



Swinburne's Supportive Whanau Environment a Great Help

Kia ora, I'm Honoraria Ropiha the Network Personnel Employment Consultant for Napier. Of the several in-work clients I support, I have the pleasure to work with and provide guidance to four Mainstream recipients and their employer's.

Mainstream is an MSD funded Employment Programme which provides a package of subsidies, training, and other support to assist job seekers with disabilities into work and enable them to gain sustainable employment.

One of our Napier based Mainstream clients is Alana who has been employed for the past 12 months as a Teacher Aide with Swinburne Early Childhood Centre, Birthright Napier. An early wake up, and two bus trips from her home in Flaxmere to Napier means she is ready and at work by 8:00am.

As a Teacher Aide, Alana completes a multitude of tasks which includes assisting the children with their play, preparing and creating resources for the children, cleaning, meal preparation, and supporting the teacher staff as required. Another big part of Alana's role is developing an understanding of the key philosophies and the legislation supporting early childhood education in New Zealand.

A core belief of Alana's is that learners will thrive within a supportive whanau environment, and Alana believes that Swinburne House works towards achieving this for the children.

Alana tells us "We are all working together on the same page, we all want what's best for the children and for them to be happy. Amazingly, some of the mums who bring their children here, came here as children themselves so it's a great sense of family."

An achievement for Alana while she has been working at Swinburne is her successful completion of the Level 4 Certificate in Early Childhood Education. Alana attended classes 1-2x each week (for 18 weeks) from 6:00 – 9:45 pm, setting aside Fridays and weekends for assignments.



Now Alana has completed her level 4 qualifications she is developing the confidence to explore and study Tikanga Maori and Te Reo Maori. Ka pai Alana!

One of the interactive activities for the children that Alana has initiated are called "**Nature Boxes**" - Alana is pictured here with one of her own creations.

As always, it's been an exciting time in the Health and Disability sector.



Our Ministry of Social Development contracts have again been extended for both services of the Network Personnel (Employment Services) team and the Turning Point (Vocational Services) team.

The next 2 to 3 years will see many changes in the way support services are delivered. Some contracts will be subject to National tendering in the near future.

We are in the process of speaking informally with our stakeholders as to what they'd like us to focus on in terms of our strategic planning for the coming years ahead.

If you would like to have input into this planning, please contact Ali Shapland on 873 8208.

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Dean Coleborn and Sharon Wright"

If you as an employer would like to explore Supported Employment further, contact

Network Personnel on 873 8208.

Our service is free.



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MEET THE TEAM



Today we'd like to introduce you to our newest team member Vadelia Wirihana

Vadelia has 6 years experience in Health and Communications in supportive supervisory roles and 2 years in recruitment with relevant qualifications.

Born and bred in Napier she has been studying and has a post graduate diploma in Communications and Leadership.

Vadelia has just completed a Masters in Environment, and Post graduate in International Studies. Her interest is Hapu development in environment sustainability, and historic writings.

Interests are exercise and sports, and spending time with family.



Disability Information and Advisory Service

Disability Resource Centre has a new arm to it called Disability Information and Advisory Service (DIAS) and Heather Robertson is the coordinator of this service. Heather emails out lots of really great information relating to disabilities of all sorts—these include seminars, newsletters, happenings, fundraisers, etc, etc.

If you would like to get onto Heather's email list, please send an email to Heather at information@drchb.org.nz.

The other part of the role is advice as to where to go for whatever you need to know about disabilities. Don't forget about the WEKA website <http://www.weka.net.nz/> (What Everyone Keeps Asking). One stop shop for info about disabilities.

Life After School...? NETWORK PERSONNEL - Popular Provider of Programme...



The Transition Programme for Students with high to very high needs (under the Ministry of Education's 'Ongoing Resourcing Scheme' funding initiative) is run by Francis Nicholas.

Francis, a teacher in a 'former life', has great insight into what the schools, students and families need in terms of providing a service that ticks all of the boxes to alleviate the stresses of what happens to these students after they can no longer attend school.

Schools, parents and students have the choice as to what provider they may wish to work with to transition the student from school-life to after-school life.

The process starts when the caregivers or parents, guided by the teacher, make the decision for their children to participate in the transition programme. Francis will attend the IEP (*Individualised Education Programme*) meetings with all parties and create a plan based on personal preferences and interests of the student and their family.

From this point Francis will organise a series of job trials, work experiences and visits to training and service providers to allow the student and their family to find a suitable post school placement.

Transition is a valuable tool which allows students and families to make informed decisions about the future. It puts the decision making process firmly in the hands of the student and their families enabling them to see the possibilities that exist once a young person leaves school.

If you wish to know more about this programme please feel free to contact Ali Shapland, Support Services Manager (873 8208) or Francis Nicholas on 873 8209.



Potiki's Story — From 'So Shy' to 'Go Fly!'

Potiki came to Disability Resource Centre initially as a referral to our Network Personnel Supported Employment division.

Employment Consultants worked with him to establish a career path and through their interactions with Potiki, they identified a high level of anxiety and severe lack of confidence.

These traits can be quite common for someone with an intellectual disability and with learning difficulties. Network Personnel staff also found that Potiki's inability to converse with other people was a barrier to employment so in March 2014, they referred Potiki to the Turning Point service (another specialist division of Disability Resource Centre) to work in tandem with them to raise his confidence and lessen his anxiety levels.

Potiki joined the "cooking for blokes" classes to learn to work alongside other people. They covered all aspects of meal creation from planning to budgeting, purchasing and cooking—and cleaning up of course! He also joined a dart's team and mixed in with 10-pin bowlers to grow his confidence and circle of friends.

This confidence-development has seen him attend a Halloween Disco with a LOT of people present – something he again had never thought he would do. He also graced the cat-walk at a fundraising fashion show (beside his coordinator) in front of a very large crowd. After it all Potiki said *"Well, that wasn't as bad as I thought it was going to be!!"* Potiki also joined a bus full of people for a day trip to visit Te Papa which was quite daunting. Potiki told us *"I'm really glad I went, it was much better than I thought"*.



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At Disability Resource Centre we do goal setting sessions with our clients. Potiki set some goals: get a paid job; get a drivers licence; go flatting; and buy a car.

We helped Potiki identify his strengths, support networks, and steps he needed to take to reach the goals he had set for himself.

We then supported Potiki, helping him to study for his learner's licence which he got on 16th December 2014. Potiki states *"I studied really hard for my learners licence, so was confident I would get it"*.

Network Personnel secured a position for Potiki to work at the DHB in the Equipment Stores as an Equipment Assistant. He started this job on 29th December 2014. This is funded through the Mainstream Programme which is a two-year placement with the hopes that he can up-skill himself to make his role permanent. Potiki still works 24 hours per week in this job and likes it. Potiki says: *"I work with nice people and feel well supported"*. Feedback from his employer is he is working very well. He is sitting Unit Standards under NZQA for qualifications in relation to his work. Employment Consultants and his supportive boss Candace help him to understand the more complicated areas of study and ensure he stays on track.

Potiki purchased a car and is now saving for a newer, more economical one. Potiki has recently secured funding through our Barry Whelan Scholarship for 5 driving lessons with a driving instructor to obtain his restricted licence which he is doing right now. Potiki is happy to pay for any further sessions should these be required. He is motivated even more to get his licence so he can be a back-up when the usual delivery man where he works is away on leave.

He is looking at flatting options and his confidence has gone from so shy to flying high!!