



Foster Hope

We believe that every child in care deserves to know that their community cares about them. We strive to make this mission a reality by providing children with necessities to ease the transitional period for them and their new caregivers.

Who is Foster Hope:

Foster Hope was started by two ladies in Auckland, Louise Burnie and Sam Weir, who are both huge supporters of helping others. Originally known as 'Kits2Kids' these ladies came up with an idea to help foster caregivers with practical support when they needed it most. The idea was to supply foster children, who would more often than not arrive at new placements with no more than a rubbish bag of belongings or only the clothes on their back, with backpacks full of essential items that not only meet their immediate needs but also provide comfort and a sense of belonging. The very first of these backpacks of essential items throughout the Auckland area in 2010.

Foster Hope has since grown from the early days and now has co-ordinators throughout the country leading branches of volunteers eager to support the caregivers of their regions. Foster Hope rely on the incredible support of our community through both monetary and physical donations, alongside grants from both the public and private sectors. As a policy, Foster Hope do not apply to Lotto or Pub charities, as they feel this can be the underlying cause of the breakdown of so many families. Everyone involved in Foster Hope including the management board and the regional co-ordinators are all volunteers. They all work tirelessly and every year give more that 4,500 volunteer hours to make sure children in care know that they are loved.

The backpacks provided allow foster parents to focus on the emotional and physical needs of the child instead of having to run around doing last minute/late night shopping to ensure they have life's essentials. These backpacks include a carry all bag, toiletries (toothpaste, shampoo, soap, flannel) and some other special personal items that they can call their own, (books, soft toys, etc).

Foster Hope have been supporting foster families for over 13 year now. Every year they supply over 3,000 backpacks to children in care, over 10,000 Christmas presents, over 5,000 pyjama sets and more than 2,500 knitted, craft or quilted items. These efforts ensure that these children have the best chance of achieving positive outcomes in their lives.

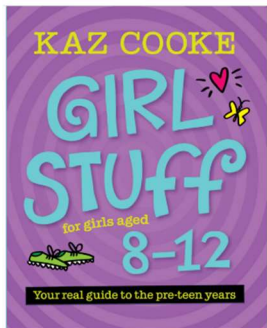
Zonta's Fundraising:

Zonta International's mission is to "Build a Better World for Women and Girls." Foster

Hope provide at least 400 girls in Foster Care over the age of 8 with essential items every year. Girls in care are vulnerable and face additional challenges compared to other girls in a time of their life which is already challenging .

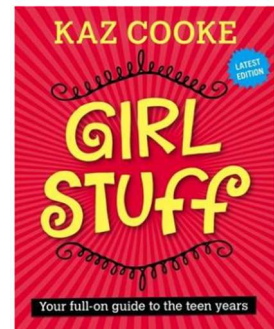
When girls are in foster care, one of the challenges they face access to timely, relevant and age appropriate information. Foster Hope do their very best to support the vulnerable girls in foster care and it has been on their wish list for a long time to provide comprehensive reference books for girls on pre-teen and teenage years. Unfortunately due to limited funding they have not been able to provide these essential books.

BUILD A BETTER WORLD FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



With the support of Zonta District 16 and the selection of Foster Hope for the biennial project, two comprehensive educational resource reference books on the pre-teen or teenage years will be funded and supplied for girls within their backpacks. These books cover everything from body changes, feelings, mind health, shopping and schoolwork to alcohol and drugs. Both books written by Kaz Cooke are age specific with one book aimed at girls between the age of 8 – 12 and the second aimed at girls 13+.

By providing these books Zonta hopes it will make the world better for girls in foster care by giving them the means to access supportive guidance through these turbulent times.



How can Zonta Clubs help in their own communities:

This project also offers the opportunity for both Zonta and Foster Hope to develop a strong relationship and provide opportunities for individual Zonta D16 Clubs to add on local initiatives supporting girls in foster care in their area.

Foster Hope has regional co-ordinators located throughout New Zealand. These co-ordinators deal directly with the foster families in their communities so know what is needed in their specific areas. Zonta D16 clubs are recommended to reach out to their local co-ordinator and establish direct relationships and ways they can help their community directly. This may be arranging donations for the backpacks, arranging local donation drives, providing social activities, running fundraising events or using their local business connections and relationships to establish more support for Foster Hope.

The hope of this relationship would also be to bring awareness and advocate for foster children, foster parents and the entire foster system. Unfortunately, it is a system in New Zealand that unless you are directly involved in many do not know how it works or the challenges these foster families face. Hopefully by being involved with this project Zonta D16 members will learn about the foster care system and help raise awareness to others. This is also an opportunity for Zonta D16 clubs and members to establish relationships with foster families in their communities as well and provide support directly to these people and learn more about their situations.

It would also be the hope that this joint project would raise the profile of Foster Hope, Zonta D16 Clubs and Zonta International in New Zealand.

It is recommend, if you have not already, to reach out to your local foster hope co-ordinator or check out their website find out about the wonderful work they are doing in your area and how you can get involved.