



Leading Social Development in

BAY OF PLENTY

Regional Plan 2007 > 2008



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora



child, youth
and family

A service of the Ministry of Social Development



family &
community services
ratonga ā-whānau, ā-hapori

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MINISTRY OF
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO TAIOHI

Administered by the Ministry of Social Development



STUDYLINK

Hoto Akoranga

A service of the Ministry of Social Development



Work and Income

Te Hiranga Tangata

A service of the Ministry of Social Development

Cover Photos

Top Left:

Enjoying a day in the sun.

Bottom Left:

Celebrating Children's Day 2007.

Right:

Trainees participating in the City Care
Pre-apprenticeship programme (*photo courtesy
of City Care*).

Leading Social Development

A PLAN FOR THE BAY OF PLENTY 2007/2008



CONTENTS

Achieving Better Social Outcomes Together	2
Opportunities for Action in the Bay of Plenty	3
Moving Forward	7
Leading Social Development	8
Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed	13
Creating Opportunities for Working Age People	21
Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow	29
Partnering with our Communities	33

Achieving Better Social Outcomes Together

I am pleased to introduce the Ministry's 2007/2008 Regional Plan for the Bay of Plenty region. The Plan sets out our key priorities and how we will respond to the needs, challenges and opportunities for the region. It also sets the direction for all our service lines, including - for the first time - Child, Youth and Family.

We work with people in a lot of different ways and our work touches the lives of many people. We need to make sure that anyone accessing our services gets the help they need, when they need it. Regional Commissioners take a leadership role to ensure these services are well connected and accessible, and make a real difference to the people who live in our communities.

But we also need to work with other agencies. Strong relationships with central and local government, non-government organisations and community partners are critical to our success. Only by working closely with other agencies, can we provide our communities with tailored, accessible services that meet their needs.

The Government has set three priority themes for the next decade: Families - Young and Old, Economic Transformation, and National Identity. Our work contributes to all of these - and to Families - Young and Old in particular.

Supporting families is one of our most important roles. We work to ensure that children get the best start in life, that everyone is safe from violence and abuse within the family and that older New Zealanders are supported to live in their community as they wish. By supporting parents and families in managing their lives and caring for each other, we can make a difference to all families both young and old.

Our ability to achieve these outcomes has been hugely strengthened by the inclusion of Child, Youth and Family within the Ministry.

Helping people into work and building the skills of our workforce are both critical to developing a high value economy and achieving economic transformation. With record low unemployment, we are well positioned to continue to enhance our services for all working-age¹ clients and to work in partnership with industry to increase productivity in the workplace.

2007/2008 will be another big year for us. By working together, we can achieve these goals and make a real difference to the lives of people in the Bay of Plenty region!



Peter Hughes
Chief Executive



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

Opportunities for Action in the Bay of Plenty

Our region

Approximately 257,379² people call the Bay of Plenty home. At the 2006 Census, 67% of our people identified themselves as being of European ethnicity (compared to the national average of 68%) and 28% as Māori (compared to 15% nationally). In addition, we have one of the largest communities of Pacific peoples outside of the major metropolitan centres, generally centralised in the community of Tokoroa.

Because of the diversity among our people and communities we cannot, and do not, adopt a one-approach-fits-all mentality to our regional issues. Our communities are an ethnically, economically and environmentally assorted blend. We range from relatively affluent urban communities with low unemployment, easy access to social and economic resources and diverse cultural and age demographics, to small, isolated rural communities with limited access to social and economic resources and atypical ethnic and age demographics.

Economically, we rely on forestry, agriculture, tourism and retail industries for employment opportunities. Our kiwifruit industry provides seasonal labour opportunities from March to November, concentrated mainly in the Western Bay of Plenty. It is estimated that some 40% of the region's total economy is dependant on, or affected by, activities generated by the Port of Tauranga.

Our role

To advance our people's ability to access the services which will help them to improve this and future generation's lives, we have established strong partnerships with local communities, individuals and other agencies. We must ensure that services are available where they are needed, and that they are accessible, irrespective of who provides them.

The Ministry of Social Development is responsible for the social development and wellbeing of our people 'from the cradle to the grave'. One of our challenges is to integrate the systems and practices of our various service lines (Child, Youth and Family, Family and Community Services, Integrity Services, the Ministry of Youth Development, Senior Services, StudyLink, and Work and Income) to provide an efficient, holistic service to our clients and communities. No one in our region should 'fall through the cracks', anyone accessing our services should be guided to the right place to get the help they need.

We need to understand both the similarities and the differences between our communities. Their needs and the resources to meet them are not the same. Agencies other than the Ministry work to achieve complementary goals, and we must develop a mutual awareness of each others aims. We can support each other, find opportunities to co-operate and avoid unnecessary duplication of resources and effort. In partnership with other agencies and our communities we can tailor solutions to meet the social needs of our people.

2. *Census of Population and Dwellings, Regional Summary, Census 2006, Statistics New Zealand.*



Above: John Forbes, Opotiki District Council Mayor tests the durability of his suit on the mudslide which was one of many Opotiki Fun Unplugged activities.

"The working relationship between the Council and the Ministry of Social Development in Matata is a brilliant example of two organisations combining their core business for the overall betterment of the community. The combined efforts will produce a result that the Council would have struggled to deliver on its own".

*Diane Turner
Chief Executive Officer
Whakatane District Council*

Challenges and opportunities

A significant proportion of our region identifies as Māori, 28%, almost twice the national average. In spite of being less than a third of our population, Māori represent 67%³ of the region's unemployment-related benefit⁴ clients, 62% of our clients receiving a domestic purposes-related benefit⁵, and are over-represented in our other benefit groups.

Māori suffer from comparatively low levels of higher educational achievement (44% of Māori have higher than NCEA Level 1 compared to 71% of Europeans). Māori experience a higher level of household overcrowding than Europeans (25% compared to 5%) and are more likely than Europeans to suffer from obesity, to smoke, and have shorter life expectancies⁶.

Many of our Māori live in areas where economic opportunities are not readily available. Across the region we have identified 47 communities as Limited Employment Locations - areas in which there are far fewer work opportunities and limited public transport options allowing the residents to work elsewhere. These are predominantly small, rural communities. We wish to further collaborate with local and community agencies to foster the creation of opportunities in these disadvantaged communities.

Over the last five years, unemployment in the region has reached historically low levels, plummeting from 11,755 clients in March 2002 to 2,265 in March 2007. During this period, some of our communities benefited from social and economic improvements more than others.

In March 2002 for instance, 11% of our clients receiving an unemployment-related benefit lived in Tauranga and 25% in Rotorua. Five years later, the percentage of unemployed in Tauranga is 3% and 38% in Rotorua. This is evidence of a fundamental shift over time in the locations where we need to target our efforts. Targeting is essential to ensure continued improvements in the lives of our people who are experiencing need.

Affordability of good quality accommodation in parts of our region has been identified as an issue. Anecdotally, rental accommodation, especially in our more affluent communities, is increasingly difficult for lower income families and individuals to access. In some of our more remote communities the standard of housing requires improvement, however



Left: Bringing the past to the present is the vision newly appointed Museum Manager Dorothy-Anne Wilson has for the Opotiki Museum Project. Dorothy-Anne's position was funded through a Work and Income Entering Communities Grant.

3. All benefit statistics in this Regional Plan have been sourced from the Ministry of Social Development's Information Analysis Platform as at 31 March 2007. Where comparisons are made, these reflect statistics as at 31 March 2006, unless otherwise stated.
4. An unemployment-related benefit includes an Unemployment Benefit and an Unemployment Benefit - Hardship.
5. A domestic purposes-related benefit comprises DPB Sole Parent, DPB Caring for the Sick or Infirm, DPB Woman Alone and Emergency Maintenance Allowance.
6. *The Social Report 2006, Regional Indicators*; Ministry of Social Development.

some of our people do not have the resources to accomplish this. Issues such as overcrowding, poor sanitation and inadequate insulation are linked to a range of social and medical ills. We are actively involved in projects such as 'Healthy Homes' in communities across the region, and we will continue to actively seek opportunities to work with local communities and other agencies to address these issues.

Economic and social growth is constrained by some skill and labour shortages, and geographic mismatches between our labour market and our labour supply. The degree to which unemployment in our region has reduced has left skilled labour an especially scarce commodity. Uneven levels of economic development between different communities have meant our unemployed are not located where the region's jobs are. A primary example of this is our demand for seasonal labour in the kiwifruit industry. During the 2006/2007 harvesting season, industry estimated they required up to 12,000 workers, mainly in the Western Bay of Plenty. At this time we had fewer than 3,000 clients receiving an unemployment-related benefit, mainly living in the Central and Eastern Bay of Plenty. We will continue to address both issues in the coming year.

There is a need to address transport issues in our region due to the mismatch between the location of our workers and the location of work opportunities. Our higher number of remote areas and the relative expense of accommodation in some centres is also a contributing factor. Cost effective, reliable and convenient transportation options will allow our people to access opportunities for work and social inclusion. Over the coming year we will work with local agencies and communities to help solve these transport issues.

Providing children and young people with the best chance to succeed in life is a key focus for us. We are fortunate to have a high number of young people living here. Of our region's total population, 35% are aged 24 years or under⁷. Their zest and energy for life represents much of the future potential of the region. Unfortunately some young people do face problems such as poverty, alcohol and substance abuse as they move into adulthood. Our early investment in young people helps to break habits and cycles of family poverty and benefit dependency, and improve the situation for both current and future generations. In collaboration with local communities and agencies we will help to provide access to training, education, health and employment opportunities for our young people.

More than 25% of our population do not have at least upper secondary schooling⁸. Education improves the options for our people, and the social and economic options for their families, both in the immediate and long-term future. We will work with local communities and training providers to identify opportunities and encourage our people to gain skills and qualifications.

Drug dependency and substance abuse create enormous impediments for individuals and their families. This impact can be widespread, affecting not



Above: Luarnie Taylor, a former Domestic Purposes Benefit client is the first woman in the Western Bay of Plenty to obtain a carpentry apprenticeship.

7. *Census of Population and Dwellings, Regional Summary, Census 2006, Statistics New Zealand.*

8. *The Social Report 2006, Regional Indicators, Ministry of Social Development.*

>> Opportunities for Action in the Bay of Plenty >>

"It's good to see Work and Income staff in the community. They are really approachable. We appreciate learning about Work and Income products, and being able to tell Work and Income about what new programmes Whakatohea Iwi Health Services provide for the community such as the new Parenting Programme".

*Claire Pye
Whakatohea Iwi Health Services*

only the current generation but that generation's children and grandchildren. We will actively seek to enhance access to services that address these issues, both through the services we directly purchase, and in partnership with our communities and other agencies.

Over the next 20 years, the number of elderly people aged 65 or greater is projected to nearly double⁹. In the foreseeable future almost one in three of our people will be elderly. In some of our rural communities, as young people move out to find work, and in cities which are popular as retirement destinations, such as Tauranga and Taupo, the level of growth of our elderly population may well be greater. The needs of this segment of our population will inevitably grow. We must work alongside local communities and agencies to support the elderly, enhance their standard of living and plan for the delivery of services to them.

It is essential for us to work in a whole-of-community way. By working together we can maximise our resources and improve the lives of our regions people.



Above: The WERT (Work Ethic Residential Training) programme focuses on employment outcomes by providing an opportunity to develop work ethic and job-search skills. Pictured from left, Joseph Snell, Tuhitaar Carroll and Clement Richmond complete the hard task of carrying a heavy log for 6km.

9. Subnational Population Projections: 2001-2026, Statistics New Zealand.

Welcome to the Bay of Plenty.

Looking forward to the challenges facing social development in our region this year, I would like to highlight some specific themes.

Our merger with Child, Youth and Family places us in a position where we have unparalleled opportunities and challenges in our region. As a united organisation, we now provide for the social wellbeing and advancement of our people 'from the cradle to the grave.' It is now our responsibility to cover our population's needs from childhood, through their teens and working life, and into their senior years.

The challenge for us, and it is a challenge I take very seriously, is to ensure that we are able to provide a seamless service to our people. We will strengthen the interface between our services and eliminate potential gaps such as young people who leave care at 17, but do not generally qualify for employment assistance until they are 18. In the intervening year, what happens to these youth? This is one of the gaps that we aim to close.

It is not only within government that there may be gaps in services that could disadvantage our people, but between our Ministry and community organisations that act in the social arena. I am committed to continuing to build links and to look for co-operative opportunities with our colleagues so that we can all act to strengthen the safety net we provide our people, both at an individual and community level. In particular, our involvement with Community Outcomes - Bay of Plenty (CO-BoP) over the last 12 months has been extremely valuable in fostering opportunities for co-operation, and we will continue to support this forum.

I continue to be concerned that some communities and some of our region's people have not benefited to the same extent as others from improvements in our economic conditions and employment rates over the last few years. While we have achieved historically low levels of unemployment, this has highlighted communities where opportunities for our people are limited or absent. By co-operating with these communities, local agencies, iwi and local government, my goal is to help foster social and economic development where we can identify specific, local needs and address them.

In the last 12 months our region has made great strides in improving the social wellbeing of our people. Without the co-operation and assistance of the Ministry's partners, our local stakeholders and my staff, these could not have occurred, and I wish to thank you all. We still have challenges for the forthcoming year, and all of us have a role to play in overcoming them. I invite you to join with us, and participate in this journey. Together, we can continue to make a difference.



Carl Crafar
Regional Commissioner for Social Development



Leading Social Development

What is social development?

“Social development builds a strong, healthy and safe society. Successful social development results in high levels of skills and education, high employment, a thriving economy, and strong and safe families and communities. It builds social capital, meaning the networks, relationships and trust within and between communities”¹⁰.

Social Development is an investment to improve the wellbeing and standard of living of our people, today, and sustainably into the future. We go beyond the essential social protection of vulnerable people, and look to provide long-term benefits to our society as a whole. The things that we do today - early intervention while problems are still manageable, co-ordinating all our government and non-government agencies to achieve common goals, working locally to address local problems as well as nationally to address national ones - are all focused on creating a better future for our people.

We are committed to these concepts. In our region, we see the social and economic development of our people as intrinsically linked, with improvements in either aspect flowing on to improve the other. By enhancing our people's involvement in the workforce we raise the standard of living for entire families, and improve access to opportunities such as health and education. By making long-term investments in education, we create a more capable and engaged workforce.

Our goal is to improve the lives of our individuals, families and communities. We are not the only agency with this goal, nor do we believe we can achieve it in isolation. To achieve our goals we must work collaboratively with the other government agencies, territorial authorities, iwi and community agencies who operate in our region. By sharing information, pooling resources and co-ordinating our efforts we can accomplish more than we can achieve on our own, and do this more efficiently.

A youth voice

Empowering young people to engage in local government decision-making has been formalised by the South Waikato District Council through the establishment of a youth representative council who will assist with the initiation of the Youth Strategy and Action Plan.

The South Waikato Youth Council will assist the Council's Steering Committee, which includes Rebekah Duthie, Regional Youth Advisor, the Ministry of Youth Development; to initiate the Plan.

“The South Waikato District Council wanted young people to have a say in terms of their decision-making processes and chose to take the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa approach and process to better achieve a clear voice for youth. It's important to them that the district becomes a great and vibrant place for young people to grow”, said Rebekah.

Plans for the Youth Council include supporting the development of a youth policy, offering guidance on the direction of the Youth Strategy and gaining skills in leadership and community service. The Council will also partner with Raukawa Young Leaders to stage activities and events for the district's young people and their families.

Rebekah said the South Waikato District Council is now on its way to strengthening the role of young people in its community and is committed to serve as a leader on youth-related community outcomes.

“A group of District Councillors will mentor and support the Youth Council in learning civic responsibility as well as adding value to the development of local young people”, said Rebekah.

Pictured are South Waikato Youth Council representatives getting ready to add their voice to the local Youth Strategy and Action Plan outside the South Waikato District Council.



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

By working together we can close the gaps between the services we are able to provide, identify where services are lacking, and learn 'best practice' approaches from each other.

There will always be a need to provide a safety net for individuals and families in society when hard times arrive. Providing this safety net is a core function of the Ministry, as evidenced by our income support services. More than this, however, our role is to assist people to overcome any difficult times and develop past them. We must also help empower individuals and families to take control of their personal situations and improve them.

The old proverb says, 'A stitch in time saves nine'. It is important to intervene as early as possible, before an issue grows into a tangled mass of multiple social and personal issues. We develop community programmes to prevent and detect problems, rather than waiting for them to get out of hand. This is both sensible, cost effective, and reduces the social impacts on our communities, families and individuals. By investing in issues such as health, housing, education, healthy eating and activity, smoking prevention and cessation, as well as unemployment, we can make that first stitch happen.

Each year the Ministry publishes the *Statement of Intent*¹¹, which sets out our high-level goals and focus for the next three years. It describes our national priorities. This Plan sets the context within which we pursue social development at a regional level.

By using our national resources, we are able to research and provide our partners with information on social trends which are broken down to regional and sub-regional levels. By knowing where we are, and by having a shared picture of our communities and people, we are all able to decide on our priorities, and measure the progress we make. Each year, for example, we publish *The Social Report*¹², which provides a range of social indicators at both a national and regional level.

The Government has identified three key priorities for social development over the next decade:

- Families - Young and Old
- Economic Transformation
- National Identity.

All three priorities intertwine, are complementary, and indeed are dependent on each other. The Ministry is the lead agency for Families - Young and Old which broadly aims to 'ensure that economic, social, cultural and environmental policies combine to make New Zealand a place in which all New Zealanders':

- families can contribute to and benefit from the success of New Zealand



Above: Handing out resources and answering questions on family violence alongside other social agencies on White Ribbon Day in Family Violence Response Co-ordinator Glennis Dennehy.

"Your Social Development Manager provides leadership, clarity, direction, resources, linkages, support, information, and positive role modelling in working effectively with communities. These all greatly support the work I do as Community Development Project Manager for the Corporation".

Brigid Macallister
*Community Development Project Manager
Housing New Zealand*

11. *Safe families, successful communities, strong New Zealand: Statement of Intent 2007/2008*, Ministry of Social Development.
12. *The Social Report 2006*, Ministry of Social Development.

>> Leading Social Development >>

- families have the support and choices they need to be secure and able to reach their potential throughout their lives
- families have access to a safe and secure environment in which they are accorded respect and dignity throughout their lives
- families are supported to live healthy and fulfilling lives¹³.

Five critical social issues for inter-agency action have been identified as sub-themes to Families - Young and Old.

- Strong Families - who have the support and choices to enable their members to reach their full potential, and assistance where care and support from within the family is not available.
- Healthy, Confident Kids - who are equipped to contribute to the future social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of New Zealand.
- Better Health for All - where our people can promote and protect their health and participate in their communities.
- Strong and Safe Communities - where people can participate in their communities and their rights and interests are protected and promoted.

- Positive Ageing - where older New Zealanders are able to live healthy, productive lives.

Under these themes we lead and co-ordinate action on Strong Families and Positive Ageing. We also support and liaise with other agencies who lead and promote the following issues:

- giving our children the best start in life
- establishing foundations for life-long learning
- reducing obesity
- eliminating family violence
- improving the affordability and quality of housing
- effective interventions in the Justice Sector.

In conjunction with the Department of Labour, our work promoting sustainable employment contributes to the goal of Economic Transformation and we contribute to National Identity through our community support and development services.



Left: Co-BOP Co-ordinator Brandi Hudson (right) discusses the forum's communication strategy with Social Development Manager Susan Jolley.

13. Government priorities are set out on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website: <http://www.dpmc.govt.nz/dpmc/publications/government-priorities.html>.

Leadership and collaboration with our partners

Community Outcomes - Bay of Plenty (CO-BoP) was formed to promote co-operation and collaboration between the region's territorial authorities and central government agencies. We see our participation in CO-BoP as one of the most vital opportunities to collectively achieve social and economic outcomes for our people.

Under the Local Government Act 2002, following extensive public consultation, our territorial authorities adopted Long Term Council Community Plans which align their work plans with their community outcomes. The CO-BoP forum provides an opportunity for agencies in the region to co-operate in achieving these community outcomes, and over the last year, priorities for collaboration included: Healthy Eating, Healthy Action; Safer Communities; and housing affordability and quality.

CO-BoP is also taking a lead role in the region's economic development. Through the Economic Development sub-committee, planning is being undertaken to align economic development strategies in the Eastern, Central and Western Bay of Plenty, to look for solutions to identified skill shortages, and to encourage the development of new economic opportunities within the region.

As well as funding the Co-BoP Co-ordinator position, several senior managers from the Ministry serve on, or regularly contribute to, CO-BoP's sub-committees, including the Regional Manager for the Ministry of Youth Development, the region's Social Development Manager, our Regional Manager for Family and Community Services, and the region's Labour Market Development Manager. The level of our involvement is evidence of our commitment to this forum.

We are also involved in projects at a direct, community level. An example is 'Murupara on the Move'. For several years now we have been the lead agency for this project. Led by the Murupara Community Management Group, the project has brought together a partnership including Te Puni Kōkiri, Housing New Zealand, the Ministry of Economic Development, New Zealand Trade & Enterprise, the Department of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Health and the New Zealand Police to address a range of social and economic issues present in the town of Murupara.

Ensuring integrity

Community education is an important part of Integrity Services proactive approach to ensuring payment of correct benefit entitlements and minimising over-payments and debt.

Integrity Services aim is for both the community and clients to have confidence in the benefit system and that the right support and assistance is given to those in need. The Bay of Plenty team do this by taking opportunities to present to community groups, outside agencies and employers in order to heighten awareness, co-opt the assistance of outside agencies to pass on correct information, and encourage clients to voluntarily disclose changes in their circumstances.

Recently Investigator Annette Mayo visited Te Ara Ki Tua Early Childhood Centre in Whakatane. She spoke to the students, sharing key Integrity Services messages of compliance. There was a lot of discussion with the group being receptive and asking lots of questions.

"Sharing information with clients equips them with the right information and lets them plan ahead about the benefits and assistance available from Work and Income, along with some additional knowledge of what is accessible in their communities", said Annette.

Investigator Annette Mayo talks to students at Te Ara Ki Tua Early Childhood Centre in Whakatane.



"The Rotorua Community Report and Local Services Mapping which focuses on youth offending services in Rotorua are shining examples where the Ministry of Social Development has led a process of seeking information, building relationships and looking forward to action in a clear and concise manner. The Ministry of Social Development has persisted even when working in this way hasn't been easy".

*Juanita Seymour
Community Safety Projects Officer
Rotorua District Council*

The project, shaped and guided by community input has developed governance structures, planned and assisted with the development of tourism initiatives and helped address community revitalisation projects. Within the last year progress has included:

- funding of a Project Co-ordinator to assist with the management of project initiatives
- funding for a community development worker from the Department of Internal Affairs
- funding from Te Puni Kōkiri for a community improvement house-painting project
- co-ordinating with the Department of Conservation to clear and maintain walking tracks utilising Taskforce Green¹⁴ assistance
- local schools working together to develop the community's Tanewha Park.

Led by the Murupara community, the project is an example of a long-term investment made by multiple organisations to address their issues and future. Over the coming year, we will continue to actively support the project.

A co-ordinated Ministry approach

Our merger with Child, Youth and Family has strengthened our ability to achieve successful social development outcomes for all families, both young and old. We are now responsible for the social development of our citizens through all stages of life.

Ensuring our clients receive a seamless and comprehensive service is important to us and a major opportunity for the coming year. For instance, to ensure our Child, Youth and Family staff are well informed about our income support services we will be placing a Work and Income case manager into each Child, Youth and Family office one day a week. This will allow our staff to be more familiar with the wider family environment as well as respond to their specific income support needs. We are also providing training to our Work and Income case managers to assist them to identify instances of family violence, and developing referral protocols for referrals to Child, Youth and Family.

Between us, by taking a more holistic approach, we have the opportunity to identify and address the needs of entire families, and thereby improve their whole situation.

¹⁴ Taskforce Green is a Work and Income employment subsidy that is available to employ workers who are disadvantaged in their local employment market to complete environmental or community projects which would otherwise not proceed.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

By giving children the best possible start in life, intervening early before problems get out of hand, building strong, mutually supportive families, and by providing young people with the best possible prospects for success, our people will reap the social and economic benefits well into the future.

Some of our families are under significant stress. Issues such as drug and substance abuse, lack of access to childcare, the growth in single and teen parent families, lack of employment opportunities and financial stresses, all impact on the family's ability to be mutually supportive. In addition, many families no longer have access to their traditional support systems, be they grandparents, wider whānau or neighbours and friends. The strength of our families is the foundation which helps to support and build healthy and vibrant futures for its members.

Supporting our children and families to be strong

Many of our service lines, and our initiatives, are devoted to the wellbeing of children and their families. A strong family provides support for its members, from the youngest to the oldest. It teaches our children how to interact within their communities, and is the foundation of their character, aspirations and overall wellbeing.

Unfortunately, not all our children and families exist in circumstances which are conducive to their growth, health and future wellbeing. Families and whānau should be a safe and secure environment where all members live free from violence. Sadly this is not always the case. Sometimes an intervention from Child, Youth and Family is necessary to protect our children.

In the coming year, Child, Youth and Family will implement a family violence initiative across all of their sites. This will entail the establishment of family violence protocols between Child, Youth and Family, the New Zealand Police and Women's Refuge to manage family violence interventions. In Tauranga, for instance, a Child, Youth and Family social worker will be based at the Women's Refuge to enhance collaboration between the support services. Child, Youth and Family and the New Zealand Police will establish co-location opportunities for their personnel in the New Zealand Police Family Violence, Youth Justice and Serious Abuse Teams to improve outcomes for our families and to ensure a more collaborative response between agencies.

Complementing this, we also operate family violence initiatives that aim to identify family violence issues across the whole family, from child abuse and neglect, battered spouses, and the abuse and neglect of our older people, and refer cases to the

Co-location success

Provision of a quality, seamless service is one of the many benefits both tertiary students and Work and Income clients are experiencing as a result of the recent co-location of StudyLink to Tauranga's Work and Income Service Centre.

StudyLink Outreach Manager Kerry Aitken said the move was aimed at providing a complementary service. *"People can access both Work and Income and StudyLink services in one place"*, he said.

Work and Income clients can easily obtain any information they may need in order for them to consider study options. At the same time, tertiary students are easily able to access possible additional financial assistance and have a link to potential employment opportunities.

"As we are now located in the central business district, close to tertiary providers like the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and Waikato University, students also have easier access to other services", Kerry said.

StudyLink moved into the Tauranga Work and Income Service Centre in October 2006.

Pictured are Cara Schmidt, StudyLink Officer; and Craig Hanlen, Tauranga Assistant Service Centre Manager discussing the finer points of the co-location of services.



agency best able to assist them.

To do this, we are forming close working partnerships with organisations across the region. Our focus is on changing attitudes and behaviours, and on giving families the skills they need to resolve conflicts without using violence or abuse.

To further complement this, we will continue to develop and enhance our Family Violence Intervention Programme. Our case managers make regular contact with many of our most vulnerable clients in the normal course of their business. We train our case managers to recognise abuse, and provide the resources to refer our people to the assistance they need when faced with this issue. We promote an awareness of the symptoms and effects of family violence, and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for the client. To support our case managers, and provide specialist assistance when needed, we have installed family violence response co-ordinators in Rotorua and Tauranga. In addition, we are gathering statistical data on the incidences of family violence reported through the Programme, which we will use to plan for future

assistance and responses given to our clients.

In some regions, including the Bay of Plenty we have introduced an integrated service focused on the family. We understand that our most vulnerable families may be entwined in a complex web of problems that can be overwhelming. Untangling this web may require the co-ordinated activities of multiple agencies, and multiple programmes within individual agencies. We will identify our most vulnerable families, assign an Integrated Service Co-ordinator, and provide the family with intensive case management, drawing together the expertise and resources of all the agencies who can assist them.

Over the next three years, Family and Community Services will fund 45 full-time advocates across the country to work with children and young people who have been exposed to family violence. Two advocates will be based in our region, one in Taupo and one in Rotorua. The advocate's role is to independently champion for children and young people affected by family

violence, ensure they have access to sound and culturally appropriate support and services, build public awareness of the impact of family violence on children, and build working relationships with other agencies.

We encourage a collective response between government and community organisations to the care and protection needs of our children and families. We will establish a demand management portfolio holder role within each of our Child, Youth and Family offices, with a mandate to develop a collective response to family violence throughout the region.

We believe the best place for children to grow up is in the nurturing nest of their family and whānau. Sometimes, circumstances require that children be removed from their families. We aim to ensure that all children in our care are placed in safe and appropriate situations. To facilitate this, we ensure all caregivers complete the appropriate approval process before children are placed with them, and we audit these approvals to ensure this has taken place. All children in our care will also have an individual plan developed to ensure that their needs are addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Our long-term goal is to establish permanent care outcomes for these children, and where possible, the first placement option is within the child's family and whānau. Obviously the needs and safety of the child are our main concern. Within the region, we have established Care Leadership Panels to support our focus on establishing permanent outcomes for children in care. We have also recruited a Care Specialist to provide additional support and focus in this area.

Sometimes however, children remain in care for extended periods. A child can remain in care until the age of 17.



Above: Sorting out the finer details of Work and Income and Child, Youth and Family's co-location are Jacki Brooks, Case Manager (seated); Heather Farr, Child, Youth and Family Rotorua/Taupo Practice Manager; and John Westerman, Taupo Work and Income Service Centre Manager.

We have identified that there is a gap between some young people leaving care at 16 or 17 years and qualifying for Work and Income employment assistance at 18. We will act to close this gap, and ensure that all children leaving Child, Youth and Family care are notified to Work and Income, and assisted to transition into study or work.

Given the over-representation of Māori in a number of our benefit and wellbeing statistics, we will establish Māori advisory panels within Child, Youth and Family to provide advice regarding care, and in particular permanent care solutions, within hapū/iwi, and with due regard for tikanga.

Early intervention

We will continue to maintain a focus on prevention, rather than repair. By intervening early in the life of a child or a family problem, we can produce a better long-term result for everyone involved.

Nationally, over the next two years we will establish 13 Early Years Service Hubs, which are designed to provide a central point for young families to access services for children from pre-birth to school entry age. Two of these Hubs will be located in our region, one in Murupara and one in Tokoroa.

We will fund eight teenage parent service co-ordinators nationally. The co-ordinators will work to establish collaborative arrangements with existing local providers, to co-ordinate the delivery of, and access to, services for teen parents and their children. Our overall aim is to improve their health, development, education and welfare outcomes. In our region, this service will be contracted to the Tipu Ora Charitable Trust, and will focus on the communities of Rotorua and Kawerau.

We will continue to fund community groups to deliver the Family Start programme. This programme provides intensive, home-based support services for families with high needs. Our local service provider, Te Ha O Te Whānau, focuses on developing an intervention plan based on the strengths and risks of each family. Their family/whānau workers advocate for the family with the multiple agencies that they may need to access, and help co-ordinate their service delivery. The programme's overall goal is to help families develop the confidence and skills to give their children the best possible start in life.

Family and Community Services assists communities with funding and information to develop initiatives that promote strong families. The SKIP (Strategies with Kids: Information for Parents) initiative encourages and supports parents to raise their children in a positive way. A component of SKIP is the Local Initiatives Fund which supports communities to find ways to connect all parents with information about positive parenting.

Strengthening Families provides co-ordinated support for families who are working with more than two agencies. The agencies work jointly with the family to develop solutions, rather than each agency dealing with one part of the problem and never seeing the bigger picture.

"The quality and excellence in service provided by the Rotorua Childcare Co-ordinator has been helpful and informative for our Centre. We appreciate the fact that she is able to provide an immediate service at short notice regarding Childcare Subsidies and Working for Families entitlements. Our numbers have increased thanks Work and Income promoting Working for Families and Childcare Subsidies".

Matthew Mitchell
Centre Manager
Punanga Reo Kuki Airani O Rotorua

Children's day in the Bay

There was plenty of family fun and activities available for the first Child, Youth and Family Children's Day events in Rotorua and Whakatane.

Children's Day aims to acknowledge the importance of children in the community and the vital role families have in raising them.

Activities such as story-telling, face painting, crafts and a free sausage sizzle provided children and families with plenty of free entertainment at Rotorua's Lakefront and Whakatane's Riverbank Park.

In Rotorua, the NZ Army brought their heavy equipment along for children to explore while the Ulysses Motor Cycle Club brought their motorcycles.

The cross-agency event was supported by Work and Income, Family and Community Services and other local government and non-government organisations such as REAP, Playcentre, Plunket, Parents as First Teachers, the Lions Club and the New Zealand Police, who all hosted activities.

Community Liaison Advisor Gwenda Ruegg said, *"The events were also a great opportunity to mention Child, Youth and Family's need for community caregivers, and to show that we work alongside many other community agencies. Feedback so far is that everyone - young and old - enjoyed their day and they want a bigger and better event next year"*.

Hector the Dolphin was the animal mascot behind the promotion of Children's Day with activity packs being given to all children who attended. Packs were also provided to all children in care.

Family and Community Services Relationship Manager, Carol Buckley helps son Alex with one of the many activities at the Rotorua's Children's Day.



Family and Community Services also offers online and phone-based information services to help families address their problems at an early stage, while they are still controllable¹⁵.

Helping young people to be heard

More than a third (35%) of the people living in our region are aged 24 or under. These are the families, the workers and the decision makers of tomorrow. Under the principles of Families - Young and Old we are challenged to help young people to reach their full potential and to be healthy, confident and able to fully participate in the economic and social life of their community.

Through the Ministry of Youth Development we focus on the ability of young people to participate in society, to provide policy advice on issues affecting them, to fund youth development

services, and to support young people to influence their social and political environment by providing avenues for their concerns to be heard.

Our work in this area is underpinned by the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa¹⁶, which promotes a country where young people are vibrant and optimistic through being supported and encouraged to take up challenges.

We also operate the Services for Young People Fund which is available to purchase new and innovative services for young people. Priority groups we seek to assist with this funding are:

- young people in transition between education, training and employment
- young people engaged in, or at risk of engaging in, low-level offending

15. Information about these services can be accessed at www.211.govt.nz.

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

- young people experiencing limited life transition choices as a result of low levels of academic achievement and personal and social skills
- young people engaged in harmful behaviours and actions.

The Youth Development Partnership Fund is available to provide funding to territorial authorities who wish to implement the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, and establish good youth development practices through engagement with young people and the community. For example, in early 2007 the 'Opotiki Fun Unplugged' project received funding to train young people in a range of entrepreneurial tourism ventures, including a highly successful mud-slide. The project encouraged youth to engage with their community, focused on developing a commercial activity, and contributed to publicising Opotiki and its tourism activities.

The National Youth Parliament in Wellington is being held in 2007. Youth Members of Parliament from across the country will gather to experience the parliamentary process, to debate a piece of legislation, to ask oral questions of current Cabinet Ministers, and hold a select committee meeting. This will be a unique opportunity for young people to share their ideas and aspirations with Members of Parliament and decision makers.

The PROVOKE Network supports young people aged 13 to 24 to have their voices heard by government decision-makers. Network members receive newsletters on current topics, advice about opportunities they can apply for such as youth conferences and positions on youth advisory groups, and opportunities to attend training workshops on how to get their voice heard. We invite their opinions on issues, and feed them back into the policy making process. During the coming year, we will mount an active recruitment programme to expand membership of PROVOKE within our region.

Through the Youth Participation in Local Government Project we will continue to run workshops and provide advice for territorial authorities on strengthening youth participation in local government. We will also produce a practical handbook on youth participation as a youth policy resource aimed at local government.

This year, we have a major focus on young people's health, and the importance of linking them to first-rate health care. Working with the Ministry of Health and other agencies, we will highlight the need for more 'youth-friendly' health services that are accessible irrespective of where our young people live. This is part of our drive to help them improve their general health and find early treatment for correctable diseases.



Above: Pictured are students taking part in the Straight Up programme. As part of the programme students learn about the realities of life on a benefit. It is estimated that by the end of 2007, almost 16,500 Bay of Plenty secondary students will have participated in the programme, since its inception in 2003.

"Management Groups across the region are working hard to ensure providers, professionals and families know about Strengthening Families, and the benefits of working with agencies who want to work together to help families achieve positive outcomes".

*Alison Struthers
Student Support Officer
Ministry of Education*

Nationally, we are co-ordinating the Youth 2007 Research project, a survey of the health and wellbeing of young New Zealanders in secondary schools. Over 10,000 students from 100 secondary schools will be asked to complete this survey. The findings from this survey are expected to be publicly available in late 2008, and will provide information that will help develop policies and practices to improve the health of our young people.

Assisting youth transitions

At about 18 years of age, young people are faced with important decisions about their futures. They must make the change from the secondary school environment, and make potentially life-shaping decisions about their entry into the workforce, their career paths, further academic study or vocational training. This transition is not always smooth or easy. While much of our focus is on 18 year olds, we recognise that some can leave school as early as 15, and we will endeavour to support these young people towards positive long-term outcomes.

We have seen that many young people who leave school without having made decisions about their working future or training goals, especially those who leave early or without qualifications, spend longer in the benefit system than others. For some youth, receiving income support is seen as a lifestyle choice. It is a choice that severely limits their options, their potential for growth, and the opportunities that would otherwise become available to their families. Our goal is that all young people will move smoothly from school to work, or into further training, however for some, this is not always the case.

We fund a number of locally-based initiatives that target assistance for young people making these transitions. Based in Rotorua, the Youth Transition Service works with young people who leave school early, to evaluate their needs, and facilitate their movement into work or further training. We work to motivate youth who are at risk of losing their future direction. In the past, the Service was funded to work with 300 youth aged 15 to 17 years each year. In the coming year, we will negotiate with the provider to extend the eligibility for participants to 19 years of age.

In Taupo, our Youth Extreme programme is a two-week residential course aimed at young people from across the region aged 15 to 17 years. They can be referred to this programme, not only by our staff, but via external community agencies, such as the New Zealand Police Youth Aid Section. Youth Extreme focuses on building confidence in our young people, and assists them to make positive choices for their future.

Also based in Taupo, but aimed at young people aged 18 to 24 years, is the WERT (Work Ethic Residential Training) initiative. Complementing Youth Extreme, this six-week residential course places a higher focus on employment outcomes and emphasises the development of work ethic and job-search skills.

Due to a concentration of disconnected youth in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, a key focus for the coming year will be to assist young people into appropriate training and employment.

We will establish a programme to support 15 to 20 year olds in the greater Whakatane area. It is envisaged that the programme will be of 45-weeks duration, and for 20 participants at any given time. We will focus on the delivery of New Zealand Qualifications Authority Units and activities that help prepare and move young people into employment opportunities.

For school leavers aged 15 to 19 years in the Tauranga area, who are considered to be in danger of becoming unemployed, we operate Launchpad, a scholarship programme to source and place them into employment opportunities, particularly those who are children of our existing clients. The Programme Co-ordinator works directly with school leavers to select candidates for the programme. Part of this placement involves mentoring the young person to continue their education while employed. Our aim is that the young person will obtain higher qualifications and work experience leading to improved employment opportunities over time.

A major decision for young people in our region is whether to move into higher education, vocational training or to directly enter the workforce. There is a correlation between the achievement of advanced skills, and future earning power, employability, and the standard of living for these clients and their future families. Attaining these skills is an investment in their future, but one that must be funded in the short term.

"We are pleased with the service offered by our StudyLink office and the students are thankful for the face to face contact. Our joint efforts to utilise our computer suites for online StudyLink applications has also been another way that collaboratively, we have helped students to transition smoothly into tertiary study. We also find the StudyLink helpdesk always provides a friendly and professional service".

*Marlene Herewini
Student Advisor
Waiariki Institute of Technology*

A new start for Tui

Single parent Tui Kerei is thankful to the Family Start programme which helped her to increase her confidence as a parent and improved her family's wellbeing.

Funded through Family and Community Services, the programme is provided by Te Ha O Te Whānau in Opotiki. It provides intensive, home-based support services for families to ensure their children have the best possible start in life. Whānau support workers regularly maintain contact with the family during the length of the programme.

With no family support to call on, the strengths-based service provided advice and encouragement to Tui, and helped her to identify potential problems early and establish goals.

Tui said that the goals she set for her family have all been achieved through the encouragement of whānau support workers.

She is now happily living in town and is excited about her new job working as a fitness instructor at the local gym.

"I set my family believable goals and have achieved them thanks to Te Ha O Te Whānau", she said.

Tui Kerei (left) and daughter Mokoia-Lily Savage catch up with Family Start/Whānau Worker, Peggy Edwardson-Hita.



>> Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed >>

Through our StudyLink service and the co-operation of education providers and student bodies, we help students to access financial support. We administer Student Allowances, Student Loans, Step Up and Bonded Merit Scholarships. Our aim is to ensure that students receive the information and options they need prior to and during study and that they complete their study with the least possible debt. During the academic breaks, StudyLink works closely with Student Job Search and Work and Income to help students find employment.

To assist Year-12 and 13 secondary school students, their parents and whānau to make informed decisions about future study and how it can be funded, StudyLink delivers the On Course programme.

Our Straight Up programme is delivered to all Year-10 secondary students in the Bay of Plenty. Straight Up informs pupils of the reality of being unemployed and of life on a benefit. The programme demonstrates that education, either academic or trade, provides far greater options for earning income and for a fulfilling future.

Some of our youth fall foul of the justice system and need assistance to recover from the experience, and change the direction their lives are taking. Within the region, Child, Youth and Family and Work and Income are working in close partnership with the Department of Corrections, the Department of Justice and the New Zealand Police to co-ordinate our mutual activities and responses. We hold regular joint meetings and will develop mutual initiatives over the coming year. The goal of these changes will be to reduce the rate and severity of re-offending by young people.



Above: Providing children and young people with the best chance to succeed in life is a key part of our work.

Creating Opportunities for Working Age People

Paid employment is still the best opportunity for our clients and their families to achieve social and economic independence. Employment can help people to achieve financial independence, improve their family's standard of living and their social connection and can enhance a person's sense of self-reliance and self worth.

Working-age people are considered to be those between the ages of 18 and 64. This is not to say that clients both older and younger than this range do not engage in work, or deserve and receive our support. They do. However, clients outside this range, due to their circumstances, tend to need more specialist assistance.

Helping people into work and building the skills and capability of our workforce are both critical elements for the development of a high-value economy, and contribute to the Government's priority of Economic Transformation. A major focus for us is to assist our clients to reconnect with the workplace and support them while they are in the job-search process.

At the same time we accept that employment is not a viable option for all of our clients, either temporarily, or in some cases permanently. Our role is to provide them with protection and support, and to assist them to continue to participate in their communities.

Some of our people require assistance seeking or returning to the workforce. Apart from the obvious economic benefits of employment, prolonged periods of unemployment deprive our people of opportunities for social connection, personal development, destroy confidence and reduce our people's sense of self-esteem and independence. It benefits us all to help them to minimise the time that they are unemployed.

As our levels of unemployment have continued to fall and our labour market has tightened, the needs of our clients and employers have altered. Our services need to reflect what our clients and employers need and expect. In response we have developed new approaches to change the way we deliver our services to both our clients and employers as we move forward.

Preparing people for work

Last year we implemented our New Service Approach, a new way of working with our clients that offers comprehensive work-focused support for anyone who is able to work. Rather than focusing on what our clients cannot do, we have moved our emphasis to assisting clients with what they can do, and to a 'work first' approach. By focusing on an individual's circumstances and work-readiness, instead of their benefit type, we expect that clients receiving a Domestic Purposes, Sickness or Invalid's Benefit will gain most from this new approach.



Above: Taiki Matekuare (centre) is pictured with Lindy Wharepapa, Integrity Services Field Officer (left) and Robyn Davis, Integrity Services Technical Officer. Taiki said, "The information provided by Lindy helped make the move from a benefit to employment much easier".

>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>



Above: Former client Shannan Jacobs, who has since enlisted in the NZ Army, took out the Limited Service Volunteers 'Outstanding Achievement Award'. Shannan is pictured with Tokoroa Case Manager, Celia Cowley.

Through the Approach clients are first assessed for their readiness to work, and move into one of three streams - those clients who are ready and able to seek employment, those who are able to work, but not immediately, and those for whom employment may not be an option for some time, if ever.

Our Job Search Service complements our New Service Approach. The Service focuses on re-attaching work-ready clients to the workforce. Over a 13-week period, clients receive support through a series of seminars which are tailored to their specific needs. Depending on the level of assistance needed, clients will be referred to seminars such as Search4WRK¹⁷ and In2WRK¹⁸.

As part of the Service, we meet regularly with clients to ensure they are getting the right level of support. Our goal is that all our clients entering the Service will find employment within 13 weeks. At the end of this period, remaining clients are re-assessed, and depending on their progress may return to the Service, or be referred to intensive one-on-one case management.

Clients who are ready and able to enter the workforce have their skills and abilities profiled and entered into a nationwide database. These profiles are then matched to available employment opportunities and clients with the right skills are referred to an employer. If successful in securing employment, we provide post-placement support to assist them to remain in work.

Clients who are not quite ready to enter the workforce are assessed, their challenges identified and resources applied to assist them in a rapid return to work. These may be clients who are caring for dependent children or experiencing ill health or a disability. We work alongside these clients through enhanced case management to develop Personal Development and Employment Plans and connect them to the appropriate services to help them realise their employment goals. Once they are ready to move into employment, we provide employment assistance to assist in their transition.

We also work with clients who will not be ready for some time, if ever, to enter the workforce. We provide assistance to move these clients onwards to self-sufficiency, ensure they have access to assistance from other agencies where appropriate and assist them to participate in their communities. In the meantime, until their circumstances change, we continue to provide financial assistance to them.

As part of this support, resources are available to assist case managers to refer clients to other government agencies, local organisations, training opportunities and support systems such as drug and alcohol assistance, housing assistance and budgetary advice.

17. Search4WRK is an employment search seminar for those clients that require a more structured level of job-search support. It is a group-based activity where clients have access to resources to help them find employment.

18. In2WRK is a one-week modular programme that aligns motivation and confidence into supported job-search activity and direct employment outcomes.

For those in our region who cannot work, or who are searching for work, we provide financial assistance which acts as a safety net. For clients who receive a benefit, it is important that they receive their correct entitlements. At the same time we will work to prevent and minimise debt and fraud. Debt can arise from the over-payment of a benefit and fraud involves a client's deliberate failure to disclose full information.

Our Integrity Services staff examine the situation of an individual who is receiving a benefit to ensure they are correctly receiving their full and correct entitlement. Receiving income support imposes obligations and responsibilities on our clients, as well as entitlements. We rely on our clients' honesty and voluntary compliance with their obligations. Our early intervention programmes are designed to ensure clients understand their responsibilities to us while receiving a benefit and know how to comply with them. We encourage them to advise us of changes in their circumstances so we can properly assess the assistance we provide, and where necessary, we supply information and advice on the management of debt.

The relationship between education, employment and the standard of living is well known. Continuing education is not the sole province of the young, and for our clients at any age, further education may be a viable and necessary path back to independence. The decision to move from a benefit to study can be difficult. Questions about the ability to fund study costs and survive while studying, or what suitable training options are available, are all valid considerations for our clients. StudyLink works with education providers and our clients to enable informed decisions to be made about their study choices. The StudyLink On Course programme has been extended to include a Work and Income module. The module is a presentation specifically designed for clients receiving a benefit who are considering study. We will begin delivering this during the coming year.

We are also re-focusing the programmes that we purchase from external providers to support our working-age people into sustainable employment opportunities. 'Way 2 Work', a new programme, will provide a menu of interventions that our case managers may select from, depending on the identified needs of an individual. These services will include:

- an assessment - vocational testing (psychological and drug, if required)
- a Work Plan
- employment coaching
- job-seeking skills

Never too late

After receiving a Domestic Purposes Benefit, on and off for 19 years, Julie Rameka has turned her life around and the results are amazing.

The Te Puke mother of 10 is now working full time for local kiwifruit contractor, Satara. She says her job has given her a whole new mindset which has led to a positive home environment for her children.

"It's boosted everything about me. Everyone has noticed it, even my eldest son", she said.

Julie was encouraged by her case manager to apply for work with Satara. She undertook a training course with the company prior to working, which she says helped her to gain pre-employment confidence.

Working has also helped alleviate the daily financial pressures. *"If I wasn't encouraged to apply for work, I'd still be struggling and applying for assistance with my bills", she said.*

Widening her social network has also been a positive outcome of Julie working. *"I have so many friends now. Before Satara, I only knew people from my family and my neighbour. I am really thankful to my case manager for giving me a whole new life".*

Te Puke Case Manager Tania Ephia said, *"Julie's new outlook and motivation to work has seen her become a positive role model for her family. Now her eldest children are either working or training to help the family. It's good to see the effect it is having on them all".*

Julie Rameka (right) celebrates her new job with Tania Ephia, Te Puke Case Manager.



>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>



Above: Our Business Sector Unit works directly with industries and key employers to help address skill and labour shortages through our Straight 2 Work training programmes. The training is designed for industry by industry. Pictured is the second group of clients from the Straight 2 Work Bus and Coach programme at Reesby's Depot.

- work experience
- placement into employment
- in work support
- financial literacy (including budgeting skills).

Some clients are unable to work because of treatable medical conditions. Rather than long-term dependence on a benefit, we aim to help clients receive early treatment and a return to full health.

In partnership with the Bay of Plenty District Health Board and two externally contracted service providers, we operate PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions). Clients in the Western Bay of Plenty who receive a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit and do not have immediate access to health care or health-related interventions through the public health system can be medically assessed through the programme and have their situations investigated to determine what healthcare options could speed their return to work. We fund appropriate treatment depending on the availability and potential of an intervention. Once their condition has been remedied, and they are ready to re-enter the workforce, the external placement service sources work opportunities and supports the client while they settle into employment.

Debt can seriously impact on a person's ability to participate in their community, live the lifestyle they wish, and achieve their long-term goals. Sometimes our clients can incur a debt while they are receiving a benefit. A debt to the Ministry can occur in a number of ways, perhaps through an overpayment when someone commences employment or goes overseas and forgets to tell us. Because of the financial situation that some of our clients are in, repaying the debt can be a problem. We identify clients with high debt and provide advice and support to them. By focusing on debt management and reduction while a client is receiving a benefit, we can minimise any debt problems once they commence work. By helping to make the rewards of moving into employment greater, we can encourage clients to stay in employment rather than returning to the benefit system.

The Working for Families package provides incentives and assistance for families to enter and remain in the workforce. Administered jointly through Work and Income and Inland Revenue, qualifying families with children can receive Tax Credits, assistance with accommodation costs and subsidies that make childcare more affordable. For many people, this package makes the transition from a benefit back into employment both economically rewarding and feasible. We will continue to promote Working for Families to our clients as they move into employment, as well as to those family members currently in employment.

In our region, there are 9,185 sole parents receiving a Domestic Purposes Benefit. Working for Families Tax Credits, coupled with Childcare Assistance and the Accommodation Supplement have been, and are expected to remain, effective mechanisms to support these clients into economically sustainable employment as, and when, their family circumstances allow.

We know that most people make their first contact with Work and Income through a contact centre. We will continue to expand the range of services that our contact centres directly provide to our clients.

Currently, a large proportion of a case manager's day is taken up with administrative functions, effectively reducing the amount of time available to work proactively with our clients. In order to provide more time for case managers to spend with clients, we will move some of our processing to central points.

Services such as 0800 Job Search¹⁹ and Service Express²⁰ allow clients to remotely access a range of services and information without the need to physically visit a Work and Income service centre. We will also continue to expand the multilingual services offered, to enhance our ability to communicate with our clients. Our outbound calling service will continue to make direct contact with clients, allowing us to discuss work opportunities, arrange appointments and ensure that clients are receiving appropriate levels of support. We will continue to explore how the role of the Contact Centre can be enhanced as new technology and processes are developed.

Services to employers

When a client is prepared and able to work, we can help to profile them to employers, and assist in their job search. By assisting employers we are able to secure opportunities for our clients. Through our partnerships with industry and employers, we work to provide services that assist clients to achieve sustainable employment.

Today's labour market presents us with a new set of labour market challenges. The increasing demand for skilled labour, has seen our focus move away from finding jobs for workers, to finding workers for jobs.

Central to our success in achieving sustainable employment outcomes is our ability to match clients to what employers want. At a time when skill and labour shortages are hampering the ability of some businesses to operate and grow, we are able to offer a 'one-stop-shop' for employers to recruit, both inside and outside of our region. At the same time as we provide employers with candidates that meet their needs, we can provide our clients with referrals to vacancies which match their skills, and increase both parties' chances of a successful employment outcome.

"We look forward to ongoing collaboration with Work and Income, New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated, the Accident Compensation Corporation and the Department of Labour through the governance group in addressing our needs as contractors".

Mat Johnston
Chairperson
Kiwifruit Contractors Association
Te Puke

19. 0800 Job Search will use contact-centre technology, to provide a free telephone job-search service for clients.

20. Service Express is a contact option for our clients that allows them to check their payment or debt details, or tell us securely about their earnings.

>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>

Sometimes an employer needs a new staff member, but is economically unable to take them on. They may need time for their business to expand to fully use the extra capacity a new worker supplies or a particular candidate may need training before they are fully productive. In some cases a person may have medical issues which require physical alterations to the workplace to enable them to function in the job. Depending on the situation, we can offer to subsidise their wages while these issues are being worked through. By doing so, we assist the employer to gain a needed resource and we assist our clients back into the workforce and into independence.

To minimise the disruption to employers who have taken on new staff, and encourage our clients to adhere to their

benefit obligations, we visit employers where we see a high risk that clients may fail to promptly advise us of the change in their employment status. In these circumstances the new employee risks incurring a debt as a result of a benefit overpayment. This year we will be working closely with the kiwifruit industry. We will provide information packs explaining how a client can cancel their benefit, as well as information about the additional assistance available to clients who start work, and about on-going financial assistance such as the Community Services Card and Working for Families. By helping to ensure that work is profitable for new employees, we also help employers to retain their new staff.

Our Integrity Services staff deliver presentations to external agencies

and community groups who also work with our clients. We provide messages about correct entitlements, minimising overpayments and the creation of debt. We also talk about additional products and services which are available to enable a client to move away from dependence on a benefit and into sustainable employment.

Our contact centres also have an enhanced role to play in providing services to employers. In particular we will enhance our Employer Line which allows employers to register vacancies with us. As well as being able to take vacancies, our staff will be able to perform talent searches to source suitable candidates.



Above: The Kiwifruit Action initiative was established to help Sickness and Invalid's Benefit clients find employment in the kiwifruit industry. Participant Jessie Watkins (seated) is pictured from left with Arlene Foster of Turning Point Trust; Annie Ross, Local Industry Partnership Advisor; and Sandy Scarrow of Fruition Training.

Addressing issues in the labour market

In our region there currently exists a mismatch between the communities with significant levels of unemployment, and those with significant opportunities for work. We believe there is a need to help foster opportunities in some of our community's labour markets, especially those that are rural and isolated in nature. We need to help the communities and employers bridge the gap between labour supply and demand.

To ensure that we create opportunities for working-age people, we must identify skill and labour shortages, and provide opportunities for our clients to fill them. As part of this approach we fund TOPS training programmes through the Tertiary Education Commission. The specific courses offered have been chosen to fill identified skill shortages in our region's labour market.

Our enterprising communities advisors will continue to work with non-profit organisations within our local communities to encourage job creation and enterprise development. Particular focus will remain on creating opportunities in communities with high unemployment and limited economic development.

Working in partnership with local industries and community groups, our Labour Market Development team will focus on identifying and developing tailored solutions to local skill and labour shortages.

Last year, in partnership with the Waipapa 9 Trust, the Tuaropaki Farming Trust, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Tertiary Education Commission and the Agricultural Industry Training Organisation we established a six-week residential programme to teach basic farming skills to a group of nine cadets. The cadets work towards achieving a Level 3 National Certificate in Agriculture, and develop the skills necessary to obtain trainee farm manager positions.



Left: The City Care Pre-apprenticeship Work Skills programme provides young people with opportunities to move through a variety of construction, maintenance and management trades with the expectation that they will move into an apprenticeship upon completion.

Photo courtesy of City Care.

The programme resulted from discussions with the two Trusts who had foreseen a shortage of young people in the region entering the farming profession. The Trusts also identified the need to develop the higher skill levels required for the cadets to succeed the existing managers as they near retirement.

Seasonal labour issues

One of our major areas of labour shortage is in the supply of seasonal workers for the kiwifruit harvesting season. The industry estimates that we currently have a shortfall of 700 to 1,000 workers. This work is primarily located in the Western Bay of Plenty, away from the communities where we have significant levels of unemployment. Traditionally, low-wage rates coupled with the irregular working hours, the lack of affordable and accessible childcare, adequate and affordable transport, and long travel times have made it difficult and uneconomic for workers outside the local area to travel to those jobs.

We collaborate with the industry to supply workers from outside of the Western Bay of Plenty by subsidising transport to make travel to kiwifruit pack houses and contractor's pick-up locations viable for workers. In 2006/2007 we helped to provide transport for workers from Kawerau, Whakatane, Te Kaha and Rotorua. Depending on demand, we expect to do so again this year.

By working with the kiwifruit industry we can address their needs as they are identified. In partnership with New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated, we jointly fund a Seasonal Labour Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator also services potential workers and sources potential accommodation providers. The role acts as a primary contact for overseas visitors who require assistance with immigration issues before they can work, and is a point of contact for potential workers who are interested in working during the season.

Because of the extent of the current labour shortages, and the economic advantages for the region from the industry, we have in the past facilitated access to seasonal work for immigrant labour. Unless conditions change over the next year, we expect that this situation will need to continue.

By supporting our working-age people in the search for work and by promoting opportunities and pathways to independence, we aim to help our people and their families to fully participate and share in the benefits that their communities can offer. We promote independence and self-reliance, and in so doing, help our people to reach their full potential.

“Work Ethic Residential Training (WERT) and Youth Extreme are Bay of Plenty Work and Income initiatives aimed at reducing income support dependency. Both programmes target unemployed young people and also intercept young people who have disengaged from learning, training or employment. Both programmes have proved to be very effective in pursuing the goals set by the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs and the Youth Transition Services”.

*Richard Cairns
Chief Executive
Premier Personnel Development*

Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

Older people have valuable skills, the benefit of a lifetime's experience to offer and are major contributors to our communities.

The theme of Positive Ageing is what guides our work around our older people for the immediate future. As the lead agency for Positive Ageing under the Government's priority of Families - Young and Old, we aim to ensure that older people are supported to remain a part of their communities, are supported to remain in the workforce if they choose, enjoy a secure and adequate standard of living, are safe from abuse and harm and have access to information and services when they need them.

Nationally, our Office for Senior Citizens leads the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy²¹. The Strategy involves government agencies and organisations working together to develop a common framework for policy development on issues affecting older people, and a plan for implementing them.

We have already discussed our expectations of population growth among older people in our region. Looking forward, we need to prepare for this growth, and the impacts it will have on our social landscape. The resulting changes in our region's population mix, the proportion of older people, and their need for services, present challenges that we must meet.

While 73% of our older client population live in the region's major centres, a quarter live in our smaller, rural communities. Half of our older Māori clients live in these smaller communities. We must plan for, and ensure that they have equal access to the services and opportunities that they are due.

Remaining independent

Our older people can be financially vulnerable. Out of the workforce, their average incomes are lower and their opportunities to supplement them are limited. At the same time they can face increasing medical and transport costs, mobility restrictions and increasing social isolation. Many of them find themselves more vulnerable, and less able to recover from the adverse events of life.

The most basic initiative we can deliver to our older people is to ensure that they receive all the forms of financial support they are entitled to. This goes beyond the payment of New Zealand Superannuation or a Veterans Pension. Depending on their circumstances, they may be entitled to a range of additional support, including a Disability Allowance, a War Disablement Pension, a Living-Alone Payment, a Residential Care Subsidy, an Accommodation Supplement, or the Temporary Additional



Left: Norman Bell, who graduated from the first Straight 2 Work Bus and Coach programme, takes Local Industry Partnership Advisor Annie Ross for a ride in his Bayline bus.

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

Support Allowance. We will ensure our older clients are aware of the assistance available, and remove hurdles that might make it difficult for them to seek and apply for extra help.

War Pension Services administers war pensions and the payment of medical and treatment costs incurred by war disablement pensioners in respect of their war disability. Over 1,600 people in the Bay of Plenty receive some form of war pension.

Our staff are trained to specifically work with our older people, to be aware of the range of assistance available to them or connect them to someone else who can help them. During the coming year, we will visit rest homes and retirement facilities throughout the region to provide residents with an opportunity to access entitlement information and ask any questions. We will distribute information pamphlets to organisations who also provide services to older people so that our support information is more widely accessible. Our overall goal is to empower our older people to be aware of, and to review, the assistance they are receiving.

Through our International Services we assist older people to access their international social security entitlements, and enable them to take some or all of their New Zealand Superannuation or Veterans Pension with them if they choose to live elsewhere in the world.

As part of our goal to support our older people to live independently in the community, we have traditionally run quarterly KIN (Keeping Independent Now) seminars in conjunction with other local community agencies. These seminars are designed to raise awareness of the services that will assist older people to retain their independence, and provide them with opportunities to network and share information and resources. As part of our drive to assist them to remain in the workforce, we will ensure local labour market opportunities and information is made available as part of these seminars.

We engage with our communities to help find ways to enable our older people to continue to enjoy social linkages within their

The right therapy for success

Ken Gibson is grateful for Work and Income's Enterprise Allowance Subsidy and Enterprise Allowance Grant for helping him to set up his own remedial therapy business in Tauranga.

The Enterprise Allowance Grant is a lump-sum payment available for capitalisation of essential start-up costs and the Enterprise Allowance Subsidy is a temporary subsidy available to clients entering self employment while their business is being established. To be eligible for either payment, clients are expected to prepare a business plan which is then independently assessed. It is also expected the client will eventually support themselves in the business.

Ken suffers from Type 2 diabetes and had a hip operation in 2004 which forced him to give up work as a remedial therapist and move onto a Sickness Benefit. He is enjoying being back at work and is keen to grow his business.

With his services already in demand as one of a handful of specialised Lymphatic Drainage and Fibromyalgia Pain Relief Practitioners in the area, the 62-year old wants to slowly build up his client base to about five or six people a day.

Ken, who is President of the Massage Institute of New Zealand, is also looking at offering training in specialised areas of remedial therapy to other massage practitioners.

At present he is working with a local hospice and finds this work very rewarding.



community. An example of this is the SAGES programme. Run in three locations in our region, the programme matches older volunteers with families who have a need for the life skills our older people can provide. Not only does this help our older people to remain engaged in their communities, but it also helps develop our younger families, providing them with access to skills such as home management, cooking, budgeting and parenting.

Enjoying a secure and adequate standard of living

Older people can experience higher than average medical costs coupled with lower than average incomes. The Community Services Card provides access to subsidies on doctor's fees, prescriptions and to some health services from public hospitals. We will ensure those clients who qualify can access Community Services Card entitlements.

During the latter part of 2007, we will also launch the SuperGold Card. Available to all people over 65 years of age, the Card is a government initiative that facilitates access to concessions on central government and local authority services, commercial discounts on everyday goods and services from participating businesses, and provides a form of photo ID for those people who choose to have their photo on their Card. We will also produce a directory and website which will list all concessions and discounts available to Card holders.

The SuperGold Card will replace the Community Services Card (for those aged 65 and over) and the Super Card. Older people who currently hold these cards will be able to access their entitlements through the SuperGold Card.

In partnership with Energy Options in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, we also contribute to a programme which aims to insulate sub-standard homes for our older people. The aim of the programme is to improve health outcomes, standards of living and reduce heating bills for qualifying clients. In addition, we actively promote Work and Income's Essential Home Repairs Advance, which allows people who receive a benefit to access up to \$1,000 for home repairs.

Helping our older people to stay in employment

Many older people wish to remain in employment beyond the traditional retirement age. They bring a lifetime of skills, experience and work ethic to their employment. In our region, where we experience high levels of skill and labour shortages, there are increasing opportunities for older people to remain in work. This is positive for the individual and means employers can retain their skills and knowledge. Our staff actively partner with both employers, training organisations and the community to assist older people into paid employment. We will ensure work opportunities are advertised on



Above: Doreen Cosgrove (left) and Vada Dobbyn watch on as families gather for the opening of Tokoroa's new community playground.

"While in Rotorua I built up a good relationship with the former Rotorua War Pensions team and this relationship has developed positively over the years. I have discovered that my goals to help my veteran friends are the same as theirs. Trusted advice is only an 0800 number away. It takes a team to serve a veteran in need".

Gavin Nicol
Vietnam veteran

"Thank you for your letters advising we will now receive a pension for Colin which will give us a net increase between us. We are very grateful for all the hard work and caring which you put into this application, and we want you to know that it is very much appreciated. The increase will make a big difference to our ability to cope."

*June Webb
New Zealand Superannuitant
Mount Maunganui*

notice boards in our New Zealand Superannuation Centres and we will provide equivalent access to our training and job-search programmes to help them find work. For older people who secure employment, we will provide a dedicated in-work support programme to help them and their employer settle into the employment situation, and help address any difficulties that may arise.

Improving the delivery of services

We have previously signalled a need to reassess the way we provide a service to our older people. Given our changing demographics, especially with the projected growth in our older population, and their increasing centralisation in specific communities, we will, in consultation with communities, continue to develop long-term plans to ensure we are delivering services to these older people where, when and how they are needed.

Part of the role of our Senior Services group is to facilitate our older people's access to information. Working through web sites, fact sheets, presentations and community expos we will improve their access to information they need. By improving the way and variety of information we deliver, we help to empower our older people to make decisions about independent living, about support options and about the life decisions that they must make.

Preventing elder abuse

Studies indicate that between three and ten percent of older people suffer some form of abuse²². This can take many forms; physical, emotional and financial to name just a few. Where our older people are socially isolated or dependent on others, the risk that they will be vulnerable to abuse may be increased.

The principles and practices of our Family Violence Intervention Programme apply equally to our older people. At some point during the year, our case managers have contact with the majority of our region's older population. By training them to recognise the symptoms of elder abuse, and providing them with the resources to help our older people, we are able to build an element of protection into our regular dealings with them.

We have also discussed our plans to help our older people remain a part of their community. By helping to reduce their social isolation, we increase our ability to detect abuse and act upon it. By increasing their confidence and independence, we aim to give them the strength and support to say 'No!'

During the coming year, our family violence response co-ordinators will present elder abuse information during our KIN seminars. We will also prepare an information handout and provide contact details as part of our information and awareness programmes, to help empower our older people.

22. 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

Our communities in the Bay of Plenty are diverse. They range from isolated, rural populations with limited opportunities, a lack of access to services and high unemployment, to expanding metropolitan communities with abundant access to services, skill and labour shortages - and every combination in between. Every community is affected by individual combinations of need, opportunity, resources, potential growth, types of economic activity, available government services and ethnic and cultural influences.

The people who live in these communities are individuals, whose needs and situations are even more diverse. We cannot be aware of all the possible mixes of social need throughout the region, nor can we design 'cookie cutter' solutions to fit every possible situation. The needs of individual communities must shape the responses we offer to them.

We actively seek, and embrace opportunities to work with community-based social services to design and deliver our responses to social development. We cannot succeed in serving our communities without a focus on delivering services to their local needs, and the networks and local knowledge to tailor and target service delivery and more effectively help our people.

With the aid of local providers we can efficiently deliver social programmes which respond to a community's individual circumstances, aspirations, assets and problems. In so doing we can provide solutions that are effective and efficient.



Above: Marking the official commencement of the Matata community Moving Forward Plan is newly appointed community psychologist Kellie Spee (centre) with Anthony Olsen, Matata Resource Centre Chairperson and Susan Jolley, Social Development Manager.

Building strong partnerships

We are involved in a disaster recovery/community revitalisation project within the community of Matata. The community was devastated by extensive flooding in mid 2005, resulting in the destruction of their community infrastructure, reduced house values which impacted on community cohesiveness, and the need for extensive public works to guard against a recurrence. In collaboration with the local community, the Whakatane District Council and other agencies, we are working to develop and implement a community plan to address these issues. Many of these issues are still being worked through, and we remain committed to our involvement over the long-term.

Local Services Mapping is a consultative and collaborative process which enables communities to identify their needs, and the social services that are available in their area. In each community, we work in conjunction with a Local Management Group, to develop an action plan that addresses the needs identified within that community. Local and central government agencies, and other groups work together to achieve a future that the community wants. This mapping process was completed in selected communities over the last year. The K-Oper-8 project

launched in Kawerau is an example of an action plan which was developed and is being implemented as a result. In the coming year, we expect to complete Local Services Mapping in Opotiki, the Western Bay of Plenty and Taupo Territorial Authorities. Over the next three years, we expect to have completed the exercise nationally across all territorial authorities.

The Offender Re-integration Programme: Improving Employment Outcomes is a joint initiative with the Department of Corrections to facilitate the re-integration of prisoners back into their communities upon release. Through the Programme, case managers and work brokers work in the region's prisons to assist prisoners prior to their release. We can assist with housing, arrange financial support, organise bank accounts and identification, and source employment opportunities. By easing an offender's re-entry into society, we reduce the stresses that can encourage recidivism, and the social impacts that accompany it.

During the last year, we have co-operated with local agencies on the Healthy Homes project in Tauranga, Turangi and Rotorua. Through the project, Energy Options, installs insulation in older

Murupara Moving on

The Murupara Moving On project, which has received funding through Work and Income, Family and Community Services and Enterprising Communities has taken a huge step forward with the first residential house being painted as part of its Housing Revitalisation project.

The project is part of the community's desire to rejuvenate the town.

Eighty-year old Lucy Ruri's house was the first to be painted. *"I'm really happy. I've waited about 20 years for this"*, she said.

Network Murupara Chairperson Joe Doherty (pictured) said, as he put the first coat of paint on Lucy's house, *"This is a key milestone for the town but there is still a lot of hard mahi to come"*.

Seniors and kaumātua are the first of five priority groups who will have maintenance work carried out on the interior and exterior of their homes.



homes, particularly belonging to low-income earners who have a history of respiratory problems. We will continue to seek opportunities to expand our involvement with the Healthy Homes project.

Developing our communities

We believe the greatest understanding of a community's issues resides in the community itself. We will continue to support local community initiatives which support the social development of our people.

Some of our smaller and more remote communities experience difficulty accessing government services, simply because many agencies do not have a local presence. To ensure equitable access to essential services, we operate our Heartland Services. These are one-stop-shops, where a range of agencies who do not have a local office can be contacted. There are currently five Heartland Service Centres in our region. In addition, we operate outreach services, where a number of different agencies synchronise periodic visits to provide a face-to-face service in our more remote communities. Currently outreach services are provided in the communities of Te Puke and Katikati.

We support and help fund a range of family-oriented community projects, which focus on support mechanisms, and are designed to build a community's strength. Examples of this are the 11 budget support services which we contribute funding to throughout the region. Not only do these services directly assist our people to manage their incomes, and learn money management skills, but they help alert us to developing trends and problem areas. Through these services we have become aware of trends such as easy access to credit, a growing number of gambling-related cases, and a need for increased numbers of full money management programmes (especially among the mental health community). We will continue to fund budget support services in the coming year.

Our enterprising communities advisors have access to project funding and resources for community projects that provide both economic and social benefits. An example of this funding is the Sustainable Events Opotiki project. This project is a joint venture between the Ministry, the Whakatohea Māori Trust Board and the Opotiki District Council to fund an Events Co-ordinator for three years. The Co-ordinator's role is to identify, grow and develop four new projects, with a view to increasing the length of time visitors spend in the community.

This will help to develop sufficient tourism-led demand for the community shopping centre to stay open at weekends, and generate an increase in the community's gross domestic product by an estimated \$1million per year. In a community with one of the lowest average yearly wage rates in the region, this is expected to drive employment opportunities and serve to increase local access to services.



Above: Family and Community Services Relationship Manager Carol Buckley presents Kawerau District Council Mayor Malcolm Campbell with the Kawerau Local Services Mapping Report.

"The Department of Internal Affairs has established a collaborative working relationship with the Ministry of Social Development. This relationship has progressed significantly to the stage where, as agencies, we are able to provide an immediate joint service in community development initiatives in Murupara and Matata. This joint service approach is recognised by the communities we serve as being beneficial in that it offers a one-stop-consultation approach for funding planning and monitoring".

Zoe Brown
Department of Internal Affairs
Waiariki/Bay of Plenty

>> Partnering with our Communities >>

“Local Services Mapping and the establishment of the K-Oper-8 group has provided the opportunity for the Council to take on a real community leadership role in respect of cross-sectoral collaboration. Communication between government agencies and the community has become clearer, and we have developed strong relationships that allow us to be creative in using community strengths to address community issues”.

Malcolm Campbell
Mayor
Kawerau District Council

Throughout the region, there are four main youth worker networks. The Ministry of Youth Development staff regularly liaise with these networks, providing advice, support, and a link to the National Youth Workers Network. We have also helped to source training based on their individual, identified community needs - an example being the Keepin' it Real - Youth Participation Workshop run in Tauranga during 2006/2007. We will continue to seek opportunities to work with these and other groups.

In Tokoroa, we are currently a member of the Youth Strategy Group, along with the South Waikato District Council, young people and community members. The Group's goal is to develop a youth strategy and implementation plan for the South Waikato District Council to involve their local community in youth issues and youth development in the District. We will continue our involvement with this Group to assist local people to develop a local solution for positive youth development and activities in the area.

We believe the knowledge and input of our local communities is essential to shape effective local solutions to local problems. By empowering and involving our communities in the formation, implementation and operation of the social initiatives that affect them, we will produce better and more workable results for everyone.

Right: The Whirinaki Mountain Bike Track was developed as part of a 10-year plan to rebuild the Minginui and Murupara communities after the areas were badly affected by the collapse of the forestry industry in the 1970's. Pictured from left, Henry Weston, Barbara Browne and Trisha Sutton from the Department of Conservation prepare to cycle the track with Susan Jolley, Social Development Manager.



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 (4 Regional Offices); Working Age Peoples' Policy; Child, Family and Community Policy; Older Peoples' Policy; International Relations.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Work and Income

11 Regional Offices; 148 Service Centres; 46 Outreach Centres; 5 Contact Centres (which includes a Multi-lingual Contact Centre).

Child, Youth and Family

4 Regional Offices; 12 Service Centres; 52 Sites; 1 Contact Centre; 3 Specialist Service Units; 7 Secure Residences for children and young people in youth justice or care and protection.

Specialist Services

StudyLink (which includes 6 Outreach Offices plus numerous campus services, 2 Contact Centres and 1 Processing Centre); Senior Services (including Community Services Card; International Services; War Pension Services); Integrity Services.

Family and Community Services

4 Regional Offices;
Co-ordination of 32 Heartland Services.

CORPORATE

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.

Risk and Assurance

Internal Audit, Risk Management, Internal Fraud, Security.

Ministry of Youth Development promotes the interests of young people aged between 12 and 24 years. Our goal is that young people are valued, nurtured, and challenged to reach their full potential. We listen to the views of young people, analyse information and statistics, provide services and broker solutions for young people.

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.

Child, Youth and Family helps those children and young people who are abused or neglected, or who commit offences. We work with their families to help make them safe or to keep them from re-offending. We also provide adoption 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.

Senior Services includes administration of the Community Services Card, which gives people access to lower cost health care; the SuperGold Card, for people over 65 years and veterans; 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.

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

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.

Ministry of Social Development

Regional Office

Level 2

1207 Pukuatua Street

Rotorua

www.msd.govt.nz

Community Services Card

0800 999 999

Child, Youth and Family

www.cyf.govt.nz

0508 326459

Family and Community Services

www.familyservices.govt.nz

Integrity Services

0800 558 008 (Debt Enquiries)

0800 556 006 (Allegation Line)

International Services

0800 777 117

Ministry of Youth Development

www.myd.govt.nz

StudyLink

www.studylink.govt.nz

0800 88 99 00

SuperGold Card

0800 25 45 65

War Pension Services

0800 553 003

Work and Income

www.workandincome.govt.nz

0800 559 009

