



Asian Family Services
Together enriching lives

20

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

25

All people of
Asian heritage and background
**lead flourishing and fulfilling lives
in an equitable
Aotearoa New Zealand**



AFS Team 2025

To enrich individual and family lives by
**providing professional, culturally
tailored evidence-based services
to support the wellbeing of Asians
in Aotearoa New Zealand.**



Management Team 2025

Our values

We Are
Inclusive

We Pursue
Excellence

We Care

We Are Bold

We Embrace
Diversity

Our Strategic Priorities



Expand &
enhance
our core
services

Enhanced
leadership,
advocacy and
influence

Organisational
development
and financial
sustainability

Establish a
Research
Based Centre
of Excellence

Leading with Vision, Inspiring Success



It is my privilege to present the Chair's Report for 2024–2025 — a year of continued progress and strong performance for Asian Family Services (AFS). This year, AFS has further strengthened its position as a trusted national provider, delivering measurable impact through culturally responsive care, robust partnerships, and strategic leadership.

Organisational Performance

AFS achieved another year of significant growth and performance across all service streams. Our clinical services exceeded expectations, achieving 131% of annual KPIs and maintaining a 96% client satisfaction rate, with clients reporting that they felt respected and understood. The Public Health team also excelled, successfully implementing the Multi-Venue Exclusion (MVE) system, advancing national policy engagement, and producing multilingual health promotion resources that are improving equity outcomes for Asian communities. AFS has continued to expand its service footprint through initiatives such as Kia Ora Ake, now active in 18 schools, and the growth of Asian Wellbeing Services (AWS) and Asian Helpline, extending reach across Aotearoa. Continued progress in research, digital innovation, and suicide prevention has also strengthened the evidence base for culturally informed mental health practice.

Governance and Leadership

The Board remained focused on governance excellence, financial sustainability, and alignment with the AFS 2025–2030 Strategic Plan. Key achievements included the review and updating of constitutional documents and governance charters to ensure strong accountability and transparency. We acknowledge the outstanding leadership of Chief Executive Officer, Dr Kelly Feng MNZM, whose strategic vision and commitment have guided AFS through a period of organisational transformation,

including the establishment of new offices and digital infrastructure to support future growth.

Strategic Direction: 2025–2030

The next five years present an opportunity for AFS to consolidate its leadership role and deliver greater impact nationally. The AFS 2025–2030 Strategic Plan sets a clear direction, with priorities to:

- Expand access and reach to ensure equitable service provision nationwide.
- Embed cultural safety and equity across systems influencing Asian wellbeing.
- Build workforce capability through professional and cultural development.
- Advance research and digital innovation to inform best practice.
- Strengthen partnerships and influence across government, iwi, and the wider health and social sectors.

Appreciation

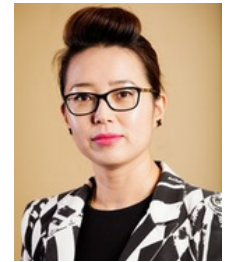
On behalf of the Board, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our Chief Executive Officer, Executive Team, staff, and volunteers for their professionalism, dedication, and unwavering commitment to our mission. I also wish to acknowledge our funders, government agencies, and community partners for their continued trust, collaboration, and support throughout the year. I am also deeply grateful to my fellow Board members — Rajen Prasad, Debbie Chin, Aram Kim, and Gigi Hui — for their wisdom, guidance, and valuable contributions. It has been a privilege to work alongside such committed and capable colleagues in advancing the vision and impact of Asian Family Services.

AFS enters the next strategic period from a position of strength — with a clear vision, solid governance, and a united commitment to ensuring that Asian communities across Aotearoa can thrive: healthy, connected, and resilient.

Fred Pau

Chair, Asian Family Services Board

Empowering Asian Communities: A Year of Growth and Innovation



The 2024–2025 year has been one of exceptional growth, renewal, and influence for Asian Family Services (AFS). As demand for culturally responsive mental health, addiction, and wellbeing support continues to rise, AFS has strengthened its capacity, built new partnerships, and advanced its position as the national voice for Asian communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.

AFS has experienced significant organisational growth, with an expanded workforce, new offices in Mt Wellington, Wellington, and Christchurch, and enhanced internal capability to support a growing national footprint. During the year, we completed a comprehensive Business Process Optimisation (BPO) review, resulting in 26 recommendations to streamline systems and strengthen management and accountability. We implemented new HR and payroll systems, finding the right solutions for ICT and CRM, and embedded new policies to ensure consistency, compliance, and efficiency across our expanding operations. Leadership development has remained a priority, with ongoing coaching and management training to build depth within the Executive Leadership teams. These initiatives ensure AFS remains agile, future-focused, and equipped to meet the evolving needs of our communities.

AFS continues to play an influential role in shaping national mental health and addiction policy. This year, we were represented on key advisory and leadership groups, including Mental Health and Addiction Strategy Reference Group, the National Mental Health and Addiction Clinical Network, the Child and Youth Mental Health Prevalence Study Advisory Group, the Growing Up in New Zealand Asian Advisory Group, and the Lotto NZ Stakeholder Network.

Our participation in these networks ensures that the voices, experiences, and needs of Asian communities are visible in national strategies, research, and service planning. AFS also successfully co-hosted the very first Asian Mental Health and Wellbeing Summit with Minister for Mental Health Hon. Matt Doocey, a landmark event bringing together government leaders, clinicians, researchers, and lived-experience voices to collectively address gaps in the system and strengthen culturally safe responses.

Collaboration remains central to our approach. This year, AFS formalised an MOU with Plunket NZ, recognising the growing needs of new Asian families and the importance of early childhood wellbeing. We also launched a partnership with Tū Ora Compass Health to establish the Wellington Asian Mental Health Service, providing seamless, culturally grounded support through PHOs and community networks. Our research partnership with the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation (CAST) at the University of Auckland and Allen & Clarke continues to generate evidence that informs national understanding of Asian insights, and model of care. Across the NGO sector, we have strengthened relationships with organisations such as NZ Drug Foundation, NZ Police, PHOs, Mapu Maia, PGF Services, Sky Light, Odyssey, fostering a collective commitment to equity and innovation.

AFS continues to deliver comprehensive, high-quality services through our integrated model of care. Clinical Services achieved 131% of annual KPIs, supporting nearly 2,000 clients with gambling-related and general wellbeing concerns. Client satisfaction remained outstanding, with 96% feeling respected and understood by their counsellor.

Public Health exceeded all KPIs, launching the Multi-Venue Exclusion (MVE) system, developing culturally appropriate multilingual resources, and advancing policy and industry engagement. Kia Ora Ake, our new peer-led and clinically informed child and youth wellbeing programme, has delivered over 800 sessions across more than a dozen schools. AFS responded to more than 10,000 requests for support this year, with the bulk of this coming through our Asian Helpline, signifying its importance as the nationwide lifeline, providing crucial support in eight languages each year. Asian Wellbeing Services (AWS) expanded its reach through PHOs, schools, and private clients, providing professional psychological and counselling support across multiple languages.

We are also leading the **New Way to Address Inequity** project, an innovative **e-learning** product designed to train frontline health and social service professionals in identifying, screening, and addressing gambling harm for diverse communities. This initiative aims to build workforce capability and promote equitable, culturally informed responses across Aotearoa. The Digital **Turnaround** website also offers online resources for easier access to information, self-help tools, and service navigation regarding gambling harm.

The Suicide Prevention Programme launched two e-learning modules, one for ethnic community leaders and one for clinicians by using the Integrated Tree Model to improve understanding of Asian communities.

We are also proud to have launched the *Between Two Worlds* podcast, raising awareness and reducing mental health stigma for 1.5 generation Asian New Zealanders. Informed and guided by lived experience, the podcast medium facilitates a sense of connection and understanding for listeners, actively normalising conversations around mental health and encourages help seeking.

AFS's research portfolio continues to underpin evidence-based practice. Projects this year included the Integrated Tree Model validation, Asian people's journeys from gambling harm to recovery, AOD and Asian Mental Health and Wellbeing Report 2025. Findings inform national strategies and ensure Asian voices are reflected in policy and system design.

As AFS enters a new strategic cycle, our priorities remain clear — to lead with integrity, evidence, and compassion. We will continue to advocate for equitable funding and culturally safe service design, strengthen workforce capability, and expand digital innovation to reach more people, more effectively. My heartfelt thanks go to our staff, volunteers, contractors, managers, leadership team, Board, funders, and community partners for their unwavering commitment. Together, we are shaping a future where Asian communities across Aotearoa are seen, heard, and supported — flourishing in health, connection, and resilience.

Dr Kelly Feng MNZM

Chief Executive Officer
Asian Family Services

Our Board



Board Chairperson Fred Pau

Fred is a chartered accountant and an experienced Chief Financial Officer who has worked in the aged care and retirement village industry and manufacturing and trading environment. He has experience working for both corporate and charitable sectors. Fred is currently employed in the aged care and retirement village sector and provides consultancy services. Previously, Fred worked as the Chief Financial Officer for the Selwyn Foundation for 14 years. He also worked in senior roles for Carter Holt Harvey and Lane Walker Rudkin and had a stint overseas in Thailand.



Board Member Dr Rajen Prasad

Rajen has had extensive experience in strategic development, governance, social policy and the social services as a senior practitioner, a researcher and an Associate Professor. He has led major human rights institutions in New Zealand focused on race relations and advocacy for families. He served as a New Zealand Member of Parliament for two terms. He has worked in Southern Africa and was the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Lesotho. He serves on several governance boards including the University of Auckland. He also served as a Director and then as Chairman of Bank of Baroda New Zealand.



Board Member Dr Aram Kim

Aram is a locally trained consultant psychiatrist of Korean descent with special clinical interests and experiences in cross-cultural, infant, perinatal, and community psychiatry as well as cognitive behavioural therapy. He is passionate about community engagement and advocacy, especially around mental health and wellbeing. He has been the chair of the Korean Community Wellness Society Inc. since 2017. He serves in various roles within local and national church bodies as well as NGOs in a voluntary capacity. He lives with his wife and four children in Auckland.



Board Member Debbie Chin

Debbie has extensive experience in leadership roles across the NZ health and disability sector. Roles include governance, public policy and executive management. Debbie has held leading roles with Waikato and Capital and Coast District Health Boards, Ministry of Health, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and with NGOs. She is currently chair of Tū Ora Compass Health and the Wellington Chinese Association. She is also a Board member of the NZ Chinese Association.



Board Member Gigi Hui

Gigi is an experienced Human Resources and Organisational Development professional with a background spanning global corporations such as PwC and Delegat Limited, and the not-for-profit sector with Spectrum Care Trust Board. She is a certified neuroscience coach, Baldrige Business Excellence trainer and assessor, and a speaker on diversity, equity and inclusion. Gigi has mentored women in business, contributed to HR and coaching committees, and volunteers in her church community. Believing that challenges create opportunities for growth, she draws on her lived experiences to guide her work as a Board Member.

Our History



2012

PGF Asian Services becomes Asian Family Services



2016

Asian Wellbeing Services launches

2018

- Asian suicide prevention resource launch: Tomorrow will be better
- AFS receives the Le Va Life Keeper Award
- eCALD training course collaboration -- How to work with Asian in Addition
- Partnership with NZ Stats for CALD communities outreach

2019

- Asian Hui at National Gambling Sector Hui
- Suicide prevention video launch via AFS YouTube
- Hosts of the Asian Pre-Cutting Edge Hui, delivering training in partnership with eCALD
- Recipient of Waitematā Local Board Good Citizens' Award

2020

- 1st NZ Asian Mental Health & Wellbeing Report
- Development of AFS' WeChat platform begins
- COVID-19 National Psychosocial Campaign
- MOE International Student – Project Connect
- Community Connection Services launches

1998

Asian Problem Gambling Services & Asian Hotline is established

2015

Asian suicide Prevention Project
Safe Talk Project starts













Our History

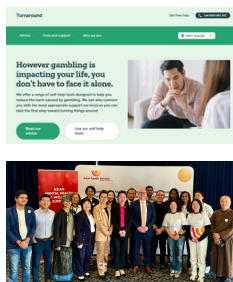
2022

- AFS WeChat passes 10,000 followers
- Launch of The Incredible Years Programme (Ministry of Education)
- Inbetweeners documentary launches
- Establishment of the Ethnic Advisory Group



2024

- Establishment of the Child & Youth Mental Health Service (Kia Ora Ake)
- Inaugural Suicide Prevention provider contract
- New Way to Address Inequity Project: Responding to Gambling Harm in Primary Care
- Digital Project - development of Turnaround.org.nz
- 1st Asian Mental Health & Wellbeing Summit



2021

- Inaugural PHO contract-Wellness Services at Apollo Medical Centre
- Pilot of the Digi Language Services
- First Service provider contract with the Ministry of Education
- Inaugural Bereaved by Suicide counselling service



2023

- AFS becomes independent organisation
- 1st Asian Hauora Day
- New research partnership with NZ Drug Foundation, launching the NZ Asian Alcohol and Drugs Use Survey
- Recipient of the COVID-19 Response Recognition Award
- Partnership Agreement with ProCare
- New Zealand international branch registration with the Employment Assistance Programme Association



2025

- Integrated Tree Model Research
- 2nd Asian AOD research
- 2nd Asian Mental Health & Wellbeing Summit
- Lived Experience is embedded across AFS governance, leadership, and service structures
- 2nd Asian Wellbeing and Mental Health Report



Research Journey

2020

- Gaps, challenges and pathways to improve Asian mental wellbeing
- 1st New Zealand Asian well-being and mental health report

2022

- New Zealand Asian Responsible Online Gambling Report
- Reaching Out: Early Identification and Intervention of Gambling Problems Among Asian People in Primary Care
- Helping Self, Helping Others: A support group project for Chinese and South Asian people with experience of harmful gambling



Gambling Harm Destigmatisation within Asian Communities in Aotearoa New Zealand

2024



2003

The face of Chinese migrants' gambling: A perspective from New Zealand



2021

- Supporting Equitable Perinatal Mental Health Outcomes for Asian Women
- New Zealand Asian Responsible Gambling Report



2023

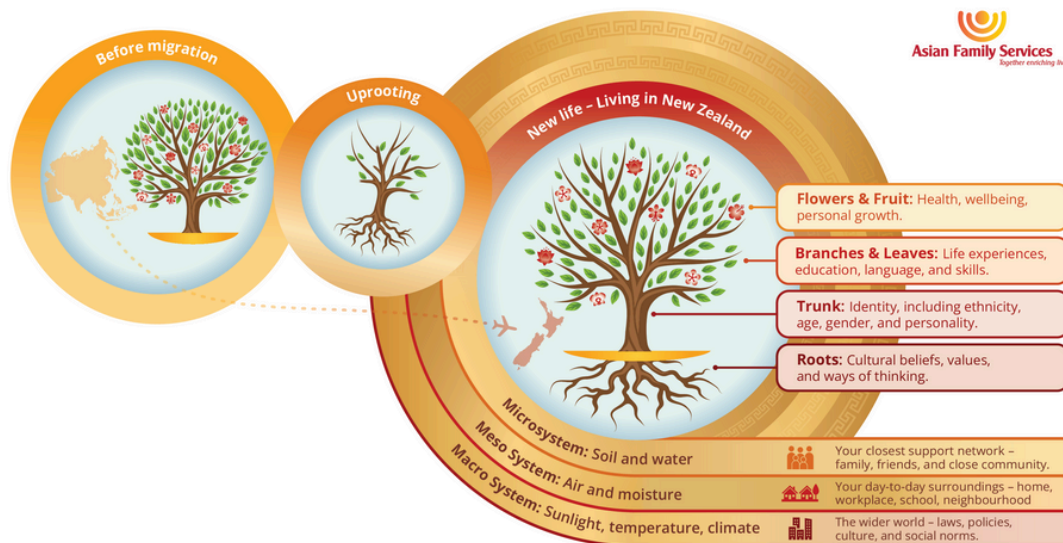
Mentally Healthy Work Migrant Insights of Workers in the Retail Sector



2025

- Factors influencing gambling harm for the Asian population in New Zealand: An empirical study to test the conceptual Asian Integrated Tree Model
- Investigating socio-cultural factors influencing the attitude, behaviour and experience of Asian New Zealanders towards alcohol and drug use
- Voices of Lived Experience: Asian People's Journeys from Gambling Harm to Recovery
- 2nd New Zealand Asian well-being and mental health report

The Integrated Tree Model



A crucial milestone this year for AFS is the validation of our Integrated Tree Model through rigorous research methodology, supported by Allen & Clarke. Starting many years ago as a shared anecdotal concept that describes the unique experiences of Asian New Zealanders using our services, this model now forms the core evidence base for what excellent service and system design looks like for Asian communities. This will inform our own service design and continuous improvement, but also how we advocate for our communities at the national level, ensuring policies, strategies and legislation advances the outcomes of Asian people by embedding cultural responsiveness. We are proud to share the key highlights of this research below.

When a tree is moved, its roots may be damaged, and the tree can lose its leaves and produce no fruit. It takes time for the tree to form new feeding roots and to adapt to its new location before new leaves and fruit can grow. Asian people go through a similar process to accomplish their dreams of a better life in New Zealand (Asian Family Services 2017). AFS developed the Integrated Tree Model to help Asian clients discover and resolve problems, enabling them to grow “stronger roots” and work towards health and well-being. Each part of the tree represents different aspects of an individual’s life:

- The roots represent the beliefs, culture, and values
- The trunk represents the individual’s identity
- The branches and leaves represent the education, language and skills
- The flowers and fruit represent health and well-being

For AFS the Integrated Tree Model not only supports individual healing and growth but also serves as a framework for staff to understand the broader ecological environment influencing a person's wellbeing. Grounded in Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (1989), the model encourages practitioners to consider multiple layers of influence in a client’s life:

- Soil and Water - Microsystem – The individual’s immediate physical and social surroundings, such as their home, family, and close relationships.
- Air and moisture - Mesosystem – The person’s broader social networks and interactions, including school, workplace, community groups, and cultural or religious organisations.
- Sunlight, temperature, climate - Macrosystem – The wider societal structures, including government policies, cultural norms, systemic barriers, and laws that impact the individual and their community.

OUR WORK

Gambling Harm Minimisation Services



Asian Helpline: Free and confidential phone service for Asian communities living in New Zealand needing support, available in seven different Asian languages and English.



Counselling Services: Safe, culturally aligned support through one-on-one sessions, group activities, and peer connections, focusing on gambling harm and overall wellbeing in inclusive, creative settings.



Peer Support: Connects individuals with trained peers who share lived experience of gambling harm and recovery, offering culturally aligned guidance and encouragement, alongside clinical advice, to reduce gambling harm and promote wellbeing.



Public Health: Promotes community wellbeing through education, outreach, and harm prevention initiatives, addressing gambling-related risks and supporting healthier lifestyles across Asian cultural groups.



Digital Innovation: Turnaround.org.nz Turnaround modernises gambling-harm support through an accessible, multilingual digital platform featuring self-assessment tools, culturally responsive resources and integrated pathways to counselling, localised support and improving reach and early help-seeking for Asian communities.



New Way to Address Inequity project: Responding to Gambling Harm in Primary Care

The project strengthens primary-care capability through culturally grounded, activity-based e-learning modules, including Foundations, Asian Lens, and Pacific Lens units, shifting practice toward equity, stigma reduction, and culturally safe, evidence-informed care.

Child & Youth Mental Health Service-Kia Ora Ake

Operating in 18 schools across the Counties Manukau catchment area, the Kia Ora Ake service delivers 1 on 1 and group mental health education and support that is peer led and clinically informed to young people aged 5-13 years old.

Asian Wellbeing Services

AFS's social enterprise arm, it delivers culturally responsive mental health solutions, workforce diversification initiatives and innovative models of care, bridging public and private support for Asian communities.

Wellington Asian Mental Health Service

Innovative and first of its kind, this pioneering collaboration with Tū Ora Compass Health delivers culturally responsive clinical and community support – bridging service gaps and setting a new standard for Asian mental health care.

Suicide Prevention: Flourishing Asian Communities

Culturally responsive e-learning for primary care and community leaders, building confidence to start safe conversations, recognise distress early, and strengthen community-led suicide-prevention responses across diverse Asian communities.

OUR WORK

Sector Collaboration

We advance AFS's mission through sector-wide collaboration, securing collective support that champions culturally tailored services to achieve equitable outcomes for Asian communities. This collaboration includes fellow gambling harm providers such as Mapu Maia and PGF Services; research institutions like University of Auckland's CAST (Centre for Arts and Social Transformation); drug harm reduction advocates NZ Drug Foundation Te Puna Whakaiti Pāmamae Kai Whakapiri; primary health organisations; and many more NGOs, community groups and service providers.

Lived Experience Informed

We ensure lived experience informs all that we do at AFS through structure, service and co-design. Structurally, a dedicated lived experience position exists at the Board and senior leadership level. Peer-led service models have ensured we are leaders in this space, particularly for Asian child and youth. And ultimately, our lived experience advisory groups ensure our co-designs (whether they are resources, projects or services) centres around the Asian lived experience voice.

Policy and Advocacy

Our policy and advocacy work champions equitable outcomes for Asian communities by influencing strategies, legislation and policy frameworks. Through written submissions and media engagement, we amplify Asian voices, challenge systemic barriers and ensure AFS's mission remains central to shaping inclusive policies and public discourse.

Research and Evidence

We use existing research and evidence to ensure our services – from counselling to public health, resource and workforce development – are grounded in proven approaches. Alongside this, we conduct our own research to back up our policy and advocacy positions with credibility and rigour. This strengthens AFS' own organisational and sector knowledge, positively shaping future strategies.

OUR IMPACT Clinical Services



2024-2025 Client Survey 108 respondents



value a counsellor who understands their culture



would recommend AFS to family or friends

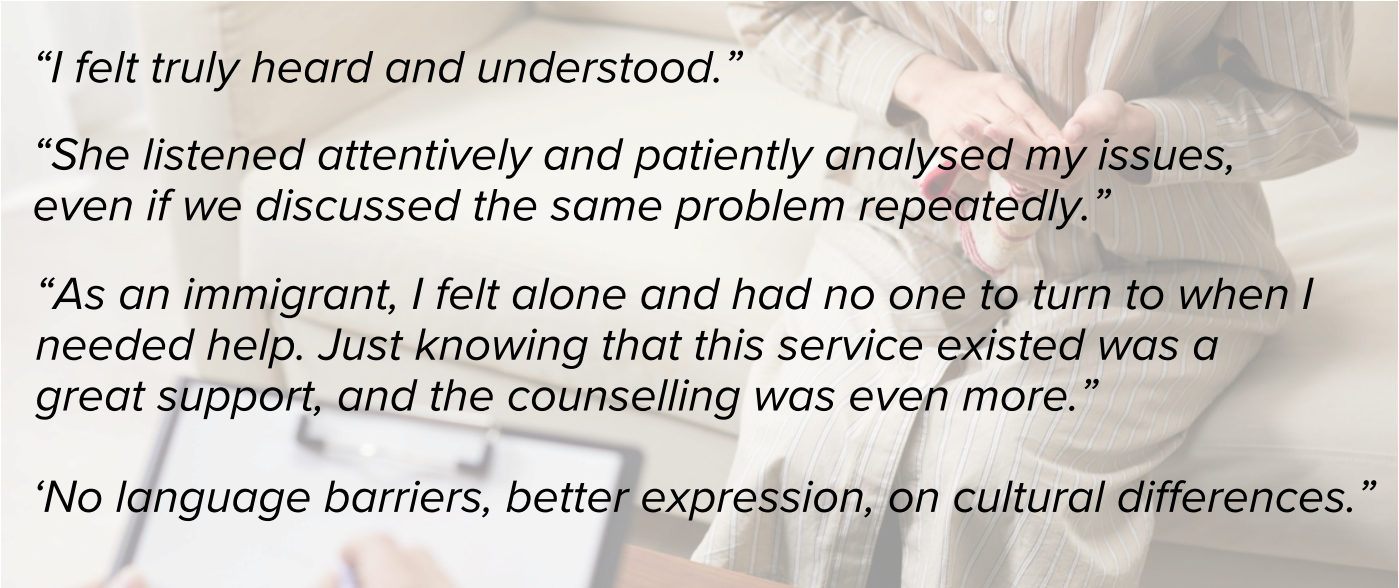


feels that it is important services tailor to the needs of Asian people



find the service is helpful for their wellbeing

Clients told us



OUR IMPACT Public Health



Public Health Activity Survey  610 feedback forms



felt they have had enhanced knowledge about AFS and its work



increased awareness of holistic wellbeing



overall satisfaction



increased awareness of gambling harm



Community told us

“I hope these activities can keep going on.”
“Thanks for delivering workshops in my language.”



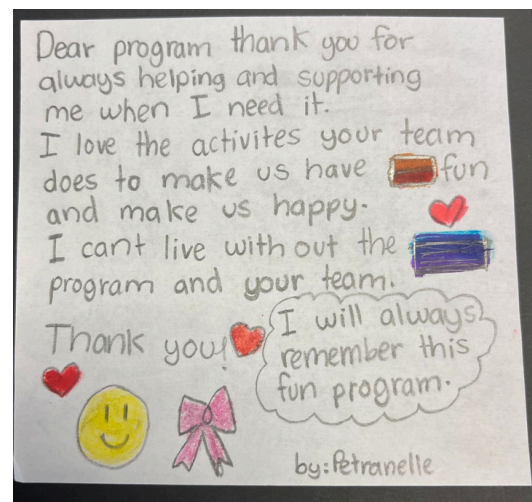
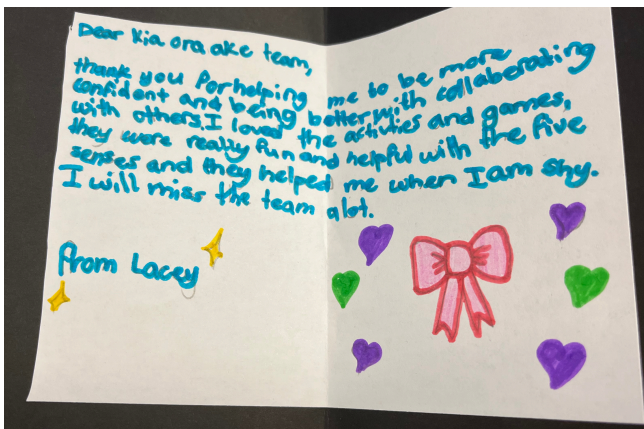
OUR IMPACT Kia Ora Ake

800+

sessions delivered

100+

students engaged



Schools told us

"I can hear and see the kids very much enjoying themselves when they are with the team! Brilliant!"

"The team is great and it's a pleasure to have them working alongside us!"

2024-2025 Highlights

Gambling Harm Minimisation Services

Asian Helpline: Over the past year, a total of 6,255 calls were received across eight language lines, underscoring the substantial demand for culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health support within the community. Callers sought assistance for a wide range of issues, including gambling harm, job loss, family conflict, depression, anxiety, study stress, loneliness, and work-related stress. These figures highlight not only the diversity of challenges faced by clients, but also the critical importance of providing help in individuals' native languages to ensure effective engagement and support.

Counselling Services: The clinical team delivered 12,659 counselling and brief intervention sessions from 1,314 referrals, well exceeding our contractual targets. The doubling of group sessions and culturally tailored programmes highlights effective, community-focused support and strong sector collaboration, with notable progress in prison-based and peer-led initiatives.

Peer Support: The peer support team has been successfully recruited, with training underway and a framework already developed. Induction for the new team members is currently in progress. Additionally, support is being provided to Changing Minds as part of ongoing collaboration efforts.

Public Health: The Public Health team made a significant impact across New Zealand, engaging with 16,413 individuals through a range of activities. These included 1,175 community outreach events such as stall displays, presentations, and workshops, which enhanced awareness of gambling harm, mental health issues, and AFS's presence within the community. The team conducted 5,027 brief conversations specifically addressing gambling harm, fostering open dialogue and helping to reduce associated stigma. Additionally, the team actively participated in 86 gambling industry activities, attending meetings and visiting casinos, class-4 venues, and TAB venues to build relationships and promote responsible practices. To ensure Asian perspectives were represented, 13 policy submissions were prepared, advocating for meaningful changes in gambling policy.



2024-2025 Highlights

Gambling Harm Minimisation Services

Digital Innovation - turnaround.org.nz

Turnaround.org.nz delivers a multilingual digital platform providing information, self-assessment tools, and access to counselling for individuals and families affected by gambling harm. Developed in partnership with people with lived experience, Turnaround ensures content and design are grounded in real stories and community needs. It is available in English, Chinese, and Korean, with culturally tailored resources to support help-seeking and reduce stigma. Turnaround represents a major milestone in AFS's digital innovation journey, providing an accessible, evidence-informed online space for those impacted by gambling harm.

关于我们

Turnaround为受到赌博危害影响的人群提供重要信息，帮助他们掌握自己人生的主动权，获取他们所需要的支持与帮助。

Turnaround

Turnaround由亚裔家庭服务中心 (Asian Family Services) 运营，为因赌博受到影响的个人及其家人、朋友、同事和社区提供支持。我们通过鼓励对赌博的坦诚交流，提供切实可行的解决方案，帮助新西兰的亚裔社区实现积极的改变。

我们的工作重点是营造一个温暖、无评判的环境，提供准确、由专家审核的信息，帮助你做出明智的选择。



Asian Family Services
Together enriching lives
0800 862 342

亚裔家庭服务中心

亚裔家庭服务中心 (Asian Family Services, 简称AFS) 成立于1998年。自第一天起，我们的核心使命就是减少和预防亚裔社区的赌博危害。从最初的小团队，到现在超过40名成员，所有同事都致力于为新西兰的亚裔群体提供支持。我们的团队包括心理咨询师、社工、健康推广员、多场所禁烟协调员、同伴互助工作者和文化支持工作者等等。

조언

분백한 삶과 정신적 안정을 도와주기 위한 글
영웅 내지는 데 도움을 주는 조언.

당사자를 위한 조언

분백이나 가족은 사람에게 도박으로 인한 문제가
생길 것 같나요?
도박을 먹고 있다면 참고하세요
자금 지키기
도박에 대해 이야기하기
위험성 도박이란?
축할 요인 이해하기

가족이나 동료들 위한 조언

다른 사람의 도박으로 인한 고민
본인 지원 받기과 제한 설정하기
도박에 대해 이야기하기

Turnaround


Get free help [Call 0800 862 342](tel:0800862342)

[Advice](#) [Tools and support](#) [Who we are](#) [Select language](#)

However gambling is impacting your life, you don't have to face it alone.

We offer a range of self-help tools designed to help you reduce the harm caused by gambling. We can also connect you with the most appropriate support services so you can take the first step toward turning things around

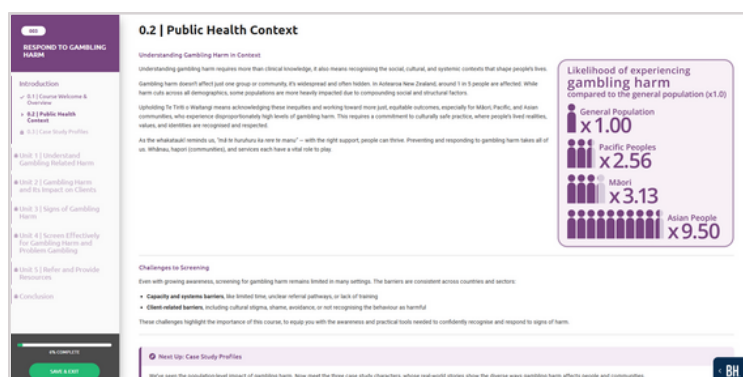
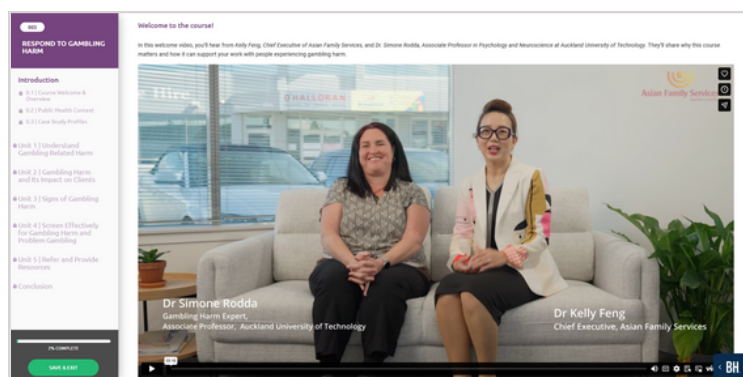
[Read our advice](#)[Use our self help tools](#)



2024-2025 Highlights

Gambling Harm Minimisation Services

New Way to Address Inequity Project: Responding to Gambling Harm in Primary Care



This project strengthens cultural responsiveness and equity in primary care through the Equity e-Learning Programme, hosted on elearnx.co.nz, a central hub for all e-learning developed by AFS. Foundations: Respond to Gambling Harm module was developed in partnership with Auckland University of Technology (AUT) and informed by input from five Primary Health Organisations (PHOs) and 76 primary care physicians across Aotearoa. This collaborative approach ensures the learning content reflects real-world practice and the diverse communities clinicians serve. Over the past year, the project has advanced toward pilot launch, positioning AFS as a leader in embedding culturally responsive, evidence-based practice within the primary care sector.

2024-2025 Highlights

Suicide Prevention: Flourishing Asian Communities

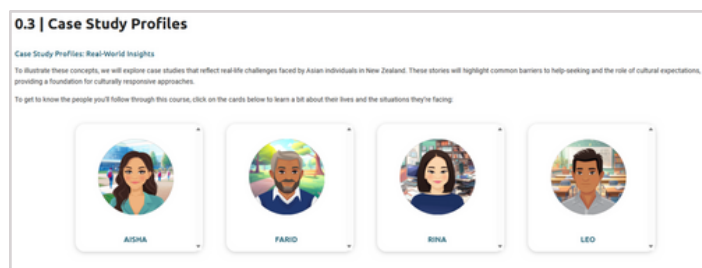
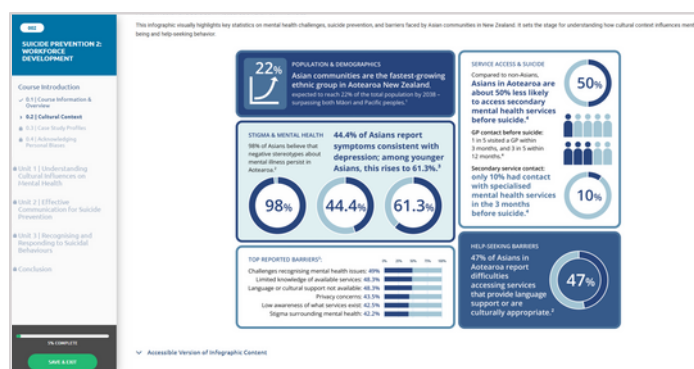
This year AFS delivered the Flourishing Asian Communities programme, a national suicide prevention and workforce development initiative designed to strengthen cultural capability across both community and clinical settings. The programme combines two new e-learning courses with the Flourishing Communities elearning series and the Between Two Worlds podcast, creating a multi-layered approach to supporting Asian communities in Aotearoa.

The two suicide prevention courses were developed through close collaboration with community and religious leaders, cultural advisors, and members of our Lived Experience Advisory Group. Their insights ensured the content is culturally aligned, practical, and grounded in real experiences across Asian communities.

The Community Leader Course supports those who are often the first point of contact in times of distress such as faith leaders, elders, and youth mentors. It strengthens understanding of cultural views on mental health, helps identify warning signs, and equips leaders with culturally appropriate ways to offer support and connect people to professional help.

The Workforce Development Course, designed for health professionals working with Asian patients, builds cultural awareness, deepens understanding of risk and protective factors, and develops practical communication skills for culturally responsive assessment and intervention. The course aims to enhance clinical confidence and improve the care experience for Asian individuals seeking help.

Together, these initiatives have strengthened AFS's partnerships across communities, expanded access to culturally informed resources, and built capability within the workforce. The Flourishing Asian Communities programme continues to foster safer, more connected, and more culturally responsive environments for Asian communities across Aotearoa.



The Between Two Worlds podcast further extended the programme's reach. Featuring lived experience voices, cultural leaders, and practitioners, it provided accessible, authentic storytelling that helped break down stigma, spark conversation, and deepen understanding of the cultural nuances surrounding mental wellbeing and suicide risk.

2024-2025 Highlights

Child and Youth Mental Health Service-Kia Ora Ake

Kia Ora Ake service began as an aspirational idea for an innovative peer led service that genuinely addresses unique challenges of 1.5 and 2nd generation Asian young people navigating identity, culture, belonging, and the stigma surrounding mental health. The service has grown into a pioneering child and youth primary mental health service in Counties Manukau, one of Aotearoa's most ethnically diverse and socio-economically challenged areas. We are peer-led, clinically informed, and indigenously grounded, embedding tikanga Māori while centring the lived experiences of Asian communities. Since its launch in February 2025, the Kia Ora Ake service has delivered over 800 sessions through school-based group programmes and one-to-one support to children aged 5 to 13. Early evaluations show marked improvements in emotional literacy, confidence, and help-seeking behaviours among participants, with positive outcomes reported not only for Asian youth but also Pasifika and Pākehā children. Feedback from tamariki, parents, and teachers highlights increased wellbeing, greater openness in discussing emotions, and strengthened peer connections. All programmes are co-designed with lived experience and cultural expertise, integrating evidence-based interventions and sensory modulation to promote active, experiential learning. The Integrated Tree Model remains central to our philosophy, supporting young people to explore and affirm their identity, regardless of cultural or migration background.

Asian Wellbeing Services

The AWS Counselling Service maintained its commitment to delivering culturally responsive psychological and counselling support to Asian communities nationwide. The service engaged 116 private clients through its pay-per-service model and provided assistance to 12 families via the Aoake Te Rā bereavement programme, ensuring support for those experiencing grief and loss in culturally sensitive ways. AWS also supported 41 clients through the ACC Sensitive Claim service, before its conclusion in May 2025. Partnerships with The Cause Collective (TCC) and East Health further strengthened access to primary mental health support, resulting in 571 counselling and 62 psychological sessions under the TCC contract, and 70 psychological sessions in collaboration with East Health for general practice referrals across Auckland. The Youth Mental Wellbeing Project, successfully completed in September 2024, delivered early intervention and brief counselling to 72 young people aged 14 to 24, with a renewed funding application paving the way for the next phase focused on resilience and wellbeing. From July 2024 to June 2025, AWS delivered four Incredible Years Parenting (IYP) programmes in Chinese, English, and Japanese, earning positive feedback from parents and formal recognition from the Ministry of Education for quality and outcomes. Additionally, AWS responded to over 150 police referrals via the Police AWHI and FSS system, providing trauma-informed, brief counselling interventions to individuals and families impacted by family violence, thereby reinforcing AWS's dedication to accessible, high-quality, and culturally tailored mental health support within the community.

2024-2025 Highlights

Research

Asian Family Services (AFS) undertook four significant national research projects addressing key wellbeing and mental health challenges facing Asian communities in Aotearoa. The first study investigated the social and cultural factors shaping Asian New Zealanders’ attitudes and behaviours towards alcohol and drug use, revealing the powerful influence of cultural norms, generational identity, and the importance of culturally safe recovery environments. The second project, the 2025 New Zealand Asian Wellbeing and Mental Health Survey, highlighted increased distress within Asian communities, with 57% at risk of depression, driven by inequity, discrimination, and barriers to culturally appropriate support, and called for inclusive solutions fostering equity and belonging. The third research effort explored the factors influencing Asian migrants’ gambling behaviours and associated mental health issues, validating the Asian Integrated Tree Model, which frames migration experiences as akin to a tree’s transplantation, emphasising environmental and social influences on trust and recovery. Finally, AFS examined the lived experiences of Asian individuals and families affected by gambling harm, aiming to inform culturally responsive interventions by identifying the challenges and recovery pathways unique to this group. Collectively, these studies underscore the need for tailored, culturally competent approaches to mental health and addiction treatment in New Zealand’s Asian communities.



2024-2025 Highlights

2024 Asian Mental Health & Wellbeing Summit



The inaugural Asian Mental Health & Wellbeing Summit, held in Auckland, brought together more than 150 leaders from the health sector, government, and Asian communities to address the unique mental health challenges faced by New Zealand's Asian population.

The summit underscored significant gaps in culturally appropriate mental health services, persistent stigma within Asian cultures, and the underrepresentation of Asian communities in research and policy. Minister Matt Doocey reaffirmed the Government's commitment to developing localised, tailored solutions, announcing ongoing work on a new mental health strategy and legislation to better support Asian communities. Participants called for increased funding, resources, and support for overseas-trained professionals, as well as initiatives to promote mental health careers among Asian New Zealanders. Ongoing collaboration was also emphasised, with Minister Doocey pledging regular engagement with Asian Family Services to co-develop a mental health roadmap and improve visibility and recognition of Asian communities within the mental health system.



2024-2025 Highlights

2024 Asian Hauora Day



Partnering with more than 25 organisations, we held our second Asian Hauora Day in both South Auckland and Auckland Northshore. The two gatherings welcomed about 450 people from a wide array of Asian communities—including Chinese, Indian, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai, Filipino, and many others—with participants ranging from children under 15 to adults over 65.



These events encouraged holistic wellbeing through diverse resources and activities that supported both physical and mental health needs across the lifespan. We are pleased to have made progress in reducing gambling harm stigma by making screening a routine part of the event and encouraging open dialogue among attendees. Furthermore, we provided language support so that everyone could access relevant health information and checks tailored to their cultural backgrounds.



2024-2025 Highlights

2024 Gambling Harm Awareness Week

As part of our ongoing commitment to reducing gambling harm among Asian communities in New Zealand, we made significant use of Gambling Harm Awareness Week (2–8 September) to highlight the message, “Keeping Communities Well – Raising Awareness that AFS is Here to Support.”



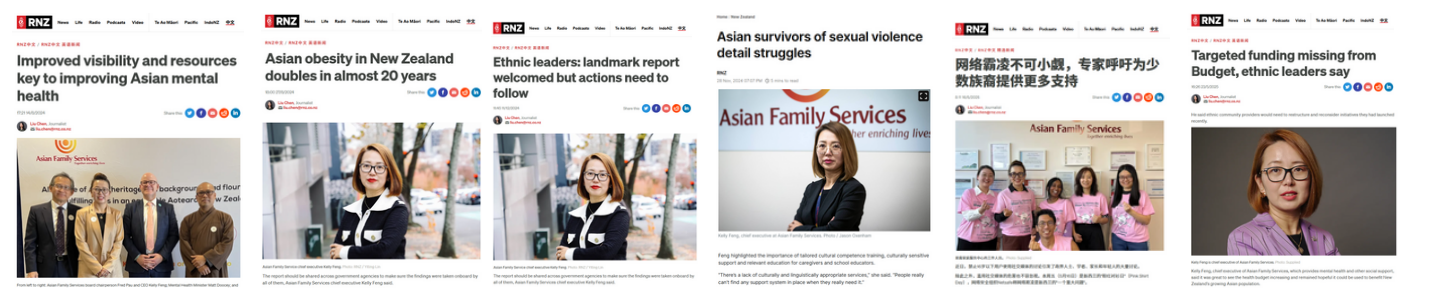
During this period, we supported collective initiatives led by all gambling harm minimisation providers and organised a range of outreach activities, including three stall displays at TAB stores and three at Sky City casinos in key locations such as Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Queenstown. In addition, our team conducted fourteen visits to gambling venues—including seven TAB stores and seven Class 4 gambling venues owned by the Lion Foundation—to introduce Asian Family Services (AFS), raise awareness, and provide culturally and linguistically appropriate support for those affected.



2024-2025 Highlights

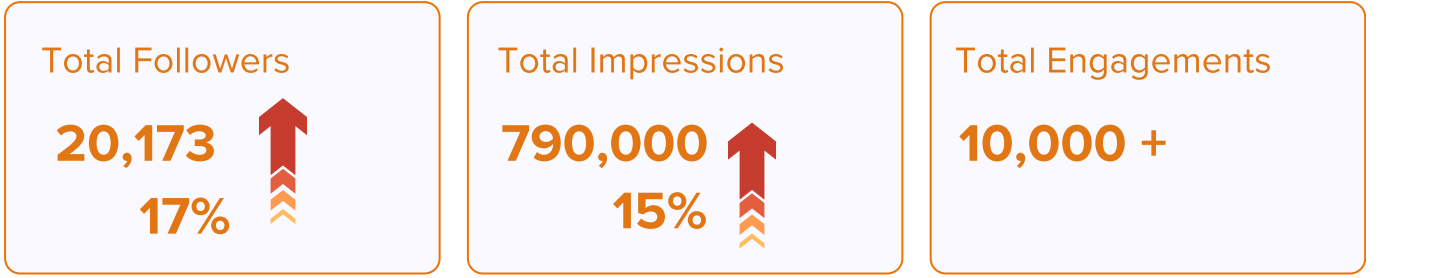
Media Engagement

Chief Executive Kelly Feng actively championed the needs of Asian communities through six media interviews this year, using these platforms to advocate for enhanced support and to highlight the ongoing challenges faced by these populations. Her media engagement significantly raised public awareness of the issues affecting Asian New Zealanders and reinforced Asian Family Services’ commitment to driving meaningful change within the sector.



Social Media

Across all Asian Family Services' social media channels, we reached a combined audience of 20,173 followers, providing an effective platform for sharing vital information and strengthening our engagement with the public. Our social media presence has not only raised awareness of our services and important updates but has also enabled the community to more easily access them and actively connect with us, fostering meaningful two-way communication and deeper relationships.



Social Media Platform Followers



2024-2025 Highlights

Policy Submissions

AFS actively championed the interests of Asian communities by submitting 15 policy recommendations to various levels of government, advocating for improved gambling and mental health policies. These comprehensive recommendations were developed in consultation with the Lived Experience Group and the wider community, ensuring that the perspectives and needs of those directly affected were reflected. Submissions addressed a wide range of issues, including Class 4 and TAB gambling venue policies to multiple district and city councils, proposed amendments to host responsibility and design at SkyCity venues, and regulatory changes concerning online gambling and associated fees. Additional recommendations were made to the Department of Internal Affairs and the Gambling Commission on topics such as game rule amendments, grants data collection, and tax positions, as well as to the Petitions Committee regarding the prohibition of gambling advertising. Furthermore, AFS contributed to the Ministry of Health's Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2025–2029 Consultation, underlining a commitment to holistic wellbeing for Asian communities.

Workforce Development

Asian Family Services (AFS) continued to drive workforce development by providing valuable internship placements to students from a broad spectrum of tertiary institutions, both within New Zealand and overseas. These internships drew on expertise across counselling, health sciences, psychotherapy, social work, and mental health and addiction support, with collaborative partnerships formed with six key education providers: the University of Auckland, Auckland University of Technology, Massey University, Taiwan Normal University, Hong Kong University, and NZMA. The initiative proved highly successful, as evidenced by the consistently positive feedback received from both the students and their institutions, reinforcing the programme's effectiveness in fostering professional growth and sector capacity.

2024-2025 Highlights

I'm so grateful for the guidance and care I've received. They really listened and helped me.

Counselling service user

Thanks for organising this event for Asian people. Now, I know AFS can help us. Thank you.

Public Health Event Participant

I loved the program, it was so fun and thanks for being with us. I learnt so much from you.

Kia Ora Ake Program Participant



The Incredible Year Chinese Workshop

As Chinese migrants living far from hometown, the AFS parenting courses have a magical power. They plant a seed of positive change in the hearts of immigrant parents—a seed that teaches us not to worry, but to embrace possibilities and challenges with greater calm and openness.

The Incredible Years Parenting Program Participant

“When I first began counselling, I was going through a very difficult time with PTSD, but counsellor listened attentively to me and provided tailored solutions. Thanks to her various solutions, I was able to assert my rights within the company. Thanks to Asian Family Services, I was able to assert my rights as a human being in this unfamiliar country, receive solutions to my mental health issues, and find solutions to my problems. Thank you, Asian Family Services.”

Asian Wellbeing Service User



Community Mental Wellbeing Workshop

Our People



Winner Tian General Manager – Strategy and Performance

AFS is more than a service provider. Our high-performing and growth-minded nature is exhilarating; a truly unique environment to develop your leadership and competencies. I'm proud to work at AFS as I see the organisation as a critical part of developing the next generation of Asian New Zealand leaders, championing and carrying on our mission.



Alex Wang National Manager – Clinical Services

I work at AFS because my core value is social justice. AFS gives me the platform to advocate for equity, fight systemic barriers, and empower our communities. It is where meaningful change happens for our people.



Hong Yuan National Manager – Public Health & Communications

Driven by a passion for positive change in community wellbeing, I am proud to be part of Asian Family Services - an organisation where my aspirations have been realised. Witnessing the impact of our outstanding public health team and the success of our communications and engagement efforts has been truly rewarding, as they continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.



Romy Lee National Manager – Child and Youth Mental Health & Principal Advisor for Lived Experience

Our child and youth mental health services are leading the way for a new generation of social support understanding and empathy. I feel incredibly proud to be part of a team that is pioneering a first of its kind model – peer led, clinically informed primary mental health services focusing on the wellbeing of 1.5 and 2nd generation Asian New Zealanders. I aspire for AFS to be an open door for all Asian New Zealanders, regardless of their backgrounds or lived experiences.



Wardah Ali, PhD Research and Innovation Lead

My purpose as a Research Lead is to turn stories into empathy, evidence into strategy, and insights into action, strengthening our understanding of vulnerable groups, guiding services that truly meet community needs, and amplifying the voices of those who often face their hardships in silence.



Anastasia Constantinides Senior Project Lead

I am driven by a deep belief in equity and community. As Asian communities grow, AFS's purpose grows alongside them. Although not Asian myself, coming from immigrant parents shapes how I understand the challenges of navigating health systems. This fuels my commitment to ensuring everyone has accessible, culturally safe mental-health support and the tools to talk about their wellbeing with confidence. My project-management background helps me turn this purpose into meaningful, community-led change.

Our People



Tracy Cui Executive Assistant

What motivates me is knowing that my work ultimately contributes to something bigger — improving the wellbeing of the Asian community we serve. I am inspired by the purpose of AFS, which is to support the wellbeing of Asian community, and I see my role in assisting the governance and operational systems that make this impact possible. I love bringing order to complexity, connecting people and information, and creating an environment where our leaders and frontline staff can focus on strategy and service.



Darcy Zhao Senior Practice Leader – AWS & Asian Helpline

As the AWS Team Lead, I am motivated by the opportunity to connect clients with professional health practitioners who understand their cultural backgrounds, languages, and mental health challenges. Seeing individuals and families gain confidence, stability, and hope through our services continually reminds me why this work matters. I am also passionate about supporting and empowering our team of clinicians and contractors, fostering collaboration, and ensuring high-quality care across all AWS projects and programs.



Hyunsook Rhee Senior Practice Leader – Gambling Harm Clinical Services

AFS provides the space and resources I need to support my clients to the best of my ability. The working environment is staff-friendly and offers opportunities for growth as a counsellor through professional development and supervision. I always feel supported by the leadership team, especially by our CEO, who works incredibly hard for AFS and motivates me to work hard as well.



Ashvini Chandra Clinical Lead – Gambling Harm Intervention Services

Working for Asian Family Services ignites my purpose, as it aligns with my personal values and professional passion. Delivering culturally responsive support to our South Asian communities is what gets me motivated and I am committed to making a tangible difference. Breaking down barriers and fostering a more inclusive environment is not just a goal it is a driving force for me and I am happy to be part of this journey with Asian Family Services in contributing to a brighter future for our Asian communities.



Cindy Huynh Clinical Lead – Kia Ora Ake

I feel deeply privileged to be able to be part of a mission that paves the way for our Tamariki to enhance their mana and flourish. Although the Kia Ora Ake service has not been around for a long time, I feel great purpose being able to utilise my therapeutic use of self, therapeutic knowledge, skills and authenticity to ensure that our Tamariki are able to meaningfully engage in doing, being, becoming and belonging.

Our People



Linda Duong Clinical Lead – Kia Ora Ake

Growing up as a 2nd generation Asian Kiwi, I have always been passionate about supporting my community. AFS has allowed me to combine my clinical skills and knowledge, as well as my lived experience into my mahi. It gives me deep gratitude to be able to provide a safe space and support for our tamariki and Asian whaanau to flourish.



Annie Zhang Public Health Lead – Events and Engagement

I am proud to support our Asian community with culturally respectful care, honouring their stories, strengths, and journeys. Helping people feel understood, connected, and valued motivates commitment every day.



Dr Mithila Gadkari Public Health Lead – Policy and Cultural Support

My purpose is to minimise gambling harm and promote wellbeing among Asian communities through culturally responsive health promotion, advocacy, and collaboration, fostering equity, resilience, and connection across Aotearoa New Zealand.



Chiely Utley Team Lead – Child & Youth Peer Support – Kia Ora Ake

My purpose as a Child and Youth Peer Support Worker at Asian Family Services, is to empower them to find their voice, recognise their strengths, and build resilience. I believe every child deserves to feel seen, supported, and capable of creating positive change in their own lives. Seeing their growth, the moments when they smile with pride, or find confidence in themselves, fills me with joy and reminds me why I do what I do. It is a privilege to walk alongside them on their journey.



Isha Singh Team Lead – Child & Youth Peer Support – Kia Ora Ake

My purpose at Asian Family Services is deeply connected to the work I do with students through the Kia Ora Ake programme. Supporting young people on their wellbeing journey gives me a real sense of meaning and fulfilment. I love being able to create a space where students feel comfortable to open up, be themselves, and know that someone genuinely cares about their wellbeing. Seeing their confidence grow and knowing I have played even a small part in helping them feel supported reminds me why I am passionate about this work—it is about connection, trust, and empowering the next generation to thrive.

Contact Us



Asian Helpline

0800 862 342

(Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm)

help@asianfamilyservices.nz

Our Offices

Auckland

- 31 Carbine Road, Mount Wellington
- Unit GE, 43 Omega Street, Rosedale

Wellington

Level 3, 39 Webb St, Mount Cook

Christchurch

Hornby Community Care Centre, 8 Goulding Avenue, Hornby



Asian Family Services
Together enriching lives