



The Champion Centre  
Tamariki Toiora

WINTER | June 2018

# CHAMPIONSHIP Newsletter



## Winter warmer

As the winter weather begins to seem greyer and bleaker than usual, we are cheered by the ongoing support for the work of the Champion Centre from kind and generous folks around the country. From doting grandparents who donate to us in lieu of birthday presents to their grandchild who attends the Centre to significant donations from trusts and bequests, we are touched by the way our community pulls together to help close the gap between what we receive from government and what it costs to run our programmes.

We are also cheered by looking forward to a gala event on October 13th to celebrate 40 years of service to the community as New Zealand's largest and longest running centre-based early intervention programme. In this issue, our Founder, Dr. Patricia Champion MBE reflects on those years and we look forward to honouring her pioneering work at the event in October.

And finally, we are cheered that the new government is beginning to invest more heavily in early intervention. I serve on a number of national advisory groups aimed at helping the government to

support vulnerable infants and young children, including those with disabilities. It is going to take a while to do everything that needs to be done, but the willingness to understand what is needed is most definitely there, and we are having direct and open conversations with Ministers about the needs of children and their families.

Stay warm,

*Susan H. Foster-Cohen*

**Dr. Susan Foster-Cohen**  
Centre Director



## "Belonging"

A reflection from Champion Centre Founder, Dr. Patricia Champion MBE.

It is now the 41st year of the Champion Centre in Christchurch,

New Zealand. Revolutionary back then, now, totally accepted as the, scientifically correct, socially appropriate and ethically right approach to take when providing therapy service, together with educational support, where babies and children may be, or are, experiencing developmental challenges.



Right from the beginning parents and caregivers have always been central to Champion Centre programmes. I have always believed that it is they who know their child best, it is they who know what will work best for their families. Our role has always been to support, guide and care, so that they can raise their child to reach his or her individual potential.

Much has changed over 40 years, society has changed, in that family life is often very different now. Scientific advances have given us new understandings of how brains and bodies grow, and of what kinds of early interventions support that best.

Inclusion of all children in their local educational settings is now the norm, not the exception. Medical and surgical developments have greatly assisted the ongoing health and wellbeing of babies and children who have many and varied challenges.

However, as I reflect on the last 40 years of my clinical and academic life

associated with the Champion Centre, the following are the things that stand out for me now, just as they stood out for me back then. - Some things change, and some things stay the same, because it is right that they do.

- Every baby or child deserves to be raised and supported within a nurturing, loving environment. All therapy services must support the emotional and social adult/child connections, so necessary for brains and bodies to grow and learn best. We knew that from child development literature back then, and we now know it also from current neuroscience.
- It is the human right of all children, whatever their unique needs, to have all the intervention supports, physical, social, emotional, educational and cultural to enable them to develop their potential within respectful, inclusive settings.
- The culture and leadership of the Champion Centre has always

been to support these values with integrity, grace and wisdom in all areas of professional life.

In conclusion I would like both to honour and thank all who have enabled and sustained this service over the last 40 plus years. - The families, the babies and children. They bravely trusted us with this new approach to developmental care.

And also Dr. Terry Caseley, Developmental Pediatrician who personally and professionally went out on a limb, 40 years ago, but believed in what we wanted to do, and continued in this belief with pediatric support for the next 35 years.

And of course all my colleagues throughout all the years, who have given of themselves so tirelessly, so compassionately, and so incredibly skillfully, to ensure all children have 'the best' of what they need. They have been courageous and ongoing advocates for every child and family in

their care. They have been so loyal to me, to their teams and to the values of the Champion Centre over all these years. The service only exists because they are there every week, all year long.

It has been my delight and enduring privilege to have been part of the journey the Champion Centre has taken over the last 40 years.

I will always remember all of the children and families whom I have known and whose lives I continue to hear of.

Not forgetting that this work has continued to be made possible by the generous financial and voluntary support of many, many, people, colleagues, friends and family, here and abroad. I never forget your kindness.

And finally, to quote Professor Bruce Perry MD (2006) ".... Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love" This is where I believe we need to stay, to work, and to care for the next 40 years.

## Art's back!

**After clearing a few attics last year and raising over \$35,000, Art from the Attic is back for 2018.**

This year The Champion Foundation Trust is hosting the event at the suitably appropriate CoCA Art Gallery, on Wednesday 15 August. Tickets for this popular event are \$25pp and available at: <https://nz.patronbase.com/CoCA/Productions/1626/Performances>

Tickets are limited so be sure you don't miss out!

Do you have any art collecting dust that you would like to donate? We are on the hunt for more art which can be auctioned off on the night! So, if you have any pieces of art, photography, or sculptures which you would be willing to donate to this fundraiser, please let us know by contacting us on: [championfoundationtrust@gmail.com](mailto:championfoundationtrust@gmail.com)



# It's quite an honour!



We all know how awesome our Senior Music Specialist Julie Wylie is, but now it appears Her Majesty does too!

Julie was awarded a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours list, something I think we all agree is so worthy in recognition of Julie's passion and commitment to musical play therapy.

Some highlights from the official citation include that Julie:

- founded the New Zealand Musical Parenting Association 22 years ago.
- **is the founder of the music programme and senior music specialist at the Champion Centre.**
- has presented music workshops and papers internationally including China, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Australia, the United Kingdom, Lithuania, Estonia, and Finland.
- has received awards for her music leadership and international awards for her music resources.
- runs her own music school, Julie Wylie Musical Play.
- is a director for an international online training programme in Musical Play and Play Therapy.

Wow! We aren't too sure how Julie does it all, but she serves the children and families at the Champion Centre with passion, joy, commitment, and a genuine desire for development outcomes through music therapy.

We recently took some time with Julie to get some insight on her inspiration.

## **How did you get involved in music therapy?**

I remember discovering musical play in my own childhood, with song, dance and musical exploration. Then when I had children of my own I got involved in developing school music programmes and productions as well as being involved in establishing community education holiday programmes. It was due to the success of these programmes that I decided to further my music career and started a music degree. Once I had completed my degree I became a high school teacher, but then took a change of direction from teaching high school pupils to developing my philosophy for musical play which was supported by training I did with international music therapists Clive and Carol Robbins.

## **Where does your inspiration come from?**

The children I work with inspire me every single day! They may be nonverbal but through their dance and musical interactions they show me how to scaffold their world through musical play. A child might give me a little thread of a song through their movement, or by playing on the chime bars, and if that thread sticks with me until I get home, I know that the song is a keeper. Some of the best songs, the best dances, and best CDs have come directly from the children and the therapists at the Champion Centre.

The children show such incredible courage, love and joy, and I get to see a miracle every day.

## **Is there one poignant moment in your career that stands out?**

Yes! I often reflect on a little girl who was born at 24 weeks. She participated in the CD Rock-a-bye Blues on the track I love my Family. Her family could see she was simply not thriving. But, when we encouraged her parents to start singing to her, she began to flourish, and she was the only participant in the recording who didn't need a second attempt. The music took her beyond the condition to a place where she could truly succeed. It fills my heart, she is now 17 years old and is going on to become a musician.

## **What can we expect from you next?**

I have started creating new songs inspired by my work in the Relating and Communicating programme at the Champion Centre. I want to release this as a new CD which is specifically for the Centre. I am also working closely with the Canterbury libraries, which has enabled me to utilise a new recording studio and I have already had the opportunity to start recording. I also aspire to open a training school for early childhood and primary school teachers where I can train music education and musical play. And, to be part of a film documentary about nurturing children through musical play. The sky is the limit with music!!!!

**Thank you for sharing your story Julie. We hope you are as proud of yourself as we are.**

**On behalf of your colleagues a heartfelt thank you for all your work, your mentoring, your friendship and your camaraderie.**

# A Champion legacy

**There are many ways to support worthy causes, including leaving a legacy gift, also known as a bequest, which can support a charity in the future.**

Many of our parents, grandparents, and supporters have said *"I wish I could do more"* to support the Champion Centre, and the children it supports.

We know that it isn't always possible to give as generously as we would like during our lifetime, as situations dictate, and other priorities take precedence.

Another way you could consider supporting us is by leaving a legacy gift in your will as part of your long-term plans. A legacy gift will enrich the lives of children with development delays and disabilities in the future, ensuring they have access to the services and support offered by our organisation.

Just like leaving a gift for family and loved ones in your will, your bequest

is a truly meaningful way to contribute to the Champion Centre.

If you have seen first-hand the benefits and outcomes made possible by the Champion Centre and you would like to consider us as a recipient in your will, please let us know and we can provide you with information to support you through making this important decision.

## A shout out to our friends at The Christchurch Press

**You might have spotted some changes to The Christchurch Press recently, as they moved to a new format for their publication, but did you also notice our awesome new advertisements, showcasing the Champion Centre and encouraging people to 'donate today'?**

**We are so grateful to the team at The Christchurch Press who support the Champion Centre with donated advertisements. These adverts allow us to increase our reach in the community, so that more people can know about the work we do.**

**A special thanks to Andrew, Boyd and Grant at Fairfax, who are great ambassadors for us - we really appreciate your support!**

*Pictured to the right is two of our regular adverts that you might see in The Christchurch Press, featuring Lars and Evannah Jane.*



## Lounging around

In our plight for new couches for the Whanau room we hit the jackpot! We had five lovely couches donated which has allowed us to update not only the worn ones in the Whanau room, but also the threadbare lounge suites in our baby room.

A big thanks to Sarah (and the Carr family) and to Kate for responding to our call out. We can assure you these couches not only brighten up our rooms but are being put to great use.

## What's happening

**Well we are sure you agree that 2018 seems to be passing by quickly, but when we look at what we have been up to you'll see it's been quite productive too!**

We have had a bit of a 'spruce up' thanks to the CDHB and their facilities decorator Graham. Some of our walls have received a much-deserved coat of paint and look fantastic! We are now on the hunt for assistance to complete the remaining painting in the large therapy rooms. If you know anyone who might be able to help us out with these spaces, please let us know.

Our team are busily preparing for our regular audits and ensuring that all of our policies and procedures are in place, and up to date. Our policies are available for all parents and caregivers to access and review.

At the end of May we hosted Minister Carmel Sepuloni at the Champion Centre. The Minister's portfolio includes Social Development and Disability Issues, both of which the Champion Centre's work falls within. The time with the Minister was used to provide insight to our 40 years of integrated therapies as well as sharing our position with the current funding shortfalls in hope that she will recognise the need for increased government funding for our organisation.

## Donate the difference

One of our new donor programmes has recently been completed and is being prepared to launch. This programme is called Donate the Difference and allows individuals and organisations to support the funding shortfall associated with one child, for a year.

Many of our supporters aren't aware that the approximate cost associated with delivering our full intensive programme equates to, on average, \$18,000 per child

annually. Government funding covers less than 60% of this amount. So, we need to raise over \$7,000, for each child, every year.

If you would like to find out about Donate the Difference, or would like to know about any of our other upcoming donor and sponsorship programmes, please get in touch with our Development Director, Abby Shaw, on: [abby.shaw@championcentre.org.nz](mailto:abby.shaw@championcentre.org.nz)



# Graduates

It's always with mixed emotions that we farewell our graduates and their families as they move on to the next stage of their educational journey. Here's a few snaps from some of our recent graduates who have started school since our last edition. We wish all our graduates the best of luck as they transition from the Champion Centre.



Pictured above is Ava who you might recognise from our recently updated Facebook profile and The Press adverts! Ava has started at St Albans Catholic School and we hear she is really focused and working super hard. Great stuff Ava, we can't wait to hear more of your updates!



Liz has also recently ventured off to school. As you can tell by her glowing smile, Liz was super excited to be heading to Belfast Primary School. We know you'll do well Liz and we look forward to hearing you are enjoying it!



Sophia is another graduate who we have sadly said farewell to recently. Sophia has headed off to St Patrick's school, and by mum and dad's accounts she is doing great and is super happy at school! All the best Sophia, we know you'll do great at St Pat's and we look forward to an update soon!



We sadly said farewell to Grace from the Champion Centre in mid-May as she transitioned to school. Grace is enjoying the learning and is loving her new teacher at Ferndale School. We can't wait to hear what exciting things you have been doing at school Grace!

## Would you be willing to share your story?

We would love to hear from families, both past and present, to create a collection of personal stories, reflecting on the individual journeys of those who have attended the Champion Centre over the past 40 years.

Not only are our team eager to hear about past graduates, but we'd also love to share your realities with more

people, so that others can learn about the services and support provided at the Champion Centre.

And we love keeping connected. We want to hear about how your family is doing, the challenges you have overcome, and if you would like to share some of the adversities you may have faced...

After all, we feel that we have played a small part in your journey and would welcome hearing more about what our families have gone on to achieve.

If you are willing to share your story with us? Let us know by dropping us an email at:  
[office@championcentre.org.nz](mailto:office@championcentre.org.nz)  
**We can't wait to hear from you!**



## Dates to remember

Here's a few key dates to remember; so, mark them down in your diary!

- **End of term**  
6 July 2018
- **Start of term**  
23 July 2018
- **Art from the Attic Fundraiser**  
Wednesday 15 August 2018
- **40th Anniversary Gala Event**  
Saturday 13 October 2018
- **Mums' Pamper Evening**  
Wednesday 24 October 2018
- **Children's Christmas Party**  
Thursday 6 December 2018

## Contact us

The Champion Centre is open  
Monday - Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

Phone 03 383 6867  
office@championcentre.org.nz  
www.championcentre.org.nz

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**Find us on Facebook:**  
www.facebook.com/  
TheChampionCentre/



The Champion Centre's

# 40th anniversary gala event

## Black tie fundraising gala event

**When:** 6.30pm Saturday 13 October 2018

**Where:** Christchurch Art Gallery, Te Puna o Waiwhetū  
Tickets on sale soon \$250pp, tables of 10 \$2,500

**For more information or to register your interest for notification of ticket sales, please email:**  
**abby.shaw@championcentre.org.nz**

## Remember to update us on your current details

Don't forget - we are moving to a new system for our supporters and community, so we can better communicate with you and reduce mailing costs!

**Let us know your preferred email address** so we can include this in our records. Send us an email or give us a call to confirm your details.  
Phone 03 383 6867 or email office@championcentre.org.nz