

## Media Release

Embargoed until 3.30pm, 26 October 2006

### **Barnardos celebrates a successful year and looks to the future**

“A greater focus on integrated services, collaborative relationships in the community and with government, and a strong financial result puts Barnardos New Zealand in an even better position to help children in New Zealand have a great start in life,” said Murray Edridge, Barnardos New Zealand Chief Executive, at the organisation’s Annual General Meeting in Wellington on 26 October.

Greater integration of Barnardos services has been a key focus in our recent work, said Murray.

“Barnardos is unique in that it offers a range of early childhood education and care services as well as extensive child and family services in communities across New Zealand. The aim of service integration is to ensure that children and families using Barnardos services have the opportunity to receive a broad range of support that can help them in a number of areas of possible development. It is the equivalent of a one-stop shop for children and families.”

“The concept of working coherently and effectively with children and families has also underpinned the increased engagement of Barnardos with other community agencies and with government departments, most notably; the Ministry of Social Development, Child, Youth and Family, and the Ministries of Education and Justice. Being part of a continuum of care and support that extends across government and the community is clearly the way to achieve the best outcomes for children, young people and their families”.

“The hard work of Barnardos staff in the 2005/06 year resulted in improved quality of services and responsiveness for our clients, increased stakeholder engagement and a greatly enhanced financial outcome.”

For the first time in several years Barnardos New Zealand posted a healthy financial surplus - of nearly \$2.7million.

“The surplus was largely due to the improved financial performance of the 20 Barnardos Early Learning Centres, the viability of Government service contracts following renegotiated funding, and improved operational processes and financial management,” said Murray. “As a result Barnardos is able to re-establish a credible financial reserve base and to reinvest in child-focused services and resources.”

A number of key partnerships were prominent in Barnardos throughout the year. One of these was the SKIP (Strategies with Kids, Information for Parents) programme which was “an excellent example of a collaborative project that is having significant results,” he said. “Our partnership with the Ministry of Social Development on SKIP enabled Barnardos to share some outstanding and innovative parenting resources with the parents and caregivers we work with. We also used SKIP in the parenting television programme *Nought to Five*, which was produced by Barnardos in partnership with the Sports Council of New Zealand, Treasures and Jude Dobson’s Homegrown TV.

Murray said that working with other like-minded agencies and individuals also worked in the advocacy area, with the coalition Every Child Counts giving children’s rights a much higher profile in the Government arena and on issues such as the repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961.

In 2005/06 Barnardos worked with more than 10,000 children and families. “A significant proportion of our work was only possible thanks to the generosity of the New Zealand public and the support of organisations such as Telecom New Zealand, Shell New Zealand and the Lottery Grants Board,” said Murray.

“With a successful year behind us and the continued support of the New Zealand public, we look forward with optimism to helping even more children this year.”

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