



A regular newsletter on behalf of Cambridge LifeSkills to our community

spring 2012

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**Cambridge Lifeskills**  
*Joining hands to change our children's future*  
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## Introducing our organisation to you

It is my privilege and pleasure to bring you the first newsletter from Cambridge Lifeskills. This is an opportunity to introduce you to the work we do in the community and introduce you to some of our team.

Cambridge Lifeskills is a Not-for-Profit organisation that has been providing a free counselling service for 20 years to children between the ages of 5 and 15 who attend school in Cambridge.

Many children are subjected to situations they should not be

exposed to but unfortunately for a raft of reasons they are often thrown a curved ball. Having someone like a Lifeskills counsellor who will listen and hear what the child is saying can be their saving grace. Many

**It's okay to seek support and guidance when needed**

of our referees are suffering from the effects of abuse in its many guises, parent separation and the guilt that can often ensue, a death in a family, relocation and loss of friends, bullying (physical, emotional, cyber), sibling rivalry, lack of social skills and the ability to make friends, parents in prison – the list of reasons for referrals is vast.

The organisation was founded in 1992 to address the social issues of a small group of teenage boys at Cambridge High School. Funding was successfully sought and a sole counsellor was employed. Today

we have 12 counsellors working for Cambridge Lifeskills and at the time of writing 86 children are receiving counselling with others being on a wait list. Six of our counsellors are paid with the remainder being volunteers who are completing their counsellor training. Being a Not for Profit organisation we rely solely on the generosity of community agencies for funding. Without their generosity we would be unable to offer this essential service **free of charge**.

Our counsellors work with clients in their own schools because we believe being in a familiar environment reduces any level of anxiety a child may be experiencing.

In saying this there is also the option of a neutral venue should that be more appropriate. The counsellors work with the children until the issues are resolved; in other words clients are not restricted to being allocated a set number of counselling sessions.

The number of referrals is growing steadily which tells us that members of the Cambridge community feel confident in the work of Cambridge Lifeskills and that it is now okay to seek support and guidance when needed.

**Beryl Emery** Chairperson



## Our Board

As with any organisation, there is a team supporting the 'front-line' counsellors. The Cambridge Lifeskills Board members are:

- Beryl Emery - Chairperson.** Has been involved with Cambridge Lifeskills for over 15 years. Deputy Principal at Cambridge Middle School until April 2011. Lives in Rukuhia however planning to move to Cambridge in early 2013.
- Ken Moreland - Treasurer.** I have lived in Cambridge all my life and am heavily involved in sporting organisations and local community projects. Strongly supportive of Lifeskills and how they support troubled and at risk children.
- Sandy Wesford - Counsellor.** Has been involved with Cambridge Lifeskills for 15+ years. Owns a business in Cambridge and is married and raising three boys.
- Alex Boyd - Foundation Sponsor.** A respected and well known businessman and Principal Partner of Cambridge Real Estate. Plays a mean game of golf on a good day and is a generous benefactor.
- Beth Wiles - Secretary.** A Cambridge local who works at Cambridge East School and has been involved with Cambridge Lifeskills for a good many years.
- Wayne Dunn - Police Officer.** Has been a Police officer for 18 years mostly in the Waikato area. Appointed Cambridge Youth Aid Officer in December 2007 and appointed to the Cambridge Lifeskills board that year.
- John Bullick - Principal Cambridge East School.** Has been involved with the Cambridge Lifeskills Board since the late 90s. Working with children in a school setting allows a real insight into the benefits that Lifeskills can make in their lives.
- Ross Tyson - Principal Cambridge Middle School.** Married 40 years; two adult children and one gorgeous granddaughter Hannah, aged 5. Involved in education for over 43 years. A golf and travel addict.
- Karen May - Marketing.** One of the newest members of the team. Owns Kaz Graphic Dezin and lives in Cambridge with her husband and two daughters.
- Brent Nielson - Procedures.** Brent is strongly connected to the Cambridge community, through St John, Cambridge Chamber of Commerce and the NZ Institute of Rural Health, matched with a Masters in Business Administration complementing the governance roles.



## We've been on a journey for the last 12 months

The past 12 months have been very exciting as we have experienced exponential growth as a professional organisation.

This has mainly come about as additional members of the Cambridge community have stepped up and offered their advice and services.

Our rebranding exercise (instigated by Karen May from Kaz Graphic Dezin) has been the catalyst for ongoing growth and development. This rebranding extended to new business cards and stationery which we are very proud of. Joining the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce has offered networking opportunities not previously available to us. The ongoing support and encouragement from members of the Chamber has been appreciated.

Through the Chamber this year we entered the Waipa Networks 2012 Business Awards and were finalists in two categories - which is outstanding considering it was our first ever award entry!

As a Board we agreed to designate the first Tuesday in each November to a Cambridge Lifeskills Community Day. The majority of the schools in Cambridge supported this concept when we introduced our inaugural day in 2011. Much fun and laughter was generated at the participating schools as they fund raised to show their appreciation of the work of Cambridge Lifeskills. Our Community Awareness Day for 2012 is on Tuesday November 6<sup>th</sup>. Watch this space!

Joining in the Cambridge Christmas Parade for the first time was a lot of fun for those involved. We loved the fact we had the brightest coloured balloons in the Parade and we were colour coordinated with our sponsored tshirts. We also had the opportunity to wrap gifts at The Warehouse in December, which was a great

opportunity to talk to the public about what we do while wrapping their gifts.

Viv Posselt has generously allowed and encouraged us to submit a monthly column in the Cambridge Edition. Through these columns we aim to offer advice and encouragement to parents and caregivers who may be temporarily 'stuck' in a situation that may seem a bit bleak. There is always someone to support when there is a need.

We accepted an invitation from local MP Louise Upston to attend a workshop for writing submissions for the Green Paper on Vulnerable Children. We also co organised a celebration of International Children's Day in Cambridge on April 4<sup>th</sup>. To our knowledge this was the first time this day had been celebrated in our town.

Being interviewed by Julie South from HaloBiz, on Community Radio was also a first for us and a novel experience.

We now have a motor vehicle so look out for the wonderfully colourful signage on it. Thank you to our donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Please see our list of generous sponsors and Friends who are supporting us and therefore enabling us to continue to provide a **free counselling service** for our children and young people in Cambridge.



## Positive feedback

Cambridge Lifeskills was established in 1992 to provide a counselling service which identified 'at risk' youth and their extended family. Many of the issues identified affecting youth were dealing with death, suicides in the family, sexual and physical abuse, lack of self-esteem and other assorted social issues.

The aim of Cambridge Lifeskills was to intervene at a young age and help the young person deal with the issues affecting their behaviours and social problems.

Cambridge Lifeskills has now been operating for 20 years and as officer-in-charge of the Cambridge Police I can say that very few (if any) children that have gone through the Cambridge schooling system have social behaviour issues causing them to commit crime. Local students are accountable for very little, if not nil, crime in the Cambridge area over the past two years.

I have no doubt that the effort by the Lifeskills team put into managing personal and social issues affecting youth is the reason our youth crime has reduced so dramatically.

I would dearly like to see similar programmes run in other centres throughout New Zealand as I firmly believe that early intervention with youth prevents them from becoming career criminals in their late teens and early 20s.

Cambridge Lifeskills was a long-term solution to reducing youth crime in an identifiable area, namely Cambridge, and I am pleased to say that it is working and we are now seeing the results.

**Gordon Grantham, Sergeant 1104 Cambridge Police**

## Tuesday 6 November

...is Cambridge Lifeskills Community Awareness Day - help us increase awareness.

The local schools are working on plans to help us raise funds and awareness for the free of charge service that we offer. Interested?

**If you would like your business to be involved- phone Beryl Emery on 021 190 1760**



# Sponsors

As we are a not-for-profit organisation we rely on the generosity of sponsors and grants. We'd like to thank those businesses who have donated.

## FOUNDATION SPONSOR



The team from **Cambridge Real Estate** has been the Foundation Sponsor for Cambridge Lifeskills for 5 years and have been with us on the journey of where we are today. We'd like to publicly say Thank You and ask you to support their business as they have supported us.

[www.cambridgerealestate.co.nz](http://www.cambridgerealestate.co.nz)

## PRODUCT SPONSOR

**Kaz Graphic Dezin** - Marketing

**Leisureline Clothing** - Clothing

**Cambridge Edition** - Advertising and Editorial

**Virtual Print** - Printing

**HotShot Signs** - Signage

## SUPPORTERS

- Cambridge Christmas Festival Ladies
- Cambridge Police
- Cambridge Lions
- Cambridge Rotary
- Cambridge Jaycees
- The Union Parish Church Op Shop
- Jumble Around Op Shop
- HaloBiz
- Cambridge Z Service Station
- Vacpro - Name Badges
- PrintHouse - Christmas Wrapping

## SPONSOR

- Lottery Grants Board
- Pub Charities
- Sky City

# Meet the Lifeskills team

Over the next couple of newsletters we'll introduce our team of passionate counsellors.

Hi I am **Sandy Wesford** and I have been involved with Cambridge Life Skills since 1997 initially working as a Counsellor in the schools of Cambridge. Over the years my passion for investing in children and families has become more and more crystallised. I also have my own private practice Cambridge Family Therapy.

I absolutely believe in the positive impact counselling has and continues to have for hundreds of Cambridge children and their families. In more recent years my role has diversified to that of Lifeskills Manager. One aspect of my role is to provide supervision for the team of counsellors. My focus for the next phase of my work with children and families is focussing more at a Government and political level with the aim of seeing a service such as Cambridge's available across New Zealand.

I am married and we are raising 3 boys, 1 dog, 1 cat and 1 chicken.

My name is **Lesley Gerritsen** and I am a qualified counsellor working with Cambridge Lifeskills, and have been working with young people and the significant others in their world, since 2010. My heartfelt belief is that every single person in this world matters - no matter what! And because of that belief I endeavour to do my very best to nurture and empower clients to enable them to live their lives to the fullest. I live in Cambridge and care greatly about our community. Loving people is my passion! I

enjoy a wonderful family, great friends, walking, food, reading, and our amazing country!

A qualified counsellor who is passionate about working with children and their families, **Lee-Anne Fitzgerald** works either individually or in a group process. Lee-Anne lives in Morrinsville with her partner and their two girls, aged five and eight years of age. Lee-Anne's passion comes from the privilege she feels when working alongside the many children and families that overcome the many diversities that they face.

Hi my name is **Yvonne Bakker** and I am in my second year with Cambridge Lifeskills. This is my third year of my Bachelor of Applied Social Science and Counselling degree. I am a mum of two grown girls - one who lives in Brisbane and the other in Hamilton with three children of her own. I live with Molly the cat and Monty my therapy dog. He is great therapy for me and has been a great help with my granddaughter who has on going medical problems. I am a animal lover and enjoy reading, drawing and riding motorbikes.

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