



## Iosis Fostercare

Did you know that Iosis has been doing foster care for over 100 years... In 1893, the Reverend Birch, took in two children he found living in a barrel, there developing a residential home. The orphanage was first operated under the auspices of a Union Free church, and then moved to the ownership of the Baptist Union in 1903. It was located on Portage Road at the time, until space became an issue and the current land in Manurewa was purchased and gifted to the work. Many children came into the orphanage due to the extreme poverty. Children were often cared for, while parents made efforts to become more financially stable and able to take back the care of their children. Read more about our history online at [www.iosis.org.nz/About+Us/History](http://www.iosis.org.nz/About+Us/History).

Systems may have changed since that time, but still Foster Care is one of the most important jobs that we do here at Iosis. We currently have 9 incredible caregivers who take in children of all ages for many differing amounts of time and for a vast array of reasons. These people walk through some very real challenges for the sake of our children, they are unsung heroes of our nation. We hear from some of them in this issue about why they do it.

## We hear from some of our Caregivers

### David & Luisa

**Q.** How long have you been doing Fostercare? In what capacity?

*A. We began in late 2006, we have had mainly boys and the occasional girl. Mostly David staysh home with the kids, Luisa goes to work.*

**Q.** Why do you do fostercare?

*A. We both come from big families who's homes were always opened to people who needed it. We also both love children,*

**Q.** What do you enjoy most about doing fostercare?

*A. The best part of fostercare - are the children. It doesn't matter what or where they have come from after a settling period their personalities and quirks soon comes through and we have found that its good to hear the sound of laughter or see smiles in this house. Also since our son became a dad, we have seen the caring nature of all these children, they all love babies. It is a pleasure to watch them play with our granddaughter and we believe it can be healing for them. Our 2 new additions - Raff and Ed (dogs) help as well. It isn't all plain sailing but it makes for a very funny household.*

*Continued on p.4*

### What does 'Iosis' mean?

"Iosis" is a Greek word indicating the process whereby a base metal becomes gold. It is a miraculous transformation and it is our inspiration. We believe strongly in the power of transformation in people's lives; that despite the challenges they face, we know they can make significant changes for the sake of their children. We are committed to providing a set of practical support and learning processes to encourage, educate and come alongside families who are struggling to change habits of violence, addiction and offending to help them create a safe and secure environment for the children.



*Iosis Fostercare Christmas Party*

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## Message from the CEO

This month, we want to celebrate! Amidst disaster and despair, we know the capacity of the human spirit to endure great hardship. We also know the other hardest thing we can do, is make big changes in our lives. To face up to attitudes and behaviours that have been hurting ourselves or others.

Our hope is to create the best homes for children when they need it, and also to create conditions for families and parents to thrive, and the conditions for them to learn and change when they get it wrong. We are in the business of both.

Sadly, many children must be taken out of home for a season, until it can be made whole and safe again. For children this is hugely traumatic, and the people who choose to care for them in this time face enormous challenges and we honour them for their selflessness and courage. This is the spirit that enables us to survive tragedy and loss, and inspires others to overcome.

Young lives are changed for the good by being loved and nurtured. Let us pray for courage for those in places of sudden loss, and for those who stand there for them, as foster parents, or as neighbours, or as professional workers. We need them all.

Read these stories, and have hope for the future of the families and our children.. at least those in our neighbourhood! ■



Ruby Duncan

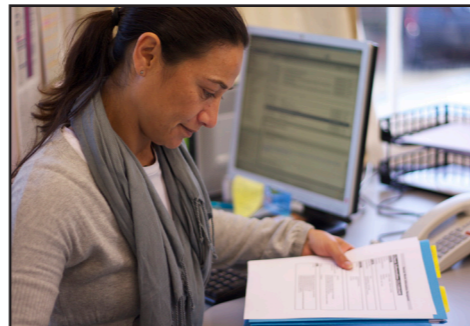
Regards,

Ruby Duncan, CEO

## Budgeting

The last few months our budgeting team has been working overtime to meet the demand of referrals for the service. This doesn't look like it's going to let up anytime soon. Because of policy change at the government level, most WINZ clients are required to see a budgeter; it overloaded our service and many other local budgeting services. This required our budgeting staff to think on their feet. The result has been great. It has seen Rose, our budgeter, run seminars in the local Work and Income offices. This has meant that she can have initial contact with many people and provide some basic introductory info without the bottle neck in our service. "It's great because we can introduce Budgeting and what we can and can't help with. It's difficult because there are no quick fixes, but you're meeting people at the coal face, they're strugglin, and if they transition to a referral to the service and stick with it, we can really help them" says Rose, our budgeter. "I just had a phone call this morning from them saying how great they think she is." says Ruby, our CEO.

"Many people we see have never been introduced to a budget before, the information is really profound and many of them will try it for the first time. There is a very high need" says Rose, "we would need several more budgeters to meet it, but at least we can make an impact" ■



## A newfound freedom

Rita referred herself to our service, from prison no less. She was facing challenging times and knew that she couldn't do it alone. She managed to locate us and her file got allocated to Angeleen. "She was very aware of her brokenness, she was a battered woman in every way" says Angeleen "she endured all layers of abuse, mental, emotional, and physical."

Angeleen and counsellor, Megan did something very unique with her, they did social work and counselling in the same session, she also completed every programme we had, Parenting, Kids Feeling Safe and Family Resilience. "She was so ready to change," says Angeleen, "she just needed someone to grab her hand and help walk her in the right direction." And now, she's doing so well.

Rita came to us having cut herself off from any of the support networks that could have cared for her through the abuse she suffered at the hands of her partner. She moved away from her family in rural Northland to Auckland years ago and subsequently to an isolated life which turned desperate the more trouble she got herself into. She became increasingly dependent on her abusive partner and less able to find the strength to make a break from his grasp on her. She had nothing to fall back on as he made her take care of his kids plus give him her money. She was hopeless. But through the intensive work that Angeleen and Megan did with her, Rita found the strength and freedom to make a break. "she cut herself off from him, it was a key move for her." says Angeleen.

"The other key move was reuniting her with her whanau, her marae. He would never let her go, but she got there

in the end and the way they received her restored her mana, her strength that was always within her but was so hidden."

"Angeleen worked from the mostly finely tuned Cross-cultural perspective I've ever seen" says Megan, Rita's counsellor. "She found who she was and went from that strength, she worked from a Maori perspective even though she is Pakeha, and she set Rita up to become independent rather than more dependent on the system.

"Angeleen was such a strength for me, I had no one else to turn to," says Rita. "She really understood my story, she held my hand through it all, made me strong, now I know who I am."

***"I had no one else to turn to. She really understood my story, she held my hand through it all, made me strong, now I know who I am..."***

We work hard here at Iosis to attract and retain great social workers like Angeleen, but we need your help to do it. If you're not a regular giver, please consider giving regularly.

*Please consider becoming a regular supporter of Iosis Family Solutions. With your donation, we can help so many more families!*

*It's easy! Simply complete the donation card included and return it to us in the free-post envelope, or go online to our website, [www.iosis.org.nz](http://www.iosis.org.nz) and click 'Donate'.*

**Thank you for your support!**

Q. What are your one or two hopes for all the children that come through your care?

A. All the children who come into our care are only with us temporarily so we only have the time they spend with us. We hope that each child will be returned to a safer and nurturing environment and their families are able to move forward to a great new beginning. We are big advocates for children's education, and we always tell them to grab onto any opportunities that come their way. We hope we instill in them a growth in confidence and self-esteem that will carry them through as they get older.

Q. What are your biggest challenges in doing fostercare?

A. Some of our children come with inappropriate behaviour e.g. temper tantrums, soiling themselves, taking things that do not belong to them, and some challenging attitudes. Also when we have children arrive with no clothing or personal items because they have been moved quickly from unsafe environments.

**Tina**

Q. How long have you been a caregiver and in what capacity?

A. Since May 2010 and I take mostly older kids. I've done a lot of respites and shorter-term stays in the past year because I am just starting out and still getting used to it, I suppose.

Q. Why do you do Fostercare?

A. I got into caregiving because I just kept hearing about how there was and is going to be a shortage of good caregivers out there. I always wanted to do it in the future ('after' I have

my own family) but I just had to get over myself and start somewhere or else how long was I going to put it off for, so I did!

Q. What do you enjoy most about doing fostercare?

A. I love meeting the children and finding the uniqueness in each of them. What I really enjoy is seeing them relax into my home as they become comfortable and watching them pick up some good behaviour and make good choices.

Q. What are your one or two hopes for all the children that come through your care?

A. My hope is that no matter how long or short I have them for that they'll experience a safety and security as well as a loving peaceful home and that memory will stay with them. That no matter where they go on to that they'll remember the feeling of being safe and that's the kind of childhood they deserve.

Q. What are your biggest challenges in doing fostercare?

A. The biggest challenge for me is letting them go and sometimes not knowing if what they're going to is going to be a good place for them. Or that the people are going to make the best decision for them. But for the most part, there's nothing you can do, you just have to do your best while you have the opportunity. ■

## New Staff

We'd like to introduce you to the newest member of our Social Work team, Agnes. Agnet is of Samoan descent and so she's already been a great asset with our Samoan clients. Please join us in welcoming Agnes to the team! ■

