

*Te Haumatāoho*

# On the frontline

*The heart of Victim Supports' service*



From left: Lil Hancock, Bren Gunn, Kevin Tso, Janet Paiti

Every day our frontline team of Support Workers nationwide strive to give manaakitanga meaning, helping those affected by crime, trauma and suicide to find safety, healing and justice.

Wrapping support and care around others binds us together, and when we do this for others in times of need, we empower victims and strengthen communities.

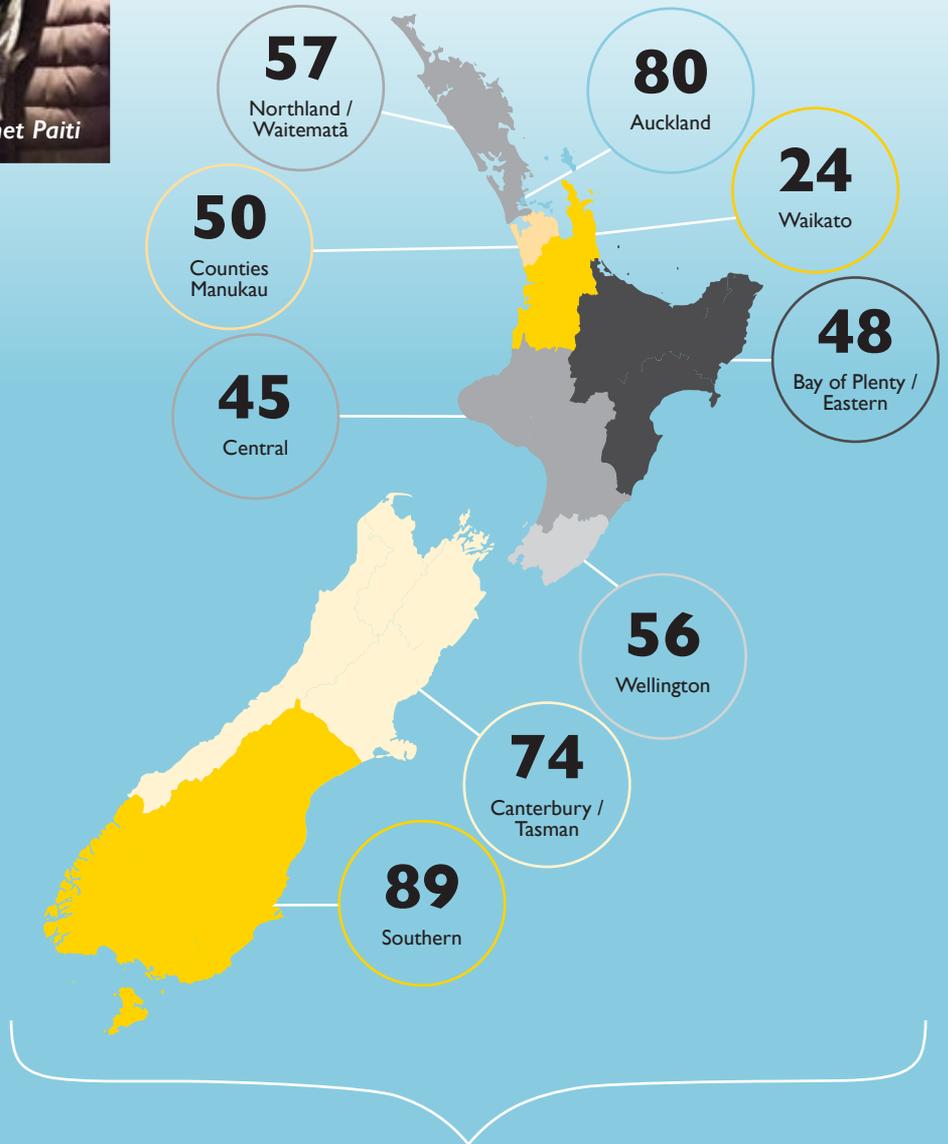
Our highly trained team of Support Workers is at the heart of our service. Comprising a mix of staff and volunteers, these are ordinary people who make an extraordinary difference.

Victim Support was founded in 1986 as a volunteer organisation and volunteers continue to play a vital role in our service delivery. Without our volunteers, Victim Support simply could not be there for victims when they need us. They give not only their time and passion but enable Victim Support to respond to more than 40,000 people in need every year all around the country, 24/7.

I acknowledge and give grateful thanks to the dedication of all our Support Workers, walking alongside victims in their journey with such generosity and kindness.

I am very proud of the dedicated and diverse teams that make up our Victim Support whānau.

*Kevin Tso, Chief Executive*



**Support Workers nationwide**



# Kāpuinga Kākaho Stronger together



Gurpreet Singh, Support Worker - Napier

“Being a Support Worker is really something anyone, from any background could do. It’s just life experience and the motivation to want to help others.”

## Making his daughter proud

**When Gurpreet Singh arrived in New Zealand in 2016, he had all the challenges facing a recent migrant in trying to settle his family, but still found time to become a volunteer Victim Support Worker.**

A doctor in his native India, Gurpreet wanted to use any free time he had to help others in his new home country. He sees this as a part of his professional and spiritual journey.

“We have our spiritual learning about working selflessly for people in need – it’s called *Seva*. It’s a foundation in our spirituality,” says Gurpreet.

Gurpreet completed his training as a Support Worker in Counties Manukau. The training enabled Gurpreet to work on all types of cases and support the diverse communities that make up the area.

“It was really valuable having Gurpreet as a fluent Punjabi speaker to support the specific needs of that community,” says Counties Manukau Area Manager, Grace Chan-Nuualitia.

He moved to Napier in 2017 where he was soon on the Victim Support Hawke’s Bay roster.

Gurpreet has since helped many Hawke’s Bay people on their road to recovery from lives impacted by crime and trauma. He acknowledges his role is a unique combination of emotional support and practical advice, quite different from his work as a medical professional.

“I could use my knowledge or training as a doctor to help victims, but I’m working for Victim Support and the objectives are different,” he says.

“My background helps me to understand how anxiety and depression go along with something like post-traumatic stress.

There are similarities as well but the most important thing really, is just to listen and try to understand what people are feeling.”

Gurpreet feels his own perspective as a doctor connects very well with Victim Support’s ‘Te Whare Tapa Whā’ service delivery model.

“It’s an holistic approach where you’re treating the person as a whole - not just defining them by one thing. With ‘Te Whare Tapa Whā’ you explore the family, the spiritual part, the psychological and physical parts. I really love this process,” he says.

“The training Victim Support gave me was amazing. It really prepares you for the role and I think this is something anyone in the community can think about doing.”

In Napier, both Gurpreet and his wife work for Hohepa, a community organisation which offers residential care along with vocational programmes for children, young people, and adults with intellectual disabilities.

“I loved how my work enabled me to help people in India and what I am doing now with Hohepa and Victim Support is the same. It’s about understanding people, giving advice and observing what challenges they may have.”

He is very much motivated by his Support Worker role, with the opportunity it provides to give back to the community, support his spiritual beliefs and to be a positive role model for his family.

His family, especially his eight year old daughter, Ibadat Kaur, have been incredibly supportive all through the late-night callouts and time spent away training.

“She understands how important it can be for someone to know they are not alone and there is someone who will be there for them,” says Gurpreet.

“My daughter is so proud. It’s a big inspiration for her: I have never felt this satisfied before. It also gives you a six figure pay, S-M-I-L-E-S.” ■

# Could *you* be there for others?

**Crime and trauma can strike without warning, to anyone, anywhere, anytime and Victim Support is here for them when it does. Our service is free and lasts for as long as victims need it.**

Victim Support volunteers come from all walks of life, just like those that need our help.

On the toughest days, a helping hand is everything. Our extraordinary Support Workers make an incredible difference for people affected by crime, trauma, and suicide, providing much needed information and support through times of crisis and beyond.

Support Workers often visit victims in their home, at the Police Station, at the scene of an incident or provide support over the phone. They provide emotional and practical support to victims in

their times of need across a wide range of events, from burglary and assault to sudden bereavements. They are a patient ear to listen and friendly face to talk to, while also providing practical information to help victims find safety, healing, and justice.

With comprehensive initial and ongoing training opportunities, we're committed to giving volunteers the training and support they need to develop their potential, whatever level of experience they bring to the organisation.

Helping people in their hour of need is incredibly rewarding. Victim Support volunteers not only help people at their most vulnerable times, but get immense rewards that only come from giving back. ■

To learn more, go to [www.victimsupport.org.nz/volunteer](http://www.victimsupport.org.nz/volunteer) or call **0800 VOLUNTEER (0800 865 868)**



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*No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burden of another.*



**Suzy Kiely,**  
Support Worker -  
West Coast

## A chance to give back

While involved with a friend's court case, **Suzi Kiely had the opportunity to see Victim Support volunteers in action and was so impressed with the way the volunteers helped get everyone through these ordeals that she contacted Victim Support to apply as a volunteer.**

"I understand trauma, so this felt like a calling to me", says Suzi.

She believes her experience of losing her son in a car accident allows her to understand how victims in crisis are feeling.

"I recently went with the police to support a mother whose son had passed away in a motorcycle accident. That felt like a situation where my experience and training helped, especially in those first 24 hours."

One year into the job, Suzi is impressed with the support she and fellow volunteers receive from Victim Support.

But it's the personal rewards that mean the most to Suzi.

"It's cool wanting to do something for no monetary value. If I can be there for people in trauma or crisis, to empathise without any judgement and make a difference, then it's all worth it." ■

**"I know that I would've been totally lost without my Support Worker. If they didn't exist there would be a lot of very lost people."**

## A personal journey

**Jill Henderson's journey to volunteering was a long one. After years of consideration, the catalyst finally came in 2018 when she received the call up for jury duty.**

"I came out of there, and I thought, right that's it – I'm going to do it. When my kids were young, I wanted to do something in the community, but at the time I couldn't rely on my partner to support me," says Jill.

As a victim of a home invasion, Jill has first-hand experience of trauma, and she feels that this has given her the tools to help others.

"To gain a better connection with a client, I sometimes let my client know that I am a volunteer – I can feel that it changes the whole dynamics. Possibly they've had connections with authority and feel they've been let down. But when you let them know you're not paid to be there they can change and open up."

For Jill, the rewards of working with Victim Support were worth the wait.

"I am getting back just as much as I am giving out. We are in the frontline of some heavy situations, but I don't take on board what they have just experienced. This is my journey, to be there to help walk them forward to what will be their new normal." ■



**Rikihana Clark,**  
Support Worker -  
North Shore

## Immeasurable support for victims of crime and trauma

**Rikihana Clark (Riki) found Victim Support when he went looking for something to offset his high-pressure position as a Programme Manager.**

"I saw an opportunity for me to make a difference and not be measured in KPIs, to even out my corporate life," says Riki.

Riki does a weekend shift each week on Auckland's North Shore. To develop his skills, he completed the initial training programme as well as specialist training in responding to victims of family violence and harm, sexual violence, homicide, and suicide.

He recalls a callout early on that highlighted the importance of the service for victims of crime and trauma.

"I was asked to attend a visit to notify the family of a sudden death. I remember waiting with the police for our client to come home. When they pulled into the driveway and saw us, their mouth dropped – knowing that something had happened.

"That incident gave me much more of a sense of the impact that these events have on people. It made me realise the role we're there to play. You're not there to be the knight in shining armour - that's the value in it. It's just being there and being a rock for the person who needs that support." ■

## Our Support Workers

*helping victims find safety,  
healing and justice*



**Minha Kim,**  
Support Worker -  
Auckland West

## Making time to help out

**Minha came across Victim Support through a friend who was already volunteering for the organisation. She has been a volunteer for over three years and during that time has supported a wide range of people in trying circumstances.**

"I have been supporting a victim for over a year now. He is Korean, and so am I. He had difficulty expressing himself in English, and he was going through very difficult times.

"In the beginning, it felt like an impossible situation. Looking back now he has improved and slowly things have got better for him. It shows that anyone can recover from a bad situation. We have more strength than we give ourselves credit for," she says.

Volunteering for Victim Support has helped Minha decide which studies to pursue and sparked new areas of interest for her.

"I studied criminology as well as psychology. I wanted to try and help offenders, actually. I felt like everyone deserves to be understood. My work with Victim Support has helped me to get an understanding of how the system works." ■



**Jill Henderson,**  
Support Worker -  
Rodney

Ā mātou mihi, whakamoemiti hoki

# Thanks to our supporters

We acknowledge and give heartfelt thanks to all our generous supporters, including individual donors, organisations and our Local Group Committees for their commitment and passion for the work we do in providing support to victims every step. We can only keep our 24/7 service free with the ongoing help of our community. Without your contribution, we simply would not have been there for 40,827 victims in 2019/20.

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