



Dr. Kirsten Finucane ONZM



1975-1979

While at Epsom Girls Grammar School, Kirsten considered becoming a farmer or an engineer and was determined not to follow her father into medicine. But eventually her love of people led her to the career that she is in today. Kirsten had a wobbly start in the medical world - growing faint at the sight of blood and being told that surgery was not an appropriate choice for women if she wanted to go on and have a family.

Despite these early setbacks, Dr. Kirsten Finucane is now regarded as one of New Zealand's top children's heart surgeons after 20 years in the industry. She is currently the Head of Paediatric and Congenital Cardiac Surgery at Starship and Auckland Hospitals - the only unit in New Zealand to perform heart surgery on children. Kirsten credits Dr. Alan Kerr, Greenlane's senior cardiac surgeon for sparking her interest in children's heart surgery; an interest that was nurtured through 6 months of training alongside Dr. Kerr in her first year of surgical training.

Kirsten's work is not limited to New Zealand children. She is part of the Hearts4Kids team who, when on leave from their full time jobs, work for free in the Pacific Islands helping children with heart problems who would otherwise not receive the medical intervention they need. Hearts4Kids has also raised \$60,000 to help with costs and resources in Fiji.