



The Adoption Option DVD



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Welcome to the very first issue of the Adoption Option Trust (AOT) newsletter. Many thanks to Tracy Matehe who is a multi-tasker if ever there was one! Not only is she the AOT treasurer she also got this newsletter underway. She was interrupted in its production by the arrival of a wee bundle of joy, her new son, Kya. Tracy and her husband Renata adopted him mid October.

Congratulations to you both!



Adoption Option Trust Launch

The trustees were thrilled by the turnout for the launch in Christchurch on 20th June. Our wonderful volunteers helped set up displays and hand out information. The guest speaker, Dr. Sue Bagshaw, talked about how useful the Trust's DVD would be in counselling pregnant young women. Other guest speakers told heartfelt stories of how adoption had been a positive experience for their lives.

One fifteen-year-old woman with a crisis pregnancy was

About Us

The AOT is an independent trust. It is not sponsored by any group or organisation. It relies on voluntary donations to survive.

The Trust's aims are to:

- *promote adoption as a positive choice for people facing a crisis pregnancy.*
- *educate the public in New Zealand about current practices in domestic adoption, especially open adoption.*
- *work cooperatively whenever possible, with others in the adoption field and in pregnancy counselling.*

informed about our launch by her GP. She came along to the launch and decided she wanted to look into adoption as a possible option for her baby.

Thank you to all the volunteers and speakers who made the launch such a success. Thanks also to Janine Holland who did such a fantastic job of organising the publicity.



Liam Messam, a rugby star who plays for the Chiefs, has agreed to support the Trust. Read his story on the website. Under "I was adopted" see Liam's story.

Website Traffic

Thanks to the generosity of the Cabbage Tree Creative web design company, the AOT was able to launch its website to coincide with the launch of the Trust and DVD. Simon Kingham worked hard putting all the information onto the site and he welcomes comments and ideas for things to include. Contact him via

info@adoptionoption.org.nz
Here are the hits the site has received so far:

Day of launch - June 20 th	71
Day after launch - June 21 st	584
Day of Campbell Live - 28 June	214
29 June	146
15 th August	444

The site is averaging ten hits per day on non-publicity days. A pregnant girl contacted us via the website. She was looking for help to find out about adoption and we have also had parents of pregnant women contacting us. We have been able to refer them on to counselling agencies and CYF.



Supporters Membership

Following requests from people wanting to support our work the trustees have decided to set up an annual Supporters Membership. The annual membership fee is \$20. For this members receive an email alert of the quarterly newsletter and occasional Supporters emails. To reduce administration membership will run January to January.

the "How to Support Us" section on the website. Once you have paid please email treasurer@adoptionoption.org.nz stating you have paid to become a supporter and giving your address. Tracy will log your email address for the supporter's newsletter and send you out a tax-deductible receipt.



If you would like to join this annual membership please see



Donations

The Trust has received a number of donations. This is awesome. Donations received have helped pay for folders, pamphlets, printing and posters. All donors have been acknowledged and have been

given receipts. Donations made to the Trust are tax deductible. Total donations received to date circa \$20,000. We are aiming to raise \$100,000 to distribute the educational materials. **Please see "How to Support Us" on the website for information on making a donation.**

Articles in the Media

We were delighted with the positive piece on Campbell Live back in July. This generated a lot of hits to the web site and a number of people contacted us after having watched it.

As part of our strategy to educate New Zealanders about adoption we have been contacting magazines and newspapers and asking them to run a story on adoption. This has proved to be successful and so far we have had stories in the following publications:

- ✚ **Tots to Teens**
- ✚ **The Press**
- ✚ **Challenge weekly**

- ✚ **The Ashburton Guardian**
- ✚ **Joy Magazine**
- ✚ **Cleo magazine**
- ✚ **Parents Inc. (December)**

In the New Year we are looking to send articles to professional journals such as medical, teaching and counseling publications. If you work for such a publication, or know someone who does, we would love to hear from you.

We can supply true stories or give contact details for birth families, adoptive couples and people who have had a positive experience of being adopted. We are keen to promote the work of the Adoption Option Trust in each article.



Volunteer positions available

- ✚ Newsletter editor
- ✚ Researcher collating youth group information
- ✚ Volunteer co-ordinator
- ✚ Distributor of DVDs

Please email us for the job specs.

We would also like to hear from anyone with financial expertise in the Christchurch region who may be interested in helping the Board of Trustees.

How can you help?

We have been delighted to receive many supportive emails on info@adoptionoption.org.nz. A common question is **"How can I help?"**

Here are the main ways we are looking for support:

- ✚ Do you have a positive adoption story you are willing to share? Please look at the adoption stories we have on our website under the **info for pregnant women** section. We want to get as many New Zealand stories as possible on the site. It helps if you can send your story in a Word format but if this is not possible just put it in an email. A photo or two would be helpful but we appreciate that some people may want to change names and be

anonymous and this is fine.

- ✚ Do you have connections with the medical, teaching or counselling professions? Or, are you part of a positive adoption? We want these people to help us distribute the DVDs and other materials to GPs, schools, youth groups and services working with women in crisis pregnancy situations. Please contact us if you are interested in being considered for this volunteer role in your area.
- ✚ Can you support us financially or run a fundraising event for us? Every little bit helps!



Adoption Option Trust
PO Box 13434 Christchurch

E-Mail:
info@adoptionoption.org.nz

We're on the Web!
www.adoptionoption.org.nz

Educating about adoption in New Zealand today

This is our first newsletter.

We hope to have personal stories in our future editions. If you have anything you would like to see in the newsletter, or have any comments on this issue, please email us.

Meetings with Politicians



Nicky Wagner MP

Simon and Sue Kingham had a very good meeting with Nicky Wagner (National Party MP). Ms Wagner was very keen to find out about the work of the Trust and was very positive towards adoption.



Judy Turner MP

Brendan McNeill and Janine Holland went on behalf of the trustees to a meeting with Judy Turner (United Future MP) and again they felt they had a useful discussion.

Supporting Pregnant Women

Following on from the set up of the Adoption Option Trust a group wishing to support pregnant women who are considering adoption has started. The support group agreed that their main role was to offer friendship. A support person would act as an advocate and help direct a pregnant woman to people or agencies that could help them. The group does not want to influence pregnant women's decision making but they recognise that being in a crisis pregnancy situation is very stressful and lonely.

Donna Ellis is co-coordinating this support group, which is **not** part of the Adoption Option Trust. The volunteers who want to get alongside these pregnant women are all birth mums who are willing to share their experience of adoption. A website is planned and it is hoped that email support will also be available to women who live out of the Canterbury area. If you have any queries about this support network you can contact Donna on delli001@hotmail.com

Newsletter Mailing List

If you know someone who maybe interested in receiving this newsletter? **We would be delighted if you would consider forwarding the newsletter link to a few friends.** If they want to receive future copies they can email the secretary secretary@adoptionoption.org.nz to update the emailing address list. **If you do not wish to receive this newsletter please email the secretary and she will remove you from the mailing list.**

Corporate Supporters

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