

Meet our staff

Teina, Team Leader, Counselling & Men's Work



As Team Leader for Counselling and Men's Work, Teina is supporting a group of six frontline staff. Part of his role is to prevent staff 'burn-out', which is endemic in demanding, people-centered roles.

"The expected work 'life expectancy' in social services used to be two years. You would then need to take a sabbatical or leave," he says.

To help his team continue to have the emotional and mental energy needed to help their clients, Teina ensures they have variety in their work. He also supports them as they explore individual areas of professional development. ☺

After a career that included drug and alcohol counselling and community mental health, Teina left New Zealand for Australia. There he had a change of pace, driving trucks for a living. Later he spent almost nine years in the mines, rising from kitchen hand to site manager. The oversight skills he picked up there are as equally useful in his new position at Iosis as is his social services background.



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112c Russell Road, Manurewa, Auckland
PO Box 98840, Manukau City, Auckland 2241
T 09 269 0050 E enquiries@iosis.org.nz
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Turnaround

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Becoming safe and well

Things weren't going well in Stuart's personal life. It had started to spill over into his professional life too. He knew he needed to make some drastic changes - for the sake of himself, his sons, and his colleagues.

Read how your support helps dads learn ways to manage stress safely.

Stuart completed three programmes with Iosis. Through the Toolbox 'Building Awesome Whanau' group, he grasped the importance of savouring every moment spent with his children.

"It's just letting the kids grow, and letting them grow their way. And standing back and offering support when it's needed. If one of them wants to come and play with you or wants to show you something, just give them the time and you will get that back in spades," says Stuart.

In Iosis's Getting a Grip on Communication programme, he learned how to observe his feelings, reflect on his needs, and articulate clearly what he requires from others. Stuart also

met weekly one-on-one with Rima, one of Iosis's MenD (Men's Development) programme facilitators. Rima asked probing questions that required Stuart to be honest with himself.

"The great thing about the MenD course is that there is no blame, there's no judging," says Stuart. "It goes at your own pace... It's not these quick-fix things. It's something you've got to work on and be aware of."

Stuart says his experience at Iosis has changed him "massively" as a parent. However the initial step of admitting he needed help was a significant hurdle to overcome.

...Continued pg2

To other men considering seeking help, Stuart offers this advice:
"Trust that the people at Iosis know what they are doing. They are there to support you... they genuinely care. It's far easier and it's far quicker than you doing it by yourself."

Stuart discusses his plans with Rima, an Iosis MenD facilitator >



Inside...

• Page 2: CEO's message | Appeals update • Page 3: Tawhiri's story | Aaron's story | Prayer needs • Page 4: Meet our staff



CEO's message

Father's Day is approaching, so it is timely to share stories from some of the dads Iosis has worked alongside recently.

The three men featured were under great stress when they first came through our doors. Even the step of seeking help was nerve-wracking. However they soon found our staff were non-judgmental and could be trusted.

Your support made it possible for these dads to find their feet again. One of them says this about the impact you are making: "If you think, 'I am funding a course', well that's really good. But if you are funding someone to get better and the community to get better, that's something far more powerful."

Thank you for the powerful difference you are making in families' lives!

Tunumafono Tracey-Leigh Peters
CEO



Appeals update

Thanks to our generous donors, we recently purchased specialised counselling resources for our Merivale Whanau Development Programme. The DVDs and workbooks cover anger management, mindfulness, self-esteem and self-calming. They will be used in group learning situations, with individual follow-up by the Merivale counsellor.

In July we also raised in excess of \$1000 to 'tautoko' (support) our Foster Care carers, especially those looking after children with high needs. Last year we raised half of that amount but were able to treat one long-serving couple to a night at a resort and another to a restaurant meal, to say 'thanks' for their commitment to the children in their care. This year, we hope to be able to do something special for even more of our carers. Thank you for making this possible. ☺



Becoming safe and well ...Continued from pg1

"It's courageous saying, 'I would like some support in improving who I am and the environment I create for those around me.' That was probably the hardest thing. Once you do that, things get a lot easier. It's like a release. We can't get through life ourselves. The sooner we realise that, the better.

"Life is a lot simpler now. It is enjoying the little things - time with my two boys, and waking up each morning, excited about the day. And knowing that there are undulations, but you are not stuck in one place forever."

When you donate to Iosis, you help dads like Stuart make personal changes so they can provide a stable and safe environment for their children. ☺



Tawhiri's story

Seventeen-year-old Tawhiri was excited at becoming a father. However he hadn't counted on the demands a new-born makes on its parents' sleep patterns and relationships.

A teacher at the local teen parent unit recommended Tawhiri attend Iosis's Young Fathers programme. Initially Tawhiri found it difficult to open up on-on-one with the Young Fathers youth worker.

"Back then, I really kept to myself. I didn't want to let everyone know how I felt. I was defensive about a lot of things."

After a while he found his weekly chats with Allan, the youth worker, became easier. Allan offered advice about relationships and family matters, and also supported Tawhiri with practical issues, like getting a driver's licence.

"Allan really helped to open myself up to everybody, and open myself up to all these different possibilities. He was my biggest help for a lot of things going on with my relationship and baby." ☺

Prayer needs

- We still require more foster caregivers for long-term placements. This shortage is being experienced by other foster care organisations too.
- Iosis is looking for an additional part-time Support Worker for Merivale. The person will be responsible for supporting mothers and their children with afternoon and evening routines, completing administration and household tasks, and ensuring the safety of the families through the night. Please pray we find someone with the right mix of relevant experience, knowledge and character, for what can be a challenging, but rewarding, role.
- Pray for our staff as they engage with families in our community. Also please pray for their health during the winter/spring seasonal change.



Aaron's story

When his marriage broke down irreparably, Aaron was devastated. He needed to talk to someone, to help process his emotions. He began meeting weekly with Rima, an Iosis MenD (Men's Development) facilitator.

"Sometimes I would come to Rima and tell him, 'I can't do this anymore.' He always encouraged me, 'There is always hope,'" says Aaron.

Learning to forgive and move on with his life was not easy. However, Aaron is now focusing his energies on taking care of his son and making plans for their future. Inspired by Rima, he is considering tertiary studies to become trained in counselling or youth work.

"The way Rima has moulded me and brought me out of the situation was amazing. If not, I don't know where I would have been. I can seriously tell you I would have gone through a nervous breakdown." ☺



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