



## Kia ora

As I write, the social service sector is facing very uncertain times. Small organisations like Iosis, which rely heavily on contracts with government departments, are particularly feeling the strain. One of our primary partners, Oranga Tamariki, is facing budget cuts of \$120 million over the next four years equating to \$30 million annually.

The impact of these cuts is severe and will have far-reaching effects on people throughout New Zealand and of course, on the people we are here to serve – many, many vulnerable families living in South Auckland.

Like many other community agencies, we are actively seeking other sources of funding so we can rely less on government funding, including donations from the

South Auckland business community. Many of their employees benefit from our services, enabling their workforce to be more productive.

The challenge of uncertainty is compounded by the increasing demand for our services, and we're continually searching for innovative ways to deliver more impact, from fewer funds. To this end, we're calling on the generosity of our wider community to step in and help the families in our care (see next article) – so that we can continue to deliver on our crucial mission of transforming family life, for good.



**Tunumafono Tracey-Leigh Peters – CEO**

## How you can help us help families in need

**Life is tough right now for the whānau we work with. Rising living costs and unemployment means that taking care of the basics can be a real struggle. The result is that many families are missing out on attending our life-changing counselling services and parenting programmes, which is compromising their ability to transform family life.**

Pearl, who leads our parenting programmes, has noticed that families are struggling more than ever this winter. "It's hard to get the help you need to strengthen your whānau when you're worried about putting food on the table," she says. "In some cases, parents simply can't afford babysitters, fuel or the bus fare to get to our programmes, which means they're missing out on accessing our services."

"When parents come to Iosis, it's important that they're ready to learn so that they can get the most out of their time with us. This means, being warm and fed, and feeling that they're in a safe space – not worried about the kids, the bills, or how they're going to get home."

Yet accessing our services and programmes is so important for vulnerable families in South Auckland. From our 'Building Awesome Whānau' programme right through to our counselling and mentoring services, these free services teach whānau how to overcome past trauma, resolve conflicts peacefully,

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reduce family violence, develop supportive relationships, and raise happy, confident children.

Iosis CEO, Tracey, is very concerned that struggling families can't access the help they need right now. "Iosis has developed a unique approach that combines experiential learning programmes, practical support and coaching that strengthens family life and leads to lasting change," she says. "We know these services make a difference – and they're free – yet if families can't make it because they can't afford to get here, we can't achieve the impact we need to."

## A little help can go a long way

For that reason, we're reaching out to our wider community to help families with 'the basics' so they can afford to attend our programmes and services. Petrol vouchers, food vouchers, and even activities to keep children occupied while their parents come to our programmes, will all help us transform the lives of South Auckland parents and their tamariki.

Parents like Mana, a mother of four who has worked with one of our social workers for a few years now – and completed several of our programmes. In doing so, she has learnt to break the cycle of abuse, and become a calmer, better parent to her children.

"The Family Resilience programme was awesome!" she enthuses. "Like so many of the participants, I had never experienced anything like that before. Some of the things we shared, I had never shared with anyone." Mana says the programme made her realise the effect of her own upbringing and how it has shaped her. "I had felt really negative for most of my life, but my work with Iosis has changed that," she says. "It made me see my strengths and the positive things about myself. That has been really empowering."

Mana is just one of the hundreds of parents, individuals and families we've helped in the past few years. Please support us so that no other families miss out on our transformative programmes and services.

## Give today to help families this winter

**We're calling on our Iosis community to help whānau in need this winter, so they can continue to attend our vital programmes and services. We're looking for:**

**Help with childcare** – A \$35 donation can help provide a children's care pack, including activity book, colouring pencils, and a snack, so parents can fully focus on learning.

**Help with transport** – A \$45 donation can help purchase a petrol voucher to assist with transport.

**Help with nourishing families** – A \$60 donation can help purchase a supermarket voucher to help nourish families.

**Help with a general donation** to contribute to all of the above.

**Yes, I want to help ensure families can continue to attend Iosis' life-changing programmes and services.**

### I would like to give a gift today of:

- ☐ \$35 for a children's care pack
- ☐ \$45 for a petrol voucher
- ☐ \$60 for a supermarket voucher
- ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### OR I would like to make a monthly gift of:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

on the 1st ☐ or 20th ☐ of each month

**Ngā mihi nui...** thank you for helping us

## Prayer needs

We pray for our Iosis whānau, the families who need additional support during yet another tough winter. And we pray for our staff who already carry a heavy load, which gets even heavier during the colder months. Kia kaha and God bless you all.



# When work and faith go hand in hand

**Diane Crowe has served the local community for many years, both through her work with Iosis and as a member of Manurewa Baptist Church. Today, she is a facilitator of our Toolbox Parenting Programme. “I feel an important part of my Christian faith is to uplift, encourage and support parents to build a stronger family life,” she says.**

“It’s so rewarding witnessing the changes that many parents go through over six weeks as they build their confidence and mana” she enthuses. By combining knowledge, new skills and practical parenting tools, the transformation can be remarkable – both for parents and their children. “When families begin to communicate differently and spend time together in an affectionate, warm and loving way, lives change.”

“Many parents have had difficult upbringings and know no other way of parenting,” explains Diane. She often shares her own story of overcoming an abusive upbringing and marriage, which encourages

participants to realise that change is possible. “They ask me how I did it!”, she says.

One of the most important aspects of her work is encouraging parents to keep going even if they experience a setback. “80% of our behaviour is habitual and it takes time to make changes. We run through the four steps of change in the sessions so they can see the process and the time it takes for new behaviours to become habits.”

As with many Iosis staff, Diane’s work is an extension of her faith. “I’m so thankful to have found this important mahi with families,” she says. “It’s one of the most rewarding things I’ve done.”

## Celebrating Matariki and a new beginning

**Recent Matariki celebrations provided a timely opportunity to put the finishing touches to our new kaupapa Māori framework. Spearheaded by Teina, our kaihautu Māori adviser, this important framework is based on eight ‘pou’ or concepts which guide our staff in their work with whānau Māori.**

Around 50% of Iosis clients are Māori, so this framework provides an organisation-wide model which our staff can use to ensure a consistent approach,” explains Teina. “Training will begin in August to ensure that the framework becomes the model of practice throughout Iosis.

Teina’s experience working on the National Ministerial Task Force proved invaluable in creating the Iosis Māori framework. “I began by interviewing our Māori practitioners to see what strategies they currently use. By refining this and clarifying how we can use the framework to create better outcomes for our clients, we have created something very powerful.”

Trust is critical says Teina. “Our clients put their life in our hands, and we give it back to them stronger than when they came. As with any Whakapapa, they

often carry many layers of burden. Identifying these layers and then peeling them off layer by layer – and teaching our clients how to deal with each of the layers – is a central part of the framework. This approach guides how we get to know them and their story, so we can help them.”

For Iosis staff, the biggest benefit is confidence. “Many of our staff are already working in this way without realising it and doing it every day,” says Teina. “Knowing that they have a framework to fall back on helps build confidence and consistency in our approach.”



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# Building resilience. Restoring families.

**Kate is the lead social worker at the Iosis Whānau Centre. She shares the story of Korrine, a young mother of five children, who recently graduated from the programme, having learned how to create a better, safer life for her children.**

"Our overriding goal for all mums who enter our programme is to leave with their children in their care – and continue to parent them in the community," explains Kate. "Before coming here, Korrine experienced a life of transience, abuse and drugs. Like most of our mums, she had no reference point for what good parenting looks like." The mothers attend daily programmes to learn these skills and Kate checks in weekly, providing additional coaching and support.

Korrine was one of the most driven mothers at the centre says Kate. "She would get up at 5am and get organised for the day. She quickly established a solid routine for the family and most importantly, showed that she really cared about them."

"Everything I've learnt at the Centre has taught me how to be a better parent," agrees Korrine. "Things like having a routine and structure – I had no structure before. Now the younger ones are in bed by 7pm and I have much more time for myself, which has been great."

A key part of Kate's role is as a support person and mentor. "Our weekly catchups provide the mums with one-to-one support," explains Kate. "We discuss what's next, what's going well or not so well, and strategies to deal with any issues."

She also helps to prepare mums to leave the Centre. "There are lots of practical things to organise, but my big focus is on making sure they're emotionally and mentally ready. It's about building resilience and

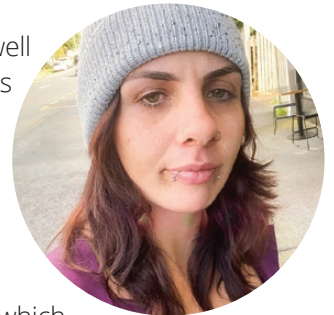
self-worth so they can parent well and not be influenced by others when they leave."

To help achieve this, Kate introduced 'Women of Worth', a free, community-based programme run by Manukau Baptist Church over 10 weeks, which mums can continue to attend after they leave Iosis. Kate says this has been a changemaker because it "builds them up from the inside". Korrine says the programme has helped her so much. "I thought I deserved to have the same life as my mum," she says. "Now I know that's not true."

Kate is incredibly proud of how much Korrine has achieved during her time with Iosis. "She was really focused and has proved herself to be a great parent. Managing five children is not easy, but she has established an effective routine and stability – she has done so well."

Korrine is looking forward to a better life with her young family when she leaves the Centre. "I have dreams now and the belief that I can make them come true. I'm looking forward to this new stage, but I'm very sad to be saying goodbye to the wonderful staff at Iosis. Thank you, my journey here has been incredible."

**You can read Korrine's full story on our website – [iosis.org.nz/story/korrines-story/](https://iosis.org.nz/story/korrines-story/)**



Korrine

## A fond farewell to John

This month, we're sad to say goodbye to John Thrush. John has been an integral member of the Iosis team for over 17 years, facilitating our MenD (Men's Development) programme and our Family Resilience group programme. A popular and personable facilitator, John can be proud to have touched the lives of so many people through his clear, compassionate approach and knowledge. Ngā mihi John from all of us!



**112c Russell Road, Manurewa, Auckland 2102**  
**PO Box 98840, Manukau City, Auckland 2241 T 09 269 0050**  
**E [enquiries@iosis.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@iosis.org.nz) W [iosis.org.nz](https://iosis.org.nz) FB [facebook.com/IosisLtd](https://facebook.com/IosisLtd)**

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Transforming family life  
for good