

THE advocate

Putting Our Children First

Every child deserves a life free from family violence. Sadly, that is not the reality for many children. They are too often the powerless victims in family violence and exposure to that violence can impact a child's mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. The effects can last a lifetime.

Aviva's Tamariki programme supports children to learn about and understand their experience of family violence, so that they can be supported to overcome its effects. Richard* (nine) and his older brother Anthony* (ten) are just two of the many children who have undertaken the programme, and benefitted from it.

Richard and Anthony were living with their Mum's mother, but it wasn't ideal. Hygiene was an issue; Mum's boyfriend was an ex-gang member, who beat her in front of the boys and threatened and physically intimidated them; the house was full with several other adults and their families and in general the boys weren't getting the attention they needed. Their school alerted Child Youth and Family (CYF) and soon dad Carl*, who had seen his sons every other weekend, became a full-time dad.

At first the brothers always wanted to be together – they were each other's security. But Dad's flat was small and cramped and there was nowhere outside to play. When the boys got angry they would act out, kicking and punching holes in the door and walls.

A CYF worker gave the family a brochure about Aviva and, encouraged by Anthony's teacher, Carl brought the boys in to discuss the Tamariki programme. Anthony first did the group, then Richard after him. "I noticed a difference straight away" says Carl. "They had been uncontrollable at home before. My mum would look after them while I was working but I'd sometimes have to come home to help, or I'd be called to the school to pick one of them up as they were out of control. Now they're calmer. We've had a lot of different help, but I think the programme did them a lot of good – it helped them change their behaviour and attitudes. They have a more controlled way of dealing with things. Even when have their moments, now they can snap out of it. They're just back to being brothers. They're more confident than what they were – they are playing sport for the first time. They've changed 100%."

"They've changed 100%."

Richard finished group at the end of 2014 and says one of his favourite things (as for all of the children who do the Tamariki programme) was the food! But he also enjoyed meeting other kids and talking to them. His highlight was learning about abuse and he became more aware of his own safety and how to keep himself safe (e.g. locking himself in a room; calling 111; going to neighbours for help).

Unless children are named on a Protection Order, they are not funded by the government to undertake the Tamariki programme. For them, access to the programme relies on the generosity of private funders and donors. It costs \$1,427 for a child to undertake a ten-week programme, but that is an investment which can change their life. If you would like to help children like Richard and Anthony towards a better, safer future, please use the slip on the back of this newsletter to make a donation or visit avivafamilies.org.nz.

*Not their real names



**LET'S RAISE CHILDREN WHO
WON'T HAVE TO RECOVER
FROM THEIR CHILDHOODS.**
- Pam Leo

Image courtesy of Dreamstime



Peer Support Specialist, Paul Scott

Inspiring Change Through Lived Experience

It took a while to find him, but we finally did – our first male Peer Support Specialist! Welcome to Paul Scott, who joins our two other Peers in supporting others on their longer-term journey of change (and special thanks to the Todd Foundation for funding Paul’s position for two years).

Paul has a background of men’s group participation and community building. He was a foundation board member for the Canterbury Men’s Centre and still keeps in touch with their work. Paul believes that he and other men all have the potential to contribute to community health and connectedness.

Paul recently graduated from the Aviva Purposeful Peer Support training course and so is now available to receive peer referrals for men. Peer support connects people who have overcome the effects of using or experiencing family violence with others still on that path. It is a personalised service, because every person’s journey away from violence is unique to them.

If you know of a man who would like longer-term support with a focus on moving towards a more fulfilling life, free of violence, please contact Paul on paul@avivafamilies.org.nz or by calling 0800 AVIVA NOW. We invite you to make self-referrals too – the forms are available on our website, avivafamilies.org.nz.

Creating Violence-Free Families

Every day at Aviva we are privileged to see children, women and men change their lives for the better. We want to ask you to be part of their journey, and ours.

Our annual appeal week runs from 11th – 17th May, coinciding with International Day of the Family on the 15th of May. Unfortunately our regular street appeal has become less profitable over the years, but we hope that you and other members of our generous community will still get behind Aviva.

Only 45% of our funding comes from government contracts and we need to generate more than \$1 million from other sources each year to keep our services running. That means we need your support more than ever to support those who are on their journey to overcome family violence. Maybe you could enlist some friends, colleagues or family to help you do that!

- Run a fun fundraising event – small or large – with your friends or colleagues. It could be as simple as a mufti day, dinner with friends who all offer a donation, or a car wash
- Issue a challenge to others in your family, workplace or group to see who can raise the most money
- Make a donation to Aviva personally or on behalf of your business/group/team. You can find how to do this at: avivafamilies.org.nz/Get-Involved/Donations
- Gift goods or services that we can gift to clients or use for fundraising.

If you are interested in supporting Aviva but the timing of our Appeal Week does not suit you, please choose any time that works for you – we love (and need) your support all-year round!

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’”

Fred Rogers

How your donation can help:

- \$20 helps fund our driving service to collect children for their weekly group programme and return them to school
- \$25 buys an emergency cellphone for clients at high risk
- \$50 will ensure the 24-hour phone line is answered during the night
- \$70 buys a personal alarm
- \$150 buys morning tea for children’s group for a term
- \$500 can provide five weeks of family violence education for men who are overcoming violence
- \$1,427 enables a child or woman to undertake a life-changing 10-week education programme

Thanks for all your help so far – last year 1,600 children, women and men needed support, and got it, thanks to you. Can you help others to make the journey away from violence this year?



We've Got an Irresistible Proposition...

... And it will make it far easier for people in Christchurch to access support for their safety, wellbeing and health!

Aviva is leading an innovative new project which will see a small group of leading social services enhance your support for children and their families. Along with Barnardos, Family Help Trust, He Waka Tapu and START, we plan to offer our services from a new purpose-built space on the first floor of Eastgate Shopping Centre in Linwood by late 2015.

Our shared vision is effectively a family and community wellbeing centre. Children and their families will be able to access a broad range of specialist yet integrated support services in one place, and our agencies will benefit by sharing knowledge, office resources, and avoiding duplication, all of which makes your support much more effective.

"The children, women and men who use our services often face a number of health and social challenges at any one time" says Aviva CEO, Nicola Woodward. "By co-locating we will significantly reduce that complexity."

Eastgate Shopping Centre is in the heart of the eastern suburbs, a relatively central site that is a public

transport hub, close to schools and the marae. Families will also be able to access a broad range of other on-site services including microfinance and budgeting assistance, primary health care and public library resources which are already located in the space. The Red Cross Outreach Services and Community Transport team will also operate from the site. Staff from government agencies will also be invited to 'hot-desk' (working at any available work station) within the space in order to provide as much resource as possible from the Centre.

Mayor Lianne Dalziel is amongst those who endorse the project. "The ability to bring together so many child and family wellbeing services is another wonderful example of our willingness to change and challenge the norm, and I think it will be a great benefit to our whole community" she says.

Better Health is leading the establishment of primary health care services on the same floor of the Centre. "With our social service partners now joining us there is a collective service offering that really speaks to holistic individual and family wellbeing, and that's unique in New



Image courtesy of Canva

Zealand" agrees Managing Director David Jones.

Well over half the required funds have been secured through generous support from New Zealand Red Cross, the Christchurch City Council Earthquake Mayoral Relief Fund, the Wayne Francis Trust and the Working Together More Fund. Business transformation and change consultancy Sysdoc have also donated significant pro bono process and change services.

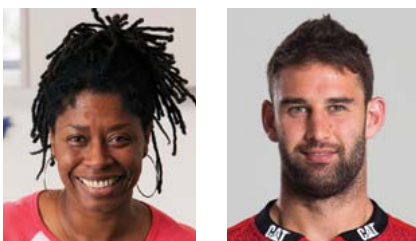
If you would like to find out more about the project, or how you can support it, please contact Julie@avivafamilies.org.nz

Simply Scrummy – a Foodie/Rugby Showdown!

We'll be warming up winter in July with some foodie fun with our fabulous ambassador Jax Hamilton (MasterChef runner-up 2011 and local cooking queen!), and new Crusader Billy Guyton!

Jax and some helpers will square off against Aviva supporter Billy, who is enlisting some mates to help him out for a great evening involving a cook-off and fun interview sessions. Who

will cook the best steak? Who is most deft of hand with an icing bag?! The evening will be a chance to meet the vivacious Jax and new Crusader Billy, who has enlisted Mark Ranby (Crusaders' Professional Development Manager and former All Black) and another mystery team mate to join him in a foodie face-off! There will be some great donated auction items to bid on and, of course, an opportunity to socialise! Plus, it's a great chance to support Aviva and all of the people who use our services. We hope you will be able to join us!



Jax Hamilton and Billy Guyton

What:
Simply Scrummy

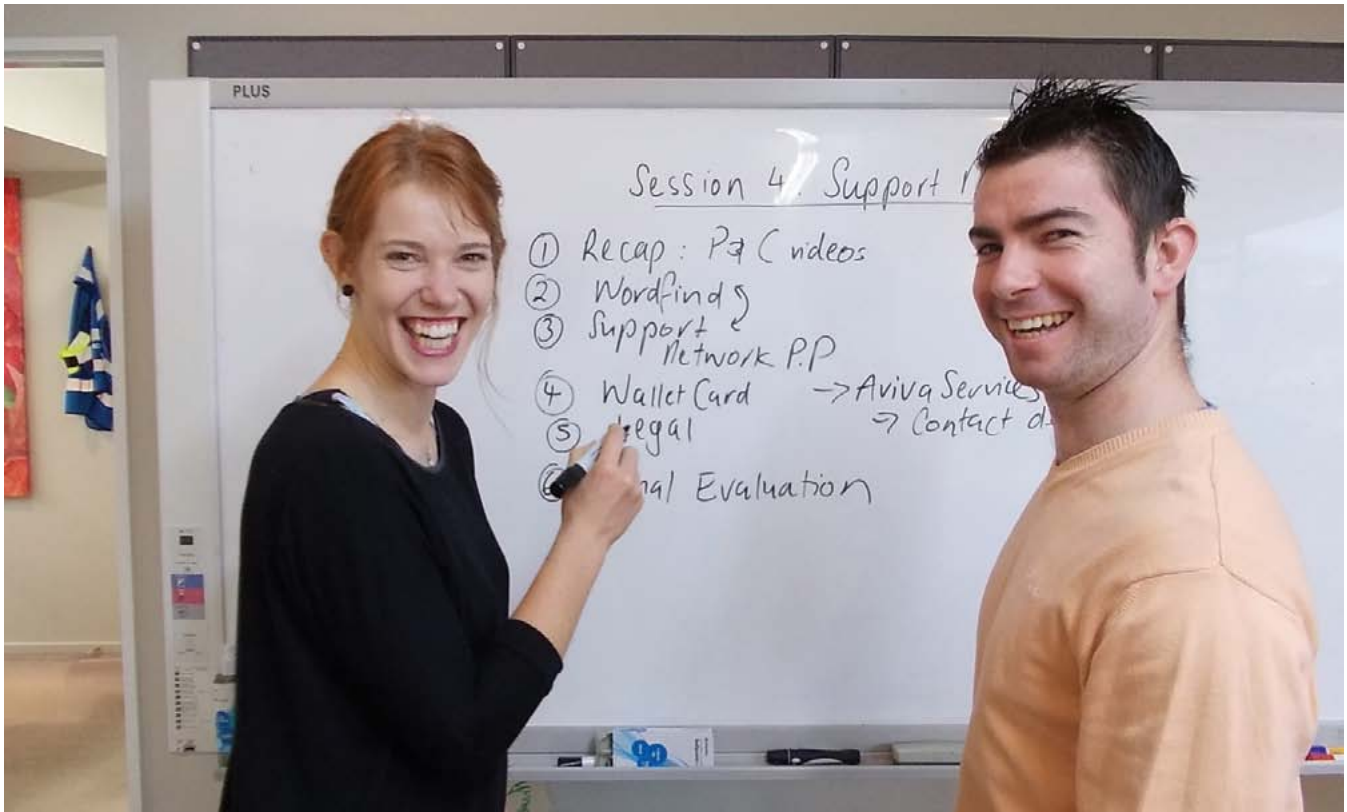
Where:
Addington Raceway, Silks Room

When:
Thursday 9 July, 5:30 kick-off – 8:30

Tickets:
\$45 each; a portion of each ticket price goes to Aviva. Your ticket includes a free drink on arrival; canapes; and a goodie bag.

Get your tickets through Eventbrite or visit avivafamilies.org.nz.

Billy's image courtesy of Canterbury Rugby



Aviva's part-time Youth Worker, Vivienne Homewood and ReachOut Family Support Worker, Darragh Fahy

Growing Healthy Relationships

Video games, music videos, social media, peer pressure... there are so many things that make it hard for young people to understand what behaviour is OK in the relationships they experience and form, and what is not.

One area where there seems to be real potential to make a positive change that can improve the future of young people is by supporting them to develop healthier relationships – whether with family, friends or potential partners. With support from the Dublin St Trust, Aviva has been working with Year 9 or 10 classes from Christchurch Boys High School, Lincoln High School and Catholic Cathedral Grammar to trial a 'healthier relationships' programme for young people 13-15 years old. The programme has been based on research and investigations of other support services for young people, to avoid duplication, as well as focus groups with high school students.

Aviva's part-time Youth Worker, Vivienne Homewood, supported by our newest ReachOut Family Support Worker, Darragh Fahy, has designed the programme as general education and awareness around healthy and

unhealthy relationships, family violence, and building and maintaining positive support networks. Each of the three sessions has a focus for discussion and activities, including gender stereotypes, different kinds of violence and abuse, myths about family violence, power and control, and student wellbeing.

Christchurch Boys High School was the first school to experience the programme and the feedback from the Year 10 class that participated helped shape its delivery in the other two schools. "After some creative thinking we came up with sessions filled with lots of small group activities, getting them moving around and drawing pictures of themselves, watching videos etc," says Vivienne. "The response was AMAZING. We had engaged kids. They were asking questions, being attentive, giving thoughtful answers and even said 'thank - you' afterwards. It's been an

absolute privilege to be representing Aviva in a programme that I am really passionate about and believe has the potential to have a big impact on some young people's lives."

The pilot has now been completed and response from all three schools has been great. "We had high levels of engagement and lots of questions" says Viv. "There was particular interest in the variety of forms family violence could take. The kids were quite overwhelmed by that, and the statistics around it."

The facilitators made themselves available after each session, as well as by email and phone, and promoted the use of school counsellors for any issues that the sessions might have raised for the students.

The programme will be evaluated over the next few months and, in the future, we hope to make the Aviva Youth Programme available to all Canterbury high schools.

When a Phone Line Becomes a Lifeline

For two out of every six weeks, Debra Vincent spends her day reading police reports about family violence; it's not the way most people would choose to spend their day.

Debra joined Aviva at the start of 2015, and a focus of her Family Support Worker role here is to follow up on the police reports ('POLs') Aviva receives on a roster. During our two-week POLs period, Debra attempts to respond to approximately 300 reports, calling the women who required that Police intervention and, if phone contact is not possible, sending them letters to offer Aviva's support. For many, that contact can change their life; for some, it might even save it.

The POLs are ranked by Police as high, medium or low risk based on a range of factors including the issuing of a Police Safety Order; whether there have been other occurrences of violence in the family; the presence of weapons; gang connections; whether there are children who might be at risk; or pregnancy.

Police tell women that an agency will be calling them after an incident. "Just getting them on the other end of phone is hard" she says. "Often the number is wrong and you're chasing numbers. I'm constantly talking to voicemail as people avoid the call. When you do get through, at first people can be defensive – I have to talk quickly to get my spiel across. I tell them 'I'm only here to offer you this' – and then it's fine. Often they don't want support* but they

"If there is even one person that I've talked to and it has helped them, then I'm happy with that."

Debra Vincent

Aviva Family Support Worker



Family Support Worker, Debra Vincent

are interested in what Aviva is and does. It's not easy, but I do enjoy it – every story is different and the women appreciate that someone is there and concerned about them."

Debra has to balance her workload carefully to ensure that she is available to focus on POLs for two out of six weeks. She ensures that she sees all of her clients prior to the POL period, and then takes a break from face-to-face client work (where feasible) in that time. After the POL period, she continues to follow up on any outstanding reports and resumes seeing clients, providing them with family violence education, support and advocacy with other organisations or services, such as lawyers.

Debra has been involved in family violence work for five years, volunteering at Otautahi Women's

Refuge at first, then eventually working there. It can be tough, but it has a personal resonance for Debra which makes her passionate about her work. "I am a survivor of family violence, from a relationship long ago, but I never knew about women's refuges and domestic violence then – I thought it was a normal thing. To know that there are women, and men, who want to help, educate others and stop family violence overwhelmed me. I believe very strongly in keeping a family together if you can do that safely and that's what I love about Aviva – it's about family, not just about women. I'm not here to 'save' anybody but if there is even one person that I've talked to and it has helped them, then I'm happy with that."

* Approximately 25% of women contacted via POLs become agency clients.

Can you support brave children whose lives have been touched by family violence? We need volunteers to drive children to and from our Tamariki education group every Wednesday during term time. Pick up is 8.15–9.30am and drop off 11.30-1pm; you can do either, or both. Aviva vehicles are available and you'll need a full clean driver's license and a clear Police record. **Call 0800 28482 669 to find out more.**

Thanks to our Supporters

As always, we're so lucky to have lots of wonderful people to thank for their support over the last few months. We literally couldn't do it without you all.

Thanks to our recent funders:

- Air Rescue Services – contributing to rent and electricity
- Christchurch Earthquake Appeal Trust – supporting Shine safe@home security upgrades
- Christchurch Earthquake Recovery Trust – contributing to Family Support Worker wages
- Lion Foundation – contributing to Family Support Worker wages
- Pub Charity – contributing to frontline staff wages
- Mainland Foundation – contributing to rent
- Trusts Community Foundation – contributing to telephone costs

Thanks also to some other great supporters for their generous gifts of goods, time and/or money:

- Blakely Pacific
- Canterbury Scientific Ltd
- Inland Revenue
- Kiwi Joinery Installation
- North Canterbury Victim Support
- Scenic Hotels
- St Marks School
- Sysdoc

There are many more of you out there who have supported us over the last few months, and much longer. We can't mention every one of you by name – please forgive us and know that the children, women and men you've supported on their journey away from family violence really appreciate all the support you give to them, through us. Every bit of your generosity contributes to improving someone's life in some way, so



Santa's Grotto at Aviva

THANKS to all our supporters for taking action.

Receive the Advocate by Email

Please help us reduce costs by choosing to receive The Advocate by email. Contact julie@avivafamilies.org.nz or call (03) 378 3847

Like us on Facebook

Aviva Families and Reach-Out Canterbury have Facebook pages. Check us out and 'Like' us to keep up to date on what each service area is doing and to share your thoughts with us.



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Charities Commission Number CC 30026

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