



Challenge 2000

Social justice, social responsibility and personal dignity for all individuals; these values underpin the work of Challenge 2000.

Challenge 2000 is a professional youth development, community and family social work agency. They provide a range of services and programmes, including leadership programmes for young people, a community service team, and four residential youth houses for young people in need. Challenge 2000's mission is to empower young people to develop their strengths, enhance their wellbeing and make positive lifestyle choices.

When the move to Alert Level 4 was announced in late March 2020, Challenge 2000 was deemed an 'essential service' by the government. This means that, while taking all possible health and safety precautions, their work continues.

Before the lockdown, when Challenge 2000 realised that the repercussions of COVID-19 would be major, they started preparing food parcels for families in need. Their staff moved quickly to organise essential food supplies and activity packs for young people to make life a bit easier for stressed parents in isolation.

John Robinson, Business Manager at Challenge 2000, says that they're incredibly lucky to have the backing of the many people who donated money and goods which Challenge 2000 distributed to families in need. These included donations of bread and cakes from a bakery, food donations, and monetary donations that went towards airfares to get young people back to their whānau.

Challenge 2000 acknowledge that their ability to continue working during the lockdown has only been possible through the generosity of the community. "We cannot do it alone", John states.

Generosity seems to be contagious at times! In the case of Challenge 2000, the generosity of their donors has allowed them to continue to bring joy to families in need.



John says that the reactions of the families is incredibly rewarding. One parent who had just been delivered a food and activity parcel exclaimed: "it's a bit like Christmas, you just turning up and giving me food and activities for the kids. Lockdown isn't easy but at least we have Challenge to back us up."

"We are also fortunate to have such wonderfully dedicated staff who, each in their own way, is contributing to our mission of service", John says.

Thinking about the future of Challenge 2000, John reflects on what his team have learnt over the past several weeks: "while our future is uncertain at this time we know whatever happens, Challenge 2000 will respond to people in need in whatever way is possible. There is much to learn from COVID-19 not least the kindness and love of so many people who are responding to those in need."

You can find out more about Challenge 2000 on their [website](#) and on their [Facebook page](#).