



Great Start House  
5 Cooper Street, Ph 567 5437



## Celebrating Our Community Newsletter March 2010

Would you like to receive updates through the Great Start email network? Contact [kirsten.grenfell@barnardos.org.nz](mailto:kirsten.grenfell@barnardos.org.nz)

### Community Garden

Ever wanted your own garden plot? How about adopting one of our garden plots and enjoy taking home fresh veges you've grown yourself! This can be an individual, family or group project, for the young or the old.

The Great Start House has nine garden plots for our community to adopt. It's free, you simply pick a section you'd like to garden. There are no schedules or meetings, you just plant, water and weed at your own pace. No expertise is needed. We have seedlings, we have the tools, all we need is you!

Anyone wanting to be part of this project can come along to the Great Start House at 5 Copper Street, Taita or phone the Great Start House on 567 5437 and speak to one of our friendly team today!



Children enjoy harvesting pumpkins at the Great Start community garden.

### A Big Thank you

To all the wonderful people of Taita, Pomare and beyond;

It would be hard to name you all but you know who you are.... parents, residents, young and old who just help out and get involved, people who want to participate and for their own community to thrive.

Great Start would also like to acknowledge with grateful thanks the contribution made by our generous sponsors. Their commitment allows us to make a difference.

Barnardos, The Todd Foundation, Southern Trust, The Community Trust of Wellington, Bunnings Warehouse Naenae

## Everyone welcome at Great Start

Great Start is all about supporting local Taita people, especially the children. It is based at The Great Start House, 5 Cooper Street.

Great Start is about you in your community, Everyone is welcome and everything is free but we are passionate about strengthening our community through reciprocity so we ask that you *give* as well as receive. This can be by way of koha, time, help or any skills you can offer – so *everyone* becomes both a giver and a receiver and the real work of society, which is caring, loving, being a citizen, a neighbour and a human being is valued.

Connecting with young children and their families is our starting point. We want our children and parents to have strong support networks and lots of opportunities to play and learn where people can both get and give help when it is needed. We also want to find ways of connecting across cultures, across generations and with groups and people who can easily become invisible or are dealing with really hard issues.

Some of the things we do and are involved with are Community Toy Library, Community Gardening, Midwifery Clinic, Breastfeeding & Pregnancy Support, Parenting Information and Baby Welcome Packs for new Parents.

We have Play, Messy Play, Craft and Music Sessions for 0-5 year olds and SPACE (a programme including play sessions for new babies and their parents). We also support the local initiative for the new park in Taita, 'My Story' in schools, Time Banking, Before School Checks, Mum 4 Mum, Te Ropu Harakeke Flax Weaving Group, Local Playgroups, the Taita Community Market and local men's initiatives. Whare Kai Pepe Baby Café is coming soon and so too is a Video Relay Service Telephone - an amazing tool that will be available for use by our Deaf community and also, we hope, by the wider community.

The house, and the activities that happen in it, are only one part of Great Start and only a small part of what happens in Taita. There are many other spaces and places where connections occur and grow. We celebrate the richness of our community.

# Great Start wins community awards

The Great Start team were delighted to receive two awards for their work with the community and their role in helping bring alive its dreams for the Walter Nash Park.

The team was surprised to discover only a few days before the Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards 2009 that Great Start had been nominated in the Education and Child Youth Development category, for their ongoing work with families in Taita.

On the night, the team were “delighted and astonished” to not only win this award, but also the Hutt City Supreme Award.

Karen Clifford, from Barnardos, has led the Great Start initiative since its inception beginning with a door-knocking survey to learn what the community wanted for Taita.

“When we learned about the nomination we just were excited about the opportunity to get dressed up and to listen to all the wonderful community work that is being done in the Hutt,” Karen said.

“To our surprise we won. Then when the Supreme Award for Hutt City was announced, we were still so excited about the first award we didn’t hear the call.”

While delighted with the acknowledgement, Karen is not focussed on awards.

“It is important to recognise the work being done but also being humble and knowing, hey, we’d be doing this anyway. And it’s not about us; it’s the whole community that is making this happen,” she said.



The Great Start team take the stage at the Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards.

A highlight of the night was a presentation by two of the children involved in the first visit to the Hutt City Council to share the community’s dreams for the park.

Kaisa Fa’atui and Danielle Tafili, along with Sue Rei of Great Start, told their story about the park using a ‘story sack’ of props, including a model hand-crafted by Kaisa’s dad.

## Taita park project team effort

Taita used to have a park but it was taken down to make way for a larger car park so in 2008 Great Start and local families visited Hutt City Council requesting a new space for the children to play. Since then the council and the children have been working together to create the Walter Nash Park.

The blessing of the land (whakaora whenua) took place in September followed by a planting working bee and picnic. All the community, from our very young to the elderly, were able to participate. Local pre-schoolers accompanied council staff, who were released from office duties for the day, to plant shrubs, laugh, eat, play and sing together.



There were prayers and songs in many languages and a mixing of ages and diversity of backgrounds. A day release work gang, as well as the carving group at Rimutaka Prison have committed to the playground project. Nine pou (feature posts) will stand in the park, designed and carved by the community.

In December people came together for the ‘Telling Tales of Taita’ event where carvers of the pou had asked for people with stories of Taita’s history to come and share what they knew. Carvers, interested locals, people who had an association with early Taita and Aroha residents, some of whom have lived in Taita for many years shared a cuppa served in beautiful bone china cups and their stories of how things were way back when there were no cars or roads here

What better way for a community to come together than creating a play space for our young and a meeting place for all – Growing new possibilities for Taita.

## Taita market

The Taita Community Market is the place to be to get a bargain, catch up with friends, have a kai, meet your neighbours or even sell your own wares.

The market is held on the last Saturday of every month until November, 9 am to 12 noon in the Taita Community Hall, Taine Street, Taita.

Everyone greets each other like a long lost cousin, the kids run around playing and there’s plenty of time and space to stand and chat.

Lots of local people, are getting behind the project and helping out with anything from painting large banners to mailbox flyer drops. All help is welcomed! We need more advertising billboards, access to free photocopying of flyers, people to do mail-box drops of flyers, help with phoning stall holders etc. **Please phone Kirsten on 567 5437 if you can lend a hand.**

Stalls are great for groups wanting to fundraise and the cost is only \$10! To book a stall phone Jo on 567 6558 or Kirsten on 567 5437.

# Strong support available for Taita parents

## Good news for expectant parents in Taita.

Two years ago it was quite difficult for local women to get a midwife and access antenatal and postnatal services. Now it is much easier for a pregnant Mum and her partner and children to get all the support they need right in their local community. Pictured at right is Emma, our new midwife who joined us at the Great Start House in January 2010.

We offer programmes centred on the needs of the families that are accessing her services. These include both antenatal and postnatal support, parent education and practical activities.

Several mums who have recently had their babies are connecting back into Great Start through breastfeeding support training, baby packs, toy library, play groups and wish to be part of a new SPACE programme, which will be tailored to their needs.

While they are at the house they'll be encouraged to create a memory box for the new member of their family. Dads are welcomed and encouraged to be active in the lives of their children. Recently two local residents have taken this one step further.



Emma is the midwife based at Great Start.

Wanting to ensure that as a community Taita acknowledges and celebrates every baby born in its midst they have put together baby packs and deliver them to local families once baby is born. It's their way of saying "We've noticed and we care". The welcome packs for families with a new baby include information about services, activities and resources for new parents.

The packs have samples and clothing for new babies and an invitation to have a family photo taken at Great Start.

Breast feeding support in our area is in constant demand. In 2009 Great Start supported Cheryl, our antenatal clinic founding midwife, to give 11 local women breast feeding training to use in their own communities. We will provide ongoing support for these peer counsellors, so they can access the families who need help and also feel able to turn to an 'expert' if they need additional support or clarity. The new breastfeeding 'peer counsellors' have plans to develop a Whare Kai Pepe (Baby café) which will be a great space for mums and dads to meet with other families and have the opportunity to meet a 'breastfeeding supporter'.

**To make an appointment with Emma, our midwife** or to change your appointment, or leave a message for Emma phone 566 6999 and ask for Maternity Enquiries.

**For emergencies**, phone the Delivery Suite on 569 7535. This is a 24 hour help line.

## Time Bank for Taita

A local resident has expressed an interest in developing a time banking scheme in Taita. Helen has used the Great Start kitchen table to have conversations with other interested people about this idea and so far the enthusiastic time banking crew have had a couple of 'working lunches' to further these ideas. Helen has given the T2GT (Time 2 Give & Take) project her own time and energy by researching the possibilities of time banking. The following story is Helen's perspective of the initiative.

### "We have what we need if we use what we have"

Time banking is about being good neighbours, realising that although there is not a lot of money around there is a lot of wealth in the community. It's a way for people to receive, but also to give. People don't want to feel like they've got their hands out all the time. Everyone has something to offer and it's a way of recognising that.

Time banking is a system where people can exchange their time and skills with each other without it costing a cent. Time banking is an idea where people can bank hours of their time in a trade for skills, an example would be offering to mow lawns in exchange for babysitting. One hour = one time credit and everyone's time has the same value. It's a way to empower the community.

For more information call Helen on 567 5437 or drop her an email at [Helen.hamilton@barnardos.org.nz](mailto:Helen.hamilton@barnardos.org.nz)



## Over 300 toys at Taita Toy Library

The range of toys and games is suitable for newborns right through to 5 year-olds and families may borrow four items at one time. Borrowing toys from the toy library means that children can enjoy having new toys to play with which are right for their age, free of charge. Check out the Taita Community Toy Library at The Great Start House.

# What's happening in our community?

## Mondays

### **Community Toy Library**

10am to 12:30pm at The Great Start House, 5 Cooper Street, Taita. Lots of awesome toys to borrow, free, all welcome!

### **DHB/Great Start Midwifery Clinic**

9:30am to 3:30pm at The Great Start House, 5 Cooper Street, Taita. To make an appointment with midwife Emma, ph 566 6999 and ask for Maternity Enquiries.

### **Monday Music**

1pm to 2pm at The Great Start House, 5 Cooper Street, Taita. Music sessions for under 5's, free, anyone can come along and join the fun!

### **Public Access Computers**

10am to 5:30pm at the Taita Library, Taine St, Taita. Free access to library catalogue and community/educational internet sites (great for kid's homework!). Email and other internet access available at a small charge. Coffee machine and newspapers to read too!

## Tuesdays

### **Pomare Playgroup**

10am to 12noon at the Pomare Community Hall, Farmer Crescent, Pomare. Free, fun & friendly, all welcome!

### **Community Bread, Fruit & Vege Drop**

11am at St Matthews Church, Reynolds St, Taita. Free kai going to good homes! All welcome to come along and join the fun and community spirit, have a chat and a laugh, catch up on what's happening. Kindly sponsored by St. Vincent de Pauls.

### **Public Access Computers**

10am to 5:30pm at the Taita Library, Taine St, Taita.

## Wednesdays

**Taita Titans Playgroup**, including Community Toy Library 9:30am to 11:30am at The Taita Community Centre, Taine St, Taita.

Free play and fun for everyone, see you there!

### **Coming soon**

#### **Ropu Harakeke Flax Weaving**

We will keep you posted as to when the popular Ropu Harakeke flax weaving classes will start again on Wednesdays at St Matthews Church in Reynolds St, Taita.

## Wednesdays

### **Pomare Playgroup**

10am to 12noon at the Pomare Community Hall, Farmer Crescent, Pomare. Free, fun & friendly, all welcome!



### **SPACE**

12pm to 2pm at The Great Start House, 5 Cooper Street, Taita. Free play sessions to support learning and development for mainly first time parents and babies (please note booking is necessary, phone Jeanette on 567 5437)

### **Stories & Craft for little ones**

2pm to 3pm at the Taita Library, Taine St, Taita. Free, just come along!

### **Public Access Computers**

10am to 5:30pm at the Taita Library, Taine St, Taita.

## Thursdays

### **Public Access Computers**

10am to 5:30pm at the Taita Library, Taine St, Taita. Free access to library catalogue and community/educational internet sites (great for kid's homework!). Email and other internet access available at a small charge. Coffee machine and newspapers to read too!

## Fridays

### **Public Access Computers**

10am to 5:30pm at the Taita Library, Taine St, Taita. Free access to library catalogue and community/educational internet sites (great for kids' homework!). Email, and other internet access, available at a small charge. Coffee machine and newspapers to read too!

### **Coming soon....**

#### **Book Club Group!**

Possibly on Fridays, commencing April, at the Taita Library, Taine St, Taita. We will keep you posted as to when the book club group will be starting....



**The Great Start Team**

**The Great Start team (from left) Kirsten Karen, Heather, Helen, Maraea, Jeanette, Sailine, Sue and Pixie the puppy warmly invite you to visit us at The Great Start House, 5 Cooper St, Taita. Everybody welcome!**

