

Enabling Good Lives

Demonstration making progress in Christchurch

Welcome to the second edition of the **Enabling Good Lives** newsletter.



We are working hard to build our team, and I am delighted to welcome our new Demonstration Coordinator, Monique Harding and Manager of Provider Relationships and Personalised Funding, Richard Buchanan. You will be able to read more about our new team members in our next newsletter.

We are also recruiting for another Enabling Good Lives (EGL) Navigator. If you are interested in the position or know someone who might be, see the advertisement in this newsletter.

It is great to have Hannah Perry on board as our first Navigator, and she and Ruth Jones are actively working with 15 young disabled people and their families to determine what makes a good life for them.

Some great ideas are emerging from early discussions and incredibly one young person has been supported directly into work – a fantastic achievement for him and his family.

Our team is also working on system changes to ensure funds and processes are straightforward for people to understand and access.

I want to acknowledge the work of officials from the Ministries of Health, Social Development and Education and the efforts they are making behind the scenes to join things up so that students and families experience the transition from school as a relatively seamless process. Most importantly, this process will be one in which young disabled people and their families have choice and control about what comes next.

It is good to be in touch with schools and, along with some individual meetings with key teachers, we held an event for schools to learn more about what we are doing. This was well attended and productive.

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Demonstration making progress in Christchurch continued...

We know that vocational providers have lots of questions, too. We are holding a Provider Workshop on December 3 to celebrate initiatives from providers that demonstrate the principles of EGL and to discuss the provider role going forward.

The Local Advisory Group continues to be very active in supporting me to progress the implementation of EGL.

This ensures that we remain true to the principles of EGL and focus on what is in the best interests of our community in Christchurch.

We're concentrating our time on working with families at the moment, so we haven't established a base for ourselves yet, but we will keep you updated on this.

If you do have questions, or would like to hear from us directly, then please get in touch, and I look forward to keeping you notified of our progress.



Gordon Boxall

Director, Christchurch Enabling Good Lives Demonstration

Bob Rhodes inspires a good life built on relationships

Bob Rhodes, co-founder of the British organisation LivesthroughFriends sums up his frustration with disability support experiences from around the world with a quote from AA Milne:



“Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head, behind

Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it.”

Put another way: “If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got,” Bob says.

During a three-hour workshop hosted by the Ministry of Social Development at the Christchurch Netball Centre on November 19, Bob described his ideas and experiences about how disabled people can create something different for themselves – the life they want.

Bob is committed to restoring the balance between services and relationship networks; helping people and institutions work together to enable good lives. He believes that people need to reconnect with their communities and start planning with a focus on possibility and potential. “If you start with money and services, you'll miss possibilities,” he says.

Bob recognises that Christchurch Enabling Good Lives Demonstration is taking a different approach – different in the same ways as many of the overseas initiatives Bob has worked on. He demonstrates that from Canada to Greece, there are groups in place whose focus is on improving the whole life of the disabled person through

relationships, community and choice. Services and funding play a support role.

Bob's starting point for doing things differently is asking positive questions instead of those that assess needs and deficits. He encourages disabled people and their families to discuss: “What really matters to you? How do you want to live your life?” These are the sorts of questions Enabling Good Lives Navigators are asking; from the answers, plans are starting to form.

In the workshop, Bob used the example of a young man with autism in a support facility who took six months to get through his ‘anger’ before he started to realise that he could plan his life and start to achieve the things he wanted. The same man is now living independently and is paid to speak at conferences throughout Europe. Bob explains that you have to work at planning, and you can't get all the answers to a life plan from one conversation.

It's vital that no one is alone when planning his or her good life. Friends, family and community are essential to making plans work and grow. Bob explains that building

Bob Rhodes inspires a good life built on relationships continued...

intentional networks through models such as PLAN (Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network) or Circles of Support ensures advocacy for disabled people and reduces service dependency.

“Once we are clear about how someone wants to live, the challenge is getting them skilled enough not to go back to services. Those who have lots of people engaged in helping them achieve their outcome have a better outcome,” he says.

In Bob’s opinion, disabled people also need to be contributing citizens. People who are an asset to their community have a better social life, better networks and are more likely to achieve their plans. “Communities are resource rich, but we have to farm them,” Bob says.

Bob sums up his workshop by bringing people back to the centre of planning. “Begin with people. Everybody has abilities, and everyone has something to offer. Start without using services and plan from there

using community, family, friends and things that can be accessed locally. Eventually you will need services in your life, but they shouldn’t be the focus of planning,” he says.

Finally, he emphasises that life is a journey, and that things will change. One plan won’t suit a person for their whole life. That’s why Bob thinks things need to change. In his opinion, relationship networks and community should be the focus for disabled people. They are the things that help lives to evolve.

Tyler plans for his ‘Good Life’

Tyler is excited about planning for his future with Enabling Good Lives. He has clear ideas about what he wants to do, where he wants to live and how he wants his social life to be.

He’s very focused on job plans and he has a variety of career choices that his Enabling Good Lives Navigator, Hannah, is helping him work through. They’re also discussing study options to help him achieve his goals.

“One thing is work for the Trackside crew, be a radio announcer, maybe



work for a radio station, maybe be an auctioneer,” Tyler says.

With a love of racing, Tyler is particularly interested in pursuing a job in that field.

Tyler is already connected with his community, spending regular time at the local Shirley St. Albans Club

watching horse racing and chatting with his friends. He wants to take his social life a step further and get outdoors as well as out and about in the city.

Just like any other 20-year-old, Tyler is also keen to move out of home and set up a flat. He’s eager to have more independence.

Mum Andrea is encouraging and supportive of Tyler’s choices and is enthusiastic about the new flexibility that Enabling Good Lives will provide. She is excited about the new approach to support and is focusing on positive things for Tyler.

“We’re thinking outside the square now... the old way was tick boxes and not what we wanted for Tyler...It was about the bad parts of his life and now it’s about the good parts and we follow that path – which is really good,” she says.

Going Places team joins Enabling Good Lives

We welcome the Going Places team, Kate Smeele and Nicky Grose into the Enabling Good Lives Demonstration.

The Going Places team has been invited to take on board the broader Enabling Good Lives (EGL) Navigator role for the 18 students they are working with already. This recognises the existing relationship that they have with school leavers and extends it to include a wider view of what is possible for these young people for the future.

We look forward to helping the Going Places team support the young people they have been working with.

The Going Places team will continue to work with their 18 students, at least until the end of June 2014. They will continue to be employed by Care NZ, but they will also report to the Manager – Families and Community Development, Enabling Good Lives in relation to their work with young disabled people and their family members.

If you have any questions about this transition, please contact Karen Rickerby, email: karen.rickerby@nzcaregroup.co.nz or phone: 03 353 6299.

Families focus on future planning

On November 6, families participating in Enabling Good Lives got together for a training workshop centred on eight key themes: individualised funding, circles of support, getting a job/business, safeguarding the future, being part of the community, going flatting, transitioning and navigating the system.

Families worked with each other to identify what had worked well in the past and then brainstormed what could work for their families in the future. Some key themes emerged.



These included:

- Families wanted less focus on criteria and more flexibility with funding and resources. Detailed information on what was available and how to access it was very important, and families expressed interest in having assistance from Navigators with this.
- People were interested in obtaining the skills and confidence to get out into the community to make connections for social reasons or for job seeking. This is something that the Enabling Good Lives team can certainly help with. We believe that building quality

relationships underpins success for disabled young people.

- Starting early and taking small positive steps towards achieving dreams were seen to be key in realising the goals of disabled young people. Navigators can help disabled people and families to plan in clear steps. Some people are already achieving goals through planning such as work experience.

Gordon Boxall, Gary Williams and Mark Benjamin, CEO of SAMS, then spent the afternoon answering families' questions related to the topics listed above.

Creating a unique plan for every young person

Update from Hannah Perry, Enabling Good Lives Navigator



A lot has happened since our first newsletter! I'm now working with seven school leavers

and their families to help them plan for and work towards a good life.

Each young person and family has different aspirations for their future, and it is such a privilege to be walking alongside each of them on their journeys. Families are building

in confidence and raising their expectations. Some speak of finally being able to 'dare to dream.'

For example, two young people are working towards living in a home of their own and spending time with their friends at home and also in the community.

Another young man has connected with a potential employer. Together they are trying out job options for next year and trying to decide what will suit him best. He's also had a second job offer – so is in hot demand!

Further education is important to another school leaver, and he and his family are looking at tertiary study options for 2013. This young man is also looking at finding ways of spending time away from home but not in the usual respite care facilities.

Circles of support are important for several students and their families. I am working with family, friends and community links to establish intentional networks for people.

Finding things in the local community that young people can be a part of is a key interest for families and helps to extend these circles of support.

We've been working on furthering local connections in the communities in which these young people live. One young man is finding out more about joining Men's Shed, working in his local community garden and taking surfing lessons. He's also trying to find some musos to jam with.

I look forward to seeing these young people grow as they continue to make plans for their futures. Families are already starting to make steps toward dreams that they did not think were possible before, and it is inspiring to see their achievements.

All of the young people and families mentioned in this update were happy for their aspirations to be shared.

Become an EGL Navigator

Enabling Good Lives is a new way of working that is changing the way the government supports people with a disability.

The team in Christchurch is looking for a number of Enabling Good Lives (EGL) Navigators to work on a casual basis supporting disabled students and helping them to reach their full potential.

An EGL Navigator will need to be:

- ready to work with great people to support them to reach their potential
- a true ally of disabled students, who are ready to leave school, and their families
- committed to disabled people being active citizens and an integral part of their community
- enthusiastic about supporting families and disabled people to dream big and plan accordingly
- confident to think and act 'outside the square'

- knowledgeable about what's happening and being offered within their local Christchurch community
- qualified/experienced in a related field or discipline.

If you feel you meet the above criteria and have some time to offer, then we would love to hear from you.

Please call **Ruth Jones**, EGL Manager of Families and Community Development, on **027 440 8573** in the first instance to discuss this opportunity.

Community connections

Rachel encourages young disabled people to get involved.



Rachel's love of entertainment drives her to seek opportunities in the Christchurch community. She has a subscription to

The Court Theatre, is a member of the Jolt Dance company and enjoys shopping and trying new restaurants with her friends.

For Rachel, this is ordinary day-to-day life. "Just because I have a disability doesn't mean I'm anything special. I don't want to do things that are segregated. I just want to go to the movies, the gym, and so on – like everyone else."

Being part of everyday community life is important to Rachel, although she thinks it can be hard for some disabled people to get involved and make new connections.

"The biggest challenge is wanting to get out there and do it and being

willing to meet different people. This is a challenge for everyone though, not just people with disabilities," she says.

Her advice for young people is not to be put off by people who say you can't do things.

"You need to be willing to think of your own solutions – someone might say 'you can't do this', and you need to say, 'well what if we tried to do it this way instead?'" Rachel says.

In her role at the Christchurch City Council, Rachel works with the community every day to make sport and recreation facilities better for disabled people.

"I think that Christchurch has the opportunity to be the most accessible city in the world. It's a challenge to get around at the moment, but the opportunities will be huge," she says.

Outside work, Rachel also spends time talking to disabled young people, including acting as a mentor through CCS Disability Action.

She wants to encourage young people with disabilities to try things in their community.

"Yes it can be hard to try something new, but don't give up – just try again; find another way," she says.

Coming up

Enabling Good Lives family picnic

When: January 25, 11am – 3pm.

Where: The Groynes, picnic area 2b, map to be emailed and put on Facebook.

What: Bring your family and friends along for a day of fun, games and a chance to catch up with other families and the EGL team. More details to come. RSVP to ruth@eglives.co.nz

Further information

Subscribe to our newsletter

If you would like to be on our newsletter mailing list, please email hannahm@eglives.co.nz to be added.

Our website

Our website will be established soon. In the meantime, please go to www.odi.govt.nz/eglives for further information.

Contact us

Gordon Boxall

Director

e gordon@eglives.co.nz
p 021 587 772

Ruth Jones

Manager of families and community development

e ruth@eglives.co.nz
p 027 440 8573

Join us on Facebook

Enabling Good Lives has a Facebook group for school leavers and families involved in the Christchurch Demonstration.

Here we'll be posting the latest news and events from Enabling Good Lives, useful resources for planning, inspiring stories from young disabled people, photos, videos and much more.

It's also a space to discuss ideas and ask questions.

To join, email hannahm@eglives.co.nz who will send you a Facebook request and add you to the group.