

## Jess' Story – Disability Resource Centre (Hawkes Bay) Trust

When Jess first came to Disability Resources Centre Hawkes Bay Trust (DRCHB) she would have reluctantly described herself as “shy, scared and lonely”.

Fast forward three years, though, and Jess would be the first to admit that a lot has changed since then.

Cheerful, friendly and willing to take on new challenges more aptly describes the 21-year-old now, and it is not only Jess who has noticed the change in herself, but her friends, family and work colleagues too.



“It really is evident in the way she carries herself and when you look back at the first photo we took of Jess, man, the change is obvious! It is so lovely to see that she has come out of her shell and tackling all the goals she sets for herself,” DRCHB Support Services Manager Ali Shapland says.

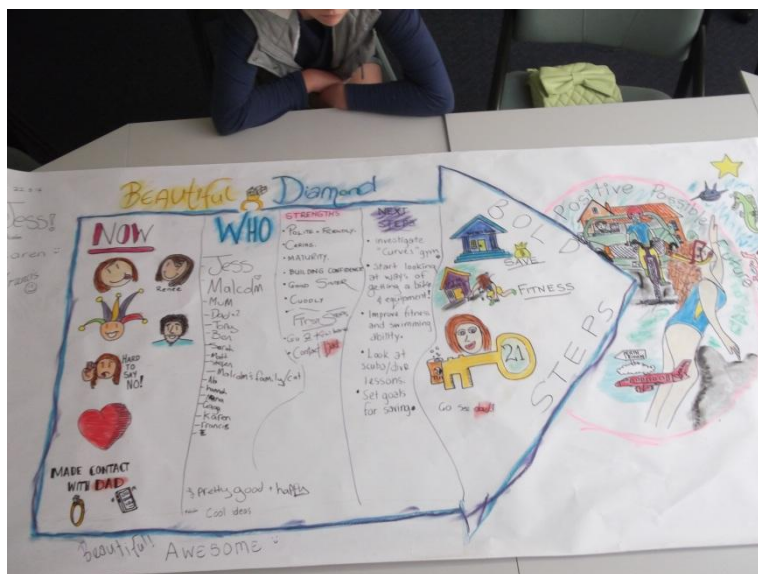
One person in particular who has watched the changes with interest is one of DRCHB's Community Coordinator's Karen Lane who works for the Turning Point division within DRCHB.

Karen has been working alongside Jess for the majority of the time she has been supported by DRCHB, and helped her set the goals that Jess has been steadily knocking off.

Karen says using the DRCHB's Pathways Planning Process was helpful in finding out which goals Jess was interested in achieving and then creating a clear path for this to happen.

One goal Jess has managed to tick off was meeting her Dad whom she hadn't seen in seven years. Jess was pretty excited for this to happen, and being taken along to her first live rugby game made the meeting extra special, Jess says.

Another goal, which is also ongoing, was joining Curves Ladies Gym which she has been working out at for the past 18 months.



Jess says going to the gym is very important to her, as the team there are incredibly supportive and help keep her on track with her fitness and healthy eating goals.

Saving and purchasing a bike has also helped Jess stick with her fitness goals, as well as being a great way for her to get around, including heading down to play a game of pool with friends – a weekly pastime she enjoys.

Other notable goals Jess has met include; attending cooking and budgeting classes at DRCHB, going flatting and completing volunteering work – which has set her up nicely to move into mainstream employment in a job she enjoys.

In fact, through the support of DRCHB, Jess has recently secured a two week job trial at a local florist – well done Jess!

A further major goal Jess recently ticked off was when she tandem skydived out of a plane from 12,000 feet.



Despite initial nerves, Jess says it was all pretty exciting and something that she would definitely do again! Sharing the moment with her Mum, Stepdad and friend Malcom made it extra special too!

Although Jess' Community Coordinator was unable to watch the jump, Jess was happy to relay her adventure the next time the two caught up.

Karen fondly remembers how “nothing could have wiped the smile of Jess' face when she was recounting her adventure” and for Karen achieving such a task was a really good measure of just how far Jess had come in the three years she had been with DRCHB.

“Watching people like Jess achieve their dreams and goals is why I love my job so much and I feel so proud of all that she has achieved, and continues to achieve. It really has been lovely to be part of that,” Karen says.

If you would like to find out more about DRCHB visit their website: [www.drchb.org.nz](http://www.drchb.org.nz) or find them on Facebook under [www.facebook.com/drchb](https://www.facebook.com/drchb)