



The Champion Centre
Tamariki Toiora



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Christchurch Early Intervention Trust
CC22708 July 2019 - June 2020

Vision

'Realising every child's potential.'

Mission

The Champion Centre is committed to providing high quality family and whānau based early intervention services for children/tamariki with multi-faceted developmental delays. In partnership with our local rūnanga (Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri), 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.

Board Chair's report



The Champion Centre has provided services to 230 children and their families during the last

financial year. This is the same number as for the year previous to this. It is without question that the service provided by the staff of the Centre is of the highest quality and excellence. The testament of this is in the graduation of the children into their local school, notwithstanding that a small number of children may benefit from a specialist school setting for a period of time. The outcomes of the transition process is a credit to the organisation.

On behalf of the board I acknowledge all staff, their dedication, commitment and high quality intervention. The professional practice of the Centre is second to none. It is of significant concern to the trustees that we are unable to match the remuneration of State Sector employees however our current funding does not enable this. It is an area that the board will continue to address as we value our staff very highly.

This year the Christchurch Early Intervention Trust and the Champion Foundation Trust held combined meetings to assist in ensuring the lines of communication were open. Later it was agreed, for pragmatic reasons, that the Foundation Chair would attend the CEIT meetings representing the Foundation Trust. This has proven to be successful.

Board Chair's report for the Financial Year 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

The Trust holds regular meetings and receives a comprehensive report from the Director that covers: outcomes for families, team competence and wellbeing, evaluation and outcomes monitoring, external recognition and financial sustainability. Each of these is based on the strategic/annual plans. In addition, the board receives a clinical report, a financial report, a fundraising report and a communications report. The board also reviews governance policies at each meeting. The trustees are very well informed.

Finances continue to be an ongoing challenge, however the Centre's financial viability relies on the almost 78% funding that we receive from government agencies. It is the charitable contribution to services that equates to 22% that is the challenge. The efforts made by the Funding Coordinator are commendable. The concern is that in the current recession, charitable funds will become increasing difficult to obtain. It is becoming evident that seeking a greater number of smaller charitable contributions may result in better outcomes.

We are indeed fortunate to receive the financial donations that we do, along with goods and services from various companies. I acknowledge our significant contributors of goods and services including James Bull, Window Treatments, Misco Joinery and Haydn Brush Co. There are many others who have made contributions, who are acknowledged elsewhere in this Annual Report. We are deeply grateful of all the support we receive.

I wish to acknowledge the recent retirement of our Director, Dr Susan Foster-Cohen. Susan has been instrumental in having the Champion Centre acknowledged as a centre of excellence. She has dedicated nearly 17 years of her professional life to the Centre and has demonstrated commitment and professional excellence during her tenure. Susan has maintained strong connections with the early intervention sector locally, nationally and internationally. She has ensured that the Champion Centre's reputation is of the highest standing. We wish Susan all the very best in her future endeavours.

The trustees made the decision to change the structure of the senior manager role of Director into two equal positions, an Executive Director and a Clinical Director. The Clinical Director position is replacing the Clinical Practice Manager position held by Jan Murphy, who is retiring at the end of this year. I want to acknowledge Jan's outstanding contribution to the Centre, however, her retirement will be marked at a later time.

We have been privileged to appoint Wendy Entwistle into the role of Executive Director. Wendy has a depth of experience, including having worked at the Champion Centre in a senior role for some years as the head of the Family Support Team and latterly as the Early Intervention Services Manager. Wendy has also worked in the health sector and Child Protection Services. She is a person of high calibre and highly respected by the staff.

More recently we advertised and appointed a Clinical Director from an excellent pool of applicants, Dr Lauren Porter. Again we are privileged to have appointed a person of high calibre into the role. Lauren has significant clinical experience in a range of settings, including clinical team leadership, social work supervision and training, university lecturing, counselling and child mental health.

Wendy and Lauren will work collaboratively, each being directly responsible to the Chair of the Trust, each attending and reporting to the regular Trust meetings.

Finally, I acknowledge my fellow trustees, each of whom bring a wealth of governance experience and personal skills of great value to the board. Their commitment to the Champion Centre is valued and appreciated.

The reputation and ongoing success of the Champion Centre is due to the combined contributions of all staff, the trustees of the CEIT, the Foundation and the families we serve.

Thank you for 'realising every child's potential'.

Ngā mihi



Graeme H Daniel MNZM
Chair

Trustees

Meet the current Trustees of the Christchurch Early Intervention Trust

Graeme H Daniel (Chair)

Graeme has recently retired having held a number of principal positions in special education over a 30-year period and was a member of regional and national advisories. He also worked for the ERO for several years. Graeme is currently an education consultant/advocate and advises in the area of Learning Support and leadership.

David Lang (Deputy Chair)

David is a partner in the law firm, Saunders & Co, and is currently the Chairman of the Nurse Maude Association. David became involved with the Champion Centre when his wife, Lois, was working at the Centre as a speech-language therapist.

Vince Barry

Vince Barry is CEO at Pegasus Health in Christchurch. He commenced his health career 35 years ago as a nurse assistant in psychiatry. Vince then went on to a career in nursing and into management in the mid 1990's, following the establishment of Forensic Psychiatric Services. Vince's management career in hospitals involved general management of mental health, aged care and rehabilitation services, as well as coordinating the elective surgical services programme for Canterbury. Vince embarked on his role as CEO with Pegasus Health in 2008.

Carol Bellette

Carol is a finance professional with governance experience in both the not-for-profit and commercial sector. She is currently the Chief Financial Officer, Oceania for PGG Wrightson Seeds. Carol has been associated with the Christchurch Early Intervention Trust since 2006 as both a parent and a Trust Board member.

Andrew Hall

Andrew is the National Programme Manager for the NZ Spinal Trust, where he is responsible for managing the Trust's Peer Support Network and the Vocational Rehabilitation Programme. Prior to this Andrew served six years on the Board of the NZ Spinal Trust, three of them as Chairman and five as CEO. He is currently on the boards of the NZ Rugby Foundation, Burwood Academy of Independent Living and Sporting Futures Charitable Trust. Andrew is a founding trustee of both the Ben Lei'a Trust and the Pacific Disability Support Trust.

Other attendees:

Wendy Entwistle (Executive Director)
Jan Murphy (Clinical Practice Manager)
Karon Storr (Grants and Funding Coordinator)

Director's report (to 30 June 2020)



Though I have now passed my responsibilities on to others, it is my pleasure to present this report for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020, during which I was Director of the Champion Centre.

Even without a pandemic, this year was always going to be one that saw major changes at the Champion Centre. My planned retirement from the position of Director after almost seventeen years, and a change from a single Director to two Co-Directors had been agreed and was in process and I am so very pleased that both the Director positions have now been filled with truly excellent people: Wendy Entwistle as Executive Director and Dr Lauren Porter as Clinical Director. I am confident that the Centre is in fantastic hands and well-positioned to continue to support the children and families going forward.

The current strategic plan for the Champion Centre, developed in collaboration with the Board of Trustees, addresses five key areas. First and foremost, of these is ensuring the best outcomes for children and families. Other areas are monitoring and supporting staff competence and wellbeing; carrying out self-evaluations and engaging in successful reviews with our funding and oversight organisations; working to increase the external recognition

for our work; and working to ensure financial sustainability. I will touch lightly on these areas in the remainder of this report.

In March 2020 we engaged in one of our most important external reviews: against the Specialist Service Standards of the Ministry of Education. These standards aim to ensure that early intervention providers deliver the best services to children with challenges to their development and their families/whānau. We received a very positive report and are confident that we continue to be a leader in best practice in our field. We were also reviewed by Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Social Development, and again received an excellent report for the quality of our work.

These positive outcomes of externally driven evaluations reflect our reputation as an organisation of quality. This reputation is further bolstered by the work we do in sharing our knowledge and skills both nationally and internationally through presentations, teaching, and research. It has been my pleasure this year to gather together some of the intellectual property created by the Champion Centre over its more than 40 year history and I urge readers of this report to look at the resources presented on our refreshed and redesigned website, where a list of the research by Champion Centre staff and affiliates as well as a range of resources for both families and professionals can be found.

Beyond our professional recognition, this year has seen a significant increase in our presence on social media and in our community thanks to the efforts of Karon Storr and her team. Public recognition reflected in Jan Murphy being named Westfield Local Hero, my own recognition as a finalist in the NEXT Magazine Woman of the Year award, and both Jan and my nomination for New Zealander of the Year have all added to the visibility of the Champion Centre. These awards are, however, far outweighed by the ongoing and tireless loyalty and generosity of our many supporters whose donations large and small help us close the gap between government funding and programme costs. This gap shows no signs of going away, despite significant increases in government support over the past three years; so ongoing fundraising efforts remain vital to the continuation of the Champion Centre's model of practice.

Finally, no report would be complete without some comment about the effect of the pandemic on the operation of the Champion Centre. Here I must applaud the dedication and care with which staff took the lockdown in their stride and continued to provide services to families at distance and with characteristic creativity. They also took care of each other and continue to respond to the ever changing health and safety requirements with professionalism and good humour. The strength of the Champion Centre

lies in its skilled and loyal staff who provide the service that infants and young children need and deserve in the Canterbury community. The Champion Centre model of delivery reflects best practice in delivering an integrated programme that treats each child as a whole person and their most important relationships with parents and caregivers as the key to them reaching their full potential. While many other early intervention providers are still in the talking stages about how to ensure that health, education and social support services are combined and integrated within early intervention services, the Champion Centre has been doing it for more than forty years and deserves to be recognised as a model ripe for replication.

For the past 17 years I have been privileged to be at the helm of the most incredibly effective and remarkably precious organisation. We have had our tough times, both man-made and nature-made, but through it all we have worked together as a team that constantly strives to provide the very best service, and we remain honoured and grateful to the families and whānau who place their trust in us to support them to be the parents their children need them to be.

Susan H. Foster-Cohen

Susan Foster-Cohen, PhD
Former Director, The Champion Centre

"The team are supportive, friendly, knowledgeable and are always willing to work around our family."

(a parent, Champion Centre Annual Consumer Survey, 2019).

Wendy Entwistle (Appointed Executive Director, end August 2020)



Wendy was appointed Executive Director following the retirement of Dr Susan

Foster-Cohen in August this year. A registered Social Worker, Wendy has a Diploma and MA in Social Work, coupled with a Post-Graduate Diploma in Management Studies. For nine years, from 2003 until 2012, Wendy led the Family Support Team at the Champion Centre and was part of the Centre Management Team.

In 2013, Wendy moved to Hamilton and led the Consumer Engagement team at the Waikato District Health Board. She established and supported the inaugural Consumer Council for Waikato DHB, working closely with community networks and many people using DHB services. Wendy was integral in ensuring 'consumers' were involved in the planning and improvement of health services across the region.

In 2018, Wendy moved back to Christchurch and is delighted to return 'home' to the Champion Centre. She took on the role of Early Intervention Services Manager, leading the team of 18 Early

Intervention Educators, as well as being part of the management team and supporting a range of executive functions. Driven by principles of equality and inclusion Wendy says: 'A significant part of my professional life has been spent at the Champion Centre and I feel a strong connection and loyalty to it. For years the Champion Centre, in partnership with families, has provided a vital service for many families in Christchurch.'

'I have immense respect for the skilled clinical work of my colleagues as well as for the strength and commitment of families with whom we partner. Equally, I have an appreciation of the solid foundation on which the Champion Centre is built, its strong research base, and the values underpinning the model of practice. I am keenly aware that it is the dedication of the many staff and supporters over the past 40 years, all who have believed in the importance of the work, that has enabled the Champion Centre to thrive'.

'I am especially grateful to Susan for her support over the years and wish her well. Moving forwards, I am excited to partner with Lauren as part of the new leadership team, ensuring the Champion Centre continues to thrive for many, many years to come'.

Dr Lauren Porter (appointed Clinical Director, October 2020)



Lauren was appointed Clinical Director in October, following Wendy's

appointment to Executive Director. A registered clinical social worker, Lauren holds both an MSW and PhD in Social Work. Her PhD was completed at the University of Canterbury in 2017 under the supervision of Patricia Champion, with a focus on first time mothers and their premature infants. Lauren has been in direct clinical practice since 1995, working with children and families for most of that time.

From 1995-1999, Lauren lived in Germany and worked for the US military, supporting adolescents and their families. She then took

on the role of Programme Director for a city-wide child sexual abuse treatment programme for a year until the birth of her first child. In 2004, Lauren and her colleague, Kate Dent Rennie, formed the NZ-based Centre for Attachment, an agency that provided direct training, consultation and intervention to parents, infant mental health professionals and government.

In 2014, after disruptions related to the Christchurch earthquakes, Lauren and her family relocated to Australia. There she worked for both Griffith University and Southern Cross University in teaching and supervision roles. She finished her time in Australia as the Team Leader for a residential addiction treatment programme, where she instituted a family programme based upon Circle of Security Principles. Since returning

to New Zealand early this year, Lauren has been Clinical Manager of Massey University Wellington's Student Health and Counseling Centre.

Lauren's appointment to the Champion Centre is a homecoming in profound and important ways. Not only is she returning home to Christchurch, but she is taking up a role that fortifies her most meaningful professional connections: to infant mental health; to Patricia, Jan and the team; and to the relational support of our youngest members of society. Lauren is excited to partner with Wendy, to learn from both Wendy and the team, and to dedicate herself and her professional energy to the best future for the Champion Centre.

Who are we and what is our purpose?

What is the Champion Centre?

The Champion Centre provides a range of services for children whose developmental progress is impacted by conditions such as Down syndrome, other genetic disorders, cerebral palsy, the consequences of prematurity, epilepsy, developmental dyspraxia, Autism Spectrum Disorder and brain injury. We offer a number of services for families in the Canterbury area, including:

An early intervention programme for children from birth to primary school age 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 because of prematurity or because of other health-related vulnerabilities.

All children are referred to the Centre by a paediatrician.

How is the service delivered?

Most children and families attend the Champion Centre, located on the Burwood Hospital site, once a week during school terms. The programmes are multi-disciplinary; involving teams (including physiotherapists, early intervention educators, speech therapists, music specialists, social workers, and more) who work in partnership with

parents/whānau to help each child reach their full potential. All areas of development are attended to (physical, intellectual, communication, social and emotional) and the programme provides both practical and emotional support to families. It empowers parents to support and advocate for their children; and because families come to the Centre in small groups, they can find support from other families on similar journeys. The service embraces the principles of Whānau Ora in supporting whānau to support tamariki in the ways that work for them.

What makes the Champion Centre special?

The Centre model uses a holistic approach based on a working partnership with parents/whānau as first teachers. There are three core components: Physiotherapy/ Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, and Early Intervention Teaching and Psychology. They are supplemented at age appropriate stages with learning through musical play, technology supported learning, early childhood play, and early intervention educator programmes. Family Support Team services are available throughout.

This "wrap-around" service also includes visits by a dietitian, podiatrist, vision and hearing resource specialists, Early Childhood

Centre teachers and school personnel. It is a programme, which celebrates the whole child and their whānau and is recognised for the quality of its early intervention practice.

How do we know our programmes work?

Both in-house and independent research has demonstrated that the programmes work. Every child makes positive change over time and achieves many milestones that were thought to be unachievable. Almost all children go on to attend mainstream primary schools when they leave, and our transition to school programme routinely receives high praise. The Champion Centre's early intervention programme is internationally recognised.

How are the programmes funded?

The programme is funded by a combination of government funding and fundraising through grants, events and philanthropy. Currently the government (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Oranga Tamariki/Ministry of Social Development) funds approximately 78% of the \$2.5 million it takes to run the Centre annually. This leaves a shortfall of over \$600,000 to fund through fundraising efforts.

Our children and whānau

During the year, the Champion Centre provided service to 230 children. Of those, 119 were born very prematurely with consequences ranging from moderate to severe; 50 have identifiable chromosomal or other pervasive disorders; 32 children have a diagnosis of global developmental delay; 6 children have a primary diagnosis of autism and 23 have other diagnosis.

During the year, 43 children 'graduated' from the programme by moving on to school or being

discharged. We accepted 33 new clients into the programme over the course of the year.

Our family support team successfully completed 135 family support plans including providing a range of practical and emotional support for families raising children in the service.

On 30 June 2019, 90% of children were aged between birth and 4 years and the remaining 10% were over 4 years of age. 22% identified as Māori and 3% identified as Pacific Island.

"I couldn't manage without all the support I get from your services. The change in both my boys is unbelievable. Thanks so much!"

(a parent, Champion Centre Annual Consumer Survey, 2019).



Closing the Gap

Government funding only covers approximately 78% of our running costs and despite prudent governance and management, each year, we are faced with a substantial shortfall to cover our basic operational budget. With over \$600,000 to secure this year, we look to individuals and corporates in our community to help us close this gap.

With the advent of Covid-19, many of our supporters in the philanthropy sector have been financially affected. This has had a flow-on effect with our grants/donations.

There are many ways that individuals and families can help:

Make a one-off donation: Big or small, this will have a ripple effect in the Champion Centre

community (every gift over \$5 is tax deductible). Donate online or into our bank account: Christchurch Early Intervention Trust, ASB 12-3240-0034924-01

Contribute to a particular part of our programme: Our Music Therapy programme, the Technology Supported Learning or the Family Support programme, Hydrotherapy or Feeding programmes.

Regular Giving: Most of our children are with us until they transition to school. It's easy to set up 'Regular Giving.'

Payroll Giving: Give as you earn, straight from your pay to the Centre (you receive your tax rebate back immediately).

Donate the Difference: Donate as an individual or form a syndicate. A donation of \$7,000 will cover one child's programme for a year.

Fundraising Initiatives and Events:

Make the Champion Centre the beneficiary of your next fundraiser. Raise community awareness of the crucial work we provide, and donate much needed funds. Sausage sizzles, social club initiatives or charity auctions. We can support your efforts with brochures, banners and social media marketing.

Contact our Funding and Grants Co-ordinator, Karon Storr, karon.storr@championcentre.org.nz for more information on ways to support the Champion Centre or visit www.championcentre.org.nz/make-a-donation



"It feels like coming home. They care about (our child) and he is happy being with them."

(a parent, Champion Centre Annual Consumer Survey, 2020).

Supporters snapshot

Community engagement, initiatives and support

It has been a busy and challenging year, and we express our gratitude to the many individuals and organisations that support us.

From donations in lieu of birthday presents, **Keeva Stott** generously gifted funds in support of her brother Ardan, who attended the Centre. Also, in a similar vein, couple **Nick Dean** and his fiancé Sarah, requested donations to the Centre in lieu of engagement gifts, to express their gratitude for the support Nick's niece, Annelise received.

Creativity has been flowing from a number of our Centre supporters, including **Debby Heard**, whose grandson currently attends our programmes. Debby has been knitting a series of bespoke bears and bunnies over the past two years, in a range called, 'One of a Kindness'. Debby's creations have raised significant donations and include the hand knitted 'Jacinda Bear' which was auctioned for the Centre. Award-winning portrait artist **Gwyn Hughes** also created a large oil painting of Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Jacinda Ardern, which was successfully auctioned. Arts Therapy student, **Kate Willis**, created a greeting card series, 'Friends in the Window', donating a portion of the proceeds to the Centre.

Community groups and schools

Mufti days were held at **Shirley Primary School** and **North Loburn Schools**; the latter organised by Centre graduate **Izzy Ashurst**. **Waitakiri School** also made hair scrunchies for sale.

Christchurch North Lions made a donation and **Inner Wheel of Christchurch West** donated funds for the purchase of lidded, reusable coffee cups for use by families and staff at the Centre.

Digital Wings, a community trust, donated five refurbished iPads to our Technology Assisted Learning programme.

Westfield Riccarton invited us to hold two community days at the mall to raise awareness, promote our *Earlybird* book and take up a collection.

Corporates and volunteers

We are grateful to a growing list of organisations and corporations who happily gift services, goods, time, talent and funds to support our families and their children. We are grateful to **Dynamic Controls**, who donated the proceeds of their social club activities. **Muffin Break** and **Surburban Eatery** carry collection boxes at a number of outlets.

Mitre 10 Mega Hornby/Papanui, with the collaboration of **Roofing Industries** and **Thermakraft**, held a charity golf day for the Centre.

SKOPE Refrigeration produced a 'staff's favourite picks' recipe book, donating all proceeds to our programmes.

FreshChoice provided a voucher to help fund our supplied morning teas for families and **SNAP Fitness New Brighton** continue to support us with donations and sales of the Entertainment Book.

Haydn Brush Company donated funds to enable us to replace 18 outdated computer monitors and **Rheel IT** kindly provided the installation.

A generous in-kind gift was offered by **Misco Joinery**, who designed and custom-built desk units for seven of our offices. **Window Treatments** and **The Blind Care Company** kindly provided complementary services.

Last October the 'Pamper Evening' was again supported by a range of local businesses, individuals and volunteers. Our Centre mothers treasure this evening as it provides some nurturing and time out for them.

Thank you to each and every one of you that contribute in some way to help make a significant difference at the Champion Centre. It's sincerely appreciated!



The Power of Musical Play

Musical Play Therapist, Julie Wylie, is well-known for her work using musical play to support early intervention for infants and young children with challenges to their development. Julie recognises that each child has an inherent musicality, regardless of disability and believes that music is a powerful non-verbal form of communication which helps children to feel included and safe.

As part of Julie's work at The Champion Centre, Julie and former Director, Dr Susan Foster-Cohen have produced a video, *The Power of Musical Play*. Created for

professionals who support young children with developmental delays through musical activities, the video presents a rich selection of the accumulated wisdom of Julie's work at The Champion Centre. The video has been created to help others draw on Julie's ideas for the use of music in early intervention practice and to understand the reasons behind Julie's work.

To preview or purchase *The Power of Musical Play*:
www.championcentre.org.nz/shop

'It is a privilege to see and hear first-hand, Julie's expertise based on many years of sound research, leading to her pioneering musical play philosophy.'

Judith Bell, Music Programme Director, Chisnallwood Intermediate School and co-Chair, MENZA (Music Education NZ Aotearoa).

Specialist Service Standards Review, March 2020

The Specialist Service Standards help to ensure the provision of quality specialist services, for children and young people with additional needs for learning support.

In March we welcomed the Specialist Service Standards Review team from the Ministry Education to the Champion Centre. This review looks at the quality and effectiveness of our early intervention service, and this year focused on how we support positive outcomes for children.

The review team selected a small number of children and interviewed management and key staff members who delivered services to the children and their families. They also spoke with the children's parents about the services they receive, and with teachers from the children's community early childhood centres.

The Champion Centre was last reviewed in 2016, and once again we were pleased with the findings of the Review:

The Champion Centre has a strong culture of reflective practice leading to continuous improvement. This is enabled by a comprehensive strategic plan, well designed organisational structures, supportive and knowledgeable leadership and a highly competent, effective and cohesive team of specialists; They are reflective practitioners who are continually reviewing the quality of their work leading to meaningful outcomes for children, families and whānau; Specialists respectfully value families and whānau as equal partners and clearly acknowledge their expertise and knowledge of their child. The specialists actively foster equal, reciprocal, trusting relationships which contribute to the sense of belonging the families have expressed; They are strengths based and take all opportunities to celebrate achievements.

"All of his developmental milestones have been big for us. We are super happy with how he is progressing and glad to have such great support."

(a parent, Champion Centre Annual Consumer Survey, 2019).

Adrenaline and adventure run through the veins of the Latz siblings



Nick with his winning bronze medal in South Korea

Conquering personal challenges seems to run through the veins of the Latz family. Ski enthusiast, Nick Latz, attended the Champion Centre more than 35 years ago. He started skiing at the age of eight under the wing of Skiing for the Disabled, with whom he spends almost every Saturday in winter up on the slopes training at Mt Hutt. Adding to that fun, he also enjoys a handful of ski weeks at both Mt Hutt and in Central Otago.

In 2013, Nick won a bronze medal in the Alpine Skiing Intermediate Giant Slalom at the 10th Special Olympics World Winter Games, in South Korea. Other than winter skiing, Nick keeps fit at the gym where he enjoys the

treadmill and lifting a few weights. He's a familiar face there and enjoys the social element of his training.

He also loves to walk Brix, the family's terrier on Waikuku Beach and up in the North Canterbury foothills. Once a week Nick looks forward to attending Learn Active in Christchurch, where he goes climbing, does river rope crossings, hiking and also learns valuable life skills. He has his own Facebook page and loves to upload his photos about his many activities.

Nick also loves to dance! He is currently planning his 40th birthday celebrations next March, which will

include some great food, drinks and music. Music is a passion that runs in his family and he's enjoyed many live concerts over the years; David Bowie, The Rolling Stones and Joe Cocker to name a few.

Nick lives independently in a self-contained unit in Rangiora, where a support worker visits in the evenings while he cooks his own dinner. Nick will often prepare a meal in the crockpot or use his Weber barbecue to cook some meat, and he makes 'the best' salads. However, he does love going out for a curry with his family. Chocolate mousse will always be his number one dessert when he's at his parents' house for a catch up, although that favourite is a rarity!

Nick works part-time at F.O.D (Fools of Desire), a café in Rangiora, where he washes dishes and enjoys the camaraderie with his workmates. On his morning break you will see him sipping on a cup of Bell tea.

Nick's parents Kate and Peter Latz say that the Champion Centre literally saved them after Nick was born. 'From those initial feelings of being completely at a loss, we were reassured within hours of Nick's birth that not only was help at hand, but that there was far more that was normal about our baby than not normal, and we should treat him as the precious baby boy that he was.'

Kate recalls that from that first contact with Patricia Champion, to the weekly gatherings with other parents and their children and babies, that they were in an environment of 100% positivity. With help from the most amazing therapists, she and Peter learnt very quickly how to ensure that Nick received the best possible support to help him learn and develop.

'As parents, we celebrated every milestone big and small and our initial despair became our greatest joy as we watched our beautiful boy embrace life,' says Kate.

Kate and Peter's message to other parents is straightforward; 'never give up, and seek help from the Champion Centre, because there is no better place for families and children to thrive.'

To recognise the positive impact the Champion Centre had on Nick all those years ago, his little sister Annabelle will be running the Tarawera 100 miler Ultramarathon, in Rotorua in February next year. Annabelle is raising money for the Champion Centre. 'These moments of madness are even more meaningful and robust when there is a focus of getting behind a great cause. It's a privilege to run ultramarathons, and an even bigger privilege to have Nick as my big brother, and have this opportunity to raise money for these youngsters



Annabelle and Nick Latz enjoy some fresh air

who are starting on their very special journey,' says Annabelle.

'He's grown into an awesome, confident guy, and that's largely thanks to his early years at The Champion Centre. And he's a rock n' roller, (not to mention a massive ski bunny) from way back, so it's fitting that the funds I raise will be going straight to The Champion Centre's music programme.'

'As we've said in our family, Down syndrome is what Nick has, not what he is,' says Annabelle

To contribute towards Annabelle's fundraising efforts:

<https://givealittle.co.nz/fundraiser/>
<https://www.championcentre.org.nz/>

To learn more about the Centre's music programme:
<https://www.championcentre.org.nz/learning-through-musical-play.html>

Champion Centre Strategic/Annual Plan 2019-2021

Strategic Goals	Expected outcomes	Measure of progress 2019 - 2021
1. To ensure all families/whānau feel accepted, valued, respected and supported to achieve their aspirations for their children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members will have increased cultural competence, particularly with respect to Māori and Pasifika families/whānau and families who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Families will have a strong voice to advocate for their child; families will have no cultural barriers at the Champion Centre; families will feel empowered to lead their child's development. Staff will have increased capability in te Reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review engagement with Māori and Pasifika. Survey/interview all families/whānau new to Champion Centre and/or who have recently moved teams. Evaluate findings. Evaluate cultural and linguistic training needs of staff and provide appropriate PD, including, Te Reo Māori, NZSL and the use of interpreters.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will have increased capabilities in engaging with families, understanding their aspirations for their children, and supporting them to support their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional training in motivational interviewing for all staff.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased funding and staffing in the Family Support Team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with government and private funders to increase long-term financial support for the Family Support Team.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members both within and outside the Family Support Team will be able to support families/whānau to navigate the complex systems of support services relevant to their needs both while they attend the Centre and beyond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional support and training for staff to help families/whānau navigate support systems, including health, education, social welfare and other NGOs.
2. To ensure all children will reach their full potential through developmentally tailored individual programmes incorporating appropriate and achievable goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Champion Centre will continue to meet SSS and ERO indicators of good practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual evaluation of SSS and ERO indicators of good practice across the Champion Centre.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams and families will continue to work together to plan and implement children's developmental programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD will be provided to teams to support the ongoing collaboration between families and teams.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will be able to sustain, support and develop the Champion Centre model of practice during and after the changes in Centre leadership that will occur over the next two years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will receive ongoing support and training in reflective practice and sophisticated multi-disciplinary early intervention thinking based on the science of early human development.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EIE team will have strong leadership and a sustainable team of appropriately qualified individuals effectively supported to provide the best support for children in their community ECCs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake succession planning and PD to ensure sustainable effectiveness of EIE team.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre-based and community-based team members will work together to ensure a holistic understanding of each child's developmental path and how to support it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide greater opportunities for collaborative discussion between on-site and off-site team members.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools will welcome children who have attended the Champion Centre and engage in meaningful relationship with them as learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of transition to school practices, following on from the recent changes to transition reports, to ensure we are continually striving to have all children understood as people and as learners from school entry.
3. To ensure all families/whānau will feel empowered to advocate for their child at ECC, school and in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and families will increase their capacity to advocate for children in ECC, school and community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the new Early Intervention Services Manager role in supporting EIEs to support parents' advocacy for their children.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new Early Intervention Services Manager position created in 2019 will achieve its goal of supporting EIEs, in particular, to advocate for children and support parents to do likewise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training and support to key staff (team leaders and EIEs) to support advocacy throughout the Champion Centre.

<p>4. To ensure all intervention team members will feel valued for the expertise they bring and supported to develop that expertise over time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over time staff will be paid at market rates. All registered teachers will have a Teaching Council approved appraisal process. PD that supports strategic goals will be given preference within the limits of funding availability. All EIEs will feel valued by other team members and an integral part of the teams that support the children they are alongside in the community. There will be sufficient EIEs able to work with children with challenging behavioural responses in the team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase levels of fundraising to allow for regular salary increases that reflect qualifications, experience and longevity in the organisation with the aim of reaching market levels of remuneration. Develop and implement revised appraisal process for registered teachers in line with Teaching Council requirements. Review the training needs Centre-wide and preference support for those activities that contribute to the strategic goals. Expand the mentoring programme for EIEs beyond the regular supervisory relationships. Train EIEs for work with children with challenging behavioural responses.
<p>5. To ensure that The Champion Centre will continue to be recognised as a centre of excellence in early intervention and a leader in early intervention practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Champion Centre's reputation will be preserved by its staff, families and board of trustees. The Champion Centre will develop a more active research programme to support understanding of excellent early intervention practice. The Champion Centre will have a larger audience both nationally and internationally for the knowledge and expertise it has to share. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for provision of early intervention training both internal and external to the Champion Centre. Develop a business case for seeking funding for engagement in Champion Centre research in early intervention. Develop a case for increasing dissemination of information, research and training nationally and internationally will increase.
<p>6. To ensure that The Champion Centre will continue to build bicultural responsiveness in all aspects of its operation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Champion Centre will continue to build on the current basis of cultural responsiveness. The Champion Centre will increase the number of Māori staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build bicultural responsiveness through te Roopu Kaiarahi and continued implementation of the 2015 cultural review recommendations. Actively work to increase the number of Māori staff.
<p>7. To ensure that The Champion Centre will be effectively managed and run under the governance of the board of trustees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new strategy document and internal evaluation plan will be developed cooperatively between management and governance and implemented from 2019/2020 based on existing internal evaluation processes and outcomes monitoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing internal evaluation processes and action plan/ outcome monitoring will be documented and reported to the board. It will include reporting on key policies, targeted self-evaluation and spontaneous evaluation. Strategic planning will be strengthened through consultation between management and governance in the development of the new plan.
<p>8. To ensure the financial sustainability of the Champion Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government grants will stay stable or increase over time to support the children and families of the Champion Centre. The proportion of philanthropic income needed will reduce over time as government financial support increases. The Champion Foundation Trust will increase its fundraising activities to increase the reserves it holds for the Champion Centre and to increase its contributions through generated returns to the Christchurch Early Intervention Trust operational account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director and senior staff, supported by the Christchurch Early Intervention Trust chair and trustees, will continue to take every opportunity to lobby for additional financial government support through the Ministries who currently provide funds to the Centre. The Christchurch Early Intervention Trust supported by the Director, the Grants and Funding Coordinator, and where appropriate the Champion Foundation Trust will continue to raise the balance of operational income required to enable the continued support of children and families. The Champion Foundation Trust will increase its holdings in trust for the Champion Centre and will move towards making regular, untagged, contributions to the Christchurch Early Intervention Trust for operational spending from generated returns.

Low family celebrate their 'star peg in a round hole'



Tessa wearing her unicorn headband

Rebecca Low, mother of Centre graduate, 7-year-old Tessa, was at a course run by Autism NZ when she heard this analogy: “Imagine walking down a dark street. You don’t know where you are and a random person you don’t know asks you to go down a dark alley.” You’d want to run. That would be your first instinct. That’s exactly how our children feel every day with the things we ask them to do. This gives you an idea of how they are feeling about things and how much harder they have to work to actually function.”

Tessa showed delays in development and was diagnosed with Global Development Delay, later followed by a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder at 4 years. Tessa attended the Champion Centre from the age of 2, until she started her transition to primary school.

Winding the clock back to when Tessa’s parents Rebecca and Matt first walked into the Centre, both recognised that this was life changing. First of all they all met one of the Family Support team, Marguerite, and immediately felt very supported. ‘It was a lovely place to be, we felt safe and ‘at home’. If Tessa had a melt-down, this was normalised,’ says Rebecca. ‘We learnt a lot from the therapists and could take the skills home to everyday life.’

Tessa attended the Middle Years and Relating and Communicating programmes then transferred to the Transition to School programme. She also attended small group hydrotherapy sessions while at the Centre.

At 2, Tessa was hardly talking, but now happily chats away. Her speech is clear, and she can assert herself. ‘Tessa’s understanding of language took some time, but now she is comfortable talking to people. She will willingly ask people questions and is inquisitive about the environment around her,’ says Rebecca. When in unfamiliar surroundings with new people, Tessa likes to hold her special soft toy Bubba which helps her feel safe and provides comfort.

Tessa loves music and rhythm and goes to JOLT Dance, a mixed ability dance group. Her big sister Ruby goes along to support her. ‘It gives the kids so much joy,’ comments Rebecca.

She has just finished two weeks of school swimming and she is about to start Huddle Kids, a gym-based programme overseen by a psychotherapist with a background in paediatric occupational therapy.

Tessa is very fortunate to have had the support of her teacher aide, Priscilla, since she started at Redwood School. This has provided continuity for Tessa every morning. Currently in Year 2, Tessa also has a specialist teacher who works with her for 30 minutes a day.

When asked what Tessa likes doing at school, Tessa replies, ‘doing my work, my business.’

This year Tessa’s parents say she has really been ‘holding her own’ and can achieve more tasks without support. She is involved in a number of school activities such as the school production and last year she appeared in this as a penguin.

Tessa is well on her road to independence and has started to make toast at home. She is resilient and her family embrace the diversity that Tessa brings. ‘We celebrate her being a star peg in a round hole,’ says Rebecca.

‘We refer to Tess as our unicorn, not a pony like her peers.’

Our funders

The Champion Centre is sincerely grateful for the generous support of our community, through donations of time, energy and funds during the financial year ending June 2020. We thank the following supporters of the Champion Centre. Grants and donations over \$200 are listed below:

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Events

Blackboard Theatre Collective - He Says
She Says
Gift Wrapping at The Palms
K E Willis - Cards
Mitre 10 Mega/Roofing Industries - Golf Tournament
Scentre NZ - Westfield Local Heroes
Shirley Primary School - Mufti Day
Westfield Riccarton - Local Hero

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A Shaw
Donated Equipment - iPads
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Our people

Name	Profession	Name	Profession
ADCOCK-WHITE Liz	Family Support Team	FRANKLIN Jasmine	Early Intervention Educator
ALBERS-GREENWAY Gabriella	Physiotherapist	FREW Julie-Ann	Occupational Therapist
ANSLEY Amie	Physiotherapist	GOVAN Jody	Speech Language Therapist
BALLIN Miranda	Technology Supported Learning Specialist	GRAY Alison	Psychologist
BARE Ali	Music Specialist/Early Intervention Educator	GRIEVE Natasha	Early Intervention Educator
BENNETTS Lee	Speech Language Therapist	HALL Ella	Psychologist
BERESFORD Ally	Physiotherapist	HAMMOND Raewyn	Early Intervention Educator
BIRD Kerry	Senior Early Intervention Educator	HANCHARD Linda	Music Specialist
BOURNE Wendy	Early Intervention Educator	HANCOCK Jackie	Early Intervention Teacher/Technology Supported Learning Specialist
BOYD Victoria	Music Specialist	HAWKYARD Toni	Occupational Therapist
BROOKS Emily	Speech Language Therapist	HEFFERNAN, Andrea	Communications Advisor
BROOM Jesse	Playroom Specialist/Early Intervention Educator	HOSKINS Piki	Play Specialist
CARPENTER Sonja	Speech Language Therapist	HOUSE Angela	Early Intervention Educator
CHAMBERLAIN Sonya	Early Intervention Educator	KERRY Deborah	Senior Physiotherapist
CHILVERS Emma	Playroom Specialist	KINLEY Jasmine	Early Intervention Educator
CREAN Paula	Family Support Team	KOSTER Janine	Early Intervention Teacher
CRESWICK Beccy	Senior Early Intervention Teacher	MALZARD Margaret	Senior Early Intervention Educator
CRIPPS Gwenda	Early Intervention Educator	MANGOS Sally	Senior Office Administrator
CROY Carol	Speech Language Therapist	MARRA Sarah	Music Specialist
DAWSON Miriam	Early Intervention Teacher	MILLAR Grace	Music Specialist
DELANEY Jane	Accounts Clerk	MCPHILLIPS Judith	Early Intervention Educator
DUNNAGE Leanne	Technology Supported Learning Specialist	MOORE Marie	Playroom Specialist
DUTHIE Lisa	Early Intervention Teacher	MURPHY Jan	Clinical Practice Manager/Speech Language Therapist
ENTWISTLE Wendy	Executive Director	NORTON Corin	Physiotherapist
FLANAGAN Leanne	Video Capturer	NORTON Jenny	Early Intervention Educator
FOSTER-COHEN Susan	(retired Director, end of August 2020)	O'LOUGHLIN Jannie	Early Intervention Educator
		PARKER Jenene	Early Intervention Educator
		PARKINSON Natasha	Speech Language Therapist
		PORTER Lauren	Clinical Director (as of October 2020)

Name	Profession
PORTER Margaret	Early Intervention Educator
POWELL Sarah	Speech Language Therapist
PRISK-VINK Margi	Senior Occupational Therapist
REDPATH Chris	Visuals Coordinator
REID Celia	Physiotherapist
RIDDLE Christina	Psychologist
ROBERTS Carol	Early Intervention Educator
SMITH Bethany	Playroom Specialist/Office Administrator
SMITH Rebecca	Speech Language Therapist
STEVENSON Marie	Senior Early Intervention Educator
STEWART Leanne	Early Intervention Teacher
STOCK Hilary	Technology Supported Learning Specialist
STORR Karon	Grants and Fundraising Coordinator
TATTERSON Clare	Senior Psychologist
TOWNSHEND Liz	Communication Facilitator
TROTTER Jenny	Senior Speech Language Therapist
VAN DER PLAS Jill	Speech Language Therapist
VAN RENSBURG Mariana	Occupational Therapist
WILKINSON Belinda	Office Administrator
WILLIAMS Sami	Occupational Therapist
WILSON Marguerite	Family Support Team
WYLIE Julie	Music Specialist
YOUNG Emma	Early Intervention Educator

"They are great at answering any questions I have and coming up with creative ideas to help my son achieve the goals we set."

(a parent, Champion Centre Annual Consumer Survey, 2019).

Our people

Clinical presentations by staff 2019/20

Publications in peer-reviewed journals and books:

Foster-Cohen, S., van Bysterveldt, A. K. & Papp, V. (2020). "The roles of language use and vocabulary size in the emergence of word-combining in children with complex neurodevelopmental disabilities." *Journal of Child Language*.

Foster-Cohen, S. & van Bysterveldt, A. K. (2020) "Pragmatic competence in Down syndrome". In K. P. Schneider & E. Ifantidou (eds.) *Developmental and Clinical Pragmatics (Handbooks of Pragmatics, 13)*, De Gruyter Mouton, 545-580.

Porter, L., van Heugten, K. & Champion, P. R. (2020). "The risk of low risk: First time motherhood, prematurity and dyadic well-being." *(l)nfant Mental Health Journal*, early view, 22 June).

National and International Conference Presentations:

Davie-Gray, A. Moor, S. & Woodward, L. (2019) "The Early Social Communication Skills in Toddlers Prenatally Exposed to Methadone." Presentation to the 2019 New Zealand Psychological Society Annual Conference.

Foster-Cohen, S., van Bysterveldt, A. & Papp, V. (2019). "Non-linear communication trajectories in children with multi-system disabilities". Paper presented at the International Society on Early Intervention conference, Sydney, Australia 25-29th June 2019.

Gray, A., Champion, P., McKenzie, J., Foster-Cohen, S. (2019). "Evaluation of an Intervention Programme for Moderately Preterm Infants". Poster presented at the International Society on Early Intervention conference, Sydney, Australia 25-29th June 2019.

Van Bysterveldt, A. K., Foster-Cohen, S. & Papp, V. (2019). "Describing the transition from sign to word in the early vocabularies of young children with Down syndrome." Paper presented at the International Society on Early Intervention conference, Sydney, Australia 25-29th June 2019.

Wylie, J. "Singing for Life" (2019). Presentation to the New Zealand Choral Connect Conference, Wellington, July 12th, 2019

Other publications/dissemination:

Wylie, J. 2019. "The Power of Musical Play" *Oh Baby!* Issue 45 Autumn 2019.



"We are so lucky to have the Champion Centre. The specialists are so motivated and concerned to give the best service for (our child) and our family."

(a parent, Champion Centre Annual Consumer Survey, 2019).



The Champion Centre
Tamariki Toiora

The Champion Centre

Private Bag 4708 | C-Burwood Hospital | Christchurch, 8140 | (03) 383 6867
www.championcentre.org.nz