



Returning the favour

Petrina grew up in a violent household. She was a Christchurch street kid at 12 and living with an abusive gang member at 14.

When her partner was killed in a drive-by shooting in 2001, Petrina was abandoned by the gang and found herself homeless, pregnant and with two young children to care for.

She says the beatings and psychological abuse had become a normal and accepted part of domestic life. But she still grieved deeply for her partner, suffering depression and living with her children as a recluse, the four of them camping out in the lounge of her house. Petrina started taking hard drugs to take the edge off her grief, which eventually led to Child, Youth and Family taking on the care of her children.

In the depths of despair, Petrina found guidance from an elderly *kuia*. She stopped taking drugs, moved to the Hutt Valley, started her first regular job,

and discovered a love for hard work and helping the less fortunate.

Her first contact with The Salvation Army happened when Petrina was helping a lonely and impoverished elderly woman clean her dilapidated and rat-infested house. She asked the Army for cleaning products for the job and began visiting her local Family Store for bargains. Petrina was asked to work in the shop and gradually became part of The Salvation Army community.

With her confidence and self-esteem still at a low point and struggling to keep her family afloat, The Salvation Army helped with food, budgeting, counselling and literacy classes. But it was the moral support, encouragement and acceptance, Petrina says, that were life-changing. Gradually, her emotional turmoil began to subside and God became an anchor.

'It was like how a flower grows—I started to blossom. And, of course, that's brought me much closer to my kids.' Petrina has been reunited with her children. She remains in contact with a

daughter with severe cerebral palsy who is in foster care.

Her work with the disadvantaged in her community is spontaneous and an extension of her own generosity. Petrina approached elderly women visiting the local WINZ office, offering to mow lawns, weed gardens or take on any job. The work expanded to the point where she needed help to cope with the demand.

She set up a soup kitchen for the hungry, operating out of a Salvation Army centre, and cooking for up to 50 people at a time. She distributes unsalable items from the Family Store to families in the most deprived neighbourhoods. 'The last time, I left crying because all these people were so grateful and they had nothing,' Petrina says. 'This motivates me to do more.'

It's thanks to supporters like you that The Salvation Army is able to give more than 120,000 Kiwis each year a helping hand to a brighter future.

Key to a new life



The Salvation Army's life skills programmes are central to moving parents and their children from dysfunction and poverty to a healthy and independent future.

Salvation Army Social Services Secretary Major Pam Waugh says while Community Ministries centres can provide food, budgeting and advocacy to relieve pressure on families, education is key to helping them develop sustainable independence.

The eight-week programmes include units on cooking and nutrition, budgeting and energy conservation, and classes on self-esteem, goal setting, planning and self-awareness.

Parents are referred to the programme from the courts and other agencies, as well as from Salvation Army budget advisers and social workers, employment training tutors and addiction treatment services. Some parents are at risk of having their children taken into care by Child, Youth and Family.

When participants complete the life skills programme, they receive support for the next 12 months to ensure the positive changes they have made become life-long habits. Programme participants are also referred to other Salvation Army services where necessary.

The only sponsored programme is in South Auckland. AA Life has been a keen supporter of The Salvation Army for a number of years. It saw the South Auckland Life Skills Programme as a way to further that support, and recognised the ability of the programme to give

participants the skills they need to make positive and often dramatic changes to their lives. The company has helped fund the programme this year and will continue to do so into 2013.

One former South Auckland life skills student and single mother, Ayesha, moved from the programme into a course with The Salvation Army's employment training arm, Employment Plus, which helped her secure a full-time clerical position. She says the programme provided vital skills, improved her then low self-esteem and brought with it new friendships at a time when she was lonely and isolated.

The single mother of three, who left school dreaming of becoming a nurse, but without qualifications, is currently completing a Bachelor of Nursing.

Countdown to the food rescue

A supermarket chain's generosity means improved nutrition for many Salvation Army clients and, in some cases, ensures food banks don't run out of food.

For almost a year, the bulk of Countdown's 164 supermarkets have been providing packaged food to their local Salvation Army food banks that is nearing its expiry date or has received minor packaging damage. Some stores give bread, eggs and vegetables, boosting the nutritional value of many food parcels.

The Food Rescue programme launched last year when Countdown stores donated \$80,000 of food in time for the heavy pre-Christmas food bank demand. The company is repeating the initiative this Christmas.

Countdown also has specially marked trolleys in stores until Christmas so customers can donate non-perishable food for Salvation Army food parcels. Items most needed include pasta, rice, cereal, spaghetti and baked beans, canned fruit, vegetables, fish and meat, flour, and tea, coffee and milo.



Photography: Greg Bowker / New Zealand Herald

Auckland City Community Ministries Director Jason Dilger with Countdown food donations

Help The Salvation Army give to those in need ...

... by purchasing Flaming Rhino cards from Whitcoulls, Paper Plus or www.flamingrhino.com

FLAMING RHINO DESIGN

The advertisement features a large pink ribbon graphic on the left. In the center, there are three boxes of Christmas cards. The first box is decorated with a Santa Claus illustration and has '10 Charity Christmas Cards THE SALVATION ARMY' on it. The second box has a white background with colorful Christmas ornaments and also says '10 Charity Christmas Cards THE SALVATION ARMY'. The third box has a blue background with a white dove and the word 'Peace' written in a cursive font, with '10 Charity Christmas Cards THE SALVATION ARMY' in the top left corner.



Taking the heat out of Christmas

While Christmas should be a time for celebration and renewing ties with family and friends, it is often a season of high anxiety for many Salvation Army clients.

Head of The Salvation Army's welfare services in the lower North Island Major Wendy Barney says the pre and post-Christmas periods are often the most stressful times of the year for families.

Advertising aimed at children is relentless before Christmas and the pressure on low-income families to provide presents and food beyond what they can afford is phenomenal and unrealistic, she says.

'Some parents will go into debt to provide what they feel is a traditional Christmas, seeing it as their responsibility as a parent,' Wendy says.

'But this can have catastrophic effects on the family budget, particularly in the New Year when parents are facing the additional costs of preparing their children for school.'

To take some of the pressure off parents at Christmas, The Salvation Army provides thousands of Christmas food hampers to clients, consisting of the ingredients for Christmas dinner and presents for family members. Programmes involving corporate and community groups like the Kmart Wishing Tree, in which the public donates gifts for the hampers, are a critical part of the programme. Other projects like the Wattie's Cans Film Festival collect food for Salvation Army food banks and are central to providing food during the pre and post-Christmas period.

The Salvation Army's Adopt-A-Family programme involves families

and companies sponsoring a family nominated by The Salvation Army. The first names of family members and the ages of the children are provided to the sponsors who buy Christmas gifts for the family and food for the Christmas meal, which are passed on to the families by Salvation Army staff.

Months before Christmas, Salvation Army clients are encouraged to plan and prepare budgets. Some centres run craft programmes so parents can develop skills and make their own Christmas presents.

Wendy says the public's support for these programmes, and a myriad of other local Salvation Army initiatives, means more families can be supported during the holiday period.

Our Christmas Appeal supports families during a stressful season of the year.

Helping out with school stationery

Warehouse Stationery continues to support The Salvation Army by raising funds for families struggling to pay for children's school supplies. Over the summer, Warehouse Stationery stores nationwide are selling carry bags for \$2 each. One dollar from each sale goes towards stationery vouchers for Salvation Army centres to distribute to families before their children go back to school next year. Warehouse Stationery stores are also collecting donations in store for this Back to School appeal.

Continue the tradition of giving

Now in its 18th year, the Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal runs until Christmas Eve, collecting gifts for The Salvation Army to give to Kiwi children who otherwise may not have a present on Christmas Day. Join in the spirit of giving by placing a gift under the Christmas Wishing Tree in any Kmart store across New Zealand. You do not need to purchase the gift from Kmart. Or you can make a cash donation at any Kmart store or purchase an e-card at wishingtree.kmart.co.nz

Snapshot of Salvation Army Community support throughout New Zealand for the year to June 2012

55,623 Food parcels distributed

135,795 Bed nights of specialist accommodation provided

23,565 Community meals served

2,051 Trainees received employment training

12,717 Budget counselling sessions provided

13,810 Families received social work support



Taking flight

Some people struggle with adversity for years seemingly unable to escape. Others need only some guidance and encouragement to break free and take flight.

Jade's movement from a troubled teen to homeless single mother and now a young woman embarking on a career was thanks largely to her own tenacity and independence, but also some timely support and encouragement from The Salvation Army.

She first came in contact with the Army after moving back to her home town hoping to find a new direction. After falling out with a relative who she was staying with, and with no other relations or friends to take her in, Jade and her three-year-old daughter found themselves homeless, and were referred to a Salvation Army social worker.

With little more than their clothes, mother and daughter were quickly welcomed into a Salvation Army emergency housing programme

for homeless single mothers. The programme provides safe accommodation for several months and prepares clients for independent life through life skills and parenting programmes, budget planning, counselling, if required, and help in securing a home.

Jade embraced the programme, learning as much as possible and making sound friendships in the process. She says The Salvation Army provided encouragement and support to define and chase her goals.

'I'd known that I wanted change for me and my daughter for a long time, but I didn't know how to go about it,' Jade says. 'The (housing) programme gave me time to debrief, to look at myself and decide what I wanted to be and what I wanted to do for my daughter.'

The Salvation Army helped Jade arrange a house. Having a deep independent streak, Jade accepted a fridge from The Salvation Army but insisted on organising the bond and furnishing the house herself.

Seeing Jade was motivated and capable, the local Salvation Army centre invited her to apply for a temporary office administration position. She got the job—her first apart from casual orchard work—and was later offered the position permanently. Jade is about to sit her driver's licence and commence tertiary education in computing and office management.

Looking back, Jade says this time of year is poignant because Christmas was always a difficult season when there was no money left for presents or celebrations with family. She says even pre-school children have high expectations at Christmas that parents on the breadline are unable to meet.

Your donation can help bring a brighter Christmas to a family in need.

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Te Ope Whakaora