

Monday, 30 January 2006

Media Release :

Barnardos New Zealand welcomes Arihia Bennett, the new Regional Manager for the South Island

Barnardos New Zealand will formally welcome Arihia Bennett, the new Regional Manager for the South Island, to its Christchurch office on Tuesday morning, 31 January.

Arihia will be accompanied to the powhiri by whanau, fellow members of Ngai Tahu and former colleagues from the Department of Child, Youth and Family.

As Regional Manager, South, Arihia will oversee Barnardos New Zealand's extensive family support and early education services in the South Island.

She comes to her new position with extensive experience in social service practice and management and with a clear overview of Barnardos, having served on its Board during the past two years.

"Coming from a long career in the Department of Child, Youth and Family with the past seven years as a national social work trainer I am particularly interested in improving outcomes for children by ensuring the best possible professional practice within Barnardos family and child support services," says Arihia.

"I'm really looking forward to working in an organisation that is focused on early intervention, working with children, parents and families so that children are nurtured, treasured and able to fulfil their potential."

"This is an exciting time for Barnardos. The last year has seen extensive reviews of both the strategic direction of the organisation and the services it provides. Barnardos has a very clear ambition – to improve the outcomes for children in New Zealand. With its extensive network of first-rate professional child-focused social and educational services in communities across the country, it is well placed to deliver improved outcomes for children."

Arihia's arrival coincides with the introduction of a new case management system, SCARF - Supporting Children and Responding to Families, across Barnardos family support services.

"SCARF is a child focused assessment that embraces a holistic approach towards meeting the needs of the child. Instead of an over emphasis on the presenting problems it will support an early intervention approach by looking at underlying causes with a view to encouraging positive changes. The SCARF model recognises the strengths and resources that exist within the child's own surroundings," says Arihia.

It is adapted from the United Kingdom's *'Children in Need and their Families Assessment and Planning Framework'* used extensively throughout Britain and by Barnardos in Australia. Barnardos is the first agency to adopt (adapt) it for use in New Zealand. Staff training begins on 9 February.

Arihia is experienced in Board directorship roles, having also served as a Director with the Ngai Tahu Development Corporation from 1999 to 2005, the last three years as the Board Chair. She is a current Trustee of He Oranga Pounamu, an organisation targeting programmes of benefit to Maori within the rohe of Ngai Tahu and in 2005 she joined the Complaints and Disputes Tribunal within the NZ Social Work Registration Board. Arihia is actively involved with her local Marae, Te Ngai Tuahuriri as an executive member.

Barnardos is New Zealand's largest not-for-profit/charitable children's organisation and provides both child and family support services (including family support services, supervised child contact services, counselling for children who have witnessed or been victims of domestic violence, foster care, social workers in schools, parenting education) as well as early education services (Early Learning Centres and KidStart home-based care and learning) in communities throughout New Zealand.

Note:

We're happy to arrange an interview with Arihia Bennett, Regional Manager, Southern, Barnardos New Zealand.

For more details about the powhiri and Barnardos services in Canterbury, contact: Jackie Maurice, Area Manager, Barnardos in Christchurch, 03 353 2592 or Jackie.maurice@barnardos.org.nz

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