

Turnaround

The Iosis Newsletter – February 2020

iosis
transforming
family life for good

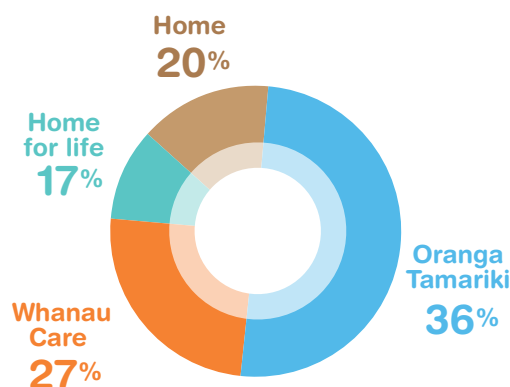
Giving our tamariki better tomorrows

Right now, many Auckland children are in need of foster carers – but sadly Iosis are unable to help because we simply don't have enough carers to meet the demand. That's why we're looking for more caring families, couples or individuals who have a good home, a caring attitude and a whole lot of aroha.

Fostering a child can be a very rewarding experience for the carers, but most of all, it can really help to turn a child's life around. As you'll see in the graph opposite, many children return home or to whanau care after being fostered through Iosis, and many find homes for life. Whatever the outcome, fostering children gives them a life-changing opportunity to feel safe, secure and loved.



Where children went after Iosis foster care



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Geraldine's story: "I know they're safe for another night."

Geraldine Anderson has been an Iosis foster carer for four years, during which time she and her family have cared for a number of children.

"We love having the children here," she says. "Sometimes it can be challenging, but we know that their behaviour isn't always their fault. When they're in our care, it's so rewarding to know that they're safe for another night – they're well fed, warm and cared for."

As a teacher for the past 20 years, I've understood how resilient kids could be, but now I've seen it first hand. When a child comes, it takes them no time to fit in – they roll with it."

Wondering if foster care is right for you and your family?

If you have a spare room, a caring attitude and a lot of love to give, then please consider becoming a foster carer and giving our tamariki a better start in life. Come along to one of our no-obligation information evenings to find out more:

- 🕒 **17th March – 7-8.30pm at Iosis, 112 Russell Road, Manurewa, Auckland**
- 🕒 **24th March – 7-8.30pm, Cafewindsor, Windsor Park Centre, 550 East Coast Road, Mairangi Bay, Auckland**
- 🕒 **12th May – 7-8.30pm at Iosis, 112 Russell Road, Manurewa, Auckland**

CEO's message



As we welcome in 2020, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported our families over Christmas – your kind gifts touched the lives of many families at a very challenging time of year.

The staff and I look forward to the year ahead as we continue to help families in the South Auckland community to overcome challenges and provide a stable and nurturing home for their families. Recently, we've welcomed new staff members and we continue to be blessed with a dedicated and long-serving staff, such as Glenis Reardon who recently celebrated ten years of service to Iosis.

This year, we also celebrate a number of changes to the sector. The Introduction of National Care Standards is an important and much-needed mandate, which I believe will be truly transformative for both children and their caregivers. These changes are designed to improve the quality of care for tamariki and rangatahi and the support provided to caregivers and we are working with our social workers to implement the first stage of these new standards this year.

We ask God to give strength and courage to our team as they work to help families through their unwavering dedication and expertise – and we look forward to another year of transforming family life, for good.

Tunumafono Tracey-Leigh Peters
CEO

Prayer needs

- 🕉 We pray for our dedicated staff as they embark on a new year of supporting families and helping them overcome tough and complex challenges.
- 🕉 We pray for all of our foster carers as they change children's lives through their care, especially those who are about to embark on their fostering journey.

The new National Care Standards: what this means for Iosis

On 1 July last year, the new National Care Standards came into effect.

Developed by an expert advisory panel from Oranga Tamariki in consultation with children in care, they set out the standard of care that every child and young person needs to do well and be well, and the support caregivers can expect to receive when they open their hearts and homes.

The standards cover a range of things that are vital for tamariki and rangatahi in care, including: supporting them to express their views and develop a life plan; keeping them connected to their whānau; giving them opportunities to participate in their culture; and making sure their education, health and recreation needs are met.

Care agencies have a mandate to help and support carers to change the lives of the children as much as they can, and Iosis will have implemented the first stage by the end of June.

Wendy Barthow, Iosis Practice Development Advisor, is delighted that the needs of children, and their carers, are being recognised and supported. “The new care standards are underpinned by the

understanding that all parties involved in foster care – the social worker and foster carer – are wanting to achieve the best outcome for the child and are working together to achieve this.

For foster carers, it will mean closer support from social workers, as well as on-going training and dialogue to implement a care plan that will benefit the child. Foster carers may be required to do a bit more, to work more closely with the social worker in order to more effectively benefit the child while in their care.”

Wendy says that another beneficial change is the ‘All About Me’ plan for the child in care. “This acknowledges that a child in care can easily lose a sense of who they are, their roots and whanau. Each child will have a plan which accompanies them when they go to a new carer. It will include a memory book of photos and key milestones – in essence their life’s storybook and memory box. So when the child leaves, their story goes with them. This is important in terms of the child connecting with whanau and reconnecting with family.”

Iosis Community Award winners: Dione & Jonathan Read

Every year Iosis recognises the amazing work of someone in the community who goes above and beyond to transform family life.

In 2019, the \$1200 prize was awarded to Dione and Jonathan Read, who were nominated by Iosis Social Worker, Rebekah Marshall.

“I was so delighted when they were selected,” says Rebekah. “They are a truly amazing couple making

such a difference to the lives of the children they care for – two of whom are now in their ‘home for life.’ Foster caring can be challenging, but the Reads have always taken a positive approach. I’m very thankful for their dedication to the children and to Iosis.”



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Merivale: a truly transformative 'safe place' for mothers and children.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, and for mothers who are struggling to cope, Merivale is that village.

A unique, long-term residential programme specifically designed for young and solo mothers who've been impacted by abuse, addiction or neglect, it provides a unique opportunity for the child to remain with mum in a supportive, secure and safe environment – rather than going into care.

Mums stay at Merivale for at least six months with their child or children, learning how to parent, overcome challenges such as alcohol or drug addiction, become independent, and care for their family. The programme includes practical life skills such as parenting, cooking, managing a home, and keeping themselves well.

The staff at Merivale teach and mentor these young mothers as they turn their lives around – it's a wonderful example of the Iosis philosophy of 'transforming family life' at work.

What is Merivale?

- 🌀 A unique, 24/7 residential programme for mothers and their children.
- 🌀 Women often have issues with dependency and/or violent relationships.
- 🌀 Minimum six-month stay, though it can be longer.
- 🌀 A unique, wraparound approach, addressing challenges such as parenting, addiction, and overcoming violence and trauma.

Merivale currently has limited vacancies: if you know of a mother who might qualify for this transformational programme and Oranga Tamariki are involved, please contact Iosis on 269 0050. 🌀

In the spirit of Christmas – thank you!

Our thanks to all of our big-hearted supporters this Christmas.

Eastview Baptist made a donation towards food parcels and toys for Iosis families, while Life Community Trust provided food parcels for families. We also received generous gifts from The Children's Corner in Howick (thank you Diane) and Care-A-Lot in Stanley Point (thank you Michelle). Lastly, our thanks to Robyn Simpson and her family, and Sifa Spellman of the Salvation Army, for the gifts for Merivale. You've all made a huge difference to the families who had something to put on the table and under the tree on Christmas day. Thank you! 🌀

