

Enabling Good Lives

Christchurch Newsletter

Enabling Good Lives approach to extend in 2014

Welcome to our December/January edition of the Enabling Good Lives Christchurch newsletter.



It's great to have our new team members Richard Buchanan, Manager of Provider Relationships and Personalised Funding, and Monique Harding, Demonstration Coordinator, on board this December. Please read their profiles below. I look forward to increasing our capacity further by welcoming more new navigators in the New Year.

I continue to be very appreciative of the work being undertaken behind the scenes by the Ministries of Health, Social Development and Education to ensure that resources can be pooled and deployed according to the aspirations of school leavers and their whānau. I would particularly like to thank John Wilkinson from the Ministry of Health who has led this work and Karen Smith from the Ministry of Health New Model team for sharing her expertise of personalised funding. We have an urgent need to get our school leavers fully transitioned into Enabling Good Lives (EGL), and we aim to have a visual pathway to show you how the transition, including funding, might work in time for our next newsletter.

A regular meeting of local officials from the three Ministries and our local Needs Assessment and Services Coordination organisation (NASC) is now in place to keep everyone up to speed on EGL. This regular meeting will help us work together to plan and to anticipate and deal with any issues quickly.

Although our focus remains on this year's leavers we are mindful of the need to contact 2014 leavers early on in the New Year. Watch this space regarding an announcement that will be made in conjunction with schools and the Ministry of Education.

We are also beginning to develop a plan for other priority groups who may benefit from an EGL approach. This could be anyone with a disability who receives support from one of the three Ministries. We would welcome suggestions from anyone with ideas in this area and intend to begin to form recommendations in February to share with national officials.

Contents

Page 2

Richard Buchanan,
Manager of Provider
Relationships and
Personalised Funding

Page 2

Monique Harding,
Demonstration
Coordinator

Page 3

Enabling Good Lives
sparks ideas for Andrell
family

Page 4

Helping providers build
on success

Page 4

More navigators to join
the team

Page 5

Career-focused Kerri is
building a good life in
Christchurch

Page 6

Life after school an
exciting prospect for
young people

Page 7

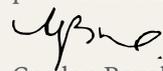
Dream Team helps Alex
Thomas future-proof
plans

Please email me at gordon@eglives.co.nz if you have any suggestions for groups you think should be included in the demonstration.

Finally, a big thanks to all the families who have shown

tremendous patience as we get things set up. I'm looking forward to a productive 2014 and to seeing the progress people are making to achieve their 'good lives'.

Wishing everyone a safe and peaceful festive season.



Gordon Boxall
Director, Christchurch Enabling Good Lives Demonstration

Richard Buchanan, Manager of Provider Relationships and Personalised Funding

Richard has been working as Manawanui's National Projects and Contracts Manager and joined the Enabling Good Lives team in early December.



He has previously served with Manawanui as a coach and area manager. He has also worked in management and leadership roles for a number of providers over the last 14 years, including CCS Disability Action, SILC Ltd, PACT and Richmond Fellowship.

Richard was a member of the Enabling Good Lives Canterbury Steering Group during which time he assisted with the facilitation of a disabled persons forum. He gathered stories and learned what people wanted to see happen in the Enabling Good Lives Demonstration in Christchurch. More recently, he

has been a member of the Local Advisory Group for the Enabling Good Lives Demonstration.

Richard has lived experience of disability and is excited about his new role. He sees Enabling Good Lives as an opportunity to offer disabled people and their families greater choice and control over their lives and flexibility in their use of support funding. He's looking forward to seeing disabled people embrace opportunities and be included in their communities through being able to use the resources available to them in creative and flexible ways. He's also looking forward to working alongside providers in Christchurch as they strive to meet the changing expectations of people and their families.

Monique Harding, Demonstration Coordinator

Monique has been passionate about the disability sector since an early age. She travelled to India and volunteered in a centre for disabled children in her last year of high school.



After graduating from the University of Canterbury with a Bachelor of Arts in Geography, she worked as a teacher aide – most recently for Conductive Education at Cashmere High School. For the past year, Monique has also provided care and support to a disabled couple.

Monique sees her new role as an exciting step towards having a life-long career in the disability sector. Being part of a new initiative is

what drew her to the role, and she is looking forward to being a key point of contact for disabled people, their families, providers and the wider Enabling Good Lives team. 'What the people want' is important to Monique, and she sees her role as vital in getting the people's views heard and actioned during the Christchurch Demonstration.

Enabling Good Lives sparks ideas for Andrell family

Kerry and Irene Andrell are optimistic about the future possibilities for their daughters Keriann and Shannen who both have very high needs.

Since becoming part of the Enabling Good Lives demonstration, the Andrells are trying out creative support options and beginning to plan for what Keriann and Shannen's good lives may look like in the future.

'We were getting nowhere until we heard about Enabling Good Lives. It's re-sparked us – it's like we are on fire again. We haven't stopped – it's so exciting, and it's given us energy to go forward for the girls' lifestyle and their future,' Kerry says.

Keriann and Shannen will both leave school in the next three years and Kerry and Irene are making progress on ideas for the young women's future lifestyles, supported by their navigator Hannah Perry.

'Having an Enabling Good Lives navigator helps you re-look at things and re-focus and start to think that it's okay to dream. You can look at what you want for your children and start to expect it,' Irene says.



Shannen and Keriann enjoy the hot pools in Hanmer with carer Renee as part of their unique respite trip.

The Andrells recently tried out a creative approach to respite care as part of their good life ideas. Keriann and Shannen travelled to Hanmer and spent time with a friend and three paid carers, instead of going into centre-based respite care. They went to the hot pools, travelled behind Clydesdale horses and relaxed in the sun – a physical and mental break for all.

'We knew who they were with and what they were doing. We got regular text updates and photos too. The girls came back so happy from their stay in Hanmer,' Irene says.

Another idea the Andrells have for the future is to establish a micro-enterprise based on their daughters' strengths and interests in crafts and gardening. Bath bomb creation and planting pots are two of the ideas on the table. A business would provide Keriann and Shannen with some income and give them opportunities to connect with their community regularly.

'We want to tap into what's available in the community around us. That's really important for the girls,' Irene says.

Kerry and Irene are also starting to plan long term, looking at Circles of Support and an accessible home for their daughters where they can live independently with care and be able to invite their friends around.

'We want the peace of mind that when we go, they are fully set up and they have the lifestyle they want,' Kerry says.

Before getting involved with Enabling Good Lives, Kerry and Irene were disheartened by what the future might be for their daughters and felt that none of the options they had were ideal. Now they are hopeful for what the future will bring.

'Enabling Good Lives has given us hope for our daughters to be able to live meaningful and full lives like every other Kiwi does,' Irene says.

Helping providers build on success

Update from Richard Buchanan, Enabling Good Lives Manager of Provider Relationships and Personalised Funding

I come into this role with the appreciation that there are many challenges and opportunities for providers and schools as we work together on the Christchurch demonstration. With a background in working for providers, and having accessed services myself, I know that providers and schools are already doing great things that align with the principles of Enabling Good Lives (EGL).

I am here to support them to build on these successes.

We held a provider workshop on 3 December, during which provider initiatives were shared. Providers are already doing things differently and are meeting EGL principles through services focused on employment, recreation and building community links.

At this workshop, we also discussed the challenges providers face. This was a great way for me to learn what the feeling is on the ground and to begin to plan a way forward for providers. The overarching feeling was one of positivity towards the Enabling Good Lives principles, but also one of uncertainty. My role is to make sure providers and schools know what is going on, what they need to do and to support them through their change process.

I wish to get to know providers and schools well and learn thoroughly about the supports they are providing. I am more than happy to

meet with providers and schools to explain the EGL way of working and what it will mean for them.

I am also very keen to spend more time in organisations learning what they do and how they do it. I will then work with them to help them meet the expectations of people receiving assistance through Enabling Good Lives.

Working with officials and NASCs to develop funding processes that people may use is another key part of my role. Funding developments will be communicated to disabled people, their families, providers and schools as they occur.

I am excited to help providers make further progress in the New Year, and I will continue to keep you updated on providers and funding. I want to again encourage any providers or schools who wish to speak with me to get in touch.

Contact Richard at:
richard@eglives.co.nz and
027 280 8925.

More navigators to join the team

Update from Ruth Jones, Manager of Families and Community Development

It is exciting for me to see more and more young people and their whānau becoming part of the

Enabling Good Lives demonstration. The young people who are already working with navigator Hannah Perry and myself are making amazing progress towards their good lives. I know how hard their families are working to support them, too. To support more young people and their families, we are employing more navigators – three will begin with Enabling Good Lives early in the New Year.

Our new navigators will bring a wealth of experience and skills to the team, as well as variety; they

come from different professions, backgrounds and experiences in the disability sector and wider community.

I look forward to welcoming our new navigators to the team and to introducing them in our next newsletters. I also look forward to introducing them to young people and their families at the Enabling Good Lives family picnic on 25 January 2014. More details on the picnic are on page 8 of this newsletter.

Career-focused Kerri is building a good life in Christchurch

Kerri's story is one of a series aimed at inspiring disabled young people.

Twenty-five-year-old Kerri is following her dream career path to becoming a counsellor.

She's working as the volunteer coordinator at Youthline, having already worked in the organisation on a project with the New Zealand Red Cross for the past year.

After graduating from the University of Canterbury with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 2012, Kerri was immediately employed at Youthline. She has plans to study further and obtain her Masters in counselling after gaining some work experience and enjoying a break from study.

Kerri doesn't let anything hold her back, and she wants to encourage other young people with disabilities to get into study and pursue their career choices.

Going to university was important to Kerri. First, she started her tertiary education with a certificate in community studies specialising in youth work at CPIT. 'The support is very good there. For me, it was a good transition out of school,' she says.

She then discovered her passion for psychology and made the move to the University of Canterbury.



Getting started was easy, and she felt supported every step of the way by the Disability Resource Service at the university.

'They accommodated everything I needed. The people there are really nice and are there to support you. They don't make things difficult. The support was excellent – can't fault it. I'd encourage people to be really clear about the supports they need to make study work for them,' Kerri says.

She was provided with personal support to get around campus and to enrol. Note takers, support people in labs, assignment writers, exam writers and any other assistance she asked for was provided.

It was important for Kerri to get in early to plan her support before starting university so that she felt well prepared to start classes. Rachel Rogers, who helped Kerri at the University of Canterbury Disability Resource Service, advises young people to get in touch with the service as soon as they start thinking about their study.

'We work with students to ensure we have the best level of academic support in place to meet their needs. We create an individual learning

plan for the student,' Rachel says.

Like any other young person at university, Kerri made friends in her classes, participated in study groups, went out for dinner with friends and did all the other things involved with 'uni life'.

Making an effort with people was important

for her in establishing a university life. 'You've got to put yourself out there. Uni is a big place, and everyone has to make an effort to get to know people. I'd encourage people to just say hi and talk to others. My experience is that people are pretty friendly,' Kerri says.

With her career on track, Kerri's next big plan is house hunting in Christchurch. She's been looking for the past two months and has found that making the change will be relatively easy – she'll just have to increase her personal care support to what she needs when she no longer lives at home.

'It's always been my goal, and I'd prefer to pay my own mortgage than rent and pay someone else's! It's going to be great to have my independence and take that next step into my own house,' she says.

Finding a partner is also on her to-do list, but at the moment she is content with spending time with friends, exploring the Christchurch shops and enjoying the city's growing nightlife.

Potential students who need support to study at the University of Canterbury can email disabilities@canterbury.ac.nz

Life after school an exciting prospect for young people

Update from Hannah Perry, Enabling Good Lives navigator

As a navigator, I have had another busy month working with young people and their families to help them progress their 'good life' plans. Some fantastic things are happening among the group I am working with, and these young people and their whānau are very proud to share the following achievements.

Following an Imagine Better microenterprise workshop, some young people and their families were inspired to develop their young person's interests, passions and skills into a small business. For example, one young man is now taking out the wheelie bins for some of his elderly neighbours. He's providing a service to his local community and getting paid for it too!

A young woman has discovered a wealth of opportunities in her community. She is a committed member of the local gym, and is trying out some new group classes and team sports. Close by is a community-run cooperative café, a community college and a youth centre, all of which she is keen to find out more about.

Families are able to be more creative about 'respite' opportunities. Two young women, Keriann and



Hannah with Grace Paterson at Willowbank Wildlife Reserve, where Grace volunteers.

Shannen, recently had two nights away in Hanmer with their teacher aide. Their parents were able to relax and enjoy the weekend at home, with regular updates via text about how things were going. The many photographs taken captured a pretty fabulous weekend for all involved! Read their full story on page 3 of this newsletter.

One family is having discussions with a service provider about how they can work together to create a good life for a young man who has just finished school. We are really encouraged by the service provider's willingness to be flexible, to provide support to the young man and his family at their home and in their local community, rather than operating out of the 'day centre' each day.

Several families are thinking long term about making sure that there are a number of people who are involved and connected because they love and care about the young person, rather than simply because they are paid to be involved. Part of my role as a navigator can be (if a

family wishes) to facilitate a Circle of Support around the individual. To have another, neutral person, involved in the 'asking' and following up can take some of the pressure off families. If people are interested in finding out more about Circles of Support, they can contact Ruth Jones or myself. There's also a great story on page 7 of this newsletter about Alex's Dream Team Circle.

As we prepare for Christmas and the New Year, I reflect on how, for some families, there is a greater sense of anticipation in their celebrations. Parents have previously told me, that the thought of 'life after school' has terrified them. Now many are excited and hopeful about what 2014 will bring for their young people, their whānau, friends and the communities in which they live.

The wonderful families whom I have had the pleasure to meet this year are dreaming about what a good life is for their young person, and, more significantly, they are taking steps to achieve it.

Dream Team helps Alex Thomas future-proof plans

Alex's story is one of a series aimed at inspiring disabled young people.

Alex Thomas has similar aspirations to anyone in their mid-twenties. He's looking to move out of home and into a flat; he's developing his own business and he's making friends while out and about in Christchurch.

Alex has a disability, but with the help of his family and his Circle of Support, he is achieving his goals and making plans for the future. The group of people in Alex's Circle are aware of what Alex's visions are, and they are there to support him and help with his decision-making.

Alex's mum Sally started thinking about developing a Circle of Support for Alex after attending disability support conferences and hearing what other young people had been able to achieve with them. The challenge was getting started.

The first step was deciding who would be in Alex's Circle. 'His Circle is made of people that he is really close to and that really care about



him. I thought of people who had the knowledge and skills to help Alex and wrote a letter to them – and they all said yes. People want to help and all you have to do is ask,' Sally says.

Once Alex's Circle was established, an initial meeting was held with the help of a facilitator, Ruth Jones. The group started with introductions and then talked about how they knew Alex and what they would like to see him achieve in the next 10 years.

'Greg and I got really emotional hearing what people had to say about Alex. He has reciprocal relationships. You often forget what value our disabled family members offer to other people,' Sally says.

'These people challenged our thinking with their visions for Alex and made us think about things that we might not have thought were possible. It's great to have people to bounce ideas off,' she says.

Alex is now fully immersed in planning the next steps in his life

with the backing of his Circle of Support, the 'Dream Team'. His first goal is to develop a micro-enterprise around his interests. Taking care of plants and pets is something Alex enjoys and a business is being set up with the help of his support workers. He is also looking at going flatting by the end of 2014.

'Without the Dream Team I think it would have taken longer to make progress on Alex's plan. Other people endorse the things we want to achieve, and it's great to see that they think these things are possible,' Sally says.

Alex's Circle is there to support him long term, helping with his plans as they progress and change.

'If something happened to us (Alex's parents) we need Alex to be self-sufficient with support. By having a group who are aware of Alex's visions we are future proofing, with as little constraint on Alex as possible, so that he can live the life he wants,' Sally says.

Coming up

Enabling Good Lives family picnic

When: January 25, 11 am–3 pm.

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

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.

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 next newsletter will come out in early February.

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

Richard Buchanan

Manager of Provider Relationships and Personalised Funding

e richard@eglives.co.nz

p 027 280 8925

Monique Harding,

Demonstration Coordinator

e monique@eglives.co.nz

p 027 699 9487