



## Lip-Sync Battle Finally Goes Ahead

And you can take part! Have you ever watched a lip-sync battle and wished you could give it a go yourself? Or is there a music video that you've always been obsessed with and wanted to emulate? Now you can! What's more, the event is a fundraiser for Aviva, so you can shimmy for a good cause.

The event is planned for **Saturday 25 September 2021**, at Addington Raceway. It was originally scheduled for April 2020, but that year had other plans for us! So now we're aiming for "second time lucky." In the spirit of *expecting the unexpected*, we have even developed an alternative plan for running the fundraiser in a lockdown (which we sincerely hope will not be utilised!)

If you're always singing in the shower or dancing around the kitchen (or office!), this is your chance to show off your skills, for a good cause. It's also an opportunity for businesses wanting to give back and raise the profile of their organisation (and a great staff social to boot).

To sign up for the lip-sync battle, or for more information please contact [community@aviva.org.nz](mailto:community@aviva.org.nz).



Karen Askew and the Aviva Fundraising Team at the charity build.

## Partnering for children and young people



LAUNCH FOUNDATION

**Karen Askew and her son Cole Askew are part of the family-led house building company, Freedom Built. In 2019, Cole had an idea – a way he could take the business and use it to support children and young people in need. That's how The Launch Foundation came to be.**

Using their building experience and network of industry contacts, they started work on a new home build, with the intention of giving every dollar raised from it to charities supporting children and young people.

"The Launch Foundation fund is used to encourage, support, and empower at risk children in Canterbury, suffering from the effects of abandonment, abuse, crime, poverty and illness. We know many of these issues are cyclical, going back generations, and strongly believe the best way to fight them going forward is by empowering our children."

Cole and Karen felt that Aviva really aligned with the Foundation's goals, because of our efforts to break the cycle of violence, by providing early intervention and education to children and youth. We were thrilled when the Launch

Foundation chose Aviva as one of the charities to partner with.

The Askews' passion and enthusiasm for the cause spread as various construction companies jumped on board to offer their materials and services at heavily discounted rates; from laying the foundations, to putting up frames, installing a roof, providing the electrical work, and even offering waste disposal for the build site. Everyone recognised that every dollar saved on the build could be used to help a child in need.

The build was recently sold and is nearing completion within the coming weeks. Freedom Built aims to complete one such project a year, with the goal of all profits from the sale supporting tamariki and youth. How amazing that buying a home can directly help young people in Canterbury to feel safe in their own home!

The funds will be used to develop a school-based healthy relationship programme, and to create a bursary fund to support children who have experienced family violence to have positive experiences.

To find out more about The Launch Foundation, go to [facebook.com/thelaunchfoundation](https://facebook.com/thelaunchfoundation).



## How Tonia supports her clients by being a bit extra

**The word most often used to describe Tonia is "extra."**

She is loud, full of energy, and not above breaking out her dance moves at any given moment. She is also one of the most versatile support workers at Aviva, working with youth, people experiencing violence, and people using violence. She does it all. Whether it is bursting into song to engage a teenage girl or foregoing paperwork to go on a walk with her client, she knows exactly how to channel that personality to help others.

"With our clients they're really just looking for someone to listen to them. It's all about having a real conversation."

Tonia will help facilitate those conversations by being her authentic "extra" self, but she will also support her youth clients to receive singing, boxing, or hip hop classes to help them feel more at ease. "I find out what they're into and then I think,

"How can I support this? Afterwards, they're so much more relaxed. That engagement is already there, and the conversations just flow."

That open relationship also helps her clients be more open to difficult discussions, such as their use of violence.

"I do have some men or women who will sit here and completely minimise what they've done. A lot of my conversations are about challenging their perceptions around their behavior. With the iceberg model, we take a deep look into the underlying factors of their anger and once we begin to unpack these feelings, a lot will start to surface – lost job, no money for petrol, the rent is overdue, son forgot to take out the rubbish. When they've had that big explosion, other people think they've lost it over the tiniest thing, but for them it wasn't just one thing. That's when I see that lightbulb moment and they see where they need to be."

"With our clients they're really just looking for someone to listen to them. It's all about having a real conversation."

This work is especially meaningful for Tonia because of where she came from. "For me, growing up in the Pacific Island community, family violence was such a common occurrence. Once I became a mum, I wanted to make sure my son was not exposed to that same culture. I wanted to make sure that cycle was broken. My community didn't know the impacts of family violence; they didn't have that education. I want to learn about violence and teach others in our community, if not for ourselves, for our kids."

Tonia is currently involved in a new project called "Seuga," aimed at bringing family violence education to Pasifika communities to help combat the higher rates of violence in them. "What I find different with Aviva is that we don't just talk about it, we actually reach out to the communities that need us. We cover their petrol costs to get here, we pick them up, we go into their homes. We are really flexible with how we engage and remove any barriers that are there. If something doesn't fit within the system, we try to make it work, like with Seuga."

Aviva is so happy to have someone like Tonia on our staff, even if it's just to keep us all on our toes!

**"I don't care what you've done, or what your partner or child has done. If you are willing to do the mahi and take in that education, you can come to us. We work with anybody. Whether it's through words, drawings on the board, or a walk outside, it's my obligation to figure out how to build you up."**

## Hayley finds the support she didn't know she needed

**Hayley\* came to The Loft looking for support with mental health difficulties and changing her benefits. She did not come looking for family or sexual violence services, but when she found Aviva, she realised it was exactly what she needed.**

"I went to The Loft because I felt lost and alone, so when I walked in without even knowing they could help, I really didn't know what to expect. Everyone I met there was so friendly and understanding, though. I never felt that my reasons for asking for their help were unreasonable, and I never felt personally invalidated."

She met with The Loft Community Connector to identify what services could help her. As part of the evaluation, she was asked whether she had ever experienced sexual violence. "It suddenly occurred to me that an ex-partner had raped me. That was a shock, because I had never really considered whether or not it was rape before."

In that relationship, Hayley experienced more than just sexual violence. "My abuse was mostly emotional and mental – gaslighting, isolation and control. For years after that relationship I thought it had all been my fault. Nobody really talks about the kind of abuse that doesn't leave physical bruises or scars, or that fact that it still qualifies for very practical assistance."

The Loft is designed to catch people like Hayley, who may not otherwise seek out Aviva services. Although she came looking for mental health support, she was quickly referred to Aviva's women's education group.

\*Not her real name.



Image courtesy of Pixels

"I would absolutely credit Aviva for putting me on the right path to be the much stronger person I am today."

The trauma of violence can deeply alter a person's perception of healthy relationships, putting them at higher risk of experiencing violence again. Access to education is essential for helping people like Hayley re-establish their boundaries, rebuild their confidence, and gain the tools to keep themselves safe in the future.

"The things I learned there and hearing what others had gone through really affected me positively and helped me to feel like I wasn't alone, especially since everyone was from very different situations, from young mothers to older professionals. It's surprising how strong some of these women seemed and yet they were still going through terrible situations. But sharing stories with them was inspiring."

Aviva further supported Hayley to gain ACC assistance, which allowed her to receive regular counseling for her past trauma. "I dealt with so much fear and negative thinking I didn't know I was holding onto, and I learned how to accept and deal with my emotions."

"My life has completely changed. The assistance I received and the extra support Aviva directly led me to have helped me gain so much confidence and self-esteem that I feel like a different person entirely. I still struggle with things, of course, but so many of the barriers that used to hold me back just aren't there anymore, or I have the tools and resources to get past most of them now. I would absolutely credit Aviva for putting me on the right path to be the much stronger person I am today."

Hayley's story took place before the Covid pandemic. Since then, Aviva has seen an overwhelming increase in demand for services. Although we offer immediate support to anyone in a high-risk situation, someone like Hayley who is not at immediate risk may only have access to interim support and be left waiting for a full referral.

**You can ensure people like Hayley get the support and education they need when they need it by making a contribution at [donate.aviva.org.nz](https://donate.aviva.org.nz).**



Image courtesy of Pixabay

## Maria financially rebuilds herself over a decade-long journey with Aviva

**In 2010, Maria\* was devastated by family violence. "I was broken, had zero self-worth, and no confidence in myself to be able to move forward. It wasn't just the physical, it was the mental violence that made you feel worthless." These feelings culminated in Maria attempting to take her own life. Thankfully, she survived; and the Police referred her to Aviva.**

"I got a lovely phone call from a lady who spoke to me for what seemed for ages. I recall feeling guilty for taking up her time."

However, through all the challenges she was facing, Maria ended up going to prison. "The lady at Aviva was so lovely, didn't judge, and said, 'Give us a call when you get out and we will help you as much as we can.' I held onto that for the whole of my prison sentence."

When Maria left prison, she was starting over again with bad credit and no money. She needed a

washing machine that her benefit would not cover.

Like many who experience violence, Maria's ex-partner had controlled the finances. She had nothing to her name except the defaulted loans she had been made to sign for and her prison bonds.

This type of financial control is a tactic used to keep people in their relationships. If they leave, their debt and lack of assets excludes them from mainstream financial services, which can lead them to predatory third-party lenders who push them further into debt. Oftentimes, they find themselves back in violent relationships.

"I remembered what the lovely lady had said on the phone. I made contact with Aviva. I was so nervous as my self-confidence was zero. I remember going to the offices and tripping up the stairs with nerves. I nearly burst into tears before I got to reception."

"I saw this lovely lady. She was comforting and made me feel like a person. She also never judged my situation, which started to give me hope that there are good people out there wanting to help."

Maria was referred to Aviva GoodLoans<sup>1</sup>, which offers budgeting services and low- and no-interest loans to those on limited incomes. The service is designed to help those like Maria who are trapped in a cycle of financial instability.

"I saw this lovely lady. She was comforting and made me feel like a person. She also never judged my situation, which started to give me hope that there are good people out there wanting to help."

Maria was approved for a no-interest loan for a washing machine. "I remember screaming with excitement as someone believed in me."

"Since paying off that loan, I have also got and paid off loans for a fridge and a television. I have learnt to budget and live within my means. I have learnt there are good people out there that don't judge and that my past does not define who I am now."

Maria is currently a few payments shy of paying off her fourth loan – this time for her prison bonds. She hopes paying it off will allow her to finally move off her benefit and gain access to mainstream financial services.

**"The person I was all those years ago was so broken and had zero self-worth. Aviva have supported me so much in my journey of becoming who I am today and gave me hope, for which I am truly grateful."**

## Aviva expands our services thanks to our generous supporters



**After the year we've had, Aviva cannot express our thanks enough to those who have stepped up to support us. Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, we have been able to expand our services to help us meet increased demand.**

Covid response funding from the Ministry of Social Development and Lotteries allowed us to introduce two new staff to manage the increased demand from the pandemic – a Crisis Intervention Support Worker and 0800 Support Line Worker. These roles offer immediate access to advice and advocacy, and provide much needed interim support to those on our waitlist.

The Tindall Foundation is funding a new programme called "Seuga," made for and by Pasifika peoples and aimed at tackling the increased rates of family violence in Pasifika communities owing to Covid.

An increase in contract support from the Ministry of Social Development

and Oranga Tamariki has also allowed us to expand our Sexual Assault Support Service Canterbury (SASSC) and children's and youth services respectively. We have rented and kit out an inviting new space at Phillipstown Community Hub for our Tamariki Group and Seuga, thanks to the support of numerous individuals and groups like The Dream Trust and The Christchurch Aunties. Although these funds and donations were not specifically aimed at combatting the impact of Covid, they are essential for ensuring the trauma of violence within the pandemic is not passed to the next generations.

We would also like to make note of all the generous supporters who donated gifts to our Christmas campaign last December, making it one of the best in recent memory!

We are incredibly thankful for all the support we have received. Although the demand persists and the impact of Covid is sure to be felt for years to come, everything you do helps make the journey a little easier.

### Funders

Blogg Charitable Trust  
Christchurch Earthquake Recovery Trust  
Department of Internal Affairs – Lottery Grants Board  
Kelliher Charitable Trust  
Mainland Foundation  
New Zealand Community Trust (NZCT)  
Rata Foundation  
New Zealand Communities Growth Trust (NZCGT)  
The Tindall Foundation

### Other Supporters

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The Creek Trust  
The Dream Trust

### Christmas Gift Donors

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Holly Lea Village  
It's in the Bag NZ  
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Lush Northlands  
North Canterbury Lionesses  
Ohoka Women's Institute  
Papanui Paraders Leisure Marching Team  
Pegasus Ladies Golf (Tuesday Group)  
Research First  
Rotary Club of Garden City  
Scenic Hotel Group  
Statistics New Zealand, Population Insights Unit  
Stratford Garden Club  
Synergy Hair  
Te Tumu Waiora Health Coaches  
Torpedo 7 & No. 1 Fitness



# THE advocate



**0800 AVIVA NOW**  
Autumn 2021

## Help us break the cycle of violence this appeal season

Mark your calendars! The Aviva Annual Street Appeal is taking place Friday 7th May and Saturday 8th May.

**Children and families across Canterbury and Aotearoa are experiencing a compounded trauma that Cantabrians are already far too familiar with.**

Even before the pandemic arrived last year, Aotearoa had the highest rate of family violence in the OECD. Covid has only served to worsen the situation, increasing feelings of anxiety, instability, and fear for an entire generation.

**We need your help to ensure this collective trauma is not passed to our children.**

Family violence is cyclical, both individually and generationally. A person who has experienced violence may have trouble recognising violent behaviors or asserting their boundaries. They may have lower self-worth and feel violence is all they deserve. They may have been financially exploited and are unable to regain independence. These factors make them and their children more likely to experience violence again.

**Aviva wants to break that cycle!**

Whether it be through early intervention for children and youth that have witnessed or experienced

violence, helping parents escape their own cycles of violence, or bringing family violence education to new communities, you can trust Aviva to tackle the issue at every level to ensure that every child has a safe home.

"A lot of these children have grown up in households where for generations there's been violence and no one's ever talked about it, so if a child comes into our group and sits down and says, 'This is what happens in my family,' that's hugely powerful for that child, and for other children that are listening to that. They know it's ok to talk about this," – Tamariki Support Worker

**Help us break the cycle of violence this Appeal season by:**

- Gifting a few hours of your time to collect for our Street Appeal on 7th or 8th May. Register at [aviva.org.nz](http://aviva.org.nz);
- Organising a fundraiser among your friends, colleagues, or community group; or
- Making donation directly to Aviva at [donate.aviva.org.nz](http://donate.aviva.org.nz).



**Children are present at 80% of all violent incidents in the home**  
– NZ POLICE, 2019

As the pandemic continues, we are seeing overwhelming demand for our services. But we don't want to be the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. We need your help to ensure that the trauma of this pandemic does not continue to haunt us or our children for decades to come.

1. GoodLoans is offered through Good Shepherd NZ with support from BNZ, Kiwibank and the Ministry of Social Development.

\* Not her real name.



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