

She is  
not  
your  
rehab

FROM THE #1 BESTSELLING AUTHORS OF  
SHE IS NOT YOUR REHAB  
**THIS IS NOT  
YOURS TO CARRY**



WRITTEN BY SARAH BROWN WITH MATT BROWN  
ILLUSTRATED BY OCEANA OLSEN

**WHAT IF THE HARD  
THINGS YOU EXPERIENCE  
AREN'T YOURS TO CARRY?**

Tai feels the weight of worry,  
sadness, and fear in his home.

One night, a wise white wolf appears  
with a magical, invisible backpack, and  
shows how to pack away the things  
that feel too heavy for him to carry.

This number one bestselling authors of  
She Is Not Your Rehab, This Is Not Yours to Carry  
is their debut children's book, created for a  
new generation of cycle breakers.

An empowering story for little people  
like Tai, and for anyone learning about  
what they no longer need to carry.

THIS IS NOT YOURS TO CARRY

SARAH BROWN AND OCEANA OLSEN

***This Is Not Yours To Carry***

**IMPACT REPORT**

First print run of 10,000 Books



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2025, ***She Is Not Your Rehab*** launched ***This Is Not Yours to Carry***, a trauma-informed children's book created to support children impacted by family violence.

We successfully distributed the first 10,000 copies of this book to schools, refuges, community organisations, and safe spaces across New Zealand. Each book gifted was more than a story, it was a message of hope, healing, and understanding for a child learning to process the pain of what they've witnessed or experienced.

This report outlines the impact of those first 10,000 books: where they went, how they were used, and the ripple effect they've begun to create in classrooms, therapy rooms, and living rooms. We share moving stories from parents, educators, and children themselves, reminding us why early emotional literacy matters and how powerful a book can be.



Dr Denise Kingi-Ulu'ave, Chief Executive of Le Va, and Dr Elizabeth Mati, General Manager, pictured with the authors of This Is Not Yours to Carry.



“

**WHAT IF WE GAVE CHILDREN  
THE LANGUAGE FOR THEIR  
PAIN BEFORE IT TURNED INTO  
SILENCE, VIOLENCE  
OR SHAME?”**







“This is a book for all children. Because the seeds of trauma are often sown in silence, long before we have the words to name them. ***This Is Not Yours to Carry*** offers a safe and sacred space where those seeds can be seen, held, and nurtured with compassion, not left to wilt in shame. Behind every outburst. Every shutdown. Every silence. There’s often a story that’s never been told. This book dares to tell it, with honesty, tenderness, and unwavering heart. It doesn’t just offer hope. It gives our tamariki the language for pain, the tools for healing, and the eyes to truly see one another. It needs to be in every home. Every school. Every space where our kids are growing, so they know they don’t have to carry it alone.”

**Jase Williams**

*Former School Principal &  
Relational Neuroscience & Trauma Informed Educator*





# OUR MISSION

***She Is Not Your Rehab*** is anti-violence movement that exists to address and dismantle the cycles of intergenerational trauma, violence and abuse by promoting safe relationships and providing support and resources for individuals and communities.

***This Is Not Yours to Carry*** is our debut children's book, written to help kids impacted by violence understand their emotions, feel less alone, and begin healing. Inspired by Matt Brown's own lived experiences, this gentle, trauma-informed story reminds children that some burdens are not theirs to carry.

Through storytelling, we aim to build emotional literacy early, because when children are given the tools to feel and express safely, they're more likely to grow into cycle breakers.



# DISTRIBUTION

In our first rollout, we distributed 10,000 copies of ***This Is Not Yours to Carry*** to children across New Zealand in collaboration with our distribution partner the ***Kindness Collective Foundation***.

27.6%

## Schools:

Delivered directly into classrooms, learning support services, and school counsellors across New Zealand.

26%

## Refuges:

Provided to family accessing support through safe homes and refuge services, offering tamariki a resource to help them feel seen and supported during times of change.

20%

## Organisations:

Distributed through community services and programmes, social services, and initiatives, supporting the vital work of those walking alongside families every day.

26.4%

## Direct to Community:

Sent directly to families in need, educators, and frontline workers who requested copies through our platform, social media, and community networks.



Authors Sarah and Matt Brown pictured with Sarah Page, CEO of the Kindness Collective Foundation





# OUR DISTRIBUTION PARTNER

This rollout was made possible through the support of our key distribution partner, the **Kindness Collective Foundation**, a charity dedicated to connecting children and families with the essentials and moments of joy they need to thrive.

Their team played an instrumental role in coordinating logistics, managing bulk deliveries, and ensuring each book landed where it was needed most. From refuges to schools, the **Kindness Collective Foundation** helped us move with care, speed, and heart.

Together, we've been able to reach thousands of children, not just with a book, but with a message of hope and healing.



# NATIONWIDE REACH

From the North to the South Island, ***This Is Not Yours to Carry*** has reached children in communities across the country, reminding them they are not alone in what they carry. Books have been delivered to schools, refuges, and families in over 25 cities, towns, and suburbs including Auckland, Gisborne, Rotorua, Tauranga, Whangārei, Kaitaia, Taupō, Hastings, Paraparaumu, Masterton, Whanganui, and New Plymouth, as well as smaller communities like Motueka, Governors Bay, Pakuranga Heights, and Thames.

We've also connected with children and their support networks in Porirua, Lower Hutt, Upper Hutt, Nelson, Blenheim, Greymouth, Timaru, Christchurch, and Dunedin.

This widespread delivery reflects the deep and growing need across New Zealand and the shared desire to equip children with tools for healing, no matter where they live.







Whakatū Refuge



Wakefield School



Owhango School



Paraparaumu School



# LAUNCHING IN SCHOOLS

To mark the release of ***This Is Not Yours to Carry***, we visited Auckland school assemblies to share the book directly with children, not just as a story, but as a moment of connection and reflection.

Each visit included a visit live reading of the book, followed by open conversation with students about the themes in the story, what it means to carry something heavy, how we can gently let go of what doesn't belong to us, and how we can support our classmates and friends simply by being kind.

One of the most impactful moments was the backpack activity, where we asked every student to write down something that felt heavy for them right now. A worry, a fear, or something they were struggling with and place it inside our 'invisible backpack'. The activity gave children space to safely name their emotions and let go of them with intention.



Mangapikopiko School



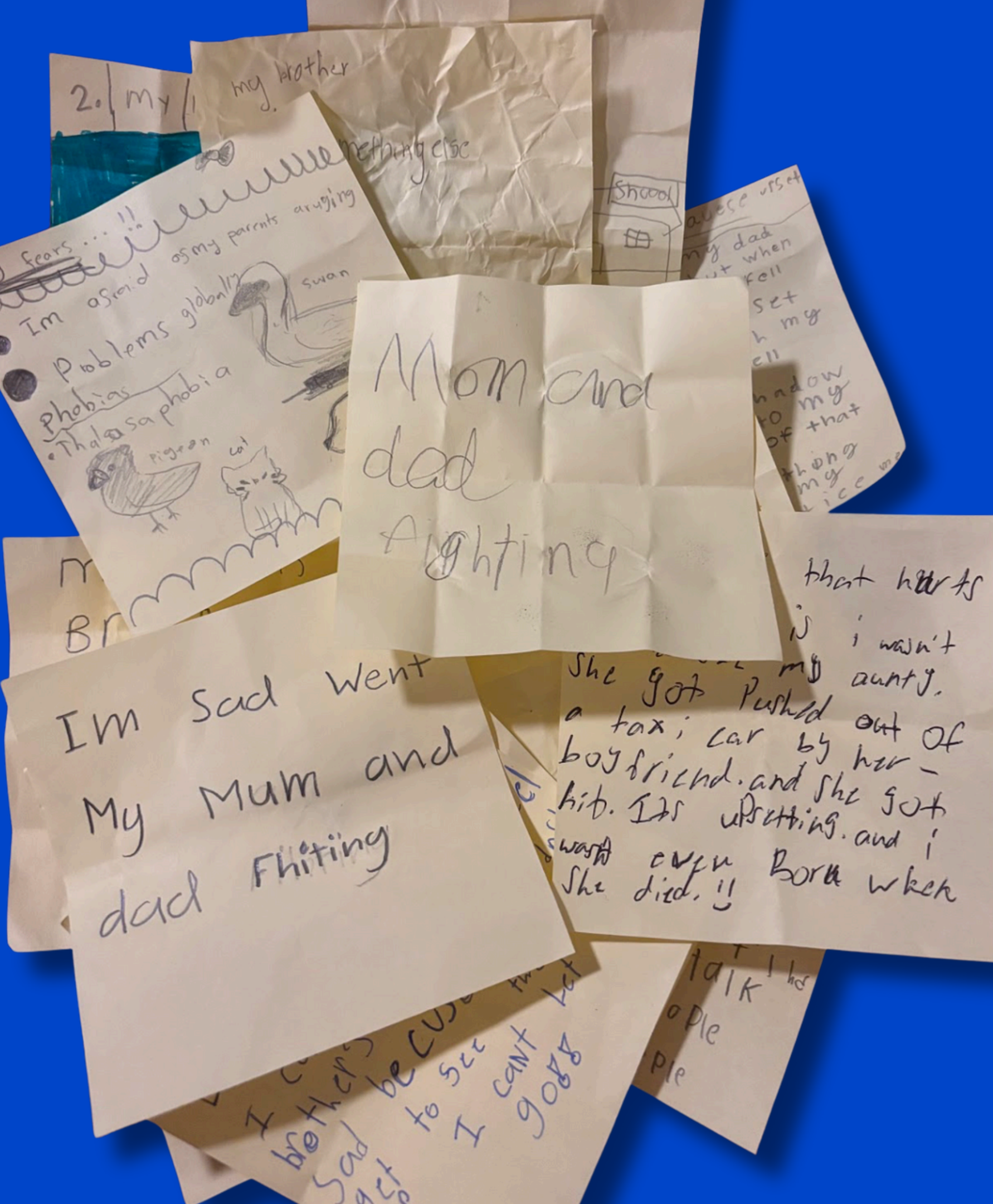


# IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers across the country have also been running the backpack activity in their own classrooms, using it as a powerful tool to support emotional literacy, self-reflection, and safe conversations. Many have adapted the idea by introducing a class backpack and creating space within their lessons to hold the anonymous thoughts and feelings shared by their students.

*"I read them the book, and we unpacked some of the story together. I was gobsmailed when we got to the page about the dad not dealing with his anger and pain. I said maybe Tai's dad had been violent too – and one ten-year-old boy came out with, 'Hurt people hurt people,' totally unprompted."*

**— Teacher, classroom reflection**





“Remuera Primary School was honoured to be part of the New Zealand Book Launch of ***This is Not Yours to Carry***. As a school, we will incorporate this book and its message in our teaching and learning at every opportunity as we look to empower our students around what is not theirs to carry.”

**Kate Seales,  
Middle School Deputy Principal**



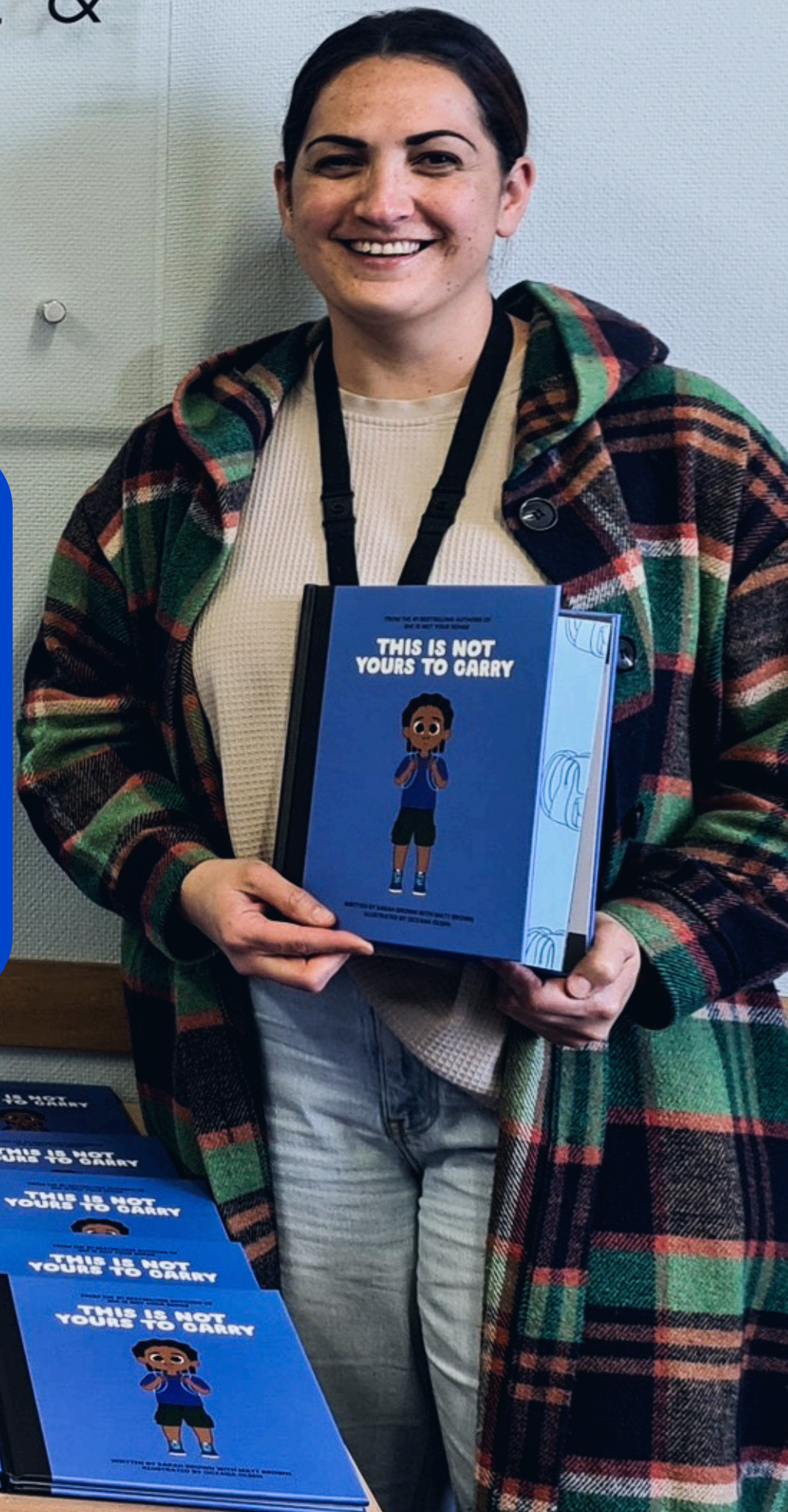
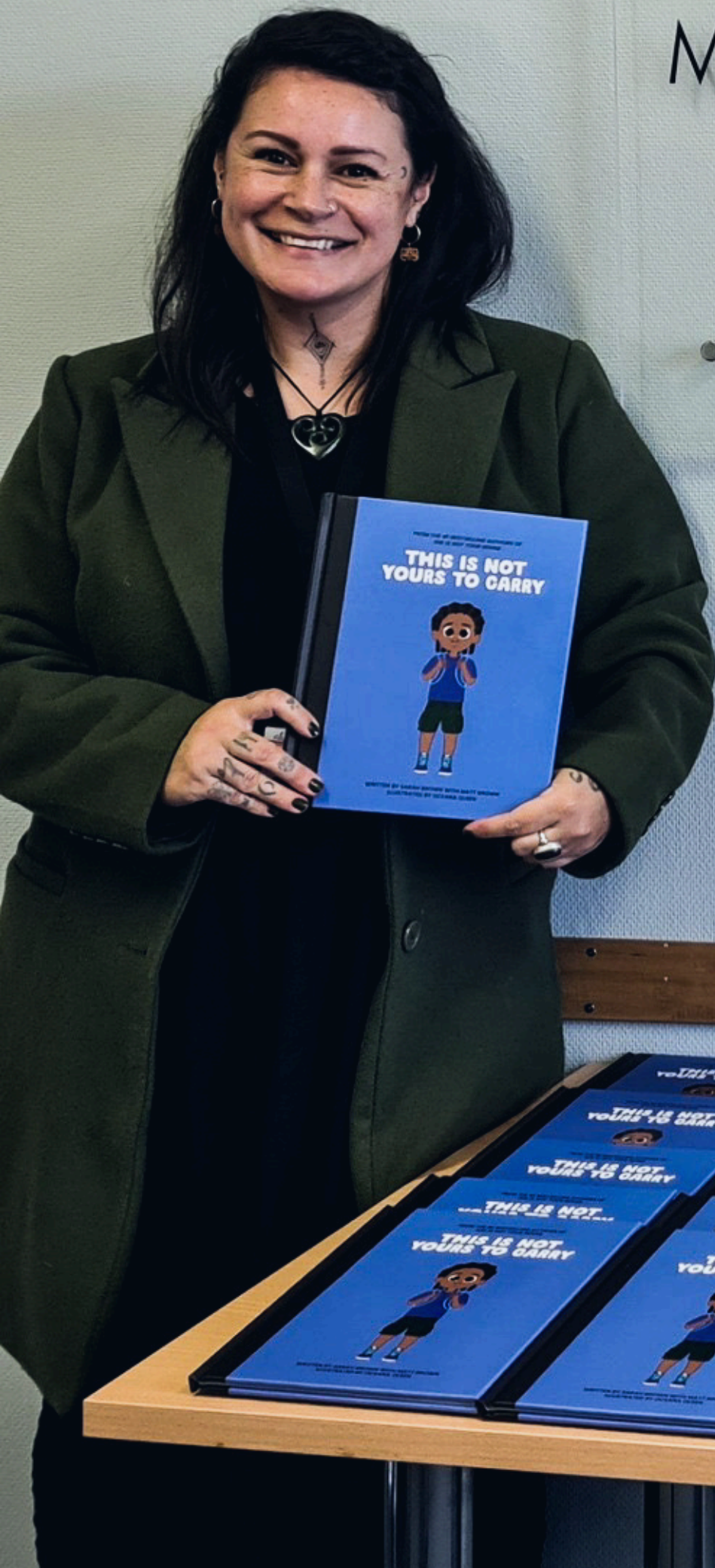


# MID-SOUTH ISLAND WOMEN'S REFUGE & FAMILY SAFETY SERVICES

*Strength, Commitment, Wellbeing & Respect  
= Healthy Relationships*

"We were over the moon to receive boxes of your new books today. Wow what an empowering story for our children to read along with beautiful illustrations. We look forward to gifting these to our whanau we support and our very special children we have come through our Safety Programs."

**Mid-South Island Women's  
Refuge & Family Safety Services**





# IN OUR COMMUNITY

"As a caregiver for children in care for many years, I find this book an invaluable resource for initiating and supporting sensitive conversations. As someone who has seen the impact of a child's realisation of "that was my experience, but it doesn't have to be me", my hope is that every child who needs to hear this message will have access to "It's Not Yours to Carry," aiding them in understanding and healing."

**Caregiver, Shared anonymously**

"Thank you again so much... He got a book and I read it omg it brought tears it's for kids in violent homes. I'm going to get him to read this when he comes home so he knows not to hold on to his dad's or even my worries."

**Shared by whānau supported through SWis**

"Family Action provide crisis support, women's refuge and counselling to victims of family violence and their children. This book is invaluable in giving children words to the stored up experiences they have, and shows them they are not alone. We have these books in our refuge and in our counselling rooms as resources, and the book is such a beautiful empowerment tool for some of the most vulnerable in our community!"

**Larah Zemey, Clinical Crisis Manager, Family Action**





"We have received such awesome feedback from the team about the book, a few tears shed and lots of healing for both our children and staff."

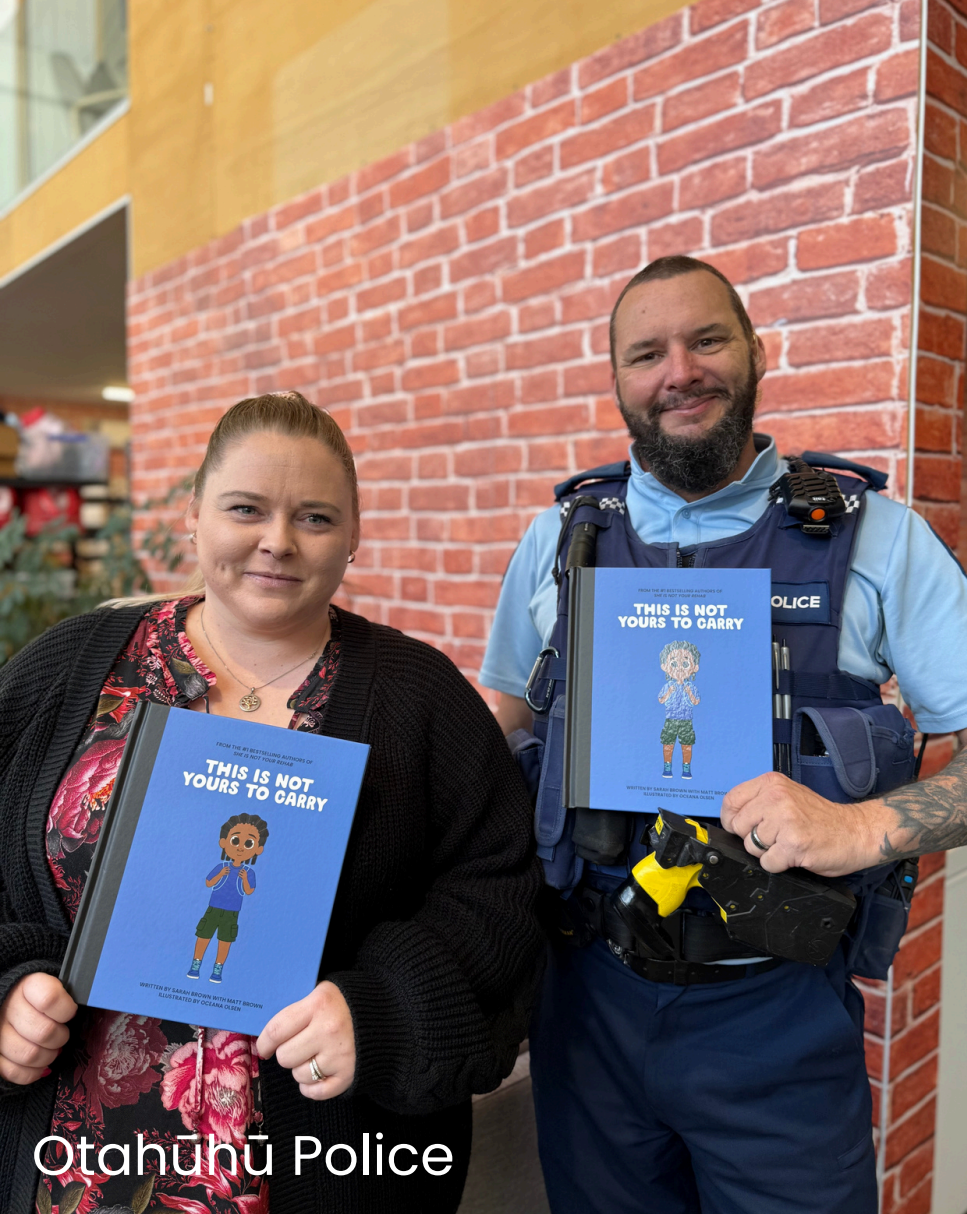
**Cholmondeley Children's Center**





# EARLY INSIGHTS

- Children are recognising themselves in the story and feeling less alone
- Teachers are using it to grow emotional understanding in all students, not just those affected by violence.
- Adults are reflecting on their own childhoods and generational patterns
- Requests for more books are growing daily from educators, caregivers, police and social service staff
- Therapists are using the book in women's prisons to explore how trauma is carried in the body with one group of women, powerfully connecting to the imagery of the backpack and recognising that, even as adults, they are still carrying things that were never theirs. "It was very tender — they felt seen."



Otago Police



Starship



Taunaki



Oranga Tamariki



# MEDIA COVERAGE

The launch of ***This Is Not Yours to Carry*** captured national attention, with widespread media coverage helping amplify the movement and extend its reach to communities, educators, and frontline professionals across New Zealand.



## Media Coverage Highlights:

- **TVNZ 1News** – Featured story covering both the official book launch and first school event
- **Stuff.co.nz** – Feature article on the movement and community impact
- **RNZ (Radio New Zealand)** – Interview and story on the book's role in supporting children
- **Mai FM** – Interview with the Mai Morning Crew highlighting the vision behind the book
- **The Nelson App** – Covered the local impact of donated books to Wakefield School
- **Dom Harvey Podcast** – In-depth podcast with Matt on healing and the heart behind ***This Is Not Yours to Carry***
- **MiNDFOOD Magazine** – Coverage of the whole movement and the importance of trauma-informed resources



# ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Across our Instagram and Facebook, content related to ***This Is Not Yours to Carry*** has generated over **345,000 views** and reached more than **230,000 people**. This includes organic traction from reels, launch posts, media clips, and widespread reposts.

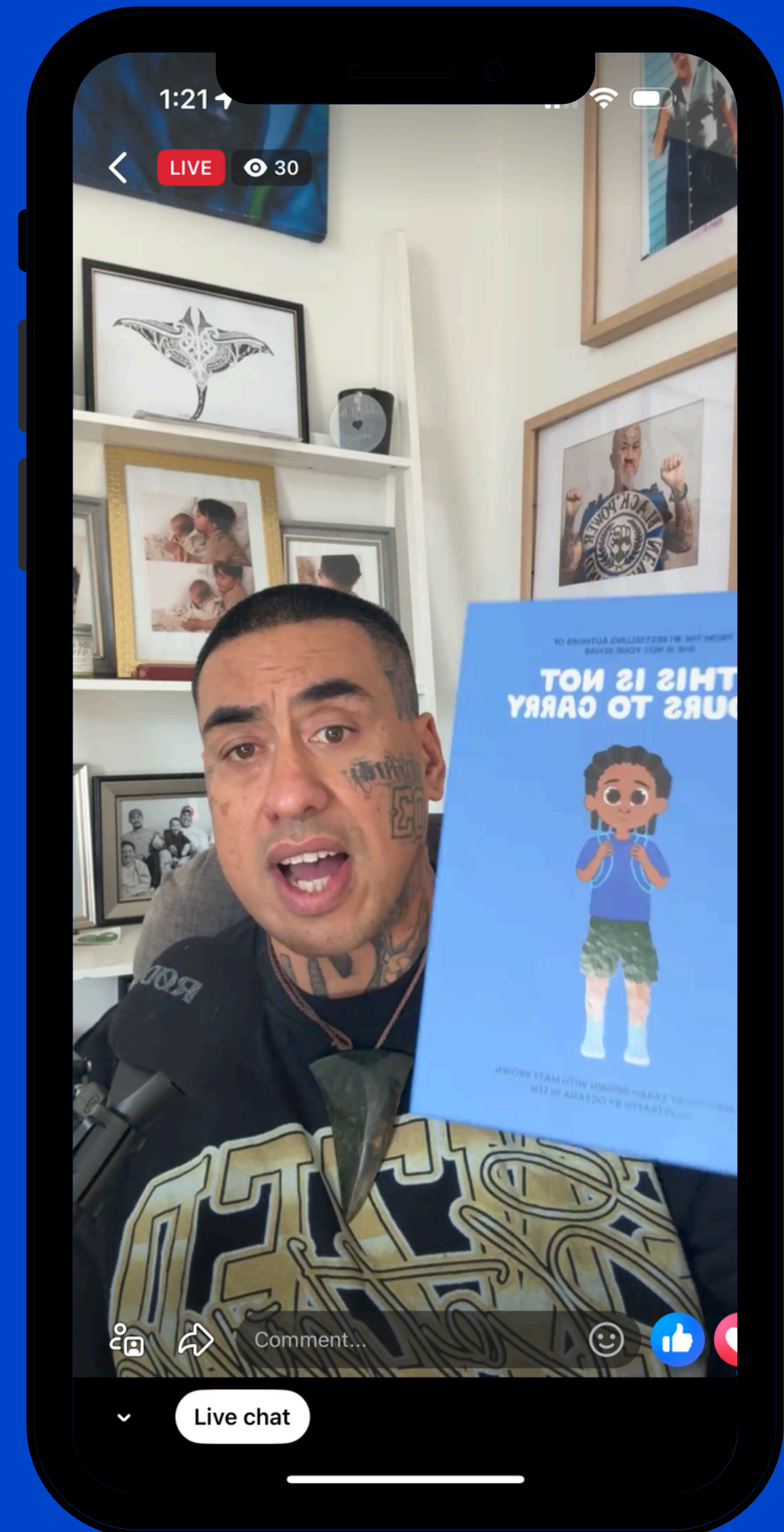
The project was further amplified by over 50 influencers and community pages who shared the book across their platforms, helping to carry its message.

345K

Organic  
Views

230K

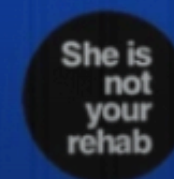
People  
Reached







Gift a book of  
hope for children  
who experience  
family violence.



# AMPLIFYING THE MESSAGE: MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

The success of ***This Is Not Yours to Carry*** shows what's possible when meaningful stories are supported by powerful media platforms.

## Radio

Thanks to support from MediaWorks, this story reached thousands of listeners across the country. These interviews helped humanise the message, spark important conversations, and connect with families and professionals nationwide.

## Billboards

With Go Media, we took the message to the streets featuring the book on digital billboards across the country. This bold visual campaign helped normalise conversations about children wellbeing in public spaces.

mediaworks.





# A NOTE FROM THE FOUNDERS

At ***She Is Not Your Rehab***, our work has always centered on breaking cycles of intergenerational trauma and violence by empowering those in these cycles with tools that resonate.

Our children's book was born from a powerful belief: that emotional literacy must begin early. If we can teach our tamariki to have language for their feelings then we can raise a generation of new cycle-breakers.

These books are more than stories. They are tools for prevention. They open up gentle, vital conversations that plant the seeds of safety, empathy, and healing. Our hope is that every home, refuge, and classroom, no matter the postcode has access to them.

Together, we can help raise a generation that is equipped to do better.

With deep gratitude,  
Matt & Sarah  
Co-Founders, ***She Is Not Your Rehab***



Authors Sarah and Matt Brown with their children, including illustrator Oceana Olsen, pictured alongside Angelou and Frida.



# WHATS AHEAD?

***This Is Not Yours to Carry*** is just the beginning.

This book is the first in a planned series of trauma-informed children's resources designed to support children navigating big emotions and adverse childhood experiences. Each story offers tools for emotional literacy, connection, and healing through gentle, age-appropriate storytelling.



## **THIS IS NOT YOURS TO CARRY**

Theme: Based on Tai; a child living with family violence.

## **THIS IS NOT WHO YOU ARE**

Theme: Based on Hera; a child living with verbal abuse.

## **THIS IS NOT THE REAL THEM**

Theme: Based on Eva; a child living with a parent with addiction.

## **THIS IS NOT YOURS TO HIDE**

Theme: Based on a child living in the aftermath of sexual abuse.

## **THIS IS NOT WHY THEY LEFT**

Theme: Based on Moana; a child living with parental abandonment.

## **THIS IS NOT BECAUSE OF YOU**

Theme: Based on a child living with a parent who is mentally unwell.

## **THIS IS NOT HOW LOVE LEAVES**

Theme: Based on a child living with a loss from suicide in the family.

## **THIS IS NOT YOUR LIFE SENTENCE**

Theme: Based on a child living with a parent incarcerated.

## **THIS IS NOT HOW IT ENDS**

Theme: Based on a child living in foster care.

## **THIS IS NOT HOW LOVE LOOKS**

Theme: Based on a child experiencing living with parents divorcing.



# THERAPEUTIC PLAY KITS:

## Supporting Emotional Safety Through Storytelling & Imagination

Each Therapeutic Play Kit is designed to bring the message of the book to life; supporting children to not only read about healing, but also touch, imagine, and play with it. These kits are intended for classrooms, refuges, counselling spaces, and safe homes, offering children an accessible way to explore big feelings through therapeutic storytelling and play.

### What's Inside Each Kit:

#### A Tai Plush Character Doll

A soft companion representing the child in the story; someone who understands hard things and models resilience.

#### An Invisible Backpack

A tactile version of the magical object from the book, used to help children externalise emotions they shouldn't have to carry. Children can place written worries, drawings, or symbolic items inside.

#### A Mini Emotions Activity Pack

Play-based worksheets and colouring pages designed to help children name feelings, imagine safety, and explore truths.

#### Facilitator Guide

Simple prompts and guidance for parents, teachers, therapists or facilitators to use the kit in one-on-one or group settings.







The Honourable Marama Davidson,  
Co-Leader of the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand  
and Member of Parliament

# SUPPORT OUR MISSION

We've seen this book become more than a story, it's a lifeline for children learning to name their emotions, release what's not theirs to carry, and begin to heal.

With your support, we can grow this movement, placing books directly into the hands of children in refuges, schools, and safe spaces, while developing future trauma-informed resources for children navigating big feelings adverse childhood experiences. Whether you gift one book or many, you're helping remind a child: ***This is not yours to carry.***

**YOUR SUPPORT HELPS  
US PUT THIS HEALING  
PUKAPUKA INTO THE  
HANDS OF KIDS WHO  
NEED IT MOST.**



**SCAN TO DONATE  
A BOOK OR  
CONNECT WITH US  
FOR PARTNERSHIPS!**

