

# Leading Social Development in **NORTHLAND**

Regional Plan 2007 > 2008



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
*Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora*



child, youth  
and family

*A service of the Ministry of Social Development*



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

*A service of the Ministry of Social Development*



MINISTRY OF  
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO TAIOHI

*Administered by the Ministry of Social Development*



**STUDYLINK**

Hoto Akoranga

*A service of the Ministry of Social Development*



**Work and Income**

Te Hiranga Tangata

*A service of the Ministry of Social Development*

#### Cover Photos

##### Top Left:

Enjoying a spot of fishing on Children's Day 2007.

##### Bottom Left:

Older people adding value to our community through mentoring.

##### Right:

Working as a boat painter after successfully completing the Stepping into Employment programme.

# Leading Social Development

## A PLAN FOR NORTHLAND 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 Northland 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-age<sup>1</sup> 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 Northland region!



Peter Hughes  
Chief Executive



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

# Opportunities for Action in Northland

There is a sense of pride when you ask most Northlanders where they come from. Those who were born here often tell you about their heritage, how they connect with the land and the people. Those who have moved here talk about their wonderful lifestyle, and the willingness of people to embrace them as part of their community.

Northland is well recognised as a tourist destination. We had eight destinations in AA Travel's recently announced 101 Must-Do's for Kiwis list<sup>2</sup>. In fact, the Bay of Islands came in third for the country, and Tutukaka and the Poor Knights came in 10th for what has been described as some of the best diving, snorkelling and fishing in the world. Other destinations mentioned were the Waipoua Forest for its awe-inspiring Kauri; Cape Reinga as the top of the Island; the beautiful Hokianga; rugged Ahipara and Shipwreck Bay; historical Waitangi Treaty Grounds; and the 'quirky' Hundertwasser Toilets in Kawakawa. One of the key challenges for Northland is to make the most of our beautiful environment and strong culture, while also protecting it. We are working with a number of iwi and community groups to find ways of developing tourism opportunities that will lead to sustainable employment and better economies in small communities.

According to the 2006 Census, approximately 148,440 people live in Northland. Of these, 50% live in the Whangarei district, 12% live in the Kaipara district and 38% live in the Far North. Our land area is approximately 1.25 million hectares, with 3,025 kilometres of coastline<sup>3</sup>. The consequence of having a small population to sustain such a large landmass is that we have a low economic base, and pockets of isolation and poverty.

Our region is well known for its strong Māori culture. Māori make up 29% of our population, compared with an average of 14% nationally<sup>4</sup>. Of our children and young people (aged 24 years and under), 43% are Māori compared with a national average of 21%. In the Far North this reaches 55%. This prominence will have a significant impact on our population make-up in the coming years, particularly as these people reach working age and beyond. There are currently 21,459 people aged 65 years and over living in our region, making up 15% of our total population<sup>5</sup>. This number is projected to rise to 41,000 by 2026<sup>6</sup>.



*Above: The impressive Tane Mahuta, situated in the Waipoua Forest on Northland's west coast is one of the region's many natural assets, attracting tourists and tourist operators to the region.*

2. [www.aatravel.co.nz](http://www.aatravel.co.nz).

3. Northland Community Plan 2006-2016, Northland Regional Council.

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

5. *Ibid.*

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

*"Manaia Primary Health Organisation has a strong working relationship with the Ministry of Social Development based on addressing key socio-economic determinants of health. We believe this task involves community health organisations, non-government organisations and government sectors, such as the Ministry, working closely together. We value our relationship and look forward to continuing to work closely together for the health and wellbeing of our community".*

**Chris Farrelly**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Manaia Primary Health Organisation

Northland has approximately 11,000 businesses, the majority are small (less than five employees), part-time or lifestyle businesses. Very few are ready to grow to the next level. The majority of our workforce is in low-skilled work with low incomes. This creates opportunities to attract investment and outside talent to grow our labour markets. However we also want to increase employment opportunities for the 14,307 working-age people receiving a benefit<sup>7</sup>.

According to *The 2006 Social Report*<sup>8</sup>, Northland has the second highest proportion of people on low incomes in the country with 30.2% considered low income<sup>9</sup>. Income levels impact on the participation of our people in their communities, their quality of life, health outcomes, and the educational attainment of their children. The median annual income for Northland is \$21,736, but drops to \$20,800 for Māori. This compares to a national median of \$25,220 and \$22,880 respectively<sup>10</sup>. Incomes for Northland Māori have increased by 39% (\$5,824) over the last two years, much faster than other groups, however there is still some way to go.

Our Regional Plan outlines the activities we plan to and currently undertake to address the issues, and exploit the opportunities we have in Northland. It covers the work of seven service lines of the Ministry - Child, Youth and Family, Family and Community Services, Integrity Services, the Ministry of Youth Development, Senior Services, StudyLink and Work and Income.

## Our vision for Northland

The Ministry of Social Development has two core functions. To provide leadership across the broader social sector and to provide policy advice and deliver services that improve outcomes for people. The *Statement of Intent*<sup>11</sup> sets out the high-level direction for the Ministry, and describes how we will achieve our outcomes. This Plan outlines how we are making a difference in Northland and the opportunities our stakeholders have to work with us.

Through our discussions with both external and internal stakeholders, we have developed a vision for Northland that we will strive to achieve. The key areas of our vision are:

- **Strong families, young and old.** A strong family is one where everyone lives according to shared positive values. They have dreams and goals for themselves as a group, and for the members of their family. They are connected and always there for one another. They know how to, and are able to, access the resources and services that they need to support their family and make a productive contribution to their communities.

7. All benefit statistics in this Regional Plan have been sourced from the Ministry of Social Development's Information Analysis Platform as at 31 March 2007. Where comparisons are made, these reflect statistics as at 31 March 2006, unless otherwise stated.

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

9. The low income information in *The 2006 Social Report* is taken from the 2001 Census, and not the 2006 Census.

10. Statistics New Zealand Income Survey data for 2006.

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

- **Sustainable employment.** In the short-term, paid work provides people with income to meet their needs and provides opportunities for social contact. Over the long term it can help a person develop their sense of self-worth and give them more choices around how they live their lives. People who are sustainably employed are role-models for their families and communities. In addition, increased participation in paid work will lead to economic growth for the region.
- **Cohesive communities.** Cohesive communities have formal and informal networks that give them the strength to develop their own solutions for community issues. They tend to have a central point of contact, or heart, in the community such as a school, marae, church, or community hall. Community members acknowledge and demonstrate a sense of caring for all people. A strong community has good links with other communities, and with wider social groups or localities.
- **Purposeful partnerships and collaboration.** Many of our stakeholders have an interest in more than one part of the Ministry. We will make the 'single face of the Ministry' concept a reality. It is important our stakeholders see value in working with us - they are the key to our success.
- **Strong internal capability.** We believe the Ministry's strength comes from two things, its leadership, and its people. Leadership is about how we establish, communicate and guide our staff to achieve our regional outcomes and to accomplish our vision and goals. Our workforce needs the right skills and qualities to help our region grow and cope with an ever-changing environment. We want our people to know where our organisation is heading, where they fit in the wider picture, and be enthusiastic about it.

## Reconnecting youth

Community-based organisation, Te Ora Hou Northland Incorporated, has been operating in Whangarei for the past 26 years.

Te Ora Hou aims to build strong, responsible and courageous young people. Weekly youth mentoring programmes, teen parent initiatives, early childhood care, school attendance services, social work support for whānau, graffiti removal, community development and transition support into employment and training are among regular programmes offered.

Common youth issues seen by Te Ora Hou staff include poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy and truancy. For many young people, relationships may have broken down in their home, school, community and culture, and in most cases the only significant connection is to their peers.

The varied work of Te Ora Hou is pulled together by visionary leadership, compassionate staff, forums addressing a range of issues, faith, a commitment to social justice, and a model of practice that is flexible enough to support each project in its own unique way.

The Ministry of Social Development supports and funds a number of Te Ora Hou initiatives. An integrated contract between the various funders and Te Ora Hou is currently being explored.

Pictured second from left is Te Ora Hou's Teen Parent Project Co-ordinator, Sharon Davis, with teenage mothers Whitney Palmer (left), Melaney Going and Danielle Logan (right) at their Harmony Antenatal Class.



## >> Opportunities for Action in Northland >>



*Above: Taskforce Green participants help to strip the de-commissioned frigate Canterbury and prepare it as a dive site for Deep Water Cove in the Bay of Islands. From left are Charlie Rewha, Trudy Perry and Deresley Clark.*

In working towards our vision we will address the needs of all our clients, however we will focus initially on two important groups, namely Māori and our young people.

Within Northland there is a strong Māori culture with the majority of iwi moving forward with both economic and social development. However, many whānau live in vulnerable situations, often in disadvantaged communities, with limited access to services. Statistics for health, welfare, crime, and education still show big differences between Māori and non-Māori.

Young people are our children, nieces or nephews, and mokopuna. They contribute to society, and have a right to be heard and have their needs met. Having young people around adds vibrancy and energy to a community. At the same time, some young people take potentially harmful risks, and can be vulnerable to negative influences. We want young people to be optimistic about their futures; to have hope. We want to support them to be leaders in their communities now and in the future.

There are many opportunities for action in Northland. The challenge is to choose the ones that will make the most difference for the people who live here. We have strong relationships with many agencies, organisations, iwi groups, communities, and other stakeholders. The key is to work together so that our various interests and needs can be met in the best way possible. There is a sense here in Northland that we just roll up our sleeves and do what we can to assist those people who need support. We cannot solve everything at once, but by all working together we can make a real difference.

E ngā mana  
E ngā reo  
E ngā tini karanga maha  
Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā rā tātou katoa.

Welcome to the Ministry of Social Development's Northland Regional Plan for 2007/2008.

Our Plan reflects the strong relationships we have built both internally and externally. Over the last year our various service lines have collaborated to develop a shared vision and find better ways to work together in Northland. Our merger with Child, Youth and Family has enabled us to explore how to provide a better service to our joint clients. Over the coming year one of our aims is to enhance the 'single face' of the Ministry in Northland.

Our regional social indicators, particularly for Māori, continue to concern us. Having said that, our relationships with other agencies are creating opportunities to jointly tackle the many social issues we face in Northland. We will be championing the Government's priority of Families - Young and Old in the Northland Intersectoral Forum. We are the lead agency for eliminating family violence, giving our children the best start in life, and promoting positive ageing. By working together we can bring our many skills and resources together to provide for the needs of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

We will also support other agencies in addressing the Government's priorities of Economic Transformation and strengthening our National Identity. Our main contribution to economic development occurs in two ways. The first is working with local businesses to source people to meet their labour demands. This can include training and skill development. The second area is working with community organisations to develop sustainable enterprises and job opportunities.

The Ministry continues to undergo many changes. The next few years offer some exciting challenges as we strengthen our partnerships with stakeholders, and strive to give our various clients the best service possible. With reducing levels of unemployment, we now find that we are assisting a different group of people. Many face significant barriers in their search for employment or participation in their community. Irrespective of whether we are working at the individual, family or community level we endeavour to have a positive impact on those individuals that we work with.

The aim of this Plan is to show you what we are trying to achieve in our region and how we can work together. It also provides me with an opportunity to acknowledge our staff, and the many agency and community groups we work with, for their continued commitment.

We look forward to working with you in creating a better Northland.

E ngā karanga maha o Te Taitokerau  
Maranga ake rā ki ngā mahi kei mua i a tātou mō  
tēnei tau  
Kia puawai, kia whakaotia i runga i te whakaaro kotahi  
Kia hoe ngatahi tātou hei oranga mō te Taitokerau.



Marama Wiki  
Regional Commissioner for Social Development



# Leading Social Development

Social development for us is about improving the wellbeing of the people in Northland. We help those who need it, and we assist people and communities to become more self-reliant. We lead social development in Northland in a number of ways. We promote collaboration to identify and address the issues that our region faces. In particular we are keen to address the areas where we fare poorly in *The Social Report*. In addition to our regional priorities, we promote and participate in addressing the Government's key priorities.

## Contributing to the Government's priorities

The Government has identified three key priorities for inter-agency action over the next decade. These are Families - Young and Old, Economic Transformation and National Identity.

Our Ministry is the lead agency for the priority of Families - Young and Old. Our goal is to ensure that all families, young and old, have the support and choices they need to be secure and be able to reach their full potential within our knowledge-based economy. We are focused on the following key themes.

- Strong Families (led by the Ministry of Social Development)
- Healthy, Confident Kids (led by the Ministry of Education)
- Safe Communities (led by the Ministry of Justice)
- Better Health for All (led by the Ministry of Health)
- Positive Ageing (led by the Ministry of Social Development).

Within Strong Families and Positive Ageing, we are the lead agency for giving our children the best start in life; eliminating family violence; and ensuring positive choices for older New Zealanders.

We are already active in all of these work areas as they build on the work already set out in the 'Opportunity for All New Zealanders' framework<sup>12</sup>. We invest in our children through initiatives such as Strengthening Families, Family Start and through our care and protection services. Our plans for further investment for children are discussed in the Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed section of this Plan. Our Chief Executive is the Chair of the 'Taskforce for Action on Violence Within Families' and we are actively working to eliminate family violence in Northland. Our Office for Senior Citizens is the lead agency in monitoring activity on the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy<sup>13</sup>. Here in Northland we will be developing a strategy to improve the choices for older people.

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

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

Our contribution to the region's economic transformation will focus on the creation of innovative and productive workplaces. We are keen to work with others to find ways to improve our labour market through the up-skilling of our workforce, increasing workforce participation, and improving choices for living, caring and working.

The aim of the National Identity theme is to 'ensure New Zealanders are able to take pride in who and what we are, through our arts, culture, film, sports and music, our appreciation of our natural environment, our understanding of our history and our stand on international issues'<sup>14</sup>. We contribute to this priority through our work in supporting all people to participate in their communities.

The Government has also identified the need to enhance the capacity of all non-government organisation providers to deliver services that will progress these priorities. Non-government organisations are vital to the success of all of these initiatives. They have the flexibility to meet the specific needs of their communities, and they often engage with families that other organisations find hard to reach. The services they deliver often complement, or are conducted on behalf of, government agencies.

## Contributing to Northland's development

The Northland Intersectoral Forum is a collaborative group made up of regional leaders from 25 central and local government agencies. The Ministry has three active members on the Forum, and our Regional Commissioner is the co-chair with the Chief Executive from the Far North District Council. Over the last year, the group has raised their profile - in August they hosted a visit by senior managers from Centrelink and FaCSIA in Australia. In October they invited the National Chief Executive from each Northland Intersectoral Forum representative organisation to attend the Forum. They now have the opportunity to report to the Social Sector Forum (the leadership group made up of Chief Executives from the Ministries of Health, Education, Social Development and Justice) on their activities.

*Below: Former District Commander of the Northland Police Viv Rickard and Regional Commissioner for Social Development Marama Wiki present on the evolution of the Northland Intersectoral Forum to visiting overseas dignitaries.*



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

*“Housing New Zealand and Work and Income have a strong working relationship that focuses on meeting the needs of our mutual clients. We will further strengthen the relationship with the Joint Assessment Implementation Strategy which allows our agencies to assess clients’ correct entitlements from each others work sites”.*

**Rick Boraston**  
Northland Regional Manager  
Housing New Zealand

Over the last year, the Northland Intersectoral Forum has supported working groups on alcohol and drugs, youth groups, and family violence. In addition, they approved a proposal for our Regional Strategic Planner to work with representatives from the Department of Labour and Enterprise Northland to set up a Planners’ Forum. The function of this group is to support the Northland Intersectoral Forum’s decision-making, and to improve collaboration in planning for our region.

The Intersectoral Forum’s priority framework incorporates the Government’s priorities with our own regional priorities. Recently they agreed to focus on the issues of lifelong learning; increasing sustainable employment; reducing crime; and reducing tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse in Northland. Addressing these issues will have an impact either directly or indirectly on social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing.

In addition to individually and collectively addressing the issues, the Forum has agreed to undertake three joint projects, all of which we will be involved in. The first is to identify ways to engage rangatahi (youth), particularly Māori boys, in learning. The second is to work with the community of Otangarei to strengthen their community. The third project is to identify collective interventions to address the risks associated with groups of youth in Northland. These projects are in the early stages of development and will be progressed over the coming year.

Family and Community Services has also been working on identifying priorities for action. The Local Services Mapping process involves undertaking a stock-take of services to identify gaps and overlaps, and consulting with communities, providers, and government agencies to identify the issues they think need to be addressed within the community. Our Family and Community Services Regional Relationship Manager produces a community report to guide government funding, and provide backing for organisations seeking to work on the identified issues. A stakeholder steering group then makes recommendations on activities around the issues, and monitors progress in addressing them.

We are currently in the final phases of consultation for the Whangarei District Local Services Mapping Community Report and plan to release it in the near future. We will then start the mapping process in the Kaipara District.

We have been working with the Far North District Council to support their Social Development Plan. Together we have consulted with communities about what their issues are and what they think should happen. The Council is using the information to inform their Social Development Plan, and we are using it to inform our Local Services Mapping process. The two pieces of work will complement each other as the Local Services Mapping Community Report will outline the priority issues identified by the district and the Far North District Council Plan will show how they can contribute to social development for the

district. We will continue to support the Council in developing and implementing their Plan. Our Far North District Local Services Mapping Community Report will be available to interested organisations shortly.

We are involved with a number of inter-agency and community groups, including the Welfare Advisory Group, Investing in Northland Communities (INC), and the Regional Labour Market Development Forum. We are also involved in a number of other projects that involve other organisations; many of which are detailed throughout this Plan. We will continue to seek opportunities to engage with others so that we all develop a common understanding of each others views, needs and activities.

## Developing a single face of the Ministry in Northland

Being a large organisation, with many different service lines has its challenges. As our *2006/2007 Statement of Intent* notes, 'to help people access our services, we need to provide a 'single face' for the Ministry at the local and regional level'.

Our aim is to make these concepts a reality in Northland. Some stakeholders work with more than one of our service lines, so it is important we co-ordinate our engagement to eliminate confusion and create the best outcomes for everyone. In addition, we are often working with clients who are accessing services from more than one of our service lines. It doesn't matter where or when a client makes contact with us, they should have access to any appropriate service, and be supported to get the help they need.

Over the last year we formed a multi-service line group that undertakes strategic planning for the Ministry's work in Northland and this has already enhanced our internal collaboration at a managerial level. To date, they have developed a draft vision for the region, and identified work we can do towards achieving our goals. We have also instigated a cross-Ministry Governance Group made up of representatives from all service lines who have a presence in the region. This Group will action the recommendations for the strategic vision, and is the central point for operational decision-making regarding issues or opportunities that impact on more than one of our service lines.

## On the road to job satisfaction

A meeting with Northland Integrity Services Field Officer, Christina Conaglen (left), has seen Logan Manuel's (right) life take off in a new direction.

Logan, who previously worked in forestry shared his desire to operate machinery with Christina at a recent meeting.

*"I had a flyer about the Employment Plus Civil Roading Course with me. Logan was ecstatic. Not only was there a course available to help him achieve his goal, but it would provide him with qualifications and experience. We arranged a meeting with the tutor and Logan was signed up to start the following Monday",* Christina said.

Logan admits it was pretty boring watching TV all day. *"I wanted to do more than labouring, and had started to look at what I needed to do to become qualified in operating machinery".*

Logan's tutors are very impressed with his enthusiasm to learn, and his motivation to secure full-time work.

The Civil Roading Course runs for six months and trainees obtain their Wheels, Tracks and Rollers Endorsements. Work experience with Fulton Hogan may be another stepping stone towards securing his dream.

*"The first thing I'll do when I get a job, is save up for a car for me and my kids",* said Logan.



The inclusion of Child, Youth and Family within our Ministry creates opportunities to work more closely with each other. Many Child, Youth and Family clients are Work and Income clients; some are also accessing services such as Family Start or Strengthening Families supported through Family and Community Services. There are many more opportunities to work together and provide a more holistic service, for the best possible outcomes for our clients.

At a policy level, EPI-net (a web-based tool) has been created to help our regional staff inform policy makers about issues that are important to our region. Our Regional Policy Advisor acts as the liaison between our staff and our National Office to ensure our regional voice is being heard in the policy process.

Last year our Integrity Services restructured to include the former Benefit Control, Debt Collection and Data Matching Units. Integrity Services provides leadership and support to our service lines and clients by focusing on minimising debt caused through error, abuse or fraud and ensuring that the right benefit is paid to the right person over the right period of time.

Integrity Services is an integral part of the Ministry as their work supports the development of policies and internal practices to prevent and detect debt and fraud at both a regional and national level. We must ensure we do this well in order to continue to build the public's trust and confidence in the Ministry's benefit system.



*Above: Eve Quinn (standing) and Jo Morrison (seated) present the new Integrity Services internal intranet to Work and Income staff from Whangarei. The intranet site aims to improve service delivery across the region.*

# Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

Supporting children, young people and families is the core work for a number of our service lines. We are working at all levels; children, young people, parents and entire families. They are inter connected - helping individual family members helps the wider family, with strong families leading to strong communities. At the same time, we recognise that individual family members have their own unique needs and aspirations.

## Giving our children the best start in life

It is well known that the early years of a child's life lay the foundations for their future. These foundations can either be positive or negative. Family and Community Services has a number of early intervention initiatives underway, all part of the Early Years package. This includes family hubs, service co-ordinators for teenage parents, trialling a programme called Roots of Empathy, and extending the Family Start programme. We are in the early stages of establishing the Family Hub and a Service Co-ordinator for teenage parents in Northland.

We have funded The Pulse to be an early year's service hub in Whangarei. Initially, The Pulse was set up as a one-stop-shop for young people, however it is now expanding to provide centralised services for families. There will be an early years worker available to develop a network of service providers and to keep families connected to core services that they may require. Once set up, the hub will be able to access a Service Development Innovation Fund to respond to specific gaps in services for families.

Te Ora Hou is one of the providers based at The Pulse. They are part of the early years hub and employ a Teenage Parent Service Co-ordinator to work with teenage parents and their children. The Co-ordinator helps young parents to access health services, education providers, government services such as Work and Income, and other support they may need. They are also a link to support groups and training to help young parents develop their parenting skills. In addition, their role is to ensure the children have access to services they are entitled to, including Well Child/Tamariki Ora, immunisation, and early childhood education. The Co-ordinator builds on Te Ora Hou's existing services such as the He Mataariki School for Teenage Parents, He Kākano Child Care Centre, and the youth leadership programme.

Our Family Start programme is aimed at supporting families at risk of poor outcomes for their children. Family and Community Services funds Family Start programmes in Whangarei, Kaikohe and Kaitiāia. The core of this programme is the availability of a family/whānau worker to visit families in their homes and support them to identify priorities and achieve their family goals. Families can enter the programme from six months prior to the birth of a child and up to one year after.

On a broader scale, our SKIP (Strategies with Kids: Information for Parents) initiative uses promotional material, and family-oriented activities to teach parents the best ways to nurture and develop their children. Kaipara Abuse Prevention Incorporated employs a SKIP Co-ordinator to deliver parent education activities across the district. He Puna Marama Trust get out and about in their 'funky' van to promote positive parenting in the



*Right: Te Aupouri Trust Manager and SKIP tutor Eric Reid (right), provides support to fathers such as Thomas Rogers (left) in their communities, through advice about parenting and strengthening relationships within the whānau.*

*“SKIP is phenomenal and we have nothing but praise. As an organisation, we work with parents in the Kaitaia community and we have waited so long for something like this to happen. SKIP is the fence at the top of the hill instead of the ambulance at the bottom. Instead of dealing with casualties, we are putting preventative measures in place”.*

**Eric Reid**  
Manager/SKIP Provider  
Te Aupouri Māori Trust

Whangarei area. Te Aupouri Social Services runs rural family days and separate programmes for mothers and fathers in the Far North.

Child, Youth and Family has a Social Worker who provides adoption services for the region. These services include child adoption and provision of information to adults who have been involved in previous adoptions.

Delivered by Work and Income and Inland Revenue, the Working for Families package is designed to help make it easier for parents to work and raise a family. Financial support will be available this year for almost all families with children, earning under \$70,000 a year, many families with children, earning up to \$100,000 a year and some larger families earning more. There are a number of Working for Families Tax Credits available which support families, including family tax credits and in-work tax credits.

In addition to Working for Families Tax Credits, Work and Income offers assistance with childcare and housing costs.

## Building strong families

Families and whānau have an enormous impact on wellbeing. They provide care and support for their members, promote the growth and development of their children, and pass on their culture and values from one generation to the next. All families face challenges and pressures at some time. While many families cope well, others need extra help. We try to ensure that there are support systems in place to provide the right help at the right time.

Our inter-agency Strengthening Families work has been underway for some time now. We have co-ordinators based in Kaitaia and Whangarei to cover our region. They have built relationships with service providers and are now seeing positive outcomes from co-ordinating our various services around the needs of families.

Over the last year Work and Income has introduced a family-focused integrated service to identify our most vulnerable families in certain communities across the country and work with them to address the issues they face. Often these families exist without accessing the support they need. Integrated service co-ordinators identify a family through the engagement Work and Income has with a family member and then actively supports them to meet their family goals.

Increasingly we recognise the link between Work and Income and Housing New Zealand as many of their tenants are our clients. As such, there are opportunities for us to improve our services by working together. In particular we are working together to move clients who are on their waiting list into private housing. We are also working to improve housing options for people with a mental illness. It is increasingly important that we focus on improving our service for mental health clients, including how we link to both housing and health providers.



**Above:** Children's Day was held at Mair Park, where 3,000 people enjoyed activities ranging from fishing, a bouncy castle, rock and roll dancers and hard-rock group dancers. 'GenerationALL' t-shirts and caps were also available. A very successful and enjoyable day was had by everyone who attended.

In working towards our vision, we will regularly review our services to ensure they are meeting the needs of families. We will be asking some of our clients for their feedback on the appropriateness of our services, and the barriers they may face. We will take their feedback on board as we continue to improve our services to them. As part of our 'single face' of the Ministry work we will also be improving the transitions into, through, and out of, our services.

## Protecting the most vulnerable

There are two sides to protecting the most vulnerable people in our communities - prevention, and support for victims. On the prevention side, Child, Youth and Family has been driving the Everyday Communities Project in Northland for the last

two years. The Project is aimed at raising awareness of child abuse, neglect and family violence. It also aims to get the whole community to take responsibility for tackling these issues. Each programme under the Project runs for 12 months and has two strands, building capability in the community to take ownership of the issue, and public education to make the issue of child safety relevant to all people. Included in this Project is Everyday Theatre which aims to empower young people to address issues of child abuse, neglect, family violence and positive parenting.

In addition, Child, Youth and Family has social workers who visit local schools and attend community functions to ensure easy access to our services, and to provide information on abuse and how to report cases.

## *Everyday communities working together*

Everyday Communities is a collaborative initiative between Child, Youth and Family and community groups to provide community education about the prevention of child abuse, neglect and family violence. In Northland the project has been rolled out in Dargaville, Whangarei, Kaitia and Kaikohe.

This year, Everyday Communities will be highly active with seven working parties made up of both government and community agencies working together to raise awareness and inform the public about these issues. Working parties are established throughout Northland, in Whangarei, Kaipara, Kaikohe, Kaitia and Whangaroa.

Each working party develops a plan of activity in their locality which includes:

- creating a campaign label, for example, 'Hugs not Thugs' in Kaitia and 'GenerationALL' in Whangarei
- identifying key messages for the abuse types to be targeted
- developing an intensive six-week media strategy for active phases of the campaign
- distributing resources at events, activities and workshops throughout the year
- developing additional resources such as stickers, t-shirts and booklets
- providing relevant training either to the public or community workers on relevant topics.

Everyday Communities provides opportunities for Ministry staff to join in the activities alongside other community groups in their area. Feedback is extremely positive about the benefits of active participation and interaction with the public.

A stage was set up to promote Everyday Communities at the AMP Summer Show, where pamphlets, brochures and 'UR Free 2B' cards were distributed.

Pictured is Whangarei Social Worker Nicolette Van Der Schriek.



## Eliminating family violence

As already mentioned, the Ministry leads the social sector response to eliminating family violence. We will be actively supporting the key message that 'family violence is not OK'.

In Northland, we have a Strategic Family Violence Group made up of representatives who have an interest in eliminating family violence. This Group connects frontline services and strategic decision-makers. They are people who can make real-time decisions to resolve operational issues for family violence-related services.

As part of our Family Violence Intervention Programme, frontline staff from Integrity Services, StudyLink and Work and Income, have been trained in identifying family violence and referring people to appropriate support services. In addition, a number of our staff are studying towards a National Certificate of Abuse, Neglect and Violence. Dealing with sensitive issues such as this has always been a part of our case managers' role, but now they have pathways to help ensure clients get the support they need. They are being supported by two family violence response co-ordinators, based in Kaikohe and Whangarei. Since the Programme's inception there has been a marked increase in the number of disclosures of violence, and some really positive outcomes for families. The merger with Child, Youth and Family has made it easier for staff to work together to meet the needs of our children and young people who are experiencing violence.

Family and Community Services is supporting the Amokura Family Violence Prevention Strategy, which is an initiative of the Taitokerau Iwi Chief Executive's Consortium. The initiative consists of four project areas: education and promotion, research, advocacy, and provider development and training. Amokura is well recognised for its successful 'Step Back' campaign which conveys simple messages and strategies for change and includes original music performed by local young people. Research includes kaumātua insights into oranga whānau; a project looking at mana tāne - ways that men contribute to the welfare and nurturing of violence-free families; action research with Whaingaroa rangatahi on their vision of oranga whānau; and a literature review. Amokura will be a key part of our future work with the Taitokerau Iwi Chief Executive's Consortium.

Other Family and Community Services initiatives include:

- Increasing support for children who witness family violence by introducing 45 full-time child advocates throughout New Zealand. The advocates are an independent voice for children and will offer advice and support where needed. Over the next year we will fund up to three advocates in selected areas around the country.

*"The Whangarei Police enjoy a good working relationship with Whangarei-based Child, Youth and Family staff. There is excellent inter-agency understanding with the Youth Justice team members and Youth Aid staff, and we have established flows of information to assist in case assessment procedures between the two departments".*

*Inspector Paul Dimery  
Area Commander Whangarei/Kaipara  
New Zealand Police*

- The Community Action Fund<sup>15</sup> which aims to support the great ideas and actions being developed at a community level. The focus is on changing the attitudes and behaviours that ignore, excuse, or trivialise the effects of family violence. Community organisations working in family violence prevention can receive up to \$30,000. Funding rounds will occur regularly over the next four years.
- Working with the Accident Compensation Corporation to revise the Community Action to Prevent Family Violence Toolkit which provides tools and information to help communities develop local campaigns to tackle family violence<sup>16</sup>.

### Care and protection of children and young people

One of Child, Youth and Family's core functions is to ensure children and young people are protected from abuse and neglect. We do this by working with and supporting families and whānau to identify their strengths and struggles, and to determine goals that ensure the safety and wellbeing of their children and young people.

It is very important that families, whānau, hapū and iwi are involved in decisions affecting them and their children.

Often a family group conference is undertaken to reach agreement on how to keep the children safe. This enables the extended family to create plans and solutions that will work for them and meet their needs and goals for their children. A social worker supports the family to implement this plan and attain the goals identified. In Northland there are approximately 200 children and young people in care at any one time. Many of these children are placed with their extended family. This is always the preferred choice. Many children and young people in care identify as Māori. We are seeking to develop a process with iwi social services to ensure more children have the opportunity to stay connected to their whānau, hapū and iwi.

Our aim under the Permanency Policy is to move children and young people into a permanent living arrangement as soon as possible that promotes their wellbeing and enables them to grow up belonging to a family that is committed to them for life, whether the family is biologically or psychologically related. Options include returning home, living with extended family, living with a new family or if an older young person, moving into independent living.

A recent inter-agency project has seen the opening of Te Whare Rerenga, a girls' residence based in Hikurangi. Previously young



*Left: Riverview OSCAR (Out of School Care and Recreation) Programme recently won a national promotion and received \$2,000 worth of sporting equipment to boost their physical activity programme for Kerikeri children.*

15. Details on how to apply for this Fund are available via [www.familyservices.govt.nz](http://www.familyservices.govt.nz).

16. The toolkit is available from the New Zealand Family Violence Clearing house, [www.nzfvc.org.nz](http://www.nzfvc.org.nz).

*"We are working closely to improve our understanding of each others services, protocols, caseloads and acuity. The relationship between Child and Youth Health Services, and Child, Youth and Family is working well, and is a reflection of Child, Youth and Family's commitment to open and regular communication".*

*Jeanette Anderson  
Manager  
Child and Youth Health Services  
Northland District Health Board*

women needing residential care were sent to Auckland. Otangarei Trust has been the driver of the project. Work and Income provided an Enterprising Communities Grant to get the project off the ground; Housing New Zealand bought the house, and the ASB Community Trust funded furniture, fittings and a minibus. Child, Youth and Family will purchase accommodation for up to six girls aged 12 to 17 years for a maximum of three months. While there the girls will receive personal development education in personal and sexual health, and life-skills training.

## Growing our young people

In addition to our work with young people as part of a family, we acknowledge that young people have specific youth development needs, and a distinctive and valuable voice. The work of the Ministry of Youth Development is about ensuring young people have support to develop the skills and attitudes they need to take part positively in communities, now and in the future. Child, Youth and Family, and Work and Income are also focused on helping young people who have particular issues or barriers which may hinder them finding a successful path through life.

From their discussions with Northland young people, the Ministry of Youth Development has found that they are keen to engage in decision making, and they would like more training opportunities and recreation activities. Young people have also indicated that they are proud of their physical and community environments, however some face problems such as poverty, alcohol and drugs, and mental health issues. In Northland many young women take on the role of parenthood at a young age and need parenting support. We will be working with other government agencies and communities to address these concerns. Within the Ministry, we have set up the Northland MSD Youth Network to ensure that we are all working together to meet the needs of our young people. Representatives also take part in the other youth networks within the region.

## Helping young people find their path

The transition between childhood and adulthood can be tough. We want to help as many young people as possible make the transition successfully. Work and Income funds Youth Transition Services based in Whangarei, and the Far North District that aim to successfully move young people from school to further training or employment. For the past few years we have also funded transition services with Dargaville High School and Te Uri o Hau. We believe having a transition service in the Kaipara District is important and although current funding is not guaranteed, we will endeavour to support its continuation. Into the future our focus is to improve the links between the different transition services so that young people get the service most appropriate for them, and none fall through the gaps.

The Ministry of Youth Development also funds programmes aimed at helping young people make a successful transition to adulthood. The Services for Young People Fund is used to purchase services that help them develop self

esteem, and covers personal development, family connections, improved health, and pathways to education, training or employment. Funding has been provided to the Kaitaia-based Community Business and Environment Centre to provide programmes in their area, and NorthTec to offer programmes in Whangarei and Kerikeri. The Ministry of Youth Development also administers the Youth Development Partnership Fund which is available to fund councils wishing to undertake youth development in their communities.

Over the last three years our four Northland councils have committed to take on cadets as their contribution to the shared goal between government and the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs<sup>17</sup>. The cadetships have resulted in successful transitions into work for a number of young people. For the 2006 Far North Futures Cadet programme, there were 10 students placed with Te Hiku Media, the Far North District Council, Fulton Hogan and Sobieski Training Consultants. This has been a collaborative project with the Tertiary Education Commission funding the training, the Ministry of Youth Development funding a co-ordinator, Work and Income offering employee subsidies, and the Far North District Council administering the programme. We are keen to continue the programme and expand the number of employers. In the coming year, we will be approaching all the major government agencies to encourage them to take on at least one cadet each.

StudyLink is in the unique position of contributing to not only our own outcomes, but to the Ministry of Education's as well. One of their objectives is that students are able to make informed choices about their investment in tertiary education. The StudyLink On Course programme is being delivered to secondary schools in Northland. The programme helps young people to make decisions about future study, and related funding options. Their feedback shows that schools are really happy with the programme.

We will also continue to support people who are not at school. Last year a Work and Income On Course module was developed especially to help people transition from a benefit to study. This year StudyLink and Work and Income will be training staff in the module and promoting it to assist our clients. We will continue to work with other organisations to promote this module to as many young people as possible. Successful collaboration also includes our work with Career Services rapuara to run joint seminars, and to link people to tertiary education.

Once a student has decided to undertake study there are many ways to access StudyLink services and we are actively promoting our online facilities. We will investigate student access to community-based computer facilities such as libraries, education providers, and Work and Income in smaller communities and will take laptops to remote locations to aid online access. We are keen to continue building relationships with local marae, especially those who run training courses. Last year we worked with Ngaiotonga and Peria Marae to ensure that their people were getting the right messages about the financial support available while studying.



*Above: As part of a Transition to Work programme, Hannah Green is attempting to secure her driver's licence with support from Whangarei Youth Transition Services Co-ordinator, Graeme Edwards.*

*"Our whole group was quite amazed that so many companies and people wanted to show us how we could get to the top. Coming from a little town like Kaitaia where youth like us are out there walking the streets, we didn't know there are people out there that really do want to help us".*

*Daryl Kairau  
Far North Cadet and Sound Technician  
Te Hiku Media*

17. The Mayors Taskforce for Jobs and government share the goal of having all 15 to 19 year olds engaged in work, education or training or other activities that contribute to their long-term economic independence and wellbeing.

## Futures Cadet programme in full swing

The Far North Futures Cadet programme is providing local young people with a stepping stone towards sustainable careers, by providing employment, training and personal development within a business environment.

The programme, delivered by the Far North District Council, helps young Work and Income clients who have a desire to improve their employment opportunities and those that want to contribute towards their communities. This year at least 10 young people will gain work experience with local organisations.

Mayor Yvonne Sharp says this is another good example of local and central government agencies and the private sector working in partnership for the betterment of the community. *“Judging from the success of the Northland Cadetship programme in which we have been involved for the last three years, I am sure this initiative will provide real benefits for both the cadets and their future employers”*, she said.

Project Co-ordinator, Kay Ratana, is delighted with the early success of the programme. *“Organisations in the Far North have been very supportive and have offered cadets important and challenging roles within their organisations. The cadets have not only improved their work and life skills, but there has been noticeable improvement in their self esteem, motivation,*

*communication skills and their ability to self manage and make better life choices”*.

The Far North District Council, Te Hiku Media, Sobieski Consultants and Fulton Hogan are among local organisations who have welcomed cadets.

Funding for the programme co-ordinator is one of the youth-focused projects funded through the Ministry of Youth Development's Partnership Fund.

Pictured from left are Te Hiku Media cadets, Jamie Clarke, Stewart Moeau and Daryl Kairau.



StudyLink also has a goal that students successfully complete their course of study with minimal debt. Once the student has completed their course, StudyLink can connect them to other support services to move them into the next phase of their life, whether it be employment or further study.

Some young people need more help to make positive choices. Child, Youth and Family works with the New Zealand Police and the Courts in dealing with young offenders under the youth justice system. This system aims to hold young people accountable and to take responsibility for their actions, and hopefully learn from their mistakes. The aim is to resolve the offending without the young person receiving a criminal conviction. Experience shows that once a young person has a criminal record they are more likely to continue offending, and the offences may get more serious over time. Around 90% of young offenders are kept out of the courts. For those who do go to court a family group conference is often held. Here the offender, their family, the authorities, and sometimes the victim

meet to decide how the young person will move forward from this point. Child, Youth and Family has a responsibility to ensure that whatever is agreed at the family group conference is carried out.

Child, Youth and Family has recently implemented a new approach to youth justice. These changes will contribute to our goal of reducing the rate and the severity of re-offending. In addition to holding the young person accountable, we will look at the reasons behind their offending. The lives of some young people can be very complex and in these cases a multi-disciplinary approach may be the best way forward. In this respect, our services are taking a greater community focus. We want to develop an intimate knowledge of community resources, networks and opportunities so we can bring together resources to help young people develop an offending-free future. Building and developing positive relationships with groups such as the New Zealand Police, the Courts, iwi social services, and other community organisations is the key to our success.

## Hearing the voices of young people

The Ministry of Youth Development undertakes a number of initiatives at a national level.

- The Youth Parliament aims to encourage young people to become active in the governing process of the nation. This year, 121 youth Members of Parliament from across the country will visit Wellington. They will get the opportunity to debate a piece of legislation, ask oral questions of current Cabinet Ministers, engage in general debate, and hold a select committee meeting. Other young people will be invited to attend as journalists in the press gallery.
- The PROVOKE Network aims to provide a national networking facility which allows government and non-government organisations to engage young people in decision making, and help young people to get their voices heard.
- Youth 2007 is a research project which will gather and analyse information about the health and wellbeing of over 10,000 young people from 100 different secondary schools in New Zealand. The data available from this survey will give us a good picture of the needs of young people in our region.
- This year we will be working with the Ministry of Health and other agencies to draw attention to the health needs of young people and the importance of providing health services that are accessible and appropriate for them no matter which part of New Zealand they live in.

*“StudyLink will quickly warn us if students have any problems or issues. They’re very student-focused. Mature and second chance learners make up a significant portion of our students, and often they don’t have the finances to cover their studies. StudyLink has provided these students with opportunities to continue learning”.*

*Joan Taylor  
Academic Registrar  
NorthTec*



*Left: Whangarei student, Mere Kemp accesses the StudyLink online application service.*

# Creating Opportunities for Working Age People

*"We've sourced staff from Work and Income for over 12 years, and they've been excellent. Work brokers know we like keen people so applicants are well screened. It saves a lot of time and makes our job easier. Some people have started as cleaners and worked their way up the ladder. I'd say 15 of these would've moved up to a management level over the years"*

**Sanjay Kumar**  
Operations Manager  
McDonald's Whangarei

There are many different stages in a person's working life, ranging from just starting out and maybe training, through to managing family responsibilities, and later moving towards retirement. These different stages create varying demands on a person. As a result, we ensure that any support we provide meets the unique needs of an individual.

A successful labour force provides the link between social and economic development. In order to work towards the Government's goal of Economic Transformation, we need a skilled and educated workforce, and an increase in the number of people who participate in it. Yet some people face a number of barriers to their participation in work. Skills such as literacy, numeracy and vocational training are obvious barriers, but there are many others, such as family support, childcare, transport and health.

Access to labour markets can be a considerable barrier. Limited access to transport means people in rural areas need to look at alternatives such as developing their own labour markets. Many communities are coming together to identify their own opportunities - the most prevalent industries being tourism and hospitality. Our Enterprising Communities Grants are available to communities who have ideas for projects that will create sustainable enterprises and job opportunities.

According to the Household Labour Force Survey for March 2007, 66.5% of the Northland working-age population were participating in the labour force. That leaves 33.5% of our working-age people who are not considered to be participating in the labour force. There could be a number of reasons for this, for example where individuals are either retired, studying, sick, or looking after family. New Zealand's average participation rate (68.6%) is higher than Northland's<sup>18</sup>. Our population breakdown is not markedly different to the national view in terms of the number of retirees, children, or women, so there is a challenge for us to identify why people are not participating and to encourage them to join, or re-join the labour force.

In addition, the labour market has changed over the last few years. While it has eased somewhat, New Zealand is experiencing a 30-year high in reported skill and labour shortages and unemployment is at its lowest level for more than 25 years. In Northland the number of working-age clients receiving an unemployment-related benefit<sup>19</sup> has dropped by 858 over the last year to 1,965. At the same time, the number of Māori clients has not reduced as fast as non-Māori. Māori now make up 65% of our clients receiving an unemployment-related benefit, and 65% of our domestic purposes-related benefit clients<sup>20</sup>. Males are also over-represented in our unemployment statistics, making up 66%.

18. Household Labour Force Survey, 31 March 2007, Statistics New Zealand.

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

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

## A service delivery evolution

Work and Income is undergoing significant change in order to meet the needs of this new working environment. We are re-assessing how we provide our services to both our clients and employers.

### Services for our clients

Over the last year we have implemented the initial stages of our New Service Approach in all of our service centres. A person who comes through our doors undertakes a pre-assessment to identify their needs. They are then streamed, based on whether they are currently working and need to remain in work, ready and able to work, able to work soon, or unlikely to work in the near future. We now provide a number of support services before a client applies for a benefit. Many do not reach the benefit application stage because they have already moved into training or employment.

Clients who are ready to work are referred to our Job Search Service which assists them in taking responsibility for finding employment. Clients receive different levels of support depending on their needs.

This may include:

- Undertaking a jobz4u<sup>21</sup> skill profile to match their skills to current job opportunities.
- Participating in seminars which provide information about the local labour market, and which detail a client's benefit eligibility and responsibilities.
- Attending a Planning and Assessment Module where a self-assessment is completed to identify what activities a client could undertake to increase their chances of gaining employment. A plan would then be developed and agreed with the case manager.
- Participating in job search group-based activities such as In2WRK and Search4WRK. In2WRK is a one-week programme that helps clients develop the skills they need to get a job and modules include CV preparation, interview skills and job-search techniques. Search4WRK is a regular forum to help clients in their search for work. It offers access to newspapers, vacancies, the internet and our staff who provide support and mentoring.

One of the differences with these new programmes is that we do not just work one-to-one with our clients anymore. Increasingly we are working with small groups of clients. This allows us to improve the impact of our services, and it provides clients with opportunities to network and support each other in their job-searching activity.



*Above: Maria Strickland had been receiving a benefit for 20 years. After completing a number of employment-related courses, Maria has now secured a permanent position at Forest Hill Poultry Farm in Whangarei.*

<sup>21</sup>. Jobz4u is a client-to-job skills matching application.

## Sole parent steaming ahead

After being supported by a Domestic Purposes Benefit since 1994, mother of three, Delwyn Smith (pictured) recently secured work with Northland Drycleaners in Whangarei.

Delwyn felt disillusioned after unsuccessfully job hunting for a long time but was encouraged by her case manager to attend Work and Income's In2WRK and Search4WRK programmes.

The programmes are group-based job-search activities where clients have access to a number of resources to help them find a job.

*"It was hard for employers to consider taking me on because I'd been out of work for nearly 14 years, but I completed the job-search programmes which were really good. They gave me a lot more confidence, especially for interviews",* explained Delwyn.

Delwyn's new boss, Kevin Wanshaw (pictured), believes Delwyn is a good match for his business.

*"I told the work broker what we needed and I'm impressed by her judgement. Delwyn's attributes fit well. Clothes can be a person's most valued possessions. We didn't want someone young. This is a 'people business' and we needed someone mature",* said Kevin.

Delwyn is able to fit her job around her children, finishing work in the afternoon before school finishes. Working has

improved Delwyn's finances and also helped her become more independent.

*"Although I'm only working 22 hours a week, I've been able to get off the benefit completely. I was surprised how much better off we are, especially with the extra Working for Families assistance we receive",* said Delwyn.



Another difference is that access to services is not decided by what benefit a client is receiving. It is decided by the stage they are at in their pathway to work. People receiving benefits other than an unemployment-related benefit have just as much right to our help in preparing for work. If they cannot work at present for reasons such as ill health or disability, or caring for a family member, there may still be things they can do to prepare for when they will be able to work again. If work is unlikely to be an option, a person can still take part in activities that involve them in their community. We will continue to make sure that all clients receive the help and support that they are entitled to.

Over time some of our administrative tasks will be centralised, allowing case managers more time to give clients a quality service. Case managers are knowledgeable about the broad range of social issues that some of our clients face and are able to refer them to the right agency or service to meet their individual needs.

We will ensure a person can access any of our services from their initial point of contact.

Our new Client Management System which we are currently developing will also play a crucial role in changing how we engage with 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, enabling us to work even more proactively with our clients from the first point of contact. The first phase will be rolled out across the country over the next year.

One of the first points of contact for a client is often a phone call to our Contact Centre. These centres have evolved over time to be a valuable part of our client service. They are a key part of our Job Search Service as they help us maintain contact with clients, monitoring their progress and supporting them in their job-search.

Over the next few years we will be enhancing our service in the following ways.

- Establishing Job Search - a free telephone service assisting clients searching vacancies listed with Work and Income.
- Extending our Service Express which allows clients to provide certain information without needing an interview. One opportunity being explored is the use of speech recognition which would increase security.
- Expanding the use of our outbound calling where we make contact with our clients to ensure they are receiving appropriate support, and help identify work opportunities for them.
- Developing our freephone Employer Services which will not only capture vacancy details from employers, but will also source suitable candidates.

For clients who receive a benefit it is important that they receive their correct entitlements. Our Integrity Services field officers and investigators spend a lot of time raising awareness of our clients' obligations while receiving a benefit to ensure that they know of their responsibility to advise of any changes in their circumstances. We recognise that failing to tell us of changes can trap people into a cycle of debt which may lead to fraud. As part of their prevention work, our field officers and investigators develop a full understanding of each person's circumstances and take every opportunity to provide brokerage to appropriate services that may help the client, for example family violence support, or providing training and employment opportunities through Work and Income.

*"We've taken on some rough diamonds and have given them opportunities to go elsewhere. We've got a pretty relaxed relationship with Work and Income. It's based on a friendship that has built over a number of years, and quite a bit of history. We're confident the work broker will deliver. They know the way I work and how Kia Tupato Security works".*

**Wayne Stokes**  
Director  
Kia Tupato Security



*Left: Work and Income assists with the Northland harvest by providing a seasonal labour force. Pictured are passionfruit pickers John Kelly (left) and Ray Collins.*



*Above: After completing a Stepping into Employment course with the Bay of Islands Employment Training Service, Kurt Raharaha has secured employment with Opuia Marine Painters.*

## Services for employers

The current labour market environment means our link with employers is very important. By working with them to find suitable staff, and then supporting clients' transition into work, we create a win-win situation for everyone. For the employer, it takes less effort to find suitable staff, they get support in training, and some receive wage subsidies for the first few months. From our perspective, our clients develop transferable skills that increase their employability, and they move into employment that is likely to last because there is a known demand for those skills. By providing a good service to an employer there is a greater chance they will return to Work and Income for future recruitment needs.

We are interested in talking to any business that is having trouble finding suitable staff. If they only need one or two people, our work broker can work with them to source people. If they need more staff, or if they are part of an industry which is experiencing a widespread shortage, our Industry Partnership Advisor can help. Our Labour Market Development team constantly monitors the labour market to identify skill shortages. They then work with employers to develop training programmes that meet their specific skill needs. Our industry partnerships have proven very successful as employers identify their labour shortages and are involved in developing appropriate training. Recent partnerships have included the training of 18 staff for the new Kaikohe New World, nine staff for the Kerikeri New World, 13 clients trained in marine fit-out, and 27 clients who have gained hospitality positions in the Bay of Islands area. We are currently identifying future partnerships focused on forestry, hospitality, retail, administration, wood processing and horticulture. We are also working with the Northland District Health Board and home-based support providers to redevelop this industry.

Currently we are working nationally to develop an Account Management Model for employers. This means that we can assist employers in different ways depending on their needs and their potential to provide our clients with sustainable employment opportunities. With some employers we will be looking to develop employment relationship agreements which set out their on-going recruitment needs, and the services we will provide at a national, regional and local level. We will then monitor our relationship with them to ensure that we are both achieving our desired outcomes.

## Removing barriers to work

### Training and development

According to *The 2006 Social Report*, Northland ranks 9th out of 12 regions in our adult population's educational attainment. Overall, 72.7% have achieved upper secondary school level, however by ethnicity only 55.6% of Māori reach that level compared with 78.2% of non-Māori. Only 11% of our population has a tertiary qualification.

*"With the current tight labour market it has been really helpful to have a Local Industry Partnership Advisor to help us recruit and train staff. We have successfully employed 12 staff, through the support of Work and Income, who have all been a real asset to the Specialist Marine Interiors team".*

**Grant Willis**  
Managing Director  
Specialist Marine Interiors

Each year we contract the services of training providers who help our clients develop the skills they require to find and remain in work. Over the last year we have trialled a new way of working with a small group of training providers such as The Salvation Army in Whangarei. They have what is called an open entry, open exit contract where they are funded to provide services for the whole year. The training is open to clients receiving any benefit type, and to all ages. We can refer a client at any time for up to 12 weeks in a programme which is tailored to their needs. Modules can include drivers' licences, budgeting, and preparation for work. All programmes have a health and fitness module, with fitness training at the local gym and morning walks. They also employ a literacy and numeracy tutor. At the conclusion of the course the client is expected to move into work, with In Work Support from the training provider for at least three months.

This type of open-ended contract is beneficial not only because it provides individualised training for the client, but it also offers the provider a stable funding stream. Having a guaranteed demand for services means The Salvation Army can employ tutors more easily. To date, the outcomes have been good and we will be looking to fund similar programmes in the future.

Another concept that we are progressing is the employment of co-ordinators who clients will be referred to for more in-depth support. They would broker access to whatever services or support the client needs but would focus on being a one-on-one mentor and motivator to help the client to find and keep a job.

### Juggling family commitments

Managing the often conflicting demands of a family and work can be challenging for most families. Having at least one parent working is important for the wellbeing of a family, and we are developing ways to make it easier for parents to work. We also recognise that there are some circumstances where a parent needs to be at home to care for a family member, and in those cases we will support them to do this.

In March this year there were 4,711 sole parents receiving a Domestic Purposes Benefit in Northland, down from 4,981 last year. The Working for Families package has contributed to this reduction, because it makes work pay. Under this package, a sole parent who works more than 20 hours a week, or a couple with a parent working more than 30 hours a week, is eligible for an In-Work Tax Credit (subject to an income limit). This extra

## Graduate helps other students secure loans and allowances

After completing her studies, Ria Kaire (seated) has secured a job as an Intranet Analyst and Developer for the NorthTec Polytechnic in Whangarei.

Ria's new role sees her looking after the software needs for the Polytechnic and maintaining the student enrolment and management system called ARENA, which verifies student enrolments.

*"The ARENA software interfaces with StudyLink, so our students are able to access support in the form of allowances and loans. It's pretty straight forward. When I was a student all I needed to do was fill in a form to access my loan and student allowance",* explains Ria.

Ria undertook her first degree in Communications at the Auckland Institute of Technology in 1993, and later returned to achieve a Bachelor of Applied Information Systems in 2005.

The financial support provided to Ria by StudyLink while she was working towards her second degree allowed her to stay focused while she completed her studies.

*"StudyLink did a lot of work to ensure I was getting my full entitlement to allowances. It definitely made it easier having a Student Allowance, as well as an Accommodation Allowance. I enjoyed studying more because there wasn't any financial stress",* said Ria.



money can make a real difference for people, and their job gives them more benefits such as increased confidence, work experience and helps them be a good role model for their children.

Our Labour Market Development team has been working with communities to try and increase the availability of childcare. For the last two years they have funded a Co-ordinator to establish the He Kākano Early Childcare and Education Centre based at The Pulse. This Centre is particularly important because it is based next to the teen-parent school. The Labour Market Development team is also working with a Rawene-based group to scope the possibility of setting up a childcare centre there. If developed, it would be one of the main childcare centres in the Hokianga area.

We offer a Childcare Subsidy to assist with children attending early childhood programmes, and an OSCAR Subsidy (Out of School Care and Recreation) for school children to attend before and after school, and school holiday programmes. Families earning up to \$1,449 per week may be eligible for a Subsidy depending on the number of children they have. We also provide funding for OSCAR assistance for the set up and day-to-day running of the programmes.

### The impact of health

Poor health is increasingly impacting on our clients. Over the last decade the number of working-age people receiving a benefit due to illness or disability<sup>22</sup> has increased to 6,180. The largest increase is in people unable to work due to psychological or psychiatric conditions, most of whom suffer from depression and stress. The next highest are musculoskeletal, and there are increasing trends in chronic diseases.

We are closely linked with the health system at every level. If waiting lists for elective procedures are allowed to grow, then the number of people receiving a Sickness Benefit is likely to increase, or be of a longer duration because our clients cannot get the treatment they need to return to work. The preventative work being undertaken by public health and by Primary Health Organisations can have a positive impact for us in two ways, firstly by encouraging people to become healthy, and by catching people in need of health interventions early so that fewer individuals are likely to need support because they cannot work.

Conversely, the work that we do to assist in the development of our communities, has a strong influence on the health of our people. Poverty is linked to health outcomes, and the best way out of poverty is through work. Irrespective of work, our focus on issues such as housing, family violence and community participation has a positive impact on people's health. As we learn more about the long-term negative effects of family violence on health and wellbeing, we are able to link more effectively with other initiatives aimed at reducing its impact.

*"With just my partner and I running the café I couldn't afford to be out there looking for staff. Work and Income was suggested to me and it was honestly the best thing that I ever did. The Work Broker came down and from there on it's been a breeze. She sifted through and found good people. She's done such a marvellous job for us".*

**Michelle Christenson**  
Owner / Operator  
Café Bite Me  
Whangarei

22. This number includes those clients receiving either a Sickness Benefit or Invalid's Benefit.



*Left: Pictured from left are clients Martin Tautari, Michael Ngakoti, and Wynton Primrose, helping the Bay of Island Railway Trust to restore the local Kawakawa train service to Opua. Clients were involved in the restoration as part of the Job Connection programme. The restored train service will be a new tourist attraction for the region.*

Unfortunately the health of our population is being seriously affected by smoking and obesity. These are the key risk factors for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some forms of cancer. We will continue to work more closely with the Northland District Health Board and local Primary Health Organisations because our work can strongly influence outcomes, many of which we share.

Over the coming year, Work and Income will be introducing several new specialist roles in each region. The roles will be integral to promoting and extending our services to help clients who have health and disability issues, as well as strengthening external provider relationships. We may also look at new ways of accessing health services to help our clients return to work.

One of the areas we will be focusing on over the coming year is improving our processes for working with clients who have mental health conditions. These clients often present with issues that are being dealt with by a number of social sector agencies. Often, in addition to needing financial support, these people may have medication issues, and accommodation problems. Our aim is to strengthen our relationship with our colleagues to make it easier for these clients to access the help they need.

Over the last two years we have purchased rehabilitation programmes for selected clients receiving an Invalid's or Sickness Benefit from the Town Basin Medical Centre in Whangarei. This initiative has had some success, and we are keen to look at other opportunities around the region. With unemployment numbers

at an all time low, we are focused on expanding our employment assistance to all working-age clients. We need to be innovative with the way we work with health providers to improve the health of our clients and move them to a stage where they are able to work.

This year we are supporting the joint PHARMAC and Northland District Health Board initiative called 'One Heart Many Lives'. This initiative aims to encourage men, and in particular Māori men, to undertake a risk assessment for cardiovascular disease. Māori men have higher than average rates of cardiovascular disease, and on average die younger than other New Zealanders. We all agree that these statistics need to change. Work and Income case managers will be giving out material to raise awareness and we will be working with local health providers to encourage our clients to access the screening service<sup>23</sup>.

Our Work and Income Residential Subsidy Unit, which is a national unit based in Whangarei, administers all residential support subsidies for the country. These subsidies are available for people aged under 65 years who need to enter residential care, either temporarily for issues such as alcohol and drugs, or long term in the case of some psychiatric conditions or disabilities. Because the Unit processes all claims across the country, we develop a good picture of the quality of the different providers and are able to identify any trends or concerns. Over the coming year we will be building relationships with the Ministry of Health and the 21 district health boards around the country to share our findings with them.

23. Further information on the One Heart Many Lives programme can be accessed via [www.wecanmakeadifference.org.nz/ohml/](http://www.wecanmakeadifference.org.nz/ohml/).

# Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

## *Elders pass on their wisdom*

By using the experience and wisdom of community elders, kaumātua and kuia, Kaipara SAGES is providing support and mentoring to families in need.

Through SAGES, older people are trained as volunteer home and life-skills mentors for families and individuals in their community.

Gail Pook, a SAGES volunteer, says SAGES helps families develop practical skills in home management, cooking, budgeting and parenting. Over time, the family finds they can cope and handle their lives in a more positive way. *“It’s great to see their lives change. Everyone needs someone to be there for them at some time”.*

Gail is currently helping mother of two, Bonita Brooklyn, learn about gardening and growing her own fruit and vegetables. In the past, Gail has helped Bonita with toilet training her toddlers; getting to doctor appointments and goal setting.

Gail says, *“What I love about SAGES is that there is a whole group of people with different expertise. You end up with a great support network to call on to help you with your SAGES family”.*

The Kaipara service is funded by Family and Community Services and co-ordinated by Kaipara Abuse Prevention Incorporated.

Pictured is SAGES Volunteer Gail Pook (right) with Bonita Brooklyn in the garden.



Positive ageing is one of the sub-themes of the Families - Young and Old priority. Within the goal of positive ageing there are two parts:

- removing barriers for older people who choose to stay in employment, and
- increasing the proportion of older people who are appropriately supported to live in the community.

Our region has an ageing population so it is very important for us to review our services to ensure they are appropriate for older people. Increasingly, research shows we cannot place all people aged over 65 into one basket. There is a continuum in ageing with many older people still active, often still working, and financially independent. They are happy to receive the services they need, and get on with their busy lives. They are also more likely to want to access services by telephone or the internet. Increasingly, we will be working with these clients to take advantage of the changing labour market. There are now more opportunities for people who want to work and continue participating in the labour market well beyond the traditional retirement age.

Some older people have more complex health needs, may be frail, and need more support. Our services to these clients need to be more intensive, and we must remember linking with us may be an important social contact for them.

For the more active group, there are also opportunities to make the most of their life experience and to undertake volunteer work. Non-profit and community organisations really make a difference in our communities, and are often looking for people to help. One programme which Family and Community Services funds is called SAGES. We have two SAGES programmes running in Northland, Kaipara SAGES, and one run by Ngati Hine Health Trust in Whangarei. SAGES volunteers are older people who mentor families and teach them life-skills such as cooking, gardening, budgeting, maintaining a house, and parenting. This is a programme we want to extend across Northland.

Recently we started working with the Northland District Health Board to plan how we can help those older people who have more complex needs. The District Health Board is working with a number of age-related care and home-based support providers to develop a restorative model of care. Home support or residential care need not be continuous, it can be temporary while a person receives care that returns them to independence. In the model, a support-worker offers an individual programme of care aimed at restoring a person to their optimum capability.

Home Support North is piloting the restorative care model on behalf of other home-based support service providers. We have provided an Enterprising Communities Grant to fund a co-ordinator to manage the project, and train and co-ordinate the staff. Initially the pilot is for one year. If successful, the model will be rolled out to other providers across Northland over the following two years. Traditionally, home support providers employ staff on a casual basis for whatever hours they have demand for. For the pilot, Home Support North is offering 20 to 30 hours guaranteed work for every support worker at a wage higher than the minimum wage. We believe that this approach offers many advantages.

We also have a local industry partnership to train staff in the restorative model of care. The pilot has the potential to provide up to 80 clients with full-time work. If the same model is embraced by all providers there are potentially upwards of 200 full-time jobs.

The Northland District Health Board is also working on a strategy to improve the health of older people. We will be working alongside them to find ways to improve co-ordination between our different services and we are keen to investigate innovative ways of making our services available. One example is the recent one-stop-shop being set up by The Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association in Whangarei. Our Superannuation team is now providing a service every Friday from Morrison Hall in Rust Avenue.

The Senior Services group has three main functions: payment of war pensions, administration of New Zealand's international social security arrangements, and administration of the Community Services card, and shortly, the SuperGold Card.

One of the Government's key initiatives to enhance the choices of older people is the introduction of the SuperGold Card which



*Left: Pictured from the left are Tracey Schreurs, Work and Income Case Manager; Lorna Child, Work and Income Service Centre Manager; Marion Barclay, RSA Pension and Welfare Officer; Chas Sibun, RSA Vice-President; and Ces Blong, a WWII Veteran, outside the new one-stop-service for older people in Whangarei.*

*“War Pension Services provides useful information and advice on entitlements for Regional Welfare Officers to circulate via RSA newsletters, and talk to kindred associations such as King’s Empire Veterans, Citizen’s Advice and Age Concern”.*

**Marian Barclay**  
Northland District Adviser  
RSA

will give older people access to a wide range of business discounts for everyday goods and services, and concessions for government services. The Card will be sent automatically to people who receive New Zealand Superannuation or a Veterans Pension, although other people aged over 65 years will need to apply. A free-phone has been set up for enquiries (0800 25 45 65). Once established, we will produce a directory and create a website that will list all the discounts and concessions available to card holders.

War Pension Services pays some form of war pension to nearly 21,000 people nation-wide. We have participated in a campaign, alongside Veterans’ Affairs New Zealand and The Royal New Zealand Returned and Services’ Association to ensure veterans are receiving their full entitlements.

For the last two years we have been fortunate to send a representative to Gallipoli to assist the Secretary for War Pensions/Director of Veterans’ Affairs with commemorations on Anzac Day.

International Services administers entitlements for more than 49,000 people who live in New Zealand and receive some form of overseas pension. They also pay New Zealand pension entitlements to nearly 12,000 New Zealanders who live overseas. They will continue to be involved in the negotiation of international agreements, and to ensure that all people receive the pensions they are entitled to.

Over the next few years Senior Services will focus on improving access to information for clients, including the use of websites, fact sheets, and face-to-face community opportunities and expos.

In our work on eliminating family violence, we must continue to focus on our older people and the different forms of elder abuse that occur. Older people must be able to live with dignity, free from neglect, emotional, financial, physical or psychological abuse. Our staff have been trained to refer people who make disclosures of abuse to the appropriate services for help.

*Right: RSA War Pensions Officer Leslie McCoid (left) provides support for Northland war veterans such as David Hall (right), Manager of the RSA Whangarei Club.*



# Partnering with our Communities

Most of Northland has a great sense of community, but that does not always mean that people are acting on it. We face the same challenges that have been identified all over the world. People have steadily moved away from family, they are working more, and they have less time to be involved in their communities. We often rely on one or two people to make things happen for everyone. As a result, the work that the community, iwi organisations and other non-government organisations do is extremely important.

## Building strong communities

Strong and safe communities is one of the Government's priority areas. Much of our work contributes to this goal. We intend to approach specific communities to find out what they really need from a social development perspective. We will then bring together the relevant players and work to create a sustainable community management structure to meet the community's needs.



*Above: Pictured from left are Far North Street Maytz, Jasmine Nauleo, Tracey Davies, and Jessie Dodds who help keep Kaitia's streets safe by providing advice and activities for local youth.*

We have commenced discussions with the Mangakahia community about their needs and as a result, Family and Community Services has agreed to fund a project co-ordinator to set up a community resource centre. We will then support a part-time whānau support worker to identify families who need help and link them with other services such as Strengthening Families. Although this type of community development work still needs further scoping we are excited by the possibilities of supporting a community to address its own unique issues.

One community project which has been very successful is the Street Maytz initiative in Kaitia. We initially funded the Far North Safer Communities Council to employ and train 10 of our clients as Street Maytz. They were trained in people skills, motivation, first aid, team building and mentoring. They now patrol the streets at night in Kaitia, Ahipara, Mangonui, and Te Kao. The aim is to engage young people who are on the streets and initiate actions to support positive results for both young people and the general community. The initiative was so successful that five Maytz have moved on to employment with other organisations and we are training a new group. We aim to continue the project as long as our Maytz are making a difference and taking advantage of the opportunities to move into new employment. We will also look at how we can extend the project to other parts of our region.

Another area of inter-agency work is the Department of Labour funded Settlement Support project. Family and Community Services has been actively involved in the Steering Group. To date they have developed a new settlers' guide and pamphlets to help new migrants to Whangarei. They are opening an office for the Settlement Support Co-ordinator to be available to provide on-going support. There will also be a free one-day programme which aims to help migrants adjust to life in New Zealand.

Last year saw the publication of Long Term Council Community Plans by our four territorial authorities. Each authority worked with their communities to identify what outcomes people wanted. We are committed to contributing to achieving the outcomes identified. We are active participants in the Kaipara and Whangarei Community Outcomes Steering Groups. We also partnered with the Far North District Council to draft their Social Development Plan for the Far North District. Information from the consultation process will feed into our Local Services Mapping work for the district.

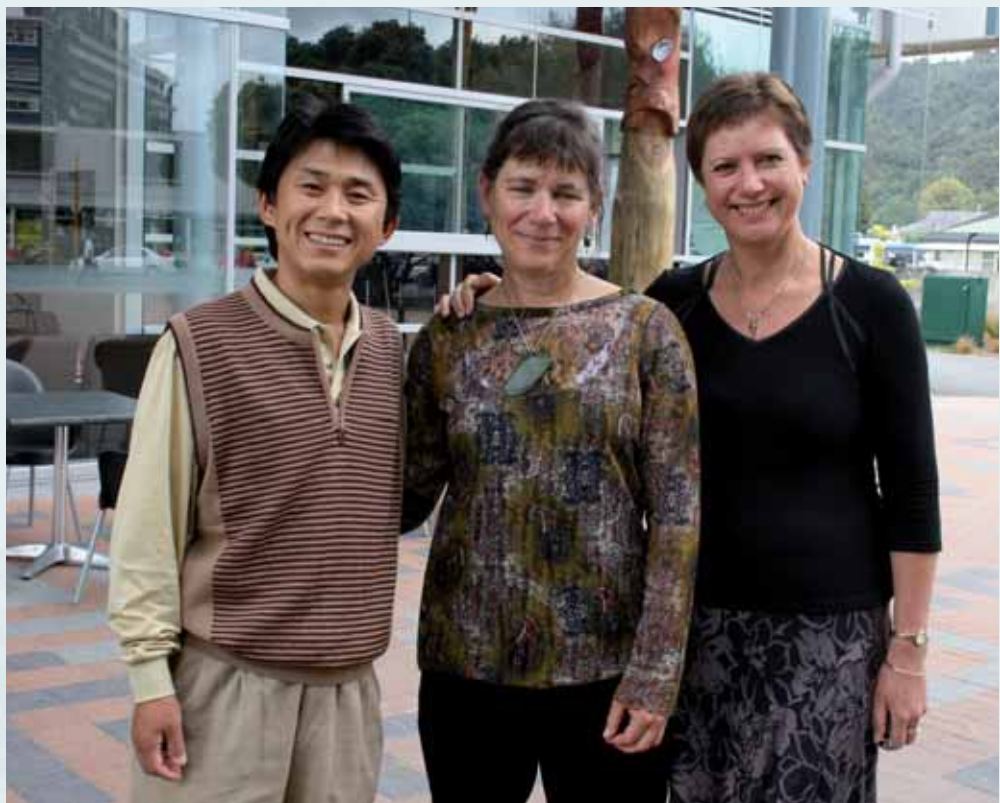
## Supporting non-government organisations

At a national level, part of the Families - Young and Old priority focuses on strengthening the family services sector by working with non-government organisations in new ways. Suggestions have included increasing the flexibility of funding, developing sustainable funding paths, and supporting workforce and infrastructure development. We value the non-government organisations that work alongside, and often on behalf of us in our communities. We will support them and keep them informed of progress on these national initiatives. As soon as there is an opportunity to roll out some of the suggested improvements in the region, we will take up the challenge.

Family and Community Services maintains the 211 Directory<sup>24</sup> which lists family-related services, programmes and resources available for each region. Organisations can register on the website.

The Funding for Outcomes project aims to bring various funding organisations together to develop a single contract for a provider. An integrated funding agreement means that a provider only has to meet one set of outcome and reporting requirements instead of the current situation of multiple funder expectations. Over the last year a lot of progress has been made to get Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa integrated contract completed. Work has also begun on developing an integrated contract with Te Ora Hou.

*Right: Members of the Settlement Support Steering Group provide information and advice for refugees and migrants settling in our region. Pictured from left are BK Kim, Whangarei Business Owner; Ellen Altshuler, Settlement Support Co-ordinator; and Leonie McGee, Family and Community Services Regional Relationship Manager.*



24. [www.211.govt.nz](http://www.211.govt.nz).

Our Labour Market Development team is searching for non-profit organisations that have a great idea that they can develop into a sustainable employment opportunity. We can fund co-ordinators and set-up costs for up to three years provided the initiative will create jobs and become sustainable in that time. Recently we have focused on pulling together an inter-agency group to support local initiatives in the Hokianga. Local iwi have identified their culture and local environment as taonga (treasures) and are developing tourism opportunities that create jobs for locals while also protecting these taonga. A large number of central and local government agencies are working closely with iwi and hapū on both sides of the Hokianga to help support these fledgling labour markets. We are keen to partner and support those communities with ideas to develop their own labour markets.

*"Family and Community Services (FACS) is a key relationship partner to the Whangarei Settlement Support New Zealand (SSNZ) initiative. Since SSNZ got off the ground in June 2006, FACS has been a solid supporter. They have been active members of the Settlement Network Support Group, providing guidance in services mapping, valuable advice to the group, and serving on several sub-committees. FACS ongoing assistance is very much appreciated."*

*Ellen Altschuler  
Settlement Support Co-ordinator  
Whangarei District Council*

## *A head start with Family Start*

Anita Walsh is one of many non-government organisation workers who started 2007 with a qualification funded by the Family and Community Services Family Start Study Award.

Anita from Te Oranga, the social service arm of Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa, recently graduated with a Social Services and Community Development Diploma from NorthTec in Whangarei.

*Anita says, "If you want to mentor families and children you need to put your best foot forward. Studying has helped me become more focused, improved my analytical skills and increased my confidence levels. All of this will have a positive impact on the families I work with".*

Many non-government organisation and Family Start workers like Anita have a wealth of experience gained from working as teacher aids, caregivers for the elderly, or caring for their families. Studying for a social work, nursing or early childhood qualification helps them provide a more efficient service to families. As a result of her study, Anita now finds that her assessment process with families is both easier and faster.

The Family Start Study Award is one of several Family and Community Services initiatives focused on providing support to the non-government organisation sector.

Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa has 35 social workers servicing over 600 families in the Far North and provide, amongst many other services, Family Start, counselling, and social work services.



*"Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa works with the wider Ministry of Social Development on a number of development projects including Family Start, Northland Trade Training and Funding for Outcomes. We have developed a co-operative relationship with the Ministry which is built around our communities needs and provides significant outcomes for our people".*

**Kevin Robinson**  
Executive Officer  
Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa

## Working with local iwi

As we have already mentioned, Māori make up a large proportion of our population and it is important that we have strong relationships with the iwi groups. Over the next year we will be seeking to improve our understanding of the needs of Māori and how we can better engage with them. One step forward has been our links with the Taitokerau Iwi Chief Executives Consortium. They agreed to develop an action plan for joint work in Northland over 2007. Some of the planned work includes Local Services Mapping, changing attitudes and behaviour to prevent family violence, a demonstration project on how we can work together for a single community, and addressing employment and labour market issues. The consortium will meet with our Chief Executive once a year to review our joint work and to plan for the future. We welcome this relationship and will work hard to make it a success.

We will also continue to build relationships with each individual iwi or hapū to ensure that our work complements what they are trying to achieve for their people. There are numerous opportunities to support iwi and hapū groups in both their economic and social development work.

Over the last two years three Work and Income housing co-ordinators have been operating across the region. Working closely with Housing New Zealand, they identify and help people who are living in difficult circumstances. Their role has been to support people to access the social assistance and support they need and are entitled to. The co-ordinators have been able to find ways of working with people who were not connecting with the support they needed. It has had a significant impact on strengthening relationships with other agencies, and community providers.

Our housing co-ordinators are now transitioning their work over to three new co-ordinator positions that have been created in Te Uri o Hau Social Services, Ngati Hine Forestry Trust and Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa. This is a joint initiative between ourselves and Housing New Zealand. There is a training and development component which gives the co-ordinators opportunities to become familiar with our various services so that they can broker them in their communities.

As you can see, we are involved across many areas of social development. We are always looking for new ways to link with groups who want to improve the wellbeing of Northlanders. Even when we cannot have a direct input into initiatives, we have strong relationships across the region that enable us to link with the right organisations to make things happen. This is the key to all our success.

### POLICY

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

**Social Services Policy**  
Ministry of Youth Development (4 Regional Offices); Working Age Peoples' Policy; Child, Family and Community Policy; Older Peoples' Policy; International Relations.

### SERVICE DELIVERY

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

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

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

**Family and Community Services**  
4 Regional Offices;  
Co-ordination of 32 Heartland Services.

### CORPORATE

**People, Capability and Resources**  
Human Resources; Finance; Information Technology.

**Corporate and Governance**  
Planning Purchase and Governance; Communications; Legal; Ministerial and Executive Services; Client Representatives and Review of Decisions.

**Risk and Assurance**  
Internal Audit, Risk Management, Internal Fraud, Security.

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

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

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

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

**Senior Services** includes administration of the Community Services Card, which gives people access to lower cost health care; the SuperGold Card, for people over 65 years and veterans; International Services, which pays benefits and pensions to people who come to New Zealand from overseas, and New Zealanders who leave the country; and War Pension Services, which administers services to veterans.

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

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

Ministry of Social Development  
Regional Office  
2nd Floor  
49-53 James Street  
Whangarei  
[www.msd.govt.nz](http://www.msd.govt.nz)

Community Services Card  
0800 999 999

Child, Youth and Family  
[www.cyf.govt.nz](http://www.cyf.govt.nz)  
0508 326459

Family and Community Services  
[www.familyservices.govt.nz](http://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](http://www.myd.govt.nz)

StudyLink  
[www.studylink.govt.nz](http://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](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)  
0800 559 009

