



DIOCESAN YOUTH & FAMILIES COMMITTEE

REPORT TO THE WAIAPU DIOCESAN SYNOD 2013

This Committee has settled into a pattern of meeting to provide oversight for the broader work of Children, Youth and Families ministry in the Diocese. In particular the role of the Committee has focused on future direction and policy when working with this vitally important ministry in the life of the Diocese.

The committee meets approximately four times a year. Meetings have been held this last year from 4 pm to 9 pm and moved from region to region. This has enabled youth representatives from that region to attend along with their Regional Youth Facilitator (RYMF). We have endeavoured to reduce the travel for the RYMFs by not expecting them to attend all meetings.

We have welcomed The Reverend Joan Edmundson onto the Committee as the Standing Committee representative after Brian Dawson's move to Wellington in late 2012. The Reverend Frank Ngatoro resigned to take up a new position in Eastland and a new .5FTE RYMF is currently being considered.

The new accountability structure has taken some getting used to for staff, but is now settled into place with regional youth committees no longer providing oversight but rather acting as Working Groups.

The overall vision of the Committee continues to be affirmed: *that every praying community has children, young people and their families as an integral part of every aspect of that community's life.*

The Childsafe programme, now known as "Safe Here" has been a key area of conversation as this has settled into use with the new Co-ordinator, Sandie Speeden. All parishes engaged with children, Youth and Families ministry, in any way, are encouraged to make contact with Sandie who can supply resources and assistance for planning trips etc. Awareness of the safety of our children and young people has greatly increased – a pleasing sign.

The Committee has also provided oversight for the LT4Youth programme and the Youth Interns programme, as well as Top Parish.

The current challenge for this Committee is the exploration of ways forward in this area of ministry into the future. The model operated with Regional Youth Facilitators has been in place now for well over 10-15 years with the more recent inclusion of a Diocesan Youth Ministry Facilitator leading the team. This structure is being reviewed to ensure that we are able to offer the best way forward. The Children & Families Enabler, Jo Crosse also works with this committee.

Current thinking is that an increase in work with children and intermediate age young people diocesan-wide may be important to consider as we are seeing a growing gap in the older youth age-group.

This is challenging work in the current climate for both church and society and our young people and can be lonely and needs support and encouragement. We give thanks to God for the Diocesan and Regional staff and the many volunteers around the diocese who work in Children, Youth and Families ministry and which we trust will go from strength to strength into the future.

The Reverend Adrienne Bruce (Chairperson) 21st July, 2013