

LEADING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora



REGIONAL PLAN 2006/2007



**MINISTRY OF
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO TAIDHI
Administered by the Ministry of Social Development



Cover Photos

Left: *The New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy* is a guiding document for the Positive Ageing Forum and its Chair Ruby Aberhart.

Centre: The *Pathways to Arts and Cultural Employment* programme is giving artists a pathway to self employment.

Right: Giving our young people a healthy start in life is a priority (photo courtesy of Latitude Nelson).

Leading Social Development:

A PLAN FOR NELSON, MARLBOROUGH
AND WEST COAST 2006 / 2007



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Achieving Better Social Outcomes Together

Our Ministry of Social Development 2006/2007 Regional Plan sets out the priorities and direction for the Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast region. It paints a picture of how we intend to achieve the things that will make a real difference in the lives of this region's families and communities.

We can't do this alone! We need to be well connected to our central and local government partners. By working in partnership with the people of Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast, our communities will get an accessible service that meets their needs.

Within the Ministry we have a growing number of regional services and activities. Under the leadership of the Regional Commissioner for Social Development the challenge is to ensure that these services are aligned, strongly led and tightly focused on the social development outcomes that matter.

Families are under pressure. Experience shows that they face many challenges. We strive to support parents and families to ensure all children get the best

possible start in life; and that anyone accessing our services is guided through to the right place to get the help they need. Our merger with the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services on 1 July 2006 strengthens our ability to achieve these outcomes.

Record low unemployment presents a new set of opportunities for us. Although the number of working-age¹ New Zealanders receiving a benefit has decreased significantly in the last five years, some groups remain at risk of long-term benefit receipt, and therefore lower living standards. There is a real opportunity for us to focus on the groups that need extra help to move in to and hold on to sustainable employment.

We have set these goals because we know that if they are achieved they will contribute positively to the wellbeing of the people of the Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast region, they will enrich your communities and improve the lives of all New Zealanders.

We look forward to working to achieve these goals with you!



Peter Hughes
Chief Executive



1. Working-age people are those aged between 18 to 64 years (inclusive).

Opportunities for Action in Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast

Big country - big contrasts

Spanning nearly 70,000 square kilometres, the Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast region is one of diversity and natural beauty, being home to eight of New Zealand's 14 national parks. Our total population is approximately 170,800². Although it is growing, statistics show that overall we have a low population density because of the relatively small urban areas, which are separated by large tracts of rugged rural land and small settlements.

Approximately 93,400 (54.7%)³ of the region's population live in Nelson/Tasman. The area is characterised by a sunny climate, and the lifestyle opportunities associated with that make it a popular destination for families, job seekers, retired people and tourists.

Marlborough's population is growing at a faster rate than the national average. The population is 43,200 (25.3% of the region's total population)⁴, with approximately two-thirds living in Blenheim and around one quarter living in rural areas. The climate suits viticulture and agriculture while activities such as marine farming and fishing add to Marlborough's economic wealth and work opportunities.

The West Coast scenery offers a breath-taking experience.



2. *Subnational Population Projections, 2001 - 2026*, Statistics New Zealand.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

Opportunities for Action in Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast



An *Industry Partnerships* programme with Talley's Fisheries provides comprehensive on- and off-shore deep-sea fishing training for clients. Pictured is the 'Amaltal Enterprise', one of Talley's deep-sea fleet heading out to the fishing grounds.

“Working closely with the Ministry of Social Development, the Nelson Regional Economic Development Agency aims to improve labour market conditions, raise income levels, improve career opportunities and improve the overall wellbeing of the community of our region”.

Bill Findlater
*Chief Executive Officer
 Nelson Regional Economic
 Development Agency*

Around 30,500⁵ of the region's population live along the West Coast. Job opportunities here are on the rise, largely due to increasing mining activity, and more people are being attracted to the area's lower-cost housing and relaxed lifestyle.

The geography and demographics of the region produce unique challenges for our Ministry. These include the challenge of providing services to rurally isolated communities and the 'growing pains' of our tourism towns and industries. Along with councils, communities and other central government agencies, we need to look for flexible and creative solutions to local situations.

The economy and the labour market

The contrasts of our regional geography and individual communities are matched by the range of industries and employment opportunities that measure our economic and social health. The Nelson/Tasman economy is dominated by forestry, fishing, horticulture and tourism. In Marlborough, viticulture, aquaculture and tourism are dominant, while the West Coast is largely driven by dairying, mining and tourism. The seasonal nature of the Nelson/Tasman employment opportunities results in changing labour needs throughout the year.

Much of the region relies heavily on revenue from exports, exposing it to international business influences such as exchange rates, energy and oil prices and competition from other countries. Input from established industry and businesses expecting future growth is invaluable in forming strategies that will cushion the effects of these influences.

In Marlborough, wine growing is the major industry. With extremely low unemployment in 2005/2006, attracting and keeping an adequate labour supply is a major priority. In the future it is likely that aquaculture, tourism and aviation will be in a similar dilemma - requiring more workers and specialist skills. Planning for the future demands a good understanding of the forces at play and effective relationships between ourselves, councils, industry and training providers.

Higher commodity prices for gold and coal have contributed to sound economic performance in the West Coast. The downside is a shortage of experienced labour, specifically for skilled trades people. Again, a combined approach is crucial to ensure local people can access training for the skills required and benefit from the economic opportunities.

On our eastern border, Kaikoura is a town on the move, experiencing growth in tourism and housing development. Each brings rewards and challenges.

5. Subnational Population Projections, 2001-2026, Statistics New Zealand.

Opportunities for Action in Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast

Our role

At a national level, we play a lead role in improving the living standards and work and social opportunities that make up the term 'social wellbeing'. At a regional level, our aim is to understand the present and future needs of the areas within our region and to help build the strength of communities so that individuals and families can thrive.

Our *Statement of Intent*⁶ outlines the big picture on where we are going and what we want to achieve. This plan shows how we are implementing that vision in the Nelson, Marlborough and the West Coast region.

The Regional Commissioner for Social Development plays a co-ordinating role across our services, ensuring Ministry-wide leadership for:

- integrated and complementary activity
- providing co-ordinated access to Ministry services
- assistance with workforce development
- effective relationships with key 'players' in the local economy
- support local authorities in the development and implementation of *Long Term Council Community Plans*
- a regionally-relevant influence to policy development at a national level.

We have a number of service lines to carry out our responsibilities.

Work and Income has over 170 staff working across the region through eight service centres and two Heartland service centres. Our focus is on helping clients, and building communities alongside other agencies, local government and non-government organisations. We deliver services to 36,546⁷ people in our region through the payment of benefits, income support and superannuation. Our employment service links job seekers to suitable employment. In its social development role, Work and Income takes a broader approach to increased wellbeing by leading and supporting initiatives which address health, education and justice issues.

Family and Community Services works with other organisations to co-ordinate information and services that help families to be strong, violence-free and connected to their communities. Family and Community Services plays an important role in our regional work and has staff based in the Nelson Regional Office. We work alongside communities to identify their needs and match these with available social services, or establish community projects to build their own strengths. Family and Community Services also manages *Heartland Services* in Kaikoura and Hokitika, which allow people in smaller communities to access a range of government and other related services from one location.

6. *Moving Forward with Confidence: Statement of Intent 2006/2007*, Ministry of Social Development.

7. All benefit statistics in this Regional Plan have been sourced from the Ministry of Social Development's Information Analysis Platform as at 31 March 2006. Where comparisons are made, these reflect statistics as at 31 March 2005, unless otherwise stated.



Collaboration and partnership is the theme of the Kaikoura Heartlands Service Centre. The one-stop-shop opened in August 2005 and houses Work and Income along with 12 other community and government agencies.



Opportunities for Action in Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast

Kirsten gets Westport cranked



Westport's Youth Co-ordinator for the Buller *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs* initiative is a woman of action. Working out of Buller Youthworks since July 2005, Kirsten Corbett has hit the ground running, assisting 52 local youth into employment or training by 31 March 2006.

Kirsten spends a lot of time helping young people. Outside of this role, she's a fitness instructor at the Westport Deep Sea Fishing School and is a netball coach for local youth.

"There seems to be a lot of kids leaving school without qualifications and if they don't get help and encouragement between 16 to 18 years, you lose them. School leavers who come to me might want a job, but they may need help before that happens. This might be literacy or numeracy skills or targeted training", Kirsten says.

Pictured from left, Kirsten talks to school leaver Bridie Dalkie about training options.

StudyLink is responsible for the administration and payment of financial assistance to people who are studying. We help students commencing study to make informed decisions about educational choices and ensure they receive their full entitlement to financial support. This encourages students to complete their study with the least amount of debt.

Benefit Integrity Services works to ensure clients receive their correct entitlement to financial assistance with an emphasis on preventing and minimising debt and fraud. Where there is a debt to the Ministry, we play a role in helping people to manage their budgets to become debt-free as soon as they can. The goal is to recover debts in a way that maximises the return to the crown while taking into account people's individual circumstances so that they do not face further hardship.

Senior Services administers pension payments through its International Services and War Pension Services units. Although the main client group is people aged 65 years and over, they also deliver services to younger New Zealanders, particularly through the administration of the Community Services Card, on behalf of the Ministry of Health. This Card helps people on low to middle incomes access cheaper doctor visits and pharmacy prescriptions.

Youth are the workforce of the future and play a vital role in our communities. The Ministry of Youth Development aims to actively engage young people between the ages of 12 to 24 years in the life of their communities and to ensure that all youth have the chance to reach their full potential. Regional development teams take a lead role in establishing initiatives that support this goal. We also provide support to organisations that are engaging with young people.

Having a significant number of people-focused services in the Ministry provides us with a large resource which can be drawn upon to help individuals and families in our region. With the partnership of local government and communities, our work is much more targeted and effective.



The pipfruit harvest is one of the most demanding labour peaks for the Nelson/Tasman area.

Moving Forward

It is with pleasure that I introduce our Regional Plan for 2006/2007.

This year's plan is very different. For the first time it shows the whole of the Ministry of Social Development's priorities for the region, detailing how our different service lines will work individually and collectively for the various sectors of our communities. Our plan is focused on five priorities:

- leading social development to help our people and their communities thrive
- supporting our children, young people and families
- identifying and initiating sustainable employment opportunities for working-age people
- working to improve the wellbeing and community participation of older people
- partnering with our communities to get the most effective results that meet local needs.

While these priorities reflect the Ministry's *Statement of Intent*, this plan provides the Nelson, Tasman, Marlborough, West Coast and Buller perspective on those priorities and shows how we intend to respond.

Leading social development covers a wide range of responsibilities. Our focus is to concentrate on initiatives that have been identified through evidence-based research and community feedback. This means that we can concentrate on projects that have the most relevance to our communities.

Communities with a strong economy, sustainable environment and a focus on social wellbeing are fundamental to better futures. In our social development role we will try to influence change that will address disadvantage. This work will continue to be very reliant on collaboration with community and government stakeholders.

Continuing to help people to secure and retain jobs remains a top priority. With the number of people receiving an unemployment-related benefit⁸ declining, there is a growing emphasis on assisting other working-age people who are able, to contribute to the labour market. Where single parents or people with ill health or disabilities wish to work, we can support them to overcome employment barriers, often in partnership with other support services and employers. In our Labour Market Development role we will support community enterprise and partnerships with industry that allow more people to participate and socially aware employers to thrive.

I am delighted with the increased regional input and investment from service lines of the Ministry including Family and Community Services, StudyLink, the Ministry of Youth Development, Senior Services, Work and Income and Benefit Integrity Services. We are working together to ensure that our services are well co-ordinated, accessible and add maximum value to this region. Our combined activities provide the opportunity to connect with thousands of people every year. If we can grasp that opportunity and provide quality information, services and support we can begin to make a difference to issues such as family violence, which is of enormous concern to all New Zealanders.

In closing, I would like to thank our staff who will work hard to make this plan a reality, and the many stakeholders (too many to list), that are dedicated to strong and inclusive communities. Together we will make a difference.



Janine Dowling
Regional Commissioner for Social Development



⁸ An unemployment-related benefit includes the Unemployment Benefit and the Unemployment Benefit-Hardship.

Leading Social Development

“Much more can be achieved when we combine our efforts and work towards common goals. No issue is peculiar to one single organisation but crosses the boundaries of several. Together we will make a difference. Collaboration between all government departments - local and central, will see real progress being made in social and employment issues. At the end of the day we are all working in the interests of the same people”.

Maureen Pugh
Westland Mayor

Effective help for individuals and communities in our region demands understanding, flexibility and the ability to draw on a range of resources from our Ministry and other agencies. Improving social wellbeing is often not just a case of addressing single issues, as the impacts are wider. The inability to gain sustainable employment may involve health issues, troubled family situations or complex financial problems. As our *Statement of Intent 2006/2007* reinforces, paying benefits is no longer our sole purpose.

Five critical social issues to address social wellbeing were identified in the Government's document *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*⁹ and the following issues are a major priority for us now, and will remain so in the coming years:

- improving educational achievement among low socio-economic groups
- increasing opportunities for people to participate in sustainable employment
- promoting healthy eating and healthy activity
- reducing tobacco, alcohol and other drug abuse
- minimising family violence, and the abuse and neglect of children and older people.

We are taking the lead role in addressing issues of sustainable employment (in conjunction with the Department of Labour) and minimising family violence, and in the other areas we are committed to supporting the other lead agencies.

Through our *Family Violence Intervention Programme* we are working with other local agencies, including Police, health and advocacy groups to achieve the most effective results.

We are working with other key agencies in the *Action for Healthy Children* project, where we are working to promote healthy eating and to help children disadvantaged by financial barriers, to get opportunities to take part in sport and recreational activities.

We are also committed to ensuring that our work at a regional level reinforces the Government's three priorities for the next decade: economic transformation, families - young and old and national identity.

9. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, Office of the Minister for Social Development and Employment, 2004.



Leading Social Development

“Despite its size and complexity, the Ministry still manages to be highly responsive to the needs of our communities. They’ve consistently shown a willingness to commit their resources alongside local partners, and they’ve earned a reputation for finding solutions that fit local needs”.

Tim Leyland
Planner

Marlborough District Council

Translating the social development vision into effective action

Our social development leadership role is based on developing an accurate understanding of our social, cultural and economic environment; intervening early in community issues by being creative, innovative, flexible and working effectively with other government and non-government agencies to achieve the best results for people in our region.

Our region has undergone significant change in the last five years. The rate of unemployment dropped to 1.9% in 2004¹⁰, median house prices increased everywhere in the region and our population grew from 155,300 in 1999 to 164,000 in 2004¹¹. *The Social Report* now provides a measure to rate our regional performance against national social indicators.

Our objective is to build our regional understanding and base our work on comprehensive information gathering and evidence-based research. To build this knowledge, we now have a Regional Strategic Planner on the team, giving us the ability to gather baseline knowledge that can be monitored and analysed to show if we are targeting our work in the most effective ways.

Communities offer a wealth of information and we take every opportunity to tap into their valuable insights at both a local level through community organisations and at a regional level, with representation on workforce development groups in Nelson/Tasman, the West Coast and Marlborough. We will continue to ensure that we not only take full advantage of any contact with stakeholders and the community to gather relevant information for future planning, but that we are also able to store and retrieve that information to assist the social development of our communities.

Over the 2006/2007 year we will continue to work on reducing the disproportionate number of socially disadvantaged Māori. Regional representatives belong to the Regional Inter-sectoral Fora which includes a range of government agencies and iwi who work in the best interests of Māori in the region. We will continue to build on this relationship, actively participating in strategic projects arising from the Regional Inter-sectoral Fora as well as seeking improved relationships with iwi groups.

Working together works better

Improved situations for families and communities are more likely when communities and central and local government work together to improve social services and economic opportunities. *Local Services Mapping* involves government agencies, local authorities and community organisations working together to identify the services a community has and what particular services it needs. From the *Mapping* exercise, action plans are developed that set out what everyone will do to find practical solutions to meet these needs. The Kaikoura Community Report has been completed and the

10. *Household Labour Force Survey*, 30 September 2004, Statistics New Zealand.

11. *The Social Report 2005, Regional Indicators*, Ministry of Social Development.

Leading Social Development

Nelson and Tasman Community Reports are due for release in mid-2006. The Kaikoura Report identified issues of education and learning, sustainable development, housing, income levels, gambling, family violence and the lack of maternity and mental health services. An action plan is being developed to address these. *Local Services Mapping* will commence on the West Coast during the coming 2006/2007 year.

Much of our work is based on strong relationships with other government agencies, businesses and employers and with community and voluntary organisations. We aim for a co-ordinated and complementary approach across all agencies to improve the outcomes for our clients. We are mindful that while we are better placed to lead some projects, there are others that community groups or agencies should champion, with our Ministry acting in a supporting role.

Talking Heads, a cross-sector group based in Nelson/Marlborough and the West Coast Inter-sectoral Fora are other avenues that allow ourselves, local government and other agencies to network as well as explore and undertake collaborative projects. We will continue to be actively involved in the work of these groups.

The multi-agency *Strengthening Families* initiative is another example of how government and non-government agencies can come together to support a family that is working with more than two agencies and work out a plan of action. This means that the family and relevant

agencies are all in agreement about the best way forward, with each contributing to making the outcome a success.

Our commitment to working together recognises that clients often have multiple needs that are best addressed together instead of being dealt with separately by different agencies. Combining the services of different agencies is often the only way to deliver an effective service to our clients.

Family and Community Services is involved in assisting migrants through the *Settling In* project. A report into the needs of Nelson/Tasman migrants is helping our Ministry and other agencies respond effectively to its findings¹². In Nelson, various areas of the Ministry including Family and Community Services, the Labour Market team and Work and Income are represented on the Nelson Economic Development Agency's workforce development groups. One of the major priorities is to help new migrants build their skills to access good job opportunities. We will continue to build closer relationships with Pacific leaders and migrant representatives so that we can better understand their needs, the issues that they face and ways that we can support and enhance their ability to contribute to society.

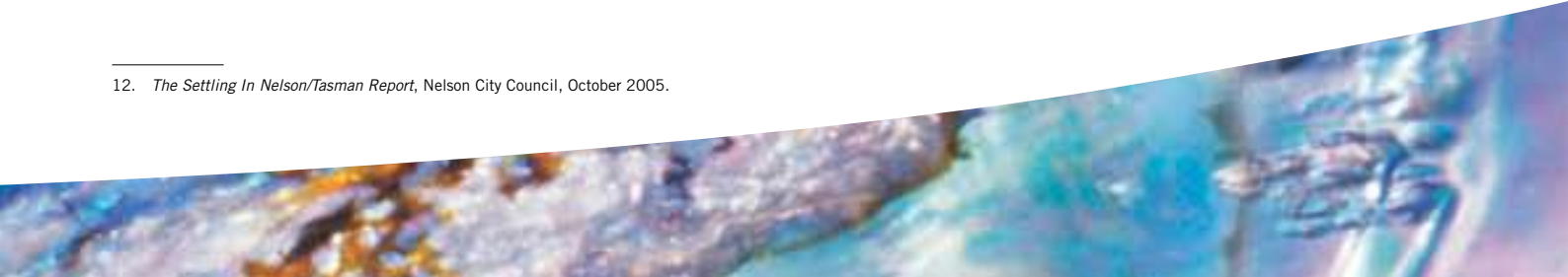
Achieving meaningful social development involves building the capacity of both individuals and communities. This crosses all areas of government from access to preventative and rehabilitative health services, education, housing and employment opportunities, to a

life free from the effects of crime. We recognise the importance of the public sector working together to support these outcomes. We have already undertaken some successful initiatives with the health sector including the *Primary Health Link* pilot in Greymouth. This was an agreement with the West Coast District Health Board, where mutual clients, who were missing out on essential health services, could have their medical and/or pharmacy costs deducted from their benefit and paid directly to the service. The arrangement was made with the client's agreement and has made a significant difference. The Greymouth pilot is so successful it has been extended to include the Reefton area.

Although we have some very effective joint projects with the health sector, we recognise there are other areas where we share responsibilities and concern. Over the next year we aim to clearly identify these and work towards a partnership approach in areas such as promoting healthy eating and activity and to improve outcomes for people receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit.

We work with the Ministry of Education to ensure that all school leavers are accounted for, monitored and referred to appropriate employment, training or support services through programmes in Nelson/Tasman, Buller and Motueka. At Greymouth High School we are trialling a small project to support both our clients and literacy in schools.

12. *The Settling In Nelson/Tasman Report*, Nelson City Council, October 2005.



Leading Social Development



Since starting the *PACE (Pathways to Arts and Cultural Employment)* programme in 2002, Work and Income has assisted over 40 artists in Nelson/Tasman to further their career in art. A one-week business mentoring workshop was held for programme participants, helping artists to value, market and merchandise their art.

In future we would like to work more effectively with the Ministry of Justice and New Zealand Police, to identify areas of mutual concern and establish ways to address issues such as the work which has commenced with regards to family violence.

Working with Housing New Zealand and the Department of Building and Housing should ensure that our clients have access to affordable housing while being conscious of minimising debt.

Building the workforce

The workforce development groups in Nelson and Marlborough, led by the economic development agencies and supported by ourselves, are a wonderful example of community and business collaboration. The West Coast Development Trust is a key player in labour force development on the West Coast.

Education and training pathways are a key factor in meeting clients' employment needs and labour demands.

Work and Income's Labour Market team has developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the regional Tertiary Education Commission so that *Training Opportunity Programme (TOP)*¹³ courses

better match the labour demand. Our service centres have developed effective relationships with course providers ranging from Te Korowai Trust in Nelson and Bread of Life Services in Blenheim to the Buller Community Development Company in Westport and the Golden Bay Work Centre Trust. These providers have already demonstrated their ability to work with our clients and help them towards better employment outcomes. *TOPs* and other training providers offer obvious potential partnership benefits, delivering training programmes that bridge the skills gap between the labour pool and the labour market.

Our region's two polytechnics, the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology and Te Tai Poutini in Greymouth, are both involved in workforce development activities. The Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology partners with Work and Income in the *Employment Scholarship* programme. This offers school leavers and sole parents the opportunity to 'earn as they learn', with employers offering placements in administration and retail jobs and allowing the scholarship students to study part-time toward relevant qualifications.

13. *Training Opportunity Programmes (TOPs)* help people with low qualifications or substantial barriers to finding work acquire foundation skills to help them toward meaningful employment.

Leading Social Development

Living without debt

Debt is a problem for many New Zealanders and is an issue for some of our clients. Debt has impacts on income, health, family stress and social exclusion. It can be a deterrent to employment, as debt repayments usually increase when individuals move from a benefit into work. Our commitment is to ensure clients receive their correct entitlement to financial assistance with an emphasis on preventing and minimising debt and fraud.

Our strategy is to prevent and minimise problems by ensuring policy and service-delivery design supports the payment of clients' correct entitlements. We also seek to intervene early, using data-matching programmes and client reviews. Data matching involves working with Inland Revenue, the Department of Corrections, New Zealand Customs Service, Accident Compensation Corporation, the Department of Internal Affairs and Housing New Zealand. Our client review processes include a variety of random, selected, targeted, letter based and face-to-face interaction with clients.

Active social assistance and case management can help to prevent and minimise debt and reduce barriers to sustainable employment and economic independence. Over the next three years we will implement a Ministry-wide *Debt Strategy* that focuses on:

- debt related to the integrity of the benefit system (errors, abuse and fraud)
- debt related to recoverable assistance (where people have debt relating to advances from the benefit system)
- multiple state-agency debt (where people owe money to more than one agency)
- private sector debt (where people have problems managing their debts with private sector organisations).

Packed with integrity



Benefit Integrity Services has built relationships with almost 300 South Island employers including Sealord Fisheries. These relationships are helping to avoid debt by encouraging clients to advise us of any change in their circumstances which may affect their benefit entitlement, and arrange debt repayment if necessary.

We hold presentations at work places and provide an *Employee Induction Pack*, which includes information about types of assistance available such as the *Working for Families* package.

Pictured from left are Gerard Friels from Benefit Integrity Services with Annie Ball from Sealord Fisheries.

Leading Social Development

Making the road to learning easier



When 17 year old Zac (right) first approached StudyLink for information about student finance, he had little support around him. To set Zac up with a successful recipe for tertiary studies, StudyLink Officer, Janet Burgess (left) ensured that he was well informed about the tertiary course ahead, fully understood the costs involved, had received all his government entitlements and also explored any options to reduce loan borrowing.

Working with Zac's case manager at Work and Income also ensured a smooth transition from a benefit to student finance. Janet has connected Zac with some key support agencies including on-campus health services, Careers Services Rapuara, the Student Association and scholarship opportunities.

Zac now has an effective support network and is motivated to successfully complete his studies. Feedback from tutors is that Zac is excelling in all of his classes.

A whole-of-Ministry approach

We have different services devoted to helping different sectors of the population. However, often our various services work with the same group of people, but cover different aspects of their needs. Providing joint services can help our clients over a wide range of needs, enabling a more holistic approach to problems and finding all-encompassing solutions. For example, Child, Youth and Family Services, Work and Income and Family and Community Services works together and with other agencies on family violence prevention. Or Work and Income may refer clients to StudyLink, while having a Family and Community Services regional presence means that we get another perspective on community issues.

Our Regional Office is a conduit to all our services. If we can't provide the assistance required immediately, we can help individuals or groups access the relevant information or area of the Ministry.

We hold regular Regional Ministry Leaders' meetings to discuss integrated and complementary approaches to initiatives or issues that the region may be facing. The group has identified some key regional priorities.

- Safe and resilient families.
- Living without debt.
- Decision-making support for those entering into and completing full-time study.
- Increased youth participation.

A listening ear and a quick response

We listen to the issues that our case managers, clients, stakeholders and communities identify. Where possible we look to implement early interventions to stem the cause, rather than treat the symptoms. For example, we are currently supporting a project led by Te Korowai Trust, to assist an at-risk group of 3 to 4 year-old children who have hearing loss and literacy difficulties, possibly as a result of glue ear.

Our ability to respond to local issues is now also strengthened by the presence of a Regional Policy Advisor, giving us a direct line to influence policy development at a national level.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

“Connections is the vital link between local and central government and the community, co-operating and working together to ensure a better future for our young people”.

Paul Matheson
Nelson Mayor and
Mayors Taskforce for Jobs Chair

Our youth are our future and we need to do everything we can to help them grow into happy, healthy adults. The reality is that New Zealand has the third highest child maltreatment death rate in the OECD¹⁴. We have to do everything we can as individuals, communities and government agencies to reduce this alarming statistic.

The way families operate has changed over the years. Now it is likely that both parents work, making access to quality childcare a priority. In the case of sole parents, accessing quality childcare is a major determinant in considering whether to take on a job. Working parents can find it hard to balance work with family life; there are financial and social pressures and some have difficulty coping with the demands of parenting while others are dealing with issues such as drugs or alcohol. We are working alongside other groups and agencies across the region to help build the strength and resilience of families and their children.

Starting early

Effective early interventions can improve children's health, learning ability and social and emotional development. The *Working for Families* package is giving more parents the opportunity to access quality early childhood education for their children. The introduction of Childcare Subsidies in the package has proved popular and a catalyst for growth in childcare and *OSCAR (Out of School Care and Recreation)* providers in the region. The West Coast is an example where, since the introduction of Childcare Subsidies, Greymouth has doubled its childcare facilities, and at the beginning of April 2006, another six had applied for funding. For parents with barriers to working part or full time because of the cost or unavailability of childcare, the *Working for Families* subsidies are opening up new work and career options.

Our childcare co-ordinators in Nelson, Marlborough and the West Coast have a close relationship with childcare centres and *OSCAR* providers, and through this contact they are identifying the gaps in childcare services. Over the 2006/2007 year we will work with community stakeholders to develop solutions to address the lack of childcare facilities. Ensuring people are aware of the *Working for Families* entitlements is the role of our four promotional case managers, who go to many community events and workplaces to explain the assistance available. This also includes explaining entitlements around the Accommodation Supplement, In Work Payments and the Child Tax Credit - the latter two being administered by Inland Revenue.



Work and Income, Barnardos and learning service Kidstart are working together to provide training opportunities to sole parent clients so they can become at-home childcare providers. Pictured from left are Kate Rose, Work and Income Childcare Co-ordinator; Kaye Blaker and Raewyn Doad from Kidstart; and Deb Pengelley, Work and Income Childcare Co-ordinator.

14. *The Social Report 2005*, Ministry of Social Development, page 107.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

The *Action for Healthy Children* project Working Group plans to improve overall opportunities for children to participate in leisure, education and sporting activities. The Group has identified four key projects including recycling of sporting equipment, increased availability of water fountains around our communities, a mobile after-school sporting facility and a fund to support children whose families are not able to meet the costs of sporting fees, equipment and uniforms. Over the next 12 months we will continue to work towards implementing these projects.

Family and Community Services provides funding, information and assistance for community organisations to undertake parenting education and support programmes. The *SKIP (Strategies with*

Kids: Information for Parents) programme supports parents to bring up children in a positive way, using love and nurturing as well as setting boundaries to guide and teach them. *SKIP* helps community organisations promote positive parenting and provide practical knowledge and skills for parents with children under five years old.

We also fund the *Family Start* programme, which provides intensive home-based support services to families with young children. The aim is to ensure that these children have the best possible start in life. In our region, *Family Start* operates from a centre in Nelson and we are establishing another centre on the West Coast.



Enterprising childcare

Through an Enterprising Communities Grant, The Children's House @ Kindy Korner is bringing a new style of childcare to the Hokitika.

The centre opened in early 2006, after research showed a demand for more childcare in the area. The Grant is providing assistance for a 12-month period, enabling the Children's House Trust time to increase their enrolments.

At present, there are 14 children between the ages of 2 to 5 years enrolled, and additional children attend the centre's school-holiday programme.

Manager, Lily Fyfe and Teacher, Hilke Bruns bring a rich background in Montessori and Rudolph Steiner-style teaching. For the children this means a lot of practical science, art, music and culture and their own vegetable garden to tend.

Pictured from left are Lily Fyfe and Jean Oliver, the Children's House Trust Chair.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

The *Strengthening Families* initiative mentioned earlier in the plan helps families who are being assisted by more than two government agencies to meet as a group and work together to resolve issues. We fund co-ordinators in Nelson, Blenheim and Greymouth to organise the meetings.

We also provide web services for families to access help, including:

- the *Working for Families* website¹⁵
- the *211 Directory*, which lists family-related services, programmes and resources available throughout the country
- *FamilyWeb*, which links people to helpful websites on subjects such as raising children and supporting young people¹⁶.

Alongside the *Working for Families* package and the various services listed above, we have implemented a range of other services to help families. Benefit Integrity Services staff interview selected clients to ensure they are receiving their full and correct entitlements. During these interviews, referrals are made to support services when it is identified that the client would benefit from other assistance, such as legal or budgeting advice.

During 2006/2007, we will accelerate our marketing effort to raise awareness on the range of support we offer. For example, we have found that the percentage of Māori accessing extra help such as the Child Disability Allowance is well below other client groups in our region, and there is more work to do ensuring people are aware of any *Working for Families* assistance they may be entitled to.

Reducing family violence

Freedom from violence, abuse and neglect is a fundamental right. Sadly, violence within families in our region is a reality. It cuts across all ages and socio-economic groups, and needs to be addressed at many levels. As the lead agency for addressing family violence including child abuse and neglect, we are approaching this complex issue in a number of ways under a strategy called *Te Rito*¹⁷. The Ministry-funded *Te Rito News* is a good resource to find out about national family violence prevention initiatives and is sent to a database of stakeholders.

15. Information can be accessed from www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz.

16. The *211 Directory* and *FamilyWeb* can be accessed via www.211.govt.nz.

17. *Te Rito, New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*, Ministry of Social Development, February, 2002.



Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

From the 'big picture' angle, we know that we cannot make changes alone. It requires a multi-agency approach and the support of local groups who know the needs of their communities first hand. At a regional level, we attend regular meetings with other government agencies to discuss and implement projects. One initiative in 2006 is to carry out a public awareness campaign in Nelson/Tasman, delivering messages about what agencies or community groups are available to help victims or potential victims of family violence.

In 2005, our *Family Violence Intervention Programme* was introduced. We now have three family violence response co-ordinators in Nelson, Marlborough and the West Coast, who provide advice and support for clients facing violence, helping them get the most relevant help for their individual situation. Our co-ordinators train case managers about how to help clients in violent or abusive situations. They are also working closely with non-government organisations, New Zealand Police and other agencies who are actively involved in the prevention of family violence.

Our regional programme *Circuit Breaker* is about working smarter. It co-ordinates family violence protection-funding contracts, so that the amount of work and cost involved for community organisations is reduced when seeking funding approval from more than one agency. The common goal is to get the best possible results for our communities.

With a number of programmes and strategies now in place, the coming year will enable us to get a greater understanding of the breadth of issues in areas of our region, and be in a position to make ground in helping individuals and families who are affected by abuse, neglect or violence.

Bernard Smith, one of three family violence response co-ordinators working in the region, talks to Work and Income Case Manager, Susan Rae about the new service which will help staff identify family violence situations and refer clients to the relevant support agencies.



Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

Helping youth get ahead

The end of school is a crossroads for young people. Without direction or a supportive family or whānau to help steer their course, it can be fearful and fraught with the danger of falling into bad habits that can influence their future. We are helping to create pathways for school leavers - into employment, training or further education.

Through the Ministry of Youth Development, we promote an understanding of what happens for, around and with young people.

The *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*¹⁸ is the Ministry's strategy for youth development, where government and communities work together to support and develop the abilities of young people to play a positive and active part in society. The *Strategy* provides a vision, principles, aims and suggested actions to help support youth in a positive way, so that they are treated as important contributors to all sectors of society. Our activities are focused on supporting the implementation of the *Strategy*.

*Aotearoa Youth Voices*¹⁹ promotes youth-related information and includes a number of initiatives for young people.

This year initiatives include planning for the *2007 Youth Parliament*, supporting sponsorship for the *Subway 2006 Stage Challenge* and support for *Youth Week*, which recognises and celebrates young people's achievements and fosters their involvement in their communities.

We are co-ordinating the *Youth 2007* research project, led by the University of Auckland, which will survey the health and wellbeing of over 10,000 New Zealand secondary school students between the ages of 12 to 18 years. The aim of this project is to collect, analyse and disseminate accurate and comprehensive information to help develop effective policy and actions to improve the health and wellbeing of this age group.

We provide policy advice to the Minister of Youth Affairs in areas where young people are affected, including youth health, the age of criminal prosecution, the alcohol purchasing age and the *New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy*²⁰. *E Tipu E Rea*²¹ was developed to support the goals of the *Strategy*, and in 2005 we offered *E Tipu E Rea* training workshops for groups, organisations or individuals who work with Māori taiohi (youth).



The Ministry of Youth Development funds the *Conservation Corps* programme, delivered to youth aged 16 to 24 years. The programme provides participants with a menu of challenging adventures including job-skills training, conservation work, rock climbing and education opportunities. The high ropes course is just one of the challenges participants enjoy.

18. *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*, Ministry of Youth Affairs, January 2002.

19. Further information about the *Aotearoa Youth Voices* programme and contributing projects can be accessed via www.youthvoices.govt.nz.

20. *New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy: A Life Worth Living: Consultation document*, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Youth Development, April 2005.

21. *E Tipu E Rea: A Framework for Taiohi Māori Development*, Ministry of Youth Affairs, December 2002.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

Earning and learning



Amanda Snowdon is one of the first school leavers in Marlborough to commence the Employment Scholarship programme, funded by Work and Income and the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology. Through the programme, participants are placed into part-time employment and spend half a day per week studying towards a Level-3 Business Administration Certificate.

“When I left school I was considering going to the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology to do both Level 3 and Level 4, but getting this scholarship means I won’t have a student loan at the end of the year and I get some fantastic work experience. I have learnt so much since starting, like computer skills and customer service”, said Amanda.

Amanda’s new employers are just as thrilled to have her on board as an Employment Scholarship employee. Gail Clement from Marlborough Financial Services says that employers sometimes don’t know where to go to get enthusiastic young school leavers and discovering the programme and Amanda has been a benefit to the business.

The *Connections* programme is another initiative focused on youth. Administered under the *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs* initiative²², *Connections* is working with school leavers and helping them access further education, training or employment and where relevant, referring them to other agencies that can provide specialist help or support.

While *Connections* only operates in Nelson/Tasman, other youth transition-related services operate in Buller, Blenheim, Kaikoura, Motueka and Greymouth.

The *Youth Development Partnership Fund*, launched nationally in October 2005, provides another avenue for partnerships with local councils to support projects that benefit young people in their communities. The focus for funding over the coming year is on education, training and employment opportunities for young people.

More young people are moving into tertiary education to attain higher qualifications and more employment choices. It is important that the costs associated with tertiary education do not bring unmanageable debt.

Through StudyLink, students have access to tertiary education regardless of their financial situation. To support students to make sound decisions, we provide needs assessments, application assistance, appropriate referral services and post-payment support as required. A working group has been formed to look at ways that we can better ensure that young people going into tertiary education successfully finish their studies, and that the study they do will give them the skills they need to find employment, with the least amount of debt as possible to repay.

“West Coasters still have low levels of educational qualifications, and the Polytechnic is determined to do what it can to remedy this. It’s especially important that young people are able to access quality education and training options on the Coast. Where we can’t provide what’s needed ourselves, we aim to help others to provide it”.

Brian MacKenzie
Director Special Projects
Tai Poutini Polytechnic

22. The *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs* goal is that by 2007, all 15 to 19 year olds will be engaged in work, education or training, or other activities that contribute to their long-term economic independence and wellbeing.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

“This (Seasonal Strategy) has required a commitment to work together on its various components, both short and long term. It has involved respecting the diverse cultures of the people and organisations involved in order to achieve a really good overall outcome”.

Richard Kempthorne
Nelson Marlborough Director
Horticulture New Zealand

Most people strive for economic independence throughout their working lives. But events happen that sometimes disrupt these intentions, whether through illness, changing life situations or unexpected events.

Our responsibility is to give working-age people the skills and help they need to find sustainable employment; to help single parents look at their options now and in the future, to find employment or training opportunities for people with ill health or a disability who want to work, and to help those who are not able to work become better connected with their communities.

Helping job seekers

For clients who are ready to work, we source job opportunities and provide assistance with interview preparation.

Through a number of national and local *Industry Partnerships* programmes, we also refer clients to training which we fund to meet labour needs. On the West Coast we fund a *Stepping Stones* programme to help long-term unemployed²³ upskill for the local job market.

The increasing popularity of cultural tourism has led to a cadetship training partnership with the Ngati Rarua Atiawa Iwi Trust where young Māori are taken on as cadets to learn about the administrative and practical aspects of the industry.

The change in the labour market over recent years has provided both opportunities and challenges. For clients who were unable to work full-time because of family commitments or illness, the shortage of labour has opened new doors. Many employers have introduced flexible hours and are prepared to offer part-time work or job-sharing options. This is ideal for some of our clients who may need to be home for their children after school or have an illness that makes it impossible to work full time, but possible to work regularly over shorter periods.

To help these clients, we have contracted a number of providers who help build their capacity to enter the workforce. Sometimes this might be updating their CV, accessing specialist help from health agencies, running motivational seminars or building self esteem.

Our contracted services also include In Work Support teams who contact new workers regularly and iron out any problems they may be experiencing, before they become major barriers to staying in work.

Work and Income also offers transitional assistance for people who start work after a long period out of the workforce. Examples of this include providing necessary work clothing or covering transport costs until they receive their first pay.

23. Long-term unemployed are clients who have received an unemployment-related benefit for 26 weeks or more.



Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

A gutsy attitude, life-changing moves and good advice



A Greymouth man who left school at 14 found that 12 years later, he wasn't coping. Diagnosed with depression and unable to work, he applied for and was granted a Sickness Benefit. Life was a struggle. *"I used to see those TV ads about mental illness and now here I was in the same boat"*. Case Manager, Tracy Leis discovered his interest in hospitality and encouraged him to join a polytechnic course.

No longer receiving a benefit and with a student allowance to complete his studies, the young man is aiming to manage his own restaurant or bar in the future, and he has advice for others with depression. *"It's scary, but there is help. Work with your doctor and once you're on the right track, get motivated. Even if you don't feel like it, try things. It will give you a reason to get up in the morning and it may change your life"*.

Opportunities for people with ill health or a disability

Through client interviews with people receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit we have found that many would like to take up part- or full-time work. Low unemployment in recent years has given us opportunities to help people normally disadvantaged in a competitive job market.

In our Blenheim and Greymouth Service Centres, we have designed an intensive pilot programme to work with people who have a sickness or disability, but want to work. This includes programmes such as *Networkz*, where clients meet weekly with case managers and work brokers to look at their future options. Where appropriate, our contracted provider Ramazzini assists clients by looking at their medical or psychological needs. Ramazzini comprises health experts who can provide individualised programmes to address client issues.

Our Greymouth Service Centre arranged for the Schizophrenia Fellowship to provide training for our staff around the region. Listening to a constant chorus of voices through headphones, staff soon understood how difficult it was for someone with schizophrenia to carry out even a simple conversation. More general training has been added and our staff now feel better equipped to help people with a mental illness. A training manual has also been developed which will be helpful to new staff members.

The Blenheim Service Centre uses the social agency Bread of Life to help clients build their capacity to confidently enter the workforce or a training programme. In Nelson, our employment co-ordinator works with agencies such as Workbridge to assist clients reach their full potential. Our work brokers also play an important role promoting the skills of these often under-estimated people to employers.

Where people are unlikely to be able to enter paid work, we look at other ways they can be involved in their communities. Isolation can be as debilitating as an illness, and linking people to community groups or voluntary organisations where they can participate is a way to help people feel valued and connected to their communities.

Helping to develop future career paths for sole parents

We have 3,320 sole parents in the region receiving a Domestic Purposes Benefit. We have been working with this client group to offer them help to take up part- or full-time work, or to study toward a career so that when their family circumstances allow, they have the skills and the motivation to move into employment quickly.

A pilot project in our Richmond Service Centre is enabling us to help sole parents resolve any barriers they may face in following these paths. This involves working through any personal or family barriers, informing them about the assistance they are entitled to through the *Working for Families* package and having work brokers who

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

promote this largely untapped labour supply to employers, encouraging them to provide family-friendly hours so that sole parents can balance family needs with earning an income.

The seasonal challenge

Seasonal work in pip-fruit, viticulture, fishing and tourism creates peaks of labour demand which can be very challenging to a region with low unemployment.

In Nelson/Tasman, having the support of industry, the ability to respond quickly and a co-operative approach with the Department of Labour has meant that

labour needs have consistently been met over the past four years. Seasonal co-ordination helps growers fill their labour needs by also referring overseas visitors who are permitted to work here, to available jobs and accommodation. Horticulture New Zealand now leads the seasonal co-ordination process and we will continue to play a supporting role.

In Marlborough, we facilitate the Viticulture Advisory Group, where winegrowers, contractors, other local stakeholders and government agencies meet to discuss industry and labour issues. There is a lot of work ahead, but there is goodwill and a commitment by all to put effective planning in place, both in the short and long term.

During 2006/2007, we will be building on the work we have started, and implementing plans to help people working in seasonal industries.

For some seasonal employees like students and sole parents, working in orchards or pack houses means extra money between study or family commitments. For others, seasonal work is their livelihood. One of our main aims is to help link seasonal work in our region so that people are able to move from one seasonal industry to another, achieving continuous employment all year round. For example, the end of apple picking leads to vineyard work or hospitality jobs in alpine areas or the hoki-processing season.



Paying a visit to Browns Orchard in Nelson from left are, Ian Palmer, New Zealand Pipfruit Growers Chair; Pip Berkett, Job Track Manager; the Hon. Winnie Laban, Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment; and Wendy Chisnall, Work and Income Regional Director.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

Seasonal labour strategies are an important part of Work and Income's annual planning, and Nelson/Tasman has set the benchmark in how effectively industry and government agencies can work together to achieve good results.

Service enhancements

Many people are telling us they want to work and participate in their communities, and as a result, the way we deliver services to our clients is continuing to evolve. This is demonstrated by the *New Service Approach* being delivered in all Work and Income service centres.

The *New Service Approach* provides clients with access to a range of

employment programmes and support services at their first point of contact with us based on their individual needs, regardless of their benefit entitlement. Sole parents or people with ill health or a disability are now able to access support and employment services which were traditionally more readily available to people receiving an unemployment-related benefit.

The *New Service Approach* was trialled in 12 service centres around the country, including the Nelson City Service Centre, before being made available nationally in May 2006.

Everyone who walks through our doors will be able to access seminars which provide information about employment services, community information and income support. Where employment

is a realistic option, our job-matching software system called *jobz4u (Jobs for You)* matches a person's skills, ability and experience to available job opportunities so that where possible they can be linked to employment straight away.

We are encouraging all of our clients to take advantage of *Working for Families* assistance, *In Work Support* and transitional help to enable them to start and stay in work. Our outbound calling service through our Contact Centre provides follow-up, to ensure clients are receiving their full and correct entitlements. These calling campaigns take place at various times of the year.

For example, our Contact Centre promoted *Working for Families* assistance to many of our clients during March 2006.

Work Track jumpstarts career search



For 19-year old Sarah Thomas, the Nelson Work and Income Service Centre's *Work Track* seminar was just the boost she needed in her search for work.

Arriving from Otago, Sarah spent three weeks searching for work before registering for an Unemployment Benefit and attending the *Work Track* programme. "It was great. It made you think about what you want out of a career and the importance of taking the stepping stones to get there", she said.

Just a month later Sarah was working in the footwear department of Nelson's Rebel Sport store. "The job is really cool and the people are great. I am really enjoying it", says Sarah.

Pictured from left, Sarah celebrates her job-seeking success with *Work Track* Facilitator, Georgette Piket.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

Working-age people are our superannuitants of the future. Planning for retirement includes being as financially secure as possible, and promotional activity we undertake will encourage people to consider preparing for retirement. We also need to provide those nearing retirement age with work opportunities so that they can work up to and, if they wish, past retirement age.

The Regional Workforce Development Strategy

Workforce strategies have been under development in Nelson/Tasman and Marlborough for over 18 months. Led by the Nelson Regional Economic Development Agency in Nelson/Tasman and the Marlborough Regional Development Trust in Blenheim, we have been actively involved both at a steering-group and working-group level. We funded research undertaken in 2004, to quantify current and future staff and skill needs, and this has informed our strategies. In Nelson, the *Workforce Development Strategy* is complete and ready for implementation. With recommendations on labour-market and labour-force issues, the *Strategy* will continue to involve a wide range of community representatives and local and central government.

The Marlborough *Strategy* is expected to be ready for implementation by the end of 2006. It is built around key industry sectors, with a focus on the need to 'gain, train and retain' a skilled labour force.

On the West Coast, a review of the Employment Action Group has resulted in the establishment of an Industry Advisory Group led by the West Coast Development Trust. We are a member of the Group, which although in its formative stages, is likely to be a key group to inform our labour market development efforts on the West Coast.

Over the 2006/2007 year, we will continue to play an active part in supporting the work of the Nelson and Marlborough economic development agencies, providing input as steering group members and participating in the strategic development of most of the working groups. We will also facilitate linkages within the Viticulture Advisory Group.

We will continue to assist in the development of a *West Coast Workforce Development Strategy* and to help the West Coast Development Trust to develop workforce, attraction and retention strategies.

These working groups provide quality early knowledge about labour needs so that training can be provided to meet those needs both now and in the future. For councils and communities, the research and analysis will signal some of the infrastructural and social needs that will arise from changing labour needs. For working-age people in our region it will mean that they have the skills to take advantage of current and future job opportunities.

Profiling jobs to youth



Youth Employment Profiles are helping secondary school students in the Nelson/Tasman area find out about local employment opportunities.

Listing hundreds of jobs, *Youth Employment Profiles* were established through a partnership between the Nelson Tasman Business Trust, the Nelson City Council, Work and Income, the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology and employers.

The *Profiles* provide an overview of the different jobs available in particular industries, highlighting the attributes employers are looking for, wage rates for different levels of employment and how school leavers can access local training in each of the industry sectors.

Pictured are the Nelson Economic Development Agency team checking out what's on offer in the *Youth Employment Profiles* publication.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

Cadetship opens new directions



Aneika Young is one of three Māori youth who completed a 20-week working cadetship in adventure and cultural tourism, funded by Work and Income and facilitated by the Ngati Rarua Atiawa Iwi.

The training, contracted through Abel Tasman Wilson's Experiences, taught the cadets a variety of skills, from office administration and kayak management to guiding tourists through Abel Tasman National Park.

Aneika says that belonging to a local iwi made the experience more special. "Working in an area with so much family history has been awesome and although this kind of work wasn't what I had in mind, I am really glad I took the cadetship. It has given me the motivation to go on in the area of cultural tourism", she said.

Pictured are Aneika Young with Darryl Wilson, Abel Tasman Wilson's Enterprises Manager.

Industry partnerships

We are identifying sustainable employment opportunities for clients through our Labour Market team. By partnering with employers that experience labour shortages to identify their needs, we are better able to develop strategies that address these shortages.

Identification takes place through our involvement and co-operation with economic development agencies, other industrial organisations and workforce development groups. Having our work brokers based in service centres also provides local intelligence regarding employment opportunities and new businesses.

Local Industry Partnerships programmes complement the national *Industry Partnerships* programmes. They provide tailored skills development for emerging employment opportunities unique to our region. Suitable training providers are critical to the delivery of successful industry partnerships as they provide training, *In Work Support* and career planning for people moving into employment.

Our Labour Market team is currently involved in projects in the fishing, hospitality and tourism industries. We are working to build strong relationships with other industries and training institutions involved in these and other emerging areas of skills need such as aquaculture in Marlborough and mining on the West Coast.

During 2005, the team organised meetings in Kaikoura, Hokitika, Westport and Picton to ask for community input to determine industry labour demand and the available labour pool. This is helping them to build an accurate picture of the skills that are missing in the distinctively different communities that make up our region and what training opportunities there are available to prepare people for these jobs.

The Labour Market team is meeting with employers to gauge their specific labour needs. While we have some information on what skills will be needed in the future, we will continue to build relationships with specific employers in the industries that have identified skill shortages. By gauging employer needs and gaining their agreement to provide employment opportunities, we can commit to training our clients in the skill areas identified.

In 2006/2007, the Labour Market team will build on our existing relationships with training providers. By ensuring our training providers are aware of the current and projected labour shortages, they can effectively tailor their programmes to address this shortfall.

Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People – Today and Tomorrow

As is the case across New Zealand, the proportion of older people in our region is increasing, with 23,644 New Zealand Superannuitants receiving assistance from us. We want to ensure that the services required by older people are provided in ways that meet their needs. A key priority for us during 2006/2007 is a review of the delivery of these services, better preparing us to respond to this growing population.

We are committed to the *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy*²⁴, which sets out 10 goals for improving the lives of older people. In response to these goals, we undertake projects that will contribute to their achievement. For example, in 2005 we held *Senior Expos* in Nelson and Blenheim where clients were able to see the range of assistance, services and community, recreation and hobby groups available in their local area. In Motueka, a similar expo was held, but also included information for people with disabilities. In May 2006, we partnered with the West Coast Disability Committee, the West Coast District Health Board and Grey Power Greymouth to host the *Toast of the Coast Super Expo*.

Providing services to older people

To assist our superannuitants, Work and Income has a dedicated team of specialist case managers who work in all our main centres and regularly visit *Heartland Services* in Kaikoura and Hokitika. Where it is possible, we arrange home visits for the elderly who need to fill out applications but are too unwell to come into a service centre. In 2006/2007, we will focus on ensuring that older people in rural communities are not disadvantaged, by strengthening our initiatives to bring services to people, such as our one-stop-shop approach through *Heartland Services*.

It is important that our superannuitants receive the full support they are entitled to and are aware of the extra help that is available to supplement costs of housing and health care. Over the next 12 months we will carry out campaigns to boost the awareness of this assistance. Our relationships with community agencies such as Age Concern and Grey Power will allow us to share information on financial assistance available, not just through Work and Income but through subsidies on costs such as rates discounts. This information will be shared with older people so that they are more able to live within their means. We will also be undertaking promotional activity, with information on planning ahead to assist those people who are soon to retire.

Our Senior Services group administers three areas of assistance to our older people. International Services develops and maintains relationships with other countries so that people who live here, but are entitled to overseas pensions, can receive their appropriate entitlements. Equally, we ensure New Zealanders living overseas receive their correct New Zealand entitlements.



The Ministry is committed to contributing to the goals of the *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy*. Pictured is Ruby Aberhart, Chair of the Positive Ageing Forum.

24. The *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy: Towards a Society for all Ages*, Ministry of Social Policy, April 2001.

Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

War Pension Services is contracted by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand to administer pensions and other support for veterans. This year is an especially important one for us all, being the Year of the Veteran. A *Year of the Veteran Community Grants Fund*²⁵ has been set up to assist local communities to provide ways of honouring and recognising the sacrifice of their ex-servicemen and women.

Our Community Services Card Centre administers the Card on behalf of the Ministry of Health, to enable people receiving low to middle incomes to access cheaper health care. Nationally, the Senior Services client base is just over 1 million people, most of whom are Community Service Card holders, although at least 90,000 people receive either War Pensions or overseas pensions.

Over the next year, we will seek additional opportunities to increase awareness about these services.

A super experience



The *Nelson Seniors Expo* was a wonderful opportunity for a variety of agencies to display information about the services they can offer to senior citizens.

The *Expo* was organised as part of the Ministry's commitment to the *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy* and included around 100 stalls showcasing hobbies, recreation and sporting opportunities and services offering a vast range of assistance for older people.

Staff from the Community Services Card Centre worked alongside the Working for Families group, War Pension Services and Veterans' Affairs New Zealand. The shared stall between the New Zealand Superannuation team and International Services provided event-goers with the opportunity to find out about all their superannuation entitlements both within and outside New Zealand.

25. Further information on what funding is available and how to apply is located on the Veterans' Affairs Website, www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz.

Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

Community participation

An increasing number of older New Zealanders are continuing with part- or full-time work after the age of 65. As a result of skills shortages, older workers are in more demand. This is providing more opportunities for people to earn extra money in retirement, keep fit and meet new people. For others, remaining active means helping their communities after they retire, either as volunteers, mentors, caregivers, kaumatua or committee and trust members.

A large number of mature and older people remain in the workforce as employers, seasonal workers and full- or part-time employees.

We will continue to support older workers to access training and employment. While we already have established relationships with employers who readily hire older or retired people, we will continue to seek job opportunities for them by working with training providers, employers and community and voluntary organisations.

The *SAGES - Older People as Mentors* programme is another way we are acknowledging and tapping into the wealth of experience and life skills of the older people in our region. *SAGES* matches families and individuals with

volunteers who provide information, encouragement, practical advice and support. Nelson's *Supergrans* programme provides free advice on everything from budgeting, cooking nutritious meals and mending clothes, to positive parenting and how to communicate effectively. The goal of *Supergrans* is to help families make the most of their resources and finances. We will continue to look for ways to link older people to programmes such as *Supergrans*, so they are able to contribute and feel valued within their communities.

Preventing elder abuse

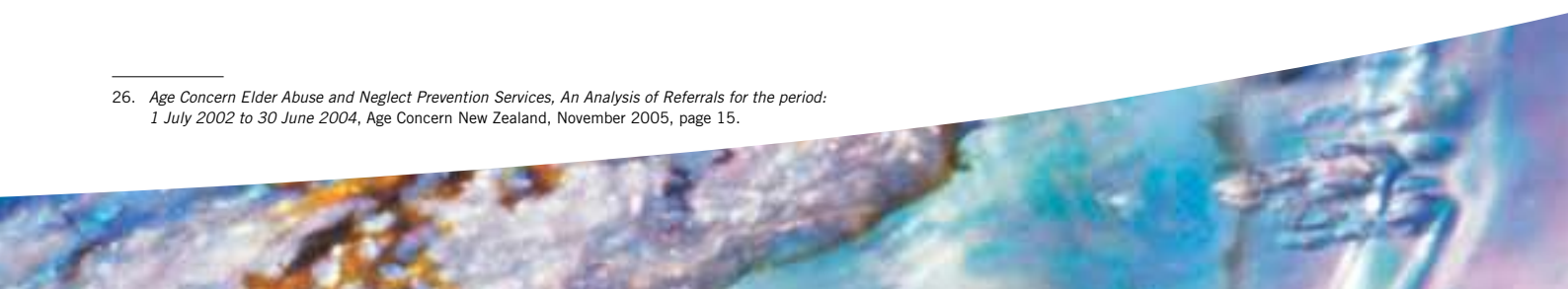
There is evidence that older people are sometimes subject to abuse and neglect. Age Concern New Zealand has reported that abuse or neglect is experienced by three to ten percent of the older population²⁶. Elder abuse and neglect is when someone is physically, psychologically or sexually harmed, or when they have been seriously affected by a person, either socially or materially, with whom they have had a relationship of trust.

The importance of recognising and responding to elder abuse is now part of our staff training. Our membership

in the Positive Ageing Forum and our relationship with stakeholders such as Age Concern and New Zealand Police will assist our ability to report abuse and neglect to the appropriate agencies. It will also allow us to support the protection, safety and wellbeing of our elders through our *Family Violence Intervention Programme*. Over the next year, as part of our work to reduce family violence, we will be further raising the issue of elder abuse with the people we work with.

Our focus for our older residents will continue to range from social protection to appreciating and using the knowledge and skills they have to offer. We welcome further opportunities to ensure older people are aware of the services we offer and the opportunities we can provide.

26. *Age Concern Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Services, An Analysis of Referrals for the period: 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2004*, Age Concern New Zealand, November 2005, page 15.



Partnering with our Communities



The first *Local Service Mapping* exercise in the region carried out by Family and Community Services, focused on Kaikoura. This has involved working together with other partners to analyse the strengths, weaknesses and available opportunities for the community.

Strong and resilient communities are the catalyst to help their members to be independent and productive. Communities can promote social responsibility at an individual and family level and they are important partners in assisting with the planning and delivery of social services.

It is important that we understand the circumstances and the needs of our communities. Knowledge of the barriers they experience is crucial to enable us to focus our services on common social, economic and cultural goals.

As part of our commitment to community partnerships, we will continue to support local authorities in the implementation of their *Long Term Council Community Plans*.

Building our relationships

We have ongoing contact with communities at a regional and local level. In our service centres, our managers meet regularly with community groups to listen to their concerns and offer our services and assistance where possible.

The knowledge of community organisations is essential to planning effective action to help the people who live in those communities. Local organisations are experts in the needs of their own communities. Securing that knowledge for advice, and using these networks to help raise awareness about our assistance is important in all that we do.

Our staff manage portfolios in specific areas of local interest such as housing, supporting families and the wellbeing of the elderly. We have representation in emergency management groups and we have carried out joint civil defence exercises with social services and community groups. Our representatives also attend a range of other community meetings such as Foodbank, community agency and employer meetings.

We are involved in projects with local councils such as *Local Services Mapping* in partnership with the Kaikoura District Council, Te Whare Putea Services, employers, runanga and community groups.

The *Community Initiatives Fund*²⁷ supports local communities to commence new projects that will make a difference to the individuals and families that live there. In Nelson, the fund has enabled the establishment of a community hub in Nelson's Victory School, where parents and members of the wider community can talk to our *Working for Families* case managers and experts from other social services about assistance that is available to them.

27. Details on how to apply for this fund are available via www.familyservices.govt.nz.

Partnering with our Communities

Community planning

The initiatives of communities and community-led organisations are often hampered by limited access to resources such as information (research results), management capacity and easy access to government agencies and other stakeholders.

Our Regional Office provides councils with information relating to benefits, superannuation and *Working for Families* assistance, so that they are more informed when making decisions that affect people in their area.

With our resources, we are able to provide support and expertise to communities, assisting them with their planning processes. We can also help communities in their consultation process with government agencies and other stakeholders.

Regional research to inform future policy and service development includes the following:

- *Defining Community Needs* research, to develop a practical understanding of how 'community' and 'community need' is understood in our region
- the *Funding for Outcomes* project evaluation, to determine whether the project is reducing costs for funders and providers, and whether such joined-up funding enhances the provision of comprehensive services
- on-going monitoring of the effectiveness of *Heartland Services* in improving support for voluntary groups in service centre areas, access to government services for rural people and inter-agency collaboration to aid access for rural communities.

Through our increased focus on regional social development leadership and community labour market development, we are significantly building our capacity to achieve better outcomes for communities. We will also continue to develop our staff's capability to engage effectively with communities and other stakeholders, and strengthen our community-focused research and policy-development capabilities.

To achieve this we will develop fora that lead to better alignment between government agencies, industries and communities in order to deliver resources to the communities that need them and stimulate the labour market.

Enhancing community investments

Communities and groups that are disadvantaged in the labour market need unique and focused services. This might include projects that help people in areas where there are few opportunities for employment, or where job seekers don't have the right skills or training for the jobs that do exist. There are sectors of our population who may need targeted projects, such as women who are finding it hard to re-enter the workforce, Māori or Pacific peoples who need help to access jobs or refugees and migrants who need language-based training or qualification conversion.

Enterprising boost for Buller business



An Enterprising Communities Grant is helping the Buller Community Development Company spread its wings further. The Grant, which was the first to be allocated in the region, has provided funding for a marketing staff member to help increase earnings for the community-owned business and bring more employment opportunities to the Buller community.

Two of the company's businesses include The Buller Community Fertiliser Company, which recycles kiln dust from the nearby cement works, turning it into a highly productive potassium rich fertiliser, and the Tauranga Bay Nature Nursery, which supplies plants that are native to specific West Coast areas, for restoration projects such as rehabilitating old mining sites.

Pictured from left discussing job opportunities awaiting blacksmithing students are Robert Green, Blacksmith Tutor and David Fielden, Buller Community Development Company Marketing Manager.

Partnering with our Communities

Helping migrants feel at home



Family and Community Services' *Settling In* programme works directly with migrants and refugees to help them settle more easily into their new country. The programme has been hugely successful in increasing the profile of both refugees and migrants in the region.

Due to the success of the programme and the commitment of locals, the Nelson Multi-Ethnic Council no longer needs to look for volunteers - residents are calling to offer support, while employers call offering employment.

Recent successes include a Malaysian woman who approached a recruitment agency to apply for a job and ended up working there, and a Rotary member volunteering to provide business information and support.

Nelson's *Race Unity Day* is a fun way to show the richness new cultures bring to the region. It is growing in popularity with twice as many people attending the 2006 celebration compared to the previous year.

It is important to help these people, groups and communities to develop projects that create lasting employment opportunities. We play a leading role in providing Enterprising Communities funding through our Labour Market team.

The key areas of focus for our Labour Market team are:

- the West Coast region, due to its high unemployment in comparison to the rest of the region
- district council programmes that support labour market development
- community initiatives that provide childcare facilities
- projects that contribute to workforce development activities
- facilitation and co-ordination of labour market fora and small community focus groups
- co-ordination of funders fora and assessment of the need for regular fora
- projects by iwi Māori organisations that address unemployment
- development of an active relationship with the Pacific Island community
- ongoing work with the Department of Labour, Labour Market Knowledge Manager to develop collaborative labour market projects, with a focus on Kaikoura.

In 2006/2007 we will hold three labour market fora addressing district labour market development barriers through partnerships with economic development agencies and the Department of Labour. We have established six small community focus groups in the region, and assist with workforce development strategies as members of the workforce development groups in Nelson, Marlborough and the West Coast.

Making a difference together

The aims and objectives of the 2006/2007 Regional Plan involve work at a national, regional and local level. With the combined effort and commitment of our various services and through partnerships with others, we will make a difference. We realise that unforeseen events can rapidly change the social and economic conditions in communities or that new challenges may arise during the year. Our region is committed to responding as quickly as possible to expected and unexpected needs. Suggestions, questions and input by communities to help us provide the best results for all who live here are always welcome.

POLICY

Social Development Policy and Knowledge

- Strategic Social Policy
- Regional Social Policy
- Social Inclusion and Participation (including the Office for Senior Citizens, the Office for Disability Issues and the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector)
- Centre for Social Research and Evaluation.

Social Services Policy

- Ministry of Youth Development
- Working-Age Peoples' Policy
- Child, Family and Community Policy
- Older Peoples' Policy
- International Relations.

Ministry of Youth Development promotes the interests of young people aged between 12 and 24 years. By listening and responding to the needs of young people, we seek ways to help ensure that young people are valued, nurtured and challenged to reach their full potential.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Work and Income

- 11 Regional Offices
- 141 Service Centres
- 46 Outreach Centres
- 5 Contact Centres (which includes a Multilingual Contact Centre).

Work and Income offers a single point of contact for people needing work-search support to secure employment; in-work support that assists people to stay in employment; and income support to people who require temporary assistance or additional income to supplement their earnings.

Specialist Services

- StudyLink (which includes 6 Outreach Offices plus numerous campus services, 2 Contact Centres and 1 Processing Centre)
- Senior Services
- Benefit Integrity Services.

StudyLink administers financial assistance to students and works in co-operation with secondary schools, tertiary education providers and student bodies to ensure students get the finance they are entitled to so they can complete their study.

Family and Community Services

- 4 Regional Offices
- Co-ordination of 34 Heartland Services.

Senior Services includes administration of the Community Services Card, which gives people access to lower cost health care; International Services, which pays benefits and pensions to people who come to New Zealand from overseas, and New Zealanders who leave the country; and War Pension Services, which administers services to veterans.

Child, Youth and Family (from 1 July 2006)

- 52 Site Centres delivering services
- 12 Service Centres managing Sites
- 3 Specialist Service Units
- 7 Secure Residences for children and young people in youth justice or care and protection.

Benefit Integrity Services includes Benefit Control, the National Data Match Centre and Debt Management. It helps to ensure clients are receiving their correct entitlement to financial assistance with an emphasis on preventing and minimising debt and fraud.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND RISK

People, Capability and Resources

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Information Technology.

Corporate and Governance

- Planning, Purchase and Governance
- Communications
- Legal
- Ministerial and Executive Services
- Client Representatives and Review of Decisions.

Family and Community Services helps to build connected communities and strong, resilient families. We co-ordinate government and non-government organisations to support families to be well resourced, violence-free and connected to their communities. We do so by providing leadership, information and funding social service providers.

Risk and Assurance

- Internal Audit
- Risk Management
- Internal Fraud
- Security.



Ministry of Social Development

Regional Office
Level 1
22 Bridge Street
Nelson
www.msd.govt.nz

Benefit Integrity Services

0800 558 008 (Debt Enquiries)

Community Services Card

0800 999 999

Family and Community Services

www.familyservices.govt.nz

International Services

0800 777 117

Ministry of Youth Development

www.myd.govt.nz

StudyLink

www.studylink.govt.nz
0800 88 99 00

War Pensions

0800 553 003

Work and Income

www.workandincome.govt.nz
0800 559 009

