

THE CHRISTCHURCH EARLY
INTERVENTION TRUST

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2021 - JUNE 2022



**219 CHILDREN &
THEIR FAMILIES
RECEIVED OUR
SERVICES**

**60 TAMARIKI
GRADUATED
FROM OUR
PROGRAMMES**

**64 CHILDREN
SUPPORTED AT
THEIR EARLY
CHILDHOOD
CENTRE**



FROM THE CHAIR

GRAEME H DANIEL MNZM

The Champion Centre has over the last financial year provided services to 219 children and their families.

The Covid Pandemic continued to challenge the service delivery however the innovative practices put in place ensured the service had little disruption. This is testament to the exceptional work that our staff undertake under the guidance of our two directors, Wendy Entwistle and Lauren Porter.

During 2021, the directors with the full support of the trustees, reviewed the programme delivery with the intent of improving the quality of the service while ensuring that the staff were paid at a higher level than previously possible. The revised programme delivery was implemented at the beginning of the 2022 year. The change brought with it some challenges however staff have made every effort to move forward with the new model of delivery.

The board has been able to support the increase of remuneration that staff receive and hope that in time to come we will be, at a minimum, able to continue to match or better salaries compared to other similar non-government services. Our staff are our most valued asset.

This year we have been fortunate to appoint and welcome the Right Honourable Ruth Richardson as a trustee. Ruth brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Trust.

"With all the helpful tips and strategies you have shown us, we are now very confident that we have enough 'tools in our tool belts' to be able to not just cope with but conquer any obstacles that are thrown our way. We couldn't have done it without you and all we can say is thank you Champion Centre, from the bottom of our hearts".

The CEIT meets on a regular basis and are kept very well informed of the operations of the Centre. The two directors provide comprehensive reports to the board including financial statements to ensure the board is able to govern the Centre at the high level expected from all government departments who provide operational funds. The Chair of the Champion Foundation Trust attends the CEIT meetings to provide updates on the work of the Foundation who are charged with raising funds to support the operations of the Centre in consultation with the Champion Centre's Executive Director, the CEIT Chair and Tracey Horsham, our in-house Fundraising and Marketing Coordinator.

Thank you to our generous philanthropic and individual donors, The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Oranga Tamariki and the Champion Foundation Trust for their support.

I acknowledge the professionalism and expertise of our two directors and staff. You are what gives the Champion Centre the highly respected reputation it is well known for.

My sincere thanks to my fellow trustees who freely give their time and expertise to the Trust.

Graeme H Daniel MNZM

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WENDY ENTWISTLE



It has been a privilege to continue to lead the Champion Centre over the past year alongside Lauren, our Clinical Director. The year has presented change and challenge, as well as success and opportunities for celebration. Throughout, our commitment to ensuring the best outcomes for children with disabilities and developmental challenges and their whānau has been unwavering.

The significant impact of the Champion Centre's work was recently highlighted by Impact Lab. Commissioned by the Champion Foundation Trust, Impact Lab set out to measure the quality of our service and its impact on the lives of children and families both now and into the future. The approach was rigorous and included the gathering of data and evidence to demonstrate and test the value and effectiveness of the Champion Centre model. We were delighted by the results which testify to the strength and value of our programmes.

Impact Lab's CEO, Maria English, presenting their findings, described the Champion Centre as a 'remarkable translation of evidence to practice that improves lives'. She praised the focus on the 'whole family and the relationships around the child', noting that 'the Champion Centre seeks to achieve a shift towards aspiration and a view of the positive potential of children and their lives'. She also noted how the 'stable nurturing relationships around children enable them to achieve their potential'.

In short, the Champion Centre's focus on flexible and individualised support to meet the individual needs and aspirations of children and their parents was deemed foundational to our success. More information on Impact Lab's report is available on our website and we hope that donors and supporters will continue to feel confident that their generous donations really are making a difference.

"We are grateful for all of the ideas/tips/strategies you shared that were helpful to us as we navigate parenting a little one with additional needs."

We always love to hear news of Champion Centre graduates, so were particularly pleased to host graduate Bella Lammers through a Project Search Internship. Project Search is designed to give high school leavers with learning disabilities the experience and skills they need to enter the workforce. Bella, who attended the Champion Centre as a baby, now age 21, joined our team for 10 weeks assisting staff with important tasks and freeing up their time for other work. Bella quickly became a valued and reliable colleague who certainly left a gap when she moved on.

The Champion Centre is a strong and supportive community with many valued parts to it. Once again this year, I extend sincere thanks to:

Our Champion Centre community of supporters, from individual donors large and small, to corporates, Trusts and government funders. It is only because of your support that we can continue delivering our unique service for Canterbury children and their whānau.

Our Board of Trustees and most notably our Chair, Graeme Daniel MNZM who has provided more than 14 years of dedicated service to the Champion Centre.

Our staff who have worked together as a strong team, constantly striving to provide the very best service.

And finally, we remain honoured and grateful to the families and whānau who join us, placing their trust in us to support them and their children on their developmental journeys.



Past student Bella Lammers



FROM THE CLINICAL DIRECTOR

LAUREN PORTER

It has been two years since I was appointed as Clinical Director and have had the amazing experience of working alongside Wendy, the Executive Director, our committed Board of Trustees (most especially our recent Chair, Graeme Daniel), our dedicated and highly skilled staff, and our brilliant tamariki and whānau.

The pillars of our work are our foundation of relational, family-centred, strengths-based, ecological and reflective practice. I have reflected a great deal over the year on what it means to be relational and family-centred. The more I get to know our community of parents, the more I understand that the journey of our whānau can be incredibly lonely and isolating. The more I understand this, the more I set a goal of increasing the level of support and connection we offer each person who comes through our doors. Whilst everyone's journey is unique, no one should have to walk the path alone. This is true for children, for parents and also for our hard-working staff.

Over this past year, we have continued to examine, assess and respond to ways we can improve a sense of connection and well-being for both our enrolled tamariki, the adults in their lives and their wider whānau.

At the start of 2022 we began including therapist-led groups in all of our programmes. For our Middle Years and Transition to School programmes, this has meant that all children now have the addition of clinically-relevant group time scheduled into their morning. Groups give both tamariki and adults the opportunity to connect on a social-personal level. For children, it offers a way to learn skills and develop capacities that can only be honed in the presence of others. For adults, it offers a way to be present with one's child whilst also forging relationships with other parents and caregivers.

"We are constantly grateful for the support, encouragement and love demonstrated to us on a weekly basis. Thank you!"

We have addressed other ways to truly live our commitment to connection and relationship-based intervention. We have changed our twice-yearly Individual Plan process to be more parent-centred and supportive. And we also now host regular afternoon teas for our parent and caregiver community, giving people a place to congregate, share a cuppa, and get to know each other further. The urge to forge deeper connections across our community has not been confined to our initiatives either. Two of our wonderful mothers began a Champion Centre Facebook page that now has over 70 families connecting, communicating, supporting each other and even meeting up in person.

We continue our commitment to ongoing evaluation of how to improve our services and better meet the needs of the children and families we serve. We are keen to learn from others and have been reaching out to make strong connections with those in the early intervention community, both locally and throughout the country.

It is my belief that next year's annual report will contain further updates about our quest to never rest on our laurels and to strengthen our ties within, between and outside of our service. I thank each person who has been part of that effort – every staff member; every donor; every parent, child and whānau, past and present; every AGM attendee; every person who has ever taken an interest in our work and helped spread the word or walked alongside a family in our service. Thank you to each one of you.



WHO WE ARE

AND WHAT WE DO



Who we are:

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. The Centre is based on the Burwood Hospital campus in Christchurch and provides services to families in the Canterbury area.

What we do:

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 Kaitiaki Māori. 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.

The two key elements of our service include:

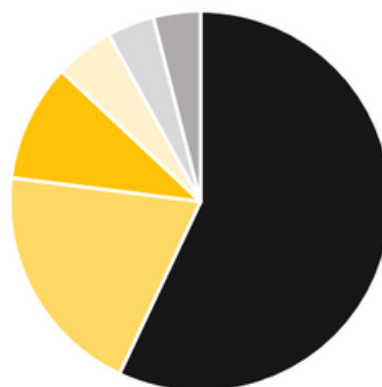
- An Early Intervention programme
- A Monitoring programme for children who are at developmental risk either due to prematurity or other health related vulnerabilities.

All children are referred to the Centre by a paediatrician.

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.

Ethnicity of children 2021 / 2022:



■ 57 % NZ European	■ 20 % Māori
■ 10 % Asian	■ 5 % Other European
■ 4 % Pacific Peoples	■ 4 % Other / Not Stated

94% of families told us we do either very well or well at providing the information, answers and advice they need

96 % of families told us that attending the Champion Centre helped them to understand and support their child's development either really well or well

94% of families told us that they very much feel they are an active partner in their child's early intervention programme at the Champion Centre

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



OUR IMPACT

GEORGIA'S REFLECTIONS

My second son Ollie began exhibiting signs of developmental regression at age 15 months. It felt as though I was watching someone turn down the dimmer switch on my little boy. Eye contact, responding to his own name, his words, his waving, clapping, verbal and non-verbal communication all stopped, to the point where the Ollie I had known was gone, and there was a new, far more complex and challenging child to parent. After a raft of tests and paediatric hospital appointments, we were given a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. In the cacophony of information, pamphlets, possibilities, questions, and fear, the only thing that really made any sense to me, was that I knew I had to get Ollie some help, to give him the best chance of regaining some of the skills he had lost, and I knew this came in the form of early intervention.

From the moment I picked up the phone to enquire about a space for Ollie at the Champion Centre I felt like I had an extra pair of hands to help me hold up the world. Very quickly, Marguerite, one of the social workers from the Centre, came out to our home and gently talked us through the process of Ollie attending The Champion Centre and what that would look like for our family. This was just the beginning of what would be more than 4 years of meeting some of the most outstanding humans I would ever have the privilege of knowing.

Ollie soon began attending The Champion Centre weekly in the 'relating and communicating' programme, designed to show children like Ollie, who are most comfortable in their own world, that joining us and engaging with us, although challenging for them, can be rewarding and enjoyable. Participating in this therapy with Ollie, working alongside a hugely experienced occupational therapist and speech therapist, was the start of my life changing education that would help me understand and empower my son to reach his fullest potential, and be the mum he needed me to be. Through weekly therapy, using movement, visuals, repetition, song, child-led play, we helped Ollie become regulated in his body so that learning could be achieved. With dedicated therapists on their hands and knees, giving every ounce of their immense expertise and heart, my little man began to respond to us. For the first time in a long time, Ollie was letting us in.

At the Champion Centre so much learning and change was occurring, and not just within Ollie. I was offered 6 funded counselling sessions to help me come to terms with the enormity of being a parent of a child with Ollie's level of needs. I was referred to the most wonderful counsellor, who has a grown-up son with Down syndrome, who, like Ollie, was non-verbal. There was so much that I never needed to explain to her, as we shared an understanding that needed no words.

The connections which are provided with other parents is just one of many ways in which the Champion Centre nourishes a sense of community and family within the individuals who attend. I was struck by an overwhelming sense of kinship. It is this, holistic approach, that helps make the Champion Centre so unique.

As well as weekly early intervention therapy, Ollie also attended the Champion Centre Hydrotherapy sessions in the Burwood therapy pool. This was often Ollie and my happiest time of the week, and I cherished every moment connecting with my son, in his happy place, the water.

It is impossible to really do justice to all the ways in which the Champion Centre enriched mine and Ollie's lives and nurtured us through those vital early intervention years. But to give you an idea of the level of support we were provided, by the time Ollie reached the weekly Transition to School programme, we had had the support of a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist, a music therapist, a social worker, an early intervention teacher, a psychologist, technology assisted learning specialists, physiotherapists, early intervention educators and the list goes on. All for our child and family, at no cost to us.

Ollie stayed at the Champion Centre until age 6. Thanks to the outstanding team he was ready for school and to spread his wings. But I wasn't ready to say goodbye, and probably never will be. I feel I will be forever indebted to the countless staff who so expertly supported Ollie during his time there.

A mother whom I'd met in my first few weeks at the centre, and had not met again since, contacted me having seen a recent "Attitude" documentary made about Ollie and my family. She told me she wouldn't have recognised me. I thought she was referring to the covid weight and new wrinkles, but it turns out she meant that my connection with Ollie, my attitude to his needs, and my outlook on life were completely different to the shell-shocked mother she had met, those years before. I attribute this change to the time I am privileged to have experienced at the Champion Centre.

There is no greater impact you can have on someone's life, than to give them the tools, knowledge and power to not only face a life they never could have imagined they would be living, but to thrive in it. At the Champion Centre every day you will find angels behind a desk, phone, swing, keyboard, swiss ball, and a raft of other therapy tools. Mostly though, you'll find them on their hands and knees, devoting their days to changing the outcome of hundreds of children in Canterbury, and cementing a legacy of kindness, that is life changing and extraordinary.

OUR FUNDING

AND SUPPORTERS

A snapshot of our supporters in 2021 / 2022

- S & A Cumming Charitable Trust
- Farina Thompson Charitable Trust
- MusicHelps
- Dove Charitable Trust
- Rātā Foundation
- S J Charitable Trust
- Independent Fisheries
- Robert & Barbara Stewart Charitable Trust
- Blogg Charitable Trust
- Jones Foundation
- NZ Lottery Grants Board
- Kiwi Gaming Foundation
- David Ellison Charitable Trust
- E B Millton Charitable Trust
- Conyers Masonic Lodge
- Redwood Physiotherapy
- I C Holdings Ltd
- A Verkerk Ltd
- Duncan Cotterill
- Dynamic Controls
- CS Luney Charitable Trust
- J M Butland Charitable Trust
- R D Butland Charitable Trust
- Champion Foundation Trust
- Dove Electronics Ltd
- Westfield Local Hero
- New Zealand Charitable Foundation
- The Philip Brown Fund
- Elizabeth Ball Charitable Trust
- P G Brophy
- S & M Manning
- S Johnson
- S M He
- T & C Talbot
- D T Howell
- J E Leggat
- M & J Stevenson
- P & C Curry
- M & R Wright
- J M Ballin
- P & S Williams
- D Heard
- A Morgan
- Digital Wings
- Brown Kiwi
- Meadow Mushrooms
- The Press
- Mainland Foundation
- Lobblinn Farms Ltd
- Southern Trust



Our Funding – Closing the Gap:

As a Charitable Trust, our services are funded by a mix of government funding and fundraising through grants, individual and corporate donors, philanthropy and events.

Government funding only covers approximately 77% of the \$2.5 million annual operational costs to run the Centre, leaving a shortfall of approximately \$600,000.00 to source from the philanthropic sector. This is 'the gap' we seek to close each year in order to provide a fully comprehensive range of services to Canterbury families.

While the gap is never easy to fill, we are once again grateful to the many members of our community who truly understand the impact of our service and have enabled us to support so many children and their whānau. Without their support we could not continue to help 'realise every child's potential'.

Thank you to our major funders, grant makers and companies who have donated considerable funds over a number of years and ensured our services are sustainable. Thanks also to our individual and community donors whose donations and efforts, big and small have made the difference to the lives of many children and families. We couldn't do it without all of you.

Thank you to our government funders, including the Ministry of Education, Canterbury DHB, Ministry of Health and Oranga Tamariki.

Ongoing fundraising is a primary focus to ensure we can continue to deliver our Champion Model to families.

"Nowhere in New Zealand is there another place like the Champion Centre, and maybe even the world! The work they do with preschool age children and babies is still to this day trailblazing, revolutionary, and ground-breaking, and I am awestruck at the level of care they provide every family that walks through their door."

Heartfelt thanks goes out to our very generous Regular Givers, Payroll Givers and Individual Donors who have contributed to The Champion Centre. We are so grateful for your support!

We also thank government agencies for their ongoing support and our community who recognise our value and give so generously.





THANK YOU

FOR SUPPORTING US!

"The Champion Centre is where we come to focus on her strengths, and all the amazing things she can do, and that has been so important to me"

FAMILIES TELL US ...

"The empathy and love. Being part of something and therefore inclusion. Partnership in allowing and encouraging my child to be the best he can be"

"I've asked a million questions and everyone is always happy to answer my queries"

"The Champion Centre helps me feel supported in raising a baby with some complications. I feel like I'm not alone and that they are there to help with any questions or new difficulties we have. If we didn't have the amazing team my child wouldn't be doing as well as she is and I would be very stressed!"

"Seeing all her specialists in one morning is a really great format"

"An amazing community of people who are genuinely interested in helping children"

"Being in an environment where staff understand what you are dealing with without being told and being able to interact with other parents who are experiencing similar challenges"

"The wrap around approach is incredible, and that there is so much help all in one place. Everyone is lovely and very approachable. It makes it an extremely easy place to come"

THE CHAMPION CENTRE

Main Entrance Burwood Hospital
300 Burwood Road, Christchurch 8083
C/- Burwood Hospital, Private Bag 4708
Christchurch 8140
033836867
Office@championcentre.org.nz

