

STORIES FROM OUR MEMBERS

Catholic Social Services
Christchurch
**Participative
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Catholic Social Services
Wellington
**Game On Parenting
Programme for Dads**

TOOLS FROM OUR TEAM

Learn about NZCCSS'
Top Tools that we use to
support our mahi day-to-
day

MEET OUR TEAM

Learn more about our
Kaitātari Kaupapa Here
Matua Senior Policy
Advisor Mel

EYES ON THE ELECTION

Insights and perspectives
from our members as we
approach Election 2023

**Post Pay Apps increasing
debt and poverty**

**Community response to
Cyclone Gabrielle**



New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

ISSUE FOCUS: NEW THINKING &
FRESH APPROACHES



Kete Kupu

M A T A R I K I 2 0 2 3



NZCCSS UPDATE

Nau mai ngā hua Welcome all things that have grown
Nau mai ngā pai Welcome all things that are good
Nau mai kia nui May they be plentiful and abundant!
Kia hāwere ai

from our
Kaiwhakahaere Matua
Nikki Hurst



Across Aotearoa, preparations to celebrate Matariki are in full swing. The above kaikōhau (an expression of hope) has been offered as a way to share your intentions for the coming season. Here at NZCCSS we are grateful for Matariki as a time of reflection, celebration and connection – Matariki Hunga Nui, Matariki Ahunga Nui, Matariki Manako Nui. We feel particularly connected to the theme of this years Matariki – Matariki Kāinga Hokia, Matariki calls you home – as we experience welcomes and farewells in our worlds both personal and professional.

Looking back across the year, we want to acknowledge those who lost loved ones, and for whom this is a time of healing and replenishment. Returning to whānau will include acknowledging those that are no longer physically with us, and the sense of loss and grief that we never fully heal from. We offer our prayers of support and aroha to those for whom this resonates.

For us here at the secretariat we will be reflecting with gratitude on the relationships that we had with staff that have moved on across the last year. We acknowledge the long service, commitment and change generated by Rosemary Taylor and Bo Liu. We hope that they are enjoying time with their whānau and know that their mahi with us continues to hold immense value.

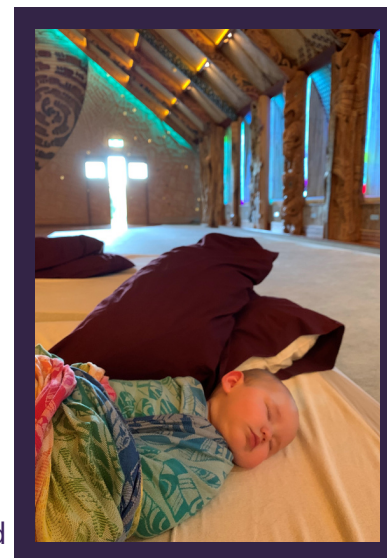
Similarly, but with celebration for and excitement with, we acknowledge Kore Hiakai becoming a stand-alone entity. It has been an immense privilege to host Kore Hiakai across the last three years, and we couldn't be happier for them as Kai Rawa Trust emerges into the world. We know that they will continue to thrive and flourish as they strive for a food secure Aotearoa.

We also celebrate and give thanks for the expansion of our core team here at NZCCSS. We welcome the Mackenzie-Hamlin and Sanders whānau, and an

addition to the Mackay whānau with the arrival of baby Evelyn (spot her in the picture below, taken during our recent stay on Te Kotahitanga Marae). We know that our staff bring their whole whānau with them, and that being with us often takes them away from being with them. We are deeply grateful that the team make this work and reiterate our commitment to them - that their whānau are always welcome in the spaces that we occupy, be it a cheeky smile in the back of a teams call, in person during a hui, a shared lunch outside of the tari or in the flexibility of time to make mahi and family fit.

As we seek to deepen our connections over this special time, we look back to our recent Marae hui, and are grateful for the opportunity to focus on our response to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in such an enriching space. For me, the stay on Te Kotahitanga Marae has many layers – it was an opportunity to re-connect to a Marae with which I have my own connections to, it was an opportunity for the secretariat and Council to more fully connect and most of all, it was a chance for us all to give voice to the next steps open to us as we seek to honour the articles of Te Tiriti.

Lastly as Matariki is a time of fresh thinking, we would love to hear more from you, our readers, in relation to the fresh thinking you see in your own worlds. Kete Kupu is the place we share our stories, our learnings and the things we value. We mihi to those who have shared in this edition, and hope that others may be inspired to share theirs.



Baby Evelyn enjoying her time at Te Kotahitanga Marae. .

Want to share your story? Email: comms@nzccss.org.nz

OUR MAHI

An update on the work of our
Policy Groups and secretariat

NZCCSS represents more than 230 member organisations providing a range of community, health and social support services across Aotearoa. Our mahi is focused on supporting our members to serve New Zealanders, on giving a voice to those in need and on ensuring that voice is put before the decision makers of this country. We do this through advocacy, collaboration, research, perspective sharing and education.

Our work is focused in three policy areas - Children and Families, Equity and Inclusion, and Older People. For each area, we have a specialist, collaborative working group made up of leaders of service organisations from across the country working with our secretariat (NZCCSS employees) to provide up-to-date knowledge of experiences and need in their communities - our Policy Groups. These groups have all spotted gaps within their policy areas and so have agreed particular areas of focus over the next three years.

Children and Families: Wellbeing of Tamariki 5-12 years old

The issue this Policy Group has spotted is: a gap in focused policy and support for children that are 5-12 years old, contrasting with the 'early years' and 'youth' populations as audiences of current interest to government and the wider sector.

One thing we are doing to address this is: researching, writing and publishing an environmental scan report to better understand what support currently exists specific to this age group (e.g. funding / expertise/ resources/ research / organisations). Due out late 2023 / early 2024.

Our aim for this work is: that the unique needs of tamariki aged 5-12 are better understood and prioritised within government policy, funding (government and philanthropic) and the wider social sector.

Equity and Inclusion: Tax and the Economy

The issue this Policy Group has spotted is: the lack of accessible public education, awareness and understanding about the taxation system, including its purpose and its outcomes, which leads to a lack of informed kōrero locally and nationally, and ultimately an unfair system.

One thing we are doing to address this is: collating accessible explainers which make broader statements about economics and tax, as well as building on existing policy work to include more analysis of government policies through the lens of economics and tax.

Our aim for this work is: that the understanding of the role of tax across Aotearoa is strengthened, and that more equitable economic models are investigated, explored and shared to raise public awareness.

Older People: Structural Ageism

The issue this Policy Group has spotted is: that many of the issues relating to the provision of services to older New Zealanders can be traced back to lack of prioritisation of older persons' needs and that this is because of system ageism which undervalues the needs of older people.

One thing we are doing to address this is: researching, writing and publishing a report which explores the context of older people in Aotearoa, written as an easy and accessible guide for anyone to read, highlighting what currently exists to support older people in this country and what changes are required now and in the future. *Te Kōrero mō ngā Kaumātua* will launch in July 2023.

Our aim for this work is: that the unique needs of older New Zealanders are better understood, seen as valid, and prioritised within government policy, all funding streams, and the wider social sector.

PARTICIPATIVE SOCIAL SERVICES

A conversation with Catholic
Social Service's Christchurch
manager Luis Arevalo

BY KARLA SANDERS

CSS, the social outreach agency of the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch, has been providing free professional social services for over 60 years. Their mission is to ensure that everyone has access to free and accessible support. CSS takes a holistic approach by offering a range of services, including counselling, food bank assistance, group courses, budgeting and advocacy, and child and family psychology services.

What is new in how CSS is offering support in Christchurch?

The practise philosophy Catholic Social Services (CSS) has been implementing since October 2022 is one of Participatory Social Services. A philosophy that requires listening to the needs of the community and, where possible, delivering to those needs and outcomes. It requires in-depth discussions with communities, and an understanding that the outcomes are invariably qualitative in nature that can have generational impacts.

Psychologists in Schools

Recognising the importance of addressing mental health concerns among school-age children, CSS introduced the Psychologists in Schools programme in October 2022. This was in response to feedback from schools showing significant need as well as difficulty accessing these services through other channels. With around 20 schools involved, CSS are exploring expanding this programme into Kaikoura and the West Coast.

Surprisingly, Luis shared that "finding psychologists has actually been fantastically smooth" and that this has allowed them to engage psychologists that 'understand the vision of participatory Social Services and who are structurally focused'. The impact of these services extends beyond individual students, as they have the potential to create positive generational change.

What's next?

Learning Support Assessments

CSS has been actively consulting with schools and engaging with principals to identify what other needs exist. This has led to discussion around the need for support with learning assessments, particularly as offering this service through the normal channels can be enormously cost prohibitive and the delay in accessing these can have a massive impact on both enjoyment and achievement.

Support Workers for Older People

Luis has a background in Social Work with Older people and understands how lonely they can be even in urban areas. He sees the opportunity for older people to have a support worker based on feedback from different parishes across two meetings. Support workers could facilitate connection to services, whether this is day-to-day needs or simply a connection.

ELECTION 2023 INSIGHTS

A series of opinion pieces written
by our members

In the lead-up to Election 2023 in October, NZCCSS will be posting a series of blogs written by our members, tied together with threads of hope and optimism for how Aotearoa might change in the near future. We want to inform readers about what our members are seeing out there in their communities, and also suggest innovative solutions for positive systemic and individual change.

We're featuring two of these pieces as part of this issue of Kete Kupu, and in the coming weeks you'll be able to find more on our website and in our monthly e-newsletter, Policy Watch.

Thank you to all our members who have taken the time to share their thoughts as part of this series.

POST PAY PURCHASES

Insight from Fraser Kerse, The Salvation Army

As we approach the election during a significant cost-of-living crisis, many whānau are having to turn to debt-inducing post pay apps, such as Afterpay, Laybuy and Zip, for the basic necessities of life.

It could even be suggested that Work & Income NZ has been complicit in creating a culture of post payment paralysis through the provision of various grants that create a debt against the individual.

The increasing poverty line in Aotearoa New Zealand should be a major concern to communities, government, and parliament alike. The results are numerous: difficulty for whānau to obtain the essentials of living, worsening mental health, inability to access health services which negatively impacts physical health. It can also lead to entrenched intergenerational poverty which is very difficult to break out of.

A concern for Aotearoa is the growing number of whānau living in poverty having to resort to post pay payments.

Once the favoured purchase method of the financially independent, more people are now caught in a cycle of post pay use as the rising poverty line ensnares those on benefits, minimum wage and low incomes. While post pay services can be convenient and an effective way to manage finances, there are concerns that arise from the misuse of them such as: over-spending, late fees, penalties, and debt accumulation.

As each political party presents its policy and positional statements, I hope that deep consideration will be given to how they can truly assist people to have hope- not just survival - but hope of a prosperous future where the financial position of whānau is flourishing, leading to better outcomes for each generation.

There's no easy answer to this issue. It will require a mixed approach, including the lifting of base benefit rates and minimum wage, as well as encouraging the living wage as a baseline for employers. There may need to be further targeted relief packages for those affected. Clearer, tighter regulation of post pay providers should be a key feature as well as the retailers that allow their use. The provision of support to enable whānau to access to essential services, job training and upskilling, will help people flourish.

Everyone living in Aotearoa New Zealand should be able to afford to live well, without material hardship that results in the need to use debt-inducing apps and practices. This country could be one where all are able to obtain what they need without having to enter into debt.

As we consider who we'll cast our vote for in this election, my hope is that everyone will fully engage with each political party to truly understand what they will do to work together with community in alleviating the financial pressures that people are facing, thereby avoiding the use of post pay and other debt ensnaring products.

CYCLONE GABRIELLE: A CATALYST FOR POLICY CHANGE

Insight from Sarah Mulcahy, Anglican Care

As we face another election the lens through which I look at the world has shifted dramatically. This year when I consider how I will place my vote I will be remembering the devastation caused by cyclone Gabrielle and the ways in which our community and government agencies did or did not respond.

Cyclone Gabrielle left a lasting impact on Aotearoa, both in terms of physical devastation and the need for policy re-evaluation. It serves as a stark reminder of the growing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. As the nation recovers from the aftermath, it is crucial to recognise the opportunity that arises amidst adversity. The cyclone has underscored the importance of community resilience and the need to empower communities through policy reforms.

The cyclone revealed vulnerabilities in our infrastructure, particularly in drainage systems, flood protection, and disaster response preparedness. I have faith that with effective governance and sound policies, New Zealand can build a more resilient and sustainable future.

To ensure the long-term prosperity of Aotearoa and the well-being of all of us, we must prioritise several critical measures: strengthening infrastructure, improving disaster response capabilities, mitigating climate change, and engaging communities. In planning for the future, it is crucial for our nation to embrace te ao Māori perspective, which emphasises holistic well-being and the interconnectedness of people with the natural world.

Policies must prioritise local iwi and hapū in land-use planning, decision-making processes, and restoration efforts. Policies ensuring mātauranga Māori is a key part of rebuilding a resilient future is essential for all generations. Such policies will align preparedness, response, and recovery with Māori values, cultural practices, and the principles of kaitiakitanga over the land and natural resources.

Our experience during cyclone Gabrielle highlighted the importance of marae for the whole community. They provided a place of safe refuge, bringing communities together and provided a pathway to deeper understanding for many who experienced being on a marae for the first time. The manaakitanga shown to us all was, and continues to be, unwavering.

The failure of communication networks during the cyclone and immediate days afterwards hampered the response and was a risk to life. By integrating technology and local knowledge, we need to establish efficient communication channels to alert communities about impending risks. Where are the policies that will support this to happen?

Policy changes are needed that can facilitate the support to community-based organisations that play a vital role in disaster response and recovery. Organisations such as those who are members of NZCCSS will always respond. We cobble together and work with whatever we have to serve the community. Another policy change required is the establishment of quick, responsive funding mechanisms to empower our organisations, allowing us to coordinate relief efforts with government agencies and partner with others to assist those impacted.

Strengthening social safety nets, providing financial assistance, and developing robust support systems for vulnerable communities are essential. Policies that ensure equitable access to resources, health-care, and emergency services can help reduce the disproportionate impact of extreme weather events on our most marginalised populations. Such policy changes should address the social and economic dimensions of community resilience.

As we go to the polls and select those who will govern our nation, spare a moment to think about cyclone Gabrielle and to consider what policies are going to sustain our communities into the future. I will be!

GAME ON- SUPPORT FOR DADS BY DADS

A conversation with Catholic
Social Service's Wellington
Kaiarahi Kamau Holland

BY KARLA SANDERS

Parenting can often feel overwhelming. However, there are programmes like 'Game On' that offer hope and support to fathers, helping them strengthen their relationships with their children. Developed over 15 years ago by Mike Tonks in Dunedin, this men's parenting program has become an important connection for dads in Wellington, thanks to the efforts of Catholic Social Services (CSS) in partnership with Greenstone Doors Charitable Trust.

Recognising the need for father-focused parenting programs, Game On provides a unique and intentional support pathway for dads, by dads. This 6-week program is designed to empower fathers to positively impact their children's lives, asking them the fundamental question, "Who do I want to be as a dad?"

Using an inclusive approach, Game On embraces diversity and welcomes men of all backgrounds and parenting experiences. This creates a supportive environment for growth and learning, where dads can share their wisdom and perspectives.

What does it cover?

Game On covers topics like diet, discipline (including self-discipline), and conflict resolution. The programme encourages participants to reflect on their reactions and emotions, fostering healthier ways of navigating challenging situations. By delving into the complexities of parenthood, Game On helps dads uncover new insights about themselves and their relationships. It also creates pathways to other support or education with one of the participants currently training to be a facilitator.

"I just don't lose my s... any more. I have a plan to manage that."

Reflection from a dad on the programme

"What impressed me about the workshop was the diversity of the dads who attended it, the age difference – from early twenties to late 60's and with a wide variety of parenting and life experience. Men I believe are quite solitary beings – we have a lot of acquaintances and few close friends and even with those we do not have the real deep and helpful discussions that I participated in at the workshop."

Duncan-Facilitator

Impact

Duncan, a dedicated facilitator of Game On, highlights the diversity and varied life experiences of the participating dads, emphasising the isolating nature of modern masculinity. However, through Game On, these men find comfort, deep connections, and a safe space to explore their beliefs and values.

For many men who have participated in Game On, the experience has been truly transformative. The program provides valuable support and facilitates open and honest discussions, which profoundly affect their approach to parenting.

"I now have different ideas about what good parenting looks like, and know now the kind of dad I want to be. Not only that but I've got a plan for how I can be that dad for my kids."

Looking to the Future

The success of Game On has inspired its creator, Mike Tonks, to begin development on a Level 2 course, demonstrating the programme's commitment to ongoing growth and support for dads and their families. Kamau Holland is proud to be involved with the Game On approach and cares deeply about programmes for men being an important element to support offered in communities.

MEET THE TEAM

A conversation with NZCCSS'
Kaitātari Kaupapa Here Matua,
Senior Policy Analyst Mel Wilson

How long have you been part of the NZCCSS team?

I joined NZCCSS in February 2022, so I've been in the role 18 months now.

What drew you to apply for the role?

After having my fourth daughter I took some time to consider what next workwise and was interested in the policy space. I really liked that this role combines some of the skills I'd developed in my previous work (research, writing, project management) with the areas I am passionate about – social justice and the community. I have a faith background and really love that NZCCSS brings various denominations together around the vision of a just and compassionate society.

As Kaitātari Kaupapa Here Matua, Senior Policy Analyst, Mel provides policy and research expertise to identify and analyse social issues and their impacts to inform our lobbying, advocacy, communications and research.

What other roles have you had?

I originally worked in research and project management for a New Zealand IT firm – I was hired because I'd studied French and Spanish and could research in those areas. That role led to project management work in the not for profit sector, a space I was more interested in. I was fortunate to be a member of the founding team at the Spark Foundation, and then helped to set up the Taranaki Foundation (formerly Te Karaka Foundation) when we moved to Taranaki. Following that I helped to set up the Mentoring Foundation of NZ, which is focused on mentoring for leaders in the community sector.

What other work do you do?

I have four daughters and they keep me pretty busy...I also volunteer in a few spaces in our community.

If you had a magic wand, what would you make happen tomorrow?

I'd use a magic wand to alleviate poverty and social isolation...

Ko Pirongia te maunga
Ko Waikato te awa
No Kirikiriroa ahau
Kei Ngāmotu tōku kainga
inaianeī
Ko Wilson tōku whānau
Ko Jared tōku tane
Ko Annabelle ratou, ko
Emily, ko Kate, ko Olivia
taku tamahine
Ko Mel Wilson tōku ingoa



What's been your biggest highlight since joining NZCCSS?

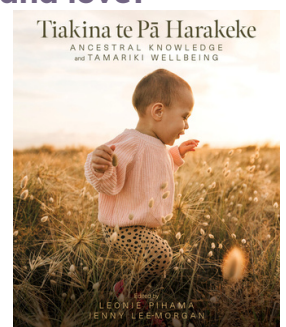
I really enjoy the conversations we have with people across our membership. It's incredibly inspiring to learn about the great work going on across the sector, and even more so, the compassion people working in this sector have and the knowledge and ideas they hold

What do you love to do when you're not working?

Socialise – I love hanging out with my friends and our families over a meal. As a family we love tramping on the Maunga or heading to the beach – the benefits of living in Taranaki is that you can do both in one day. I also really enjoy pottery, was one of the many Kiwis who picked up sourdough breadmaking during the lockdowns and am happiest when I have a good book in hand.

What's a fresh approach or new way of thinking that you've recently discovered and love?

I'm currently researching what knowledge and support exists relating to 5-12 year olds in Aotearoa and have come across a book I'm really enjoying reading: [Tiakina Te Pā Harakeke](#).



What energises you?

Connections energise me – I enjoy getting to know new people, and making connections between people I know

How will you be observing Matariki?

Weather permitting, we will get outdoors for a tramp or bike ride and then catch up with friends for a meal.

What's your go-to karaoke song?

Singing is not a strength of mine...it's quite hard to resist belting out Living on a Prayer by Bon Jovi though.

OUR TOP TOOLS

Tips & tools from our team around tools or resources they use every day that you might find helpful.

Child Impact Assessment Tool

The Child Impact Assessment (CIA) Tool is designed to improve the wellbeing of children and young people by supporting the policy-making process of government and non-government organisations.

It enables users to assess:

- the impact of a policy on children and young people's wellbeing and rights
- the extent to which a policy or law aligns with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Tool was created in response to a recommendation from the United Nations in 2011 challenging the government to integrate the views of children and young people in decision-making.

Click [HERE](#) to find out more about the Child Impact Assessment (CIA) Tool

**Kaitātari Kaupapa Here Matua,
Senior Policy Analyst Mel Wilson**



Ara Tohu

Ara Tohu is a tenancy advice website which often contains more easily accessible tenancy information than Tenancy Services.

It is accessible but still provides links to applicable legislation to ensure clarity and accuracy. I use it to research tenancy law and direct tenants to so they can research their rights and obligations.

**Kaitātari Kaupapa,
Policy Analyst Hamish Jarvie**



Click [HERE](#) to visit Ara Tohu

Beehive Press Releases

My favourite thing to check in on is the Beehive Press Releases. I often spot wee gems that are interesting / important or could otherwise be missed.

Click [HERE](#) to view the Beehive's press releases

**Kaiwhakahaere Matua,
Executive Officer Nikki Hurst**



Ngā Tūtohu Wellbeing Data

This website shows data which measures social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing in Aotearoa. It provides a big picture view with data that is more up-to-date than the previous census, while we await new census data.

**Kaitātari Kaupapa Here Matua,
Senior Policy Analyst Rachel Mackay**



Click [HERE](#) to explore Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa Wellbeing Indicators

ANNUAL HUI

The Council and Secretariat spent two days together at Te Kotahitanga Marae at Unitec

In June, members of the Council and Secretariat were welcomed onto Te Kotahitanga Marae in Auckland to come together across two days of whakawhanaungatanga, kōrero, and planning, as we look at more ways to honour the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in all our mahi.

With a mostly remote-working secretariat, and Council members arriving from all around the motu, it was a special opportunity for us all to work together in the same space - and what an inspiring space it was! Sending a huge mihi to the whānau at Te Kotahitanga Marae for their welcome and manaakitanga and to the Jeremies, J1 and J2, from Navigator for their guidance and facilitation.



We'd love to hear from you...



Ko Whangatauatia te Maunga
Ko Karirikura te Moana
Ko Te Ohaki te Whare Tupuna
Ko Roma te Marae
Ko Tinana te Waka
Ko Te Rarawa te Iwi
Ko Hamlin tōku whānau
Ko Kate tōku ingoa

Kia ora koutou, ko Kate Hamlin tōku ingoa and I'm the new Kaiwhakahaere Whakawhiti Kōrero, Communications Manager here at NZCCSS.

My highlight so far has been hearing about all the amazing mahi our secretariat, council and members are doing. I want to share these stories more so we can learn from and celebrate each other.

That's where you come in! If some-one in your organisation is supporting the

community in a way that you think everyone needs to know about, please let me know so it can be shared with our team to inform our advocacy, included in a future issue of Kete Kupu and/or high-lighted it in our monthly newsletter, Policy Watch.

If we've sparked your curiosity, we'd love to kōrero with you about how you can be involved.

We also welcome feedback!
Email comms@nzccss.org.nz