

### **Whānau Āwhina Plunket Rotorua fundraising for new community hub**

Whānau Āwhina Plunket is busy fundraising for its new purpose-built community hub in Rotorua.

The Pukuatua Street building has supported generations of tamariki but it has seen better days and is no longer meeting the community's needs.

It will be replaced by the new hub, once the organisation has made up the \$100,000 shortfall still needed for the internal fit-out.

Regional Operations Manager for the Central Region, Viv Edwards, says Whānau Āwhina Plunket has received very generous funding from different organisations for the new hub, including substantial donations from the local community – but there is still a lot of money needed to make the build possible.

“For several years local volunteers have been raising funds for a central facility that offers a one-stop shop to parents of young tamariki – a hub that is accessible, welcoming and family friendly,” Ms Edwards says. “While the plans for the new hub are well on their way, we still need \$100,000 for this project.”

Ms Edwards says the Rotorua team is currently split across two buildings.

“Our nurses, kaiāwhina, managers and administrative staff are in separate offices to the community services, which is not practical or whānau friendly,” Ms Edwards says. “This project will bring the community services and clinical services in with the nurses to create a welcoming hub for the community so that we can have all our services under one roof.”

Ms Edwards says the team is looking at local initiatives to help raise money before October, when the building is removed and the rebuild scheduled.

More than 1000 new babies enrol with Whānau Āwhina Plunket annually in the Te Whatu Ora – Lakes area, with around 5000 tamariki currently enrolled in the area and more than 3000 in Rotorua alone.

“While the current building has served us well for many years, it's no longer suitable for Rotorua's growing community and the changing needs of our whānau and community groups,” Ms Edwards says. “The new hub will be a one-stop central hub to better meet the needs of whānau in Rotorua and the Bay of Plenty. It will be accessible, easy to find, and totally whānau-friendly.”

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