



Te Ope Whakāora

your support in action

# Reporter

2011 ISSUE 1



Photo by Jason Oxenham

## Christmas rush during holiday season

The Salvation Army saw a significant increase in the need for its services over the Christmas holidays, alongside an increased response from the public.

Christmas is a trying time for the many families struggling to make ends meet around New Zealand. The 2010/2011 holiday season was no different.

Families across the country struggled to put a special meal on the table for Christmas Day or even to provide gifts for their families. They experienced loneliness or felt the burden of debt so heavily that Christmas was just like any other day, devoid of any special happiness or joy.

Many of these families, though, found help through Salvation Army centres throughout the country.

'Over the holiday period we saw an increase in the number of people coming in for food parcels, gifts for their families and budgeting,' says Major Wendy Barney, who oversees Salvation

Army Community Ministries centres in the lower North Island. 'We also saw a different type of person coming in: people who have been made redundant, have a mortgage and a family to support and don't know how to make ends meet on a dramatically decreased budget.'

Over the last financial quarter (from 1 October to 31 December), Salvation Army centres saw 10,681 families presenting for food parcels, an almost 10 per cent increase after last year's dramatic increase of 17 per cent. 5,110 of these families had never come to The Salvation Army before or had not presented at a centre for over two years. The Salvation Army also provided 2,035 budgeting advice services throughout New Zealand, a 17 per cent increase from the same quarter last year.

'We keep hearing that we are out of the recession, but I don't think we are,' says Major Barney. 'I think that we are still seeing the effects of the recession, particularly on working families, and that we will be dealing with these effects for some time to come.'

'A lot of the people The Salvation Army sees coming in for help have been used to working out these types of issues for themselves,' she adds. 'But when you are up against a brick wall that you can't see through, you find you need help.'

Alongside an increased need for its services, The Salvation Army also witnessed a large and generous outpouring of support from the New Zealand public across the nation.

'This year we've seen again the public's generosity in their giving,' comments Major Barney. 'The community is being a part of what's happening in their neighbourhoods—it's so wonderful to see people excited about what they can do for their neighbours.'

*The Salvation Army is grateful that so many supporters helped make the holiday season a lot easier for other New Zealanders. Salvation Army staff and volunteers are now gearing up for another year of meeting the needs of families in your communities and appreciate your ongoing support.*

### Inside:

One life changed

New Zealand's most reputable not-for-profit

Girl helped out of homelessness

Giving families a break

## One life changed

Salvation Army child sponsorship meant David could overcome his difficult past and look forward to a bright future.

David Raj grew up in Fiji. His dad left the family when he was a young boy. Afterwards, his mother remarried an abusive man who did not care for David or his sisters.

'I can never forget the turbulent times that my mum and our family went through while staying with my stepfather,' says David. 'Mum was abused all the time, and my stepfather used to kick me if I tried to intervene.'

When he was 13 years old, David's stepfather forced David, his mother and two sisters out onto the streets. David's mother was forced to work tirelessly to provide for her children, yet the family could find no means of accommodation on their meagre income.

'Mum worked so hard on a farm to provide for us kids,' says David. 'She

would never be bashed again; but the fact was: we were homeless.'

A friend of David's mother directed the family to The Salvation Army where they were invited to stay in the officers' (ministers') home while The Salvation Army built a small house for the family.

David's mother began selling fruit at the market during this time, while The Salvation Army's Cherish a Child sponsorship programme found David an overseas sponsor to assist him in his primary and secondary school education.

'Life was never easy, but with the help of The Salvation Army and my sponsor, I was able to complete my secondary education and begin a degree in Accounting and Economics at the local university,' says David. 'I never would have dreamed that I would even complete my secondary education. The Salvation Army was such a blessing in my life.'

David went on to be employed as a Financial Controller in a respected Fijian business. He joined The Salvation Army

and now sponsors a child in Fiji, just as someone did for him as a child.

The Salvation Army's Cherish a Child sponsorship programme currently helps over 1200 children in 20 countries with education, clothes and health needs. Around 500 children accepted into the programme still require sponsorship.

*For more information on child sponsorship or to sponsor a child, please contact Glenys Heese, Child Sponsorship Secretary, on 09 639 1120 or visit [salvationarmy.org.nz](http://salvationarmy.org.nz).*

“ She [mum] would never be bashed again; but the fact was: we were homeless. ”

New Zealander Mandy Carian works with children at a Salvation Army children's home in Suriname





## Sallies helped me at my lowest

A new Salvation Army women's emergency house helps keep young girls from homelessness.

Somaly came to Sanctuary House because she had nowhere else to go: alone in New Zealand at 20 years of age she found herself forced to live on the streets after a living arrangement with an acquaintance ended abruptly.

'I was sleeping on the couch,' says Somaly. 'But my friend and I had some arguments and I didn't feel safe there. I knew I couldn't live there anymore, even though I had nowhere else to go.'

Somaly came to New Zealand when she was just 17 to live and to work while gaining a degree in hotel management. She fell in love with the country and took English classes at local community centres to prepare for her study. During this time she was directed by an agency to attend a Salvation Army life skills programme for youth called Equipt to

help her find a job, manage her budget and prepare for studying in New Zealand.

It was during this six-week course that her accommodation with her friend fell through, leaving her on the streets, looking for alternative accommodation on a tight budget: 'At the end of the day I just couldn't live there anymore, so I talked to the director at The Salvation Army who said I could come live here.'

Somaly became one of the first young women to move into Sanctuary House, an accommodation and emergency support home for young women aged 15-23. There she and others received help in CV writing, finding a job and maintaining a healthy lifestyle in a positive environment.

'It was so comfortable to live here at Sanctuary House,' says Somaly. 'It meant I could concentrate on getting a job and getting enrolled in school and not have to worry about where I was going to sleep.'

Somaly now works full time and is enrolled to start hotel reception and

hotel management courses at the end of February. She found her own flat after two months of living at Sanctuary House and couldn't be more thankful for the help she has received.

'Some people aren't going to look at you twice when you are poor or hurting,' says Somaly, 'but here at The Salvation Army they never mind; they will be your good friend.'

'If I couldn't have come here, I don't know where I would have gone,' she continues. 'I would have been really scared if I would have had to be by myself with no one next to me. It is so nice to have this place here to help people just like me who are struggling.'

Many young women throughout New Zealand encounter homelessness through various circumstances. Sanctuary House can cater for up to four girls at a time with two places reserved for girls referred from Child, Youth and Family and the remaining two open to community or local court referrals.



## Most Reputable NZ Not-for-Profit

HayGroup gave The Salvation Army the title of Most Reputable Not-for-Profit Organisation in New Zealand following a survey sent to business leaders throughout the country. Participants chose an organisation and rated it on criteria including: having a clear and compelling vision, maintaining strong and effective leadership, and actively contributing to the wider New Zealand community. The Salvation Army was

chosen based on this criteria. As one participant commented, 'The Salvation Army goes where most of us fear to tread and help the most needy ... They make the world a better place.' The Salvation Army would like to thank HayGroup for conducting the survey as well as the New Zealand public for their trusting support of The Salvation Army's mission of 'caring for people, transforming lives and reforming society'.

## Giving families a break

The Salvation Army and InterContinental Hotel Group provide holidays for families under pressure.

The Salvation Army works with many families throughout the year who find it necessary to manage on a tight budget, especially in the weeks and months following Christmas.

While many of us take the opportunity to relax with our families away from the busyness of work and school, these families continue to struggle to pay the bills and are unable to relieve the pressures of life because they lack the money or face other hardships.

The Salvation Army, alongside InterContinental Hotel Group, recognises the importance of families spending time together in a relaxed setting, particularly as breaks create the opportunity for families to spend quality time together. The Give a Family a Break programme was created on this premise and is designed to give disadvantaged families who come to The Salvation Army for help a holiday during summertime.

In the months leading up to summer, InterContinental Hotel Group fundraised for the programme, holding an online auction and sausage sizzles to raise over \$25,000 for up to 30 disadvantaged families to take a holiday.

Katrina and her two children, Monica and Antonio, were recipients. Katrina initially came to The Salvation Army on referral for family issues. She attended a six-month parenting course and was helped with supportive accommodation



Katrina, Monica and Antonio enjoy their holiday in the Give a Family a Break programme

while she sought to turn her life around.

The family attended a four-day family camp where Monica and Antonio rode horses, swam in the pool and rode the flying fox. Katrina enjoyed walks around the local lake away from the city.

'It was awesome,' recalls Katrina. 'I almost had tears running down my eyes when they said we were going because no one has ever done something like this for me before. I can't afford much, so it was really amazing having something different for the kids to do over the holidays. It was such a treat.'

Monica says her favourite part was the giant water slide and meeting new people, and both Monica and Antonio wished they didn't have to come back home.

Other recipients around the country attended similar holidays to that of Katrina and her children. Many found the holiday especially important because of the stress around the Christmas season. As Katrina mentioned: 'I couldn't have asked for a better way to spend a couple of days with my kids.'

*The Salvation Army thanks InterContinental Hotel Group for their incredible generosity in gaining funding for the Give a Family a Break programme as well as those who supported the events run. The Salvation Army is looking forward to this programme going from strength to strength into the future.*

## CHILD SPONSORSHIP

Child Sponsorship, through The Salvation Army's Cherish a Child programme, is a great way to help children living in poverty throughout the world. For just \$25 a month you could sponsor one of 500 children still requiring sponsorship through the programme.

For more information please contact **Glenys Heese on 09 639 1120** or visit [salvationarmy.org.nz](http://salvationarmy.org.nz)



## Giving back

**Three ways to donate ...**

Visit [salvationarmy.org.nz](http://salvationarmy.org.nz)  
Call **0800 53 00 00**  
Remember us in **your Will**

