



The cause we fight  
for is very **ordinary**



*June 2015*

Dear Supporters and Friends of the Champion Centre

The Champion Centre provides a multi-disciplinary early intervention service to more than 150 children each year; a number that has been stable since we moved into our current premises in 2000. But we are doing it tough. It now costs nearly \$2 million per year to run the programme (including 16% overheads including administrative salaries) and we currently need to find about \$750,000 per year to supplement government grants.

### **Why are we struggling for funds?**

While we have had small increases from government over the past ten years, they have not kept up with inflation or rising wages and we have lost more than half of what we gained through changes of policy around early childhood education funding. The net effect is that we have received an increase of only about \$75,000 over the last six years.

(See here for a recent commentary on the challenges faced by social service providers: [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/opinion/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=466&objectid=11456278](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/opinion/news/article.cfm?c_id=466&objectid=11456278) )

At the same time, it has become increasingly difficult to source private funding, particularly post-earthquakes when there are so many more calls on private donations.

## Who is helping us?

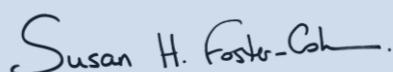
We have some long-term friends who are working hard on our behalf. Starting in 2015 we have received the first of five years of partnership funding from the Todd foundation. At \$75,000 per year, this is a wonderful help towards what we need to raise. We have also received significant funding from Lesley Nesbit towards the music programme and from the Dublin Street Trust towards the computer supported learning programme.

In addition, we have received the following substantial donations since our last newsletter in October 2014:

Todd Foundation	Flow Hot Yoga
Canterbury Community Trust	Margot Hutchison
George Sevicke Jones	NZ Lotteries Grant Board
Lion Foundation	SJ Charitable Trust
Dublin Street Trust	Loyal Riccarton Lodge
P & M Murphy	Kirby Trust
D Stock	NZ Charitable Foundation
ME James QSM Trust	Lois MacFarlane Charitable Trust
Un Cadeau	MacKenzie Charitable Foundation
Jones Foundation	John Ilott Charitable Trust
Dove Charitable Trust	The Trusts Community Foundation
Elizabeth Ball Charitable Trust	Dynamic Controls
Maurice Carter Charitable Trust	EB Milton Charitable Trust
Dynamic Controls	Harcourts (Grenadier) Foundation

Importantly, we have a dedicated group of volunteers trying to raise sustainability funds through the **Champion Foundation Trust** whose only aim is to help us reduce the amount we need to raise through grant applications, events and other requests on a yearly basis. For more information on this trust, please contact us.

But despite all these supporters, we still have no certainty of income, and the board has asked that I prepare for major budget cuts. The only way to do this, however, is to cut services to the children and their families and we really do not want to have to do this. Your help would be so appreciated, particularly if you were able to dedicate a regular amount to our work. Remember, you get a third of it back in tax relief!

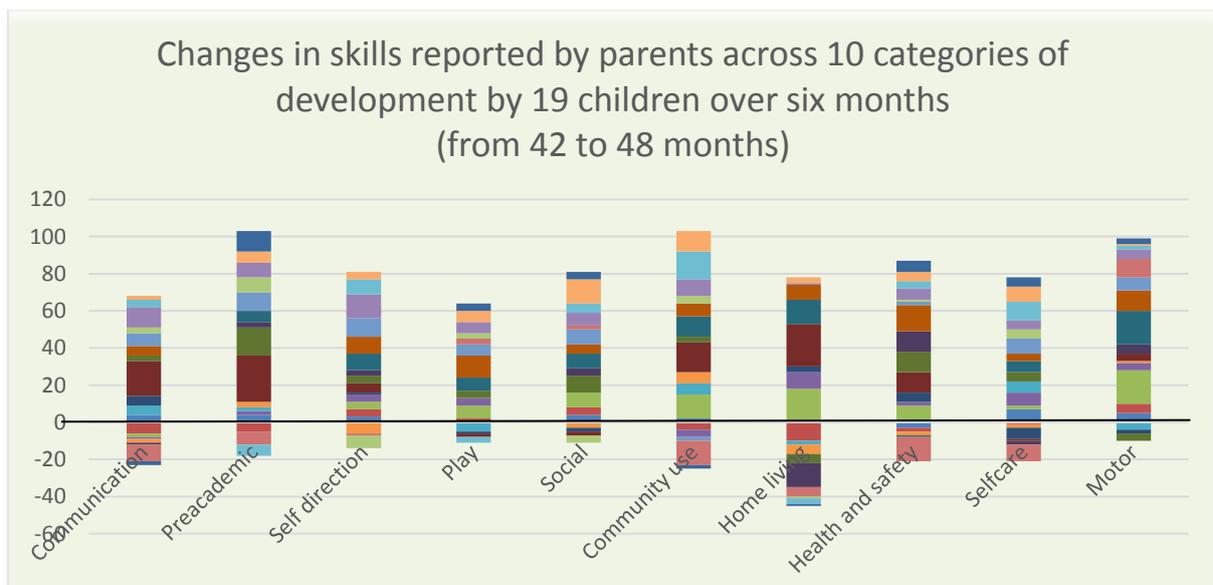


Susan Foster-Cohen, PhD  
Centre Director

### How do we know the Champion Centre programmes work?

There are a number of ways of measuring our outcomes. Here are some of them:

- 90% of our graduates move on to mainstream primary school settings, and for the remainder it is a considered choice to attend a special school.
- In our annual consumer survey, parents overwhelmingly give us positive evaluations and when they have suggestions to make, we listen. At the end of 2014, 84.21% of respondents said that the Centre's programmes had worked well or 'really well' for them and their child during the year.
- While development is not always a forward trajectory for young children with complex needs who find it difficult to add to sustain new skills, their developmental paths show real progress over time. Below is a graph from our ongoing research tracking children's development every six months. Blocks above the zero line represent the addition of skills over a six month period; blocks below the line represent a (usually temporary) reported loss of skills.



- The family support team tracks the outcomes of its work with families. Out of 217 pieces of work in the year to June 2014, 210 had outcomes reflected in improved wellbeing of parent or child or both. Among other results, 20 families were financially less stressed, 57 had better access to community supports, and 30 had better access to healthcare.
- Then there are the stories of children and families. Below is just one and more can be found on our web site.

**Molly's story**  
**An Important Lesson - Never Give Up**

*(A speech given at school by one of our courageous graduates)*



*" Hi, I am Molly and this speech is about me and how I have learnt to never give up. When I was a baby I was very tiny and not growing. The doctors got very worried about me and so were Mum and Dad. Various methods were tried to get me to grow but none worked. Dr Abbot, my specialist, decided that I needed an operation to stop my silent reflux and to put a feeding tube directly into my stomach. I was only one and a half years old and Mum stayed in the hospital with me and learnt all the things she would need to know about using the feeding pump when we would go home. Mum was sad as well as worried about me as her Dad and my Grandad had just passed away. I slowly started to grow lucky the doctors didn't give up on me. I went to the*

*Champion Centre and they have a motto saying Growing Champions and they never gave up on me. It was hard work doing physiotherapy, speech language therapy, occupational therapy and music therapy. I cried a lot doing physio and it was very hard for Mum but she didn't give up and kept taking me once a week for five years. Sometimes I went twice a week to a feeding clinic as well. When I was two years old I visited the hospital eighty time and always got invited to the hospital Christmas party which me and my siblings enjoyed. I didn't understand why Mum didn't think it was such a great thing. Now I know that I was only invited because I was very sick and went to hospital so often. I had some other operations on my stomach and my eye and again no one gave up on me. I went to Kindy with the help of my early intervention teacher from the Champion Centre, Margaret. She was so wonderful and helped me and always encouraged me and was always there for me and never, ever gave up on me. The Champion Centre people thought I was their star champion and couldn't believe the progress I had made from a tiny fragile baby to a champion. They loved the help I got at home from my Mum and Dad and George and Jemima. She (Margaret) helped me settle into school, into Mrs Harland's class. As I got older at school I had learn the lesson to never give up. I had to do the school cross country's, swimming sports, mountain biking, triathlon with Mr Mitchell, school speeches and talking in front of lots of people, sitting school tests, making friends, fight with my tummy pains and to force myself to eat and drink. I have learnt to try my best to keep going even if it is hard work. Some people would find the above things easy but for me they are hard physically, mentally and emotionally. I have learnt the lesson well to NEVER GIVE UP and maybe some of you can learn this lesson too.*

**Will you help us tell more stories like these?**

A donation of \$5,000 will make up the difference between government grants and the true costs of therapy for a child for a year.

Please call us: (03) 383 6867, visit our website: [www.championcentre.org.nz](http://www.championcentre.org.nz) or make a direct donation to 12-3240-0034924-01

Thank you for helping!