

Youngsters put on a show at hospice

By DENISE PIPER

A childcare centre's visit to North Haven Hospice has helped forge community relationships and demystify death.

The hospice cares for people with a terminal illness, both at the patient's home and at the hospice in Tikipunga.

Two-year-olds from nearby Tikipunga Educare recently visited the hospice, singing songs with staff, giving patients muffins and handing over an artwork.

Hospice general manager Helen Blaxland says although schools do visit, this was the first visit from an early childcare centre.

Getting children to think about what grief and loss means is important, she says.

"We just think it's great to start people thinking young about what it means to be a volunteer and support chari-



Haven visit: Above, two-year-olds and staff from Tikipunga Educare enjoyed their visit.

Sing along: Left, North Haven Hospice volunteer services manager Julie Jensen, left, and clinical services manager Mary Death join in a song with Abbey Findlay, 2, from Tikipunga Educare.

table causes, and also demystify death and dying," Mrs Blaxland says.

"Children have grandparents who die, sometimes aunts and uncles and even brothers and sisters who die

– it helps to have just a bit of exposure," Mrs Blaxland says.

"We think the visits are great and are hoping it will be the beginning of more awareness for people."

Mrs Blaxland says students from Huanui College have also helped support the hospice, and she is available to talk to schools about what hospice is and what it does.

And schoolchildren will be encouraged to draw a picture or write a story about what grief and loss means for them as part of hospice's awareness week in May.

Mrs Blaxland says the

patients enjoyed the entertainment by the youngsters.

The Educare centre was very appreciative of the reception by the hospice and plans to visit again with some older pupils.

Hokianga measles outbreak sparks vaccination reminder

Parents are being urged to ensure their children are vaccinated against measles after confirmation of a large outbreak in Northland.

The Northland District Health Board says of 30

patients believed to have measles in the Hokianga area, five have been confirmed.

Measles is a potentially serious, highly infectious disease that can make children

sick for one to two weeks with high fever, hacking cough, red eyes, a running nose and rash.

Medical officer of health Jonathan Jarman says the affected European com-

munity is quite isolated and normally does not have a lot to do with traditional health services.

"Our immediate concern is that the virus is going to spread into the wider Hoki-

anga community and to other parts of New Zealand," Dr Jarman says.

He urges caregivers to check their children have been vaccinated against measles, with two injections

giving 99 percent protection from the disease.

Because measles is a severe illness it is also important for caregivers to get medical advice if their children become sick.

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Ultimate service to her customers

She may work for Kooky but Whangarei's Lorraine Young is apparently only crazy about looking after her customers.

Mrs Young, who works for Kooky's Whangarei women's clothing store, has won a national award for providing inspirational customer service.

She was nominated by Whangarei woman Yvette Watts for helping her solve a woman's worst nightmare – a badly fitting wedding outfit.

In her nomination of Lorraine for an MYOB Awesome Service Award, Yvette says that after going to the trouble and expense of having an outfit for her son's wedding made by a dressmaker, the result was an unwearable disaster.

"In a panic I rushed into Kooky in tears to grab anything that would fit. Lorraine calmed me down, wiped away the tears, and together we found a suit that worked for me.

"Unfortunately there wasn't a jacket to fit in the store, so Lorraine hunted one down at a Kooky store in Wellington and had it couriered to my daughter's house in Tauranga.

"She then wrapped the rest of the outfit in tissue and gave it to me to take home without any form

Awesome help: Lorraine Young was nominated for helping solve a Whangarei woman's worst nightmare.

of payment. Visa numbers were phoned through later.

"Her service, compassion and professionalism was outstanding."

It is fitting that a Kooky staff member in Whangarei has won the award because brand creator and clothing designer Suzanne Lee Sowry grew up in the city.

Kooky has 15 stores in New Zealand and a factory in Wanganui that employs 20 people. Another 60 people run its stores.

MYOB Awesome Service Award winners are nominated by people impressed by the service of individuals in business.

■ Nominations can be made at www.awesome-service.co.nz.