

# VISION

"VISION" is the Official Publication of Parents of Vision Impaired (NZ) Inc.

**PVI's Whakataauaki/Proverb:**

*Kia hora te marino, Kia whakapapa paonamu te moana, Kia tere te karohirohi,  
I mua I to haerenga, Kia tau te rangimarie.  
May the calm be wide spread, May the sea glisten like greenstone, May the shimmer of  
summer dance across your pathways, May you always find peace.*

**Issue 85**

**May 2011**

**PACIFIC VISION International to DONATE UP TO \$100,000.00** worth of adaptive technology equipment for students that have previously applied for equipment and have been turned down.



**PVI and the Sector say  
THANKYOU  
Barry Burgess of  
PACIFIC VISION  
INTERNATIONAL**

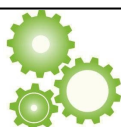


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## From your National Office...

Greetings fellow parents,  
Winter is approaching and my thoughts are still with our whanau in ChCh.... Having visited ChCh I was impressed with the resilience of the people, devastated at the scope of damage and truly hope the leaders get the rebuild right, there is a wonderful opportunity here not only for Christchurch and Canterbury but for all New Zealand.

Gains since we last wrote have been, the **Pacific Vision International donation of up to \$100,000.00** of Blind and Low Vision equipment...FANTASTIC. To **Barry Burgess** and the team, our sincere thanks.

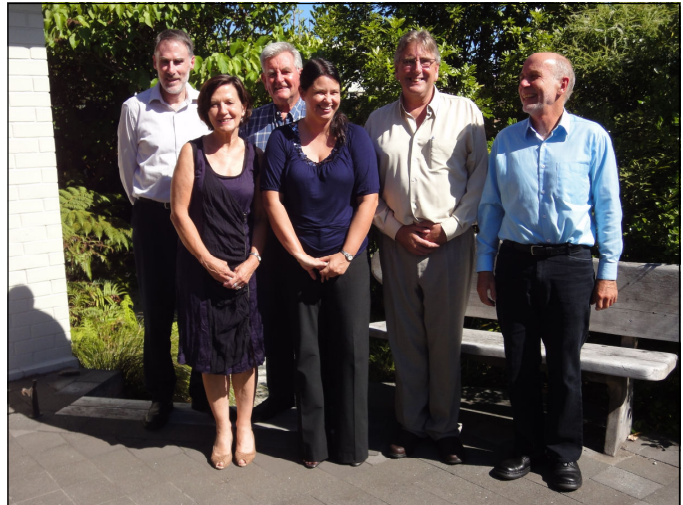
PVI has secured funding from the J R McKenzie Trust to further advance the unmet outcomes of the "See Here" project. Our sincere thanks to Project Manager Janet Digby for all she and the "See Here" have achieved and of course to the J R McKenzie Trust for believing in and supporting PVI.

Internationally I have been working with colleagues in Australia and the Pacific to help develop a pacific template for the education needs of Blind and V I learners. This has been adopted throughout the Pacific at the recent Pacific Disability Forum held in Auckland.

Your Board is busy with Policy updates, they are a hard working team of parent volunteers. And on this note it is important to advise of the upcoming **PVI AGM to be held 12th November 2011** with the venue at this stage **not confirmed but likely to be the Bella Vista Express Hotel, 14 Airpark Drive Auckland Airport**. If as a parent you would be keen to stand for a Board position then the following positions are up for re-election: - Lower South Island, Lower North Island, Upper North Island, 1 Tangata Whenua and Pacific Island. Remember as a Board member you deal with issues of strategic importance for PVI, you bring with you though all the experiences that have shaped you to what you are today, a proud parent of a child with a vision impairment..... Contact either Paul or Lyn for further information

# Parents/Carers are Voters!

### PVI to adopt See Here Advocacy



The See Here team, rear L-R are, Prof Ron Jacobs of Auck University, Dr Peter Holst retired, Front Row: - Sue Spooner Auck University, Janet Digby See Here Project Manager, Paul Manning EO PVI, and Iain Hines, Executive Director J R McKenzie Trust. The See Here team have disbanded and handed the reigns over to PVI to continue Advocated for the unmet outcomes.

### **PVI EO walks Huntly Half Marathon**

Place in Half Marathon walk: **115**  
Time: **2:55:46**  
Registration number: **4157**  
Name: **Paul Manning**  
**Hamilton**  
**M 50-59**  
Grade **21**

Hi, since giving up smoking and feeling rather overweight, something had to give... I began walking some months ago and began to dream of walking a half marathon. Well dreams can come true!

The Huntly Half Marathon was impressive on many levels, the organisation, the camaraderie and the amazing course. The time was a Personal Best as this was my first, I had walked some 20 minutes faster than training had indicated!

At the recent National Training Weekend parents donated \$10.00 towards me finishing the half marathon, the \$180.00 donated will go towards a small operational fund in support of the Christchurch Parent Support group.

I plan to walk the Hamilton Half Marathon on the 2nd October, donations gratefully received upon completion, for the same cause....

Paul

## Welcome to BLENNZ Online.

BLENNZ Online is a network of online spaces dedicated to sharing stories and providing information around blindness education in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Although still in its infancy, we are delighted to announce that we are now “live” and keen for you to take a look around. You can find us at [www.blennz.school.nz](http://www.blennz.school.nz) and from there you can jump into the different spaces.

When you visit you will find yourself at the main school web site, but from there you can jump into BLENNZ Families, BLENNZ Educators, and our BLENNZ Video Library on YouTube. Rather than build one big website, we have woven together individual websites, each with its own flavour and character. Every space is open and you are welcome to dip in and out of them all.

So what will you find?

**The BLENNZ** space is really the hub of BLENNZ Online and the equivalent of a school or business website. It is like our front-of-house. There you will find an overview of assessment and teaching, plus details of the physical structure of BLENNZ, including our Homai Campus School and Residential Service. You will also find information about how to refer your child to BLENNZ.

**BLENNZ Families** is dedicated to sharing family stories and providing a central space for support information. It has a forum where people can ask questions and share ideas and experiences.

**BLENNZ Educators** is growing from the shared resources generated within the BLENNZ teaching team. It is part of our commitment to make our practice transparent and easier for other agencies to understand what we are able to offer and how we can work together. We also aim to make a more visible ongoing contribution to the international field of vision education and the wider educational community.

**BLENNZ Video Library on YouTube** on our BLENNZ1 Youtube channel is the home of all our BLENNZ videos. Here you will find parents talking about their children and their family life, and students and educators sharing their learning. We encourage you to subscribe to the channel and then you will receive an email each time we upload new material. All BLENNZ videos are shared first in this BLENNZ Video Library and then embedded on each BLENNZ Online space wherever they are useful.

Behind the scenes, two more spaces are in development.: Our BLENNZ Learning Library and BLENNZ Student Portal. The BLENNZ Learning Library is where we are going to bring together stories of BLENNZ learners gaining new skills and share the ways we as educators and teams have worked alongside. We are currently editing lots of stories and hope the first installment of content will be live by the middle of 2010. Also in the wings, the BLENNZ Student Portal will be a landing pad for students and a portal to connect to the many already established student-led communities.

The development of BLENNZ Online would not have happened without the vision, collaboration and support of many people and multiple agencies. Firstly, we would like to express huge thanks to the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology, the Royal Society and CORE Education for their support of Chrissie Butler, our ICT facilitator during her Teacher Fellowship in 2010. During this year, Chrissie devoted her study to investigating and then designing a sustainable framework for sharing stories. We would also like to thank all the families, RNZFB and BLENNZ staff who collaborated with Chrissie and continue to share their learning and expertise in BLENNZ Online.

Hi Everyone,

For the last 10 years, the University of North Carolina’s computer science program has been creating computer games specifically for totally blind and low vision students. These computer games are always FREE! We are excited to announce that the new generation of games have been released! These games are web browser games which means that they will be able to run on ALL computers (PCs and Apples) and the games will automatically work on future operating systems (like Windows 7 and beyond). Another advantage is that when teachers create new content using this software, the new games will instantly be available for others to use as well. Currently, there are a number of classic and new Hark the Sound games on the website. More games will be added in the near future!

There are dozens of games on the site but it requires a **modern** browser like Chrome, Firefox, or Safari to work properly. The games do NOT run on Internet Explorer, so be sure that you are accessing the internet with a newer version of Chrome, Firefox, or Safari. If the home page comes up but nothing happens when you click on a game, then you are using Internet Explore or an old version of the other browsers. These browsers are free, so you can quickly download the updated version.

Remember: these games are **AUDITORY** games. Make sure that your volume is turned up on your computer or you will NOT hear the directions or be able to play the games! Many of the new games (such as the Maze Gae) is played using **stereo** sounds, so you either need stereo speakers or stereo headphones connected to your computer.

To play the games, go to [www.HarkTheSound.org](http://www.HarkTheSound.org)



PVINZ





## FREE Equipment FOR PEOPLE IN STUDY

Pacific Vision International is about to celebrate its ninth anniversary since starting in New Zealand. We can now be found in most places in the Southern Hemisphere from New Zealand, Australia and to the north of the Malaysian Peninsula and East to Tahiti.

Today we are so pleased to announce that we have up to \$100,000.00 worth of equipment to give away, yes that's right, to give way. The list of equipment can be found at the bottom of the page. The target group are the ones in study with their whole lives in front of them but who have been denied access equipment for their studies.

We are looking for students at school or university where equipment has been turned down for the lack of funds or not meeting the criteria.

To apply you must have proof that you have been turned down for funding by one of the following Workbridge, Accessable, Enable or the Ministry of Education.

Pacific Vision International believes all students Blind, Low Vision or not, should all get a fair go in education to achieve their goals in life. We believe we could all do better to help and this is our way to see the youth of today come through.

The following is the criteria and this criteria which is final.

- 1:** You must be a member of the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind studying in New Zealand or in main-stream Education in New Zealand.
- 2:** Your application must be accompanied by a letter of support from the RNZFB or a Visual Resource Teacher. That you can use the equipment and why you should receive some equipment.
- 3:** The equipment can't be sold or lent out, if it is no longer needed the equipment must be returned to Pacific Vision Unit 25, Newpark Estate 105 Bamford Street Woolston, Christchurch 8023
- 4:** All equipment must be insured
- 5:** There will be a panel of people from the RNZFB, BLENNZ, PVI and a Member of the RNZFB. This panel will decide over the applications to whom gets the equipment.

Please note Pacific Vision International will not take part in this decision making.

All Applications must be sent to Paul Manning, Executive Officer, Parents of Vision Impaired, PO Box 366, Waikato Mail Centre, Hamilton by no later than 30th September.

Please note not all the equipment is new but is in good working order.

Pacific Vision will not cover repair costs.

The Equipment is:

**PACMates** QX and BX 420,  
**Braille Displays** 40 and 12 Cell  
**Reading machines**  
**Magnification software**  
**CCTVs**

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### **PVI Humbled by this offer of generosity**

In these times of turmoil particularly those living in ChCh, stories of generosity and triumph of the human spirit abound. Barry Burgess of Pacific Vision International is one such story. Barry a man with very low vision understands the value of education, in his words, "I had a very limited formal education, I wish to see others succeed where I was not given the opportunity".

I have visited Barry at both his place of work and home in Lyttleton. His place of work has received earthquake damage yet he continues. His home has serious structural damage yet it is habitable, all around his home are signs of considerable damage. Yet we have this wonderful gesture from Barry.

We often forget how strong we are until we are forced to face diversity, and often forget how generous we can be.

To Barry and Pacific Vision International, our sincere thanks from us all, not only in PVI but from the whole sector.



## **Developments at the Homai Special Formats Library**

Towards the end of last year the RNZFB's Homai Special Formats Library received via the efforts of the fundraising team a sum of money to be used to help create a children's digital library.

Part of this sum was used to purchase "Playaways" towards a replacement for the commercial cassette collection which is of course outdated technology.

Playaways are a pre-recorded MP3 player about the same size as an iPod.

There is one title on each Playaway which cannot be recorded over. The narrators' voice can be made faster or slower, volume can be put up or down, they can be fast forwarded, back tracked and bookmarked. They come complete with batteries and ear buds. They can be used with any type of ear buds and some ear phones.

We are lending these out one at a time for 4 weeks, although we are finding the turn around time is much quicker as they are so popular. They are ideal for recreational reading, very easy to use and are so portable.

At present we have approximately 100 titles ranging from 7-8 year reading level upwards. We also have some with short stories on them. If you wish to see what titles we have please log in to the Library catalogue page on the RNZFB website [www.rnzfb.org.nz](http://www.rnzfb.org.nz) and use the key word Playaway.

Another part of the sum raised is going to be used to purchase iPad 2's for the Library for use as e-book readers and research tools for use in the Library.

The iPad is the only device of this kind that is being produced with in-built accessibility. I was looking for e-book readers for the Library and the iPad is that and so much more. It has Internet access, voice over, zoom, Braille accessibility and other features to enable our kids to launch themselves right into the technological age.

This article is well worth reading <http://www.tuaw.com/2010/06/01/the-ipad-could-be-the-best-mobile-accessibility-device-on-the-ma/>

And for those of you who may think it is just for low vision kids watch this :

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvEe91GJOqA> Wesley Majerus is the Access Specialist for the National Federation for the Blind and shows us during the iPad meetup how blind persons use this device. Visit them online at <http://www.nfb.org>.

Cyclone Computers, an Apple Distributor specializing in education, has been kind enough to lend us three iPads for trial use in the Library during the month of March.

We have also had a wireless keyboard and a keyboard with a stand for use with them. The keyboard on the iPad is simulated but I believe you can now purchase tactile overlays for this.

Classes (and any other interested parties) on their library time have been trialling the iPads with great success and enthusiasm. There are free and low cost apps (applications) that can be easily downloaded on to the iPad to suit all ages, abilities and vision range.

The iPad has read stories to children, who then at a signal and the swish of a finger turn the page to continue with the book. We have had stories being read on one iPad and sound effects that enhance the story being generated by a child using another iPad. We have had children in wheelchairs with limited fine motor skills utilising sensory apps, making all sorts of noises with great delight! We have also had an immersion course of teenagers checking them out as to whether they will be suitable for their tertiary education next year, taking notes on in lectures, checking their emails at the same time.

The iPads to be purchased will be for use of anyone visiting the Library. In the new building we will be much easier to locate.

Another portion of the sum raised has also been used to purchase more DAISY titles for the Library catalogue.

At present members of the RNZFB's Library service are on a waiting list for a Plextor DAISY player. However if you wish to receive DAISY titles burnt to a CD that can be played on another device as long as it has DAISY software, please contact the Library and we will organise for this to happen.

Also if you wish to access DAISY titles and do not have DAISY software this is the link to download AMIS a free open source software program developed by the DAISY consortium to read DAISY books <http://www.daisy.org/projects/amis>

Don't worry though. With these new developments we will still be offering our usual services and titles in Braille, large print, collage, twin vision and kitset formats. Please do not hesitate to call us if you have any queries.

**Lucy Smith Librarian Homai Special Formats Library** [LSmith@rnzfb.org.nz](mailto:LSmith@rnzfb.org.nz)  
**Ph 09 268 3215**





## Ronald McDonald's Rotorua Retreat

Hi Lyn, attached are some photos of the retreat in Rotorua. Also one of Josh and his cousins that we took while up there. The retreat sleeps about 8 I think, although we did have to seek special permission to add to it. (we had 9 of us in total). It was a great opportunity for Josh to spend time especially with his Aunty, Uncle and his cousins (from Auckland and Nelson).

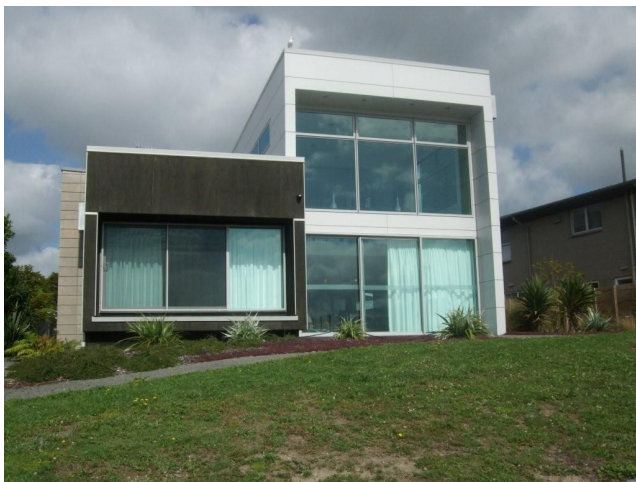
The retreat is something else - we couldn't have asked for anything more - starting with the guy from McDonalds who took us to the retreat, showed us around, gave us all the info, left his business card in case we needed anything to the brochure that had all the attractions in it - some totally free, some with major discounts etc. If there is ever a worthwhile cause to donate money to, Ronald McDonald has most certainly got our vote. I think the idea is that you can use it once in a life time and under special circumstances you may be able to apply to use again.

Cheers

Christine

Hopefully some of these photos are of use to you.

There are 2 houses on the property, we were lucky enough to have the front one which had the view over the lake - was just fabulous.



I was at a conference in the weekend and met a woman from the Ronald McDonald House Charities. One of the programmes they run is a family retreat on Lake Rotorua. There are two gorgeous new houses in which families with a child who has a chronic or long-term illness/condition are able to stay free of charge, with passes, etc to the local attractions.

**<http://rmhc.org.nz/what-we-do/ronald-mcdonald-family-retreat>**

The woman I was talking to thought that some of the families with blind or partially sighted children would be eligible to stay, so I thought I'd mention it you in case you want to share this with the families you're in contact with.

Cheers

Deborah Ward

Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind

## BLIND SPORT N Z & VARIETY UPDATES

### NEW WORLD CHAMPIONS—Alanya Turkey

From left –

**DANIEL HOLT**, Albany – **GOLD** 200m Freestyle,  
**SILVER** 400m Freestyle and  
**SILVER** 200m Medley.

**DANIEL SHARP**, Waitakere – **GOLD** 50m Breaststroke  
and World Record,

**GOLD** 100m Breaststroke, **SILVER** 200m Breaststroke,  
**BRONZE** 100m Freestyle,  
**BRONZE** 50m Freestyle.

**MARY FISHER**, Upper Hutt – **SILVER** 200m Freestyle,  
**BRONZE** 100m Butterfly,  
**BRONZE** 50m Backstroke.



The swimming section of the 4<sup>th</sup> IBSA World Championships & Games was held in Alanya, a city some 130Kms east of Antalya, the main venue.

New Zealand's VI swimmers have once again maintained their superiority in the pool. For Daniel Holt and Mary Fisher this was their first foray into the IBSA World Championships. Daniel Sharp, a veteran on two previous World Championships and two Paralympic Games. All three have been IBSA World Youth Championships gold medallists, several times over.

### Variety Updates

Dear Paul,

#### VARIETY SEEKS CHRISTCHURCH CHILDREN TO HELP

Do you know of any children or families in Christchurch who need financial help? Variety is seeking more applications from families who need financial assistance following the earthquake.

Variety is there for children in all sorts of challenging circumstances and has been working in the Christchurch community for many years supporting sick, disabled and disadvantaged children. Some examples of things that we are funding from our earthquake appeal include replacing mobility and medical equipment for children with special needs, providing toys or equipment for those who suffered great loss, financial help with school or sports fees, or helping children to cope with loss.

If you and your family require help, or know of any children that do, please visit [www.variety.org.nz](http://www.variety.org.nz) or telephone 09 520 4111 to complete an application for funding.

#### GRAB A BARGAIN AND SUPPORT VARIETY WITH USAVE

Treat yourself to something new and give to Variety – The Children's Charity as you buy.

Join USave, the new community focused online shopping centre, at [www.usave.co.nz](http://www.usave.co.nz)

and choose to support Variety as your charity when you sign up.

For every purchase that you make, 25% of the sales commission will go to Variety. USave – where Kiwis save money and help their community. Don't forget to tell your friends to sign up and support Variety too.

#### BID ON A LIMITED EDITION FORD FIESTA

The All Blacks and Ford New Zealand have teamed up to create a one-off limited edition Ford Fiesta, the AB35. They put together a team of specialists and players who finessed all aspects of the car, and one of the finished AB35 Fiestas will be auctioned on Trade Me with half the proceeds coming to Variety - The Children's Charity, Ford New Zealand's official charity partner, and the remainder going to the NZRU's official charity partners.

Ford is also giving you the opportunity to win a Ford Fiesta for a year in an online treasure hunt at [www.ab35.co.nz](http://www.ab35.co.nz). So make sure you check it out!

If you would like more information about any items mentioned above, please visit <http://www.variety.org.nz> or call us on 09 520 4111.

Warm regards,  
Lorraine Taylor  
CEO, Variety - The Children's Charity





## If you don't care, how can we?

### **JOIN CARERS NZ and the NZ CARERS ALLIANCE**

More than 420,000 New Zealanders provide care for ill, elderly, disabled, and seriously injured family members and friends.

Caring is something we can all expect to give or receive during our lives. Caring can be for a short time or for a lifetime. Any of us can become a carer overnight (after an accident or health trauma) or over time, as a loved one's support needs increase.

Caring can range from basic tasks such as helping with cleaning or paying the bills, to an intensive 24/7 role that requires considerable personal sacrifice. Caring is an unsung role ... something Kiwis have always provided for friends, family, whanau, and aiga ... but they don't always get the recognition and help they deserve.

It's time for New Zealand to care better for its carers, otherwise community-based care won't be sustainable. Carers are our country's biggest health workforce, and their unpaid work has an annual economic value of at least \$5 billion. Our We Care! campaign aims to recognise, celebrate and support carers -- they give so much, and ask for (and receive) so little in return.

Carers NZ, the national peak body for carers, and the NZ Carers Alliance, a coalition of 44 national not for profits, are launching this campaign to:

- Recognise and celebrate carers and their contribution to families, society, and the national economy
- Ensure thoughtful leadership for carers across every political party, and across government agencies ... because every party and agency has to deal with looming care challenges in our ageing society
- Encourage the Prime Minister, John Key, to take a direct interest in the work and welfare of family carers (presidents and prime ministers in other countries do ... we hope he will too!)
- Ensure that carers are respectfully recognised across government in key policies, documentation, strategies, and support/service development (there is no 'us' and 'them', only us ... all of us)
- Ensure that supports and services for carers are flexible, relevant, and truly reflect carers' wishes and needs, and that carers have free

access to nationally consistent, high quality information and learning to support their role

- Ensure that carers of workforce age can make the choice to participate in paid work if they wish
- Ensure that carers who give 24/7 support are not exploited, undervalued, or experience discrimination on the basis of old-fashioned arguments based on 'natural support' or 'social contract' obligations (carers have never had a say about what this actually means; is that fair?)

Remind everyone that caring is a precious social and family value. We need to care for our carers, otherwise they might not be able to continue to care.

***We Care! will continue through the 2011 general election until mid 2012. We encourage carers and their supporters to participate in the campaign by:***

- Submitting photo messages for society and political decision-makers (these can be emailed to [sara@carers.net.nz](mailto:sara@carers.net.nz) or, after 23 May, directly uploaded to the We Care! gallery at [www.wecare.org.nz](http://www.wecare.org.nz) Just get a big piece of paper, write a message, take a photo holding the message ... and send it to us!)
- Visiting [www.wecare.org.nz](http://www.wecare.org.nz) after 23 May to send an email message directly to John Key asking him to help Carers NZ and the Carers Alliance make faster, better progress for carers

Sending a We Care! campaign post card to the Prime Minister with this message ... to request post cards for your family/whanau, or workplace, or organisation, phone (0800) 777 797 or email [sara@carers.net.nz](mailto:sara@carers.net.nz). It's free to send a card to the PM at Parliament; just sign the card, add your own message if you wish, and pop it in the post!

- Share your story! Tell us about the joys and challenges of caring. Tell us what would make a difference for you. Tell it like it is. We can promote your story to local media, in our Family Care magazine, and at [www.wecare.org.nz](http://www.wecare.org.nz)
- Visiting your local Member of Parliament to encourage him/her to take an interest in carers, and issues important to older people and families with health and disability needs. Or, send a card or letter!



- Organise a meeting for carers in your area so you can together take photos for the We Care! message gallery ... complete and send post cards to the Prime Minister ... or submit email messages to John Key from [www.wecare.org.nz](http://www.wecare.org.nz)

***We welcome your inquiries about the We Care! campaign and encourage you to be proactive before the general election later this year! Carers are a substantial community of voters ... let's be organised, and ensure that all political parties and elected representatives are accountable to carers in the 2011 election!***

**In the meantime, we hope to see you in Auckland on 23 May for the launch of We Care! Please feel free to distribute this invitation to carers and supporters. We will also notify you of upcoming campaign activities, and when the [www.wecare.org.nz](http://www.wecare.org.nz) website is live! We will also have a Facebook presence for We Care!**

**Send your stories and inquiries to Carers New Zealand, PO Box 133, Mangonui Far North 0442.**

***Become a We Care! Twitter following @WeCareNZ***



Parents of PVI, please take note of the importance of this campaign, remember if we do not care enough to take some positive action to make life better for us as full time carers than who will, certainly not this National Government; a bit harsh?

Let me explain....

- This National Government has filed to appeal the verdict of the Court of Appeal regarding the payment to Parents who are providing full time care for their adult disabled children. The court has ruled that current MoH policy discriminates against parents and as such is illegal
- The failure of this National Government to sit down and have discussions with the Carers Alliance executive to further promote the unmet outcomes of the Carers Strategy
- Yes times might be tough, but if we forget our people....

## **SURVEY for family, whanau, and aiga carers ... share your views about wellbeing and learning for carers!**

Do you care for a friend or family member who has health, disability, mental health, serious injury, or age related needs?

Have you ever received any learning to support your caring role, or to assist with your own wellbeing?

Carers NZ, on behalf of the Ministry of Health, is seeking your feedback about carer wellbeing and learning, and to give you a say in what is developed for carers in the future.

We hope you will take the time to complete our brief survey about carer wellbeing and learning, which can be found at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L9XLC5B>

The survey takes 10-15 minutes to complete, and those who provide contact details will be automatically entered into our draw for a \$500 prize. Surveys must be completed by 20 May at 5PM; the winner of the \$500 draw will be notified on 31 May.

Information from the survey will be used by the Ministry of Health and its contractor, Twenty Pages Ltd, to learn about the experiences of carers who have previously attended Ministry funded carer training and learning programmes. The survey will also identify wellbeing and learning priorities for carers who have not previously attended such programmes. The information you provide will remain confidential. Feedback will be summarised by Twenty Pages for a final report to the Ministry of Health for its consideration.

If your organisation supports carers, we encourage you to promote the survey link to them, so they have the opportunity to participate in this important consultation.

Please note that the survey is *for carers only*. Please do not complete the survey if you are not a family, whanau, or aiga carer for a friend or family member.

Thank you!

# **Carers are Voters!**



## Did you know?

### SAVE THE DATE - VARIETY MONSTER BOOK FAIR, 28-31 JULY

*Including hundreds of brand new children's books this year*

Mark your diary for the pre-loved book event of the year! The Variety Monster Book Fair takes place from 28 - 31 July at Alexandra Park. This year Variety is also selling hundreds of brand new children's books, as well as good quality pre-loved books, CDs, DVDs, games and puzzles.

#### Opening times:

Thursday 28 July	6pm – 10pm (\$10 entry fee)
Friday 29 July	8am – 6pm (free entry)
Saturday 30 July	8am - 6pm (free entry)
Sunday 31 July	9am – 3pm (free entry)

#### How you can help:

- **Donate.** Drop your good quality, pre-loved books, games, puzzles, CDs and DVDs at Variety, 290 Great South Road, Greenlane during office hours, or call 09 520 4111 to arrange for Variety's Book Bus to pick them up.

- **Volunteer.** Register your interest in helping during the Book Fair or with set up on Sunday, 24 July by emailing [emily@variety.org.nz](mailto:emily@variety.org.nz). Variety is also looking for volunteers on the North Shore who can accept and store book donations in a garage or spare room until our book bus can pick them up.

**Spread the word.** Tell your friends, family and colleagues about the Book Fair and make sure it's in your diary so you don't miss it!

### VARIETY SEEKS CHRISTCHURCH CHILDREN TO HELP

Do you know of any children or families in Christchurch who need financial help? Variety is seeking more applications from families who need financial assistance following the earthquake.

Variety is there for children in all sorts of challenging circumstances and has been working in the Christchurch community for many years supporting sick, disabled and disadvantaged children. Some examples of things that we are funding from our earthquake appeal include replacing mobility and medical equipment for children with special needs, providing toys or equipment for those who suffered great loss, financial help with school or sports fees, or helping children to cope with loss.

If you and your family require help, or know of any children that do, please visit [www.variety.org.nz](http://www.variety.org.nz) or telephone 09 520 4111 to complete an application for funding.

## Support this please...

### Stereotypic Behaviour in New Zealand Children Who Are Blind New Research: A Parent's Perspective

Social skills are one of the most important aspects to consider when we think about helping our children towards leading happy and fulfilling lives. This is reflected in the BLENNZ Mission Statement which refers to the provision of a quality education so that learners reach their potential for growth, independence, participation and success within their communities.

In line with this thinking, new research, as part of Ph.D. studies through James Cook University (Townsville, Australia) is currently being undertaken by Elaine Gilmour of BLENNZ Auckland. This research is looking at stereotypic behaviour – a repetitive non-purposeful behaviour thought to be prevalent in children who are blind. This is behaviour such as eye poking, hand flapping, body twirling and rocking. These behaviours are of interest as they can interfere with how children connect with others in social settings. Shortly, a survey will be posted to families who have a child who is blind, and who is enrolled on the BLENNZ database. This survey gives parents the opportunity to respond to information about their child, so that we can learn more about this behaviour.

The research grew out of a concern when observing children who are blind who display this behaviour. The reactions of others and the impact on the child who is blind both socially and in their learning outcomes appeared to be compromised. Through surveying parents, it is hoped to build upon our knowledge so that we can all understand more about the impact of stereotypy. Your participation in this research would be greatly appreciated and in time, the outcomes of this project will be available to share with you all. This will be in the form of an summary article for the "Vision" magazine.

[elaine.gilmour@blennz.school](mailto:elaine.gilmour@blennz.school).

***PVI is delighted that one of our Resource Teachers of Vision is studying to get her doctorate, this will be a first for New Zealand we understand.***

***Well done Elaine.***



## **"Jetstar" Oh Dear Oh Dear....**

Hi Paul – I suggest a boycott of flying with Jetstar is the best course of action & making it public knowledge to put pressure on them to change their policy & retrain their staff!

They are owned & set up by Qantas who has been around for over 70 years & made several hundred million dollars in their last financial year! So it's not as if Jetstar didn't have a customer policy model to follow from the start & they have been operating for a number of years now also!

Being owned by Qantas they cannot plead that they are a low cost carrier as a defence!

I don't believe, in their time of operation in Aussie & NZ that this was the first time this would have happened! There must have been many other passengers badly treated by them that haven't had the energy, confidence or media contacts to stand up to them & complain in the public forum like these two TV staff were able to do!

Dianne & I are definite for conference this year & DO NOT want to fly Jetstar ex CHC for the above reason please. Please book us on Air NZ as soon as possible for conference & for board meetings as it will mean cheaper fares.

Kind regards

Grant & Dianne Davies

I totally agree with the sentiment Grant, but sadly, even if we boycott Jetstar, our numbers will not be enough to make a big impact. Personally, Paul and Lyn, don't ever book me with them if there is any other choice.

I watched the interview on "Close Up", and I was furious by the end of it. How dare Jetstar have treated two intelligent, articulate, independent adults this way, simply because they happen to use wheelchairs instead of legs. There is no excuse for that in this day and age.

The CEO of Jetstar not only got one foot completely into his mouth, but the second foot was almost all the way in too. (and I thought that was a talent only I had.!!!)

As Grant said, claiming to be a low cost carrier is absolutely no excuse

Maybe we could make a bigger impact another way. Could Kevin and Paul maybe get the Consumer Group and the RNZFB alongside to perhaps send a letter representing all the groups to Jetstar, stating our concern that disabled persons were treated this way,

and requesting their policy be updated to reflect the independence of many disabled people. And the dignity they would like to be treated with. Heck, we'd even volunteer to help them rewrite the policy. (for a small donation towards our organisation.!!)

I feel the sheer numbers of such a large group, especially if the letter were to point out we represent thousand individuals, may have a bigger impact.

I hate seeing disabled people treated to this kind of indignity, and if we allow it to slide past and continue, by not standing up and being heard, then we are just as guilty as Jetstar.

What does everyone else think?

Pat

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## **Psss't...something worthwhile....**

SibSupportN.Z.®

Are hosting a SibShop on the  
West Coast

Saturday 28 May 2011

If you have a brother or sister with a special need, illness or disability then this busy interactive day is for you. Issues are discussed and feelings shared in a SibShop interspersed with team building games, theatre sports and lots of fun. You will be supported by a facilitator and leader who themselves have a brother or sister with special needs.

Location to be confirmed

Ask reception for a brochure or call **Ruth**  
**(toll free) on 0508 236 236 for further**  
**details**





## Did you Know?

### Fathers take note, this is very worth while listening to: -

Google National Radio, look for Sunday Morning  
look for Audio from Sunday, 06 March 2011

Ideas: Fathers and (Disabled) Sons

Jeremy Rose reflects on his relationship with his youngest son, Tai, and talks to two other fathers of disabled sons. (duration: 53'41?)

Download: Ogg Vorbis MP3

## Mum's @ Yes

Hi, my name is Sharron, and I am the Parent Liason here at the Yes Disability Resource Centre in Albany, I am here Tuesday to Friday, 9.30am till 2.30pm, we have started the "Mum's @ Yes" Information Swap Network Group Meetings.

These are being held bi-monthly, if you'd like to come along to the next one, just email or phone me and I will let you know when the next one is happening.

Its purpose is to create an informal gathering of parents/caregivers of Special Needs Children / Teenagers / Adults to share and gather information that we have collected along the way, in the hope that it will make life just that little bit easier for someone else, and maybe our selves too. This also creates the opportunity to meet and make friends with people that are in potentially similar circumstances.

It also gives me the opportunity to share the information that comes to me through our "Yes" Network via emails to you.

Cause let's face it, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE DON'T KNOW. And it's my job to gather and share with you all that I can find out.

If you could like to come along to the next or a future "Mum's @ Yes Information Swap Network meeting, and/or be on my email network contact list, please RSVP me on [sharron@yesdisability.org.nz](mailto:sharron@yesdisability.org.nz)

Kindest regards

Sharron Barnett-Jensen

## YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM CHRISTCHURCH WHEN...

A "Splash-Back" is not  
that nice thing on the wall behind your stove top.  
You buy your kids a Plastic Bucket & Shovel for a treat.  
You see people driving around with a  
flashing Orange Beacon on the roof of their vehicle  
.....And no one really knows why...  
You had to explain to your mother  
what "munted" meant  
and shes decided to add it to her vocabulary.  
You now understand the "Hippy Lifestyle"  
and all it's Quirks.

## YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM CHRISTCHURCH WHEN.

You sleep in one suburb, shower in another,  
Collect water from another,  
Go to the toilet where you can.  
And still smile and greet people like you are one big family.

### Pacific Vision Technology Workshops proving their worth.....

A Cambridge mother has shared this with me in a recent email advocating for improved technology so her son can better access the school curriculum.

***"At technology workshop held in Hamilton in the first term, Ryan Henwood from Pacific Vision provided wonderful solutions for Reuben such as Magic software and a specific keyboard for visually impaired students. From memory the keyboard cost about \$35 and the Software about \$562. These incidentals would provide much needed solution for Reuben to function from day to day."***



## **Success for All – Every School, Every Child**

### **Aggregating sensory resources**

#### **Key messages from 30 March 2011**

All three sensory schools and the Ministry were represented at the meeting.

Feedback from the letters to schools sent in mid March has been light to date, but it is good to note that where principals have questions or concerns they are contacting the sensory schools or the Ministry. Issues raised will be incorporated into the planning process.

The principals of the sensory schools have been meeting with regional groups of the special schools to discuss the implications of the policy for their students with multiple needs.

A data base of students eligible for the aggregation of sensory resources has been developed and information from the Ministry Special Education about what services the students are currently receiving has been added. There will always be changes as students move but the current list is appropriate for planning purposes for the roll out of the aggregation of sensory resources from 2012. The list will be validated with the March returns from all NZ schools when they have been processed by the Ministry.

The approximately 700 ORS students who have a vision impairment have been divided into two groups. One group is of those students who have vision impairment as their primary need. There are about 250 students in this group and it is this group of students for whom resourcing will be aggregated to BLENNZ. The other group of students have a vision impairment as well as other disabilities, and therefore have a more complex range of needs and support requirements. This group numbers about 450, and we will not aggregate resourcing to BLENNZ for this group. Schools currently do, and can continue to discuss with BLENNZ if the transfer of ORS teacher staffing would best meet the needs of these students.

For the approximately 420 ORS students who have a hearing impairment resourcing will be aggregated to Kelston and van Asch Deaf Education Centres. For the small group of students within this number, who have other disabilities as well as their hearing impairment, discussions will be held with schools where there are groups of students, in order to find the right mix of teacher and para professional support for the students.

Consideration was given at the meeting to the current and past methods of allocating teacher's aide time by the Ministry of Education and this was discussed along with other approaches to the distribution of specialist teacher and paraprofessional hours. Reviewing options will continue as planning develops

The difference in how the sensory schools currently serve their client groups was highlighted for further discussion and the move to a consistent approach by the three schools overtime.

The sensory schools also provide services to vision and hearing impaired students who are not ORS verified and with the aggregation of the ORS .1 and .2 teacher time and the paraprofessional time there can be a more fair distribution of services across the whole range of students with vision and hearing impairments over time.

The 5<sup>th</sup> project management team meeting is scheduled for 28 April 2011.

#### **Background to Aggregating Sensory Resources**

This policy initiative is the result of:

- feedback to the Review of Special Education discussion document. The majority of the feedback came from parents. Educational staff, advocacy and interest groups also contributed.
- the need to get a more flexible and responsive service which meets the individual needs of children with sensory impairments
- the Ministry of Education working with the sensory schools over time. In particular, this initiative follows on from the work of sensory schools to match student need with specialist teacher capacity.

#### **Benefits of policy initiative for children:**

- allows for more flexibility in how and what resources are provided
- allows for redefinition of types of workforces to most appropriately meet student need
- will strengthen relationships between sensory schools and regular schools which have children with a sensory impairment on their rolls
- will allow for more direct access to specialist teachers
- supports specialist teachers to manage workloads efficiently to meet the needs of individual students
- allows opportunity to strengthen and build professional development of those working around children with sensory impairments
- contributes to lifting confidence of schools through providing better training and understanding
- will increase access to a wider range of services by families
- strengthen collaborative approach of the team to supporting the learning needs of individual children.

#### **Contacts**

Yvonne Hope Project Manager Ministry of Education  
[yvonne.hope@minedu.govt.nz](mailto:yvonne.hope@minedu.govt.nz)

Bernie Mulcahy, Principal, van Asch Deaf Education Centre

[bmulcahy@vanasch.school.nz](mailto:bmulcahy@vanasch.school.nz)

Jane Wells, Principal, BLENNZ

[jane.wells@blennz.school.nz](mailto:jane.wells@blennz.school.nz)

David Foster, Principal, Kelston Deaf

Education Centre [davidf@kdec.school.nz](mailto:davidf@kdec.school.nz)



**PVINZ**

## National Training Weekend May 14 15 2011

This weekends training consisted of two main speakers. First was Jane Thistlethwaite from Positive Pathways International. Jane spoke to us on the need to better understand how our children are wired, neurologically speaking, and how teachers must change their teaching methods to best teach children. Jane who is part of a global research team specializes in Vision Impairment – Autism, however she spoke to a variety of different combinations of children with complex learning difficulties. The response to Jane's presentation was very positive, many parents were expressing delight in the approach Jane was taking and understanding the importance of understanding how to connect with the learner will lead to better education outcomes for the learner.... Jane could have spoken all day such was the feedback she received, thankfully she stayed on with us and many parents had the opportunity to further engage etc...

Chrissy Butler from BLENNZ followed and I was thinking, this is unfair on Chrissy, how can she match what Jane had just presented. Well when one assumes one can quickly become an ass! I failed to appreciate just how dynamic Chrissy was at presenting, she spoke from the heart and about matters important to our souls as parents. Chrissy spoke to the new BLENNZ website and in particular the parent portal and the importance of online support and the sharing online of our stories, our journey thus far. She showed some examples and you could have heard a pin drop. Some were on the verge of tears as what we witnessed were mothers and fathers sharing their stories.....powerful, respectful and thoroughly valued by us all.

What really impressed was the opportunity for parents to share and get affirmation and guidance from other parents, the feeling of not being alone came through, the opportunity to better understand as a parent how things work etc. Honestly this website is fantastic it has many portals of advice over a range of issues. To Chrissy and the BLENNZ team, a huge thankyou for the foresight and development of this site and what it will continue to offer parents nationwide.

**[www.blennz.school.nz](http://www.blennz.school.nz)**

**Look for the link to BLENNZ video library on u tube....**



Parents who attended the recent NTW were asked to dress as a PVI parent.... Above are some of the outfits. Gaynor rear left wore a PVI T/shirt from many years ago, a rooster that vibrates when crowing!, a set of lights for better vision as part of her cap and of course the white cane to beat off those nasties we encounter!, Kitty depicting a Mother from Hell!, Andrea as the Queen B not to be messed with, myself with a Sand-which board of advocacy points, Christine another version of the Mother from Hell, Maxine making a point for strangers that stare, and Linda with the much vaunted PVI TOP.....

Saturday night saw the brave parents dress up as a PVI parent as a way of celebrating who we are etc... needless to say we had fun, dinner wasn't bad either, I heard no grumblings!

Sunday saw us with no speakers and time for us to re-evaluate our NTW programmes, our PVI Conference and AGM and many other topics.

- Unless fundraising improves we have a very limited budget for Conference 2011. At this stage we might be able to assist with travel but accommodation/food will need to be paid for by parents
- Funding ideas to be sent to [paul@pvi.org.nz](mailto:paul@pvi.org.nz)
- NTW format of coming together once annually needs to continue, it is valued and the learning is appreciated. PVI needs funding support to ensure this is to continue....

A great weekend was had by many, some said they felt reinvigorated, others were inspired to do better.....





## Websites and info.....

**www.pvi.org.nz** This is our website, check it out!

**www.blennz.school.nz** The new BLENNZ website, take a look, well worth the journey!

**www.kapomaori.com** The official website of Ngati Kapo Aotearoa Inc

**www.abcnz.org.nz** The largest Blind Consumer group in N.Z. An excellent website.

**www.humanware.com** Excellent products available for both Low Vision and Blind users.

**www.pacificvision.org.nz** This website has links to many international providers of Low Vision aids.

**www.biopticdriving.org** This website explains how some low vision people can gain extra vision by using bioptic lens that in some cases enables them to drive legally!

**www.aniridia.net:** Anidria Foundation International.

**www.aniridia.org:** Anidria support

**www.albinism.org.nz** New Zealand's website for those wishing to know more about Albinism.

**www.nzord.org.nz** This website has links to many international sites containing information concerning rare disorders. This site is the New Zealand link.

**www.rnzfb.org.nz** The website of the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind.

**www.quantech.com.au** This website has good information on new Mountbatten training resources. Worth visiting if your child uses braille.

**www.tsbvi.edu** The Texas School for the Blind and Vision is a leading educational facility. Excellent information and links to other places.

**www.minedu.govt.nz** The official Ministry of Education website. Good information, easy to use.

**www.varietyclub.org.nz** The Variety Club may be able to provide financial assistance for children with special needs. I have found them most supportive and helpful in the past 09 522 3743.

**www.parent2parent.org.nz** Parent 2 Parent is a nationwide support group of parents who have children with special needs.

**www.carers.net.nz** This is the official website of Carers NZ. This website has excellent information on a range of carers needs. They produce an excellent magazine called "Family Care". This magazine is free to all carers, just ring Sara at 09 406 0412 or email: info@carers.net.nz

**www.napvi.org** The National Association of Parents of Vision Impaired USA. Good website, note the section re parent matching.

**www.cpsociety.org.nz** NZ's Cerebral Palsy site an excellent website, very informative and easy to use.

**www.wrightslaw.com** An excellent website for tips on IEP's, it is USA based where laws are different, the tips and ideas are very similar.

**www.zabonne.com** Zabonne's website hosted by Ivan Pivac, much information regarding blind and low

vision aids, plus technology aids for children with additional disabilities.

**www.maparentsupport.com:** - a web site for parents to find support from others who have children with Microphthalmia Anophthalmia.

**www.familytimes.co.nz** a newspaper produced quarterly, ChCh and Auck based, well worth a read.

**RNZFB Holiday Home:** The RNZFB have one Holiday Home available to rent for members. Located in Tauranga at \$50.00 per night. For further information contact Karen at the Tauranga RNZFB Office between 9.00am and 12.00noon on **07 578 2376**.

**The Koru Care:** This charity is linked to Air N Z. They specialise in taking children with Special Needs to Disneyland/Gold Coast Australia. Contact 09 523 2456 to see if your child qualifies. There are also contacts at Wellington and Christchurch offices of Air New Zealand.

**www.yesdisability.org.nz:** Yes Disability Resource Centre in Albany. Note the Mothers support group known as Mum's @ Yes" Information Swap Network Group Meetings.

**A CD called "A Family Affair"**, available from **BLENNZ** Homai Campus, **09 2667109** it gives good information re the National Assessment Services available at BLENNZ.

**PacificVision:** email Barry at barry@pvi.co. excellent low vision equipment.

**Parents:** - Feel free to write to the following Members of Parliament the good news (Positive Advocacy) or bad news concerning either your child's needs or yours as a parent!

**Prime Minister:** pm@ministers.govt.nz

**Minister of Education:** atolley@ministers.govt.nz

**Minister of Disability Issues:**

tturia@ministers.govt.nz

**Minister Maori & Assoc Min Education:**

psharples@ministers.govt.nz

**Assoc Min of Education—Sp Ed:**

rhide@ministers.govt.nz

### **PVI Regional Support Vacancies:**

We need more parents to volunteer as Regional Representatives in the following areas: - Northland, Especially Auckland, Waikato, Taranaki, Palmerston North, Dunedin and Southland. We need more parents acting as signposts to support other parents in your community. We wish to create teams within your own community hence sharing the workload. National Training is provided FREE normally 1 weekend per year. Support seminars will more than likely be provided in a community near where you live. If you have the time to give and wish to further support us please contact

**Paul: 0800 312 019**



**PVINZ**

## Your PVI Board

**Chair: Lower North Island Representative:**

Mr. Kevin Beaver: 04 589 3719 k.beaver@clear.net.nz

**Upper S.I. Representative:**

Mr. Grant Davies: 03 326 4013 dandavies@xtra.co.nz

**Treasurer: Central N.I. Representative:**

Mr. D Fairgray: 027 286 7798

**Lower South Island Representative:**

Ms. Judith Hyslop: 03 467 5774:judithhyslop@xtra.co.nz

**Upper North Island Representatives:**

Mrs. Kim Lewin: 094221012 lewinfamily@xtra.co.nz

Mr. K. Singh: 027 320 6317 kam\_mit@hotmail.com

**Anywhere in N.Z. Representative:**

Mrs. Dionne Gilligan: 06 344 7755 dionnesg@gmail.com

**Tangata Whenua Representatives:**

Ms. Riripeti Paine: 06 838 3949

Mrs. Kitty Tuari: 09 372 5453 ktuari@gmail.com

**Pacific Island Representative: Vacant**

**Return Address:**

Parents of Vision Impaired NZ Inc

PO Box 366

Waikato Mail Centre

Hamilton 3240



## Regional Support Parent Contacts

**Dargaville:** Gaynor Edgar 09 439 4439  
**Wellsford:** Kim Lewin 09 422 1012  
**North Harbour:** Linda Moore Carter 09 442 1330  
**Auck. Central:** **Vacancy please apply**  
**Auck. South:** Mr. Kawaljeet Singh 09 299 8028  
**Auck. West:** Paulette & Rodney Francis 09 835 1232  
**Auck. East:** Mr. Kawaljeet Singh 09 299 8028  
Mrs Tirzah Shepherd 09 530 9539  
**Hamilton:** Maxine Jeffery 07 853 7006  
**Tauranga:** Linda & Don Fairgray 027 286 7798  
**Rotorua:** Lex & Helen Craig 07 349 3191  
**Wairoa:** Riripeti Paine 06 838 3949  
**Napier:** Mrs. Lou Halbert 06 845 4706

**Taranaki:** **Vacancy please Apply**  
**Wanganui:** Dionne Gilligan 06 344 7755  
**Manawatu:** **Vacancy please apply**  
**Wellington:** Christine Pask 04 527 7585  
David and Rhonda Heather 04 203 6539  
**Nelson:** Adrian Secker 027 201 1028  
Trudy Perrett 03 544 6641  
**Christchurch:** Andrea Lamont 03 980 1566  
**Oamaru:** Pat Fox 03 434 3499  
**Alexandra:** Sarah Hinton 03 449 2414  
**Invercargill:** Kim Hartley 03 217 1906