



# eVision August 2020

Parents of Vision Impaired New Zealand  
Inc supported by Blind Low Vision New  
Zealand *(formerly The Blind Foundation)*



Lily in front of the zebras at Hamilton Zoo



[PVI.ORG.NZ](http://PVI.ORG.NZ)



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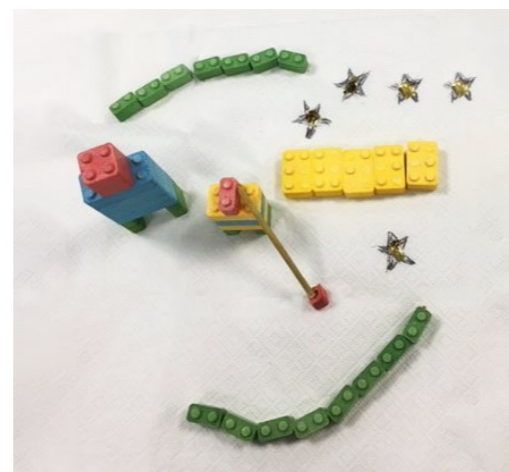
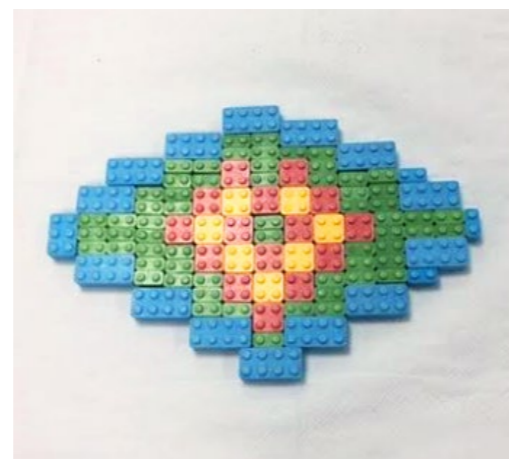
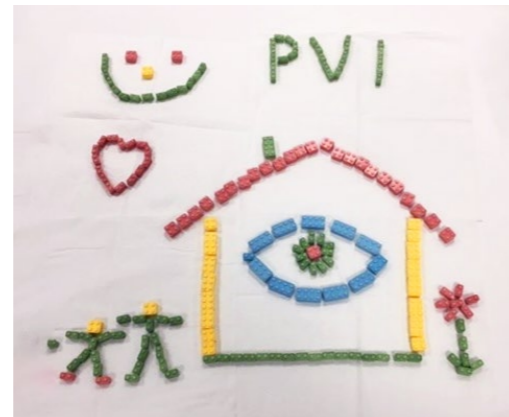
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## Update from the Chair

Recently I attended a management committee meeting for an organisation I am involved in here in Dunedin. The well-known saying "there is no 'I' in team" was shared. After the meeting, I came away and reflected on this, thinking how lucky we are to have such a great and committed team as our PVI board. Bringing together people from different communities around New Zealand, family circumstances and different ages and stages in the journey of our children's lives can be challenging. However, we all come together with one objective: to help make a difference. These last few months have been tough for everyone and the extra workload and responsibilities as a board member have been challenging. I am proud to be part of the team we have and it was wonderful to finally meet face to face in July in Wellington.

At our first meeting this year, one of the things we did was to have a bit of fun with a team building exercise where each group was given a bag of lollies in the shape of building bricks (from that famous lolly shop). The task was to construct a logo that represented PVI and this is what was produced after much laughter and a bit to cheating to see what each other was up too! I think this just shows how we came together for the first time, worked together and shared our results together. The lollies didn't taste too bad either!

Take care out there,  
Judith



Logos created that represented PVI by using lolly bricks.



Isabella and Lily having fun.

## EO Update

*Kia ora anō,*

Another two months have flown by! Conference planning is now well underway, with speakers confirmed and a venue booked. We are in Auckland this year, at the **Waipuna Conference Suites Highbrook** and the **Quest Highbrook**. Both of these are located at **60 Highbrook Drive in East Tamaki, Auckland**. Please note the address! It is worth noting that the Waipuna Conference Suites Highbrook (where we are) is NOT the Waipuna Hotel in Mt Wellington! Please come to 60 Highbrook Drive, as that is where the PVI Conference is.

There has been a flurry of reports released, post-Covid. Some of these are of relevance to PVI members. Rather than read the entire report, I have summarised key areas of interest in this eVision release. Of particular interest is that the experiences of lockdown for those engaging in caring work were: a) similar across the motu, and b) different to those who were not doing caring work. That said, the issues faced were depressingly similar to the issues already

articulated by carers, prior to the pandemic. That said, the response by the blind sector was excellent. There are things to work on for sure, but, overall the way the blind consumer organisations worked together was noted as a model to follow.

On a personal note, it was been wonderful to send my kids back to school! It has also been so very nice to be able to do things such as visit the local zoo, go out for a wine with friends, and attend meetings in person. Our Lily is currently very taken with zebras, so we have visited the zoo several times. Hamilton Zoo is quite large so walking around is great for her physical movement, for her vision, develops her language further, and of course is great fun to boot! Here she is, wearing her zebra stripes and visiting the zebra enclosure.

Take care and all the best for the next few months as we finalise conference and carry on with assorted tasks and things.

*Nga mihi*  
Rebekah

# PVI CONFERENCE AND AGM 2020

AUCKLAND, 16-18 October 2020

16-18  
OCTOBER  
Highbrook  
Conference  
Suites by  
Waipuna



**The PVINZ Conference will be held in Auckland: Friday 16 October (assemble), Saturday 17 October and Sunday 18 October**

**VENUE:** Highbrook Conference Suites by Waipuna, 60 Highbrook Drive, East Tamaki, Auckland

*We are limited to 65 parent conference delegates, so it will be first in first served.*

**PVINZ WILL PAY FOR MEMBERS:**

- Return air fares in New Zealand.
  - Accommodation (studio apartment) at the Highbrook Conference Suites by Waipuna: 60 Highbrook Drive, East Tamaki, Auckland, Friday and Saturday night.
  - Parent delegate reg fee \$160 per couple.
  - Parent delegate reg fee single \$80.
  - Single with own room a supplement of \$50 per per day.
- The conference will start at 8:45am Saturday and conclude at 1:00pm Sunday.

For PVINZ members wishing to provide their own transport to attend only the Saturday programme, we will have limited space available.

For delegates attending from our partner organisations and professions we have a registration fee of \$120.00 per person. If attending the dinner an additional \$60.00 is required. If finances are difficult to arrange this year, please get in touch with us.



## Parents of Vision Impaired (NZ) Inc

### 2020 PVI CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

16-18 October 2020

**ATTENDING PARENT - CAREGIVER/S DETAILS. PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE**

Parent 1: (Last name) \_\_\_\_\_ (First name) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent 2: (Last name) \_\_\_\_\_ (First name) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Travel arrangements: Air \_\_\_\_\_ Depart date \_\_\_\_\_ Depart Time \_\_\_\_\_

Air return \_\_\_\_\_ Depart date \_\_\_\_\_ Depart time \_\_\_\_\_

By Car \_\_\_\_\_ Car park required?  Yes  No

In order to secure cheaper air fares we need to register and book early. **ACCOMMODATION: Highbrook Conference Suites by Waipuna**

Friday night accommodation  Yes  No Saturday night accommodation  Yes  No

*The accommodation bookings will be made by PVINZ Inc, so please do not call the Hotel.*

**DAY PROGRAMME** Saturday only  Yes  No

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION COST** is \$80.00 per parent delegate.

**SPECIAL REQUESTS:**  
Diet: \_\_\_\_\_

**MOBILITY Issues:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP:**

I confirm my child \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Child needed to confirm membership)

Has a serious vision impairment and that I am a registered parent / caregiver of Parents of Vision Impaired NZ Inc

**SIGNED:**

Please send this form to Parents of Vision Impaired NZ Inc, PO Box 5629, Frankton, Hamilton 3242. or email to rgraham@pvi.org.nz  
For delegates attending from our partner organisations and professions we have a registration fee of \$120.00. Accommodation and travel is at your cost.

SUMMARY	COST
Parent registration per couple: <b>\$160.00</b> per couple	
Parent registration share twin: <b>\$80.00</b>	
Parent single accommodation: <b>\$50.00</b> per night	
Delegates partner organisation: <b>\$120.00</b>	
Delegates partner organisation dinner: <b>\$60.00</b>	
Donation to support another PVI parent attending:	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

**NUMBERS ARE LIMITED SO PLEASE REPLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**  
Deposit directly to our bank account ASB account # 123100 0115685 00.

**National Office:** 59 Commerce Street, Frankton, Hamilton 3204. PO Box 5629, Frankton, Hamilton 3242.

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**WWW.PVI.ORG.NZ**



Photo credit: Alex Matthews, 2019.

# Listening, learning and loving the ballet with audio description

By Pascale Parenteau from the RNZB

Every year since 2017 when the Royal New Zealand Ballet brought the first audio-described ballet performances to New Zealand audiences, PVINZ has been there to support us by providing sponsorship which enables vision impaired children and young people and their carers to attend an audio described school matinee performance free of charge. This year's audio-described performances are part of our season of *The Sleeping Beauty* which will tour the country from October until December. Audio-description will be offered in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch at both a public performance and a school matinee.

At an audio-described performance patrons wear an earpiece through which they can enjoy a live commentary provided by a trained audio describer. They can also attend

a free Touch Tour before the show. Patrons can walk through the set, touch set pieces, feel costumes, handle key props and learn more about the production. An RNZB Dance Educator is on hand to explain various ballet terms and the shapes and quality of the movements from the ballet.

### See a clip from *Hansel & Gretel* 2019 ([youtu.be/2lph3wEtnUc](https://youtu.be/2lph3wEtnUc))

From the moment the performance began to the huge applause in the curtain call, the audio describers told us which characters had come on stage, what dance pose they were doing and what props they were holding. This is my first time ever to a ballet performance, and thanks to RNZB, it won't be my last! — Julie Woods, Dunedin, after attending *Hansel & Gretel* in 2019

## The Sleeping Beauty Audio Described School Matinees



Photo credit: Alex Matthews, 2019.

### WELLINGTON

Opera House  
5 November  
10am – 11am Touch Tour  
12.30pm Performance

### CHRISTCHURCH

Isaac Theatre Royal  
20 November  
10am–11am Touch Tour  
12.30pm Performance

### AUCKLAND

Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre, Aotea Centre  
4 December  
10am–11am Touch Tour  
12:30pm Performance

### DURATION OF EVENT: 60 min.

Due to the popularity of these events, seats are allocated on a first come, first served basis – book now so you don't miss out!

### BOOKING FORM: ([bit.ly/2DUOi7G](https://bit.ly/2DUOi7G))

Download link and return to Pascale Parenteau, RNZB Education, Accessibility & Community Manage, email: [pascale@rnzb.org.nz](mailto:pascale@rnzb.org.nz) mobile: 021 678 521

## The Sleeping Beauty Audio Described Public Performances

### WELLINGTON

Opera House  
7 November, 1.30pm

### DUNEDIN

Regent Theatre  
15 November 1.30pm

### CHRISTCHURCH

Isaac Theatre Royal  
21 November, 1.30pm

### AUCKLAND

Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre, Aotea Centre  
6 December, 3pm

**TO BOOK:** Contact RNZB Ticketing Team on 04 831 1056 or email: [subscribe@rnzb.org.nz](mailto:subscribe@rnzb.org.nz). Mon-Fri: 10am-4pm. Ticket prices: children \$25, adults \$45. Booking fee \$2 per transaction. Seats situated in the stalls. A free companion ticket is available if required. Guide dogs are welcome.

### AUDIO DESCRIBED ONLINE PERFORMANCES

During the recent covid-19 lockdown we were able to provide audio description of some of the ballets which were broadcast free online. These reached a wide audience both in NZ and overseas. A patron in Colorado, USA wrote:

*"The introductory performance notes were not only helpful but opened up the performance to a complete experience. I felt so included, knowing about the film backdrop as a stage context. And, of course, the costuming and physicality of the dancers helped me to be right there."*

At the Royal New Zealand Ballet we are always looking for ways to maximise the accessibility of our productions so that the joy and wonder of ballet can be shared by all.

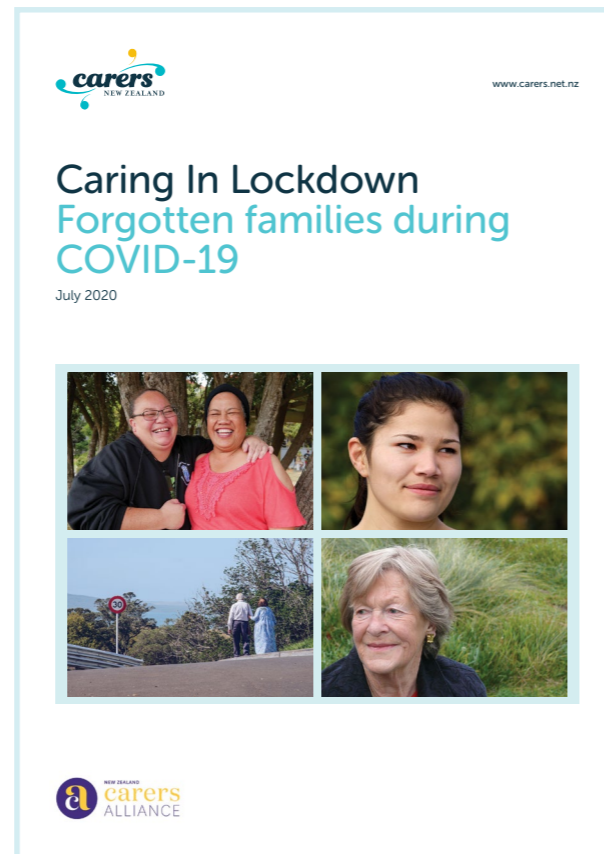
# Caring in Lockdown: Carers Respond

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Seven weeks in lockdown had a significant effect on family members caring for disabled family members. Carers NZ and the NZ Carers Alliance carried out an online survey, with 676 carers from around New Zealand responding. Many questions were accompanied by comments, which gave rich insights about the issues facing carers through Covid-19.

The full report can be accessed here: [carers.net.nz/information/covid-19-survey-report-caring-lockdown/](http://carers.net.nz/information/covid-19-survey-report-caring-lockdown/)

Many of those who completed the survey were providing very high levels of care, or juggling care in complex circumstances. Not only have many provided more care than before, they are suffering financially and are worried about the future. For many, their concerns and anxieties existed pre-Covid-19 and the pandemic has simply amplified



them. Some of the reported findings may sound very familiar to PVI members:

## IMPACT OF CARE WORK

- 64% of carers provided more care during Covid-19. Of those providing more care, 51% did so as a result of services being reduced, paused, or stopped.
- 50% of all carers provided more help with emotional support, motivation or keeping an eye on the person they care for during the pandemic.
- Many carers spoke of the exhaustion of providing constant care, including mental wellbeing support for the person they care for. Comments from carers show that the halt or closure of regular services added to their stress levels, removing usual opportunities for respite from caring and impacting their own wellbeing.

## FINANCIAL PRESSURES AND IMPACT ON WORK

- 76% of carers have spent more money on food and household bills, and 25% of carers were worried about their financial situation long-term.
- 29% of carers spend more on technology to stay connected during the pandemic.
- Many carers already faced difficult financial situations due to their caring responsibilities; caring can result in a sharp reduction in income due to earning 10% less on average than non-caring New Zealanders, along with the extra costs of caring.

What would help you post-lockdown?	%
Respite / break from caring	55%
More clear/ specific government advice for carers	39%
Increased financial support	38%
More help with contingency planning in case you aren't able to provide care	37%
A rise in benefits	29%
More advice and information and benefit entitlement	24%
Someone to talk to	24%
More information and support from your DHB	22%
PPE for workers and / or for family carers and those they support	22%
More frequent testing of people with symptoms	20%
More support from your GP or medical practice	17%
More support in community eg; from local volunteer	15%
Paid leave	10%
More support from community pharmacies	7%
Something else	8%



## WORRIES AND FEARS

- Alongside the usual stresses of ensuring the person they care for is well looked after, the Covid-19 outbreak added extra pressures. Most prominent of these is carers' need to maintain their own health to be able to continue caring.
- Two-thirds of carers worried about what would happen to those they support should they become ill themselves or not be able to continue caring for other reasons.
- Over a third of carers reported feeling overwhelmed and worried about burning out.

Carers were asked what would help their wellbeing post-lockdown. The responses mirror issues raised prior to Covid-19, with the pandemic exacerbating and intensifying the challenges faced.

- 46% of carers had not had a break for more than eight weeks at the time they completed the survey - they are tired!

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## The Blind Sector During Covid-19: Overview

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Kāpō Māori Aotearoa NZ and Blind Low Vision NZ (on behalf of the New Zealand blind consumer organisations, including PVI) prepared a comprehensive report for the Minister for Disability Issues, the Hon Carmel Sepuloni. Key points are summarised here for PVI readers. Overall, I (Rebekah) felt very privileged and proud to be part of a sector that took such a collective response to our respective members wellbeing.

With the announcement of the country going to alert level 4, the chief executive of BLVNZ (John Mulka) initiated a meeting of all the blind consumer organisations. The key priority for all present was the safety and wellbeing of their members.

The first action initiated by the collective was a statement (in Te Reo Māori and English) that all blind consumer

organisations (including PVI) would work collaboratively during the lockdown. This document was subsequently uploaded to the PVI website. This explicit statement of collaboration and support set the blind sector apart and was positively remarked on by other groups within the sector.

Secondly, weekly meetings were facilitated by the chief executive of BLVNZ. These meetings discussed outreach activities undertaken, shared information, and provided peer support. Hearing from other groups each week was very encouraging, and a great reminder of *He waka eke noa* – we are all in this together.

Outreach activities ranged from wellbeing checks, connecting members to local community supports, Covid-19 information updates, producing Covid-19 alternate formats and gathering members' stories.



New Zealand Blind Consumer Organisations

Multiple communication methods were used to reach and communicate with members, families, *whānau* and supporters: landline and mobile phone calls, video calls, emails, texting, alternative formats hard copy communications, TIS (Telephone Information Service), website, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

A particularly unique and valuable attribute of the blind sector during this time was the encouragement by blind consumer organisations for their members to engage across the groups and receive support from more than one organisation. At the close of lockdown it was estimated that over 14,000 blind, low vision, vision impaired and deafblind persons were contacted in some form. As well, around 900 *whānau* members and supporters were contacted. The use of social media at this time

extended the reach of organisations beyond the blind sector boundary. Based upon the information provided across the blind sector, the collective outreach was just over 56,000 people, organisations, *hāpu* and *iwi* across Aotearoa and internationally.

This is an extraordinary effort! I was very proud to be associated with PVI and to be part of the wider New Zealand blind consumer organisations and Blind Low Vision NZ efforts.

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# Accessible Content

One of the things highlighted during the lockdown was the importance of being able to access the internet. This is not just broadband access and digital devices, but the need for websites to be accessible for blind, low vision, vision impaired and deafblind (BLV) persons.

Web accessibility is about inclusion — making sure everyone, including disabled people and those using assistive technologies, can access online information and services. Online content must be accessible to provide equal access and equal opportunity to disabled people. It's a human right (see Article 9 of the UN's CRPD).

Did you know that New Zealand has a web accessibility standard? And that this is based on the International Standard for web accessibility, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1? All public service and non-public service agencies must meet the NZ Government Web Accessibility Standard 1.1.

You can find out more here, on this accessible NZ site: [digital.govt.nz/standards-and-guidance/design-and-ux/accessibility/](https://digital.govt.nz/standards-and-guidance/design-and-ux/accessibility/)

## THE BENEFITS OF ACCESSIBLE WEBSITES INCLUDE:

- people can access information and services
- people can better participate in society
- accessible websites are easier to use
- they not only help people with disabilities but also help older people and people from different cultures
- agencies can reach a significantly larger portion of New Zealanders
- accessible sites are easier for search engines to crawl
- cost-savings can be made by building an accessible website from the beginning rather than fixing issues after development.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- using plain English so content is clear and easy to understand
- writing content specifically for the web instead of publishing documents designed for print
- including alt text with images
- providing long descriptions for tables, graphs and diagrams when alt text isn't long enough to describe the complexity
- providing captions and transcripts for video
- marking up content with the correct HTML elements, for example headings, lists and tables
- providing enough colour contrast between text and background
- making sure webpages can be used with only a keyboard
- making sure keyboard focus is easily visible.



PARENTS OF VISION IMPAIRED NEW ZEALAND INC  
SUPPORTED BY BLIND LOW VISION NEW ZEALAND  
(FORMERLY THE BLIND FOUNDATION)



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