

WAIAPU CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ENABLER - 2013 REPORT

The changing face of ministry is challenging for all of us in our various places and roles, including those who work and play alongside children and families. Finding new ways and times and places to gather as a Christian community is a high priority, recognising that those gatherings will only happen where there are existing relationships to build on. In places where there are few children and families present amongst the current worshipping community, we need to invest our time and energy in engagement with the people in our neighbourhoods and streets. We need to establish relationships with those we live amongst on a day to day basis, and to leave our own agendas to one side as we take time to find out what life is like for others around us.

Meeting with ministry leaders: One of the areas I have focussed on in this CaFE role is to try and help ministry leaders think broadly about these kinds of challenges so a key aspect of my enabling ministry is to ask questions, to learn about the parishes and communities who offer ministry in Waiapu, and to try and encourage local teams to think imaginatively and creatively about ways they can share ministry in those communities. There is no single solution, and we cannot rely on one or two key people in each place. Every community will have its own strengths and weaknesses, challenges and opportunities. This kind of ministry is about how we all live our Christian lives in our communities.

SafeHere (formerly ChildSafe): Whenever we gather with children, youth and families, or other vulnerable people, we need to be able to reassure them and ourselves that we offer a safe and caring environment. This year we have been more intentional in our processes around safety matters and have employed a SafeHere Coordinator, Sandie Speeden. We are using the SafeHere website and resources' to raise awareness of potential issues and desirable safety practices, and Sandie is available to all parishes for advice and assistance in these matters. A second basic training session has been facilitated by Julie Hintz at the Children and Youth Leaders Training Weekend, and further training will be offered in each region in coming months.

Side-by-Side Mentoring: One of the strategies which we are promoting as a youth and families team, is mentoring. Side-by-Side mentoring has a particular focus on building relationships with young families, and mentors receive a three day training (provided as three one day sessions over several weeks) as well as ongoing support and refresher training. This is a new initiative for Waiapu, with myself, Ian and Sandra Riley, Carol Baron and Rev. Craig Smith having completed the training through Wellington Diocese. We aim to offer the first series of Waiapu training next year.

Leaders Training Weekend: This annual training event continues to be a great source of refreshment and mutual resourcing and support for the leaders who attend. This year we met in Taradale and enjoyed sessions led by Julie Hintz (National StraNdZ Enabler) on SafeHere as well as a storytelling workshop, and a session with Phil Trotter on leading youth groups. The time spent talking with each other and sharing experiences is also highly valued.

Diocesan Networks: I meet regularly with the Youth team and we have worked together on SafeHere implementation and organising the Leaders Training Weekend. I attended all three regional conferences, clergy conference and other key events such as Top Parish and Parachute where I am able to build relationships with youth and children's leaders and other parish leaders.

Communication: I am a regular contributor to the Waiapu News and distribute StraNdZ newsletters and publications as they become available.

Personal: I attend regular supervision and spiritual direction. Due to a number of factors I put my study on hold this year. With only three papers remaining to complete my degree my aim is to achieve that over the next couple of years.

Reverend Jo Crosse