

## Volunteers Awarded

Leanne Collins from Volunteering Hawkes Bay speaks to DRC about the Volunteering Excellence Awards.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, the awards were held for the seventh year in a row. It was a wonderful opportunity for volunteers to be recognised and was a great success with 125 people attending Bev Ridges on York in Tamatea. The Board Members of Volunteering Hawke's Bay judged 34 nominees for five different categories.

Gabby Allen was the guest speaker. Her passion for children led her to found projects such as *Jammies for June* which in 2017 provided 6,600 pairs of pyjamas to children in Hawke's Bay who would have otherwise gone



**The Cancer Society Volunteer Drivers with the Team Award.**

without.

When the winners were announced, each of the winners gave a speech and were presented with a trophy from one of the sponsors.

Three of the winners of the five categories were from organisations that are in some way dedicated to

to people who experience disabilities: the Cancer Society Hawkes Bay, Presbyterian Support East Coast, and Special Olympics Hawke's Bay.

The Cancer Society Hawkes Bay Volunteer Drivers received the Team Award. They donate their time and vehicle to

transporting those with cancer to medical and hospital appointments, sometimes even taking them as far as Palmerston North.

Elizabeth Campbell from the Napier Presbyterian Support Store was the winner of the Youth (cont'd next page)

*DRC – Living Life Connected* is a quarterly publication of events and stories from around Hawke's Bay. As the Disability Information Centre for the region, DRC also publishes a weekly update outlining events that are coming up in the

near future as well as news items of interest. This quarterly newsletter is about covering what has happened at a selection of those events, as well as stories that are relevant to those with disabilities.



As the blue symbol from the DRC logo, the information service shares impartial advice freely about Hawke's Bay support available for those with disabilities – temporary, permanent, new and old.



**Elizabeth Campbell with the Youth Award.**

(cont'd from previous page) Award. She started volunteering for her Duke of Edinburgh Award, but she continued to work for the store, and is very highly valued by her team.

The winners of the Governance Award were the Committee from the Hawke's Bay branch of the Special Olympics. The committee consists of 15 members who are all volunteers. They meet every

month and among other things that are discussed, a representative from each sport gives a report on their particular game.

- Elana McNeill

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## Music Therapy for Everyone

The Raukatauri Music Therapy Centre has opened its first regional service in Hawkes Bay and the organisation wants to make it available to everyone, regardless of their financial situation. Hinewehi Mohi, co-founder of the Trust facilitating the service says the centre can provide subsidies to make music therapy accessible for anyone who has a disability.

Will Darbyshire, the registered music therapist assigned to the satellite centres currently operating in Tamatea and Havelock North, presented two information sharing sessions with CCS Disability Action this August. This reporter went to one of the sessions and was able to find out interesting information about music therapy as well as experience it for herself. People with disabilities, support workers, and others were

also in attendance.

It all started with a song. An eight-year-old boy with a rare blood condition whom Darbyshire had met in a paediatric hospital had written a song to express his emotions. The song was simple, yet uplifting, and left one with a feeling of happiness. Instruments were handed out to the group, and everyone played along in whatever

way they could.

Darbyshire went on to share about his music therapy experience, which included a recent placement at a centre for people with cerebral palsy in Kolkata, India. He was trained in Melbourne, and comes from Toowoomba, Queensland. A registered music therapist has a degree in either education or music, and then goes on to complete two years of

postgraduate study in music therapy.

The information sharing session continued with an explanation of what music therapy is and how it works using a therapeutically supportive space. It works because it accesses many different areas of the brain, and is emotive allowing for expression that doesn't need to be verbal. As Darbyshire put it, "words



**A music therapy session.**

and sounds are easier during music time”.

There is interesting research going into music therapy and how it works along neurological pathways. People have learned how to speak again through singing, for example, after a stroke. Because singing accesses different areas of the brain to speaking, people are able to put the connections back together in a way that

speaking alone could not achieve. Another example of how music therapy has been used is to change negative thought patterns that have existed in cases of mental health difficulties.

Hinewehi told a story of a woman who had limited independent movement who she met participating in music therapy. The woman and the therapist were working with wind

chimes one day, and all of a sudden, she reached out and with a purposeful movement, ran her hand along the chimes.

For people who experience so many barriers in their lives, Hinewehi and the Raukatauri Music Therapy Trust do not want there to be financial barriers to accessing music therapy. They run a subsidy programme where people can pay as little as \$6 a

session. There are also options for group therapy which can also reduce the price significantly.

- Elana McNeill

To get in touch with the Raukatauri Music Therapy Centre in Hawke's Bay, contact Will Darbyshire: 027 202 1876 06 870 3990, willdarbyshire@rmtc.org.nz

## Change Wars

Suzanne Stewart from Napier Family Centre talked to us about Change Wars, the fundraiser for children's mental health, and how it went this year.

Change Wars is a fundraising event for children's mental health run by Napier Family Centre for one week during the month of June. Napier Family Centre ask people from the community to hold an event in which to raise money either by competing with another team, company or organisation (hence the name Change Wars) or by another fundraising activity. This year it was held from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June.

Napier Family Centre employs or contracts counsellors to treat mental health issues. One quarter of all of the counselling sessions held are for children or young people. They experience things such as depression, self-harm and bullying. Most of the young people they see are teens between the ages of 14-16, but they have seen children as young as two.

The funds raised from the fundraising activities are used to pay for counselling sessions at \$95 an hour, and all counsellors are professional members of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors. Last year some of the funds were used for courses, such as Just for Kids which helps children explore issues and



build confidence.

This year Change Wars was very successful, with many people in the community getting involved. Every year more and more people are becoming more involved and aware of the need for fundraising for children's mental health.

Suzanne would like to

say how grateful they are for all the support that has been shown, and that it's good to be able to get the message about children's mental health out into the community.

- Elana McNeill

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