



Te Ope Whakaora

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BusinessReporter

corporate support in action



Photography: Greg Bowker / New Zealand Herald

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 161 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.

While many Countdown supermarkets had been donating food to a range of charities on an ad hoc basis, the Food Rescue programme is a formal partnership with The Salvation Army.

Some stores give bread, eggs and vegetables, boosting the nutritional value of many food parcels, and used by some centres to provide meals for the homeless.

The programme launched last year when Countdown stores donated \$80,000 of food in time for the heavy pre-Christmas food bank demand. It also provided bins so customers could donate

food. The company is planning to repeat the initiative this Christmas.

Salvation Army Community Ministries Secretary Major Pam Waugh says the programme has meant food banks are now better stocked than ever. In the past, some smaller Community Ministries had to shut their doors temporarily because of depleted stock, but this is now no longer the case, she says.

Countdown Public Affairs Manager Luke Schepen says the programme is part of the company's strategy of eliminating food waste, and The Salvation Army ensures the unsaleable food gets to those who need it most.

'A core value of our business is our focus on doing the right thing by our customers and also by the communities our supermarkets operate in,' he says. 'We have 18,000 team members who love serving their communities, and food rescue is one way they are able to do this—these are the people who drive the programme.'

In any given week, Countdown

Auckland City Community Ministries Director Jason Dilger with Countdown food donations.

supermarkets donate dry groceries to Salvation Army food banks with a retail value of around \$20,000—and this excludes fresh food and non-food items. The company gives another \$20,000 worth of food per week to other charities and organisations.

Countdown's relationship with The Salvation Army is a long one. The company was one of the first businesses to come forward following the first Canterbury earthquake in September 2010. It donated \$100,000 for The Salvation Army's recovery work in the region and provided logistical expertise when the Army set up a food distribution centre to cope with the steep rise in demand for welfare services.

The distribution centre now processes food parcels for Christchurch's six Community Ministries and Centre Coordinator Nick Allwright says up to 20 per cent of food parcel content is now contributed by local Countdown supermarkets.

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Paying the price of child poverty

Much of The Salvation Army's work, directly and indirectly, concerns the welfare of some of the country's 270,000 children who live in dire material need.

In New Zealand, we see children hospitalised for preventable, developing world conditions like respiratory and skin infections and rheumatic fever. Putting aside their personal misery, children in poor neighbourhoods experience infectious disease rates three times that of affluent communities, increasing the likelihood of a lifetime of costly public health consumption.

We see children under-performing



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at school because they are unwell or undernourished, putting them at a distinct disadvantage when they attempt to enter the labour market and raising the possibility of their reliance on benefits in later life. Some of them will lose their way and get tangled up in the legal system, again with a large fiscal price tag attached.

Independent researcher John Pearce at a recent Public Health Association Conference put the cost of child poverty at around \$10 billion a year in lost productivity, health, crime and social welfare costs.

Contrary to popular stereotypes, The Salvation Army's experience is that very few impoverished parents surrender their parental responsibilities because they are poor or spend what little discretionary money they have on alcohol and gambling. They generally work hard to manage problems few of us can comprehend, and to withstand the accompanying stressors 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty recently laid out its recommendations to address the crisis.

Two of them—reintroducing the universal child payment for the first five years and longer for poor families, as well raising family tax credit to families with young or multiple children—would

go a long way to solving the health, education and crime and punishment problems associated with poverty in this country.

What aspects of the group's counsel the Government eventually adopts is unknown. What is clearly evident is that to continue to address the problems with further handwringing and scant action will ensure our communities and businesses pay much higher costs than the investment required to mitigate child poverty.

Campbell Roberts
Director,
Social Policy &
Parliamentary Unit



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

59,033 Food parcels distributed

34,013 Families/individuals receiving food parcels

25,677 Community meals served

19,503 Families/individuals receiving social work services

6,027 Families receiving furniture, clothing

New start for Canterbury unemployed

In its first months of operation, a Salvation Army initiative that trains unemployed Christchurch people to gain work in reconstruction of the city has placed 80 per cent of graduates in work.

The full-time, six-week programme—U Build 4 The Rebuild—provides unemployed Cantabrians with entry-level qualifications for roading and underground infrastructure work. As the building of homes and commercial buildings gains pace, The Salvation Army will also look at providing training programmes for the building industry.

Infrastructure Industry Training Organisation InfraTrain estimates a need for 1500 infrastructure workers in the next two years. Infrastructure repairs and rebuilding is expected to take the next five to seven years.

U Build 4 the Rebuild is operated by The Salvation Army's training and employment arm, Employment Plus. It is funded through The Salvation Army Canterbury Earthquake Appeal.

Project Manager Robyn Laurenson says the programme provides career opportunities for those made redundant by closure of quake-affected businesses and for the longer-term unemployed.



Photography: Neil McBeth / SCIRT



Supporting Christchurch schools

The Salvation Army's School Programme in Christchurch has been supporting schools in suburbs hardest hit by earthquakes for the past 15 months.

What started off as providing post-quake social and practical support for one primary school, its pupils and their families, rapidly expanded as other schools asked to be included. The programme is now helping 16 schools in or near the quake-affected suburbs.

It has proven so successful that the Ministry of Education in Christchurch has borrowed some of its principles for its own initiative to support 30 schools across the city.

Salvation Army Schools Support Team Leader Jocelyn Smith says that

families and teachers have been under tremendous and almost constant strain since the first earthquake in September 2010. The Government's proposal to close and merge many city schools has further heightened emotional tensions in the wider school communities, she says.

Salvation Army school support workers arrange practical assistance such as food, clothing, heaters and bedding for families, as well as counselling, social work services and advocating on their behalf for housing and social services.

They organise holiday programmes for the children and regular recreational activities to give parents a break and provide stimulating distractions for the children. During the October school break, 235 children visited a farm. They

A Salvation Army School Programme visit to Canterbury Aero Club

also visited the Canterbury Aero Club for a flight in the club's aircraft.

School support workers offer teacher support in the classrooms and playgrounds. They also provide breakfast clubs and lunches for the kids and help with specific needs such as school fees and uniforms.

As local families are likely to be rebuilding their lives for several years, The Salvation Army is committed to running the programme for another three years.

'Our aim is to build resilience in the school communities by connecting people with the appropriate support, and also providing kids and parents with a distraction from their day-to-day challenges,' Jocelyn says.

Nutritious milk

Milk is an essential food for New Zealand families. Salvation Army clients are fortunate Fonterra recently donated 18 pallets of long life milk to the Army's South Auckland Community Ministries for distribution to food banks in Manukau, Waitakere, Pukekohe and Hamilton. The Salvation Army very much appreciates Fonterra's continued support of New Zealanders in need of nutritious food.

In Memoriam

Insurance broker, Marsh New Zealand, has made a special donation to The Salvation Army in memory of their Christchurch staff, Melanie Brown and Barry Craig. The employees died while working in the Marsh office in the Pyne Gould Corporation building that collapsed during the Christchurch earthquake on 22 February 2011. The Salvation Army is grateful to Marsh for this generous contribution, which will help families in need in Christchurch.

'The Gift of Children'

Thank you to the Holiday Inn Auckland Airport for sponsoring 'The Gift of Children' Christmas Breakfast on 8 November which is an opportunity to support The Salvation Army's work with children in South Auckland. Hear from Inga Tuigamala and Deputy Children's Commissioner Dr Jo Cribb while enjoying a complimentary meal.

Sponsoring a table is one way to help our work. To find out how, please email lynne_trafford@nzf.salvationarmy.org

Suffer the children

Keri was severely beaten more than once by gang associates of her partner. Domestic violence and being immersed in a drug culture forced her to take her young son and flee her provincial home town.

Establishing herself in Auckland was difficult but Salvation Army social workers and budget advisers helped her get back on her feet.

Keri says one of the side-effects of the domestic upheaval was that her son began showing violent tendencies. She has since got her family back on track after working with The Salvation Army.

Salvation Army Community Ministries Secretary Major Pam Waugh says Keri's story is sadly familiar to Army officers and staff throughout the country. About 80 per cent of children entering Salvation Army emergency accommodation programmes with their mothers have experienced family violence. Of these, 60 per cent are pre-schoolers.

Other Salvation Army services are seeing similar rates of clients and their children exposed to family violence.

The Salvation Army's response is the Safe from the Start programme, designed by The Salvation Army in Australia for pre-school children and their parents. It is currently being piloted with 40 families across New Zealand. So far, 25 Salvation Army staff have been trained to deliver the programme, which in its initial stages, has seen promising results. Whether the programme is rolled out more widely depends on obtaining funding for resources used during therapy, Pam says.



With help from The Salvation Army, Keri is now well on the way to building a new future for her children and herself. Keri's eldest son, mentioned in the story, is not pictured.

A play therapy kit, adapted especially for New Zealand, uses books, toys, puppets and music to help the child talk about their feelings and unravel some of the difficulties they may be experiencing.

The parent is with their child as they play, learning about that child's experiences and emotions. With the help of the social worker, the parent learns how to use the toys with their child to build attachment and further develop their parenting skills.

'The programme's strength is that it works with the parent and child together,' says Pam. 'So we're not only working to help the child find a voice, but we're helping the parent build a secure attachment to their child.'

The programme won a Tasmanian Child Protection Award for its innovative approach to working with both children and their parents. In New Zealand, Child, Youth and Family and a number of non-governmental welfare agencies have shown an interest in the programme.

What prompted the development of Safe from the Start was research showing one in four children who witness domestic violence develops serious social and behavioural problems. Australian studies showed exposure to violence at an early age can affect a child's cognitive development and increases their risk of future violent behaviour, drug and alcohol addiction and mental health conditions.

This is just one example of lives changed thanks to your support. To help transform the lives of everyday Kiwis in need, please contact me about sponsoring a Salvation Army programme such as Safe from the Start.



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Get involved in workplace giving

To help Kiwis in need in your local community

**MAKE A
CHOICE
TO HELP**

Build team spirit and generate goodwill with your staff, customers and suppliers by partnering with The Salvation Army. Just some ways to support the things we do:

- Run a fundraising event
- Make a donation
- Join Payroll Giving
- Sponsor a specific programme

To find out more about workplace giving and for inspiration on how to get your staff involved, contact:

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