



Leading Social Development in  
**TARANAKI, KING COUNTRY  
AND WANGANUI**

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:

Builder Calvin Scott is a PATHS success story.

##### Bottom Left:

Grandfather and grandson on a South Taranaki Beach (*photo courtesy of the South Taranaki District Council*).

##### Right:

Anna McLean at Children's Day 2007.

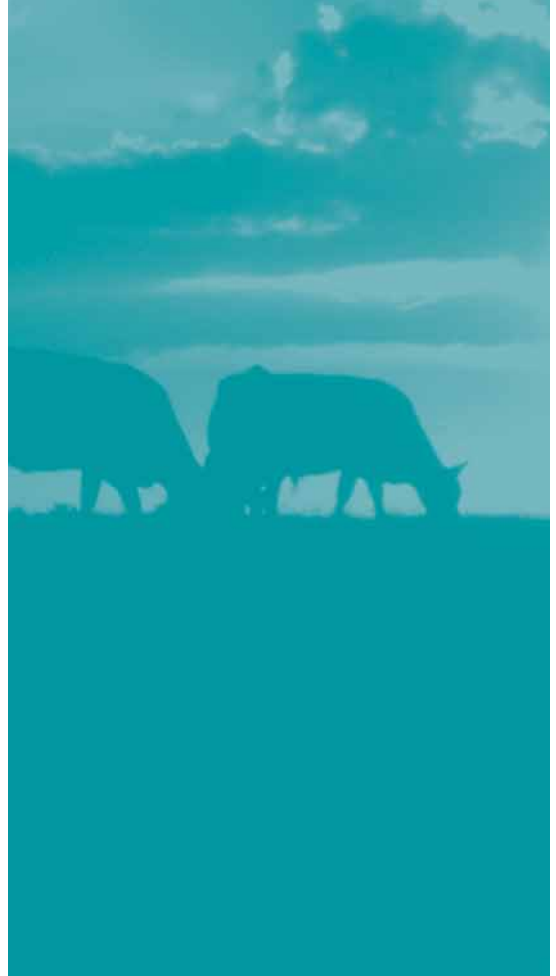
# Leading Social Development

## A PLAN FOR TARANAKI, KING COUNTRY AND WANGANUI 2007/2008



### CONTENTS

Achieving Better Social Outcomes Together	2
Opportunities for Action in Taranaki, King Country and Wanganui	3
Moving Forward	6
Leading Social Development	7
Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed	15
Creating Opportunities for Working Age People	23
Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow	31
Partnering with our Communities	34



# Achieving Better Social Outcomes Together

I am pleased to introduce the Ministry's 2007/2008 Regional Plan for the Taranaki, King Country and Wanganui 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 Taranaki, King Country and Wanganui region!



Peter Hughes  
Chief Executive



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

# Opportunities for Action in Taranaki, King Country and Wanganui

## The big picture

Our vision is of an inclusive New Zealand where all people are able to participate in the social and economic life of their communities.

Our *Statement of Intent*<sup>2</sup> describes our work as achieving improved social development outcomes for our key population groups of children and young people, working-age people, older people, families and whānau, and communities, hapū and iwi.

Families - Young and Old focuses on providing all families with the support and choices they need to be safe and secure, and for each member to reach their full potential. The services we provide for children, families, communities and older people all contribute to this priority.

Much of the work we do locally also supports the priority of Economic Transformation. We assist people into lasting employment, deliver programmes and services to build the skills of the workforce and partner with employers to help meet their demands for skilled workers. Providing income assistance for people who are temporarily or permanently unable to work and providing assistance, information and options to students entering tertiary education, also forms part of our activities.

Our work is carried out by the staff of Child, Youth and Family, Family and Community Services, Integrity Services, the Ministry of Youth Development, Senior Services, StudyLink and Work and Income.

## The regional picture - opportunities to work and achieve together

In the Taranaki, King Country and Wanganui region, we seek opportunities to partner with others to achieve improved regional outcomes. Our region comprises a large area from Otorohanga in the north, Rangitikei in the south and Ruapehu in the east, covering eight territorial authorities and three regional council boundaries. Mountains, rivers and coastal areas dominate our beautiful surroundings.

Our population according to the 2006 Census was 193,710 or 4.8% of New Zealand's total population. While most of our region's rural populations have continued to decline, our urban population of New Plymouth has increased by 5% while Wanganui has remained stable<sup>3</sup>. There is an even urban-rural population split.

*The 2006 Social Report*<sup>4</sup> uses a set of statistical indicators to monitor the wellbeing trends of New Zealanders across 10 'domains' of people's lives. It is a valuable tool that helps identify issues that directly affect our region and opportunities for improvement. Our region is portrayed in a positive light with strong employment in Taranaki, and high early childhood education rates and high adult participation in sport and active leisure. There are, however, opportunities to increase employment in the King Country and Wanganui.



*Left: Te Kuiti Work Broker, Vicky Henderson (left), and Gloria Campbell, Regional Commissioner for Social Development (right) are pictured with Otorohanga Mayor, Dale Williams at the Otorohanga Trades Trainee Graduation in April 2007.*

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

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

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

*"I'm a first-year student who had experienced both personal and study problems whilst in my summer school course and the start of my full-time course. StudyLink, who have an office here in Wanganui on campus, were receptive to my problems, gave good advice and solved my problems in a most satisfactory manner, which has given me the confidence to continue study this year without additional worry".*

*Fiona Tizard  
First-year Nursing student*

In 2006, parts of the region experienced New Zealand's largest decline in home affordability<sup>5</sup>, with Taranaki and Wanganui respectively third and fourth in annual rent increases. Access to affordable housing is a priority, therefore we will ensure we regularly engage strategically with Housing New Zealand about housing availability and costs.

Our economy is based on agriculture, meat processing, forestry, tourism, manufacturing and energy production. The region is home to the world's largest exporter of dairy products and is the acknowledged centre of New Zealand's oil and gas exploration, with plans for further major exploration off the Taranaki coast. Our reputation as a motion picture production location is growing, with several more screen projects planned for our region. Tourism based on adventure and cultural experiences makes us an increasingly popular visitor destination. These developments will provide significant employment opportunities for our clients.

Levels of unemployment in the region are at the lowest level for two decades which can largely be attributed to a strongly growing economy. We will therefore continue to enhance our services for clients, and provide services that are more proactively employer and industry responsive.

An increasing number of people with health-related issues have indicated they want jobs. We have established valuable partnerships in the health sector which will see us addressing people's health issues and helping more people find work.

It is our experience that those most likely to face difficulty in the labour market are those without qualifications. Many Taranaki students are leaving secondary school with no or low qualifications<sup>6</sup>. To increase educational attainment, we are working closely with education providers to assist young people to transition successfully from school into employment or training. Our youth development focus will be on working collaboratively with others to strengthen the co-ordination of youth services.

The projected rise in the population of people aged 65 years and over means our future focus will be to ensure improved access to information to assist older peoples' choices about services, continued independence and community participation.

Roading, transport and lack of childcare create challenges for rural people travelling to larger centres for employment, tertiary education and training. Helping our rural communities is a priority. We will be working to bring more government services on board through our Heartland Services in Hawera, Taihape and Taumarunui.

There are two prisons in our region of which Wanganui's prison at Kaitoke has the potential to increase its capacity significantly. A potential impact is a larger prison releasee population for Wanganui. We will work with the justice

5. Massey University Quarterly Survey, December 2006.

6. Taranaki School Leavers Research 2006, Education Taranaki Trust.



*Above: Dr Glenda Quintini (third from the left) visited New Plymouth's Youth Transition Service on a fact-finding mission for the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Her final report aims to outline the practices and policies that help young people find employment.*

sector to assist prisoners before release in ways that help them successfully return to the community and reduce re-offending.

There is a high degree of public interest in, and a growing demand for, services that can respond to child abuse and neglect. A major focus for us will be developing more effective ways to do this.

Our ongoing objective to meet the expectations of our community is championed through forums such as the Future Taranaki Facilitation Group. High on community agendas are secure and healthy communities that are successful, skilled, connected and vibrant. Community priorities identified by regional councils, territorial authorities and ourselves are well aligned. We will continue to strengthen our work with territorial authorities through joint planning, co-ordinated services and ensuring that community priorities are addressed for families both young and old.

Through this Plan we will highlight future opportunities to work together in providing a whole-of-community response to improve the lives of our children, young people, working people, families, older people and communities both now, and into the future.

# Moving Forward

Greetings!

I am delighted to introduce our Ministry of Social Development Regional Plan. The Plan sets out our priorities and how we will respond to issues that matter to us all. It provides direction for our work over the coming year and a glimpse beyond.

As we are a community of small cities and rural townships, we are generally better connected and close-knit. The collaborative relationships we have developed within both the private and public sectors enable us to get things done. Our achievements typify provincial relationships at their best.

Innovation is likely to have its origins in the regions. We have been able to develop unique and at times cutting edge initiatives that are happening only in our region - notably, addressing stress-related disorders earlier on so that people can return to the workforce sooner. Our signature approach in having our PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions) teams based in our Work and Income service centres has enhanced our ability to address people's health barriers to employment.

Unemployment has plunged in recent years. We have zero youth unemployment in most of our centres. This is a significant milestone due directly to the combined efforts of our frontline staff and our valuable partnerships with employers, industry, councils, providers and agencies.

Supporting families to be safe and strong is vital. Through supporting parents and families, we are helping to ensure that children flourish, young people realise their full potential and older people are valued.

Our frontline staff are critical to our ability to recognise and respond to issues. We have strengthened the capacity of our frontline and regional teams to apply additional rigour to planning and implementing new services successfully. In these exciting, dynamic times, however, it is important we maintain core services that are accessible and of the highest standard. I wish to convey a huge thank you to staff for their continued efforts to achieve service excellence.

As more opportunities unfold, we are well placed to ensure more people share in the social and economic success of our region.



**Gloria Campbell**

Regional Commissioner for Social Development



# Leading Social Development

Social development is about investing in our people and communities to succeed. It can be a catalyst for bringing about real and meaningful results for individuals and families enabling them to fulfil their potential and fully participate in their communities.

We are committed to ensuring our work reinforces the Government's three priorities of Families - Young and Old, Economic Transformation and National Identity. We are the lead agency for progressing Families - Young and Old which focuses on ensuring all families have the support and choices they need to be secure and be able to reach their full potential. Families - Young and Old contains five key themes. Within these themes, we are leading and contributing to work under Strong Families and Positive Ageing.

Successful social development means acting early before issues become complex and require more intensive remedial action. In the future, our work will have a much stronger focus on preventative actions especially at known critical points in people's lives when they are at their most vulnerable. These include early childhood, the transition from school to study or employment, parenthood and retirement.

Increasingly, we will be involved in activities that support our people and communities to be resourceful and self sufficient. We will continue to provide support and income assistance for people who, because of their circumstances, need our help on a temporary or permanent basis.

## Social and economic development together

A healthier, better educated, employable and productive population contributes to economic development and the continued success and prosperity of our region and its people.

Successful social development includes ensuring that social and economic development go hand in hand. We will continue to strengthen our social development approach based on partnerships and collaboration with others such as our communities, voluntary organisations, iwi, local councils, employers, industry, training and education organisations as well as government agencies.

Paid employment offers the best opportunities for people and their families to achieve social and economic wellbeing. We will continue to focus on and implement services that will support more people into work.

As more people secure employment, we will contribute to lifting the productivity in our region's economy. We will contribute further by addressing the issues that prevent people from taking up or remaining in work. Factors that can impact on people's capacity to work include low skills, drug and alcohol issues, ill-health, offending and debt.

Our work towards achieving successful social outcomes is evident across many sectors as outlined throughout this Plan.

*"We value our relationship with the Ministry of Social Development. Working together to promote initiatives such as Working for Families, and ensuring more young people have access to affordable education contributes to improving outcomes for people in our communities".*

**Mark Dawson**  
Community Relationships  
Customer Insight  
New Plymouth and Palmerston North

*Right: Pictured from left, Denise Mackle, Work Broker; Kelly Kemp, Integrity Services Field Officer; Ross Elmes, Service Centre Manager; and Max Brooking, Integrity Services Investigator on their way back from a stakeholder's meeting in Waitara.*



## Building the skills of the workforce

Our National Business Sector Unit and Labour Market Development team have established partnerships with the energy, engineering, retail, hospitality, tourism, and sport and recreation industries. Through these partnerships, we increase the number of clients moving into industry-designed entry-level positions. Trainees can 'earn as they learn' from the outset and have the opportunity to advance their careers by gaining higher skills and qualifications through apprenticeships and work-related study.

We are very keen to support services that meet the needs of our young people. Education Taranaki is a regionally-focused organisation that provides a forum for all stakeholders across the education spectrum to contribute to regional initiatives that promote educational excellence, informed career choices and life-long learning. We have contributed by funding the Taranaki School Leaver Research 2005 and 2006. This is a unique model of tracking school leavers and is supported by all Taranaki secondary schools. It provides us with a better

understanding of the movements and make-up of our school leavers, creating opportunities to identify possible solutions that will contribute to improving the quality of the region's educational sector.

Another piece of recent research has identified barriers to young peoples' success in the labour market. A future forum of organisations from the education and social sectors will be established to develop strategies to respond to our findings.

Cadetship programmes formed in partnership with district councils along with various private sector employers, continue to be very successful. We will strengthen our work with councils, government agencies such as Te Puni Kōkiri and private sector employers to build on existing programmes to provide a greater number of young people with employment. Identifying new opportunities based on the cadetship concept will be an ongoing priority.

We recognise that a highly educated and skilled workforce is critical for our

economy to thrive. Through our StudyLink services we will focus on ensuring tertiary education is accessible and that students are successfully completing their studies with the least possible debt. We will achieve this by continuing to maintain our strong relationships with education providers, student associations and student welfare groups.

In the over-arching area of youth development, we will continue to provide leadership, co-ordination, support and policy advice for government and non-government agencies working with young people.

## Working together across the social sector

The key themes identified within the Government's three priorities cannot be addressed effectively by one single agency. We will continue to tackle priority issues together and develop new ways of doing this. A sample of our collaborative work follows:

## Stronger families and safer children

We encourage a collective response to the care and protection needs of children and families and work with others to achieve this. As one of three sites nationally, Child, Youth and Family in Taranaki continues to test a differential response approach to social work. This involves strengthening relationships with our non-government partners and working to build up the capability of the care and protection sector. Currently, two Taranaki non-government organisations are approved to complete child and family assessments in reported care and protection cases and are invited to contribute towards decisions to determine an appropriate pathway in each case.

The Te Rito<sup>7</sup> collaborative management groups in Wanganui and Taranaki include people from a range of organisations whose work includes family violence interventions. A number of initiatives, both short and longer term, are being implemented by the collaboratives to ensure family violence prevention is integrated and co-ordinated within local communities. We will continue to work closely with Te Rito groups.

We continue to promote and develop partnerships with government organisations in Wanganui to ensure better outcomes for children and families. Through Child, Youth and Family, we have tested and subsequently piloted an inter-agency response to family violence which has proven to be successful with outstanding results in reducing family violence notifications. It is envisaged that this pilot programme will be implemented nationally in the coming year.

## Partnerships for better health and better futures

Last year PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions) Taranaki was launched in partnership with the Taranaki District Health Board and Web Health. Recently, PATHS Wanganui commenced in partnership with the Wanganui District Health Board and the Whanganui Regional Primary Health Organisation. The programme provides access to medical services that assist in removing and reducing health problems for people who want to return to work. We have taken the unique approach of basing both PATHS programmes out of our Work and Income service centres. The ability of having health professionals work alongside us within our New Plymouth and Wanganui sites is pivotal to our effectiveness in delivering PATHS and increasing our staff capacity to help people achieve their employment goals.

The Ministry of Health has identified Wanganui as one of four communities with high levels of inequality of health status and we will be seeking to establish a strategic forum to support the Wanganui District Health Board address health issues for high priority clients.



*Above: Through a Work and Income and Sport Wanganui partnership, Splash Centre cadets are trained for permanent employment at the Centre. Pictured during a rescue training exercise, Susie Muir, 'suspected spinal injury victim' is supported by Rautini Murphy (rear), Moewai Gilsenan and Bryce Holy. Photo courtesy of the Wanganui Chronicle.*

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

*"When I first looked at the Healthy Homes project I thought it was simply getting people jobs - then saw it was more than that. It was about improving people's lives by making homes warmer and people healthier. And when I talk to people who are part of the project they tell me that they feel good because they know, 'this community cares about me' ".*

*Brian Jeffares  
Chairman  
Taranaki Electricity Trust*

## Healthier homes and healthier people

The Taranaki Healthy Homes initiative was launched in February 2007 as part of a long-term plan to make 2,400 Taranaki homes healthier to live in. Although this type of programme has been run in other regions, and as a previous smaller initiative in Taranaki, they have generally focused on insulating homes. This initiative provides a more comprehensive approach and includes accident prevention, linking residents to primary healthcare and ensuring residents are accessing available Work and Income services. Healthy Homes is being promoted by the Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority and Pinnacle Primary Healthcare Organisation as both a preventative primary health strategy and an energy efficient initiative.

We will continue to be involved with this initiative as there are some distinct advantages for our clients. These include the opportunity for people receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit with respiratory disorders to improve their health and enhance their capacity to return to work. This has a positive impact on client debt levels due to the reduced need for an advance on their benefit to meet power costs, and the creation of significant employment opportunities for clients.

We have been invited by the Wanganui District Health Board and the Whanganui Regional Primary Health Organisation to participate in the development of a similar initiative for Wanganui. We will actively support this undertaking to address health and energy efficiency issues for the people of Wanganui.

## Breaking the cycle of re-offending

Criminal offending has a major impact on a person's ability to secure and maintain employment. We contribute to the reduction of offending and re-offending in a number of ways. Through a joint initiative with the Department of Corrections, our Prisoner Re-integration teams will continue to work directly with prisoners at Kaitoke and New Plymouth Prisons to enhance their prospects of finding suitable employment upon release. Further initiatives are planned around home detention, sentence planning and inmate employment.

Kaitoke Prison is undergoing an expansion with a future capacity to house higher numbers of prisoners. We are presently scoping work that will facilitate an integrated case management approach with Kaitoke prisoners to achieve successful transitions for prison releasees returning to the community. This initiative will involve engaging with the Prison, the Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation Society, Housing New Zealand and other social agencies who can contribute to a more comprehensive and co-ordinated 'circuit breaker' programme to reduce re-offending. This will complement the existing work of the Department of Corrections programmes and our Offender Re-integration Programme: Improving Employment Outcomes.



*Above: Pictured from left, helping a student at the 2007 orientation day at the Western Institute of Technology are Erilyn McBride, StudyLink Outreach Officer; Evelyn McLean, Work and Income Childcare Co-ordinator; and Renee Hitchings from Inland Revenue.*

We will continue to meet quarterly with the New Plymouth Prison, the Department of Corrections and Housing New Zealand to ensure services are delivered in a co-ordinated way for prison releasees who return to the New Plymouth community. We will maintain strong relationships with local employers and industry to achieve higher employment rates for releasees.

Through Child, Youth and Family, we will have a dedicated Youth Justice team based in New Plymouth. Under consideration for the future, is the possibility of having dedicated Youth Justice services based in the community or co-located with other youth service providers. The goal of these changes will be to reduce the rate and severity of re-offending by young people.

Our Wanganui and New Plymouth Youth Offender teams have led inter-agency discussions about youth offending and the New Plymouth group has recently adopted the 'Rock On Truancy' programme which has achieved good results in other regions through a collaborative approach to the issue of truancy, involving schools, the New Zealand Police and Child, Youth and Family. The programme targets a younger age group and aims to reduce the occurrence of truancy by reducing its scope to include behaviour such as regular late arrival at school and by ensuring a structured and co-ordinated approach to addressing these issues.

## Community partnerships and leadership

We lead or contribute to a number of regional leadership forums in our region on matters of importance to our communities.

### The Future Taranaki Facilitation Group

Taranaki's community goals are to be a secure and healthy, prosperous, skilled, connected, sustainable, together and vibrant community. The Future Taranaki Facilitation Group, formed by the leaders of the Taranaki Regional Council and the three Taranaki territorial authorities, oversees the community outcomes process, reporting against the progress of Long Term Council Community Plans. Our Regional Commissioner has a leadership role working alongside the Chief Executive Officers of the Taranaki District Health Board, the economic development agency Venture Taranaki and the Regional Manager of Te Puni Kōkiri. The Group's first 'scorecard' released last year showed very satisfactory progress towards the aims set by the four councils in 2004. The Group has recently identified three priority projects for action. These are Safer Families, Safer Communities; Working together for a Smokefree Taranaki; and the Regional Skills Strategy.

## Finally on the right path

PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions) is proving successful for a number of people receiving a Sickness or Invalid's Benefit who want to progress into employment.

One of those successes is Calvin Scott from New Plymouth who had been receiving a Sickness Benefit for about eight months and wanted to return to work.

*"I heard an ad for PATHS on the radio", he said. "So I thought I would call up about it".*

Calvin's case manager linked him with the PATHS team and the process of assessment and review began to see if he met the criteria for assistance.

*"The team was great", he said. "I went to the specialist and within two or three weeks, I was in hospital having my hernia operation. I could never have afforded the operation on a Sickness Benefit and I didn't want to be on the benefit for the rest of my life".*

*"I didn't think there was anything that could help me. I didn't have the money or the opportunity to fix the problem but PATHS came to the rescue".*

Within three weeks, Calvin was on the job working as a builder. *"My case manager was really good and the PATHS team followed up to see how I was going. They were very supportive".*

Calvin is now working full-time and learning on the job. *"My life has changed", he said. "I'm working, I'm independent, I'm not relying on the system anymore, I'm not in any pain and I'm happy. It just keeps getting better"!*



We want our communities to be safe places that will attract more people and investment to our region. We will lead the Safer Families, Safer Communities project which will provide a new layer of intervention regarding family violence in our region by focusing on developing awareness, education and support in Taranaki's workplaces. This will include the development of a programme to introduce voluntary family violence resource officers in most Taranaki workplaces along with an education package designed to facilitate a workplace culture of non-tolerance. The programme will be led by our family violence response co-ordinators as part of their promotional activities to reduce family violence. The numerous likely benefits of reducing family violence through a workplace non-tolerance approach include a reduction in social crime such as youth offending, vandalism and drug and alcohol abuse.

Led by the Taranaki District Health Board, 'Working Together for a Smokefree Taranaki' is a project with the ambitious aim of making Taranaki smokefree by Smokefree Day 2009. This will be achieved by helping people to quit smoking through a variety of cessation programmes and reducing smoking in public places by expanding current restrictions to more venues such as

playgrounds and major sports stadiums. Our commitment to the project includes encouraging a smoking cessation programme for our staff, referrals to support services for clients, and public endorsement of the Smokefree Campaign.

The Regional Skills Strategy led by the New Plymouth District Council and Venture Taranaki is aiming to address skill shortages that affect the province due to its geographical isolation. The project seeks to assess the long-term skill requirements for the region, establish effective business and agency partnerships to meet those requirements, and promote and market the profile of the region to attract skilled and creative migrants. The project strongly aligns with our goals of upskilling people and lifting labour market participation.

### Regional agency leadership forums

The Taranaki Regional Inter-sectoral Forum meets bi-monthly to identify opportunities to work jointly on economic and social development initiatives that improve outcomes primarily for Māori. Forum membership spans the education, housing, justice, employment, and social sectors.

We are leading work to establish a Regional Inter-sectoral Network for the Wanganui, Ruapehu and Rangitikei areas. This Network will include representatives from the three councils and the Wanganui District Health Board. We will seek to engage with leaders in Waitomo and Otorohanga about opportunities to work together.

We will continue to work closely with our local emergency management teams on planning for co-ordinated responses to emergencies. As part of the region's Welfare Advisory Group, we provide advice and undertake planning to ensure that effective welfare services can be delivered during and following an emergency. Helping people recover from civil defence emergencies is also part of our role including Enhanced Taskforce Green clean-up operations.

## Leading social development across the Ministry

As our work spans many areas of people's lives, we realise it can be a challenge for people to know where to access information and services, or find out how they can contribute to, or support social development in their region. We will continue to ensure individuals or groups are connected to the right services or people that are best able to assist them. Our role in providing responsive regional social development leadership will continue to evolve and broaden accordingly.

Our role with children and families has expanded. The merger with Child, Youth and Family has increased our capacity to provide a combined response to the issues facing vulnerable children and families. We will also be strengthening our co-ordinated approach to the delivery of social, employment and housing assistance for 16 to 18 year olds transitioning from Child, Youth and Family care to independence. For instance, work brokers and social workers will work together so young people leaving care have access to employment services, tertiary education or training. This will assist them to transition successfully into adult life.

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

Our Governance group of regional managers led by our Regional Commissioner will continue to focus on increased and improved co-ordination of our services right across the Ministry in the Taranaki, King Country and Wanganui region. This forum gives us the opportunity to establish a more comprehensive picture of the opportunities, trends and issues for our region. Strengthening our integrated social and labour market approach through co-ordinated planning, contracting and funding, and local initiatives, will enable us to better meet the needs of our clients.



*Above: The Future Taranaki Facilitation Group includes central and local government agencies, key industries, iwi and core service providers in the Taranaki region. Pictured is Gloria Campbell, Regional Commissioner, presenting the first progress indicators report on community outcomes for Taranaki.*

## >> Leading Social Development >>

*"The New Plymouth Police and Child, Youth and Family have long-established relationships at a practitioner and management level, in youth offending work and care and protection matters. A recent addition to our collaborative work is Child, Youth and Family's involvement in a joint approach to enhance the safety of children affected by family violence. Working together is essential to increase the wellbeing of our children and young people, and to reduce the extent of youth offending."*

*Inspector Fiona Prestidge  
Area Commander  
New Plymouth Police*

A number of our service lines are based outside our region therefore our challenge is to develop ways of ensuring we maintain effective communication and continue to maximise opportunities to work effectively together on matters of importance to our communities.

Through greater communication with and between our areas of operations, and the benefit of each others' collective knowledge and experience, we will achieve more effective and co-ordinated services. This in turn will provide us with greater capacity and opportunities to work with you on improved social development outcomes. Partnerships are vital to achieve a positive difference for all families, young and old.



**Above:** Te Whānau Oranga aims to help families gain confidence. The programme is funded through Child, Youth and Family and run by Mahia Mai A Whai Tara. Evelyn McLean (centre), Childcare Co-ordinator; and Naida Tuirirangi from Inland Revenue (back left) are pictured at Puniho Marae where they are discussing Working for Families assistance.

# Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

We want to give children the best start in life, for them to thrive in childhood and lead healthy and active lives. This enables them to grow into confident, well-equipped young people who are able to contribute to the future wellbeing of our region socially, economically and environmentally. They are our workers, parents and leaders of tomorrow.

Families and whānau need to be strong, resilient and a safe environment for all family members, both young and old. Children who grow up in safe and secure homes develop greater self-confidence that will stand them in good stead for successful adult lives.

## The early years

The early years are the most important for child development. A key area of work over the next two years will be expanding early intervention programmes for vulnerable children, their families and communities.

We will be increasingly focusing our activities and delivery of programmes on improving support for children from birth until they start school. This will contribute to improving their health, learning ability and development and reducing neglect and insecurity.

As at 31 March 2007, there were 1,472<sup>8</sup> sole parent families in our region who have dependent children aged two years or under and who rely on a Domestic Purposes Benefit as their main source of income. We will be leading work to determine challenges faced by sole parents with very young children, for example, a lack of knowledge about or access to available parent support services. The effect on young children whose families regularly move house is another. We will identify issues particular to our region and focus on developing tailored services for our most vulnerable people.

We are keen to develop and seek resourcing for more intensive case management services for pregnant teenagers. This will ensure that they are connected to community agencies such as Pregnancy Help and Plunket and programmes such as Family Start and Birthright that provide support before and after the birth of their child. We will help to prepare them to adjust to life as a new mother and enhance the opportunity for their child to have the best possible start in life. We will also work alongside young sole parents to support continued education and assist with planning for future employment goals.

We will continue to support a number of community events this year such as Children's Day, to celebrate our children and promote safe, happy and healthy futures.



*Left: Anna McLean keeps the balloons under control while helping out at Children's Day in New Plymouth. Work and Income and Child, Youth and Family staff joined with community groups, to showcase their role with children in our region.*

8. 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.

## Building strong, resilient and safe families

Our work will continue to focus on enabling families to be strong and resilient and support them to function well. Resilient families are able to face pressures and handle change. The resilience of some families however, can be put under strain by low income, debt, unemployment, family change, separation, work and family demands. Some families cope well but others find it more difficult. Strong and connected support services that are accessible and provide appropriate help at the right time are essential in helping some families cope.

Our family focused Integrated Service was introduced last year to support vulnerable families to be safe and secure and to give their children the best possible start in life. Our most vulnerable families experience complex problems that can become overwhelming. Indicators such as several generations in receipt of benefits and poor school attendance rates among children can help identify families with high needs. The Integrated Service ensures families are connected to all the services and support they need. A Work and Income Service Co-ordinator is assigned to families and provides intensive case management. A lack of awareness among some families about the help that is already

available in the community and in some cases a reluctance to work with outside agencies are the main challenges. The Service Co-ordinator working with community leaders to link families to support networks helps us overcome these challenges.

We will continue to fund and deliver programmes such as Family Start which recently commenced in Taumarunui; SKIP information delivered by providers throughout the region; Strengthening Families; and family violence prevention programmes.

Family Start provides intensive, home-based support services and parenting programmes to vulnerable families with young children, improving their ability to resolve difficulties and problems.

Our SKIP programme supports groups working with parents and caregivers of pre-school children to feel confident about how they manage children's behaviour. SKIP funds and trains community organisations to promote positive parenting and to provide practical knowledge and skills on safe, effective, non-physical ways of disciplining children. Local 'No Sweat Parenting' workshops form part of SKIP activities.

## Families get a good start in Taumarunui

Taumarunui's Kōkiri Trust was formed in 1989 to improve local Māori health issues. Since its establishment, the organisation has grown to take on 18 health and social support service contracts.

The Trust's latest contract is Family Start which is funded by Family and Community Services. Family Start provides intensive, home-based support services for families with high needs. It strives to improve health, education and social outcomes for children, improve parenting skills and family circumstances.

The contract aims to support 65 families in the Taumarunui area who will go through an assessment to ensure they are able to participate. Kōkiri Trust's Operations Manager, Jodi Ralph says, *"It's about building on family strength. We develop a plan which is unique to each family which can include support with health and education issues, social services, budgeting and counselling"*.

Families are selected through a referral process by their GP, local health provider, school or pre-school, Work and Income, or Child, Youth and Family.

Family Start family/whānau workers provide home visits to families and help them to set their own goals. They act as a

service advocate if necessary, and ensure services for the family are well co-ordinated.

*"We know from the experiences in other areas that this is a successful programme", Jodi says. "We're looking forward to working with local families to make a positive difference in our community"*.

The Family Start programme in Taumarunui supports parents and their children just like Paige and Tyler Fata pictured here with their dad, Percy.



Families and whānau should be a safe and secure environment where all members live free from violence. Sadly, family violence including child abuse and neglect and elder abuse is a major problem in New Zealand. Our Family Violence Intervention Programme, led and co-ordinated by Family and Community Services, and implemented by Work and Income, enhances our ability to respond to clients and their families experiencing violence. Our case managers have been trained to ask clients about family violence, to identify the potential signs and provide resources and information to people dealing with it. Family violence response co-ordinators support case managers to make referrals to appropriate services where necessary. The co-ordinators also participate in family violence prevention networks that contribute to the continued development of more integrated responses.

A priority for us is to reduce the time in Child, Youth and Family care for children and young people who have suffered neglect and abuse or who have offended. We will continue to work with and support families to look after their own children and young people where possible. When a young child does go into care, we will provide integrated services that work towards stability and permanency in their lives.

Strengthening Families is a collaboration between government agencies and non-government organisations designed to support families who are working with two or more agencies to help them resolve family issues. It allows families to meet all their support people and agencies at one time. They get better access to information and services, and support to develop their own goals and solutions. Strengthening Families co-ordinators operate in Tamarunui, New Plymouth, Wanganui and the King Country.



*Above: Pictured from left are Mark Popplewell, Social Development Manager; Patrick Coyle, Service Manager Special Education; Janice Jessiman, Strengthening Families Co-ordinator; Graham Parker, District Manager Special Education; Brett Austin, Regional Manager Family and Community Services; and Fiona Prestige, District Commander of the New Zealand Police; at a recent Strengthening Families Local Management Group meeting.*

Local Management Groups, with representatives from across a number of agencies, will continue to provide management for each of our three Strengthening Families programmes. Through Family and Community Services, we will be working with Local Management Groups to improve their membership, explore a Lead Agency Funding programme in which non-government organisations will have more direct involvement, and ultimately increase the number of families engaged in the Strengthening Families programme. We also seek to establish Strengthening Families Regional Governance Groups to provide further support for the programme.

Working for Families makes it possible to work and raise a family. All parts of the Working for Families package have been implemented, with higher numbers of families now eligible for this assistance.

Our Childcare Co-ordinators are involved in the wider promotion of the Working for Families package in the community, on marae and in workplaces so even more parents are aware of the help that is available. This includes Childcare and OSCAR (Out of School Care and Recreation) subsidies for childcare services, after-school care and holiday recreation programmes.

Debt can cause anxiety and pressure within families. Through enhanced case management, we are working with clients to identify any potential debt issues earlier and to prevent their debt situation from becoming critical. Referrals to budgeting services help clients address or manage their debt. We will continue to provide funding for community budget advisory services based in New Plymouth, Hawera, Wanganui, Tamarunui, Raetihi, Marton and North King Country.

*"The relationship between Child, Youth and Family, the Ministry of Health, and Special Education, makes it possible to very quickly develop service pathways for children common to the three agencies, which we were unable to do before. This is very important and makes the communication clearer and simpler because children and families only have to tell their story once".*

**Graham Parker**  
District Manager  
Special Education - Ministry of Education

## Improving outcomes for young people

Improving educational, employment and social outcomes for young people today is one of the best investments we can make to secure a successful future for them.

### Successful youth development for positive futures

Our work through the Ministry of Youth Development is underpinned by the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa<sup>9</sup> which promotes a country where young people are vibrant and optimistic through being supported and encouraged to take up challenges.

We are seeking to strengthen outcomes for young people aged 12 to 24 years including improved self esteem and resiliency, personal development and achievement, strong connections to family and community, improved health, reduced offending, and pathways to further education, training or employment. We will do this through the youth development services we fund and by working alongside councils and organisations in our region who deliver services to youth.

Local youth programmes such as the New Zealand Conservation Corps and Youth Service Corps connect young people to the community through project work. Participants gain job skills, undertake job planning as part of their personal development and identify opportunities for further education, training and employment. Programmes are delivered by the YMCA in New Plymouth and Wanganui, the Maniapoto Training Agency in Te Kuiti, the Taranaki Environmental Education Trust in Stratford and The Salvation Army Employment Plus in Hawera.

The Services for Young People Fund administered by the Ministry of Youth Development provides us with the opportunity to promote effective and integrated responses which focus particularly on young people who are in transition between education, training and employment, engaged in low-level offending, have limited life choices as a result of low educational qualifications, lack personal or social skills or are engaged in harmful behaviours and activities.

A young person's health has a major influence on their ability to learn and progress. A key part of our work programme is the co-ordination of the Youth 2007 Research project which will gather and analyse information about health and wellbeing from young people aged 12 to 18 years in our region's secondary schools. This information will provide a clear picture of their needs and tell us how we can continue to improve the targeting and nature of our youth development projects.

This year, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other agencies, we will highlight adolescence as a critical developmental phase and draw attention to the need for more 'youth-friendly' health services that are accessible across the region.

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

## The human powered vehicle challenge

A 500-strong crowd was treated to a display of young talent and some excitement during the Human Powered Vehicle Challenge held in Hawera last year.

The Challenge project, which was submitted by the South Taranaki District Council, received funding through the Ministry of Youth Development's Youth Development Partnership Fund.

Eleven teams of five young people designed, built, tested and raced their own human-powered vehicles. Each team was linked to a South Taranaki engineering firm which provided supervised workshop access and technical guidance.

Playboy Babes team captain, Courtney Myers, was confident their vehicle would take out best design with their bright pink vehicle and matching uniforms.

During her pre-race speech she said, "We had no help with the actual building of the vehicle and we wanted something that stood out. The best thing for us was our team spirit".

Project co-ordinator Jan Roberts from the Can Do Trust said the project was great for the community. "Engineering firms in the district have really got behind the project. The Challenge has exposed young people to engineering and the firms have identified potential apprentices".

*"There is a belief amongst young people here that they need to leave the area and go to university to get good training opportunities, but this has identified many options for them to stay in this district".*

And finally, when the chequered flag fell - the Human Powered Vehicle Challenge was won by The Streaks Ahead team.

Pictured below are members of the Playboy Babes team.



## Youth development partnerships with councils

The Youth Development Partnership Fund aims to provide funding to territorial authorities wishing to implement the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa and establish good youth development practices in their communities. Funding supports local projects that focus on positive social, economic and wellbeing outcomes for young people. Councils that have received funding include South Taranaki for the 'Human Powered Vehicle Challenge', Otorohanga for the 'Harvest Central' initiative and Wanganui for the 'Make It Take It' project. Projects aim to develop social, communication and leadership skills that will equip young people to succeed in the community.

Following closely on the heels of the 'Human Powered Vehicle Challenge', the South Taranaki District Council has been successful in securing funding for its 'Get Connected' project. The two-year project will engage and support young people in the District to implement projects and initiatives that will meet their own needs. We have funded a Youth Co-ordinator position

to set up a Youth Network and implement a training and support programme that will provide access for young people to career training, health, personal safety, communication and life skills.

## Providing a voice for young people

The Ministry of Youth Development enables us to talk with and listen to young people.

We do this by running youth participation activities and providing youth-related information under the banner of Aotearoa Youth Voices<sup>10</sup>. Activities include the PROVOKE Network which continues to provide young people aged 12 to 24 years with opportunities and information on getting their voices heard by policy makers on matters of importance to them. A particular focus this coming year will be Youth Parliament 2007.

Our Youth Participation in Local Government Project provides workshops and advice for territorial authorities on strengthening

10. Further information about the *Aotearoa Youth Voices* programme and contributing projects can be accessed from [www.youthvoices.govt.nz](http://www.youthvoices.govt.nz).

youth participation in local government business. This includes a practical handbook which targets local government about youth participation and the development of a youth policy. Last year, a Youth in Local Government Conference was held in New Plymouth that successfully attracted delegates from a wide range of councils, youth organisations and agencies.

### Increasing youth employment levels

We are continuing to achieve significant reductions in the number of people under the age of 25 years receiving an unemployment-related benefit<sup>11</sup>. The number has reduced by 2,472 over the 10 years ended 31 March 2007 and by 628 in the last 12 months alone. People under the age of 25 years now represent 18.5% of the total number of people receiving an unemployment-related benefit in the region.

Many young people complete their secondary education and make the transition to tertiary education or to the workforce,

however not all school leavers enjoy the same success. We want to ensure that all young people successfully transition through key points in their life such as their teenage years and when they leave school. Without help, some struggle to move from school to work or further training because they lack formal qualifications or plans for the future. They are at risk of remaining unemployed and unable to compete for jobs. We are helping to address these issues and connect young people to positive activities so they can move successfully into adult life.

In partnership with our Taranaki local councils, we have established a Youth Transition Service. Youth co-ordinators provide support for school leavers from across the region by helping them to find jobs or connecting them with education and other youth services. Their continued focus is on our young people's talents, strengths and potential in order to prepare them for work.

## Young man hits the roof

Hamish left his home town of Wanganui on Anzac Day last year to go flatting with his sister in New Plymouth. She was unable to support him financially so he approached Work and Income for assistance. As he was 16 at the time, he was referred to Youth Transition Services to find a job.

Jon Collins, Youth Transition Services Youth Coach, organised a CV for Hamish and started calling employers. The call was answered by Millwards Roofing who offered Hamish a position on the proviso that Youth Transition Services organised a restricted driver's licence for him.

Hamish has now been in his roofing job for eight months. As a speed skater his good reflexes come in handy when climbing the long ladders and scaling roof tops.

*"I'm enjoying my work", he said as he climbed another ladder. "I'm becoming more independent and getting fitter".*

Millwards Supervisor, Lee Webb, is pleased with Hamish's progress. *"Hamish is going well. He's keen and eager to learn", he said.*

Jon Collins, who has followed Hamish's progress, says Hamish has always been very positive and has a great personality. *"This job means he has been able to buy a car and has financial and personal independence".*

While Hamish now lives two hours from his home, he says his Mum is pretty happy he is working and enjoying it. He plans to become good enough to go contracting in Australia and then come back to New Zealand and buy a house.

Pictured is Hamish, climbing the ladder of success.



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



*Above: Work and Income, the Rangitikei District Council, cadets and employers celebrate the first year of Career Start. Pictured from left are Evan Adams, Cadet; Dave Allen, Retravision Manager; Kerry Brown, Programme Co-ordinator; Louise McCoard, Work Broker; Leigh Halstead, Rangitikei District Chief Executive Officer; Gloria Campbell, Regional Commissioner; and Bob Buchanan, Rangitikei Mayor.*

Helping young people obtain paid work from the first point point of contact with us will continue to be a priority. We will build on last year's efforts to further reduce the number of young people receiving an unemployment-related benefit through initiatives that strongly support the shared goal between government and the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs<sup>12</sup>. As a result of the intensive work and planning we do with young people, it is common for there to be no youth clients under 19 years old receiving an unemployment-related benefit in Te Kuiti, Taihape, Hawera, Taumarunui, Waitara and Marton with numbers continuing to drop dramatically in our larger centres. We will continue to provide enhanced services to all our 16 to 19 year olds receiving either an Independent Youth Benefit or an unemployment-related benefit through intensive one-to-one case management. This can include joint case management where appropriate between Child, Youth and Family, Youth Transition Services and Work and Income.

Work carried out earlier this year with a small group of sole parents of children aged 16 to 18 years, showed that some parents lack the knowledge and resources to be able to help guide their teenagers towards positive options for their future. We will work with more parents and young people throughout our region to connect them to employment, training and further education services.

*"We really appreciate all the support the Ministry of Youth Development has given this project (The Human Powered Vehicle Challenge - South Taranaki) and know it would not have been possible without their generous funding".*

*Jan Roberts  
Project Co-ordinator  
Can Do Trust*

12. 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.

*"If it wasn't for Career Start we probably would not have taken on a young person. We had to take on someone and it would have been an experienced person, but Career Start allowed us an opportunity to help a younger person enter the workforce. We were first-time employers, but we knew we could fall back on the Career Start Co-ordinator. It was great knowing that the support was there."*

**Janette Johnson**  
Rangitikei Tyre Centre

Our programme co-ordinators maintain strong relationships with our contracted service providers, the Tertiary Education Commission and other training programme providers and StudyLink Outreach officers to ensure young people have access to employment opportunities upon completion of their training and study.

We will help increase the number of young people who complete their schooling and make the successful transition to tertiary education and employment through our participation in forums such as Education Taranaki and through the continuation of Youth Transition Services, industry partnerships, cadetships, Ministry of Youth Development initiatives and services for students through StudyLink.

### Career Starts

Career Start cadetship programmes in partnership with several of our mayors and councils have been successful in providing young people with their first job. We will seek further opportunities to develop even more private sector cadetships, such as the Tegel Foods Ltd partnership in New Plymouth, and those implemented through the Rangitikei 'Career Start' and the 'Working for Ruapehu' programmes.

The Rangitikei and Ruapehu initiatives have shown that a combination of both council-based and private workplace-based cadet positions can be achieved. The cadetship programme co-ordinators role and relationships with local employers and work brokers will continue to be pivotal to the success of such programmes. The Rangitikei cadetship was the first combined public and private sector programme involving a wide range of local businesses.

By assisting young people to enter the workforce, we can help solve current labour shortages. Through our Labour Market Development team we will continue to engage with industries and form partnerships to provide opportunities for our clients that include entry-level positions that will provide them with their first paid job and the first step towards a career.

# Creating Opportunities for Working Age People



*Left: Troy Egan, Social Worker Community Liaison from Child, Youth and Family chats with secondary school students at the South Taranaki Skills Expo held in Hawera.*

We maintain that employment is one of the most effective welfare policies ever invented. Paid employment is often still the best opportunity for our clients and their families to achieve social and economic independence.

Increasing people's skills and getting more people into work is critical to achieving a high-value economy. Ensuring that people in our region have access to opportunities to improve their quality of life for themselves and their families through paid work, will contribute significantly to the Government's priority of Economic Transformation.

## A changing client dynamic presents challenges

The number of working-age people receiving an unemployment-related benefit in our region has plummeted over the last 10 years from 8,380 to 2,159 - a huge reduction of 74%. Youth under the age of 25 years and Māori client numbers have also dropped markedly over the same period, by 86% and 65% respectively. The number of people in receipt of other forms of income support is also reducing. For example the number of clients receiving a Domestic Purposes Benefit has reduced by 1,565 over the last 10 years down from 6,835 to 5,270.

This is a significant achievement. It presents us with a new set of labour market challenges that will see us respond differently

and work more intensely with new client groups than we did 10 years ago. Increasingly our clients receiving a Domestic Purposes, Sickness or Invalid's Benefit tell us that they want to work. With unemployment at such low levels, they are well positioned to gain the most from the current labour market conditions.

We have high proportions of Māori clients residing in smaller or rural areas such as Taihape, Taumarunui, Te Kuiti and Hawera, with Māori representing 45% of all working-age clients receiving an unemployment-related benefit regionally.

With a much stronger focus on employment services for all working-age clients, we will work alongside our Māori, youth, sole parents, people with ill health or a disability and mature clients offering more comprehensive job-search services.

In recent years, as our economy has strengthened and our labour market has tightened, the needs of our clients and employers have altered and we anticipate that their expectations of our services have changed as well. Our services need to reflect what our clients need and expect. We will therefore develop new approaches and explore a range of service delivery options for both our clients and our employers as we move forward. New technology to enhance our services for both clients and employers is a key part of our service delivery development.



Above: Local rugby hero and former All Black Glen Osborne spoke to young Māori and long-term unemployed clients about his life story and offered words of encouragement and inspiration at Wanganui's Work and Income Career Expo.

## Services to meet the needs of employers and industry

Industry and businesses continue to experience skill and labour shortages. The demand for workers could potentially apply the brakes to continued economic growth. Our challenge is to now provide workers for jobs rather than jobs for workers.

In order to meet the ongoing needs and expectations of employers we will help our clients develop and strengthen the right skill sets. As we move forward, we will provide a service that is based on the latest labour market knowledge and reflects the specific recruitment needs of employers and industry. We will develop our knowledge so that we will be able to anticipate future labour market demands as accurately as possible. The use of internet and contact-centre technology will enhance access to our services for employers. This will enable us to provide a more responsive recruitment service that will contribute to increased staff retention rates and ultimately improved sustainable employment outcomes.

## Getting the right match of people to jobs

Pivotal to achieving sustainable employment outcomes is our ability to match our clients to what employers want.

We want to better understand the recruitment needs of our employers. To help us do this, we are developing an account management approach to enhance our employer relationships. This includes learning more about the nature of an employer's business, the size and makeup of their workforce, staff turnover

*"Finding staff was one of the big issues we faced because of the low unemployment rate in Taranaki, but Rachel Little (Work and Income Work Broker) did a fantastic job".*

*Peter Melody  
Co-owner  
Pak'n Save  
New Plymouth*

and recruitment needs and offering an Employer Relationship Agreement detailing the service we will provide.

Jobz4u is an internet-based tool that our staff use to apply a search to find suitable people to fill job vacancies as they arise. It also underpins our contact centre-based employment services such as the Employer Line and a proposed new service for clients called Job Search. This tool will be expanded as it has the potential for online access for both employers and clients, and to be used for labour market demand planning.

Work brokers will dedicate more time to employers who can offer the most opportunities to the majority of our clients. This means some employers will be offered other service options such as an enhanced Employer Line or through the internet.

### Industry partnerships addressing skill and labour demands

Creating industry partnerships is an effective way of working together to minimise skill and labour shortages and maximise job opportunities for our clients.

We will continue to build industry relationships to identify their needs, and in particular their recruitment requirements. This will involve working with more employers in the development of training and support programmes including

*"The collaboration between the engineering sector and local training providers is now starting to show some real benefits. In particular, the understanding of the actual training needs of industry is much better than it was three years ago. There is still a long way to go and we'll continue to work on this together".*

**Brian Souness**  
Chief Executive Officer  
CApENZ



**Above:** Taranaki's energy industry is the catalyst for an industry partnership between Work and Income and CApENZ (Centre of Applied Engineering New Zealand). Signing the agreement are Brian Souness, CApENZ Chief Executive Officer; and Gloria Campbell, Regional Commissioner. Also pictured from back left are Terry Curran, Industry Partnership Advisor and Malcolm Carson, Regional Labour Market Manager.

work-based programmes such as Straight 2 Work<sup>13</sup>. These programmes ensure we train our clients to an employer's entry-level requirement and provide on-the-job support to help new employees settle in more quickly.

Our National Business Sector Unit has signed several partnership agreements with a range of industries and their training organisations. A successful example of a Straight 2 Work programme in our region is with the meat industry which has enabled us to respond to the large workforce needs of meat processing companies in Wanganui, Rangitikei and Taranaki. This provides paid work for a significant number of local people. Another that holds relevance for our region especially the King Country, is the Straight 2 Work wool harvesting programme that is helping address skill and labour shortages in shearing, handling, classing and pressing of wool.

Through our Labour Market Development team, we are continuing to work alongside local industries that are experiencing skill or labour shortages by developing specific programmes to meet their needs. For example, our local industry partnership with CApENZ (Centre of Applied Engineering New Zealand) was initiated in response to the growing needs of Taranaki's energy industry. Launched last year, this three-year programme is providing clients and school leavers with training opportunities in the engineering sector. CApENZ links with training establishments who are approved to provide training and assessment in internationally recognised unit standards.

Each participant is assessed and individual training plans designed so they can achieve competencies that will

result in long-term employment within the engineering sector.

Other successful local industry partnerships in our region include supermarket and retail programmes with Pak'n Save in New Plymouth and Hawera, New World in Wanganui and Taumarunui and the Warehouse in Wanganui.

### Providing a rapid response

Our Labour Market Development team and work brokers provide a local knowledge-based rapid response service. Strong relationships with local industry, businesses and economic development agencies provide us with the knowledge we need to be able to respond swiftly to pending shifts in the labour market such as company closures and relocations and seasonal lay-offs.

We will continue to provide a proactive service in these situations by assisting companies with such things as the redeployment of affected staff to other businesses in need of their skills and experience. This will help businesses meet skill and labour shortages, and people to remain in work and maintain their standard of living to adequately support their families.

### Services to clients - helping more people into work

We know that many people receiving a benefit would like to work and would be better off if they were working. The way in which we deliver our services in the future will support them to achieve this.

### A New Service Approach

Our New Service Approach offers work-focused support for anyone who is able to work. It allows us to tailor our services to an individual's circumstances and work-readiness, instead of making decisions based on their benefit type. Today, less than 15% of people receiving a benefit in our region are receiving an unemployment-related benefit. We therefore expect that people receiving a Domestic Purposes, Sickness or Invalid's Benefit will gain the most from these enhancements.

A pre-assessment at initial contact allows us to determine each client's circumstances and the level of support that we will provide them in their job search. Clients who are work-ready undergo immediate employment profiling and job matching before a benefit is granted. Wider and earlier access to employment programmes, seminars and work broker services are also part of the New Service Approach.

### A Job Search Service

The Job Search Service is Work and Income's new 13-week job-search support programme for clients receiving an Unemployment Benefit and any people who are receiving other benefits who choose to take part and are ready to work immediately.

We actively work with clients right from their first contact with us. For those clients who do not secure work immediately, we offer work broker services, a range of job-search seminars and assessment services depending on the level of support they require. Participants develop a plan which details the individual job-search activities they will undertake.

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

Throughout the 13 weeks, we meet regularly with clients to ensure they are getting the right level of support. Clients needing extra help have a case manager assigned to work with them one-on-one. This support aims to prevent them from becoming long-term unemployed<sup>14</sup>.

### Enhanced case management

We support people who may be caring for dependent children or experiencing ill health or a disability, to prepare for work opportunities. Through enhanced case management, we will continue to work alongside clients to develop Personal Development and Employment Plans and connect them to services and opportunities that may help realise their employment goals. We will continue to provide financial assistance and access to other services in the meantime.

Our enhanced case management work with sole parents supports them with planning for the future and ensures that they are receiving their full and correct entitlements. For those people working part-time or considering returning to the workforce, it includes completing Working for Families eligibility assessments. Help with childcare costs and accommodation, along with Working for Families Tax Credits, can provide a healthy boost to family incomes. As a result, increasing numbers of sole parents are moving off benefit and into work. Many sole parents report a sense of personal achievement when they attain financial independence for themselves and their families.

Adding value to our client services are early intervention programmes run by Integrity Services. Aimed at ensuring people are receiving their full and correct benefit and family support entitlements, the programmes focus on preventing and minimising debt. An initiative that sought to effect positive change with a group of long-term clients was successfully completed in our region in January 2007. Field officers spent time with individuals and families and

*"Erilyn McBride at StudyLink (New Plymouth Outreach Office) was extremely helpful in getting Braden's study finances sorted out. She was excellent".*

*Margaret Putt  
Parent*



*Left: Prior to the opening of New Plymouth's new Pak'n Save supermarket, additional workers were needed and Work and Income was there to help with recruitment. Rachel Little, Work Broker (left) and Peter Melody, employer are pictured with butchery trainee Steven Paniora.*

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

offered them the opportunity to consider their future prospects. This resulted in many clients being facilitated into training or work. These programmes will continue to assist people to improve their economic futures and contribute to better social outcomes through sustainable employment and by delivering financial assistance correctly.

### Paths to employment

We are keen to develop initiatives such as the early assessment and counselling pilot for people with stress-related disorders which we have run in partnership with primary health organisations. By investing early in people and enabling them to regain former levels of health sooner, means things are not left until their situation worsens and becomes more difficult to resolve later on. This facilitates a faster return to work and restores family income levels through reduced periods receiving income assistance.

Our resources will be boosted over the coming year to enhance our support for people with ongoing health conditions or with a disability who wish to be employed. Specialist staff will liaise with employers and industries that are in a position to offer employment to people in these circumstances.

Considering the skill and labour shortages being faced by employers and industry, this is an exciting prospect for our clients who will have the opportunity to be part of a new and developing pool of job seekers. We will be working more closely

with others in the health and disability sector to maximise employment opportunities for this group.

### Encouraging education

As outlined earlier in the Plan, we have many initiatives in place to help young people to succeed in life. We are encouraging more of them to take up tertiary study and gain a higher education to equip them for successful careers in the workforce.

Our StudyLink Outreach offices in New Plymouth and Wanganui deliver services to students to ensure that they receive the information they need to be able to make informed study choices and funding decisions that maximise their successful completion of study and minimise their Student Loan needs.

Our StudyLink On Course programme involves presentations to secondary school students to inform them about allowances and loans that help meet tertiary study costs. This prepares students to manage financially during their study years. The presentations also cover our available online services. Feedback from schools about On Course has been very positive. We will continue to review and enhance the delivery of this programme to ensure students transition successfully from school to tertiary education.

Through StudyLink, we will identify opportunities to offer specific in-study support for students who have recently transitioned off a benefit and develop ways of how we might deliver such support. We will strengthen our relationships with Youth Transition

## *Early Intervention programme helps young mum*

When Integrity Services Field Officer Glenn Park (right) met with Taihape client Emma Thurston (left) as part of an Integrity Services Early Intervention programme, he was advised by Emma that she had the possibility of employment with two local businesses, Ruapehu Clothing and Hautapu Pine.

Based on her estimated starting wage, Glenn provided Emma with an assessment of her likely entitlements to the Working for Families package which is delivered by Work and Income and Inland Revenue for low- to middle-income families.

Emma was successful in securing employment and as a result of her meeting with Glenn and his explanation of the financial assistance she could receive, Emma decided to cancel her benefit. *"If it hadn't been for the Working for Families package, I wouldn't have been able to exit the benefit system and gain my financial independence",* said Emma.



Services and engage with young people enrolled with them to offer study as an option.

Some groups, such as Māori, are well represented at the certificate or diploma level of tertiary education but are under-represented at a degree level. We will place a greater emphasis on encouraging students into tertiary education who may not have previously considered this option.

We will also continue to actively encourage students to make full use of our online services. Online facilities will continue to be available in our New Plymouth StudyLink Office. As greater numbers of students use our online services, we will seek more opportunities to promote these services in the community. A regular campus presence at UCOL Wanganui and the Western Institute of Technology in Taranaki, attendance at open days and orientation weeks, as well as regular attendance at local careers expos where we can co-locate with Inland Revenue, will also provide students with additional access to our services.

StudyLink and Work and Income staff will continue to work collaboratively to maximise summer employment opportunities for students by actively referring them to vacancies managed by Student Job Search and our work brokers.

Working with education providers to help promote early Student Allowance and Loan applications from students will continue to be part of our work to ensure students get off to a good start each year.

By providing young people with access to tertiary education, we are contributing to the priority of Economic Transformation through achieving a higher skilled workforce and a knowledge-based economy.

## Helping people remain in work

We will be successful in lifting the labour force participation rates and improving outcomes for families both young and old, if more people secure paid work and remain in work. In many cases, we can get people into work before they require a benefit. Ensuring people remain in work is the key.

As we get to know and better understand the issues for some of our clients in getting and keeping a job, we are learning which services are the most relevant and useful in helping people prepare for work. This includes specialist employment assessment and report services we purchase to identify people's barriers to employment and ways to address them so people can achieve their employment goals. Future services will also need to reflect the needs of new and different groups of clients. Training and other service providers will be expected to have strong links with, and knowledge of, the labour market as it relates to the needs of these new groups.

As unemployment levels continue to reduce, we are seeing more clients with complex issues such as drug and alcohol-related issues. We will pursue the availability of services that can provide expert drug and alcohol treatment coupled with a strong employment emphasis. In this way, people will be more aware of, and able to meet their requirements as an employee and ultimately prevent further drug use.

*"I'm 21 years old with one child. I had been receiving a Domestic Purposes Benefit for just over a year and I wanted a job. I didn't see the point of being on a benefit - I'm much happier being employed - I'm better off financially and I love my job!"*

**Baylea Hanscombe**  
Former client

## A seamless service

While undertaking a Trade and Commerce Training Opportunities Programme to attain his Certificate in Level 2 Computing, 19-year old Braden Putt decided he would attend the Western Institute of Technology in Taranaki, to gain further Information Technology qualifications.

*"I wanted to get into the Information Technology industry and I knew I needed help to be able to afford to do it", said Braden. "StudyLink Outreach Officer Erilyn McBride helped me sort out what I needed to apply for, like my Student Allowance".*

During their meeting at New Plymouth's StudyLink Outreach Office, it transpired that Braden also needed extra assistance with his rent as his flatmate had moved out and Braden had become responsible for all of the costs.

As StudyLink is co-located with Work and Income, Erilyn was able to immediately link Braden with Work and Income Case Manager Jessica Cooksley-Gruys who arranged a review of his Accommodation Supplement until such time as Braden could find another flatmate to share costs.

*"I liaised with Jessica so that between Work and Income and StudyLink we achieved a rapid and seamless service for Braden", said Erilyn. "Students are really advantaged by the fact that we are in the same premises. It is great that together we can eliminate or prevent any problems for students. It makes for a smoother transition, especially for people transitioning from a benefit to tertiary study".*

Pictured from left are Jessica Cooksley-Guys, Erilyn McBride and Braden.



We recognise that post-placement support may be required for some people returning to the workforce after an extended period of time. Where such cases are identified, we provide assistance to both the employee and employer through contracted in work support services while people settle into jobs. In some instances, subsidies will be available to contribute towards any extra initial supervision and workplace modification costs incurred by employers.

## The growing support role of our contact centres

We know that most people make their first contact with us through a contact centre. Contact centres will play an increasingly pivotal role in our ability to deliver the services employers and clients expect.

We have identified a number of services that we will establish or enhance over the next three years. These include an enhanced Employer Line which will improve our ability to place people into work and expand on our current service to employers through an 0800 number. In addition to taking vacancy details, our contact centre staff will perform talent searches through our jobz4u matching tool to source suitable candidates.

Our clients can expect to see enhancements to Service Express, a contact option for clients that currently allows them to tell us about their wages and to check payment or debt details. We are exploring new opportunities to provide more services using speech-recognition technology. Our multilingual services and outbound calling services will also be expanded. Outbound calling campaigns can include ensuring that people are aware of Working for Families entitlements, available employment opportunities and other support for people who have recently moved into the workforce.

Our initiatives and services will continue to evolve to develop people's skills and experiences to meet the needs of employers and industry in our changing labour market. Employment is a key element to growing stronger and resilient individuals who make up successful families, young and old.

# Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

Older people have valuable skills and the benefit of a lifetime's experience to share. They are major contributors in our communities in the voluntary sector and in the economy. As our population ages, society will increasingly depend on their contributions.

## Supporting positive choices

We want to support older people to have positive choices such as working past the age of 65 if they prefer and to remain living independently in their own homes, for as long they choose.

Research released in February 2007<sup>15</sup> shows there has been a strong upturn in the proportion of older people who are working across all major occupational groups, with the largest increase in the 60 to 64 years age band. By extending their working lives, older people have the opportunity to remain active, to save, and to maintain their living standards.

In a time of skill and labour shortages, older people who choose to work longer, should be encouraged to do so. We support older people through our employment services and by referring them to agencies such as Experience Express in New Plymouth that deliver services to mature<sup>16</sup> clients.

Many older people make a valuable contribution in the community through their voluntary activities such as sports clubs, marae and organisations that help people in need. Some have taken on the hugely important role of raising their grandchildren. We will continue to support older people's lifestyle choices to achieve continued independence and social participation.

In our region, there were 27,985 people receiving New Zealand Superannuation as at 31 March 2007 and we provide services for superannuitants in 11 Work and Income sites across our region.

*"It is not enough to identify cases of elder abuse and neglect. Confronting and reducing elder abuse needs us all to focus on developing and strengthening the structures that will allow our health, social, legal protection, financial and Police services to work together in a co-ordinated way to appropriately respond to and eventually prevent elder abuse and neglect".*

**Kathy Glass**  
Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Co-ordinator  
Taranaki Elder Protection Service  
Te Hauora Pou Heretanga



*Left: Ashley Griffiths works with Te Arahina Rest Home resident Elizabeth Rogers as an assistant in diversional therapy. Ashley was unemployed for 14 years before gaining employment. A Work and Income wage subsidy was arranged to support Ashley's placement.*

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

16. Mature clients are those aged between 45 and 59 years (inclusive).

## Dulcie says there's no such word as 'old'

Waitara mother of three, grandmother of seven and great-grandmother of four, Dulcie Manson celebrated her 80th birthday in style in January 2007. She donned leathers and protective footwear and went for an exhilarating ride on a Harley Davidson motorbike, courtesy of a family birthday gift.

*"I'll have a go at anything. It's great fun!",* said Dulcie.

While she confesses to a 'couple' of medical conditions, these do not deter Dulcie from doing anything she sets her mind to. Her family confirms she has a reputation as a bit of a thrill-seeker and she doesn't hold back from a challenge.

Dulcie can claim among her many achievements; climbing Ayers Rock, camel riding, and at 79 years of age, being dragged along behind a speed boat in a 'biscuit' on the Mokau River just north of her Waitara home. Also a keen marcher, Dulcie is a member of the Waitara Raleigh Rebels marching team and enjoys many fun-filled trips away with the 'girls'.

Dulcie says there is no such word as 'old' in her vocabulary. *"My family won't allow me to mention that word. I am 'mature' "*, she said.

*"While she does not hold with the word 'old', we hope Dulcie doesn't mind if we think she is a brilliant example of positive ageing and it's just magical that her family support her in her lifestyle choices",* said Regional Commissioner for Social Development Gloria Campbell.

And for her next birthday ... Dulcie is thinking about doing a parachute jump!



*Photo courtesy of the Daily News.*

We administer the Community Services Card which enables people on low- to middle incomes or receiving income-related support to obtain subsidies on doctor's fees, and prescriptions and to access secondary health services from public hospitals. Keeping primary healthcare organisations and pharmacies informed about the assistance we provide for older people will continue to be a key part of our work to raise older people's awareness of the help available from both our sectors.

We have eight formal reciprocal social security agreements with other countries. These, along with General and Special Portability arrangements for countries not covered by agreements, are administered by our International Services. These arrangements enable New Zealand citizens to take some or all of their New Zealand Superannuation or Veterans Pension with them if they choose to live elsewhere in the world. We also administer New Zealand Superannuation for people living here who are eligible for pensions from other countries.

In the coming year, we will continue to take every opportunity to inform superannuitants and veterans about our services. We will go about this in a variety of ways; for example speaking with groups such as Grey Power, The Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association, kaumātua and through presentations at Positive Ageing forums.

We will strengthen and increase information access points for older people including websites, fact sheets, in other printed forms and face-to-face community networking opportunities. We will continue participating in community services expos and information days where other service providers and interest groups attend and share information.

There are 1,103 people receiving a War Pension in the Taranaki region. The majority of people receiving a War Disablement Pension served in World War II. Due to increasing disablement among ageing veterans and a concentrated campaign by The Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association, Veterans' Affairs New Zealand and our War Pension Services to ensure war veterans are receiving their full and correct entitlements, we are carrying out significant numbers of reviews of War Disablement Pensions.

The introduction of the SuperGold Card in the latter half of 2007 recognises the contribution older New Zealanders and veterans have made, and continue to make, to our society. The Card, which will automatically be sent to people who receive New Zealand Superannuation or a Veterans Pension, will provide commercial discounts on everyday goods and services from participating businesses, and access to concessions on central government and local authority services. Our Senior Services will produce a directory and website listing all the discounts and concessions being offered.



*Left: Clive Doughty, National Manager, the Card Centre, conducted a presentation about the SuperGold Card at the Zone Three Local Government Meeting in Hawera. The SuperGold Card generated a lot of interest from the 36 attendees from Taranaki, Wanganui and Manawatu.*

A freephone number (0800 25 45 65) for enquiries about the SuperGold Card has also been set up. We will seek further opportunities to inform older people about the SuperGold Card.

## Positive ageing goes from strength to strength

We actively support the goals of the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy<sup>17</sup> through our close links with groups that provide support and services specifically for older people.

We value our continued close relationship with the New Plymouth Positive Ageing Trust and our National Office for Senior Citizens. The Trust continues to receive numerous invitations to speak at forums in other parts of the country about New Plymouth's approach to promoting positive ageing. The Trust is also very successful in attracting prominent people with expertise in matters of importance to older people such as the Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner and the Retirement Commissioner, to speak at New Plymouth Positive Ageing meetings. The Trust's growing membership now boasts 30 agencies and groups who deliver services specifically to older people.

## A safe and secure environment in later years

Supporting older people to be safe and secure is a priority. Case managers are now better able to support older people who disclose family violence and elder abuse, and ensure that they have access to the services they need to be safe and secure. Family and Community Services will continue to contribute to the prevention of elder abuse by funding groups such as

Age Concern in Wanganui and Te Hauora Pou Heretanga in New Plymouth to deliver elder protection services.

More people are choosing to live independently in their own homes for longer and we will continue to look at new ways of providing services for those who are living independently, but may no longer have the mobility or support to visit our service centres.

We will continue to support the Taranaki 'Healthy Homes' project and the establishment of a similar initiative in Wanganui to ensure older people in our region have the help they need to achieve warmer and healthier homes and ultimately lower household energy costs.

Ensuring older people are receiving their full and correct entitlements and additional assistance such as a Disability Allowance towards health-related costs, Special Needs Grants for such things as spectacles and an Accommodation Supplement for housing costs, will continue to form part of our everyday work.

Working proactively with others can help us achieve better outcomes for older people. An example is our joint work with the New Plymouth District Council last year when pensioner housing rentals were adjusted. We worked with the Council to ensure that tenants received their increased accommodation supplement payments simultaneously from the date that rents were adjusted. This ensured that tenants received extra help towards their housing costs in the most timely and convenient way.

Older people continue to make an enormous contribution and as we reflect on this, we know how fortunate we are to have such a valuable and growing community resource. We will therefore continue to contribute to ensuring older people are well supported and provided for into their later years.

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

# Partnering with our Communities

Our communities identify strongly with our clean, green countryside and we are very proud of our beautiful scenery, national parks, rivers, mountains and rugged coastlines. Many of our region's rural communities are home to higher proportions of Māori. New Plymouth is attracting skilled people from overseas and has a small but growing migrant population.

In well functioning communities, networks and shared values within the community contribute to economic growth and social development.

Our goal is to build connected communities. We will continue to contribute to building strong communities by funding social services to families, and providing information and advice to help families and communities learn about the services and support that is available locally.

## Aligning services to the needs of our communities

Local Services Mapping was undertaken in parts of our region last year to determine if family services were meeting the particular needs of communities in our region. We will be commencing action planning in the coming year in response to

the completed Local Services Mapping reports for New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki. Regional mapping groups will continue working closely with communities to learn how services can be better aligned, funded and delivered.

## Enterprising communities

We know that the best ideas for creating employment opportunities for local labour markets, communities and economies often come from the communities themselves. Through our Enterprising Communities Grants, we will continue to support communities to design and implement projects that develop local skills and create job opportunities for people such as those living in areas where there are fewer opportunities for employment, or where people do not have the right skills or training for the jobs that currently exist.

Successful Enterprising Communities projects include the Bushy Park Trust Bird Sanctuary and Hinengakau River Guides, both tourism ventures which are providing local people with jobs, and the Taranaki Arts Community Trust in New Plymouth which continues to support local artists to develop self sustaining careers. Community projects such as these aim to be self sustaining within three years.

## *Bushy Park, an example of a successful enterprise*

Just 10 minutes from Wanganui is a unique example of a native New Zealand rainforest preserved in its original state.

The Bushy Park Trust Bird Sanctuary is a community-owned venture involved in the recovery and protection of rare and endangered native bird species such as Kiwi, Saddleback, North Island Robin, Kaka, Kokako and Weka.

Through Work and Income's Labour Market Development team, the Trust is receiving Enterprising Communities funding. The three-year funding has so far allowed the creation of two positions - a Conservation Officer and an Assistant Ranger/Fence Monitor. It is also expected to provide training for other local people as conservation cadets, working in the protection of rare birds and monitoring and maintenance of nearly five kilometres of a special pest-proof fence.

Bushy Park aims to become a leading native bird sanctuary that attracts paying visitors who wish to see something uniquely New Zealand. Tourists can also take nocturnal tours

through the forest as it was before the arrival of man, and experience the calling of Kiwi and other native birds.

Longer-term goals include the establishment of a visitor centre, café and shop which will provide further employment opportunities.



## Connected communities

We are continuing to link more people in rural or isolated communities with government services. Our three Heartland Services located in Taihape, Hawera and Taumarunui are all co-located in Work and Income service centres and each has a co-ordinator providing one-stop-shop access to government and community services.

Contributing agencies include Inland Revenue, Te Puni Kōkiri, Housing New Zealand, the Department of Internal Affairs and the Māori Land Court. Establishing closer relationships with more community groups, schools, mayors and councils and service providers will widen access to Heartland Services and provide more opportunity for us to work together on projects such as community information and skills and careers expos in our smaller townships.

Heartland Services co-ordinators will continue to actively participate in a number of local networks and act as 'connectors' to government services for local voluntary and community groups operating in the social sector. For example, in the earlier part of 2007, our Hawera Heartland Services Co-ordinator convened the meetings of the long-standing South Taranaki Social Services Network. Our Taihape Co-ordinator participated in Volunteer Wanganui's 2007 Volunteer Recognition Awards to acknowledge people who have carried out voluntary work for a non-profit organisation in the Wanganui, Rangitikei or Ruapehu Districts. Our co-ordinators will be placing an even greater focus throughout the coming year on encouraging more agencies and groups to participate in Heartland Services.

The community and voluntary sector is very diverse. We wish to acknowledge the extraordinary individual and collective volunteer effort that goes into helping non-profit organisations achieve their potential, and how this enhances and enriches our communities.

Our sports people, our artists and performers across the community provide inspiration at many levels. It can also be said of our local leaders who strive for better outcomes for our communities. Through Family and Community Services, we will continue to support community-based initiatives through the Community Initiatives Fund which provides support for outstanding community leaders undertaking social development projects. An example of this is 'Keystone Taranaki' which received funding for its community project leader. The project's aims include building leadership and governance within the non-government organisation sector. A part of this work has involved organising a series of seminars taking place throughout 2007 which are facilitated by mayors and other local leaders including our regional staff who are providing organisations with a better understanding of what makes for successful governance.

Much of the work in achieving strong and resilient communities is done through community-based organisations. Through our National Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector, we will continue to help build the capacity

*"Working together is important for the whole community. When new migrants come here to work, their wives or partners are usually looking for paid work also, because work is one way of getting out and meeting people in the community - it eases any feeling of loneliness and isolation. We value our relationship with the Ministry of Social Development and their membership of our Settlement Support migrant network".*

**Geetha Kutty**  
Settlement Support Co-ordinator  
New Plymouth

*“Partnership can be defined as a co-operative relationship between people or groups who agree to share responsibility for achieving some specific goal. Successful partnerships are therefore active, rather than passive processes. The innovative response to the capacity building needs of community organisations provided by Keystone Taranaki demonstrates such a partnership. Community organisations, local authorities and government agencies are actively working together and we are achieving sustainable improvements for our communities”.*

**Simon Cayley**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bishop's Action Foundation

of community organisations. We administer the NGO Study Awards, supporting staff from non-government organisations undertaking study towards a social work degree. The awards recognise that non-government organisations have limited resources to support staff in study. They contribute to increasing the collective qualifications of community-based workers.

Our communities are becoming more ethnically diverse as new migrants make their homes here. Through the New Plymouth Settlement Support Office, an initiative of the Department of Labour, new migrants to Taranaki have a point of contact with community and government services. We enjoy a valuable relationship with Settlement Support and will continue to participate in the Settlement Support Network to share information about our services so that migrants feel welcome and connected to community life.

We have developed a number of strategies that promote the participation of all people in their communities and in local and central government decision making. These include The New Zealand Disability Strategy<sup>18</sup>, the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy, the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa and New Zealand's Agenda for Children<sup>19</sup>. Strong communities involve families, whānau and individuals in their planning and decision making. This leads to services and policies that are right for the community.

We will continue to take every opportunity to partner with our communities and to engage with you, the people and communities of this region, on matters of priority. The goals we have set aim to make a positive difference to the lives of people and to enrich our communities so that our region remains prosperous, skilled, connected, vibrant and strong for all families, young and old.



**Right:** People from all races and backgrounds came together at the annual Taranaki Multi Ethnic Festival to celebrate cultural diversity. Groups from across the community joined in the day which was attended by over 6,000 people.

18. The New Zealand Disability Strategy, Ministry of Health, 2001.

19. New Zealand's Agenda for Children, Ministry of Social Development, June 2002.

# Organisational Overview

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

## 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  
4th Floor  
60 Gill Street  
New Plymouth  
[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

