

Close to Home

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‘Auntie’ Faith’s fast fingers fly through the knitting



Faith with one of her handknitted tea cosies.

Every winter, kids at Motueka primary schools are toasty warm, thanks to Faith’s speedy knitting skills.

The Kāinga Ora tenant, known as ‘Auntie Faith’ to the children she knits for, has been donating beautifully knitted slippers and mittens to Motueka schools for several years.

“The idea is every child in the classroom has cosy feet because they change into slippers in the classroom,” Faith explains.

“I ring around the schools in March to see if they need anything. I do it with my daughter and two or three friends and I get the schools to draw an outline of the children’s feet to give me an idea of what’s needed. I also get an outline of the children’s hands for the mittens. I can make two pairs of slippers in an evening,” Faith says.

Faith has been knitting for about 80 years and has many memories of the important part the hobby has played in her life.

“I learnt to knit when I was five. It was during the war and Mum and I were living with a lady while Dad was overseas. She taught me how to knit, although Mum was a good knitter too. I was at school in Addington in Christchurch and Mum and I would go and buy skeins of wool. I was 10 when I knitted my first jersey.”

Faith’s lifelong love of knitting has seen her enter local knitting competitions and donate items to many people in need over the years. For 10 years she was Motueka coordinator for Operation Cover Up, which sends shipping containers full of donated knitted clothes and toys to Eastern Europe each year.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 01

Close to Home has gone digital



kaingaora.govt.nz

We now deliver Close to Home digitally via email-only to all customers who have provided Kāinga Ora with their email address. By receiving this issue in your mailbox it means you may not have your email registered with us.

Join us in saving waste by going digital – All you need to do is make sure Kāinga Ora has your current email address. To do this, register with MyKāingaOra, or contact our **Customer Support Centre on 0800 801 601**.

CONTINUED FROM COVER

'Auntie' Faith's fast fingers fly through the knitting



"I used to collect everything and then it went to Christchurch and on to Europe. We made about 300 blankets. I had peggy squares all over my lounge floor before we sewed them up," Faith says.

"We got a video of the children getting the handknitted dolls, and the look on their faces! I really enjoyed doing that project."

Faith and her husband raised four children in a Kāinga Ora home in Motueka, where she lived for 36 years.

In August last year, with her family all grown up, it was time to move to a place that better suited her needs.

Her home's central location means she's close to the Motueka District Museum and the Motueka Red Cross Shop, where she volunteers her time.

"When the weather's good, I can walk to the museum and the Red Cross. I have volunteered with the Red Cross for 32 years. I couldn't bear to not be busy," Faith says.



Age Concern New Zealand

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on 15 June reminds us that elder abuse happens across all communities and cultures.

In half of Age Concern's cases last year, it was adult children who were abusing their older relatives. In some cases, people's money is taken, loans not repaid, or cars used without costs covered – these are all forms of elder abuse.

If you see signs of older people being abused, visit ageconcern.org.nz or talk about it with Age Concern on 0800 65 2 105.

Scan the QR code for more information.



Scan me

Beware of scams

Scams are when someone tries to manipulate a person into sharing personal information and money with them. Scams aim to exploit people in various ways and can look very sophisticated and genuine. It can be hard to spot a scam because it may look like it's from a legitimate and well-known organisation. You can read about different types of scams, how to avoid them, and where to report scams on Age Concern's **Scam** page.

Scan the QR code for more information.



Scan me

Putting Kiwis on patrol

Scammers are making off with millions of dollars from Kiwis each year. In response, Age Concern New Zealand has teamed up with ANZ bank to bring back Officer Frank 'Ponch' Poncherello from the hit 70s and 80s TV show "CHiPs", to encourage Kiwis to be on patrol for scams and fraud.

Find out more and gain free access to the ANZ Scam Academy at ageconcern.org.nz



Te is a creative force in her community



Te at the communal gardens at Te Mātāwai.

Since moving into Kāinga Ora apartment complex Te Mātāwai, Te has become known for her creativity and leadership skills.

Naturally artistic, Te can turn her hand to most arts and crafts. She crochets and her new favourite pastimes are photography and print making.

These are skills she's put to great use in the Te Mātāwai community. She's contributed work to an onsite art exhibition, assisted with photography projects, taken photos at events, sold her arts and crafts offsite, and helped to plan activities for the onsite youth group.

"When I moved in 18 months ago, I got involved in art classes, which led to exhibiting one of my art works. Then I helped with costumes and a lot of the paperwork for two photography projects involving tenants with artist and lecturer Dienneke Jansen from Auckland University of Technology.

"I was very excited when Dienneke then invited me to assist on a film and photography project outside Te Mātāwai. It's a big opportunity for me."

Dayne, the Community Development Manager at Te Mātāwai, says Te is a gifted creative and her sense of humour shines through in everything she does.

"Te's worked with us on several projects and events that have benefited from her creativity and clever thinking, with heaps of laughs along the way. She's a doer and a leader, and the skills she's shared with our community have led to new opportunities for her, which is awesome. We're really grateful for all of Te's contributions to the Te Mātāwai community."

Te's new ventures are part of the upward trajectory her life has taken since moving into Te Mātāwai.

The central Auckland complex, with 200 apartments for social housing tenants and 24/7 onsite support, is a place where lives change.

"I'd been living in backpacker hostels and boarding houses for years because I couldn't afford anything more, but it wasn't very healthy for me."

And with long-term health problems, Te often felt trapped in her room as she wasn't well enough to use communal spaces.

"Now I have my own studio apartment, I can cook and do laundry without having to risk my health. And when I'm well, I can join all the activities going on here.

"There are so many programmes on offer and there are a lot of nice people around. Everything I need is either here or very close by, which makes life easier."

With a place to call her own, improved health and a supportive community, Te says her next goal is to find part-time work, preferably in a reception or administration role. "I like organising other people," she laughs, another talent that has come to the fore at Te Mātāwai.

Keeping the community safe around dogs

Preventing dog bites

Every year, there are hundreds of dog attacks across the country. Children under nine are most likely to be seriously hurt by a dog bite. Even friendly dogs can bite if they become overly excited or scared. It's important for parents and tamariki to practise safety around dogs.

A dog might bite because they:

- Are surprised suddenly
- Are not used to being around children or other animals
- Feel like they are in danger
- Are roaming outside their property in unfamiliar surroundings
- Are trying to protect something like a toy, food, bed, or their home or owner
- Are playing and get overexcited
- Are frustrated, sick or in pain.

Keeping tamariki safe around dogs

What to do:

- Actively supervise young children and infants whenever a dog is around. Always watch closely and be prepared to step in before any risky behaviour occurs, from either the child or the dog

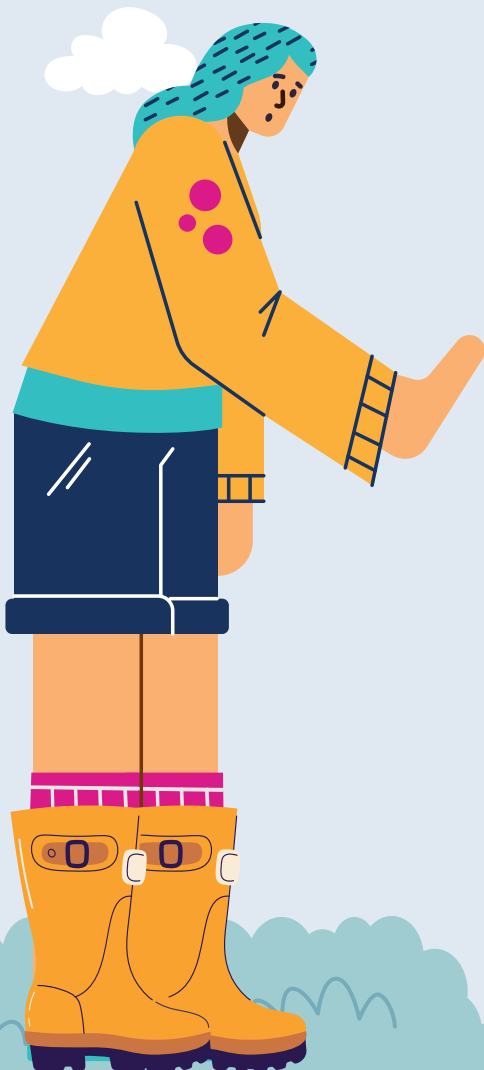
- Remind tamariki to stay calm and be gentle around dogs
- Ask the owner's permission before letting a child pat their dog
- Let the dog approach first and sniff the child. If the dog is friendly, encourage gentle pats on the body, not head
- Watch out for signs the dog is scared or angry, like raised fur, growling, or ears pinned back, and separate your child from the dog if you see these
- When introducing a baby to your whānau, allow the dog time to adjust, then introduce slowly on a leash and give lots of praise.

Teach children not to:

- Touch or put their face close to the dog's face
- Go near a dog that is eating or chewing on a treat
- Approach a dog that is playing with a toy
- Startle or touch a sleeping dog
- Run around or shout near a dog
- Pull a dog's hair, tail or ears, or sit on it.

Teach children to:

- Stand still and turn sideways so the dog can choose whether or not to come over and say hello. Dogs feel safer when they can decide if they want to meet you
- Give the dog space. Keep your face and hands away from the dog's face. If the dog comes close, stay calm and gentle – pat them only if they show they're happy and comfortable



- Leave dogs alone when they're eating or chewing. Dogs need to feel safe while enjoying their food or treats, so it's best to give them quiet space for this
- Not wake a sleeping dog. Just like people, dogs don't like being surprised when they're resting. Wait until they're awake and alert before giving them space to come to you
- Be calm and quiet near dogs. Walk slowly and speak softly so dogs feel relaxed. Running or shouting can make them feel worried or scared
- Use gentle hands. If a dog chooses to come close and seems happy, pat them gently on their back or side. Always treat dogs with kindness – never pull on their tail, ears or fur
- Respect a dog's special things. Their toys, bed and food belong to them, and they may be protective of them. Leave those items alone so the dog feels safe and respected.

Wandering dogs

Roaming dogs are a serious problem across the motu. Dog attacks can occur when dogs are allowed to roam beyond their properties. Make sure your dog is securely contained on your property at all times. If your dog gets loose and is impounded, you could be fined; or worse, it could attack or kill another animal or seriously injure a person. If your fence needs repair or is unsuitable, please call us on 0800 801 601 and organise for the maintenance team to help.

It is important to:

- Keep your dog under control at all times, especially around children
- Keep your dog contained in a fenced-off area when at home and never let them roam.

If any members of the public witness a roaming dog or a dog behaving aggressively, they should calmly retreat to a safe space and call the council's Animal Management team as soon as possible.

Responsible dog ownership

Make sure you're a good dog owner by being a responsible dog owner. SPCA recommends owners provide positive social interactions for their dogs from a young age so the puppy becomes confident and learns to cope in different social situations, without reacting negatively towards people and other dogs. For resources on how to socialise your puppy, visit: spca.nz/advice-and-welfare/article/puppy-socialisation. Auckland Council suggests the four best ways to be a responsible dog owner are:

- 1 **Register your dog** from when they are three months old, and renew the registration annually. Registration fees help pay for the upkeep of dog parks and facilities, and ensure lost dogs are reunited with their owners. If you're not up to date with your dog's registration, or have an unregistered dog, you could be fined.

- 2 **Find dog-friendly exercise spots** – not all parks, beaches and reserves are safe for off-lead play. There are plenty of fenced off-lead parks and play areas for dogs to play and socialise so take advantage of these for your pooch.

- 3 **Learn where you can and can't take your dog.** For safety or hygiene reasons, most indoor and public spaces don't allow dogs. Please respect these rules and boundaries.

- 4 **Make sure they're a really good dog** – keep them under control at all times. Not everyone is comfortable around dogs, and not all dogs are dog friendly. Always supervise your dog around tamariki and around other dogs, and understand that your dog can pose a threat to protected wildlife. Preventing nuisance and harm isn't just about having a well-behaved dog. These obligations are outlined in the **Dog Control Act 1996**.

- 5 **Desex your dog** – Not only does desexing your dog help prevent unwanted pregnancies, it also has health and welfare benefits, reduces their tendency to wander, and reduces strain on animal shelters and charities.

For more information about responsible dog ownership in Auckland, visit: ourauckland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/dogs/

Are you struggling to keep on top of your finances?

While everyone's circumstances will vary, here are a few general tips that can help when you're living on a budget:

1 Make sure you're paying the right amount of Income Related Rent; you could be overpaying.

If your income has decreased or your household situation has changed, Work and Income will be able to recalculate your rent payments so you're paying the right amount for your circumstances: workandincome.govt.nz/housing/live-in-home/live-in-public-housing

2 Set a budget to manage your expenses. Understand your incoming and outgoing payments and set a budget to help you manage your expenses. Be realistic about how much you have and what you can spend,

as well as your fixed and variable expenses. 'Sorted' suggests that what you'll need when setting a budget are:

- A record of your day-to-day spending
- A list of your annual costs
- Your income information
- Your savings and investments.

sorted.org.nz/guides/planning-and-budgeting/how-to-start-a-budget/

3 Set up different accounts for spending, bills, savings.

Automate what outgoings you can – set up automatic payments for bills in the dedicated bills account separate from your spending account so you don't overspend and default on your bills.

4 Pay down debt as quickly as possible to avoid additional interest and penalties.

sorted.org.nz/guides/tackling-debt/how-to-get-out-of-debt-quickly/

5 Avoid payday loans, hire purchases, and buy now, pay later schemes. They are designed to entice us into buying what we couldn't normally afford.

6 Create an emergency fund.

Once your essentials are covered, save whatever you can spare with an aim to get to \$1,000 to keep in an emergency fund. Keep it in a savings account (not a term deposit), so it's out of reach but you can still access it when unexpected expenses crop up without putting yourself into debt.

7 Get a financial mentor through MoneyTalks. They will help you navigate your debts, finances, your credit rating, advocate on your behalf with banks, utility providers, and design an individual plan to get you on top of your finances.

For more budgeting tips:



Scan me

Having trouble paying your power bill?

Times are financially tough for many of us, and electricity, along with other household costs, is becoming more expensive. There are lots of support options available to those experiencing energy hardship. ERANZ (the Electricity Retailers' Association of New Zealand) has produced a resource that provides a brief introduction to some of those sources of support along with ways to find out more online.

If you are struggling to afford electricity it's important to contact your electricity retailer to let them know. They value you as a customer and can help you with ways to pay that suit your budget.



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MoneyTalks is a free service to help you manage your money

It's often hard to ask for help, especially with finances, but MoneyTalks is a great service that's free, non-judgemental and available to all New Zealanders. It has helped more than 20,000 Kiwis a year get on top of their finances by connecting them with financial mentors and social services who offer everything from advice on budgeting and managing debt, through to advocacy and helping get utilities reconnected following overdue bill payments. With MoneyTalks you'll have someone in your corner when it comes to managing your money.

You can contact MoneyTalks through their online live chat, texting service, email, or freephone 0800 345 123.

moneytalks.co.nz



New rent debt policy

We've made some important changes to how we're managing rent debt.

We'll now be acting sooner when rent payments are missed and we'll be supporting customers to repay their debt quickly. We'll also be taking a firmer approach with customers who skip payments, ignore their rent debt, or refuse to work with us.

Households who fall on hard times but are making genuine attempts to get back on track with their rent will continue to receive support from us. We're a social housing landlord so that's the right thing to do.

If you think you're going to miss a rent payment, you should get in touch with us as soon as possible on 0800 801 601 and we'll work with you to get a plan in place.

For more information on our changes to managing rent debt visit: kaingaora.govt.nz/rentdebt

Watch: Rewa finds comfort in Kerikeri after cyclone

After her home was badly flood damaged in Cyclone Gabrielle, Rewa reconnected with her Northland roots in her new home in Kerikeri.



Scan me to watch



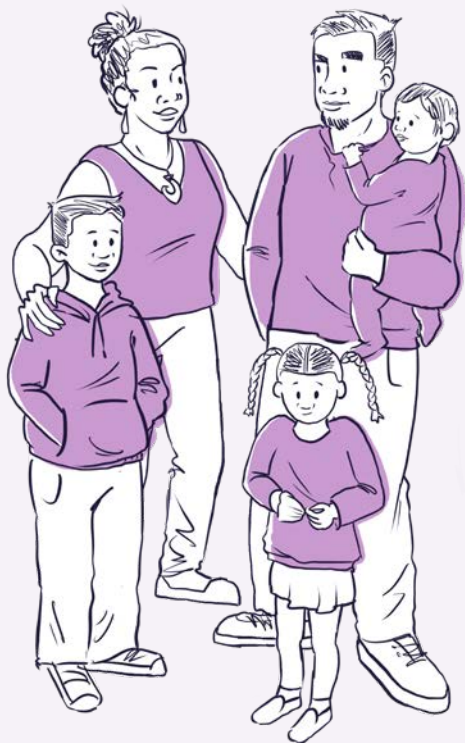
Rewa
Kāinga Ora tenant

Rheumatic fever prevention

It's the time of year when colds, flu and sore throats are more common in the community. But did you know that sometimes a sore throat can cause rheumatic fever?

About rheumatic fever

- Rheumatic fever is an illness caused by a Group A Streptococcal (GAS, also known as Strep A) throat infection and treating Strep A throat infections is the best way to reduce a person's risk of developing rheumatic fever. However, not everyone with rheumatic fever reports a history of a sore throat.



- Most children and young people with rheumatic fever develop sore joints, with limping or difficulty walking due to pain.
- There are also some uncommon symptoms of rheumatic fever such as unusual jerky movements (a condition called Sydenham's chorea), skin rashes and fever.
- If any of these symptoms are present, families should seek medical care as soon as possible.

Preventing rheumatic fever

- Get sore throats checked quickly to prevent Strep A throat infections from developing into rheumatic fever.
- All sore throats in Māori and Pacific children and young people aged 4-19 years need to get checked as soon as possible.
- There are lots of places you can have a sore throat checked:
 - You can go to your doctor or nurse. You may have to pay a fee; phone ahead to check.
 - Contact your local pharmacy to find out if they provide free sore throat checking.
 - Your child's school may have a free sore throat checking programme – contact them to find out.
- If a Strep A throat infection is diagnosed, antibiotics will be prescribed to prevent rheumatic fever and the full 10-day course of antibiotics needs to be taken, even if you feel better.

If you need free health advice or have any immediate concerns, call Healthline on 0800 611 116.

For more information about rheumatic fever scan here



Scan me

If your child has signs or symptoms of rheumatic fever, take them to a doctor or nurse straight away to be checked

Rheumatic fever usually starts

1-5 weeks

after your child has had strep throat.

Kura students help bless 10 new Gisborne homes

New Gisborne apartments resounded with the sweet voices of students from Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hawaiki Hou as they assisted Kaikarakia to implant mauri (spiritual energy) into the homes.

As the sun streamed in the windows, aroha was put into each wall in each of the new homes as the students recited chants from local mōteatea and karakia they have learned in the classroom.

Invited by Kaikarakia Morehu Pewhairangi, who has blessed many of our new homes in Gisborne, Kura principal Russell Wilson said it's a great opportunity for our tamariki to take what they are learning in the classroom and use it in the community. "The waiata, karakia, haka and mōteatea learnt are all taonga that are passed down from generation to generation. Our students now have a deeper understanding about what they are learning and how it benefits people moving into a new whare. We definitely felt that today."

The sunny, warm and dry apartments are close to the CBD and will provide a home for 10 individuals and whānau who are leaving the uncertainty of living in emergency and transitional housing.

The 10 new homes are a combination of two and three bedrooms and include a three-story walk-up building, only the second one we have built in Gisborne.

Mayor Rehette Stoltz says it makes a huge difference to see homes like this built in the region. "We know Tairāwhiti has a massive shortage and builds like this don't just happen. They are a culmination of us all working together and playing our part."

The new homes are definitely putting local health and disability support worker Ivan Te Momo on the right path. He is legally blind and has been living in emergency housing for the last two years. "The complex I was staying in had lots of corridors to navigate to the communal kitchen and bathroom facilities. Because of my disability, I have struggled to keep my room to the expected standards.

"It has been difficult to cook because of my sight and because I could not keep anything in the kitchen. I had to carry everything instead, including my cutlery, down the hallways from my room to the kitchen. That was a struggle.



Ivan has found independence at his new apartment and is working towards his PhD, focusing on health services for Māori with disabilities



Kura students walk through the new homes as part of the blessing ceremony.

"In the last year CCS Disability Action has helped me to cook, clean, cut vegetables and take my daily medication.

"I am looking forward to feeling settled, having my own place and the autonomy that brings. Having a home gives you a tūrangawaewae, a place where you can stand."

For the man who used to be a body combat instructor, even when his eyesight was starting to fail, the first focus is his health. "With my cane, I can walk to work from here. It has been hard to get my health in order staying in a place I don't control.

"My other focus is finishing my PhD thesis on health services supporting disabled Māori with Te Whare Wānanga Awanuiārangi. There have been challenges, but I am determined to be one of the first blind Māori to complete their doctorate in New Zealand. And I want to be able to show other blind people that it can be done!"

Winter health and wellness for you and your whānau

Prepare for winter, protect yourself and your whānau, ask and act quickly if you get sick.

To **prepare**, getting the flu vaccination is our first line of defence. This is free for those most likely to get very sick – including everyone aged 65 and over. See bookmyvaccine.health.nz or call 0800 28 29 26.

Protect yourself and others

by staying home if you're sick, and keeping away from young children, those who are pregnant and those aged 65 years and over. Wear a mask when you're in public, especially in a crowded place, and test using a RAT test if you have COVID-19 symptoms.

Ask and act early if you or someone you know gets sick

– most winter illnesses can be managed at home. If you need advice, contact your healthcare provider, doctor or Healthline – **0800 611 116** anytime 24/7, free of charge. You can also talk to your community pharmacist or visit an Urgent Care Clinic. Call 111 in an emergency.

Check **Healthpoint** for details of these services.

Other health concerns include ongoing risk from COVID-19, whooping cough, rheumatic fever, asthma and measles if not immune – visit info.health.nz/immunisations for advice or talk to your healthcare provider.

For more information, go to info.health.nz. If you are on Spark, Skinny, One NZ, 2degrees, Warehouse, Slingshot or Orcon mobile, go to zero.govt.nz for access without data charges.



Look after your pets as the chill kicks in

We all like to wrap up warmly and keep cosy as cold and wet weather sets in, and our pets are just like us. You'll have happy, healthy pets over winter with these top tips:

Shelter and warmth

If you're feeling cold, it's likely your pets are too. Keep them safe from bad weather by bringing them indoors when you can. If your pet lives outdoors, make sure they have access to shelter that is warm, well-insulated, waterproof and windproof.

Food and water

Animals are less likely to go outside in the cold, so using toys and puzzle feeders at meal times can be great for their mental and physical health. It's also a good idea to check outdoor water bowls each day to make sure they haven't frozen over, or to break up any ice if they have.

Exercise safely

Our pups love their walkies, even when it's cold or rainy. Try to keep heading out each day to keep them healthy and their minds stimulated. Reflective leads and harnesses make pets easier to keep an eye on during dark mornings or evenings.

Household emergency plans must account for all members of the whānau, and this includes your animals.

Visit spca.nz for more winter tips.

Make every sleep a safe sleep for your baby

There are four steps to making sure your baby has a safe sleep – and these spell PEPE:

- P** Place baby in their own baby bed in the same room as you
- E** Eliminate smoking in pregnancy and protect baby from smoke
- P** Position baby flat on their back with their face clear of bedding
- E** Encourage and support breastfeeding and gentle handling of baby

If you choose to share your bed with your baby, keep them safe by putting them beside you in their own baby bed – a wahakura or Pēpi Pod® or similar.

For more information and support about safe sleep call PlunketLine for free 24/7 on 0800 933 922 or visit plunket.org.nz



WINTER FIRE SAFETY

Every year, colder weather means more house fires happen across Aotearoa.

See a fire before it starts



A metre from the heater – keep everything at a safe distance

It's tempting to hang winter laundry near a heater. But unless it's a metre away, your clothes are a fire waiting to happen.



A clean dryer avoids a fire – remove lint before every use

If your dryer's filter fills with lint, it can easily catch fire. Remove the risk by getting rid of lint buildup before every use.



Cool ash before you stash – fireplace ash holds heat for up to five days and can spark new fires

Always soak it with water in a metal bucket before binning it.

For more information visit fireandemergency.nz/

Fire safety

Are you a smoker? Watch out for fire!

Every year people die in fires from being careless with their cigarettes, matches or lighters.

- If you fall asleep with the cigarette still alight, it could start a fire. If you are tired, have been drinking alcohol or have taken medications that make you sleepy, avoid smoking.
- Never leave burning cigarettes unattended. Make sure they've been properly extinguished before you leave a room.
- Always keep matches and lighters out of reach of children.

Prepare your household by having an escape plan

Your escape plan should include at least two ways out and a safe meeting place.

For apartment buildings, you will have an evacuation procedure to follow. Check the signage in your building and make sure you know where to go during an evacuation.

Practise your escape plan with your whānau or flatmates today!

Visit fireandemergency.nz/home-fire-safety/3-step-escape-plan/ to create your plan to get out so your household can be safe if there's a fire.

Working smoke alarms save lives – do not tamper with them

When you hear the smoke alarm sound, always get out and stay out. Go to your safe meeting place and call 111.



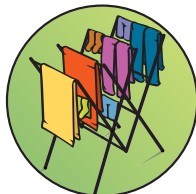
FIRE ESCAPE PLAN FOR THE WHARE

- 1 ENSURE YOUR SMOKE ALARMS ARE WORKING**
- 2 PLAN TWO WAYS OUT**
- 3 AGREE ON A SAFE MEETING PLACE**

**YOUR WHĀNAU
ARE NOW
PREPARED
TO SURVIVE
A FIRE IN
YOUR WHARE**

Helping you and your family stay warm and healthy

We spend a lot of time in our homes over winter, and we enjoy that more if we feel warm and dry. Be sure to heat bedrooms and other rooms you spend time in. Remember, drier air is easier and cheaper to heat, and stopping moisture building up helps prevent mould.

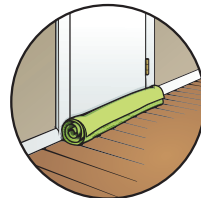
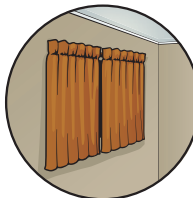
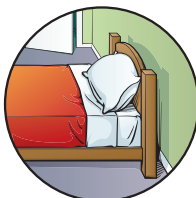


Keep the damp air out, air it out!

- Dry windows by wiping off moisture with an old towel in the morning if required
- Dry clothes outside as much as you can
- Use your rangehood when cooking
- Use your bathroom fan when showering or bathing and keep the fan going at least until the mirror and walls are dry.

Warm your home, keep it warm!

- Use heaters when it is cold and set your heater thermostats at 18–20°C to keep healthy and save money
- Open curtains during the day to use free heat from the sun
- Turn your heater(s) on as the sun starts to go down to keep the temperature steady.



Air it out!

- Open windows twice every day (for 10 minutes) to let damp out, even in winter
- Keep beds and mattresses damp-free by keeping them out from the wall far enough to let air circulate
- Raise mattresses off the floor to let the air dry them out daily (if possible) especially if people are sharing a room for sleeping.

Keep the heat in!

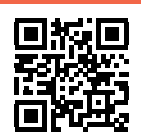
- Close curtains in the evening as the sun goes down to keep the day's heat in
- If there is a gap below a door, using a proper draught-stopper will help keep warm air in
- Call us if you feel a draught coming from windows, external doors or walls.

Got your curtains sorted?

Curtains are especially important during the colder months to keep the warmth from the day in once the sun goes down. If you don't have curtains, or feel your current ones aren't in good condition, speak to your Housing Support Manager.

Tips to save you energy

A big power bill is difficult at any time, but can be especially tough in winter. Scan the QR code for some easy ways to cut down on power, helping you save cash and the environment.



For even more power saving tips, see energymate.nz. Winter can be a more expensive time for your power bills. The Winter Energy Payment may help, but if you think you might fall behind with your power bill during the cold weather, contact your energy provider to work out a plan with them.

Is your clutter becoming a problem?

A clutter-free and tidy home is a happier home. Extreme hoarding can be a fire risk, attract pests and odours, and make your home harder to keep clean.

Piles of clutter can be a tripping risk and make your home stuffy and overwhelming. Being unable to find things is frustrating, and a messy home can affect your mental and physical wellbeing.

Decluttering your home will give you better peace of mind, and better safety and security. Having a clear and tidy floor makes your home easier to clean and will create a more welcoming space when you have visitors.

How to know if you're a hoarder

Here are some signs you could be a hoarder:

- You can't bear to throw anything away, just in case you might need it
- You can never say no to a bargain
- You have a habit of collecting an assortment of things, including collections
- You feel like everyone else's unwanted things are a great find
- You avoid inviting friends and family over as your clutter and mess have become unmanageable.

How to declutter

Decluttering can seem overwhelming if you have a lot of things, but it helps to start with one room at a time and take things slowly.

- Spaces like the garage and shed are good to sort through first as they are often dumping grounds for things we aren't using
- Work your way around the house, room by room until you tackle them all. But don't just move things from one room to the next
- If you don't think you'll use an item, or you feel you can live without it, ditch it!
- Organise and sort into what you can keep, donate, give away, sell or throw away (as a last resort)
- Digitise your documents and letters by saving an electronic copy to your computer or smartphone.

Digitising your documents and letters

You'll always need to keep a physical copy of your IRD number card, and essential life documents such as your passport, and marriage, birth or loved one's death certificate in a safe place, but you can digitise other documents such as bank statements, tax records, and bills.

Other tips for going digital with your documents:

- Use a scanning app such as Google Drive, Apple Notes, Adobe Scan, Microsoft Lens to make your smartphone into a scanner
- Ask for your bills to be emailed instead of through mail
- Sign up to MyKāingaOra, MyMSD and MyIR and download a digital record of your letters
- Throw the original documents in the recycling bin, making sure you destroy anything with private information.

Make a plan for what you want to get rid of right away

Have a garage sale, list things online, fix things, donate or give them away.

- Second-hand dealers might be interested in your vintage clothing, vinyl records, CDs, furniture, electronics, games, fitness equipment, antiques and books
- Unwanted toys in good condition can be donated to a toy library
- Baby and maternity goods can be donated to Nest Collective, or Pregnancy Help
- Look up e-waste disposal in your area for getting rid of old appliances and electrical goods
- Lots of charity shops offer a pick-up service for bulky items.

Be mindful of waste

You can reduce waste by looking at what you've got that you can fix or modify to give it another life, rather than replacing it with something new.

Unsure where to start?

- Check out tutorials on YouTube for how to mend your clothing
- Join a local mending workshop like the Palmerston North Repair Café or the Mending Club in Christchurch
- Your local Menz Shed might be a good way to make friends and fix up your old furniture or appliances
- Fix things right away rather than allowing them to pile up and add to your clutter.

How to keep organised

Once you've rid your home of unwanted clutter, your things must have a proper place.

- File, store and stash everything tidily in an organised space such as cupboards, shelving, drawers, containers, racks and tubs
- Use stickers and labels to tell you where you've stored things.

How to keep your home clutter free

Our thirst for more and more stuff creates pollution and waste. Our landfills are full of preloved goods because they are no longer 'trendy'. But you can help by shifting your mindset.

Be mindful of what will end up as clutter

Collecting fewer things means you'll accumulate less clutter. It's not only better for the environment, but also saves you money. Charity shops appreciate donations, but they're often overrun with unwanted, low-quality goods that they can't sell (and can end up in a landfill).

Set yourself some rules

- Say no to cheap or single-use freebies (unless it's consumable)
- Don't be tempted by a bargain
- Ask if you really need it and is there space for it in your life or home before buying
- Do you already own something similar or is there a way you can upcycle or spruce up what have (such as giving a piece of old furniture a new paint job)?
- Is there a second-hand substitute that you can search for first?
- Is it good quality and will last you for years, or will it end up in a landfill when you one day replace it?

Buy less checklist

- ☐ Avoid trends by opting for timeless pieces that won't date
- ☐ Avoid sales
- ☐ Buy second-hand over new
- ☐ Delay buying an item for at least a day to curb impulse spending
- ☐ Consider the social, environmental and ethical impact of what you buy
- ☐ Become part of the slow fashion movement (the opposite of fast fashion addiction).



Extra help for hoarding disorders

healthify.nz/hauora-wellbeing/h/hoarding-how-to-help-a-hoarder

cdhb.health.nz/your-health/when-collecting-becomes-hoarding-is-it-a-problem/



Winter gardening tips

The star constellations of Te Waka o Rangi and Matariki (Pleiades) have set in the west, Tamanuiterā (the sun) journeys across the sky on his shorter path to Hinetakurua (Sirius), and we can all feel that winter has truly arrived.

As soil temperatures drop, growth has slowed down in the garden. If you didn't plant winter veggies like broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower, it's not too late, but just know they won't grow much until spring arrives. Protect your crops from frost – for example, use shade cloths to cover your garden.

Bring chilli plants and passionfruit vines inside over the winter. They should survive inside in a pot with good drainage until it becomes warm again in the spring, and they can be repotted outdoors.

Broad beans germinate best in winter, and their seed is easily planted straight into the ground. Don't let them get leathery and grey. If you pick them smaller, as sweet, young green things, they'll taste more like peas and can be eaten raw

or lightly fried or steamed. Broad beans don't need good soil, but they will improve the soil for the next crop. Plant them where you plan to put tomatoes in spring, and they'll not only add nitrogen into the soil but can be cut down and used as straw mulch to protect the young tomato seedlings in October.

As gardeners we are always thinking ahead about how we can improve soil for the next season of growing and it's vital that we become aware of the changing seasons.

Use succession planting – this is especially important when growing brassicas. Sow your brassicas in intervals, with a week or two between each planting. This means they will be ready at different times and you can stagger your harvest.

Plant out: broad beans (seed), broccoli, cabbage, garlic, kale, lettuce, mesclun, pak choi, radishes, snow peas and strawberries.

Compost tip: Keep a bin of organic waste (cardboard, paper, dead leaves, small sticks, mulch) next to the compost bin with a lid on to keep it dry. Each time you empty food scraps into the compost bin, cover them with a handful or scoop of the dry organic waste. This will add the carbon it needs, reduce unwanted pests like fruit flies, and add air to the compost so it can break down more quickly.

Gardening tips thanks to
Common Unity Project Aotearoa
commonunityproject.org.nz



Family barbecue pork sausage roll

READY IN: 55 MINUTES
SERVES: 4-6

Savoury, filling and good hot or cold. You can use pastry trimmings to decorate it or leave it plain and just enjoy a hearty, crispy family-pleasing meal in under an hour.



YOU WILL NEED:

- ½ Tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 3 rashers of bacon, chopped
- 450g pork mince
- 2 slices of bread, made into crumbs
- 1 tsp dried sage
- 1 tsp mustard powder
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup BBQ sauce, store-bought
- 1 egg
- 2 sheets puff pastry, defrosted
- 1 egg, lightly beaten, for glazing (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 210°C. Heat the oil in a small pan and add the onion, garlic and bacon. Cook gently until soft, stir in the sage, mustard and paprika and set aside.
2. In a bowl or processor combine the cooked onion mixture, pork mince, breadcrumbs and egg, and mix. Add half a cup of BBQ sauce and stir till combined.
3. Join the pastry sheets together sealing with a dab of water. Place on a greased baking tray and trim one-third off the end of the pastry. Place mince down the centre, brush the edges with water, roll, and fold in ends to seal.
4. Cut decorations from remaining pastry and attach with a dab of water. Brush all over with beaten egg or brush with milk instead. Cut a few vents in the top to allow steam to release, then bake in preheated oven for 30-35 minutes until dark golden. Serve as a family meal with a jacket potato and green vegetables.

TIP:

For a smaller household or a couple, divide the mixture and roll out as six sausage rolls, freezing any you don't use for a later meal.

FOR KIDS, ABOUT KIDS



This month, Matariki (Māori New Year) is on Friday 20 June – Rāmere 20 Hune

During Matariki, the star cluster, also known as Pleiades in Western astronomy, Subaru in Japan, Mao in China, and Krittika in India, is most visible in the night sky.

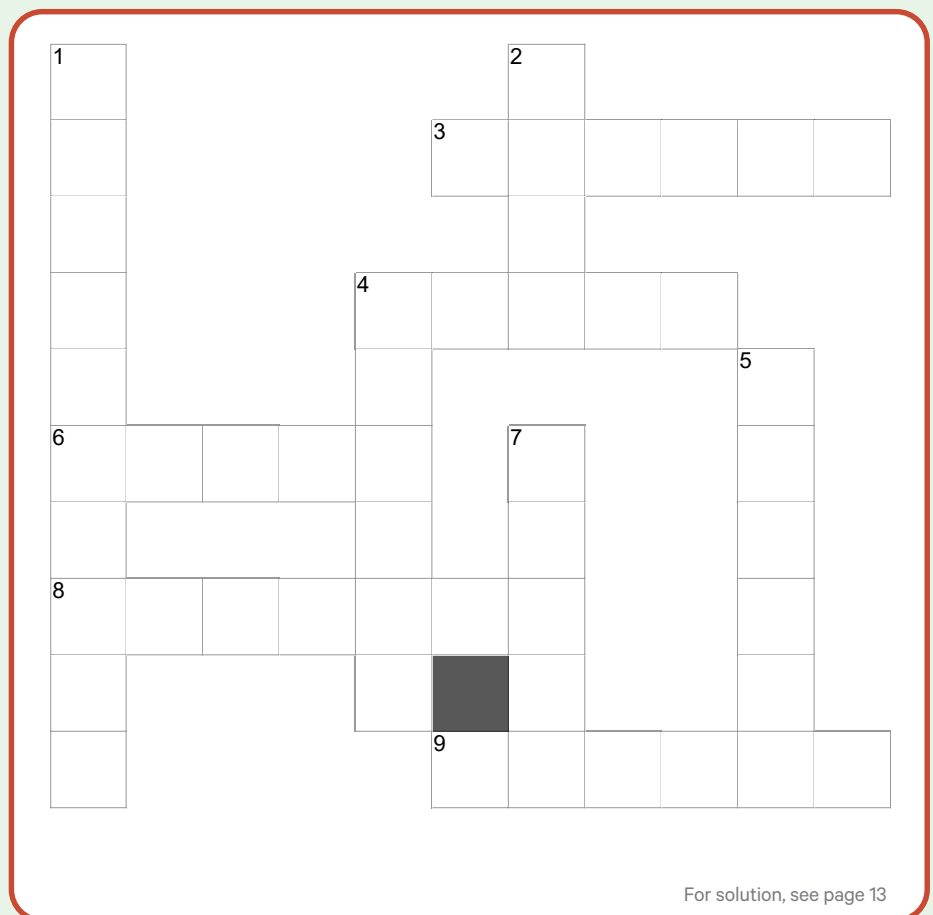
It is a time for remembrance, for reflecting on the past and current, and looking forward to the new. For Māori, it's a significant time for the beginning of planting crops, harvest and life.

Across:

- 3 What the Matariki star cluster is known as in Japan
- 4 Te reo Māori word for star
- 6 Matariki star cluster in Greek mythology is known as what (number of) sisters?
- 8 The direction on the horizon where the star cluster is visible in the night sky during Matariki
- 9 The day of the week during Matariki that the public holiday is observed on

Down:

- 1 The three bright stars in line known in Māori as Tautoru, and featured in the Orion constellation, are known as what in Western astronomy?
- 2 Matariki this year is observed on the 20th day of which month?
- 3 What the Matariki star cluster is known as in Japan
- 4 Takurua/Hotoke in te reo Māori is known as what season in English?
- 5 Sweet potato brought to Aotearoa by early Māori
- 6 Matariki star cluster in Greek mythology is known as what (number of) sisters?
- 7 Type of calendar used by Māori and Eastern cultures, and is an alternative to the Gregorian (Western) calendar
- 8 The direction on the horizon where the star cluster is visible in the night sky during Matariki
- 9 The day of the week during Matariki that the public holiday is observed on



For solution, see page 13

Origami jar of stars

What you'll need

- A jar with a lid (a recycled one is ideal)
- Strips of paper in assorted colours. (You can cut your own strips using coloured A4 paper and measuring 1cm strips against the short edge so that the strips are the length of the sheet.) It works best with two or more colours
- Ribbon or rope for decoration

Instructions

- 1 Fold the strips of paper first at a 45-degree angle towards the long edge. Then fold again until it forms an even-sided pentagon shape, tucking in the exposed edge.
- 2 Continue to wrap the length of the paper around, following the sides of the pentagon until you're left with just a corner.
- 3 Tuck the corner in underneath the nearest edge.
- 4 Puff up the stars by gently pressing against each point of the pentagon. You may need to gently blow on one of the corners to help it puff up.
- 5 Repeat until the jar is filled with your 3D stars.
- 6 Screw on the lid and decorate with your rope or ribbon.





No data? No problem.

Zero.govt.nz has you covered.



Driveway safety reminder



Safekids Aotearoa suggests three things you can do to make driveways and other places safer for children:

- **Check** for children before driving off
- **Supervise** children around vehicles – always
- **Separate** play areas from driveways.

Email option If you would prefer to receive this publication via email, send an email to editor@close2home.co.nz



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