



Feel Good Stories

Safe Passage for
Endangered Sea Lions



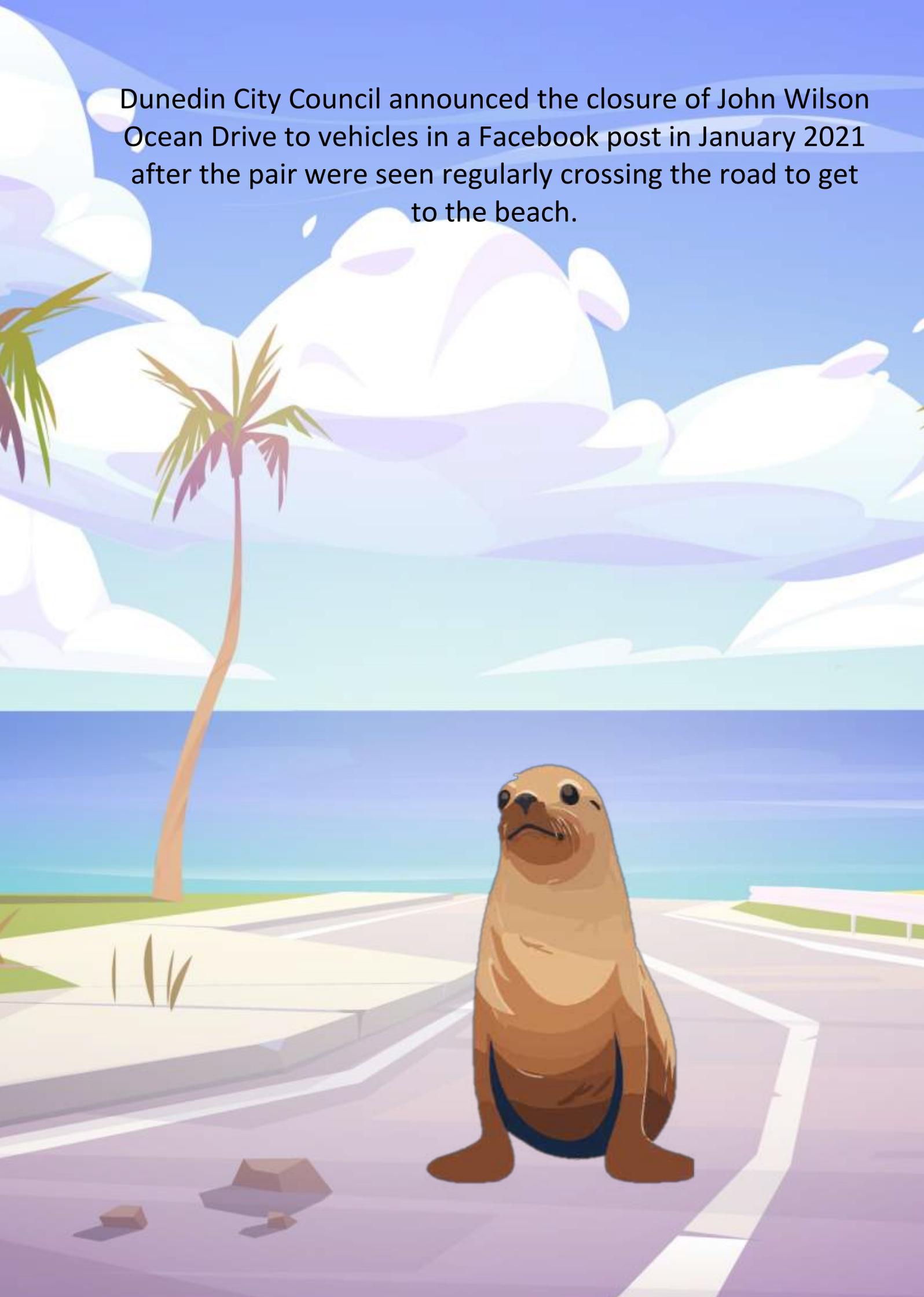
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A council in New Zealand closed a popular coastal road for a whole month to protect a rare sea lion and her club, who were found nesting on a local golf course.



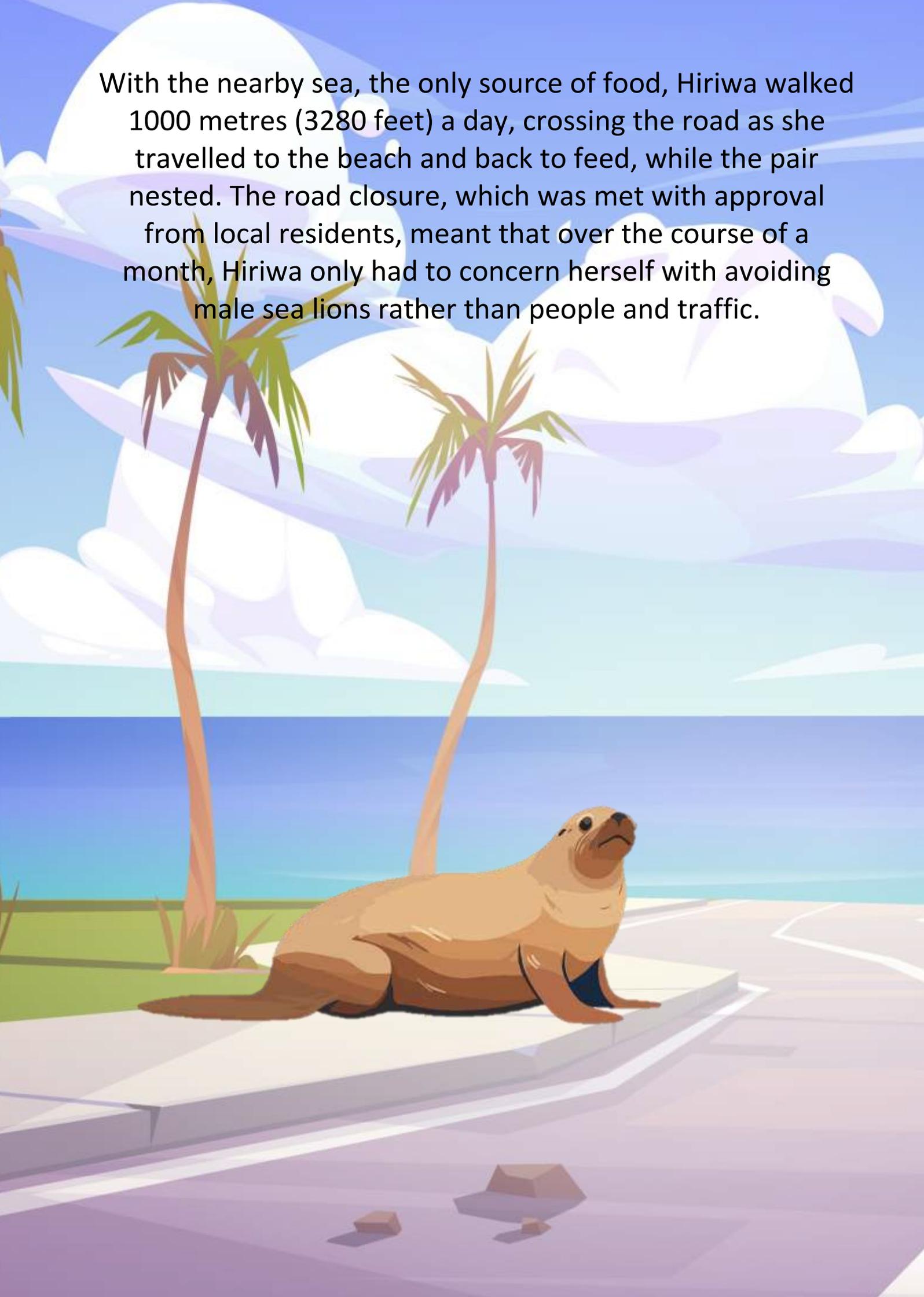
Dunedin City Council announced the closure of John Wilson Ocean Drive to vehicles in a Facebook post in January 2021 after the pair were seen regularly crossing the road to get to the beach.



The mother sea lion, called Hiriwa – ‘silver’ in Maori – had initially been spotted alone on the green at Chisholm Links Golf Club, a few days before her pup, named Chisholm after its birthplace, made a noisy entrance into the world. The pair then set up home in a bush near the 13th hole.



With the nearby sea, the only source of food, Hiriwa walked 1000 metres (3280 feet) a day, crossing the road as she travelled to the beach and back to feed, while the pair nested. The road closure, which was met with approval from local residents, meant that over the course of a month, Hiriwa only had to concern herself with avoiding male sea lions rather than people and traffic.



Local residents could still walk and ride bicycles in the area, but had to keep any dogs on a lead and remain at least 20 metres (6.5 feet) away from the mammals at all times, so as not to risk an attack.



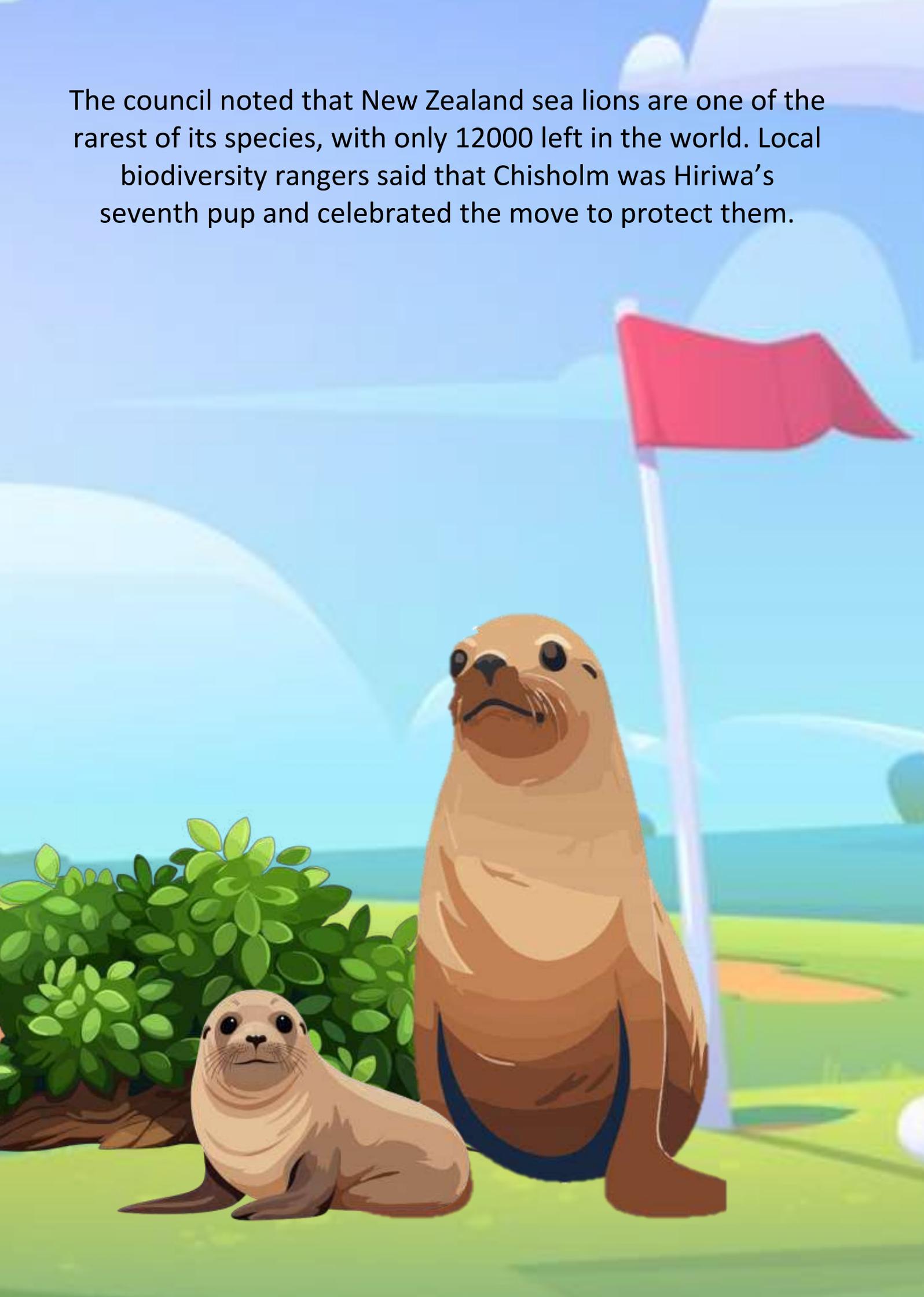
Dunedin is no stranger to endangered sea lions. The city saw its first recorded breeding in mainland New Zealand since pre-European times in 1992, welcoming three breeding females by 2000. Hiriwa's sighting prompted a joyful response from the golf club on social media, saying: 'We're lucky to have marine mammals on our coastline and we need to share the space with them. This is what makes Dunedin's coastline so unique!'



Road closures to protect wildlife in the area are commonplace, although usually only for a matter of hours or days, with the action to protect Hiriwa and her cub being the longest closure of its kind.



The council noted that New Zealand sea lions are one of the rarest of its species, with only 12000 left in the world. Local biodiversity rangers said that Chisholm was Hiriwa's seventh pup and celebrated the move to protect them.



New Zealand's Department of Conservation said that Hiriwa was believed to be one of 23 breeding females, 18 of which had pups. Next breeding season, they estimate this number will grow to 29 and they expect 20-25 new pups to be born, contributing to the recovery of the species on the mainland coastline.





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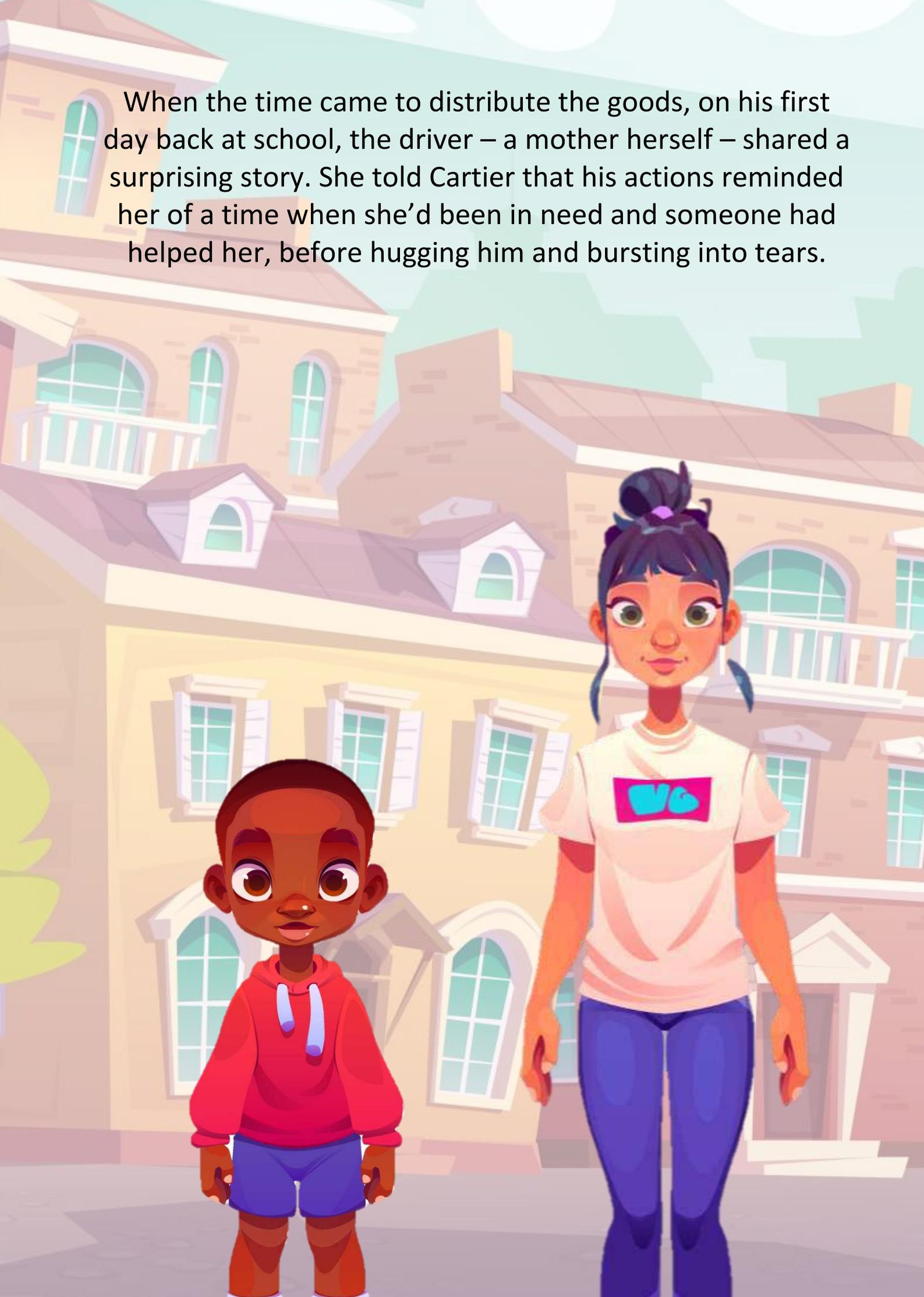
Eleven-year-old Helps
Parents in Need



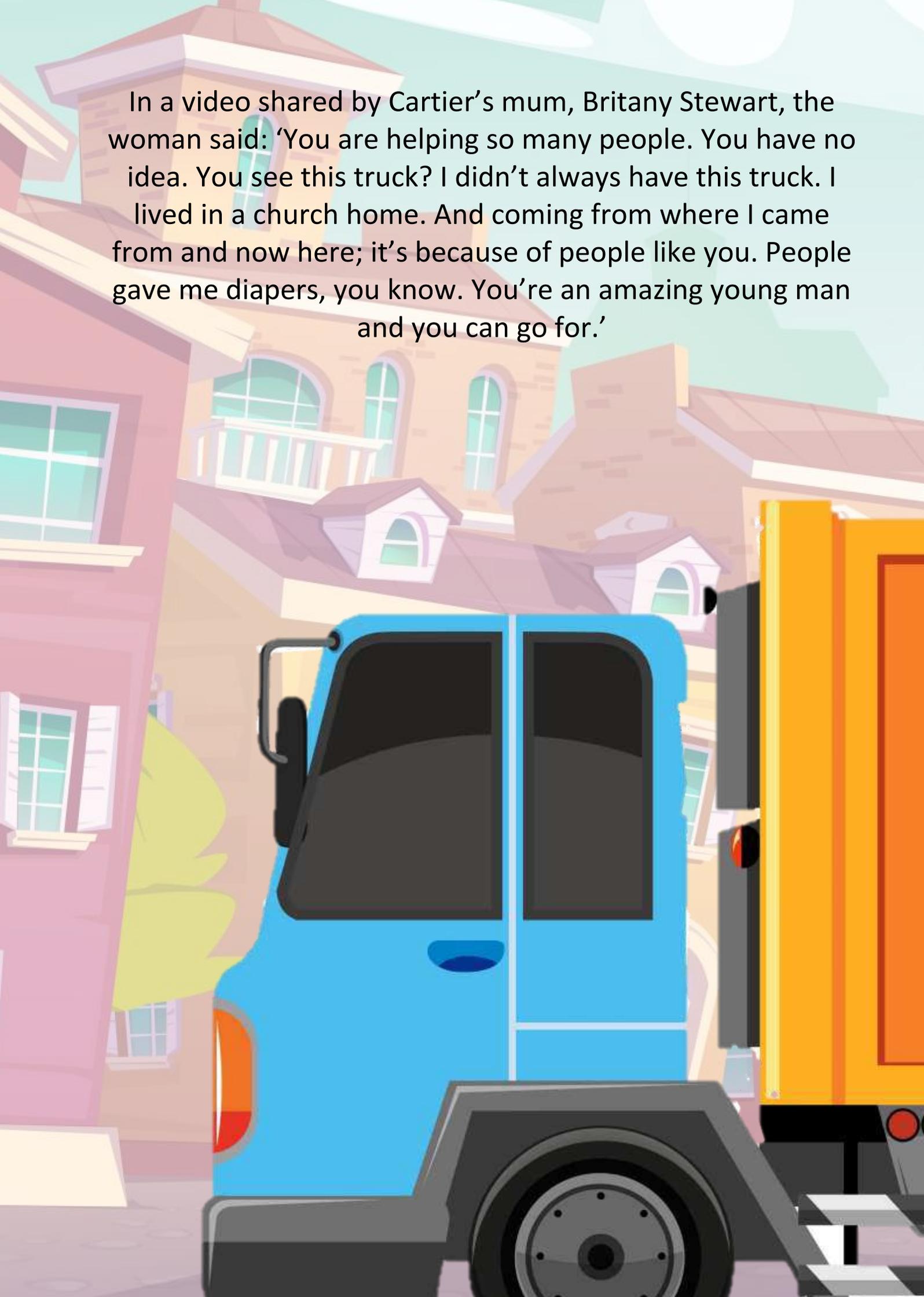
After learning of a shortage of nappies during the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, 11-year-old Cartier Carey spent the summer holiday at his lemonade stand in Hampton, Virginia, raising money to buy supplies for parents who needed help. In the end, he raised \$4,500 – enough to buy more than 22000 nappies.



When the time came to distribute the goods, on his first day back at school, the driver – a mother herself – shared a surprising story. She told Cartier that his actions reminded her of a time when she'd been in need and someone had helped her, before hugging him and bursting into tears.



In a video shared by Cartier's mum, Britany Stewart, the woman said: 'You are helping so many people. You have no idea. You see this truck? I didn't always have this truck. I lived in a church home. And coming from where I came from and now here; it's because of people like you. People gave me diapers, you know. You're an amazing young man and you can go for.'



The personal revelation spurred Cartier on to continue his good work. He has set up a charity called Kids 4 Change with his mum as a way of encouraging other children to see that they are never too young to make a difference.





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