

Leading Social Development in **CANTERBURY**

Regional Plan 2007 > 2008





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



Cover Photos

Top Left:

Children playing together.

Bottom Left:

Barista training provides excellent employment opportunities in the hospitality industry.

Right:

Young people learn new skills on an employment preparation and life skills programme.

Leading Social Development

A PLAN FOR CANTERBURY 2007/2008



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Achieving Better Social Outcomes Together

I am pleased to introduce the Ministry's 2007/2008 Regional Plan for the Canterbury 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 Canterbury region!



Peter Hughes
Chief Executive



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

Opportunities for Action in Canterbury

The Canterbury region is unique as it contains New Zealand's second most populated city, Christchurch, while being surrounded by a number of thriving rural towns. This long-standing co-existence and inter-dependence of urban and rural communities, has contributed to a prosperous and diverse economy, with low rates of unemployment, and high rates of labour force participation.

Our region extends south from the Conway River to the Rangitata River in South Canterbury. It stretches from the Pacific Ocean to near the middle of the South Island at Arthur's Pass.

Our large and diverse population mirrors our geography with approximately half a million people living within our regional boundaries. Of the region's population, 33,000 identify as Māori, 347,000 as European, 60,000 as New Zealander, 10,000 as Pacific, 28,000 as Asian, and approximately 3,200 as Middle Eastern, Latin American or African descent². Christchurch City has growing numbers of new migrants and refugees, while Ashburton has seen a growth in its Pacific population.

There are currently just over 62,000 people aged 65 years and over living in our region and this is projected to rise to 112,000 in 2026³.

The region's economy is based on a mix of manufacturing, agriculture, retail trade, finance, property and business services, and construction.

As at March 2007, our region's labour force participation rate was at 71% and our unemployment rate was 3.4%⁴. We are ahead of the national average in both areas, highlighting a prosperous economy.



Above: Canterbury service line managers meet to co-ordinate and align work programmes. This ensures consistent and clear communication on key messages and strategies to all staff and external stakeholders.

2. *Census of Population and Dwellings*, Census 2006, Statistics New Zealand.
3. *Subnational Population Projections: 2001-2026*, Statistics New Zealand.
4. *Household Labour Force Survey*, 31 March 2007, Statistics New Zealand.

>> Opportunities for Action in Canterbury >>

Our focus

Our Ministry's vision is of an inclusive New Zealand where everyone is able to participate in the social and economic life of their communities.

Our *Statement of Intent*⁵ highlights six key outcome areas:

- Leading social development
- Children and young people
- Working-age people
- Older people
- Families, whānau
- Communities, hapū, iwi.

The Ministry of Social Development includes a number of separate but integrated service lines. Child, Youth and Family,

Family and Community Services, Integrity Services, the Ministry of Youth Development, Senior Services, StudyLink, and Work and Income, all work together to contribute to improving outcomes in each of these areas.

The Government has identified three key priorities for inter-agency work over the next 10 years; these are Families - Young and Old, Economic Transformation and National Identity. We are the lead agency for progressing the Families - Young and Old priority and have an important role to play in actively supporting other agencies in contributing to our region's economic transformation and national identity.

*The Social Report*⁶ enables us to understand the challenges that people in our region face and what we can do to make a real difference. *The Report* also allows us to: observe social and economic changes, monitor improvements in key facets of life, and compare New Zealand to other countries.

Standing tall

Whakatu Rangatahi, or Helping Youth Stand Tall, is a new youth service course run by Te Ora Hou Ōtautahi. The course, sponsored by the Ministry of Youth Development, is well into its first year and caters predominantly for young Māori people from the north and east of Christchurch.

Whakatu Rangatahi has a strong focus on local community involvement and aims to provide positive outcomes for the participants as well as seeking to teach new skills, encourage positive decision-making and provide opportunities for serving others.

Seventeen-year old Benji Walker recently attended the course. *"I did so many new things such as cooking, eeling and planting trees. I've enjoyed meeting heaps of new people and have decided to do the second course because I still believe there's so much more I can learn"*, he said.

Benji's most memorable time was tramping for five days on the St James Walkway. *"The scenery was awesome and just living off a little bit of food made it more challenging"*, he said.

Benji has taken on the responsibility of helping plan activities and helps youth workers at a local intermediate school instructing students in break dancing. He also mentors Te

Ora Hou Boys' Club rangatahi in a weekly activity programme. Benji's future aims include obtaining his drivers' licence and establishing his own music group.

Pictured are Benji Walker (left) and Kodi Warbrick laying carpet for the Easter Youth Camp in Spencer Park.



5. *Safe families, successful communities, strong New Zealand: Statement of Intent 2007/2008*, Ministry of Social Development.

6. *The Social Report 2006*, Ministry of Social Development.



Above: Integrity Services staff talk to Limited Service Volunteer participants about their responsibilities when receiving income assistance from Work and Income.

As a region, we face challenges that are common to a number of other areas in New Zealand such as how to address identified skill and labour shortages, promote healthy eating and exercise, and eliminate family violence. However, there are a number of challenges that are unique to the region.

The increasing cost of electricity impacts on the ability of some Cantabrians to adequately heat their homes during winter months. Living in a cold, damp home can adversely affect health, which may have an influence on a person's ability to work or attend school. We will continue to work with a number of stakeholders to assist our clients to better manage these costs.

Health and social service agencies working with young people have indicated that Christchurch City has a lack of emergency accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds. We will continue to work together with external partners to get a better understanding of the extent of this issue and seek possible solutions.

Given the number of correctional facilities in Canterbury, the release of prisoners presents our communities with challenges. In order to improve outcomes for this group, the Department of Corrections and Work and Income have developed an Offender Re-integration Programme: Improving Employment Outcomes. This aims to support prisoners to rejoin their communities and find sustainable employment upon release. We expect that assisting these people into quality sustainable employment will contribute to a reduction in re-offending.

"The New Zealand Conservation Trust is confident that with the help we have received from Enterprising Communities that our Great Spotted Kiwi project will grow from strength to strength."

Janet Hellyer
Trust Manager
New Zealand Conservation Trust

>> Opportunities for Action in Canterbury >>

"The West Coast Youth Workers' Collective would like to express their gratitude to the Ministry of Youth Development (Southern Region) for visiting and facilitating the 'Keepin' it Real' workshop. Trystan Swain did an excellent job and we would love to have him back some time. It is really good to see that the Ministry of Youth Development is supporting youth workers in this way."

Julie Griffiths
Co-ordinator

West Coast Youth Workers Collective

Canterbury has a large and complex labour market involving a variety of stakeholders. To ensure information is shared across agencies and that areas for joint action are quickly identified, this year a labour market governance structure has been established. We participate in this important forum through our Labour Market Development team.

Local Services Mapping has been completed, or nearly completed, for Waimakariri, Selwyn, and Ashburton, three of the six territorial authorities that comprise the Canterbury District. A number of common themes, such as a lack of information and services in rural and remote communities, and family violence have emerged through the process. Work is currently underway to address these issues.

In 2006, the New Zealand Police identified a small number of family groups who had a high number of family members involved in illegal activities. We are currently working with them and a number of other government organisations to help improve outcomes for these families in both the short and long term.

We are also focused on ensuring that people receiving income support who move into study or training are well supported and do not inadvertently incur any debt.

Cantabrians who face social and economic adversity are usually affected by complex and inter-dependent factors. The Government recognises that to make significant reductions in disadvantage, government agencies must not only work together, but they must work in partnership with the voluntary sector, non-government organisations, communities, hapū and iwi. We will continue to actively seek opportunities that align with our strategic priorities and work in partnership with others to improve the lives of our region's people.

Moving Forward

It is with pleasure that I present to you the Ministry of Social Development's 2007/2008 Regional Plan for Canterbury.

It is pleasing to see a range of indicators that highlight that things are going well in our region. *The 2006 Social Report* paints a generally positive picture of the Canterbury region, where we score very well, or reasonably well, across nearly all of the social indicators. Our unemployment and labour force participation rates are also very optimistic. These positive statistics are the result of hard work by many people, organisations, community groups, and communities and I would like to sincerely thank all those who have worked with the Ministry to ensure that Canterbury's economic and social environment is in good shape.

I also wish to acknowledge our staff whose passion, determination, skill, and experience have been a key ingredient in our success. In different ways each of us are working towards similar goals, transforming our country into a high income, knowledge-based economy providing a unique quality of life for all. We need to continue our efforts to further improve economic and social outcomes for our people.

The recent merger with Child, Youth and Family presents us with a number of opportunities to use the expertise and resources of all our service lines to bring the benefits of a social development approach to a larger group of our clients. The capacity in our Regional Office has also been increased and this will assist us to have a more visible role in the Canterbury community.

This last year has been busy and as we look to the future I'm inspired by the number of innovations that lie ahead. To illustrate some of these: we are implementing significant changes to our Work and Income services to ensure that all people who are able to work are actively assisted into sustainable employment. Improvements are also planned to the way we work with employers and industry. We are also making changes to our Youth Justice services and are confident that these changes will lead to a reduction in young people who re-offend.

We have invested in increased service co-ordination for teen parents and their children, which will ensure that teenage parents are able to access and use the support services that are available to help them and their children. To provide an opportunity for young people to have their voices heard we are working with others to establish a Youth Council for Christchurch.

You will find more detailed information on these innovations, and others, outlined throughout this Plan.

All of our work supports the Government's long-term vision for New Zealand which is to be a strong economic performer and an inclusive society where all people have the opportunity to fulfill their potential, prosper, and participate in their communities.

Only by working together on opportunities presented to us in our region will we make this vision a reality.



John Henderson

Regional Commissioner for Social Development



Leading Social Development

Social development is about enhancing the wellbeing of all our people across a range of areas such as health, education, and employment.

As a concept, social development comprises two key aspects - social protection and social investment. Social protection is focused on ensuring that New Zealanders who face adversity have access to the resources and help they require. Social investment is about providing people and communities with the resources and support to help build on their strengths so that they can achieve their potential, be successful and participate in the life of their communities.

In Canterbury, all of our day-to-day work helps to develop our communities. Many of the work programmes discussed in this Plan involve other central and local government agencies and community organisations. We are committed to working in a co-ordinated, responsive and respectful manner with all our partners. The need to co-operate recognises that no single entity can improve social wellbeing and tackle complex social and economic problems alone. A collaborative approach is required to 'nip issues in the bud', reduce disadvantage, promote opportunity for all, and support individuals, families and communities to take responsibility for their own wellbeing.

"We find StudyLink staff friendly, approachable and willing to assist us as required".

Regina Oakeshott
Team Leader
Financial Services Department
Canterbury University



Above: Our close working relationships with advocacy groups ensure that everyone is informed of the services available to assist mutual clients. Pictured during one of their regular meetings are members of the Canterbury Advocacy Group.

The Government's priority of Families - Young and Old is about ensuring that economic, social, cultural, and environmental policy combine to ensure that our country is a place in which families are supported to be safe, secure, and healthy, so that members can reach their full potential and have a stake in the future of New Zealand. It is a unique approach to social policy that focuses on prevention rather than reaction, identifying all of the factors that contribute to difficulties early. It relies on comprehensive intervention, tailored responses and supporting self sufficiency, and acknowledging the importance of transition points.

We are responsible for leading the themes of Strong Families and Positive Ageing that sit under this priority. Strong Families aims to ensure that all families have the assistance they need to be secure and achieve their life aspirations and potential. Positive Ageing aims to support older New Zealanders to live safe, secure, healthy and productive lives.

The Christchurch Social Policy Inter-agency Network

With the Families - Young and Old theme of Strong Families firmly in mind, the Christchurch Social Policy Inter-agency Network (CSPIN) continues to improve outcomes for young people and families facing serious adversity.

CSPIN, chaired by our Regional Commissioner, is a network of senior Christchurch-based managers from a number of government agencies, the Canterbury District Health Board and the Christchurch City Council. All CSPIN member organisations are focused on delivering social, civil, health, economic, or justice services and programmes to Cantabrians.

The CSPIN Collaborative Plan for Christchurch Youth 2007-2010 is the continuation of work that commenced in 2002. The Plan has identified three key areas affecting the young people of Christchurch that members will focus their resources on over the next three years.

The first priority is to provide comprehensive inter-agency interventions that will assist high-need families and will improve the social, educational, economic and health outcomes for all families, young and old.

The second priority is to ensure that young people are accountable for their offending, so that its frequency and severity is reduced. Addressing the needs of victims is also considered in this priority.

The third priority is to improve youth safety and health, as well as offering support for youth health centres, teenage parents, street workers, and homeless young people.

The Plan offers examples of the programmes and services that CSPIN members currently deliver under these priority areas. CSPIN members report on their progress in contributing to each priority every six months.

Successful outcomes in these three priority areas should lead to improvements in wellbeing for Christchurch's young people and the community overall.

"The Youth Council is an opportunity to represent the true voice and opinions of young people in this city. The Youth Council will not only advocate for the interest of the diversity of young people, but it will also allow a forum for them to highlight issues that are unique to their own area's of living, lifestyles and cultures"

Melissa Stanley
Community Advisor
Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs

In addition to the Youth Plan, work has begun on the development of an inter-agency strategy to improve the overall wellbeing of families whose adult and adolescent members are involved in serious and frequent offending. The Ministry of Justice's Crime Prevention Unit has provided guidance to CSPIN and supports the Network's plans to establish a range of interventions that will be applied to improve outcomes.

In 2007, each CSPIN service delivery agency reviewed the information they held about these families. The information provided each agency with a profile of the families, provided data for evaluating the success of future interventions, and helped identify the success of interventions that had been offered in the past.

To measure progress on achieving positive outcomes, a comprehensive measurement framework has been designed. The framework will help CSPIN evaluate whether the interventions that are implemented have resulted in improvements across a wide range of social, health, educational, justice, employment, and safety indicators. The development of this framework has been led by staff from the Christchurch City Council and Statistics New Zealand.

Canterbury's labour market

Canterbury's labour market is large and diverse. All labour markets are susceptible to unexpected downturns as well as developmental opportunities. To ensure that we provide leadership on labour market opportunities, our Labour Market Development team has partnered with others to establish three labour market groups.

The Government Agency Labour Market Forum was established in 2006. The Forum consists of eight government agencies with an interest in responding to labour market issues. Its aim is to ensure that labour market information is shared and members understand each other's key programmes of work, regional priorities and strategic goals. One important focus for the group during 2007 will be attempting to increase Māori youth-participation rates in the labour market.

In 2007, a Local Governance Group was formed in partnership with the Department of Labour. Members of this Group include representatives from industry, education, an economic development agency, and central and local government. The aim of the Group is to identify labour-market development opportunities that can be pursued.

During 2007, we will establish an advisory group. The group will be overseen by the Local Governance Group. Members will include representatives from a wide range of labour market stakeholders, particularly local community groups, and will implement strategies identified by the Governance Group.

Social development for young people

The future of our region lies in the hands of our young people. Valuing young people means listening to, consulting with and seeking their input and feedback. This is even more vital when policy initiatives affect them.

The Ministry of Youth Development is in a unique position to inform government on how they can respond to youth interests when developing or improving policies and services.

Our work is underpinned by the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa⁷ which promotes a country where young people are vibrant and optimistic through being supported and encouraged to take up challenges. To make this vision a reality in Canterbury, we have been working with others on a number of key projects.

Youth Council

We have developed a Youth Council for Christchurch in partnership with the New Zealand Association for Adolescent Health and Development, the Canterbury Youth Workers' Collective, the Delta Trust, 198 Youth Health Centre, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, the White Elephant Trust, the Problem Gambling Trust, the Department of Internal Affairs, the Christchurch City Council, Youthline, SADD, Sport Canterbury and 4 YP.

The aim of the Youth Council is to provide a forum for the voices of our young people, giving a young person's perspective to agencies, territorial authorities and government departments who provide services to youth. The Council will also encourage the participation of young people in planning, policy development, and decision making. The Youth Council was launched during Youth Week in May 2007 and we will continue to provide training, advice, and support to the Council.

Youth participation in local government

Local government also requires a youth voice and to further encourage this, a project, 'Youth in Local Government', is underway. The project aims to help territorial authorities strengthen youth participation in their planning and development of their youth policy.

Ensuring that our young people are informed will contribute to the development of services that reflect their needs. In the meantime the identification of service gaps is a priority for us.

7. Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, Ministry of Youth Affairs, January 2002.

Building safe families

Family violence response co-ordinators recently presented an overview of their roles to delegates from the Hong Kong Department of Social Welfare.

The delegates were visiting New Zealand as part of a two-week trip to research our approach to family violence intervention from both a community and government sector perspective.

Our Family Violence Intervention Programme gives our case managers the skills and resources to recognise the signs of abuse and assist clients who experience family violence.

The Programme ensures that staff have an awareness of the symptoms and effects of family violence, can provide a safe and supportive environment for the client and are able to refer the client to appropriate support services. Our family violence response co-ordinators provide support, training and mentoring to staff.

Pictured are Family Violence Response Co-ordinators Dennis Valentine (left) and Jill Ashton (centre), presenting an overview of the Family Violence Intervention Programme to the delegates.



>> Leading Social Development >>

Emergency accommodation for young people

During recent consultations with Christchurch's youth-providers, and community and health and social service agencies, one theme that regularly appeared related to the lack of emergency accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds. This need appears to be long-standing, aligned to family breakdowns and other crises, and the difficulty young people experience accessing rental accommodation.

We will continue to work alongside Housing New Zealand, the Department of Building and Housing, the Christchurch City Council, He Oranga Pounamu, Te Puni Kōkiri and the Canterbury Development Corporation to identify a solution. As a start, a survey of the social services, and youth sector has been conducted. Young people have also been surveyed and the results from this work will help guide the response.

Working with others

Working collaboratively across the Ministry and in partnership with other stakeholders is essential to ensure that we achieve positive outcomes for Cantabrians. Our staff are actively involved in a number of on-going forums, work programmes and initiatives



Above: Phillip Gillard was referred to the City Care Pre-apprentice Work Skills programme. On completion of the programme Philip was employed by City Care and has begun studying towards a Diploma in Civil Engineering with the intention of working as an engineer in roading construction.

that are contributing to the region's social and economic development.

We regularly attend and contribute to a wide variety of other community forums, such as Social Service Providers Aotearoa Canterbury, Inter-agency Pandemic Preparedness Planning, the Inter-Cultural Assembly, the Canterbury Abuse Intervention Project, the Combined Funders' Forum, the Christchurch Housing Forum, the Canterbury Youth Workers' Collective, and the Family Violence Funding Circuit Breaker. Our Regional Commissioner is deputy chair of the Welfare Advisory Group for Civil Defence.

We are also a partner in the Safer Christchurch Strategy. This Strategy is led by the Christchurch City Council and involves iwi and a wide variety of government and non-government organisations who take a unified approach to crime, injury prevention and road safety.

Additionally we are a signatory to the Healthy Christchurch Charter. This project seeks a number of health and wellbeing-related outcomes for Christchurch's citizens. The signatories meet six-monthly to address issues of mutual concern, agree on priorities and plan cross-sectoral and inter-agency strategies.

Leading social development across the Ministry

We have an ever increasing number of regional services and programmes within our Ministry. Our challenge is to ensure that these services are aligned and strongly focused on the social development outcomes that matter most to our region.

To ensure we continue to provide a high quality service to our clients and stakeholders, our internal capability will continue to be an important focus for us.

Through our Ministry of Social Development Canterbury Programme, our service line managers meet regularly to co-ordinate and align work programmes. Recently this group identified four areas where we could work closer together to improve outcomes for Canterbury's people. These areas include young people, building family resilience, family violence, and debt and fraud.

A voice from our region

EPI-net, a web-based tool, has recently been created by our Regional Social Policy Group to help our regional staff inform policy makers about issues that are important to the region. Our Regional Policy Advisor acts as the liaison between our staff and National Office to ensure these issues are discussed and that our voice is being heard when policy is being determined.

Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

We want to see our children and young people loved, valued, and respected. We want them to grow up in safe, secure and stable environments where they have the opportunity to learn, thrive and reach their full potential. Our children deserve the best start we can give them. Today's children and young people are tomorrow's leaders and will shape the future of our country.

Children and young people live in families and thus families and whānau are the foundation of our society. They provide care and nurturing not only for children and young people, but also in some cases, for other relatives. For children and young people to be strong and successful, families and whānau have to be well supported, have a sense of identity, and be able to access the wide range of resource available to assist them.

Families - Young and Old is one of the Government's three key priorities for the next decade. This priority has five sub-themes designed to support and assist families to live independently so they have healthy, safe and rewarding lives and achieve their aspirations.

The five sub-themes are:

- strong families
- healthy, confident kids
- better health for all
- strong and safe communities
- positive ageing.

Support for children and families

At times there are families in New Zealand who face various difficulties. Helping children get the best start in life and tackling difficulties before they become ingrained are the key aims of our early intervention services.

Through Family and Community Services, we fund a Christchurch-based community social service agency Early Start, to deliver the Family Start programme. Family Start is a home visitation service that provides intensive support services for families with high needs, to ensure that their children have the best possible start in life. It supports families to be strong and resilient and to provide for the wellbeing and protection of all their members.

Early Start works with around 250 Canterbury families each year. Families can be accepted on to the programme from six months prior to the birth of a child, until the child is one year of age. Participation in the programme is voluntary.



Above: Keeping healthy the fun way! Children enjoy some outdoor playtime during the holidays.

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

The early years

Investing early in the lives of children is one of the principles underlying Families - Young and Old.

In September 2006, the Government announced the introduction of a range of services and programmes to better support families. The Early Years package aims to improve children's health, safety, and education outcomes. Research indicates that improving outcomes in these areas will reduce the likelihood of poor long-term outcomes for children.

In Canterbury the Early Years initiative includes a Teen Parent Service Co-ordination Programme, funded through Family and Community Services. The programme aims to ensure teenage parents have increased access to the support they need through improved co-ordination of services. The programme is delivered by Waipuna Community Trust

who already deliver a wide range of well developed services and programmes to young people.

This programme is intended to improve wellbeing outcomes for children of teenage parents by providing parents with access to services. A Service Co-ordinator will build on existing collaborative working arrangements with other social and health agencies and provide further support, advocacy and case management for teenage parents to ensure that they are linked with the services they and their children need most.

Building strong and resilient families

The Strengthening Families programme, administered through Family and Community Services offers co-ordinated support for families who are dealing with more than two agencies. A co-ordinator

works with a wide variety of organisations to assist families by ensuring open communication and a degree of aligned planning. The ultimate goal of Strengthening Families is to improve the current situation and future wellbeing of children, young people and their families. At a local level Strengthening Families is overseen by a Local Management Group.

To oversee the activities of Strengthening Families across the region, and to improve alignment between family-related initiatives, a Strong Families Regional Governance Group has been established.

The Canterbury Strong Families Regional Governance Group has prioritised four areas for action:

- safe and resilient families
- healthy and confident children
- vibrant young people
- safe and cohesive communities.



Above: A Regional Governance Group has been established to improve the co-ordination of family-related initiatives across greater Canterbury. Pictured from left are Denise Kidd, Family and Community Services; John Henderson, Regional Commissioner; Nick Scott, Department of Corrections; and Sean Wheeler, Ministry of Education.

Over the last year, Work and Income introduced an Integrated Service to support families. The integrated service identifies our most vulnerable families in certain communities across the country and works with them to address their issues. Often these families exist without accessing the support that they need. The Integrated Service Co-ordinators identify families through the engagement Work and Income has with family members and then actively supports them to meet their family goals.

The Integrated Service initiative is guided by the principles that underpin Families - Young and Old. These principles aim to prevent poor life outcomes being transmitted across generations, investing early in problems, identifying all factors that are contributing to difficulties, and realigning government spending from intervention to prevention.

Family violence

A wealth of New Zealand research exists that demonstrates that violence is a significant issue for some families. Between April 2005 and March 2006, the Christchurch and Ashburton Family Courts issued 312⁸ temporary protection orders. Child, Youth and Family responded to approximately 7,000 notifications of child abuse for the year ending June 2007. Of these around 5,000 were investigated by social workers.

Serious and sustained violence surrounding or directed at children and young people can impact upon their development in a number of ways. Domestic violence has been associated with impeded brain development, truancy, running away, substance abuse, and offending in older children and young people. Family violence is a blight not just in our region but throughout our country.

A Family Safety team consisting of the New Zealand Police, Women's Refuge and our Ministry staff has been established in Christchurch to ensure victims of violence receive the services and support they require, while those committing acts of violence are held to account.

To date, the team has been very effective in focusing resources on serious offenders and providing support to victims. We will continue to work with partner agencies as the team develops new and improved ways of working.

A stable loving home for children

Child, Youth and Family foster parents Amy and Dan Marsden have four foster children in their care. Their plan is to move toward permanency for these children.

Last year, MORE FM ran a competition for home owners with the first prize being a complete home makeover.

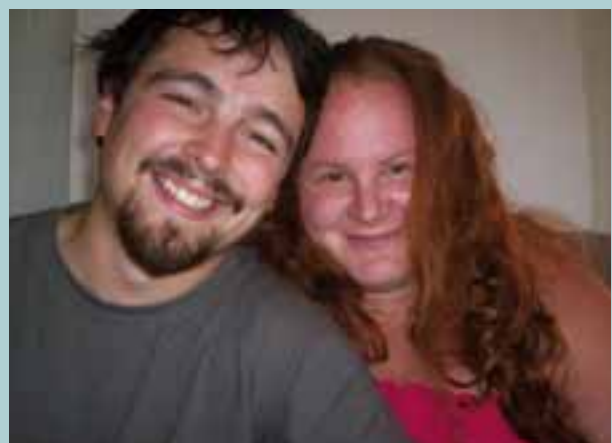
Amy and Dan were nominated and won the competition. While the home was being transformed, the couple were treated to a week away at beautiful Hanmer.

When the Marsden family returned from their week away, they were led through their home where they viewed not only the makeover, but new furniture, full cupboards and enough bread for a year. The home had a new stainless-steel kitchen, new carpet, appliances and furniture.

The outside of the home had a new deck and children's play area, including a playhouse and sandpit.

Shortly after the renovation, Dan and Amy realised they needed a bigger home and were able to, sell this home and move the family into a 'super large' house with more bedrooms.

Amy and Dan feel they are incredibly blessed and say the makeover team have given them the opportunity to buy a bigger house. Through the contacts made from the makeover team, they are now able to look at re-decorating their new home.



8. Christchurch and Canterbury Domestic Violence Applications, Temporary Protection Orders, Final Protection Orders, and Programme Referrals are indicative only. Southern Regional Purchasing Plan. Domestic Violence Programmes, Ministry of Justice, 2006.

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

Through Family and Community Services and Work and Income, we deliver the Family Violence Intervention Programme. Two family violence response co-ordinators support frontline staff across the region by providing information on the signs, symptoms and effects of family violence. They are available to consult, advise and support case managers, and have close links with external public service and community organisations who also provide services in this area. This programme assists our case managers to more effectively support clients who experience violence.

Care and protection

Occasionally, for their safety, children will need to be removed from the environment they are in. The 1989 Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act requires that our staff only remove children from their families and put them into alternative care as a last resort to protect them from harm. The Act reflects the notion that removing children from their family can be

disruptive and stressful. When children are placed in care, it is preferable that it is with wider family members with the aim that the children are returned home as soon as possible.

On occasions when they cannot be returned home, Child, Youth and Family has implemented its 'Permanency Policy' which aims to ensure children have a psychological attachment with the people who are caring for them.

In Canterbury we have over 500 caregivers providing foster care to 650 children and young people. These caregivers are generous, dedicated, and hardworking people committed to ensuring the safety, stability and wellbeing of those in their care.

In the coming year, we will be working with caregivers to transfer custody orders to family/whānau or other caregivers. Our goal is to reduce the overall number of children in care, and to increase the number of children placed with whānau as a proportion of those in care. Currently in Canterbury this proportion is around 30 percent.

A bright future for Samuel

A difficult childhood brought Samuel Twose to the attention of Child, Youth and Family. In spite of attending various parenting courses and involvement with a variety of social service agencies, Samuel's mother was unable to manage his behaviour.

After a temporary period living in a Family Home under a Temporary Care Agreement, a Family Group Conference was held and Samuel went to live with his grandparents in 2002. Child, Youth and Family continued to follow and support Samuel's progress.

Samuel's grandparents helped and guided him to improve his behaviour both at home and school. Their constant encouragement, positive parenting and clear expectations resulted in significant changes to the point where in the last year of his schooling, (where he had been a bully at times in the past) Samuel was

upheld as an exemplary young man who had mentored many of the younger pupils.

Samuel is passionate about rugby. He has been selected for the Canterbury Country Rugby Development Fitness Squad and his coach believes he has potential to represent Canterbury and the All Blacks in the future. He is also passionate about woodwork and he has made many items that he has gifted to his grandparents.

As the family live on a limited budget in a small rural town, Child, Youth and Family have assisted with a gym membership and travel to and from a gym for three months.

Samuel enjoys living with his grandparents and will continue to stay there as he explores many possibilities for his future. He has recently gained full-time employment in the joinery trade as an apprentice.

Today, aged 17, Samuel has a bright future ahead of him.



Implementing our Permanency Planning Policy will ensure children and young people are kept within family/whānau and these caregivers are supported appropriately to provide permanent care.

A small number of children require extra support which is provided by our residential centres. In Canterbury we have a 10-bed Care and Protection Residential Centre, Te Oranga.

The Centre provides a safe, stable, and secure environment for children and young people. To improve the level of services offered to children and young people staying in the Centre we are working to ensure that every child has a comprehensive support programme wrapped around them that ensures their health and education needs have been assessed, their risks to themselves and others have been considered, regular review meetings occur, and that upon leaving the Centre they are being well supported in their transition.

This year we plan to sign a local Memorandum of Understanding with the Christchurch Family and Foster Care Association. The Association provides valuable support and advocacy for Canterbury foster parents. It is expected that the formalisation of the relationship between Child, Youth and Family and the Association will lead to benefits such as improved advocacy for caregivers. Indirectly such benefits should cascade to the children and young people they support.

In February 2007, the Government announced that a considerable number of caregivers would benefit from an increase to the payment rates for Unsupported Child's Benefit, Orphan's Benefit, and the Foster Care Allowance. These increases recognise the valuable contribution that caregivers make to the development of children and young people living with them.

Supporting our young people during transitions

Throughout a person's life there are times when they may be more vulnerable to life's challenges than others. For young people, these times are often associated with transitions from one social institution to another, for example leaving school and moving to tertiary education, employment or training. The offer of quality support during these transitions can contribute to improved outcomes.

When young people leave secondary school they have a number of choices available to them. For those seeking employment, further education or training, it has long been recognised that young people face different challenges and have different needs from adults. For example, for many young people seeking employment, the interview process may be the first time they have experienced a formal questioning of their skills and abilities.

In recognition of such issues, a youth-focused employment service was established in 1997. ActionWorks is a joint initiative between the Ministry and the Canterbury Development Corporation - the economic development arm of the Christchurch City Council. ActionWorks' staff assist Christchurch's young people, between the ages of 16 to 19, into employment, education, or training.

"Early Start has developed and enjoyed a co-operative working relationship over the past two years with local Family and Community Services staff. The communication between our two organisations is excellent with Family and Community Services keeping us informed of any new developments, consulting with us when appropriate, and Early Start being able to discuss any relevant issues and operational matters when the need arises. This assists Early Start in resolving issues speedily and ensures that the service delivery to our clients is of a good standard, ultimately benefiting the families and children enrolled with Early Start."

Hildegard Grant
General Manager
Early Start

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



Above: StudyLink Officers Tania Robin (left) and Rauwai Herbert-Johnson took part in a local youth expo, 'Mana in the Marae'.

The overall aim is to support them through vulnerable transition periods so they can engage in worthwhile activities that will build their skills and experience and contribute to their future economic and social independence. During 2007, a social worker was employed as part of a short-term project to assess the holistic needs of ActionWorks' clients and to provide appropriate support. Issues such as homelessness, self harm, drug and substance abuse, teen pregnancies and other health issues were identified.

We are also involved with the New Zealand Defence Force which has taken the lead in developing the Limited Service Volunteers programme. This is a programme for young people aged between 18 to 24 years who need to develop and practice some life skills before they embark on employment or education. The programme focuses on preventing poor life outcomes, a key principal of Families - Young and Old.

Based at Christchurch's Burnham Army Camp, the programme is available to young people from throughout the country.

It is voluntary and runs for six weeks. Usually five intakes, each containing approximately 140 young people, are offered each year. The programme combines a range of physical activities with life-skills education delivered in a classroom setting. The course aims to develop self discipline, confidence, promote motivation, and the use of initiative. Co-operation with others is essential as team-based tasks underly many of the activities.

We expect that around 70 to 75 percent of programme graduates will move into employment or training within eight weeks of completing the course.

On Course is a programme delivered by StudyLink to the majority of high schools in the Canterbury region. StudyLink staff visit schools and meet with Year-12 and 13 students who are considering tertiary education. The aim is to ensure students have all the information they need to make an informed decision about further study. Feedback indicates that students and schools find the programme very

worthwhile and during 2007/2008, we will continue to review and enhance the delivery of the On Course programme.

Rural Canterbury has different strengths and faces different challenges to urban areas. Generally speaking sustainable employment, education and training opportunities tend to be more readily available in large urban and metropolitan locations. In recognition of this we are involved in initiatives to support rural young people make a seamless transition from school to the wider world.

The 'Ashburton Youth' project was established to assist young people from Ashburton and surrounding areas to make a smooth transition from school to employment, education or training. Our Youth Employment Broker liaises between employers, schools, students, and industry training organisations to match young people's skills and desires to employment opportunities.

We also contribute funding to the 'Pathways' programme run by North Canterbury's Amuri Area School.

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

'Pathways' caters for students who have been excluded from school and aims to ensure they continue to develop a range of skills and knowledge that will assist them to re-enter the traditional schooling system, go onto further training if desired, or to secure employment. In addition, we contribute funding to the Hurunui Academy, also based at the Amuri Area School. The Academy offers alternative vocational educational options for students who are at risk of leaving school too early.

Support for students

Tertiary education provides benefits to individuals as well as to society. With technological advances growing at a rapid pace in many businesses and industries, higher levels of education are required by many employers. If employers are unable to find staff with the right levels of education then economic opportunities may be missed, and this may impact on the country's economy.

Investing early in the life of a person, focusing on key transition points, tailoring services to individual needs, and supporting self sufficiency are all principles of Families - Young and Old. These principles are clearly reflected in the assistance that we offer to those undertaking further study.

During 2007, StudyLink will be testing and piloting components of an enhanced service model. This model broadens their service focus from processing applications for financial assistance to supporting students to make considered decisions leading to successful course completion with minimal debt. Support is provided from the moment a person decides to study through to their completion and transition into the workforce.

For those considering a course of study, we aim to work with them to develop realistic plans that take into account their circumstances and aspirations. Once courses have commenced, we will work with students to ensure they only borrow what they need to successfully complete their course and do not unnecessarily place themselves into debt. Throughout the term of their studies we will stand alongside students, encouraging completion and offering extra support to those who may be at risk of not completing their courses.



Above: Inland Revenue staff Pip McCartney (left) and Karen Lilly promote Working for Families assistance with Work and Income Case Manager Kim Wallis (right).

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

A positive change for Laura

When Laura Price left school she had little idea of what she wanted to do with her future. Laura was referred to the Limited Service Volunteers programme through ActionWorks, a one-stop-employment service for youth.

The programme is a voluntary six-week residential course provided by the New Zealand Defence Force at Burnham Military Camp. The principal goal is to increase the number of young people entering employment or training by improving their motivation, self-discipline, self-confidence and initiative.

Laura found Limited Service Volunteers a challenging programme that provided new skills, not only in finding employment, but in all areas of her life.

After graduating, Laura obtained full-time restaurant work. She credits her job to the programme. *“I learnt a lot of really good life skills and about life and myself. It was life changing”,* she says.

Major Cate Linton, Limited Service Volunteers Company Commanding Officer said Laura’s commitment to the course and her achievements throughout are a credit to her courage and to her desire to make positive lifestyle changes. *“The results achieved by Laura, and by many who have graduated, are encouraging and reinforces that the course, in its current form, is achieving its mission”,* she said.



Once they finish their course of study, we will work to ensure students are connected to employment opportunities and have full information about Student Loan repayments and other more general support services available to them.

Our aim is to ensure potential students are able to easily access comprehensive information about all of the aspects of tertiary study. We also plan to increase the ease at which students can contact us via the internet and will progressively develop and enhance online services to students.

Reducing social and economic disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity is an important aim for the Ministry. In the tertiary education area, one means of contributing to this goal is to assist groups who are under-represented at a tertiary level. Education should be available to all people and students should have support to complete their studies.

We will continue to encourage students into tertiary education who may not have considered this. Some groups, such as Māori, whilst well represented at the certificate/diploma level of tertiary education, are under-represented at degree level. We have the opportunity to work more closely with Māori and other identified groups to support their active participation at all levels of tertiary education.

The tertiary education sector involves a variety of stakeholders. Over the next year, we will be working hard to strengthen our relationships with all players in the education arena. We already work with Career Services rapuara to provide course-related advice to students, Student Job Search to facilitate employment for students, and the Ministry of Education in relation to policy development.

Youth voices

During 2007, New Zealand's fifth Youth Parliament will be held. The initiative aims to encourage electoral enrolment and voting by young people, provide positive images of young people as active citizens, and raise the profile of Parliament and government.

Youth Parliament 2007 will see 121 Youth Members of Parliament debate legislation, question Cabinet Ministers, engage in debate, and participate in select committees. A Youth Parliament provides a unique opportunity for young people to share ideas and aspirations with Members of Parliament and key officials. The Ministry of Youth Development has been proactive in working with their youth networks to promote this event throughout Canterbury.

Along with the Youth Parliament and Christchurch's Youth Council, sits the PROVOKE Network. PROVOKE is a national project which has three main aims. Firstly, to give government and non-government organisations a mechanism to engage with young people in decision making. Secondly, to provide young people with opportunities and information on how to get their voices heard, and finally to help youth councils and advisory groups maintain a national networking facility.

One Youth Voice advocate said, *"With the support of the PROVOKE scheme and similar projects, we can strive for society to give young people the good name they deserve and better our chances, no matter what our background might be. The PROVOKE training was a great chance to meet other like-minded young people who want to make change for the better, even in a small way"*.

Supporting an offending-free future

Youth offending generates public concern and reducing the severity and frequency of it is an important goal for us. Along with the New Zealand Police, the Courts, and other community organisations, we play a key role in the youth justice area. Our goal is to reduce the rate and severity of young people's re-offending. To achieve this we need to lift our capability and change the way we work, and think about, youth justice. We also need to address the issues that lead young people to commit crimes.

To enhance our performance we have established dedicated Youth Justice teams. They are located in our communities so that they can work closely with external stakeholders. They are responsible for developing an intimate knowledge of local resources, networks, and opportunities which can create an alternative, offending-free future for young people. In Christchurch the teams will be better aligned to Court and Police boundaries.

We will also ensure that our Youth Justice plans for young people include a wider range of conditions, that will not only hold the young person to account, but provide opportunities for work and education and therefore reduce the chance of re-offending.

Residential care has an important role in the Youth Justice process. In Canterbury we have a Youth Justice residential centre, Te Puna Wai o Tuhinapo. The centre provides a safe and secure environment for young people on remand from, or sentenced by, the Youth Court. To improve the level of services offered to young people staying in the centre, we are working to ensure that every young person has a comprehensive support programme wrapped around them that ensures their health and education needs are assessed, any risks to themselves and others have been considered and that they are supported when they leave the centre. During 2007, work commenced to increase the centre's housing capacity by an additional eight beds.

In 2001, a Youth Unit was opened at Christchurch Men's Prison. The Unit accommodates young men under the age of 20 and provides a separate environment away from older prisoners. To assist inmates who are released from the Unit to successfully re-integrate back in to our communities, we work with young people to help them into training or employment. Other needs, such as improved health outcomes, are also addressed through referral to appropriate organisations.

Creating Opportunities for Working Age People

Economic transformation is a key priority for the Government over the next decade. The aim is to grow globally competitive firms, develop a world-class infrastructure, encourage innovative and productive workplaces which are underpinned by high standards in education, research and skills, while taking into account environmental stability.

To contribute to this priority we want to continue to reduce the unemployment rate, increase the work participation rate, and focus on those disproportionately represented on our Unemployment Benefit register.

For the majority of working-age people, employment whether part or full-time, is a significant and positive part of their lives. Sustainable paid employment provides people with economic independence, the means to support themselves and their family, the opportunity to lead the lifestyle they wish, and the chance to participate in their communities as well as achieve their aspirations. Supporting self sufficiency and resilience is a key principle of Families - Young and Old. Employment also provides psychological benefits, imposes a time structure throughout the week, and provides an opportunity for social contact and friendships.

In April 2007, New Zealand reached its lowest rate of unemployment in 27 years⁹. There are less than 1,600¹⁰ people receiving an unemployment-related benefit¹¹ in our region, which is a reduction of 1,422 since March 2006.



Left: When Jerom Lavea left school at 16 he knew he wanted to work with his hands. He was referred to ActionWorks, which is a partnership between Work and Income and the Canterbury Development Corporation. With assistance from ActionWorks Jerom commenced work at Aberdeen Pavers. Since then Jerom has been promoted and now oversees other staff members' work. Jerom (left) is pictured with his employer at Aberdeen Pavers.

9. *The number on the dole falls to lowest in 27 years*, The Press, 12 April 2007.

10. 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.

11. An unemployment-related benefit includes an Unemployment Benefit and an Unemployment Benefit - Hardship.

>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>

An expanding economy has led to high demands for staff and in some parts of the region, skill and labour shortages have been identified. To keep pace with the changing economic and social environment, we have implemented a new approach to service delivery for our clients. We recognise that it is not possible to continue to offer a service in the same way we have in the past. To help employers secure the staff they need, we are supporting all of our clients who want to work, regardless of their benefit type, to find work.

Our New Service Approach

In mid-2007, Work and Income finished embedding the first stages of this new way of delivering services throughout its 13 Canterbury service centres. Our New Service Approach allows us to tailor our services to an individual's circumstances and work-readiness.

The new approach is about active job seeking, ensuring that employment opportunities are a strong focus from the first contact people have with us. Clients are first assessed for their readiness to work as soon as they make contact with us and move into one of three categories - those who are work 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. Taking the time to understand the unique situation each person faces allows us to tailor our services appropriately. Following this assessment, a range of different services are then offered so that we can assist the client into sustainable employment.

Our New Service Approach is complemented by a Job Search Service which operates in all our service centres. The Service assists work-ready clients to find employment as early as possible and our clients are offered a variety of assistance depending on their needs. Through a Search4WRK seminar, which is a group-based activity, clients can discuss, plan, and review their employment search activities and access job matching and work brokerage services. For clients who need assistance with CV preparation, goal setting and interview skills, a separate comprehensive seminar, In2WRK, is available. On completion of this seminar, clients can then attend the Search4WRK seminar.

Frequent reassessments ensure people are receiving the right support and assistance to help them secure sustainable employment.

People who are confident they can find work quickly will be supported in their job search by our Contact Centre. They will be able to access 0800 Job Search which is a free telephone-based job search service.

The Job Search Service is available to all clients seeking employment, including those who receive other forms of assistance. Making the Job Search Service available to all recognises that people on other benefits may be ready, with the right services and support, for part- or full-time work. Offering extra assistance to people who are receiving other benefits, such as a Widow's, Sickness, Invalid's, or Domestic Purposes will contribute to positive outcomes for them and their families, and also help address our skill and labour shortages.

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.

Our new Client Management System, the first phase of which will be introduced later this year, will allow us to work even more proactively with our clients. The System will hold benefit eligibility rules and provide scripted questions that will assist us to determine a client's work readiness and other needs. It will also reduce processing time and help ensure that our clients receive appropriate products and services that meet their needs.

We know that promoting the access of our services through telephone and internet channels has led to improved efficiencies and has increased access for clients. We know that most people have their first interaction with Work and Income through our Contact Centre. We are aiming to increase the benefits this interface brings to a greater number of people by expanding the range of services our Contact Centre offers.

Getting support to find work, employment or training can be a challenge if English is not a clients' first language. We recognise our clients' ethnic diversity and have enhanced our multilingual service in our Contact Centre by increasing the range of languages available to assist callers.

>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>

Services to employers

Offering high quality, responsive, and efficient recruitment services to employers will help us assist people into sustainable work. Our Contact Centre is taking a leading role in offering improved services to employers.

Our Employer Line allows employers to call our Contact Centre via a free-phone number and register any vacancies they have. Contact Centre staff will use information held about clients to identify people who may possess the skills, experience, and knowledge the employer is seeking. Candidates will then be referred to an interview.

Central to our success in achieving sustainable employment outcomes is our ability to match our clients to what employers want. It is about ensuring employers get the staff with the right experience for the position, allowing employees to use their skills and talents in positions that are appropriate for them.

Jobz4u is a computer-based tool that allows skills matching to quickly occur. Case managers input a client's skills and

attributes, previous work experience, and qualifications. The programme then matches these skills and experiences to a range of jobs that they are appropriately suited to. The case manager and client can then view all current vacancies.

Working in partnership with local industry is also important for a number of reasons. It allows us to identify current and upcoming skill shortages, quickly receive information about new opportunities, and add anecdotal information to the range of economic statistics and indicators we collect for our region.

Industry partnerships are created with a wide variety of industries, employers and training organisations. Clients with an interest in working in a particular industry can access our Straight 2 Work training programmes¹². The programmes ensure clients are trained to a level that meets an employer's expectations. Once in work, if required, we offer ongoing support to help the new employees settle in and build their confidence and skill levels.

Continued education for young parents

Christchurch's Kimihia Parents' College provides a programme of learning which enables young parents to continue their education and develop skills that will enable them to seek employment or further training.

An important focus for Integrity Services is debt prevention, and ensuring individuals receiving income support assistance receive their correct entitlement and are aware of their responsibilities.

As a part of this focus, Integrity Services aims to have regular contact with community groups in order to share information on various topics including how relationships may affect a client's benefit entitlement.

Integrity Services Investigator Stephanie Williams (pictured) works with a number of groups including Kimihia Parents' College. *"I find this an enjoyable and rewarding part of my job as it enables me to interact with the community in a proactive way. Kimihia Parents' College has been very*

supportive in making time available for me to talk with the students, and answer any questions they may have regarding their benefit entitlement", she said.



12. Straight 2 Work is an Industry Partnership training and support programme that gives people the basic skill set required to move straight into employment and help them stay there.

>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>



Left: Youth and Cultural Development offers a range of structured programmes delivered in a supportive environment. One such programme is the Youth Service Corps, which has an educational component, challenging recreation, and a community focus to support young people to move into further education, training or employment. Pictured is Youth and Cultural Development Youth Worker, Philip Nuu (left) working alongside a programme participant.

Unfortunately business closures occur from time to time in our region. Our Industry Partnership Advisor plays a key role in ensuring that employees who may be affected by business closures receive up-to-date information about the labour market, job-search skills, employment opportunities and income support. Often this information is delivered in conjunction with staff from Inland Revenue. The efficient delivery of information and other support services usually acts to minimise the time that affected staff are out of work.

Breaking down barriers to employment

There are a number of groups within the labour market who face significant barriers to employment. It is vital to ensure that those who require additional support to move into part- or full-time work receive it. Many people who live with ill health or a disability may be able to work but require increased support to remain employed while managing their condition. As a result we have expanded the PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions) programme to offer support to a greater number of people.

PATHS assists people receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit who wish to return to employment but are prevented from doing so by a health issue. The programme is a partnership between

Partnership Health, the Canterbury District Health Board, the Mental Health Education and Resource Centre, and Pegasus Health. Clients can self-refer to the programme or they can be referred by their case manager or health professional. The client then undergoes an employment assessment, enabling agencies to work with the client to manage the health issue and assist them to move into some form of employment.

Raising staff levels of awareness of how mental illness can impact upon a client and their family is important to ensure that we provide an empathetic service. To help our Integrity Services staff understand how mental health difficulties impact upon people, we have developed a staff training programme. The development of the training was supported by the Schizophrenia Fellowship and is now operating nationwide for all new Integrity Services staff.

In April 2007, the final component of the Working for Families package was delivered. This package was introduced in 2004 and consists of a range of payments that are designed to assist low- to middle-income working families, making it easier to work and raise a family. Our Childcare Assistance payments provide incentives for clients who receive a Domestic Purposes Benefit to enter work by providing access to affordable and quality childcare. Our In-Work Tax Credits also provide incentives, as they help make work pay.

>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>

Supporting the transition to study

Tertiary education plays a crucial role in enhancing a client's employment prospects and lifetime earnings.

Over the past few years there has been an increasing number of adults returning to study or training, and in many cases people have moved from a benefit to study. To ensure that our clients are well supported throughout this transition, receive full financial entitlements, and do not incur additional or accidental debt when moving between a benefit and study, we are considering piloting a programme called StudyOn.

StudyOn will see Work and Income case managers from a selected service centre working with clients who plan to move into full-time study or training. Clients will receive information and support regarding their study choices, the financial implications of study, and financial support available. StudyOn will also ensure that they are aware of the wide range of personal, health, and academic assistance provided to students by most education and training providers. At critical points of the academic year, staff will make contact with the client to check their progress and offer appropriate support if required.

The pilot will be evaluated to see if it has met its objectives of helping clients make a challenging transition in a smooth, supported, and co-ordinated manner.

Support for released prisoners

Prisoners face a number of challenges in their return to society. The Offender Re-integration Programme: Improving Employment Outcomes is a joint initiative between ourselves and the Department of Corrections, working with prisoners prior to release, to provide them with information about employment and other services. Our Prisoner Re-integration team is based in the Hornby Service Centre. The team's primary focus is to assist prisoners find suitable employment upon release with a longer-term aim of reducing re-offending.

In late 2006, we formed a working group with other stakeholders including staff from the Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society, the Probation Service, and Workbridge. The aim of the group is to identify service delivery gaps, and consider how we can work together more cohesively. In the future, the benefits of meeting regularly and sharing information will translate into further positive outcomes for people released from prison.

We also contribute funding to Ka Wahine, a residential re-integration home for released women prisoners. At Ka Wahine, a co-ordinator works with residents to help them re-integrate back into the community, and find safe and stable accommodation. The co-ordinator also assists them with health, social, financial, and family relationships matters. In conjunction with a Work and Income work broker and a member of the Prisoner Re-integration team, the Ka Wahine co-ordinator works to locate suitable employment for residents. Providing this range of assistance should contribute to a reduction in re-offending rates.

"It's great that we can work collaboratively with government and non-government agencies and the wider community to identify the needs of the community and work together to respond".

Rachael Fonotia
Aranui Community Co-ordinator

Enterprising communities

We also assist people into employment, through our funding programmes. Enterprising Communities Grants are delivered by our Labour Market Development team and are designed to assist disadvantaged groups and communities to identify and develop labour market initiatives that create employment. This investment increases local employment ventures, increases sustainable employment opportunities, and develops employment skills that match labour-market needs.

Because of their vulnerability in the labour market, young people are an important focus for our interventions. With the assistance of an Enterprising Communities Grant the Southern Māori Development Trust has created sustainable work for young Māori people.

The initiative commenced after the Trust realised that there was an opportunity to delivery te reo, kapa haka and noho marae training through a commercial venture.

The Trust works in local high schools where it delivers a presentation on Māori culture, history and language. The aim of the presentation is to raise cultural awareness and promote tolerance and understanding, whilst creating a number of employment opportunities.

The Trust sets about employing and training young Māori who were facing challenges in the labour market. Since April 2006, 12 Māori youth have been assisted into sustainable employment.



Left: Former Sickness Benefit recipient Hau Kahukiwa is now working at BusXchange after participating in the PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions) programme.

>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>

"StudyLink at the University of Canterbury and Student Job Search have always had a friendly and close working relationship with each other. We have our moments of stress and laughter, shared woes and happy joys - all in all a family unit"

Lupa Leota
Regional Manager - Canterbury Region
Student Job Search Aotearoa

Beverley Rose, Head of St Andrews College Pre School said, *"I am writing to convey my appreciation and admiration for the young people who visited our school to enrich our investigation of Māori culture and language. They were wonderful ambassadors for the Southern Māori Development Trust. The programme was of a high standard and meaningful for our students"*.

Our approach to debt management

Debt to the Ministry can be incurred in a number of ways, perhaps through an overpayment when someone commences employment or goes overseas and forgets to tell us. Sometimes people who have debts to the Ministry also have debts to other organisations.

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. When people with debt have children and other dependents, they can often all be negatively affected.

It has been identified that a significant proportion of our clients experience hardship through debt to utility companies. Through the development of initiatives and information sharing with utility providers and other social service agencies we aim to reduce this type of debt arising.

To help prevent debt from occurring for those transitioning off benefit and into work, we have increased the number of visits we make to employers. The aim of these employer visits is to ensure new employees are aware of their responsibility to notify us that they have started work. Our staff also leave employers with a range of information regarding their employee's entitlement to assistance such as the Community Services Card or Working for Families assistance.

Maintaining public trust in the Ministry's benefit system is also very important to us. Our Integrity Services team run a number of early intervention programmes to prevent client fraud, by taking a proactive approach to talking to people about their entitlements and responsibilities. With the correct assistance, and less debt, people will be better placed to fully participate in the social and economic life of their communities.

The programmes assist in improving people's economic position and strengthen the Ministry's ability to contribute to improved outcomes across a range of social and economic indicators. In the coming year, we will continue to improve the content and delivery of our early intervention programmes.

>> Creating Opportunities for Working Age People >>

During every Limited Service Volunteers programme our staff talk to participants about their income support entitlements and their responsibilities while receiving a benefit. A similar programme is regularly offered to young parents at Linwood High School's Kimihia Parents College, and the young mothers' residential programme, Holly House. These educational forums are delivered in a manner that is appropriate for the audience and provide a chance for people to ask questions and seek guidance.

In the coming year we are planning to expand the delivery of these seminars to include young people who are receiving services from Karanga Mai, Kaiapoi High School's teen parent unit, and Waipuna Trust. These providers welcome this interaction. It allows us to come and talk with young people, who by talking to their friends and families, ensure that the message around debt and fraud prevention reaches a wider audience.



Above: Scott Vinning left school not knowing what he wanted to do. Work and Income referred him to a hospitality course delivered by Treehouse Training. Scott is now an expert barista and has won an Australasian barista competition run by his employer, HMS Host.

Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

Technology advances allow WWII veteran to hear

David Slater is a UK World War II veteran, living in Christchurch. During his service, a parachuting accident resulted in a fractured skull, and subsequent meningitis left David hearing impaired.

A number of years ago, David had a cochlear implant in his right ear to assist with his hearing. The external speech processor component of the device had deteriorated over time and David was ready for a replacement.

War Pension Services provide an administration and liaison service for their UK equivalents to ensure UK veterans living in New Zealand are well supported. War Pension Services liaised with Bay Audiology in Christchurch, to assist Mr Slater to get a replacement external speech processor. Advances in technology since Mr Slater's last speech processor have resulted in him now being able to speak to his wife on the phone for the first time.

The new device came into its own recently, when David had a nasty fall from a ladder, and was hospitalised. *"Being able to speak to my wife from the hospital at a time when we needed to have contact was wonderful"*, said Mr Slater.



Canterbury's older people have a wealth of life experiences and wisdom to offer, not only to their families, but also within our communities. They often support younger family members and are involved in voluntary activities. They are an extremely valuable asset to be revered, respected and listened to. They have the right to our support, to ensure they remain independent and secure.

Positive Ageing is a priority issue under Families - Young and Old and we want to ensure older New Zealanders are able to live healthy, productive lives.

Ongoing long-term improvements in social and economic conditions have led to an increase in life expectancy for many New Zealanders. Advances in medical technology and health care have resulted in more older people remaining physically and cognitively well. Currently those aged 65 years and over comprise around 13.4% of our region's population¹³.

In Canterbury, there are 61,733 people receiving New Zealand Superannuation, making them the largest group that we work with. We have seven Work and Income service centres where older people can access New Zealand Superannuation services, including a large Super Centre housed in our Papanui Service Centre.

With an ageing population we need to ensure older people can easily access information and co-ordinated services. This will assist them to live their lives with security and certainty. We also need to ensure opportunities are available for older people to work longer, and to have a choice of lifestyles at the end of their working lives. Future policies and services are being designed to support people as they grow older to enable them to contribute to the economy and offer the benefits of their experience back to the community.

Recently a number of reports have been released that show that older workers are choosing to remain employed rather than retire. New Zealand has one of the highest participation workforce rates in the OECD for those aged 50 to 64 years. In 2005, 77% of 50 to 64 year olds were working, compared to only 57% in 1991¹⁴. With current skill and labour shortages there is recognition of the value that older workers offer with their years of experience. In turn those continuing to work reap financial and social rewards.

To help older people into paid and voluntary work, we are partnering with training organisations, employers and community and voluntary organisations.

13. *Census of Population and Dwellings*, Census 2006, Statistics New Zealand.

14. *Older PEOPLE IN WORK: Key Trends and Patterns 1991-2005*, Department of Labour, February 2007.

>> Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow >>

SAGES is a programme funded by Family and Community services. In our region the programme is delivered by Presbyterian Support Services, North Canterbury. The programme recruits, trains, and supports older people to work as volunteer mentors with individuals and families. Mentors use their life experiences and wisdom to assist those they work alongside with a variety of household, life, and parenting-related tasks. As at March 2007, 17 SAGES mentors had been trained. During 2007/2008 Presbyterian Support Services, North Canterbury anticipate training a further 16 mentors.

The SuperGold Card

In recognition of the contribution that older people and veterans have made to New Zealand, and continue to make, the SuperGold Card will be introduced in the latter part of 2007. The Card will provide access to commercial discounts on everyday goods, products, and services from a range of participating businesses, and will help to facilitate access to concessions on central government and local authority services.

To help SuperGold Card holders identify participating retailers, businesses, government departments and local authorities, we will be producing a directory and a website that lists all discounts and concessions being offered 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 now be able to access all their entitlements through one card, the SuperGold Card.

The Card will be sent automatically to people who receive New Zealand Superannuation or a Veterans Pension - other residents aged 65 and over will

qualify for the Card, but will need to apply. To assist with the introduction of the SuperGold Card we have established a freephone (0800 25 45 65) number for people wanting to make enquiries.

Acknowledging our veterans

In Canterbury there are around 2,600 people who receive a war pension. These veterans risked their lives to bring freedom to many countries around the world.

To commemorate a significant event in New Zealand's military and social history, one of our War Pension staff members was invited by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand to participate in commemorations at Gallipoli. The staff member assisted the Secretary for War Pension/Director of Veterans' Affairs with commemorations on ANZAC Day. The opportunity for us

to acknowledge the sacrifice made by a significant number of New Zealand's young men and women, and their families, was considered a great honour.

War Pension Services continues to seek opportunities to raise entitlement awareness amongst veterans and provide information.

Supporting the transition from work to retirement

Moving from work to retirement is a key transition point for middle-aged people. To assist in this change, we intend to increase the frequency of our community-based information seminars. The seminars aim to educate people about their entitlements and provide a forum for discussion and questions.



Above: Clive Doughty, National Manager, the Card Centre, conducted a SuperGold Card presentation to 50 attendees at the Zone Six Local Government meeting in Hanmer Springs in March 2007. Pictured from left are Clive Doughty; Michael McEvedy, Mayor Selwyn District Council; Jim Palmer, Chief Executive Officer, Waimakariri District Council; and Jim Gerard, Mayor Waimakariri District Council.

>> Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow >>

We actively support and contribute to the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy¹⁵, which identifies 10 areas for improving the lives of older people. These include income, health, housing, transport, ageing in place, cultural diversity, rural issues, attitudes, employment and opportunities.

We will continue to focus on ensuring that older people have access to simple, complete and accessible information, to assist them to make their own choices in relation to services, continued independence and social participation. At a national level, Senior Services will continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with external organisations and partners to enhance service and information delivery to older people.

Senior Services will also be focusing on improving and increasing other information access points for clients in the next few years, including improving the availability of information via websites, fact sheets, in other printed forms and face-to-face at expos and other community events. We need to ensure that older people know that we can help if they are considering moving overseas to live, or if they may be eligible for a War Pension, Community Services Card or SuperGold Card.

Elder abuse and neglect

With an increasing number of older people in our communities, the issue of their mistreatment is now more focused. Elder abuse covers a variety of areas, including physical, psychological, sexual, failure to meet needs, and material exploitation. To date, no population-based studies have been conducted in New Zealand to establish the prevalence of elder abuse, however, statistics from Age Concern Elder Abuse and Neglect Services indicate that psychological abuse and material abuse are the most common types of referrals received by this provider¹⁶.

Our Family Violence Intervention Programme allows us to support and protect the safety and wellbeing of our older people. This service is staffed by experienced practitioners who are available to educate our staff and for general consultation and advice. In conjunction with our case managers the family violence response co-ordinators are able to refer our older clients to other specialist services that can offer them the support that they need.

Local stakeholder relationships

During 2007/2008 our New Zealand Superannuation case managers will continue to offer training to colleagues from social and health services who work with elderly clients. The aim of the training is to increase people's knowledge of the financial supports available to their clients. This will ensure that older people are getting the full support they are entitled to.

We have developed and will continue to develop our relationships with groups such as GreyPower, PROBUS, Age Concern, and Elder Care Canterbury. By communicating regularly, sharing information about new programmes and identifying opportunities, older people will be supported to remain independent and secure.

Our Service Centre Manager for New Zealand Superannuation is also part of a planning group, organised by the Christchurch City Council, that is looking at Council provided services and programmes for older people.



Above: Kuia Heeni Phillips dancing (centre), shared her knowledge of traditional Māori healing and te reo at a hui at Rehua Marae in Christchurch.

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

16. Beyond Zero Tolerance: Key Issues and Future Directions for Family Violence Work in New Zealand, Families Commission, August 2005.

Partnering with our Communities

The ability to identify and take opportunities, as well as the ability to solve challenges, exists within all our communities. Individuals, families, groups, businesses, social and health services, and institutions such as schools are the experts on their own community. They are best placed to recognise what the opportunities and concerns are.

To grasp opportunities and solve challenges that can arise, communities require accessible government services, resources, support and sometimes someone to take a co-ordinating, facilitating, and leading role. Building collaborative linkages between communities and government, local and non-government services, results in more effective support being available for our families.

Collaboration and good communication ensures that organisations are not duplicating each others' work and families working with more than two agencies, are able to meet with the agencies at the same time. Everyone benefits from this approach. We want communities to be strong, connected, and well informed.

We manage a number of initiatives that encourage the Government and the community sector to work together in ways that improve outcomes for families, young and old.

Local Services Mapping

To help identify the strengths and aspirations that exist in a community, we have undertaken Local Services Mapping. The mapping exercise is conducted in a consultative and collaborative manner with the purpose of building comprehensive community profiles that will allow us to co-ordinate future responses and action.

"The Superannuation presentation was professionally delivered. Some of the information couldn't have been found in a pamphlet, and because the presenters were friendly and presented in a relaxed environment, people would be confident to contact Work and Income if they needed extra help".

Barry MacKenzie
New Zealand Superannuitant



Left: The Aranui Heartland Service Centre is a one-stop-shop where people can access a range of government and other related services. The Aranui Heartland Service Centre celebrated its opening in March 2007.

>> Partnering with our Communities >>

Local Services Mapping has been completed, or nearly completed, for three of the six territorial authorities that comprise the Canterbury District. These are Ashburton, Waimakariri and Selwyn. A number of common themes have been identified through the process. Rural and remote communities in Canterbury are concerned about the lack of information and services, rapid population growth in some communities which will place pressure on the physical and social infrastructure and social isolation, especially for older people and single parents. Family violence has also been identified as a concern.

As part of the Local Services Mapping process, action plans are formulated to provide solutions to the identified issues. These action plans detail how the community, local and central government, and other groups can work together to achieve the future that the community wants.

Heartland Services

Family and Community Services supports the development of Heartland Service Centres. These Centres provide a one-stop-shop for communities to access a range of government and other-related services and information. Heartlands also seek to improve service delivery through improved service co-ordination.

While the initiative originally focused on central government services, community organisations have increasingly been included in some Heartland Service Centres. This has contributed to Heartlands success.

In Canterbury, we are supporting Heartland Services in the Chatham Islands, Hornby, Akaroa and in March 2007, the Aranui Heartlands was opened. A national evaluation of Heartlands completed by independent researchers identified a very high level of client satisfaction with the services provided.

Ensuring families know what supports are available to them and are able to access resources easily, is the aim of an initiative underway in the Rowley area of Christchurch.

The Rowley Pilot Project

The Rowley Pilot Project is a collaboration between Housing New Zealand, and the Department of Building and Housing, Work and Income and Child, Youth and Family.

Rowley was identified as an area containing a number of families with a range of needs. In an attempt to offer more comprehensive and co-ordinated support to this community, a pilot project commenced in 2006. The pilot aims to improve outcomes, across a number of domains, for the people who reside there.

Vitu Pacific Arts Festival

For the last seven years, the Pacific Arts Festival has been held at Christchurch's Art Centre. It's a fun day for Pacific people and the wider community involving festival and cultural events. One of the aims of the day is to promote cultural understanding.

Case Managers Priscilla Pritchard and Sue Ah Koi manned a stall at the Festival and spoke to a number of families regarding Working for Families assistance and other Work and Income products and services.

Sue has been involved with the Festival through Work and Income's cultural group, Orama, for a number of years. *"It's a very worthwhile event for us to be part of", she said. "It's very rewarding, as a Pacific staff member to assist and engage with our Pacific community. It is also an opportunity for our community to learn about the assistance we can provide, in their Pacific language".*

Pictured from left enjoying the day at the Festival are Priscilla Pritchard and Sue Ah Koi.



Upon completion the pilot will be analysed and the findings utilised to inform other pieces of integrated work.

There is a large population of Pacific people in this area and to ensure that they know about their entitlement to Working for Families assistance, information has been made available in a number of Pacific languages. Information was also broadcast over local Pacific radio.

Assisting new Cantabrians

Families who have come to New Zealand as refugees face a range of challenges that are not likely to be experienced by new migrants. Sometimes they have come from countries experiencing armed conflict, and have often witnessed tragic and traumatic events.

To assist young people in these families, we are working with representatives from the Canterbury Resettlement Service, the Christchurch City Council, Hagley High School and the Canterbury Development Corporation (ActionWorks) to develop a city-wide inter-agency support network.

The aim of the Christchurch Inter-agency Strategy for Young People from Refugee Backgrounds, is to better co-ordinate services and interventions. Central and local government, non-government organisations and communities are committed to working together to implement strategies that will improve the settlement experiences of young people from a refugee background, and support their families with education, health, welfare, and employment resources. The overall goal is to increase opportunities for their social participation.

The Southern Comfort Project

Because of our location, an important issue for the Canterbury region relates to our cooler winter climate and how the increasing cost of electricity has impacted on the ability of some Cantabrians to heat their homes during winter months.

During 2007, we have found that people most adversely affected are likely to be those receiving income support or on low incomes. Cold and damp homes can significantly affect the health of babies, children under five, older people and people with disabilities. These health consequences may have an influence on a child's ability to attend school or on an adult's ability to work. Rising costs may also impact on an individual's or a family's level of debt.

We are in the process of drafting a pamphlet for our clients living in rental accommodation that details health, energy efficiency, and electricity cost saving information. The pamphlet will emphasise the health benefits of a warm and dry home, provide information about Work and Income entitlements, together with information about retrofitting subsidies and other products available to home-owners and landlords through the Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority.

"Fast growth has led to significant changes in the nature of the Selwyn District in the last 10 years. The population has grown significantly over the last 12 years. Given the speed and nature of this growth, Local Services Mapping has allowed the community, with the Ministry of Social Development, to reassess service delivery. The Council is appreciative of the opportunity to work with the Ministry on this project as it fits exactly with two of our community outcomes; access to community and public health services and co-ordination of services"

Ann Jarman
Community Development Manager
Selwyn District Council



Above: The Avon River, Christchurch City.

>> Partnering with our Communities >>

"We have been particularly concerned about our clients who are most vulnerable to the cold. We have worked with the Ministry of Social Development to share information about our programmes and to identify opportunities to work together. We are working with case managers to ensure older clients are referred to our Winter Warmth programme."

Andrew Dickerson
Chief Executive
Age Concern Canterbury

We are involved in a number of work programmes that aim to ensure that Cantabrians live in warm and dry homes. We actively support Community Energy Action and the Clean Heat Project run by Environment Canterbury. The Clean Heat Project seeks to create warmer and healthier homes, improve electricity efficiency, reduce air pollution through a mix of home assessment and subsidies for insulation and the replacement of open fires and other inefficient heating devices with more efficient options.

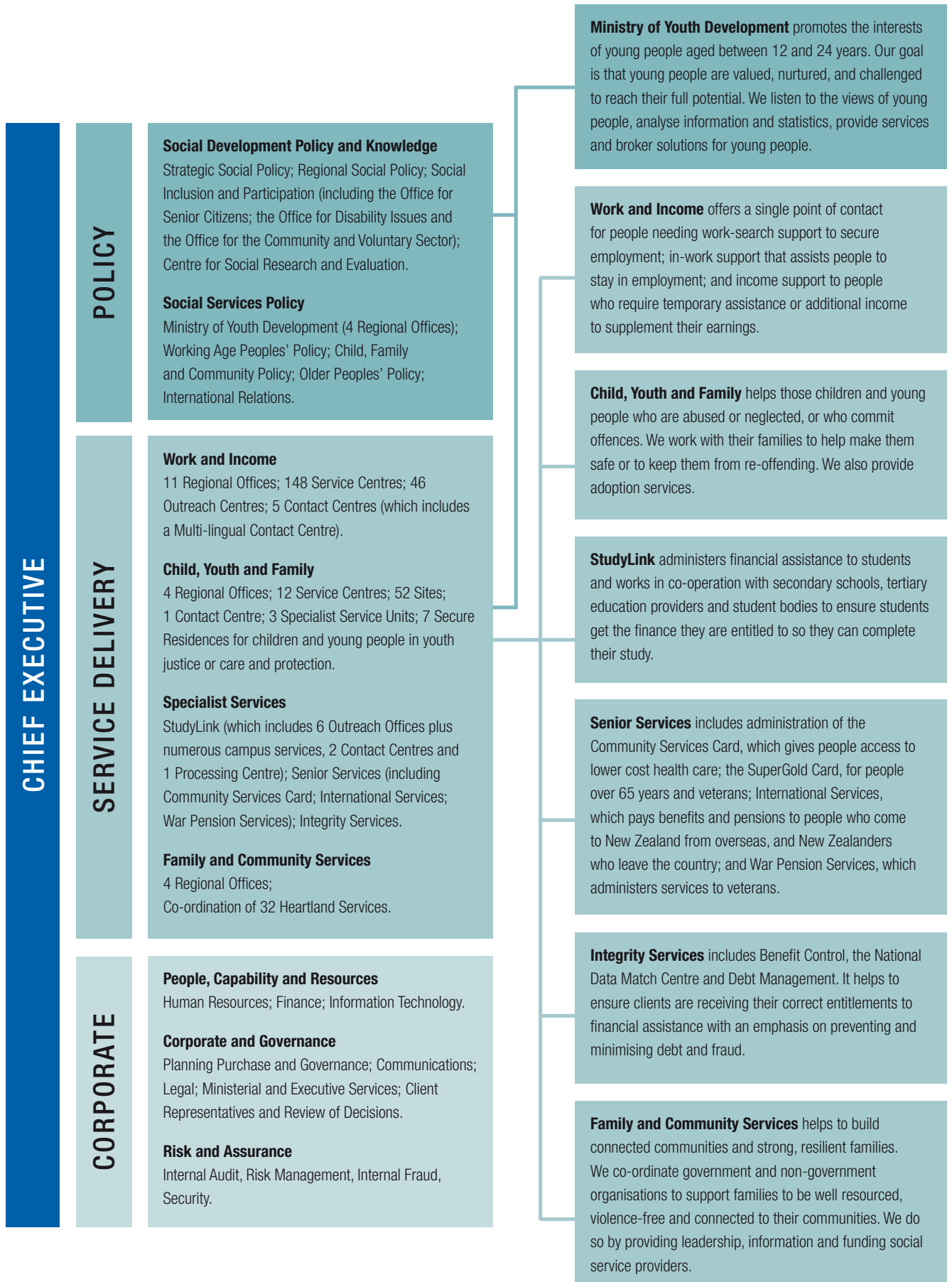
We will continue to work closely with representatives from the Council of Social Services in Christchurch, Healthy Christchurch, Tenants Protection Association, and the Christchurch City Council to explore the issue of substandard rental accommodation in Christchurch. This work programme recognises the link between housing and general wellbeing. The project group is looking at ways to work with tenants and landlords to improve the condition of substandard rental properties.

No wrong door

In 2005, the State Services Commission released a number of development goals for New Zealand's public service. The goals focus on how the state sector is configured and performs. One of the goals is concerned with ensuring that publicly provided services are easy to access and are responsive. To give life to this goal we are focused on ensuring that anyone accessing our services is guided to the right place to get the help that they need. With the inclusion of Child, Youth and Family into the Ministry and the opening of another Heartland Service Centre in Aranui, the possibilities in this area have increased and we will continue to focus on this important goal during the coming year.

We are involved in a number of other community programmes in the Canterbury region, some of which are already underway and others that will commence in the next year. Many of these initiatives are delivered in conjunction with a range of other organisations. The need to work in partnership recognises that disadvantage seldom comes from one source and the expertise and resources of others are needed to successfully address the underlying causes. All of our work supports the Government's long-term vision for New Zealand, as a strong economic performer and an inclusive society where all people have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in their communities.

Organisational Overview



Ministry of Social Development
Regional Office
7 Winston Avenue
Papanui
Christchurch
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

