



**ADVENTURE**  
SPECIALTIES TRUST

# IMPACT

**SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT  
+ ANNUAL REVIEW**

**2023**



# OUR VISION

Lives Inspired by Adventure

# OUR MISSION

To respond to community needs by providing purposeful adventure, which facilitates therapeutic outcomes and positive growth

# OUR VALUES

We are guided by our Christian faith, which places the love of God at the centre of all that we do. This is expressed by the following values:

**WE ARE HOPEFUL.** Change is possible for everyone. We are optimistic, we are confident and we use a holistic, strengths-based approach which supports hauora, “the winds of wellness.”

**WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER.** We practice mahi tahi. We encourage each other and our participants. We grow community partnerships and collaborate to achieve shared goals.

**WE ARE ADVENTUROUS.** Outdoor adventure will transform lives. We use healthy adventure and a connection with te taiao, the natural world, to nurture growth and learning.

**WE ARE INCLUSIVE.** Everyone is welcome. We honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We practice equity, respect and manaakitanga.

**WE ARE SAFE.** We embrace physical, emotional, social and cultural safety. We continually invest in our team and resources to ensure that everything we do is high quality.



EST. 1984  
**ADVENTURE**  
SPECIALTIES TRUST

# THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

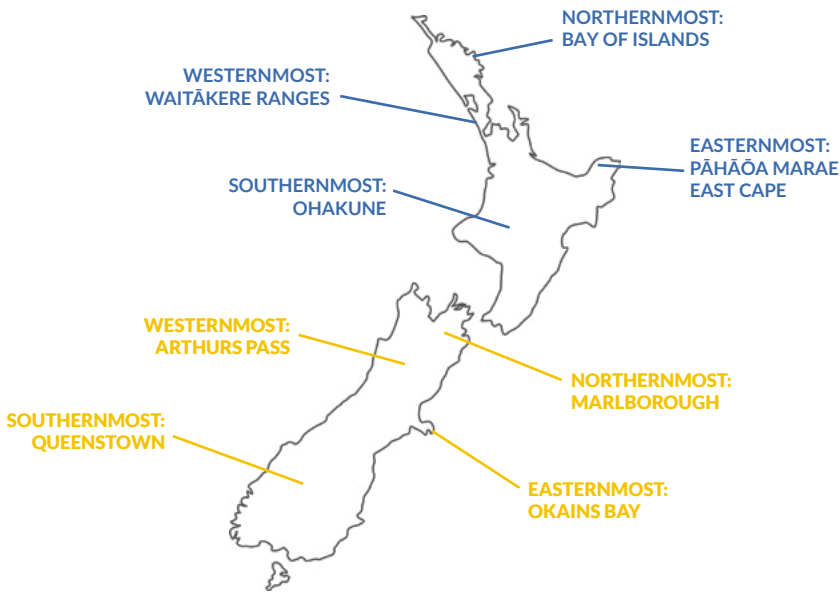
**3,875**  
PARTICIPANTS  
IN 2023

**99,072**  
PARTICIPANTS  
SINCE 2001\*

**199**  
PROGRAMMES  
IN 2023

**4,914**  
PROGRAMMES  
SINCE 2001\*

## NORTH ISLAND PROGRAMME LOCATIONS



## SOUTH ISLAND PROGRAMME LOCATIONS

**39**  
YEARS OF  
OPERATION

**5**  
TRUSTEES

**29**  
EMPLOYEES

**1**  
INTERN

\*Figures taken from data collected since 2001. However, there was data missing from two years (2007 and 2008). Possibly stolen by the washing machine sock monster. So we have made conservative estimates of the two missing years, based on the years before and after the missing data. Data from 1984 - 2001 is no longer available.



*“I’ve definitely  
**changed my mindset.**  
Being outside and  
doing activities  
made me realise that  
**being nice and busy outside  
helps my mental health.”***







## WORD FROM THE CEO

Kia ora koutou,

Our 2023 journey started with a full staff retreat in January at Pāhāōa Marae, which sits on the beautiful East Cape. It was great time for whanaungatanga and continuing our bicultural journey. **I thank Pāhāōa Marae and the people of Te Whānau-ā-Apanui for hosting us.** It was therefore a great shock when we left the serenity of the East Cape and returned to severe flooding in Auckland! Little did we know at the time that this weather event (and others that followed) would cause immense stress to our communities and significant challenges for our organisation. However, this also became **an opportunity for us to support our communities and make a difference.**

A recent report<sup>1</sup> shows that many young people in Aotearoa have been experiencing significant challenges following these natural disasters. “Evidence shows that rangatahi [young people] are **more at risk of adverse psychological, social, health, economic, and educational impacts after disasters**, and existing factors are likely to be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and response to the pandemic.” At Adventure Specialties Trust, we have seen **an increase in the number of people suffering from mental health challenges and feeling disconnected from our natural world.**

This is where Adventure Specialties Trust comes to the forefront; **we are able to offer adventure-based wellbeing programmes which are impactful and life-changing.** During 2023, we had many opportunities to make a difference, delivering both new and established programmes. One new programme of significance was ‘Revive’, a programme run in partnership with ACC (you can read more about this on page 17). Revive was so successful (evidenced by external research) that it has been approved for continuation in 2024. Thanks to the team that persevered with ACC to get this off the ground and who continue to deliver a programme that is impactful and life-changing for the participants.

2023 also brought other challenges in that we had several cancellations due to weather events and then further cancellations due to participants’ increased anxiety in being in the outdoor environment. This obviously had an impact on the finances, and you will see in the financial report that we unfortunately ended 2023 in a significant deficit. This was further compounded with a “cost of living” crisis, plus a reduction in philanthropic funding, while still working hard to pay our staff fairly. However, **our work isn’t about making money, it is about making a difference!** As you read this report, you will see the difference that our programmes have made, which is worth every penny!

Other highlights for 2023 included a **great staff team, supportive Board**, increasing our reach with our **Adventure Therapy** programmes in Auckland (with the employment of an Adventure Therapy clinician), plus **the development of new programmes** and the continuation of well-tested, good old fashioned **Adventure With Purpose** programmes. I thank you for your support. I trust you will enjoy reading this Annual Review and agree with me as to how important the continuation of our work is. In closing, I am reminded of the words of Helen Keller: **“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”** As we look ahead to the challenges and opportunities of 2024 (our 40th year of operation), we continue to stand with others and **we are united in our commitment to creating a brighter future for all!**

Ngā mihi nui

Tim Wills  
CEO



*"I have learned  
to **help others**  
in my group  
and not just  
worry **about myself.**  
I think more of how  
**others are feeling."***





# CHAIR'S REPORT

Tēnā koutou e te whānau,

Who doesn't like a good challenge? **Challenge is just another way of saying adventure** and so it's probably appropriate that the Board of Trustees had a few adventurous challenges to occupy us during 2023. Most of these were related in some way to finding the sort of people we need to ensure Adventure Specialities Trust can continue to fulfil its mission.

The Board continues to place absolute confidence in our team. However, we are also aware that we can only do this if the CEO is supported and given clear and reasoned governance direction. This we continue to do in an increasingly complex and challenging political, environmental, societal and legal environment. There is no lack of opportunity to do what Adventure Specialities Trust does because **there is no lack of demand for the services we provide**. However there are many complex issues around compliance, finance, and access to the physical environment that we need to address in order to deliver programmes. Adventure Specialities Trust needs the very best instructors, supported by experienced and creative problem-solving leaders. We have these, but we also need to ensure we retain them. The Board's primary role in this ongoing challenge is to support the CEO. Secondly, our role is to ensure that the Trust's mission is always front and centre of all that we do. And thirdly, as a Board, we need to ensure there are resources in place to enable the leaders and instructors on the front line can do what they do.

**People are at the heart of the Adventure Specialities Trust's mission.** Ensuring that we attract skilled and competent individuals who really understand the work and mission of Adventure Specialities is hugely important. Getting the hire right is more important now than it ever was. The ever-changing societal and legal requirements surrounding the employment relationship mean that we have to get this right. Hiring is a management responsibility; supporting management is a board responsibility, so Board and Management have worked together on several occasions during 2023 to ensure that **Adventure Specialities remains top of its game in looking after the team**. Our governance driven policies that support hiring decisions and then the ongoing welfare of the team required a real focus. **People matter.** Both **those who we serve in our community** and also **those we hire to do the serving**. The year that has been provided challenges in this regard. The year to come will be no different. The Adventure Specialities mission is about people. All people.

All trustees of the Adventure Specialities Trust board remain focused and enthusiastic as we move into a new year. We are **thankful for the year 2023 and all that we were privileged to witness**. Being a part of a mission that is so involved in **changing lives and making a difference** is a privilege that this board is very humbled to be a part of. It is our sincere hope and prayer that we will continue to keep top of mind in all that we do, the reason why our mission means what it means to us.



Ngā mihi ki a koutou katoa

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. R. Knolles".

Brian Knolles  
Chairman

"When I arrived at Family Camp, I was skeptical  
and **I wasn't sure what to expect.**

In one afternoon, I met a group of strangers and,  
by the time we were having lunch, I was talking to these people  
**like I had known them for years.**

"I truly believe that I needed this  
and **my children's happy faces** made it all the better.  
I hope this Family Camp program continues  
and more families are given the experience.

**"I am truly grateful for the opportunity  
to meet these people** that I probably would  
never stop and talk to.

"I hope **I have made friends for life**  
and someday we can all look back at this  
and say that this initiative is **a positive thing  
for many families going through life struggles.**"

- Parent







## PROGRAMME STORIES: MUMS ON THE MOVE

*Mums on the Move* was a programme created in partnership with the Salvation Army. A group of mums met up each week to go on a different adventure around Auckland, including kayaking, cycling, surfing, caving, tramping and snorkelling.

Each week, there was a new theme related to the day's activity. For example, when the group went cycling, the theme was 'Front Wheel/Back Wheel' and the conversation included questions like, "What is your back wheel/What has got you to where you are now?" and "What is your front wheel/Where do you want to go from here? What is one thing you can do today to steer you in that direction?" When the group went caving, the theme was 'Being Squeezed' and the questions were, "How do you react when you feel squeezed? How do you want to react instead?"

### **At the end of the programme, the ladies were asked to share their feedback:**

"This program found me at a point in my life where I was facing uncertainty and instability. **I didn't realise how much I needed it** until the end. My trust in others and ability to be vulnerable felt as if it had just diminished and this really helped me to overcome this. Caving's lesson reminded me to **reflect on how I react when being "squeezed"** and how to communicate and **put trust in others** to help guide me when I may not see the way through. Mountain biking helped me to reflect on **how I want me future to look** and feel for myself and my son. Most of all, **I found a safe space to trust in myself** and draw from those who care. **I felt heard and appreciated and celebrated**, and these are some things I haven't felt in a very long time. I have have so much hope now."

"**I am truly grateful for this programme.** It has helped me so much in different areas of my life. For example, mentally. I have been drained from my situations. **I felt like my life was spiraling downhill and I was literally drowning**, feeling like I couldn't breathe even for a second. It was dragging me down. *Mums on the Move* has helped me in such a huge way that I can continue **living a life of happiness.**"

"I didn't know what to expect from this programme, but **I can confidently say that it has changed my life.** It has opened my eyes to a more active and healthier lifestyle and I have been incorporating more outdoor activities into my daily routine **so that I can show my babies the importance of keeping our bodies moving and staying active.** I loved experiencing all the different activities that were done. Having a theme each week was so good for me, I was able to reflect on things I didn't know I needed to and was **able to get new perspectives.** This programme really **got me out of my comfort zone.** I have so much respect for Tim [the instructor] and appreciate **the safe environment** he created, for not only myself but the whole group. I learnt so much and **thank you for connecting me back to nature.** I didn't know I needed this but its put such a positive start to my year. Hope to be in this programme again!"

Rose, the facilitator from Salvation Army Royal Oak, gave this feedback: "The wāhine that signed up enjoyed every part of the *Mums on the Move* programme. **I see a lot of changes with their hauora** [wellbeing] physically, spiritually, socially and mentally. **Being outdoors is therapeutic and healing.** I hope we can work with Adventure Specialties Trust in the future and do this again for our community."

# OUR CONTEXT IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Aotearoa New Zealand is a wonderful place to live in many respects. We have a beautiful country with state-funded healthcare, education and social welfare. We enjoy all the luxuries of a developed country.

However, there are also areas in which we, as a country, are struggling. The statistics below give a snapshot of some of our greatest concerns. At Adventure Specialties Trust, we find these statistics heart-breaking and they form our motivation of the work that we are doing. These issues are often what we see our clients struggling with. Our programmes focus on reaching people who are struggling and supporting them on their journey towards greater wellbeing.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

One in four young people (aged 15-24) and one in nine adults experienced 'high' or 'very high' levels of psychological distress (in 2021/2022). This includes anxiety, psychological fatigue and depression.

## MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

The Ministry for Youth Development is reporting that students throughout New Zealand are experiencing high levels of disengagement from education, plus significant impacts to their mental health, social connections, confidence and hopes for the future.

## DISASTERS

Research acknowledges that young people are more at risk of adverse psychological, social, health, economic and educational impacts after disasters. Existing factors are likely to be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and response to the pandemic.

## UNMET NEED FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Approximately one in six young adults (15-34 year olds) reported an unmet need for professional help for mental health, substance use, stress or emotions. Over the last five years, there has also been an 80% increase in unmet needs for adults.

## BULLYING

New Zealand has one of the highest rates of bullying in the world. Over one third of the Year 5 and 9 students surveyed reported that they were bullied on a monthly basis. Bullying commonly took the form of 'being made fun of' and 'being excluded on purpose'.

## SUICIDE

The suicide rate in New Zealand has been dropping, but it is still 50% higher than the OECD average. Rates continue to be higher for Māori than non-Māori. The highest age group affected is 20-24 year olds.

## INACTIVITY

Only half (52%) of adults met physical activity guidelines. Over 13% of New Zealanders surveyed did little or no physical activity.

## RACISM

Of all the types of discrimination that New Zealanders experience, racism is the most common one. 96% of Māori say racism is a problem for their whānau.



# OUR SOCIAL IMPACT

## INTRODUCTION

Adventure Specialties Trust was founded on the philosophy that the outdoors offers a unique opportunity for impactful change. The combination of being outside, experiencing an activity, while spending time with other people, offers a unique backdrop for the growth and development of people.

This **Social Impact** section illustrates a small selection of the things we do at Adventure Specialties Trust to tackle some of society's challenges and make a positive difference in our communities. Though the issues are complex and the challenge is real, we see that we are moving positively towards our vision of '**Lives Inspired by Adventure**'.

Human life is diverse and complex, so we know that we will never fully understand exactly what part our programmes play in the growth and change in our clients' lives. However, our **Outcomes Evaluation** process gives us some understanding of how well we are achieving our desired outcomes. When we analyse the data from the Outcomes Evaluation questionnaires, we can use the resulting information to celebrate our successes and also consider improvements to our programmes.

## OUR EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The programmes we run at Adventure Specialties Trust are diverse! We have '**Adventure with Purpose**' and '**Adventure Therapy**' programmes, both of which have their own set of outcomes (pictured below). Our programmes can range from half a day through to 21 days in length. We offer a wide range of outdoor activities, including kayaking, rock climbing, alpine, caving, tramping, abseiling, coasteering and mountain biking. Plus, many of our programmes are designed and delivered in partnership with our clients (for example, schools and community organisations), which can influence every aspect of the programme. So, evaluating the influence of each programme is not a simple task!

Our current approach is that each programme only focuses on three of the five possible outcomes. At the end of each programme, participants are asked to fill in an **Outcomes Evaluation** questionnaire which contains questions specifically relating to those three outcomes. There are different questionnaires depending on the type of programme. Some programmes have a 'before' and 'after' questionnaire, depending on how long and in-depth the programme is. Afterwards, the responses are collated and analysed. The statistics on the following pages show some of the data from the 2023 **Outcomes Evaluation** questionnaires.

### ADVENTURE THERAPY



#### OUTCOMES

- > SELF WORTH
- > TOOLS FOR HAUORA  
(HEALTH AND WELLNESS)
- > WOVEN INTO COMMUNITY  
(WHANAUNGATANGA)
- > HOPE FOR A FUTURE WITH PURPOSE
- > TAHA WAIRUA (SPIRITUAL WELLNESS)

### ADVENTURE WITH PURPOSE



#### OUTCOMES

- > SELF-AWARE
- > SOCIALLY AWARE
- > CULTURALLY AWARE
- > ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE
- > MOTIVATED TO BE ACTIVE

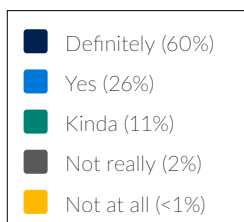
# OUR SOCIAL IMPACT

After each programme, we ask participants to fill in an **Outcomes Evaluation** questionnaire, so that we can measure the impact that our programmes have had on them. Here are the statistics from all our programmes (**Adventure With Purpose** and **Adventure Therapy**), plus some quotes from the open-ended questions:



## I enjoyed being outside

(n=524)  
(average 4.4/5)



"I have read about how nature does **wonders to your mental and physical health**, but to **experience it for myself** is a whole other level."

"This programme helped me **work better with others** by showing me how to work well in a team and how to help those in need."

"I have learnt how to be super girly, **where I can just let go**, because 'we're all girls, you can be weird!'"

"[This programme] showed me it makes me **feel good once you finish** the activity."

"It showed me that **going outside makes me feel calm and relaxed**."

"It taught me that **some people need more support** than others."

"This has made me **more aware of the environment** and how my actions impacted it, in day to day life."

"It has made me **conscious of the choices I made as an individual** and how it affects others around me."

"I refused to give up despite the difficulties."

"Things like rock climbing, long hikes and mountain biking **scared me before**, but now I want to do them again."

"I've been able to get out of my shell and get amongst the group."

"I loved the nature we were in. Being by the sea and the walking tracks. **Feeling the water through my hands** when kayaking. It made think we need to save this."

"[I learned] to **give everyone respect so you get respect back**. To work as a team."

"I learnt to interact with different types of people which can help me be a better friend to more people."

"It has inspired me that I can be more physical. It's more of a mental game. Knowing that **I am capable of walking that 10km walk!**"

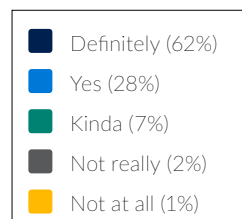
"I have learnt to have **an open mindset when doing new and different activities**. This will help me try more things in life."

"Just to be more **grateful for the little things** and [I realised] I don't need things all the time, like my phone."



## I feel like I was successful at something on this programme

(n=523)  
(average 4.5/5)

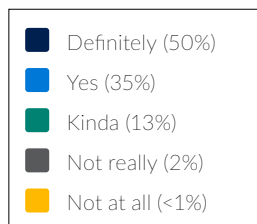






### I enjoyed the physical activities we did

(n=524)  
(average 4.3/5)



"Our hike was so hard, **it felt good to complete this.**"

"I've learnt to be a person **with a positive attitude.** Because I was a negative person. This camp let me [make] some new friends!"

"This programme has enabled me to reflect and **create positive changes in my life,** particularly regarding my career."

"I feel energised and **connected to nature.**"

"[This programme] has made me more independent and **appreciative of my home and my parents.**"

"**Everyone has their own comfort zones.** It takes empathy and understanding to help your peers adapt."

"I have learnt that **knowing when to be silly and when to be serious** is really important."

"I learnt how to communicate **with people that I don't like.**"

"My confidence has increased. My [belief] in what I can achieve has increased. My trust in myself and my body has increased. **My self-esteem has increased.**"

"**I am braver than I thought.** This will give me courage and motivation to step outside my comfort zone to reach my goals."

"We did exercise every day and it feels very good to be doing physical recreation. **I want to go outside more.**"

"We became **more aware of Māori culture.** We learned about the traditional Māori view of the importance of nature and conservation too."

"I feel hopefully about my future and that **life is worth living.** Before this course, I saw no purpose in life. Experiencing this course has made me see the **beauty in life** and **I no longer feel alone.**"

"It made me realise that **I'm not alone** in the mental struggle."

"**I've learnt that I'm a good helper.** I'm physically stronger than I thought I was. I like rock climbing. I'm a good teamworker."

"I'm more positive, confident and clearer about who I am and what brings me life. **I've learned that I don't have to be perfect** and giving my best is fine."

"This programme gave me the opportunity to connect with classmates **I don't usually hang with** around school."

"[I learned] how to get out of my comfort zone."

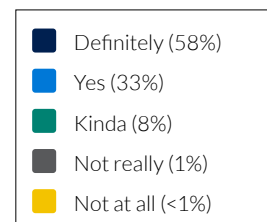
"**I learnt how much I value alone time** to reset my brain."

"I have learnt that I am a good leader and am effective at **taking others opinions into account,** whilst also making my own decisions."



### I had a great time

(n=527)  
(average 4.5/5)



"[This programme] has taught me valuable life lessons."

"Made me more mature in my opinion and boosted my ability to self-manage. **Made me feel grateful.**"

"I have learnt that **I am not alone.** That has given me **courage.**"

"I am **more capable that I think I am.**"

"I feel like I should live. **Before this, I saw no point in living. Now I do.** This course has truly saved my life. Thank you."

"I will listen to **everyone's viewpoints.**"


"I learned that **my body is more capable that I think,** so I will try to push my boundaries, because I like the rush of adrenaline."

*“I have learned that  
**I can push myself**  
which will **help me in life**  
because now I know that,  
**whenever I feel like**  
**I can't do anything,**  
I can look back on this trip  
and **remember how far**  
**I can push myself.”***









*"I feel hopeful about my future and that **life is worth living**. Before this course, I saw no purpose in life. Experiencing this course has made me see **the beauty in life** and **I no longer feel alone**."*

*"I feel like I should live. Before this, I saw no point in living. Now I do. **This course has truly saved my life**. Thank you."*

*"I'm more positive, confident and clearer about who I am and what brings me to life. **I've learned that I don't have to be perfect** and giving my best is fine. I've learned too that I have a lot to offer other people because of who I am ... I am no longer suicidal. **I have more hope and can feel joy, self-pride and gratitude**."*

*"It has helped me see **the light at the end of a very dark tunnel**."*



# REVIVE

## AN ADVENTURE THERAPY PROGRAMME FOR SURVIVORS OF TRAUMA

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Adventure Specialties Trust has been running **Adventure Therapy** programmes since 2015. During this time, we have been approached by ACC's 'Lead Providers' (the qualified psychologists, psychotherapists, counsellors and social workers who work in an on-going therapy relationship with ACC Sensitive Claims clients) who asked if we ran any group therapy programmes for **survivors of trauma**.

As we researched the subject, the more we learned about trauma, the more we realised that our Adventure Therapy programmes fit perfectly with **what trauma experts call for in recovery plans**: gentle adventures, small groups, opportunities for fun and enjoyment, opportunities to experience pride and empowerment, and a reconnection to their bodies, while using strategies that allow participants to **feel physically and emotionally safe**.

It took some work to get there but we are now approved to run an Adventure Therapy programme specifically for **ACC's Sensitive Claims clients**. This programme is called REVIVE and it runs one day a week for eight weeks. The group consists of up to eight participants plus two facilitators from Adventure Specialties Trust (one outdoor instructor and one ACC-approved clinician/therapist). Each day, the group meets up and heads out together on a gentle outdoor adventure (like kayaking or a coastal walk) with time set aside for facilitated conversations about **different aspects of hauora [wellbeing] and connection**.

*"Trauma (until we work through it) keeps us stuck in the past, robbing us of the present moment's riches and limiting who we can be. In many cases it blights a person's sense of self-worth, poisons relationships, and undermines appreciation for life itself. It can impair your capacity to experience gratitude for the beauty and wonder of life." - Gabor Mate (2022)*

During the REVIVE programme, we have witnessed our participants experience **so many moments of healing**. Moments of freedom where their trauma **no longer makes them feel stuck**. Experiences where they've expressed **pride in themselves** and their bodies. Situations where they've **felt connected with others**. Even maintaining friendships after the programme finished. They have recognised where there have been glimmers - moments where they have been able to appreciate and soak in the beauty and wonder of life. Adventure Therapy is a remarkably **simple yet profound approach** that takes people outdoors so they can **connect with nature and do some gentle physical activity in a safe group space**. People experience life-changing things.

We have had **an external researcher evaluating** the first three groups of the REVIVE programme using five psychometric tests, interviews with participants and their Lead Providers (counsellors) following the programme. The results of this research have shown that REVIVE **participants are experiencing significant progress in their therapeutic journeys because of this programme**.

To sum it up, this is one client's experience:

*"On the last day, the group did this thing where we walked around and discussed what are nice things that you've learned about the other people in the last eight weeks. When they got to me, they listed off a bunch of things, they wrote them down and I've actually framed it now and put them in my bathroom. They're just like, "You're inspiring. You have self-love and awareness." It was beautiful, hearing all this from a bunch of strangers. But all the things they listed were the goals that I've been striving for, to try and to get my old self back. They didn't know my goals. They don't know my story. They know nothing about me. It made me realise that these goals I've been chasing - I've already achieved them. I just wasn't seeing it in myself. It was really moving."*

What a privilege it has been to walk alongside these people as they heal. We couldn't agree with this participant more when they said, **"I love this. It's so peaceful. I never want it to end."**

# ADVENTURE WITH PURPOSE THEORY OF CHANGE

## 1

### KEY COMPONENTS IN ALL OUR MAHI ARE:



**COMPETENT, WELCOMING STAFF**



**COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMME DESIGN**



**COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY**



**WILLING PARTICIPANTS**

## 2

### DURING THE PROGRAMME WE FOCUS ON:



**CONNECTION WITH NATURE:**

- Developing a relationship with nature
- Kaitiakitanga<sup>1</sup>
- Learning about the places we go



**HAVING ENJOYABLE OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES:**

- Feeling good about achievements
- Inspired to do more activities or hobbies



**FACILITATED CONVERSATIONS:**

- Experiential Learning
- Increasing confidence in sharing ideas
- Understanding different perspectives



**WORKING AS A GROUP:**

- Developing manaaki<sup>2</sup>
- Cooperating to achieve a goal
- Developing leadership and social skills



**EXPERIENCING CHALLENGE AND SUCCESS:**

- Developing confidence and self-belief
- Understanding more about self
- Reinforcing personal strengths and skills



**EXPLORING IDEAS OF CULTURE:**

- Recognising and respecting difference
- Realising more about own culture and values
- Understanding the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa

<sup>1</sup>caring /value for the environment <sup>2</sup>compassion, empathy and generosity to others

## 3

### AS A RESULT, PARTICIPANTS WILL HAVE MORE:

**ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

**SELF AWARENESS**

**CULTURAL AWARENESS**

**MOTIVATION TO BE ACTIVE**

**SOCIAL AWARENESS**

**LIVES INSPIRED BY ADVENTURE**



**ADVENTURE**  
SPECIALTIES TRUST

EST. 1984



# ADVENTURE THERAPY THEORY OF CHANGE

1

KEY COMPONENTS IN ALL OUR  
MAHI ARE:



COMPETENT, WELCOMING  
STAFF



THOUGHTFUL PROGRAMME  
DESIGN



COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY



WILLING PARTICIPANTS

2

DURING THE PROGRAMME WE  
FOCUS ON:



CONNECTION WITH NATURE:

- Focused on relationship
- Creating opportunities for awe and wonder
- Absorbing physical stress-reduction benefits



EXPERIENCING SUCCESS:

- Discovering personal strengths and skills
- Developing confidence and self-belief
- Becoming more hopeful about the future



REFLECTING ON EXPERIENCES:

- Celebrating strengths and successes
- Sharing ideas, listening to others
- Transferring learnings into everyday life



EXPERIENCING CHALLENGE:

- Practicing skills to regulate emotions
- Developing confidence in own abilities



HAVING ENJOYABLE PHYSICAL  
EXPERIENCES:

- Relieving stress and overwhelm
- Developing tools to maintain wellbeing
- Improving mood, sleep, appetite and connection with body



A SAFE AND HEALTHY  
GROUP CONTEXT:

- Connecting with others
- Improving ability to co-regulate
- Gaining social confidence and trust with others

3

AS A RESULT, PARTICIPANTS WILL  
HAVE MORE:

SELF WORTH

TOOLS FOR HAUORA (WELLBEING)

WHANAUNGATANGA / CONNECTION WITH OTHERS

HOPE FOR A FUTURE WITH PURPOSE

TAHA WAIRUA /SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

LIVES INSPIRED BY ADVENTURE

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 **ADVENTURE**  
SPECIALTIES TRUST



## PROGRAMME STORIES: KO TAKU REO / DEAF EDUCATION

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"I received a phone call from Crystal from Ko Taku Reo / Deaf Education New Zealand, from their specialist school and residential campus in Christchurch. They had heard about our Inspire programme [an outdoor adventure programme, one day a week during the school term] and were keen to try it out with their students. We ran a few trial days which went really well, with heaps of good learning and a little bit of bribing students to get them involved.

"Crystal asked if we could do some water-based activities for them. I was lucky enough to instruct the group on the first day of surfing with them. When I met them, the staff and students were very excited about the day. I found out this was because it was **the first time they had ever been given approval to do a water activity** and the key reason was because of the safety systems we have. We had to adapt our communication systems a bit to account for hearing impairment.

"Luckily the ocean was kind to us that day. **Despite the odd wipe out, the staff and students had a great day out.** At the end of the day, we had a reflection time, based on the day's theme of highs (peaks) and lows (troughs). All the students reflected that **their highlight for the day was simply being allowed to go surfing.** One student commented, 'I think I am going to buy my own surfboard.'

"The highlight for me was being gifted a sign name. It's hard to explain how much that meant to me, other than to say I felt very honoured."

- Andy, Christchurch Manager (and instructor on this programme)

"Being part of a school which is also a home for our residential students **poses a lot of red tape and safety planning.** For years, it has made it really difficult for our students to have worthwhile/interesting activities (other than movies, mini golf, the zoo, etc.). Having been able to source the help of **the experts from Adventure Specialties Trust with their amazing staff, their local knowledge and their robust safety procedures and policies,** made it possible for students to have adventures in the natural environment and to learn skills and have agentic experiences where they learn about the activity and themselves.

"Their teachers see the difference after we do activities with Adventure Specialties Trust. **The students are happier and have more trust in each other and in themselves.**

"Our students constantly face challenges with communication, different levels of language understanding and ability to express themselves. The activities with Adventure Specialties Trust have always been safe and enjoyable and accessible for all our students. It has been really wonderful."

- Crystal from Ko Taku Reo / Deaf Education New Zealand

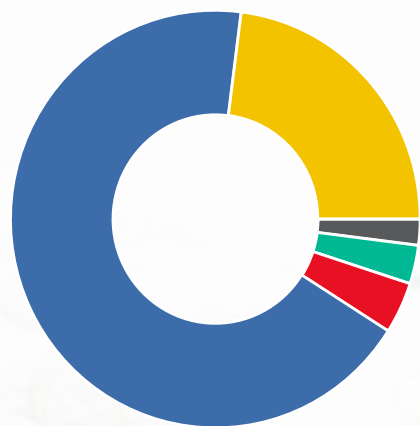
# THANK YOU! FOR SUPPORTING US AND WORKING WITH US

## THANK YOU TO ALL THE INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS WHO SUPPORTED US WITH FUNDING, GRANTS AND FINANCIAL DONATIONS

There are too many families and individuals to list - thank you for your incredible generosity! The organisations who supported us with funding and grants include: Auckland Airport Community Trust, Aotearoa Gaming Trust, Auckland Council (Henderson/Massey Local Board), Catalytic Foundation, Christchurch Airport Community Fund, Foundation North, Four Winds Foundation, Grassroots Trust, John Ilott Charitable Trust, Lion Foundation, Lottery Community Fund, Manatū Wāhine Ministry for Women, Pub Charity Ltd, Rātā Foundation, Recreation Aotearoa, Sport Canterbury, Sport Waitākere, The Emissaries, Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa, Wilberforce Foundation, and Youthtown.

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR CLIENTS WHO PARTNERED WITH US

**CHRISTCHURCH CLIENTS:** Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC), Active Muslim Explorers, Aidenfield Christian School, Amuri Area School, Ara Institute, Ashgrove School, Ngutuawa (Bamford) School, Belfast Community Network, Big Brothers Big Sisters Christchurch, Blue Light Canterbury, Breens Intermediate, Burnside High School, Canterbury District Health Board, Cashmere High School, Christchurch South Intermediate School, Christian Camping, Christs College, Department of Corrections, Development West Coast, Diamond Harbour School, Franz Josef Tours, Hana Gooch, Hillmorton High School, Hillview Christian School, ICONZ, Kingslea School, Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education, Ladbroke School, Laidlaw Counselling Programme, Leithfield School, Loburn School, Margaret Haverland, Medbury School, Ministry of Social Development, Mountain Adventure, Papanui High School, Papanui Youth Development Trust, Peel Forest Outdoor Centre, Pegasus Bay School, Praxis, Prebbleton School, Purapura Whetu Trust, Rangiora High School, Recreate, Riccarton Primary, St Michaels School, Salvation Army, Scripture Union, Southern Cross Language Institute, St Martins Scout Group, St Patricks School, St Thomas of Canterbury College, STOP, Tai Tapu School, Tamariki School, Te Kāprehu Riccarton School, Te Kaupapa Whakaora, Te Kura o Rudolf Steiner, Whareni School. **AUCKLAND CLIENTS:** Adventure Works, Aorere College, AnglicanTrust for Women and Children, Auckland Grammar School, Auckland Secondary Schools Centre, Big Brothers Big Sisters Auckland, Bigfoot Adventures, Birdwood School, Diocesan School for Girls, Eastern Mennonite University, Family Works, Graeme Dingle Foundation, Hobsonville Point Secondary School, Kelston Boys High School, KidsCan, Kings College, Kingslea School, Mariam Arif, Massey High School, Maxim Institute, MPHS Community Trust, Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children, Ranui 135, Rosmini College, Rutherford College, Saint Kentigern College, St Dominics Catholic College, Transformation Academy, Upside Youth Mentoring, Visionwest, Waitakere Alternative Education Consortium, West Auckland Pasifika Community Forum, Youth Multi-Disciplinary Cross Agency Team (MDCAT).



## THANK YOU TO OUR PARTICIPANTS!

- 6-12 years old (23%)
- 13-18 years old (68%)
- 19-25 years old (4%)
- 26-35 years old (3%)
- 36-65 years old (2%)







# FINANCES

*We had a very challenging time with our finances in 2023. Weather events at the start of the year created some cancellations and postponements of planned programmes.*

A budgeted commercial programme was cancelled; philanthropic funding was reduced; and there was an increase in expenses. One regular philanthropic source was only able to fund our operational costs around 30% of what they have been giving us for the last eight years. On top of this reduced income, our general operational expenses increased due to generic increases and to navigating the 'cost of living' crisis. We also had some significant vehicle maintenance issues which were unexpected and had to be covered to keep us operational.

Unfortunately, with these additional expenses and a reduction in some funding, we ended the year with a large deficit. However, through good management, our cash reserves were healthy and we were able to sustain this loss without passing on any additional costs to our participants.

We have been told that 2024 will also be another challenging year, with philanthropic and donors indicating that they will be unable to support us as they have done in the past. We can't keep dipping into cash reserves, so 2024 is looking to be a "tightening of the belt" year while we look for alternative sources of funding.

Thank you to our financial team who helped us navigate these tight financial times. Thank you as well to everyone who was able to support our work, such as the individual donors and organisations. This support was to the tune of \$451,000 and without you, we would not be able to provide services to our communities!

## Financial Summary\*

**Total Revenue: \$2,317,472**  
Minus Expenses: (\$2,481,679)  
**Surplus (Deficit): (\$164,207)**



## Revenue Breakdown\*

Programme fees	(\$1,532,305)
Donations	(\$308,776)
Government Contracts	(\$286,226)
Capital & Operational Grants	(\$153,359)
Other	(\$36,802)

\*Figures are representative only and may show slight variance to the audited accounts. Further financial detail is held in our audited accounts, available from the Charities Commission.



# STAFF NEWS

## STAFF OF 2023

Amy Horn  
Andy Balcar  
Anita Sword  
Anna Cunningham  
Anneke Beardsley  
April Heath  
Bex Charteris  
Brenda Lewis  
Caitlin Gillespie  
Dave Moss  
Elizabeth Royds  
Emily Murray-Barrett  
Gareth Corder  
Grace Robertson  
Isaac Bayldon  
Jeff Lappin  
Joanne Matla  
Joseph Scott  
Kerryn Rothery  
Kyle Smart  
Mark Johnston  
Nathalie Nasrallah  
Oli George  
Patrick Seifert  
Peter Ross  
Rani Harris  
Rebecca Willis  
Tim Wills (CEO)  
Tom Batts

## INTERNS

Reuben Biggelaar

## TRUSTEES

Brian Knolles (Chair)  
Bruce Conway  
Liam Gao  
Tanya Laybourn  
Vincent Heeringa

## NEW STAFF

Elizabeth Royds  
Emily Murray-Barrett  
Gareth Corder  
Joanne Matla  
Rebecca Willis

## FAREWELLS

Big hugs and thanks to the wonderful staff who we farewelled over 2023.

Dave Moss, Grace Robertson, Kyle Smart, Caitlin Gillespie, Joel Buckley and Tom Batts.

## STAFF TRAINING

Staff Training continues to be an important part of Adventure Specialties Trust. For a constantly growing and changing team, we commit time into **'us' as a whole team** and **'us' as individuals**.

**When we are together as a team**, our focus is ensuring that our Mission, Vision and Values are clearly articulated and understood. Not just superficially but in the heart.

For our annual Staff Retreat, we spent a week hosted by Te Whānau-ā-Apanui at Pāhāōa Marae on the East Cape. This was our second stay there and our relationship with the iwi continues to grow.

Bringing everyone together each year comes at a financial cost but the benefit is evident during the rest of the year, as we work beside each other as a team.

**The time we commit to 'us' as individuals** is tailored to meet specific needs, for example technical skills or facilitation skills.

## INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT

As a team, we successfully hosted the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA) National Symposium 2023. This was a 3-day event with outdoor instructors coming from all over the motu [country] to sharpen, refresh and learn new skills. Our staff hosted a number of workshops, giving everyone a window into how we do things at Adventure Specialties Trust.

Being involved in our wider industry helps us stay connected with other organisations who are doing similar work, as well as helping keep us on top of compliance by receiving information as soon as it comes out.

Congratulations to our instructors who successfully completed NZOIA qualifications through the year:

**NZOIA Bush 1:** Rebecca Willis, Patrick Seifert, Isaac Bayldon, Joseph Scott, Nathalie Nasrallah, Oli George, Caitlin Gillespie.

**NZOIA Kayak 1:** Rebecca Willis.

**NZOIA Rock 1:** Rebecca Willis.





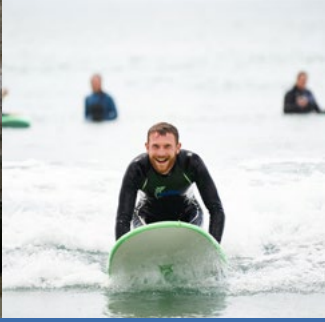


"Earth and sky, woods and fields, lakes and rivers, the mountain and the sea; they are excellent schoolmasters and teach us more than we can ever learn from books."  
- John Lubbock



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