

“I wanted to be that safe haven”

Jade is a young mum with a creative streak and a keen interest in sports. In December 2022 she graduated from Iosis’s Merivale Whānau Development Centre. She reflects on what life was like before Merivale and how she developed personally and as a parent during her nine-month stay there.



It was Oranga Tamariki who recommended Merivale’s residential parenting programme to Jade. At the time she was striving to maintain custody of her infant daughter and the new baby she was expecting.

“My life was a bit loose. I felt like I could easily walk over the edge. I had triggers that were around me because I was pretty vulnerable at the time,” says Jade.

“Coming from professionals, I could trust what they said. I needed to learn a bit more about myself and how I could take care of my child. I wanted to get my children and be that safe haven for them,” she says.

At Merivale, Jade attended parenting and non-violent communication classes and received counselling. She also learnt about the importance of structure for children’s development and sense of security.

“It’s given me more care in the way I operate my daily relationship with my child. I feel that I can put her first and make her feel important because these structures help me. She’s really attached to me and enjoys my company,” Jade says.

“I am glad that Merivale took me in because now I can say I am sober and drama-free! I am grateful to have this experience because I was in desperate need of a hand to get my life on track. It didn’t look like the prettiest life.”

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A message from our CEO

I've been thinking about Jade's desire to become a safe haven for her children (see page 1). In many ways, Iosis itself seeks to be a safe haven for hurting families. It is a place where they will find non-judgemental love and a listening ear, where they will be respected, and where their strengths, emotions and experiences will be acknowledged. But it is also a place where courageous conversations must be had. This is only possible as we earn their trust.



Tunumafono Tracey-Leigh Peters

This then becomes a safe boundary within which they can find the freedom to learn and explore new ways of living and relating. Within that safe haven they can discover fresh hope for themselves and the generations to come.

The last few years have been ones of turmoil and tension. Realistically, I believe we have more ahead of us. Now more than ever, it is essential that families who are emotionally exhausted, discouraged and struggling can find a safe haven. Now more than ever, parents need to know how to gently and wisely lead and protect their children into tomorrow. Thank you for supporting this work with your prayers and your gifts. Thanks for sharing our vision of future generations of New Zealanders raising strong healthy families.

Tunumafono Tracey-Leigh Peters - CEO

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Jade has some encouraging words of advice for other mums considering Merivale's help.

“The staff are supportive and caring. They are there for you as much as they are for your child. Merivale wants the best for you mums. They'll do anything to help you when you need something. All you have got to do is ask.” ☺

Please help other mums like Jade learn how to become a safe haven for their children by supporting this work with your gift. Go to www.iosis.org.nz/support-us/donate or call 09 269 0050.

Making a clean sweep

When mums graduate from Merivale, they are in almost every way starting afresh. Often this means them finding a new place to live in, away from past harmful influences. Setting up a home can be expensive. That's why we were thrilled to receive a grant from Public Trust –

Helen Stewart Royle Charitable Trust last year, to purchase hygiene kits for mums graduating from Merivale.

Each kit includes a vacuum cleaner and other cleaning tools, plus consumables to keep the home sparkling clean. Jade was the first graduating mum to receive one of the kits.

Prayer needs

We have a number of key roles that are currently vacant. Given that it is a tight labour market, please pray that we will have success finding qualified and experienced people to fill these positions and who will fit well into the Iosis whānau.

Z Good in the Hood

Iosis was fortunate to be selected by two Z service stations, Z Manurewa and Z Roscommon Road, for the Z Energy 'Good in the Hood' programme late last year.

We received almost \$2,000 in December through the programme. The funds were for a baby changing table, cabinet for baby supplies and furniture for our family learning centre.

This building houses our group programmes and our counselling rooms, and so is a busy facility, especially during term times.

Last year was the first time that Iosis had been involved in this community programme, which has been run by Z Energy since 2013. Each of Z's service stations chose four different organisations to support, giving away a total of \$4,000 at every site. Customers who shopped instore were given an orange token with which to 'vote' for their favourite local group.

The money was then split between all participating groups based on the number of votes each

received. In addition to the \$4,000, every Z service station has an additional \$1,000 to be used by local retailers throughout the year to support other neighbourhood initiatives.

We are thankful for all who took the time to vote for us. And we are particularly grateful to Kennerley Retail Investments Ltd (Z Manurewa) and Aiga Energy Ltd (Z Roscommon) and their respective staff for making this opportunity available to us. ☺



Larry Tupai-Lavea of Aiga Energy Ltd

Iosis Community Award

Each year Iosis gives a small cash award to an individual, organisation or project our staff believe benefits the South Auckland community.

In December we selected Sk8 it 4ward. This Waiuku-based charity was started by two 12-year-old girls. Keen skateboarders themselves, Sienna and Bella want to give other children who cannot afford skating gear the opportunity to participate. They collect donated second-hand and new gear, and cash donations, to make this possible.

Much of the equipment has gone to children living in the Randwick Park, Manurewa, community, which has a popular skate park.



Iosis's Wendy Barthow with the Sk8 it 4ward team



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Ngā mihi nui – thank you

Food boxes – a gift of hope

Iosis partners each year with LIFE Community to deliver Christmas Boxes to families. Each box contains enough food to supplement a week's worth of meals for a family of four to six. We delivered 100 boxes last year. Thank you to all who made this possible by donating to our Christmas Box appeal.

Since April 2022, through our partnership with the Papakura Police in the MDCAT team (a cross-agency collaboration

established to respond quickly to family harm situations) we have distributed RRT Food Boxes to several families in crisis. The food boxes are an initiative of Rapid Relief Team and contain emergency staples for a few days until families can get longer-term support. We thank RRT and the Papakura Police for this timely resource for families.



Storing Christmas Boxes, ready for delivery

Recycled charity

We are grateful to St Andrew's Op Shop in Waiuku for a donation towards our work with families, which has come from profits from its retail sales. Northcote Baptist Op Shop is another second-hand goods store that supports our work financially. It's wonderful how people's no-longer-needed items can be sold and then 'recycled' into support for others!

St Andrew's Op Shop assistant manager, Hanna



Storage King

We are thankful to Storage King St Lukes for recent donations of home wares for families Iosis is working with. The items are ones that Storage King clients have either left in their units, or which they have donated specifically for people in need. The relationship with Storage King St Lukes follows similar arrangements with other stores in the group over past years. ☺

Gifts in Kind

If you have a business or business contacts who you think may be able to help with 'gifts in kind', please get in touch. **You can contact us at Ph 09 269 0050 or enquiries@iosis.org.nz.**