



Family ties matter

Case study: FFT-CW®

Uniting



The Family Profile

The Taylor* family was referred to the Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare (FFT-CW®) due to domestic violence and the father's drug use.



Despite these pressing issues and facing homelessness, like many other mothers in a similar situation, Kelly* avoided involvement of Family and Community Services (FACS) due to her fear of having her three sons taken away and having to return to her home country – New Zealand.

“Understanding their cultural background played a vital role in helping this family”, explained FACS case worker. The family was matched with Jacqui - an FFT-CW® therapist, with Pacific Islander background (Samoan), who effectively engaged with both parents. Jacqui's understanding of Kelly's strong ties to her Maori family and her heritage helped to break the barriers and earned the family's trust.



The Result

“At first we felt apprehensive about therapy, but you are different”, said the children's mother during one of the therapist's regular visits. “I can tell you understand us and want to help us be better”.

What differentiates FFT-CW® from other FACS programs is how it engages affected families to create hope for the future with an overall goal of keeping the family together.

“When you see your family and your kids running around it is pretty hard to ignore that. Just because you are surrounded by everybody you love you want to do the best you can”, explained father.

Working with the Taylor family was a collaborative process between these two bodies; the FFT-CW® therapist and FACS caseworker maintained regular communications about the treatment progress and supported each others' work. The caseworker praised Jacqui on her engagement with the family: ‘I really appreciate everything you have done with the family. Their progress is a reflection of all of your hard work and tenacity’.

“I am overwhelmed with so much joy and hope for our family future and it warms my heart that we have been blessed to have you in our lives”.

Kelly

The Taylor family remains together and FACS closed their case half way through the treatment as risk to the children was reduced. They continue to make progress with the support of Uniting and FACS.