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PARENTING FEATURE

**guiding hands**



**Midwives help push for natural health start**

A natural approach to pre-natal and post-natal care is being promoted through a joint Kakariki Health Store–Otamatea and Rodney midwives initiative.

Launched last month, the year-long programme will involve giving mothers-to-be information and samples of natural products which offer an alternative to some conventional over-the-counter treatments.

Midwife Kate Rankin says pregnancy is a good time to get across health messages.

“Parents are often a lot more motivated and receptive to advice at this time,” she says. “It’s often when they are prepared to commit to making lifelong changes which will benefit both them and their baby.”

Kate says midwives regularly come across cases where babies have had an allergic reaction to everyday pharmaceutical products.

“Reactions to some brands of baby oil, baby wash and wet wipes are particularly common.”

Kakariki owner Jess Costello says parabens and sodium laureth sulfate are two chemicals, in particular, that should be avoided.

“The packs introduce mothers to a range of products that are chemical-



Pictured at a get-together to look at the new pregnancy packs are, from left, Jess Costello, Kakariki remedial massage practitioner Stephanie Cammell, and midwives Kate Rankin, Vicky Macdonald and Kassie Flavell-Neville.

free,” she says. “These include mother and baby massage oils, nappy creams and laundry powder. A lot of the product is also made by NZ companies such as The Herb Farm, Ecostore, Kiwiherb and Tui Balms.

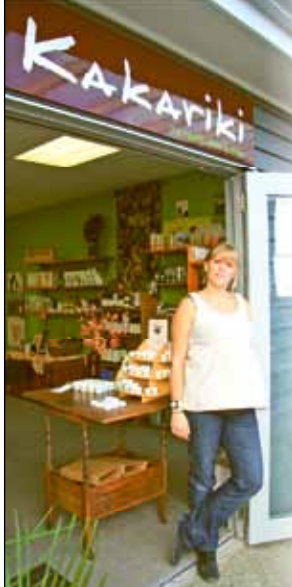
“We chose to distribute the packs to midwives as they are the primary

caregivers for the majority of pregnant women in rural areas. If you go to your GP when you’re pregnant, you’re given a pack with samples, but it is surprising how much of the product supplied is full of chemicals and there is absolutely no information available about other options.”

**Watch those crystals**

Consumer Affairs is warning parents to take care with crystal ornaments and glass around the sun. The ornament can magnify and focus the light and heat from the sun causing scorching or even a fire. The department recently had a call from a mother who was dealing with the aftermath of a scorched teddybear. Understandably, she was worried that it could have been a lot worse.

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PARENTING FEATURE



# guiding hands

## New school principal brings wealth of teaching experience

Mahurangi Christian School Board of Trustees has appointed acting principal Helen Pearson of Whangaparaoa as their new principal.

Helen was the founding principal of KingsWay School in Orewa, working there for six years.

She has also worked as a curriculum developer and educational consultant.

While at KingsWay School, Helen designed the Interact Curriculum for Christian and Catholic schools, a biblically-based and integrated programme of learning for students in years 1-8. It is used in around 40 schools in NZ, as well as overseas.

Helen is an international speaker on matters of curriculum and teaching and is a founding director of the Laidlaw College School of Education.

A mother of five, Helen says she is looking forward to using her experiences as a curriculum developer,



New principal Mrs Pearson says her short time as acting principal helped her appreciate the support the school has from staff, the community and Board.

teacher educator and parent in a school setting.

## Extra maternity funds delivered

The Government is making an extra \$33.2 million available for maternity services and to help new mothers and their babies.

Health Minister Tony Ryall says a further \$21.3 million will boost WellChild services, with a particular focus on first time mothers.

The extra funding for maternity services includes:

- \$18.4 million to bring all local maternity professionals together for regular clinical reviews of all births. This funding will also increase the number of midwives in hospitals, together with medical specialists on-

- site and on-call.
- \$6 million to revamp new parent information services.
- \$6.8 million to help vulnerable mothers access a fuller range of health and social services. It will also assist midwives to make appropriate and timely referrals to other practitioners.
- One-off funding of \$2 million to ensure all DHB maternity data is collected nationally.

The additional WellChild services have a particular focus on the needs of first time mothers, funding additional home visits.

## Making parenting incredible

A parenting programme designed to enhance positive family relationships, which empowers parents to make change and helps them to better manage difficult behaviour, is being offered in Warkworth. The Incredible Years course is a practical step-by-step programme for parents of three to eight year olds to help handle everyday family situations. Dr Carolyn Webster-Stratton, of the US, developed the programme and evaluations show that it is effective in significantly improving parent-child interactions, reducing parents use of violent forms of discipline and reducing child conduct problems. The date and venue are yet to be confirmed, but the course is likely to start towards the end of this month. It will be run from 10am - 12.30pm, and limited free childcare is available. For enrolments or further information, phone 09 487 1100.

Read our latest edition online at [www.localmatters.co.nz](http://www.localmatters.co.nz)

## Dyslexia Workshop

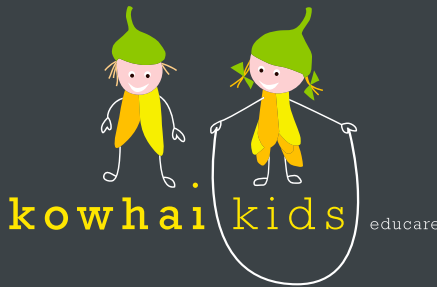
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