



The Champion Centre  
Tamariki Toiora

CHRISTCHURCH EARLY  
INTERVENTION TRUST

# 2021

## ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2020-JUNE 2021



We  
have provided  
services to

**235**

tamariki and  
their whānau

**48**  
**TAMARIKI**

graduated from  
the  
Champion Centre

**72**  
**CHILDREN**

were supported  
weekly in their early  
childhood centre



## From the Chair

### Graeme H Daniel MNZM

The services of the Champion Centre have been provided to 235 children and their families, this year.

The pandemic has interrupted the face-to-face services at times however, the Centre continued to provide services remotely to ensure families continued to feel well supported. The staff are to be congratulated for their commitment and support for our community during these challenging times.

The decision of the trustees to appoint two directors, an Executive Director and a Clinical Director, has proven to be an excellent innovation. Last year, Wendy Entwistle was appointed to the role of Executive Director, and Dr Lauren Porter was appointed as the Clinical Director. Both have developed a highly professional and collaborative working relationship that has been of significant benefit to the Centre.

For a number of years the trustees have been concerned that the salaries of the staff have been lower than market rates and of some other Non-Government Organisations. There has also been a concern that in the longer term that it will become increasingly difficult to attract the high calibre of employees we have currently due to lower salaries.

The directors, with full support of the trustees, set about reviewing the programme delivery of the service with the intent to improve the quality of the programme. In addition, the intent was to consider how service could be improved and salaries increased. A great deal of planning and consultation was undertaken with a change proposal developed that would meet the goals as described above.

Naturally, change is challenging and stressful for all the staff affected. The outcome has resulted in new initiatives to be introduced at the start of 2022.

The board of trustees has been well informed throughout the proposal of change and has agreed in full to the changes that have and will be implemented. We congratulate Wendy and Lauren for the professional manner in which they have managed this challenging process and the staff who have continued to provide excellent professional services to our children and families throughout this proposed change.

I want to acknowledge the generous support of philanthropic supporters; without your support our services would be much reduced. We are extremely appreciative of the funding we receive from donations and respective government ministries.

On behalf of the trustees, I acknowledge the professionalism, commitment, and dedication of all the staff at the Centre. It is through your work that the Champion Centre has the outstanding reputation in the community that it has.

I acknowledge David Lang, a long time trustee who resigned from the board this year. David has made a significant contribution to the Champion Centre during his tenure.

To my fellow trustees, I acknowledge the skills and experience you bring to the governance of the Centre. Your commitment and support ensures the Champion Centre remains a highly respected organisation.

Ngā mihi,

Graeme H Daniel MNZM



## From the Directors Wendy and Lauren

From 43 years ago until today, as New Zealand's oldest centre-based early intervention programme for young children with developmental challenges, the Champion Centre has always stood at the forefront of best practice. Taking over the reins has been exciting, challenging and a little daunting, with such big shoes to fill!

During this year, it has been my absolute privilege to work closely alongside Dr Lauren Porter, our new Clinical Director. Our dual focus has been to ensure that Champion Centre services for children and families remain of the highest quality, are based on the latest evidence, and are financially sustainable into the future.

In consultation with our Management Team, long-standing and founding Clinical Practice Manager, Jan Murphy, and with full agreement of our Board of Trustees, we embarked on a full review of current service delivery and finances. The result of the review is a new service delivery framework for 2022 which has both clinical and financial benefits. Much of the service delivery will look the same, but there will be some exciting new innovations.

Our staff are our greatest asset. Despite a pandemic, a lockdown and period of change, they have carried out their duties with professionalism. I thank them for their commitment, skills, and energy. Despite the ongoing pandemic, we continued to deliver services, with staff connecting with families remotely during lockdown, via Zoom and phone, and other means.

Ngā mihi

Wendy Entwistle - Executive Director

I would like to echo all that Wendy has said. In coming into a newly established role of Clinical Director, I have leaned heavily on our staff and our Board to support the immense learning process of this role.

Everyone has been gracious and generous with their time, and their wisdom. Jan Murphy, who held the clinical leadership role for so many years, has been so instrumental to my learning that I cannot imagine doing this without her. Similarly, I cannot imagine taking up my role without Wendy's guidance, support and kindness. I feel truly grateful to be part of such an amazing team.

The Champion Centre is also filled with countless staff members who have shared their incredible knowledge with me as I continue to learn and grow. I have been privileged to observe our day-to-day work throughout the year. The appreciation I have for our staff's commitment, passion and skill cannot be overstated. Finally, the commitment, passion and skill of our families-both children and adults-is staggering. As Jan reminds me, families do not choose to become involved in the Champion Centre; it is life that chooses for them. Nonetheless, the way children, parents, caregivers, and extended whānau engage with our service is inspirational.

It is because of these inspirational people-both staff and whānau-that we embarked on the review of our clinical and financial delivery. I am truly excited for the changes we have planned for next year which I believe will offer greater, more holistic, more developmentally-attuned support for children and parents whilst also giving staff salaries commensurate with their worth.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Dr Lauren Porter - Clinical Director

**We thank the government for their ongoing support and our community who recognise our value and give so generously. And finally, to our families, thank you for sharing your journey with us.**



# Who we are and what we do

The Champion Centre is an internationally respected early intervention centre for preschool children (birth to age 6) whose development is impacted by conditions such as Down syndrome, other genetic disorders, Cerebral Palsy, the consequences of prematurity, Autism Spectrum Disorder and brain injury.

Our multi-disciplinary team includes physiotherapists, early intervention teachers and educators, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, music specialists, psychologists, social workers, technology assisted learning specialists, and a Kaiwhakapuawai. All work in partnership with parents, caregivers and whānau to help each child reach their full potential. Our approach is holistic, evidence based and family centred. Families who attend the Centre regularly find support from other families on similar journeys.

## Our families tell us...

100% of families said that their team helps them to understand their child's development either 'very well' or 'well'

90% of families said that suggestions made by their child's team helped them support their child's development at home 'very well'

95% of families told us we are helping them to meet the goals they have for their child and family 'very well'

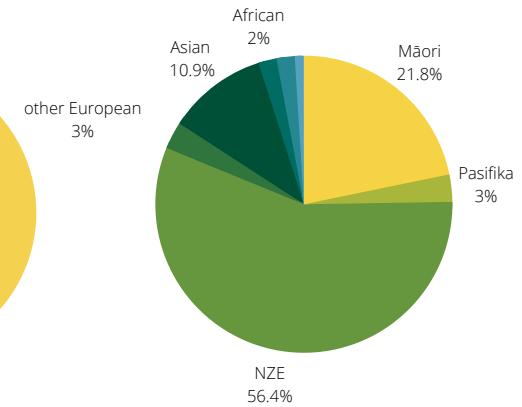
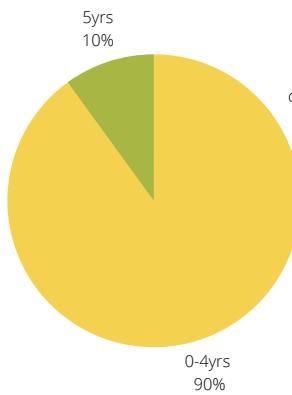
## Our services for families in the Canterbury area:

- An early intervention programme for children who have delays in at least two areas of development
- A specialist early intervention programme for children with relating and communicating difficulties
- A monitoring programme for children who are at developmental risk either due to prematurity or because of health related vulnerability

### Mission

The Champion Centre is committed to providing high quality family/whānau based early intervention services for children/tamariki with multi-faceted developmental delays. In partnership with our local rūnanga (Te Ngāi Tuāhuriri), the Champion Centre will educate about early intervention and act with parents/mātua/tamariki with developmental delays as advocates for adequate and appropriate community services for them and their children/tamariki.

Tuia te rangi e tu iho nei,  
Tuia te papa e takoto nei  
As the sky joins the earth,  
so people depend on one another





## Spotlight on our Early Intervention Educators

Any children who attend the Champion Centre can also be enrolled with their local early childhood centre (e.g. kindergarten, playcentre, Montessori). Most children over the age of three and in one of our weekly programmes are supported by one or more sessions a week in their community by an Early Intervention Educator (EIE) who is part of the multi-disciplinary team around the child.

EIE's support children to access the Te Whāriki curriculum, build communication skills, and interact and develop friendships with their peers. They work on the same goals supported by parents, caregivers and the Champion Centre team. The EIE also provides support to the early childhood teachers so that children can attend independently, wherever possible.

When the child is ready to be transitioned into school the EIE takes the child on visits to school and spends several sessions in school with the child once they are enrolled. She helps the child settle in this new environment and, along with the Champion Centre therapy team, passes on knowledge of the child to the child's teacher, and teacher aides. In this way, the strongest foundations for success are laid.

Our wonderful team of EIE's has many years of collective experience between them. Their skills, warmth, and playfulness support each child to reach their full potential, and importantly take their place in the community. This year our team of 16 EIE's supported 72 children on a weekly basis in their early childhood centre. 14,054 hours of EIE service were provided.

*We can't thank her enough for showing us what was possible for (our daughter) and the true meaning of inclusion in education.*

- comment from a parent about Margaret Malzard's 'transition to school' support

Margaret Malzard is our longest serving EIE. In October we were particularly proud that she was one of three overall winners in the Westfield Local Heroes Award 2021. This was a huge acknowledgement of her outstanding 28 year career as an EIE at the Champion Centre. Margaret won a \$10,000.00 prize which will support our EIE 'Transition to School' programme.

As a result of being a winner, one added bonus has been that numerous families and children (now adults!) whom Margaret supported over the years, have been in touch to congratulate her and share what they are up to.

Congratulations Margaret!



*all the children we look back on, having come through the Champion Centre 'integrate beautifully', they seem to end up being way more prepared*

- comment from a primary school teacher after a recent transition



# Our funding

The Champion Centre is a charitable trust. Our programmes are funded by a combination of government funding and fundraising through grants, corporate sponsorship, events and philanthropy.

Currently, the government (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Oranga Tamiriki) funds approximately 75% of the \$2.6 million annual operational costs to run the Centre. Despite prudent governance and management, we were still faced with a shortfall of \$650,000.00 to source from the philanthropic sector.

The funding gap is one we undertake to close each year, in order to provide a fully comprehensive early intervention service to Canterbury families.

This shortfall never gets easier to fill, and the flow-on effect from the global pandemic certainly tested our resilience and creativity.

Once more we are humbled by the munificence and resourcefulness of individual donors, gifting from corporate's as well as initiatives and events held in our honour. Much gratitude to our major funders, those companies and grant makers who offer a considerable financial contribution, year on year, and heartfelt thanks to all our community donors whose efforts, big and small, bridge the shortfall in programme delivery costs for our young champions.

Without the commitment from those who truly understand the impact of our service, we would not be able to support so many children and their whānau, and ensure the continuing financial viability of the Centre.

A huge thanks to each and every one of you whose time, talents, passion, and both monetary and in-kind donations become the vital difference it takes to 'realise every child's potential'

We are extremely grateful for your ongoing support.

Ongoing fundraising efforts remain a core focus, enabling the improvement of the Champion Centre's model of practice.

## A snapshot of our wonderful supporters in 2020-2021;

- Independent Fisheries Ltd
- Blogg Charitable Trust
- Jones Foundation
- L K Cooney Charitable Trust
- Mary Moodie Family Trust
- NZ Founders Society
- P G Brophy Family Trust
- Cequent Projects and Imperial Holdings
- Robert & Barbara Stewart Charitable Trust
- Haydn Brush Company
- Riccarton Rotary youth Trust
- S & A Cumming Charitable Trust
- Datacom
- Dynamic Controls
- Dynamic Controls Social Club Inc
- Rookwood Holdings Ltd
- Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Trust
- Champion Foundation Trust
- David Ellison Charitable Trust
- Dove Charitable Trust
- Dublin Street Charitable Trust
- E B Milton Charitable Trust
- Elizabeth Ball Charitable Trust
- Farina Thompson Charitable Trust
- I H C Foundation
- J M Butland Charitable Trust
- Lois McFarlane Charitable Trust
- Mainland Foundation
- Maurice Carter Charitable Trust
- MusicHelps
- NZ Lottery Grants Board
- Phillip Brown Fund
- Ralph & Eve Seelye Charitable Trust
- Rata Foundation
- S J Charitable Trust
- Southern Trust
- Sutherland Self Help Trust
- The Press
- Foodco NZ Ltd
- GWJ Hughes
- Debby Heard
- P & C Curry
- R Burdon
- Lobblinn Farms Ltd
- R Burdon
- The Gums Partnership
- Misco Joinery
- The Drawing Room
- Digital Wings
- Suburban Eatery
- H Wheelans
- Belles Latz-Ultra marathon
- Losing the Locks-Fundraiser
- Window Treatments

Enormous thanks also to those generous Regular Givers, Payroll Givers and Individual Donors who, together made the magic happen in 2020/2021

## The beginning of a journey

"We first heard about the Champion Centre shortly after Hugo's diagnosis in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. What I couldn't have imagined is just how extensive the support is around the entire whānau from the minute you walk through those doors. Hugo has been provided with a safe environment where he can be supported and challenged simultaneously. We can't speak more highly of all the staff who have come across Hugo's path, who have worked tirelessly to ensure he is moving forward in his goals. As much as these practical skills have been appreciated, I am just as appreciative of the weekly coffees that are poured, and the genuine conversations with staff who journey each stage with us. Nothing ever seems to be 'too big an ask', and staff bend over backwards to help in any way they can."

While Hugo's journey is different from many others, I wouldn't change a thing. He's taught us so much, and through him we've been introduced to so many people who we couldn't imagine 'doing life' without. The Champion Centre is an extension of our family, and we're all the richer for them" Vikki-current parent

## The end of a chapter 'Transition to School'

"We felt well supported by our EIE, Kohei and I saw incredible growth and development in Rio with that support. She was considerate of how Rio thought/felt. Her positive words encouraged Rio and gave her lots of confidence. They built a great relationship over time, and therefore Rio was happy to share their time together.

The 'transition to school' was smooth and successful because the EIE worked hard for both Rio and the school teachers. She took Rio to school as much as possible, while she was at kindergarten, to get her used to school routines, environment and the people there (students and teachers). She also provided information and knowledge around Rio to school teachers, to help them understand her.

Thanks to the EIE's dedication to the transition programme, now Rio enjoys going to school every day.

- Overall, staff at the Champion Centre are amazing too. We are grateful for all the things we have learned, we would like to apply them to the next step of our journey. Our experience at the Champion Centre was such an important part of our lives. We have really appreciated all of the hard work and dedication".

Tomoko-past parent

## Living a full life

"I'm 27 yrs old. I was born prematurely, at just 29 weeks. I live with my mum and dad. My interests are riding my hand-cycle and building LEGO models (something I find challenging because of a lack of finger dexterity).

A birth injury resulted in Cerebral Palsy. At 4 months, I had the first of many operations, a ventriculo-peritoneal shunt was inserted as I developed hydrocephalus. Over the next 5 yrs, Mum and I went 1 day a week to the Champion Centre, where I had physio, cognitive, speech-language and music therapies, and also technology assisted learning. Swimming helped my very restricted movement and we practiced exercises at home.

By the time I started school I could walk from home to school, had an extensive vocabulary and learned to read. Not bad for a child who was not expected to walk at all!

I have gone on to do amazing things; a 5-day trip on the Spirit of NZ, I've enjoyed travelling to Europe, USA, Fiji, and Britain, fulfilling my dream to go to the Burghley Horse Trials. In 2015, I gained a job as an Artisan Weaver, at Handmade Studio. I'm very proud of each piece of fabric I create as it requires fine motor skills and using my feet, both of which I find difficult. I have achieved my 'Queens Guide Award' in Girl Guides, the highest award in NZ. As an adult, I became a Guide and Brownie Leader, to give back to the organisation that gave me so much" Sarah-Champion Centre graduate

# Our impact

## 'Realising every child's potential'



"we felt such love, acceptance and inclusion"

"showing us what was

"more people need to know about this  
beautiful place"

possible"

" an innate understanding of exactly what our daughter  
needed"

"her confidence grew, her vocabulary exploded"

"we quickly  
saw an  
amazing  
change"

"true advocates"

"through the  
encouragement of  
the team we  
learned what to do,  
and then we built  
on that, one day at  
a time"



**The Champion Centre**

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