

LEADING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN Wellington



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora



REGIONAL PLAN 2006/2007



Cover Photos

Left: Helping students with the right study choices at Whitireia Community Polytechnic.

Centre: Apprenticeships are a great stepping stone to a career.

Right: A young boy looking at his grandfather's war medals.

Leading Social Development:

A PLAN FOR WELLINGTON 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 Wellington 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 Wellington 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 Wellington 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 Wellington

Geographically compact, Wellington is home to 343,044² people, encompassing Wellington City, Porirua City, Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt. According to Census 2001, our population consists of European 75.8%, Māori 11.9%, Pacific peoples 8.9%, Asian 7.7% and Other 1.1% which is relatively in line with the national average. However, Māori and Pacific peoples are over represented in relation to the total number of people receiving an unemployment-related benefit³ in the Wellington region, representing 25.8% and 12.8% respectively⁴. Our large youth population of 75,084⁵ (under the age of 15 years) can present issues including access to quality childcare, youth crime and truancy. In line with the national trend, we are also facing an ageing population.

Not just a political hive of activity, Wellington is rapidly establishing itself as the cultural capital of New Zealand. Host to world class movie production houses, performing arts and stage productions, we have more cafes, eateries and restaurants per head of population than New York⁶. The unique character of our region has created a diverse labour market not seen elsewhere. We have strong hospitality opportunities available for training and employment.



The historic Petone Wharf is a popular fishing spot.

2. *Census of Population and Dwellings, Regional Summary, Census 2001, Statistics New Zealand.*
3. An unemployment-related benefit includes an Unemployment Benefit and an Unemployment Benefit - Hardship.
4. 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.
5. *Census of Population and Dwellings, Regional Summary, Census 2001, Statistics New Zealand.*
6. Information can be accessed via www.wellingtonnz.com.

Opportunities for Action in Wellington

“The Regional Commissioner, Mike Bryant has been instrumental in developing social development in partnership with the Wellington City Council”.

Kerry Prendergast
Mayor of Wellington City

The region has experienced significant residential and commercial construction which has assisted in driving our economy. Even with such growth, there are still areas where government intervention is required to assist people into employment. As a result, we are working closely with employers to address the skilled labour shortage in our region and to look at ways of upskilling our existing labour force to meet this demand.

Those in the Wellington region are innately proud of who they are and where they belong. We realise we cannot do it alone; a collaborative approach to address the issues we face as a region is required. Steps towards this goal are already being achieved, with community groups working closely with government agencies to provide a seamless service to those who require assistance. This community spirit is what drives us.

The Ministry's role

It is not acceptable for us to work in isolation and expect to achieve the best outcomes. Partnerships within our community, and working closely with other organisations will ensure not only a higher standard of service, but that a more holistic and balanced approach is taken to address the issues faced by people in Wellington.

The *Statement of Intent 2006/2007*⁷ outlines the national approach and direction the Ministry is taking. In the past our Regional Plan has been a document based on Work and Income's services. This year, our plan shows how we are all working together, across the Ministry, to implement those goals at a regional level, in a unique way that is best suited to Wellington's needs.

The Ministry of Social Development provides services through six service delivery units in Wellington. These are outlined below and will be further expanded on throughout the plan.

- There are nine Work and Income service centres and a Contact Centre spread throughout the region. Our focus is on finding jobs for people who are seeking employment and our services include providing them access to training, development and planning, to prepare them for work. We purchase a large number of programmes from organisations designed to develop skills and open new areas of employment for people. We also provide income support to people who are not in a position to work immediately or may never be able to work due to ill health or a disability. We administer New Zealand Superannuation and components of the *Working for Families* package⁸.

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

8. The *Working for Families* package assists low- and middle-income working families by improving the returns from paid work and reducing barriers to participation in the labour market.

Opportunities for Action in Wellington

- Family and Community Services works with other organisations to co-ordinate information and services to support families to be strong, violence-free and connected to their communities.
- The Ministry of Youth Development helps support our youth aged 12 to 24 years by encouraging and assisting them with their involvement in the social, educational, economic and cultural development of the region. We provide policy advice on youth issues as well as funding for youth initiatives and supporting youth-related activities in the region such as the *Youth Parliament* or the *Subway Stage Challenge*.
- Benefit Integrity Services helps to ensure people receive their correct entitlement to financial assistance with an emphasis on preventing and minimising debt and fraud.
- Senior Services manages three distinct services: International Services administers New Zealand's social security agreements and portability arrangements here and overseas; the Community Services Card Centre administers the Community Services Card on behalf of the Ministry of Health; and War Pension Services (contracted by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand) administers war-related pensions to veterans. With a main client group aged 65 plus, Senior Services also delivers services to younger New Zealanders.
- StudyLink helps to support students by administering Student Loans, Allowances and scholarships as well as providing information to assist students in making informed study choices. Our region is also home to StudyLink's Contact Centre, based in Lower Hutt. During the peak season, staff at the Contact Centre more than double, to cope with demand.

Investing in education

Sean Chin is the StudyLink Account Manager for Massey University (Wellington), and he also supports students within our migrant and refugee communities.

Sean provides personalised assistance through seminars and workshops. He also has regular contact with agencies such as Refugee and Migrant Services, migrant community groups and housing, careers services and welfare advisors. Through these networks Sean is able to link students with the right agencies when they need help.

This work supports StudyLink's focus on education as an investment. Placing a strong emphasis on enabling students to make informed decisions around study choices and loan borrowing, we can assist students to reduce loan debt and increase course-completion rates.

Sean is pictured speaking at a seminar.



Opportunities for Action in Wellington

“Hutt City maintains a strong partnership with Work and Income to address social issues. The Hutt region really appreciates their dedication and successful innovation”.

David Odgen
Mayor of Hutt City



The Wellington City Council and Work and Income are presented with an award recognising the joint work undertaken by the Council and the Work and Income Kilbirnie Service Centre to assist refugees and migrants into employment. Pictured third from left is Race Relations Commissioner, Joris de Bres, presenting the award to Amanda Golding from the Wellington City Council (second from left) and Work and Income staff.

Absolutely positively Wellington

In the coming year, we are committed to investing resources in our region and building on the capacity and capability of our communities. We will endeavour to provide an excellent service to both our clients and stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes for all. There are a number of issues and challenges that we will address in the coming year.

- Strong families build strong communities. Early intervention in a child’s life is crucial to ensure the healthy development of that child. Working in collaboration with other agencies, will ensure all children are safe and protected and appropriate support is provided to their families. Our family violence co-ordinators will work to support those affected by family violence into a positive future.
- Empowering our young people will shape the future workforce of the region and provide an environment where our future leaders can grow and achieve.
- Sole parents face a number of barriers that may dissuade them from moving into employment. We endeavour to provide a number of opportunities and motivators to encourage this group to participate in their communities. Any assistance we can provide to improve the lives of families today will reap benefits tomorrow.
- Māori and Pacific peoples are over-represented in comparison to the total number of people receiving an unemployment-related benefit in our region. As a group they have barriers to employment including health, education and low-standard housing. Partnerships with community groups through projects like *Tamaiti Whangai* and providers such as *Tapa International Limited* are helping to address these issues.
- Wellington is fortunate to host migrant communities, which bring their own unique opportunities and challenges. We have achieved a number of significant outcomes over the past year in this area, and intend to build on these successes in the year to come.
- We will work closely with those clients receiving a Sickness or Invalid’s Benefit to improve their quality of life. An important part of this is supporting and encouraging employers to tap into this resource.

By identifying the issues and challenges faced by our community, we are equipped to take more proactive and meaningful steps forward. However, we can’t do this alone. Engagement and partnerships with communities is essential if we are to achieve our goals. Solid partnerships are already in place with a number of other agencies, iwi, training providers and employers. There is however, always room for improvement. Only by consultation with a diverse range of people and agencies will we be able to identify and meaningfully address the issues that are important to our region.

Moving Forward

Welcome to the inaugural Ministry of Social Development Wellington Regional Plan. The great work our people do across all areas of the Ministry is reflected in the pages of this document, as are our goals for the coming year. I am excited and privileged to be working with a cohesive, dedicated and passionate group of people.

You will notice that this plan differs greatly from those in the past. Where previously, our focus has been on Work and Income, we are now striving towards a more co-ordinated approach to social development in our community. This means all areas of the Ministry will be working together to offer our services to the community in a convenient and effective manner. By the time you have read this plan, you will understand how broad the range of our work is. Importantly, we all have common goals. We want to offer opportunities for those

in our region to improve their standard of living, to inspire and motivate our young people, to honour our older people, to create nurturing and safe families and to build strong, thriving and supportive communities.

All this work, however, is not done in isolation. It is only through our strong partnerships within the community that our goals and expectations can be achieved. This year we will be striving to build on those existing relationships and work towards creating new ones.

Social development is a dedication to ensuring all New Zealanders are afforded equal opportunities and given a fair go. It means that in times of need, we are there to lend a helping hand. By working together, investing in our people and our future, we can head towards better health, education and employment outcomes for our community. To lead social development, we will be

working closely with other areas of the public and private sectors. By understanding the range of issues that our communities face we can develop our services, programmes and initiatives to effectively respond to these.

Thank you to all the councils, agencies, providers, community groups and individuals that we have had the chance to work with over the last 12 months. I look forward to engaging with you all again, as we continue to drive the Wellington region forward in a positive direction. As you read through this plan, I hope you are inspired to think of new ways we can work together to achieve our common goals. To the staff of the Wellington region, the passion and dedication you display for your work impacts on the daily lives of those we serve. For your ongoing commitment, expertise and professionalism, I thank you.



Mike Bryant
Regional Commissioner for Social Development



Leading Social Development

To achieve social development we are investing in people's futures, and giving them a positive outlook and financial independence. We recognise that areas such as health, education and employment are all closely related, and it is an approach that requires us to think beyond simply providing services and paying benefits. By intervening and investing early in initiatives that address social problems collaboratively, we will all benefit in the long run.

Setting priorities

“From a local government perspective, social development is an integral part of the ‘four aspects of wellbeing’ as identified in the Local Government Act 2002. This Regional Plan is critical and a stepping stone to bringing a more collaborative approach to developing stronger on-going relationships with sector, Council and community groups to address the region's social development issues”.

Jenny Brash
Mayor of Porirua City

*The Social Report*⁹ is published each year, reporting on New Zealand's quality of life and wellbeing. It allows us to understand what is happening in our communities, so we can plan effectively to address our priority social issues.

In response to issues identified in *The Social Report*, we published *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*¹⁰ on behalf of the Government. Together, these two documents provide the underlying structure and direction for our planning and assist us to prioritise our efforts, in partnership with others, to best assist individuals, children, youth, families and communities.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders identified the following five critical social issues to be addressed over the next three years.

- Increasing the opportunities for people to participate in sustainable employment.
- Minimising family violence, and the abuse and neglect of children and older people.
- Improving educational achievement among low socio-economic groups.
- Promoting healthy eating and healthy activity.
- Reducing tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse.

None of these issues stand alone. Each has a flow-on effect to others. In order to achieve the best outcomes, a collaborative, unified approach is essential. Whilst we are responsible for leading two of these areas; sustainable employment (in partnership with the Department of Labour) and minimising family violence, we also contribute to the other areas to achieve a whole-of-government approach to addressing these issues.

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. *The Social Report 2005*, Ministry of Social Development.

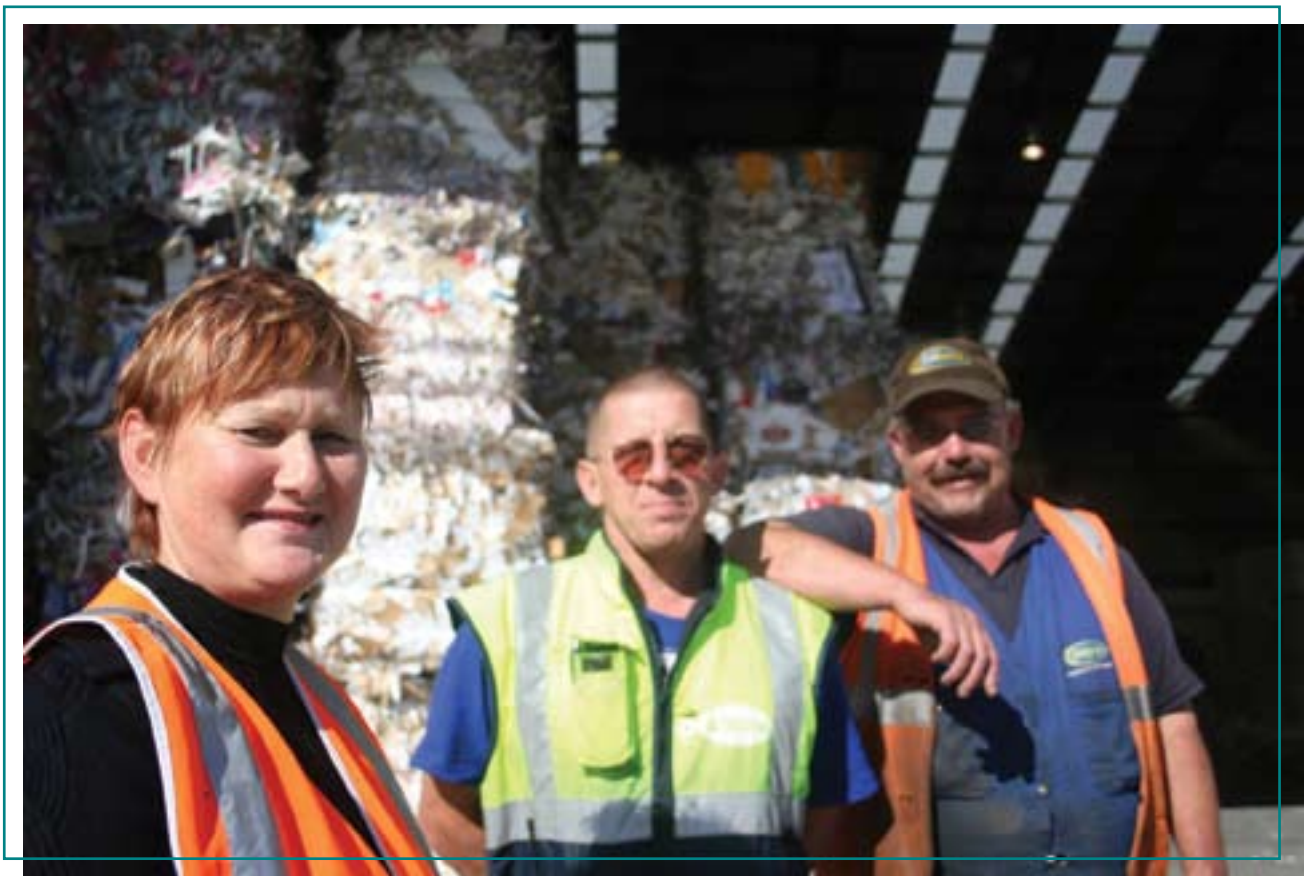
10. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, Office of the Minister for Social Development and Employment, 2004.

Leading Social Development

Working across the Ministry

The recent broadening of the role of our Regional Commissioner for Social Development demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our services are closely aligned internally, and all of our service delivery units are working towards the outcomes that matter for those living in the Wellington region. To be successful, a co-ordinated approach across the Ministry is needed.

Supported by the development of our Ministry's Wellington Regional office, we have also established a Regional Governance team to lead, foster and support this collaborative approach. At these forums, each business unit briefs other partners on regional successes and outlines their current priorities. By taking this approach, we are in a position to realise common goals and combine our resources to collaboratively address issues across the region.



A strong relationship has developed between Work Broker Pauline Prentice and All Brite Industries. All Brite are willing employers of our long-term unemployed clients. Once placed into employment, both All Brite and Work and Income go to great lengths to ensure all of the clients' needs are catered for, such as transportation and *In Work Support* services. Pauline is pictured from left with John Servos and Robert Bell from All Brite Industries.

Leading Social Development

“The Capital and Coast District Health Board has enjoyed an active relationship with Work and Income for the past three years. There are clear linkages between a population’s income adequacy and its health, and to this end we have been working collaboratively to improve the wellbeing of our mutual clients. The collaborative approach is set to grow in the coming year, with further partnerships planned around workforce development and service delivery linkage. It is a privilege to work with Work and Income’s dedicated and responsive regional team”.

Margot Mains
Capital Coast District Health

Collaborating across our region

There are three key ways we are leading social development in the region.

- Providing leadership and resources to identify opportunities and address issues. This may involve allocating funds, resources and staff to assist with the provision of services.
- Working with other organisations such as councils and non-government agencies to support social development outcomes.
- Providing co-ordination and support for organisations that have similar aims, by focusing on clear strategies and planning to meet common social goals such as improved education, housing, employment opportunities and health.

To ensure a holistic approach to some of the issues that may face our region in an emergency, a whole-of-welfare approach has been established through the Wellington Welfare Advisory Group. Involving the likes of Red Cross, Victim Support and Civil Defence & Emergency Management, this group meets four times a year to discuss how we will support our communities’ welfare needs in a time of crisis. Recently the group has been working towards developing a Pandemic Action Plan.

Strong working partnerships between ourselves and local councils is crucial to improving social development outcomes. Under the new Local Government Act 2002, all local councils’ plans now include a commitment to achieving various *Community Outcomes* under their *Long Term Council Community Plan*. All councils produce a plan highlighting the social issues they want to address in their communities to achieve *Community Outcomes*, which are identified through consultation with the community. These *Community Outcomes* align with our own aims, and as a result, there are many initiatives and programmes run in partnership with councils.

Taking our integrity to the people

Benefit Integrity staff attended the *Creekfest Health and Cultural Festival 2006*, held in Porirua, providing information and advice on managing debt repayment. By also helping people to understand the importance of advising us of any changes to their circumstances while receiving a benefit, we can help clients to avoid incurring debt.

The *Festival* also provided us with an opportunity to talk about the range of financial assistance we deliver and ensure that clients are receiving everything they are entitled to, including assistance through the *Working for Families* package. By attending the *Festival*, we could get our messages out not only to individuals, but to families/whānau/aiga and the wider community who are also impacted by the financial hardship debt can cause.

Pictured is Porirua Mayor, Jenny Brash surrounded by Ministry staff at *Creekfest*.



Leading Social Development

Our region has a Leader's Forum, led by the mayors and chief executives of the councils. This is a positive collaborative approach, with our Regional Commissioner for Social Development being an active member on the steering group and taking particular leadership roles around a number of youth issues. The Leaders Forum advises on a number of topics including liquor licensing, prisoner re-integration and transitioning youth from school to employment.

The *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs* initiative provides funds for collaborative projects, with the aim 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. A number of programmes including *Youth Transition Services* and *Council Cadetships* are underway in our region to work towards this goal.

Debt to multiple agencies can place heavy financial burdens on people, pose collection problems and undermine agencies' efforts to reduce client disadvantage. Debt can lead to a reduction of income, poor health, family stress and social exclusion. It can also be a deterrent to employment, as repayments usually increase when individuals move from a benefit into employment. In response to this, we are leading the *Debt to Multiple State Agencies* project, working alongside Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Justice and Housing New Zealand.

Our ultimate goal is to reduce our clients' current debt levels, as well as

working proactively to reduce debt being accumulated. We are achieving this in a number of ways. Our case managers are working closely with clients to consider ways of minimising existing debt. Early intervention and education will also reduce debt created by benefit overpayments. In addition, specialised units within the Ministry are also working in unison with other government departments by sharing data to identify individuals who defraud the system.

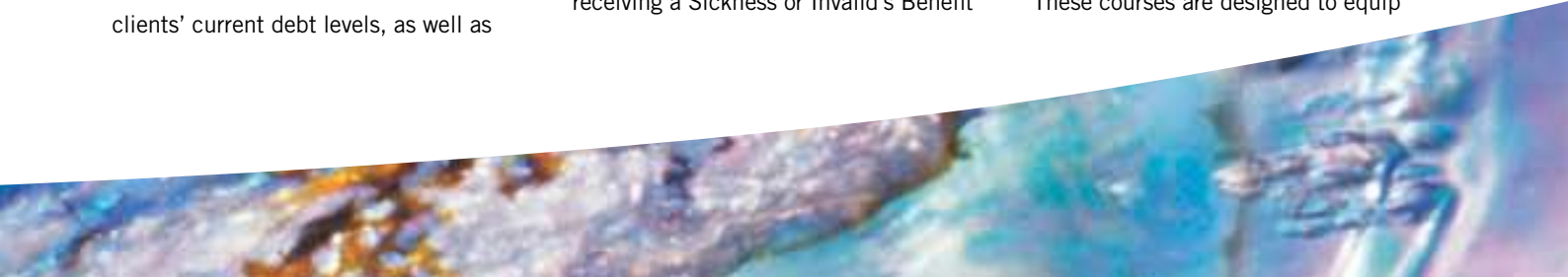
Our Community Labour Market Development team took a leadership role in creating a *Wellington Labour Market Strategy* to align with the *Wellington Regional Strategy*. The Wellington Labour Market Steering Group will finalise the *Strategy* and it will be released to the public later in 2006. The team was instrumental in gathering together a large forum of interested stakeholders to address the labour issues facing the region. The forum included local employers, local and central government agencies and education and service providers. Our *Labour Market Strategy* provides a framework to develop employment opportunities and is an ongoing process where relationships are built within the community to encourage feedback in an area that is important to us all.

PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions) is a collaborative and co-operative partnership between ourselves, the Capital Coast District Health Board and health service providers. *PATHS* helps clients who are receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit

return to the workforce quickly. The programme provides access to a range of health services including intensive physiotherapy, access to pain clinics, fitness programmes and extra visits to health professionals for the management of chronic diseases such as diabetes and asthma. By improving the quality of life for these clients, they can better participate in their communities and ultimately return to the workforce.

The *Offender Re-integration Programme: Improving Employment Outcomes* is a joint initiative with the Department of Corrections. It is a comprehensive programme that helps offenders to rejoin the community when released from prison. Work and Income has dedicated case managers and work brokers based on site at prisons, who work with these clients to help them find employment and gain access to immediate financial assistance following their release. This is aimed at improving the chances of prisoners making a successful re-integration into the community and stopping re-offending.

The old adage of 'it takes a village to raise a child' is also what it will take to achieve truly meaningful outcomes in our communities. We have contracted programmes offering a variety of services, and a large number of diverse organisations deliver these. We have motivational youth programmes such as *Outward Bound*, parenting courses, pre-trade training courses, cadetships, mature employment courses and business courses to name just a few. These courses are designed to equip



Leading Social Development

people with the skills and confidence they need to be prepared to move into the workforce.

Our Regional Policy Advisor works closely with local authorities and advocacy groups as well as our staff. This creates an opportunity to share information and respond to wider social-policy issues that impact on the development and delivery of services in our region. Our Social Development Manager works in partnership with a number of agencies to achieve better social outcomes for our community. We are currently working closely with both District Health Boards. Our aim is for our mutual clients to gain better access to health and welfare services. A community nurse working out of our Porirua Work and Income Service Centre is a positive outcome of this relationship.

Tamaiti Whangai 'Our Families, Our Children' is the title for new programmes which have been conceived and developed by Kara Puketapu, CEO of Te Runanganui o Taranaki Whanui. He wanted to address the serious issue of education-achievement rates of young New Zealanders. *Tamaiti Whangai* literally means 'the nurturing and caring for each other of any age'.

Collaboration between Weltec, Work and Income, the Runanga, and the residents of Wainuiomata has given many youth in the area the opportunity to gain a Certificate in Foundation Studies for the Trades - Level 2. The 19-week programme is led by the Wainuiomata Family Whānau Trust and supported by numerous agencies including Child, Youth and Family Services; Weltec; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Justice; the Hutt City Council; Te Puni Kōkiri; Accident Compensation Corporation and ourselves.

Participants are able to gain hands-on experience in a variety of fields including building, beauty therapy and motor mechanics. Fully supported throughout the course, students are assisted to compile a CV, prepare for job interviews and when ready, make contact with potential employers. For students who choose to continue their training, Work and Income staff work in partnership with the region's 41 industry training organisations to facilitate this. Whole-of-government support for community-driven projects like *Tamaiti Whangai* will ultimately service our unique communities in the best way possible. We are proud to support the broad range of services *Tamaiti Whangai* offers, and look forward to engaging with other communities in a similar way.

All our efforts are aimed towards one primary goal. That is, to improve the quality of life for those in our community and work to achieve better outcomes for future generations. It is only through consultation that we can know what the needs of our community are.



Attending the launch of the *Youth Transitions Service* in Lower Hutt are from left Wayne Guppy, Upper Hutt Mayor; David Ogden, Hutt City Mayor; and Mike Bryant, Regional Commissioner for Social Development.



Civic Square, the heart of the capital.



Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

Children and young people are the future of our region. If they are brought up in a nurturing family environment and are given the right opportunities and encouragement, they will achieve. If we have strong families, we will have strong communities.

Strong beginnings

Our priority for children is to provide them with both safety and security. Family and Community Services provides leadership and co-ordination of services and programmes that promote stronger and safer communities. The aim is to support families to be violence-free and connected to their communities. We also provide funding, information and assistance for community organisations to undertake education and support programmes. One of our initiatives, *SKIP (Strategies with Kids: Information for Parents)* provides parents of under fives with practical advice, resources and techniques for coping with a range of parenting challenges. Some of the *SKIP* programmes that have taken place in the Wellington region include a fono for Pacific parents and a parenting programme for refugee families.

Our online information service, the *211 Directory* (formerly known as the Family Services National Directory) lists family-related services, programmes and resources available throughout New Zealand. Parents can also access a range of websites about raising children, supporting young people and growing older through *FamilyWeb*¹¹.

Early intervention initiatives such as *Family Start* provide support for families in the comfort and security of their own home. The programme aims to empower families with the ability to resolve issues and create a nurturing and loving environment for their children.

The first *Family Start* programme for the Wellington region was established in Lower Hutt in 2005. Naku Enei Tamariki and Kōkiri Marae deliver the programme to 128 families in the Hutt Valley. The programme is run by service delivery teams whose overall aim is to improve health, education and social outcomes for families with young children. Services are intended to improve parenting skills and the uptake of well-child checks and pre-school education. Naku Enei Tamariki is working to build its networks and develop its referral systems so that *Family Start* becomes an integral part of support services to families in the Hutt Valley.



Today's children are tomorrow's future.

11. Information about these services can be accessed via www.211.govt.nz.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

Assistance for families

The financial stability of families and their standard of living can be greatly improved by assisting parents back into the workforce. Accessible and affordable childcare is an important factor in achieving this. The *Working for Families* package is designed to make work pay. By providing subsidies for childcare, the financial burden of placing a child into care is minimised. We work in conjunction with Inland Revenue to provide increased levels of Family Assistance, Childcare/OSCAR¹² Subsidies and Accommodation Supplements to those on low to medium incomes. The new In Work Payment, which came into effect on 1 April 2006, now makes it even more financially viable for a parent to return to the workforce. As the

thresholds for these types of assistance have been increased, more families are able to access it.

A proactive Working for Families team has been established in the region, with childcare co-ordinators and promotional case managers reaching out into the community to ensure people are aware of their entitlements.

The availability of childcare centres is an issue for our region. To address this shortage, we are working with potential providers to access funding to establish centres where there is a notable shortage. The OSCAR Grant is a one-off payment of up to \$3,000 to help with the cost of setting up before-school, after-school, or school-holiday programmes. Through this Grant, three OSCAR programmes now operate in Wainuiomata, where previously

none existed. By addressing the issue, more parents will now be able to return to the workforce with the knowledge that their children are in an approved, monitored and safe environment.

Minimising family violence

There is still a high level of family violence in New Zealand. Through Family and Community Services, Child, Youth and Family Services, and partnerships with local councils, New Zealand Police and other agencies, we are ensuring help and advice is available for families who experience violence in the home. This also includes public education and awareness programmes, providing people with easy-to-access services.



Celebrating Pasifika families

Porirua's *Strong Pasifika Families Week* was a stunning success, with a high level of participation from Pacific Island communities.

The week of activities began with a parade to Te Rauparaha Park, led by five local church leaders. The festival featured a range of activities for children, stalls, displays and performances.

A steering group of local representatives from the Pacific community organised the week, in partnership with Family and Community Services' Strong Pacific Families team. It was also supported by Capital Coast Health, the Department of Labour Pacific Division, Work and Income, Benefit Integrity Services, Whitireia Polytechnic and the Porirua City Council.

Strong Pasifika Families Week provided opportunities for agencies to get to know each other and talk about ways to work together. "The week was successful, positive and inspiring", spokesperson Ann Dysart said.

12. OSCAR (*Out of School Care and Recreation*) programmes provide childcare outside school hours for children aged 5 to 13 years.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

The *Task Force for Action on Violence within Families* is designed to assist all government agencies to address the reasons behind family violence.

Family and Community Services supports a number of community-based programmes that assist Māori and Pacific peoples to address incidents of family violence. Servicing communities in Lower Hutt are Kōkiri Marae Keriana Olsen Trust and Te Whānau o te Maungarongo. Based in Porirua, we support Te Roopu Awhina ki Porirua Trust and Te Korowai Aroha Whitereia (Inc) to deliver these programmes.

The *Family Violence Intervention Programme* is run by Work and Income and supported by Family and Community Services, who provides specialist advice. The *Programme* trains our case managers to identify the signs of family violence and provide the right help. We have just employed two family violence co-ordinators to align regional efforts and address the cycle of violence and abuse.

Based in the Naenae Service Centre, Family Violence Response Co-ordinator, Sally Bennett says, *“The position of the family violence response co-ordinator adds value to the business of Work and Income for two reasons. Firstly, it is an acknowledgement that case management often involves the difficult aspects of our client’s social situations, and frontline staff now have another avenue of support to call on. Secondly, our role shows that the Ministry is out in the community trying to tackle the issue of family violence, showing our support for the other frontline organisations that do this on a daily basis, and working in collaboration with these agencies”.*

Transitioning our young people

“The support and development of youth in Wellington is critical to the future success of the region. Much of my success has come from the strength and opportunities the Wainuiomata community gave me. My continued support of youth by participating in Work and Income programmes, mentoring and providing a positive role model, is to ensure youth in the Wellington region seize the opportunities that are afforded to them. The youth of today are the leaders of the future”.

Tana Umaga
Former All Black Captain

Youth are the key to our region’s success in the future. The transition period from childhood to an adult can be a difficult process, even with the best support. The Ministry of Youth Development is one of the Government’s key connection points with the young people of New Zealand. A vital part of our work is talking with and listening directly to young people. This places us in the special position of being able to inform the Government on the best ways to take into account youth interests when developing or improving policies and services. We run a number of youth-related projects and initiatives to help all young people in the region.

The Ministry of Youth Development is expanding its services this year, with the establishment of a regional team in the lower North Island. Our aim is to enhance youth participation in decision making as well as promoting youth policies and programmes.

The *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*¹³ was launched by the Ministry of Youth Development in 2002, to determine the future development of those aged between

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

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

12 to 24 years. We seek to be responsive to youth issues and have the capability to address them. By ensuring all young people have the life skills to make them independent, achieve a good standard of education and have access to training and employment, we are enabling our youth to be successful, particularly those at risk of becoming unemployed.

Under the *Aotearoa Youth Voices*¹⁴ banner, we promote youth-participation activities run by the Ministry of Youth Development. This includes a number of youth engagement initiatives and the

provision of youth-related information. An illustration of how we are helping youth is through *Activate*, a Youth Advisory Group established to work with government agencies. *Activate* encourages the region's youth to have input into local and central government by providing advice on youth policy and on the issues that affect them.

The *Activate* Youth Advisory Group provided oral evidence on the Sale of Liquor (Youth Alcohol Harm Reduction) Amendment Bill to the Law and Order Select Committee on 5 April 2006.

The *Activate* members drew from their own experiences in part, in their responses to the Committee's questions. While *Activate* could not represent the views of all young people, they do try to use their networks to seek out differing opinions. Committee members seemed genuinely pleased to have younger submitters come before them. *Activate's* submission received very positive media coverage, including articles appearing in *The Dominion Post*, the *Stuff* website and *The New Zealand Herald*.

Activating the youth voice

Activate is the Ministry of Youth Development's Youth Advisory Group, helping to provide a youth perspective and youth input into our work. It has three main roles:

- communicating a youth perspective to the Government
- providing advice to the Minister of Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Youth Development on youth-related topics
- organising youth projects on topics or issues important to them.

A committed and passionate group of 16 young volunteers, the members come from a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives. Current *Activate* members represent the Asian, Sri Lankan, Pacific Island, Somalian, Māori and Pakeha cultures and communities, and two members are hearing-impaired. Volunteers are either high school or university students, or are in full-time employment.

Activate is one project in the *Aotearoa Youth Voices* suite of youth-participation projects. Check out the website for more information: www.youthvoices.govt.nz.



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

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

Nurturing children



Based in Wainuiomata, *Tamaiti Whangai* provide a range of programmes including free school-holiday activities for local 'at risk' young people. Activities include sports, singing and healthy-eating classes, and over 800 children have attended since it began in January 2005.

With the assistance of funding from Work and Income, young people from the community aged 15 to 18 years are employed as leaders on the programme. As part of the training process, they attend a Work and Income *Work Track* course to learn the skills to help them in their future job search.

This free service is run and provided by Te Runanganui O Taranaki Whanui ki te Upoko o te Ika a Manu Inc. *Tamaiti Whangai* is not only a hit with the kids, but parents have peace of mind knowing their children are in a safe and productive environment.

Pictured during the April school-holiday programme are children solving fun puzzles at the 'Question and Answer' station, assisted by local school teachers.

Photo courtesy of Tamaiti Whangai.

Assistance for young people

We have programmes in place to deal with youth suicide and substance abuse issues. The Ministry of Youth Development supports implementation of the *New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy*¹⁵, in partnership with the Ministry of Health; Child, Youth and Family Services; the Department of Internal Affairs; and the Ministry of Education. This ensures that the *Strategy* and five-year action plan on suicide maintains a strong prevention focus for youth.

Limited Service Volunteers is a six-week residential motivational training scheme run by the New Zealand Defence Force and Work and Income, located at Burnham Military Camp near Christchurch. Targeted at youth aged 18 to 25, the principal goal of the programme is to increase the number of young job seekers entering employment or training by improving their motivation, self-discipline, self-confidence and initiative. These personal qualities are developed through the delivery of training within a disciplined environment.

Around 10% of our region's youth leave school with no qualifications¹⁶. This is a critical time in any young person's life and we must support our youth to make good choices about their career path or further educational opportunities.

Youth Transition Services are part of a package to help meet the *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs* goal of having all 15 to 19 year olds in work, education or training by 2007. The service provides career training, job-seeking advice, information on educational opportunities and customised support for at-risk school leavers. We are fortunate to be able to offer *Services* in both Porirua and the Hutt Valley.

Youth Cadetship, another response to the *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs* initiative, has seen young people accept positions in councils throughout the region in a wide range of areas from conservation through to building consent. A further 34 positions will be offered this year.

"The New Zealand Defence Force is committed to the development of New Zealand's youth, and invests millions of dollars annually in a wide variety of trades and career training. The *Limited Service Volunteers* programme provides life skills and career development for young New Zealanders".

Air Marshal (Rtd) Bruce Ferguson
Former Chief of New Zealand
Defence Force

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

16. *Education Counts, School Leavers statistics*, Ministry of Education, 2004.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed



Providing young people with exceptional support is vital to ensure a smooth transition from school into further study. StudyLink Officer, Lania Pohatu (right) is pictured with first-year students from Whitireia Polytechnic.

Educating our young people

StudyLink offers a range of services aimed at helping students make informed financial educational choices. Across the region we work with 42 private training establishments, five tertiary education providers and 48 secondary schools to identify, develop and enhance networking opportunities. A range of services are also available on campus at different times of the academic year. This allows easy access for current and enrolling students and fosters relationships with education providers and student bodies.

We also run the *On Course* programme, offered in high schools throughout the region. It provides Year-12 and 13 students with an insight into the realities of student life and stimulates their thinking, both about their study choices and the options for funding themselves through study. *On Course* also provides expos, career days and information evenings to parents, whānau and teachers.

One of our current services, the *Hostel Programme*, involves making contact and developing a working relationship with the major student hostels in the region. This has enabled us to deliver information and advice to first-year hostel students during their induction period. During these sessions we discuss the various options for funding study, and provide students with information about the implications of borrowing for study. We will continue to offer this service to students.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

A new chapter opens



Returning to Wellington after graduating from Otago University with a Bachelor of Science, Sierra discovered that with no work experience, employers were not keen to hire her.

After six months receiving an Unemployment Benefit, Sierra's case manager referred her to Partners Porirua, a provider at the Porirua *Youth Transition Service*. Following a meeting with a youth employment facilitator, Sierra applied for a cadetship with the Porirua City Council and was employed as a cadet at the Porirua Library. Through the cadetship, Sierra was given the opportunity to expand on her skills and gain valuable work experience. So impressed were her employers, Sierra was offered a full-time permanent position at the library as the Serials Library Assistant.

"The cadetship is an excellent idea," Sierra says. "I am grateful to have been given the chance to participate in a scheme which has provided me with such a great opportunity".

Sierra is pictured with TJ Taotua, Youth Employment Facilitator.

During a person's life, having the opportunity to participate in work has a direct impact on their children, families and communities. We are assisting job seekers to secure employment, while also providing financial protection and support for people who are not immediately able to work, or for whom work may never be an option.

Getting people ready for work

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 Naenae Service Centre, before being made available nationally in May 2006.

For those individuals who are finding it a challenge to remain in employment, we try and identify what is making it hard for them. We are working closely with over 70 providers who deliver foundation-skills training through Tertiary Education Commission-funded programmes and over 65 Work and Income contracted providers. A wide range of services are available including CV preparation, industry training and *In Work Support*. Treehouse Training is contracted to provide *Straight 2 Work*¹⁷ programmes for clients eager to enter the hospitality and retail trades. These programmes are supported by both the Hospitality Association of New Zealand and the New Zealand Retailers Association. Training is provided for up to eight weeks, where students learn the basics of the trade and are then moved straight into employment. The course is held in such high regard that many of Wellington's top hotels, restaurants and retail employers are keen to employ the graduates of the programmes.

In addition to providing *Straight 2 Work* courses, we offer a number of programmes that have been developed to address motivation, self-esteem and work-readiness issues such as literacy and numeracy skills. We provide our clients with support and advice on job-seeking techniques, the local labour market and a strong work-first approach commencing at the time of their application for a benefit through our delivery of *WRK4U (Work for You)* seminars.

17. *Straight 2 Work* is an *Industry Partnerships* training and support programme which gives people the basic skill set required to move straight into employment and help them stay there.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

Work Track is a three-week programme designed to help those who have been in receipt of a benefit for less than 26 weeks make a quick return to the workforce. The course focuses on building confidence, job-search skills and in the final week actively works to find employment for the participants. Over 300 clients found employment through the Wellington region's *Work Track* last year. The vibrancy and enthusiasm of the course facilitators is a large contributing factor to this.

Finding people employment

As at 31 March 2006, there were 6,076 clients receiving an unemployment-related benefit in the Wellington region,

a reduction of 23.6% from 7,953 as at the same time last year. Although this is a great result, there is still a lot of work to be done.

Māori continue to be over represented, making up 25.8% of those in receipt of an unemployment-related benefit, disproportionate to their 11.9% share of the regional population. Likewise, Pacific peoples account for 12.8%, and only 8.9% of the regional population. We will be working in partnership with local iwi and community groups and through providers such as Tapa International Limited, to actively find employment solutions for these groups.

Tapa International Limited is based in Porirua and works particularly with Māori and Pacific clients who have

“The innovative policies of the Ministry of Social Development have enabled my organisation to advance the progress of inter-tribal co-operation on a national scale (not before achieved with a degree of success), which gives positive encouragement to smaller Iwi/Tribes, that need to better secure their involvement with major initiatives by the larger Tribal entities. A national Iwi Chairman’s Forum was facilitated in Wellington, with the Ministry making a strong contribution to its success through a project development recently put together between the Ministry and local Iwi - Te Atiawa of Wellington (the Tenth Trust)”.

Peter Love
Wellington Tenth Trust



Work and Income promoted training and employment opportunities at the third annual *Transition Expo*, targeting high school students with special needs.

Work Broker, Helen McDonald was available to discuss the range of services we provide to assist Sickness and Invalid’s Benefit clients into employment.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People



With the financial assistance of an Enterprise Allowance and the skills learned from a *Be Your Own Boss* programme, Sue Middleton was able to start her successful hairdressing business 'Hair to Stay' in Wainuiomata.

been receiving an unemployment-related benefit for longer than 26 weeks. They work towards improving clients' work and life skills and ultimately facilitate their transition into work. At as 31 March 2006, Tapa International Limited was working with 73 clients participating on the programme and had placed 42 clients into work since July 2004.

Over the past year the number of refugees and/or migrants receiving an unemployment-related benefit has reduced by 44%. We provide a number of training opportunities for those for whom English is a second language. Moving both migrants and refugees into work can impact on entire communities, not just individuals. As more people within migrant communities find a sense of identity and job security within Wellington, the better they can contribute to the wider community.

The *Skilled Migrant* programme, run in partnership with Victoria University, offers both refugees and migrants who are either under-employed and unemployed, access to a 12-week programme that incorporates a workplace communication programme for the first six weeks, followed by a six-week work placement with local employers. Participants are matched to jobs for which they have qualifications or the appropriate skills. The programme has had great success, with participants securing employment in the finance, IT and government services arena, commensurate with their level of qualifications.

StudyLink and Work and Income partner Student Job Search to assist students obtain holiday jobs. StudyLink connects students with holiday vacancies and agencies that can help with work-search activities such as preparing a CV.

Mature job seekers (45 to 59 years of age) offer a wealth of knowledge and valuable skills for employers, particularly in relation to addressing current skill and labour shortages. To ensure this client group can participate in the workforce, we are engaging with a range of providers such as the Mature Employment Service in the Hutt Valley and Business Porirua, who deliver employment and training advice and support for mature job seekers. Both organisations have a diverse range of employer networks that include non-government organisations and business, to promote the value of recruiting and employing mature workers into their labour force.

Starting your own business and being self-employed is a good option for some clients and enables them to become self-sufficient and gain valuable skills in a particular market. We support job seekers (for up to six months) to become self-employed through the Enterprise Allowance and the Capitalisation Grant. A programme such as *Be Your Own Boss* offers eligible job seekers the opportunity to gain knowledge on the 'ins and outs' of establishing a business - from marketing, developing a business plan and managing GST through to financial planning and much more.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

Developing our labour market

We must continue to upskill our workforce to meet the needs of the local labour market, both now and in the future. This will allow our economy to continue to grow and provide sustainable employment opportunities.

Over 56.7% of our population works in Wellington City, meaning that the labour force and business activity is largely reliant on Wellington City and its service-based economy¹⁸. Our region accounts for 12.2% of New Zealand's employment, with the top contributors being business services and government administration, attributable to large numbers of people employed in central government¹⁹. We also have high proportions of people working in communications services, finance and insurance, property and business services industries.

Our Labour Market Development team works with government agencies, industry employers and education providers to identify regional labour needs and skill shortages, to encourage and support sustainable business growth. Currently, our key issues are:

- the inability of employers to fill vacancies
- skilled people moving out of the region for work
- increasing shortages in the trades sector
- a higher percentage of some ethnic groups in low-skilled employment
- a reduction in skilled migrant labour.

In response to this, we established *Industry Partnerships* programmes to provide training to working-age people. This will create new employment opportunities and work towards meeting the needs of employers from the existing labour pool. The *Trade Start* initiative, based in Lower Hutt, illustrates this approach. By assisting people to identify a trade they wish to pursue, we can then facilitate engagement with some 140 training providers to help them prepare for a career.



Pictured are trainees from the *Certificate in Sport Management and Exercise Prescription* course, run by the New Zealand Institute of Sport. Participants can be referred through *Youth Transition Services*. Completion of the course will see trainees equipped with the necessary skills and qualifications to move into employment in the sports industry.

18. *Census of Population and Dwellings, Table Builder*, Census 2001, Statistics New Zealand.

19. *Regional Labour Market Report Supplement*, Department of Labour, January 2006.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

“The Centre for University Preparation and English Language Studies, Wellington Campus, has a strong working relationship with StudyLink, particularly with the on-campus representatives. The courses we offer assist the students to gain more confidence with their English learning and enhance the skills they already have, so they can continue to be a valued part of our society. The help given to these students from StudyLink on campus provides that extra team support for our ESOL students”.

Karen Saunders
Regional Administrator
Centre for University Preparation
Massey University

Supporting those who need it

We recognise that not everyone is ready for work. Childcare commitments, sickness or injury can all create barriers to employment. We have a strong focus on addressing these barriers and moving people towards valuable participation in their communities. Changing the attitudes of some employers is an important step towards this.

We will continue to work with those clients receiving a domestic purposes-related benefit²⁰ to assist them to provide a better future for their families. For parents, childcare commitments, a lack of training or even the length of time they have been removed from the workforce can make the prospect of work daunting. Working with their case manager to prepare *Personal Development and Employment Plans* allows parents to set meaningful and measurable goals to prepare for the workplace. In addition, by funding the cost of training through the Training Incentive Allowance, parents are able to improve their employability with a flow-on effect being the example they set for their children.

Our Lower Hutt Service Centre has seen the successful implementation of a specialised work brokering relationship with employers to hire those receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit. Similarly, the Naenae Service Centre found the use of their employment co-ordinator equally beneficial. The co-ordinator works closely with external health and disability agencies to address barriers to employment and find solutions for the individual. Examples of this could include offering a range of part- or full-time employment options or social service assistance from other agencies such as district health boards.

Our case managers work closely with their clients to empower those with a disability or illness with the confidence to secure work. Additionally, we ensure we provide them all the support and encouragement they will require to remain in employment. This may include the assistance of an on-site support worker, or modifying their workplace to suit their needs. Consistent support for both the employer and employee is paramount to achieving lasting employment.

We acknowledge the apprehension a prospective employer may have towards employing someone with a disability or illness. Therefore, consistent support (financial or otherwise) that facilitates a smooth transition for both parties is essential. Specialised Work Broker, Helen MacDonald, sees the benefits of this service on a daily basis. Constantly inspired by the change she sees in clients' lives when they are given the right support is all the motivation she needs. *“To hear employers praise the dedication of staff they have employed through supported programmes is uplifting. One employer has told me his employee is a role model to the rest of his workers and has set a new benchmark for performance. It's that sort of feedback that really validates the work I am doing”.*

20. A domestic purposes-related benefit comprises DPB Sole Parent, DPB Caring for the Sick or Infirm, DPB Woman Alone and Emergency Maintenance Allowance.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

The *PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions)* programme focuses on assisting people in receipt of a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit who want to return to work, to receive the appropriate health interventions that will assist them achieve this. The service is completely voluntary for the participants. In the Wellington region, the *PATHS* programme looks at both the physical and mental health needs of the person. Some of the interventions that have been put into place for our participants include private specialist assessments, physiotherapy and counselling. In addition, three supported employment agencies have come on board to assist participants find employment and support them whilst employed for as long as they need it.

PATHS Co-ordinator, Tania Nixon-Kamilo, believes that the *PATHS* programme has been well received in the Wellington region. *"The health interventions given to one gentleman meant that he could return to full-time work in 10 weeks. Before accessing PATHS he was told he would not be able to return to work for at least 12 months"*. Tania credits the success of the programme to the commitment and collaboration shown by Work and Income, the Capital and Coast District Health Board and the Inner City Project²¹.

A range of government agencies including Housing New Zealand, the Department of Corrections and Community Probation Service, provide services to assist released prisoners re-integrate back into

their community. Through two designated case managers and a work broker who work on site at Rimutaka, Mt Crawford and Arohata Prisons, we assist released prisoners with short-term income and accommodation assistance. Through a collaborative approach with other agencies we tackle a broader range of issues face on, and take a more holistic approach to re-integrating this group back into the community. A stronger and more supportive network will reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

Recipe for success

Six years receiving a benefit and a number of failed job applications can be enough to discourage even the most dedicated of job seekers. Natalie though, was determined that one day someone would give her a chance.

Referred to Tapa International Ltd, Natalie was able to gain valuable job-search and application skills, along with a renewed sense of confidence and motivation. So much so, that when initially turned down for a position, Lueni Taufua, Natalie's mentor, encouraged the employer to allow her to reapply. Lueni helped Natalie re-write her application and second time around Natalie successfully gained a position with KFC.

In March 2006, Natalie received an award for her customer service skills and is considered a valued member of her team. Natalie's employer is delighted with her progress.



21. The Inner City Project provides a co-ordinated health and social service for people with mental health issues.

Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

Helping people to stay in work

Our focus is not just on preparing people for, and then finding them work. To achieve our goal of improving people's standard of living and wellbeing, a stable work place is important. However, the nature of today's labour market means that not all jobs are the traditional 40-hour week. Many people find themselves working two part-time positions or undesirable shift hours and as a result, we need to focus on career development. Although a rapid move into the workforce is ideal, we are also working with people to help them develop their careers and improve their position.

In Work Support offers continued support for clients for up to six months after moving in to work. In our region, this service is provided by In Work NZ. To ensure a smooth transition into the workforce, In Work NZ can help with budgeting, address health issues and even pick clients up for work and drop them off if their car breaks down. They will work closely with employers to resolve any issues that may arise. As time goes on, they liaise with the client to help them move on to more suitable employment and assist them to develop and achieve career goals.

As mentioned earlier, the *Working for Families* package makes it more

financially viable for parents to move into work. The extra assistance available through the In Work Payment, Childcare Assistance and Family Assistance payments, is now making work pay for those on low to middle incomes.

We want to make the transition from a benefit into the workforce as stress free as possible. An important element of this is effectively managing any existing debt and avoiding any further debt being accumulated. For this reason, Benefit Integrity Services is working proactively with clients to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities while in receipt of a benefit. We also support people to access services that will help them develop financial planning skills so they have some choices about how they spend their money. By avoiding or reducing the burden of debt, people will be better equipped and more motivated to remain in employment.

Improving the quality of life for our working-age population benefits not only the individual, but builds strong families and strong communities. By working towards ensuring all people are engaging in their community, on some level and in a positive way, we can take active steps towards achieving a thriving, supportive region that we can all be proud of.



Pictured are trainees taking part in a practical exercise during a Treehouse Training programme.

Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

Like other countries in the developed world, New Zealand has an ageing population. According to Census 2001, there are 450,420 people aged 65 years and over in New Zealand, representing 12.1% of the total population. By the year 2051, it is projected that one in four New Zealanders will be aged 65 years and over²².

In the Wellington region, we have 33,686 clients in receipt of New Zealand Superannuation, which accounts for 54.1% of our total client population - the largest group of clients we provide services to.

Because older people are living longer and have healthier lives, the number of people aged 85 years and over is also anticipated to increase over coming decades. Many older people are working longer and have stronger connections with their communities, increasing the need for services such as health, transport and retirement income.

We know that older people make a significant contribution to our labour force, economy and the wellbeing of our people as community volunteers, business advisors, mentors and childcare providers. As the number of older people increases, we will need to look ahead and adapt our services to cater for the increased need and use of services such as health and housing. In the coming year we will work closely with our superannuitants by supporting them to maintain their independence and participate in their communities. To ensure that we deliver a high quality service, experienced specialised case managers are based in our Upper Hutt, Lower Hutt, Wellington and Porirua Service Centres.

A super experience

Promoting the range of health and wellbeing services available to older people, their families and caregivers was the focus of the region's inaugural *Health, Wealth and Wellbeing Expo*.

Held in September 2005, visitors were able to access a range of information from over 44 stalls including hearing and vision checks, emergency home alarms and home help. Ways to stay active in the community were also promoted.

A steering group involving Work and Income, Age Concern, Sigma and Supergrans met every Wednesday to plan for the event. Head organiser, Shona McLean said "*Many elderly were not aware of the services available to them and because of the Expo, they are using these services today, which have enhanced their lives*".



22. National Population Projections, 2004 - 2051, Statistics New Zealand.

Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

The *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy*²³ provides us with a blueprint to ensure that issues faced by older people are addressed. The *Strategy* sets out priority goals and actions in 10 areas: income, health, housing, transport, ageing in place, cultural diversity, rural issues, attitudes, employment and opportunities. It places a strong emphasis on a unified approach and we work closely with other government agencies, local councils and community groups such as Age Concern to progress our goals. Our *KIN (Keeping Independent Now)* seminars provide information to older people on how they can stay independent in their communities. We liaise with a number of other key agencies such as health providers and neighbourhood support groups to provide a broad range of information at these seminars.

It is important to us that our senior citizens know what assistance is available to them and how they can access it. As mentioned earlier, Family and Community Services administers the *211 Directory*, which provides information on services for older people in our region. We recognise that not all our senior citizens have access to the internet. Collaboration between ourselves, Age Concern, Sigma and Supergrans saw the first *Health, Wealth and Wellbeing Expo* held in Lower Hutt last year. This *Expo* provided access to over 12 local agencies and support networks such as Age Concern and Grey Power. Also on display were a number of activities in the community on offer to senior citizens such as the Leisure Marchers Marching Group. The positive response to this initiative will see its return in the coming year.

SAGES is another initiative operating through Family and Community Services. Older people provide mentoring on life and home skills to families and individuals in need. The volunteers provide advice on areas such as home management, cooking, budgeting and parenting. Through *SAGES* we are involving our older people in their communities while enabling them to share their wealth of knowledge.

We also know that as people get older, there may be increased health costs. We administer the Community Services Card, which can be used to access subsidies on doctor's fees and prescriptions, and to access secondary health services from public hospitals. The Community Services Card is also used by a number of local agencies to determine entitlements to a range of subsidies such as discounts on public transport or access to recreational facilities.



Wellington Service Centre Processing Officer, Blair Kingsbury is one of four staff that specifically work with New Zealand Superannuitants and assist with their applications.

Pictured from left, Blair assists New Zealand Superannuation client Ian Cookson.

23. 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

The Government has designated 2006 as the Year of the Veteran so our communities can commemorate and honour the sacrifice and service of our servicemen and women. A *Year of the Veteran Community Grants Fund*²⁴ has been set up to assist local communities to provide ways of recognising their ex-servicemen and women.

There are some people currently living overseas who qualify for New Zealand Superannuation. Our International Services team administers New Zealand pension entitlements for these people, and for people living in New Zealand and receiving an overseas pension.

The wellbeing of our older people is becoming increasingly more important as the numbers in the community grow. We continually seek opportunities to work with other organisations in the community to find ways to keep people informed about how to keep safe from abuse, neglect and to know who they can talk to about their legal rights.

The Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Network is funded and managed by Family and Community Services to ensure older people are safe from abuse and other harm, achieve wellbeing for older people and increase public awareness of the issue. There are currently eight contracted service providers in our region including Age Concern and Presbyterian Support Services. They deliver a range of services to older people such as counselling and referrals to health professionals. When needed, they will notify police of situations that may require intervention.

The Ministry is taking a closer look at how we deliver services to people aged 65 years and over. We are focusing on identifying what immediate enhancements should be made to the delivery of services, and in the longer term identifying:

- what outcomes the Ministry should be aiming to achieve
- what services the Ministry should be providing
- how these services should be delivered.

It is important that our delivery strategy supports positive outcomes for older people and has the flexibility to respond to the increasing size and diversity of the 65 plus population.

Our older people are an important part of our region. By embracing and celebrating the knowledge, experience and support they can bring to our communities, we can take positive steps forward in building a safe, caring and nurturing society.



Keeping active is an important ingredient to ensuring older people feel valued and are able to contribute to their communities.

24. Further information on what funding is available and how to apply is located on the Veterans' Affairs New Zealand website www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz.

Partnering with our Communities

“We are extremely happy with the working relationship and partnerships we have with the Ministry of Social Development in Upper Hutt”.

Wayne Guppy
Mayor of Upper Hutt

As mentioned earlier, there is a true sense of pride in belonging to the Wellington region. However, when we break that down further, the four areas we cover; Wellington City, Porirua City, Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt each have their own unique identity. Communities are innately proud of who they are, and there is almost a sense of healthy competition between the four areas, all with one common purpose; to create a safe, thriving and strong region.

To achieve this, we are and will continue to work closely with other government agencies and locally-based organisations to improve the services and support available to our people. It is only by working together that we can effectively address the challenges of today and create opportunities for tomorrow.

A job with a bang



Photo kindly supplied by The Dominion Post.

The HMNZ Wellington F69 was bought by Marco Zeeman, the 2005 Wellingtonian of the Year. Purchased for \$1, the F69 was sunk off Wellington's south coast in November 2005 as an artificial marine reef and dive attraction.

Eleven Work and Income clients assisted in preparing the frigate for sinking and gained valuable site-safety, first-aid and work skills in the process. After the sinking, eight of the 11 clients immediately went on to further employment.

Work Broker, Jim Hughes assisted and supported each client through the project. Jim says he found the F69 project to be the most satisfying and successful he has experienced as a Work Broker. *“The project was meaningful, they were paid well and the team worked together effectively and cohesively,”* he said.

Partnering with our Communities



A beautiful view out over the Porirua Harbour.

Those in need of assistance have a mixture of government, council and community-based organisations they can turn to. To ensure easy access to this information and assistance, it is important that we work together. Our partnerships with central and local government and community-based organisations are just one step we are taking to smooth out this process. The Multicultural Service Centre based in Wellington City, is a successful example of a collaborative approach benefiting the community. The Centre provides both refugees and migrants with a one-stop-shop to access interpreting and counselling services, along with on-site experts on welfare assistance and education opportunities.

We will continue to work with others to lead social development in the region. The ultimate goal of providing this initial leadership is to equip communities with the skills and resources to go on to support themselves economically. Our Labour Market Development team is

one such example. This team administers the Enterprising Communities Grant, providing locally-based advisory services and funding to help disadvantaged communities create employment opportunities. The objective is to help these groups develop initiatives leading to sustainable opportunities for employment and financial independence. This funding is available only to non-profit organisations. Need is established from market intelligence collected by way of a vast array of internal and external networks - frontline staff, local authorities, iwi and Pacific groups, district health boards and the Labour Market Advisory Forum to name a few.

A successful illustration of the difference the Enterprising Communities Grant is making in the lives of Wellingtonians is Earthlink in Upper Hutt, a non-profit organisation committed to providing work for disabled people in the area of recycling. They work almost exclusively with mental health consumers, and as a direct result of this Grant, have

created 11 part-time jobs assisting over 17 people to participate in their community in a meaningful way. As well as the employment created, Earthlink is developing their own income streams to help support the work they do with disabled people in the community.

Our *Taskforce Green* programme supports projects that benefit the environment and communities, while giving eligible job seekers work skills and experience to improve their chances of finding employment. These are fixed-term community or environmental projects that may not have been otherwise completed.

We are undertaking *Local Services Mapping* in our communities. This involves government agencies, local authorities and community organisations working together to identify the services a community has and what services it needs. *Local Services Mapping* has commenced in both Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt, supported by the local authority. Both areas are trialling a new

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“Between November 2004 and March 2005 we hired four staff with limited English skills through Shiblee (Work Broker). Although there was a need for us to provide training and some difficulty with communications, it was a very successful exercise. All four are still employed by Airport Motel Limited and are valuable members of our team”.

Richard Mazur
Director
Resource Holding Ltd.

approach to *Mapping* so that the community report and action plans can be developed more quickly. Once developed, action plans will set out what everyone will do to find practical solutions to meet identified needs.

Youth leader, Ross Davis of the Wellington Boys' & Girls' Institute, has initiated a youth exchange between the East Coast/Te Tai Rawhiti and Wellington/Poneke. *Crossing the Stile* brings at-risk young people from the East Coast to Wellington and sends similar Wellington youth to a farm on the East Coast. The programme is supported by Family and Community Services' *Community Initiatives Fund*²⁵, helping participants work through a range of modules with local youth workers, farmers, businesses and iwi. It encourages participants to plan ahead and to find a mentor or group to be part of, such as a sports club or youth group, so that they maintain a sense of direction in their lives. A pilot has been run with 10 young people aged from 10 to 16 years, of different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Participants can be nominated by their schools, community groups and other organisations.

In the past, social services have been provided by a variety of organisations from government to local organisations, which has sometimes lead to confusion from those we seek to help about where to ask for assistance. To respond to this, we must find a way to move forward by working together. Government departments can no longer work in isolation. Nor is it acceptable for us to lead from the front and simply expect other stakeholders to follow. Consultation, collaboration and community focus is required to achieve the most positive outcomes for our region. Only by constant engagement and reassessment can we ensure that we achieve the best results for the people who reside in our great Wellington region.

Brightening up our future



The Porirua Work and Income Service Centre took part in a community-driven initiative to makeover Miranda Street in Cannons Creek, home to 55 families who are clients of Work and Income.

Work and Income case managers, Housing New Zealand staff, local health workers and community groups worked with residents to clean up the street by removing car wrecks, eradicating graffiti, removing rubbish, improving fencing and planting shrubs from the *Keep Porirua Beautiful* initiative.

Representatives from government agencies were available to provide information on their products and services, while health workers provided hearing and vision checks and information on immunisation.

The event ended with a 'Tidiest Front Yard' competition and barbeque. Westmeath and Waihemo Streets have been chosen to undergo a similar beautification project in the coming year.

25. The *Community Initiatives Fund* supports projects run by community leaders that will make a difference in their local community.

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
195 Willis Street
Wellington
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

