

Making a Difference: Supporting Healthy Relationships.

(please return in enclosed
freepost envelope)

Yes I would like to support the
work of Relationships Aotearoa

Enclosed is my cheque for \$ _____

Please debit my credit card:

Mastercard Visa

No. _____

Card Name: _____

Expiry Date: _____

Yes I would like a receipt (Donations over \$5 are
eligible for a tax rebate)

I would like to make a regular contribution to
Relationships Aotearoa.

My contact details are:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____



Relationships Aotearoa clients committed to quality services

Relationships Aotearoa is committed to providing
effective, high quality relationship counselling and
education services for its clients.

We regularly survey clients to find out if we are
achieving these goals.

Our latest survey shows that 99 per cent of those who
participated in the survey through our offices nationwide
said they found counselling they are receiving from us is
very helpful – 92 per cent rated the services as excellent
(60 per cent) or very good (32 per cent).

Not only do they rate our services highly, they say we
have made a difference in their lives and the lives of their
family members.

Here's a snapshot of what our clients have to say about
us:

“ The help we received has been literally life
saving, not just for us, but for our children.
We are parenting better and resolving
issues more productively and peacefully.
Thank you. ”

“ I found it has helped me talking to
another person about my issues. ”

“ I'm a different person now, and I
would like to say a big thank you to
(Relationships Aotearoa) that have given
me an opportunity for my life changing
experience. ”

Relationships Aotearoa has played a big
role in the emotional recovery of Canterbury
people following the earthquakes in 2010
and 2011. More than 13,000 people have
received support through our agency.



Members of the Christchurch earthquake response team
(from left, rear) Diana Bradley, Loretta Dixon, Andy O'Malley,
Sue Baker; Liz Ford, Tess Ward, Jeff Saunders, Toni Stewart,
Frances Young, Kerrylea Sampson, and Moira Underdown.

Relationships Aotearoa

counselling & educating



Helping New Zealanders for over 60 years

Newsletter Issue 1 2012

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Relationships Aotearoa – helping New Zealanders for over 60 years

Welcome to this first issue of a new quarterly newsletter to keep you up to date with our news.

The first, and most obvious thing you will notice is that we have changed our name. From February 27, 2012 we will no longer be known as Relationship Services Whakawhanaungatanga.

We are now known as Relationships Aotearoa. We hope you like the new name and the new look logo that goes with it.

Relationships Aotearoa has been on a journey since its inception as Marriage Guidance over 60 years ago. In those days, as our name suggested, we just worked with married couples. Our work has evolved over time and we now offer a range of services for individuals, couples and families.

As well as couple counselling we have expertise in working with individuals and families, Māori and youth at risk, as well as violence and abuse and workplace issues.

Very few people used our full name Relationship Services Whakawhanaungatanga when referring to us.

Relationships remain at the core of our business. We want our new name to signal this in a more definite, simpler form than our previous name.

The use of Aotearoa in our new name reflects that we offer a nationwide service and our commitment to building a strong relationship with Māori.

The logo shape in the form of New Zealand has its origins in the speech mark form to demonstrate that communication is a keystone of counselling and that we are a national organisation. It also alludes to the koru shape.

It replaces the previous logo that showed a couple, which no longer reflected the breadth of our services.

We have also freshened up our website – please take the opportunity to have a look at www.relationshipsaotearoa.org.nz.

This new name and logo signal another step forward in our six-decade journey as a forward thinking organisation, responsive to the changing needs of New Zealanders.

It is important that we continue to respond to changing needs during these challenging economic times.

Much of our work comes from Government – with one major piece of our work up for review this year – Family Court Counselling.

Government is also looking at how we can better protect abused, neglected and disadvantaged children through its Green Paper for Vulnerable Children. We believe we have a big role to play in this area because healthy relationships build stronger families.

Relationships Aotearoa is participating in the submission process for both of these significant Government consultation documents.

Last year we provided services to around 35,000 people in 70 communities across the country, from small rural areas to urban areas, including central city and suburban locations. But this comes at a cost, which is increasingly hard to meet.

We are very grateful to the organisations and individuals who continue to give us the means to support some of the most vulnerable in our communities so they may gain the strength to build healthy, respectful and non violent relationships with their loved ones and those around them.

Finally, I am leaving Relationships Aotearoa to become Chief Executive of Barnardos. It has been a great privilege to lead an organisation that provides quality counselling and education for thousands of New Zealanders. The work done by Relationships Aotearoa is essential for providing good outcomes for family/whānau.

Thank you for your support of me in my role at Relationships Aotearoa over the past eight years.

Jeff Sanders
Chief Executive



From mg to Relationships Aotearoa

Kirsty Robertson has seen the growth of Relationships Aotearoa from a largely voluntary organisation to be New Zealand's largest professional counselling agency.

Kirsty retired from her position as Clinical Leader in Nelson at the end of last year.

When she joined the organisation (known then as Marriage Guidance) in 1982 it was as a trainee volunteer counsellor in Tokoroa.

The work then was confined to individual and couple counselling as well as Family Court Counselling.

While couples counselling remains a big part of what we do, the work has diversified into areas like domestic violence and working with families. More men using our services are asking to share the care of their children following separation and we have also become part of the care options for mental health consumers, she says.

The client base has diversified over time with more migrant groups arriving in the country and seeking our services.

"The names have changed over the years from the original Marriage Guidance. At one point the organisation just went by the letters mg (lower case)."

"This was meant to sound like the sports car and the red letters were meant to be racy and exciting."

It became Relationship Services in 1994, changing this month to Relationships Aotearoa, a move Kirsty welcomes.

"It is great to have the beautiful word Aotearoa included in our name."

Kirsty is not ready for total retirement, so is continuing to work with a few self referred couples.

And when she's not doing that she is likely to be seen on her veranda enjoying the glorious view from her Nelson home something she had little time for when she was working full time.



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Relationships Aotearoa has come a long way in its 60 year history: from couples counselling to now supporting families and individuals as well to make positive changes to their lives and their relationships.

Each year Relationships Aotearoa delivers around 2,000 unfunded counselling hours to a significant number of clients: families, young people, couples and individuals. Relationships Aotearoa has always supported some of the most vulnerable in our communities with free counselling – a fact that many may not be aware of. However in the current economic climate, the numbers of people we see who struggle to make even the smallest contribution continues to increase.

We would like to take this opportunity to invite you to join with us to ensure access to counselling remains a right of all New Zealanders. Counselling is a proactive response to life's challenges, and working with us to support the many hundreds of clients we see in difficult situations will not only make a difference to how many people we see, but will make a very real and lasting difference to those we support.

Thank you

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