



The Champion Centre
TAMARIKI TOIORA

Annual Report

of the
Christchurch Early
Intervention Trust
Charities Commission Number
CC22708

BUILDING FUTURES
FOR CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

July 2012 to June 2013

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Our mission statement

The Champion Centre is committed to providing high quality family and whānau based early intervention services for children/tamariki with multifaceted developmental delay. In partnership with our local runanga (Te Ngai Tuahuriri), The Champion Centre will educate about early intervention and act with parents/mātua of children/tamariki with developmental delay as advocates for adequate and appropriate community services for them and their children/tamariki.



Chairperson's Report for the Financial Year 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013

Carol Bellette

Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the
Christchurch Early Intervention Trust

Since the late 1970's the Christchurch Early Intervention Trust has operated the Champion Centre and impacted the lives of over 1,600 children and their families. As a parent each milestone your child achieves is significant, but for a child with disabilities the effort required is often extraordinary.

The infants and young children who attend the centre have complex disabilities and, through relationship-based early intervention, the Champion Centre enables these children to succeed and transition to school with the help of our Education Support Workers, therapy teams and school personnel.

We are grateful for the government funding which partially funds our core services of early intervention teachers, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, education support workers, social workers, and kaiwhakapuawai. We would like to acknowledge and thank our corporate supporters, community supporters and individual donors. Without you we could not continue to provide the holistic support for children that is the hallmark of the Champion Centre. Your support supplements the government funding in the core areas and also enables the children to have access to a music specialist, a computer-supported learning specialist, and a playroom specialist.

We have a fantastic team of staff who through their expertise and passion make a real difference for the children and families we work with. We were proud to receive the highest evaluation possible in our recent ERO (Education Review Office) report. Extracts from key findings include "Children learn in a caring and positive environment. They are well supported in their learning and are appropriately extended through play-based activities..." "The service has a well-established culture in which children, parents and staff are valued, celebrated and affirmed... Parents' knowledge of their children is sensitively used to help plan appropriate activities..."

To our current families we acknowledge your collaboration with our talented staff and the key role you play in supporting your child through each milestone. As one parent wrote in the Annual Consumer survey, "I truly appreciate every session with the therapists. I feel blessed to know they support us 24/7. Growing with my son, with their guidance and help, is enjoyable even though it's challenging most days/nights. It will improve life."

We are always interested to hear of the achievements of our graduates. We were delighted to hear a past parent comment that on transition to school her child with Down syndrome was better prepared for school than others in her class.

Finally I would like to acknowledge retiring Board member Nathan Mikaere Wallis for his contribution over the last five years and thank my fellow board members for their on-going support.

Meet the Board of Trustees of the
Christchurch Early Intervention Trust

These were the trustees as at June 30th 2013

Carol Bellette (Chairperson)

Carol is a finance professional with governance experience in both the not-for-profit and commercial sector. Her current role is Chief Financial Officer for Landcare Research. Carol has been associated with the Christchurch Early Intervention Trust for the last seven years, as a parent and for two years as a Trust Board member. Carol believes all children should have the opportunity to realise their full potential.

Barbara Stewart, QSO

Barbara is a director of SKOPE Industries Limited, a Christchurch manufacturing company employing approximately 400 people. In addition to serving on the trust board of the Champion Centre, she is on the Cholmondeley Foundation, Chairman of the Court Theatre fundraising campaign and Co-Patron of the Diabetes (Christchurch) Society. She was involved as a local body, elected representative for 15 years, including three years on Waimairi District Council, three years as a community board member for the Fendalton ward of Christchurch City, and nine years as a city councillor for the Fendalton ward of the Christchurch City Council.

Graeme H Daniel

Graeme has been a principal in special education settings for over twenty five years. He is currently principal of Allenvale School, was principal of Halswell Residential College and has worked for the Education Review Office. He is currently the president of SEPAnz and is a member of several education advisory boards at a national and local level.

Casey King

Casey Jane King is a parent of a child with Down syndrome who graduated from The Champion Centre. She has a keen interest in all children's well being and is also a member on the Family Advisory Council at the Christchurch District Health Board.

David Kerr

David has worked as a General Practitioner in Christchurch for over 30 years. He was the founding Chair of Pegasus Medical Group, and was the Clinical leader for Mental Health for this organisation for many years. He is the Chair of Ryman Healthcare Ltd, Deputy Chair of Pharmac, and Chair of EcoCentral Ltd.

David Lang

David is a partner in the law firm of Saunders & Co, working principally in the fields of commercial and property law. He is on one of the Standards Committees of the New Zealand Law Society, and is the honorary solicitor for a number of Charitable Trusts. David was a member of the Board of Trustees of Kirkwood Intermediate School for 6 years, and is presently on the Board of the Nurse Maude Association.

It is my pleasure to present this year's
Champion Centre Annual Report.

Dr. Susan Foster-Cohen, PhD. Director

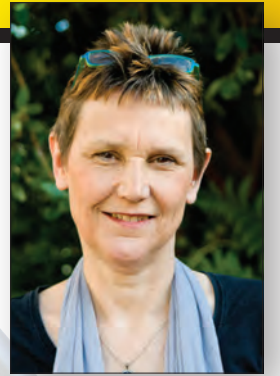


Photo: Paul Tattersson

The 2012-2013 year has been a very mixed one of highs and lows of various kinds. As you will see in what follows (organised around the goals articulated in our strategic plan), we have had some success in fundraising--but not enough to provide sustainability, despite the efforts both of ourselves (The Christchurch Early Intervention Trust trading as The Champion Centre) and of the Champion Foundation Trust. We have also maintained the high level of professional service to which we aspire, despite some significant losses of staff. The impact of the earthquakes continues to place stress on our families and staff, while the programme faces major challenges due to a period of no significant increases in government funding despite rising costs and no diminution in the number of children and families needing our help.

Strategic Plan: Goal 1

To provide long-term sustainability of the Champion Centre service for
infants and children with disabilities

Our financial situation

Our government funding continues to be inadequate to cover the services we are contracted to cover with them. A recent analysis shows, for example, that we are underfunded by the Ministry of Health to about \$200,000 per year. Moreover, as last year, we have had only nominal increases in our funding from government sources that do not keep pace with increasing costs; and our fundraised income was down by about \$150,000 compared to 2012, despite some very generous donations including \$100,000 from the Lotteries Board, \$100,000 from Christchurch Earthquake Appeal UK, and other donations itemized in the accounts. The Audited Accounts for the year to 30th June 2013 therefore show that while we had a positive bank balance at the close of the financial year, we have had to report a deficit of \$216,986. We are now in very real danger of having to reduce services to children and families, particularly as 2014 marks the end of the 'rent in advance' period from our landlords (the Canterbury District Health Board) and we will need to start paying an, as yet undetermined, amount in rent from August 2014. A summary of those aspects of the programme most at risk are shown on the "What if..." page later in this report. (See Page 08.)



Strategic Plan: Goal 1 (Continued)

To provide long-term sustainability of the Champion Centre service for infants and children with disabilities

Our Fundraising Activities.

A variety of fundraising events and activities have contributed to our donations income and/or increasing the visibility of the Centre this year. Among them are

- The new Champion Centre website www.championcentre.org.nz (donated by Hairy Lemon) went live at the beginning of 2013. It provides a portal for learning about the Centre and for making donations. It is also linked to our Facebook page, which has emerged as a virtual meeting place for current and past parents and others during the year. We have 530 'likes' on our page!
- The ongoing support of The Christchurch Press has increased our visibility through the advertisements placed without cost to us, and their fundraising at the Riccarton markets. They also supported us via their sponsorship of the Tactix netball team home games at which we were able to collect donations from attendees.
- The Champion Centre Fair, organized by trustee and past parent Casey King in April was well attended and enjoyed by all.
- A concert presented by wind instrument players of the Christchurch School of Music at St. Margaret's College, with solos from Mark Walton (clarinet), Thomas Eves (trumpet), Perry Carter (saxophone) and Susan Foster-Cohen (saxophone).
- A fun run organized by parent Anette de Joux for a specific piece of equipment attracted both past and present parents and children as well as others who were new to the Champion Centre.

The quality of our services.

Earthquake damage to our building has required some attention from our landlords, but the Champion Centre has remained open and has delivered services to 178 children and their families over the year. We have supported 23 of those children to move on to primary school and have welcomed a similar number of new infants and children into the service. Despite significant changes within the social work support of the Family Support Team we have retained our focus on outcomes for children. Elsewhere in this report is a summary of the work this part of our team has done over the year reflected in our tracking of completed pieces of work and the particular outcomes these have had for families. In their regular approvals visit in August 2013, Child, Youth and Family concluded that, "The Champion Centre continues to deliver a high quality of social work service. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and staff are dedicated to supporting families/whānau through the early intervention programme. The level of record keeping in all aspects of the organisations work is consistently excellent."

The Champion Centre Tamariki Toiora was also reviewed this year by the Education Review Office as an Early Childhood Education Centre. (This review is independent of its review last year as a provider of early intervention therapy services.) The review concluded that the Champion Centre is "Very well placed" to promote positive learning outcomes for children. This is the highest grade possible under the ERO evaluation scheme.

Quote from one Champion Centre parent: "Fantastic. It is my rock, gives me hope and understanding of the great things our child can achieve."

Strategic Plan: Goal 1 (Continued)

To provide long-term sustainability of the Champion Centre service for infants and children with disabilities

Highlights from the report are:

- "The director and staff have continued to build on the good practices identified in the 2009 ERO report."
- "Children...are well supported in their learning and are appropriately extended through play-based activities."
- "The service has a well-established culture in which children, parents and staff are valued, celebrated and affirmed. Each family/whānau is considered an essential part of the centre's learning."
- "Programme planning is well linked to the strands of Te Whariki, the New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum."
- "Staff develop positive, trusting relationships with families that enable the sharing of useful information to support a child's learning."
- "Children's transition to school is well planned and managed by key staff."
- "Staff...are reflective practitioners who regularly evaluate their teaching practices and the impact of these on children."
- "The research currently undertaken by the director has directly contributed to the service's early intervention programme."

The full report is available on the ERO website. <http://www.ero.govt.nz/Early-Childhood-School-Reports/Early-Childhood-Reports/The-Champion-Centre-Tamariki-Toiora-22-07-2013>

Our team.

Staff turn-over at the Champion Centre is traditionally very low. However, this year has been different. As a direct result of the earthquakes, we have lost 2 key members of staff: Wendy Entwistle (Family Services Manager) and Bess Carbines (Social worker and kaiwhakapuawai (Maori Whānau Worker). We have lost one staff member to retirement (Moira Austin: Social Worker) and another (Jane Phillips: Early Intervention Teacher) who has joined her partner in another city. We have also lost a long-standing Education Support Worker (Danielle Guise) to a career change.

A particularly sad loss, however, has been that of our Office Manager, Gail Bocket, who succumbed to cancer less than a year after diagnosis. Gail worked for the Champion Centre for 11 years, and was responsible, among other things, for the day to day financial transactions and reporting on government contracts. It was difficult for all of us to watch Gail's decline over the year, but we were glad we were able to mark her passing by making a memory quilt and by catering the refreshments for her funeral.

Gail Bocket. Fondly remembered but sadly missed.



On the plus side, we have welcomed to the Centre this year: Piki Hoskins, an early childhood teacher who fell in love with the Centre when she was a student on placement with us; Huia Bracken who has replaced Bess Carbines as Kaiwhakapuawai; Paula Crean and Marguerite Wilson who have joined us as Social Workers; and Jane Delaney who has taken over the financial and reporting side of the office team. We have also hired a new ESW, Jenine Schonland. I would also like to acknowledge Cushla Waghorn who has stepped up to be Family Services Manager despite not being quite ready to take on so much responsibility so soon after the birth of her second son.

Strategic Plan: Goal 2

To advocate for all children with disabilities through training and research

- Our new website (www.championcentre.org.nz) is already attracting attention both nationally and internationally. It is one of the ways we can share good practice in early intervention, and attracts visitors to view our work.
- I continue to serve as a reviewer and advisor for the Specialist Service Standards Reviews team of the Ministry of Education. This team is responsible for in-depth reviews of all early intervention and school based specialist services in New Zealand and is an opportunity to bring my expectations of good practice learned from the Champion Centre to that work.
- We continue to take students on placement from a number of training programmes. This year we have welcomed Canterbury University Speech Language Therapy student, Emma Irvine, Clinical Psychologist in training Heather Landau-Gordon, and Early Childhood Education students Jackie Gray, Yvonne Hitherton-Selby and Sophie Brears.
- We have also welcomed visitors from Malaysia, Japan, the UK, and Australia who have made the journey specifically to see the work we do.
- The completed Cross Agency Learning Resources project has now been written up. This project provided visual supports to children in primary schools with moderate needs who were not reaching their potential. The Executive Summary of this work is included in this report; the results have been presented at conferences and workshops; and they are now being prepared for publication in peer reviewed journals.
- The main research project at the Champion Centre has now collected data from more than 90 children who are attending, or have attended, the Centre since 2010. A portion of this data has been analysed and written up as a successful Master's Thesis by Speech and Language Therapist Jessie Davison. Jessie's results, as well as some other preliminary results (to be presented at conferences before being written up for publication) are included on the Research Summary page of this report. So far this research has been carried out with modest, but much appreciated, support (from the University of Canterbury's Institute of Language, Brain and Behaviour), but further support is urgently needed.

The following presentations have been given by staff members since the last Annual Report:

Foster-Cohen, S. *Understanding communication development in children with multi-system disabilities. Presentation to the Communication Disorders Department at the University of Canterbury. March 2013.*

Prisk-Vink, M. *The Champion Centre transition to school process. Presentation and panel participation to the University of Canterbury post-graduate Diploma Specialist Teaching Programme. August 2013.*

Ritchie, R & Murphy, J. *Building relational, face-to-face intimacy and engagement in young children with disorders of relating and communicating. Presentation to the University of Canterbury post-graduate Diploma Specialist Teaching Programme. August 2013.*

Ritchie, R. & Murphy, J. *Early indicators of praxis challenges in children with complex developmental profiles: Recognising the problem; meeting the need. Workshop at the 6th National Dyspraxia Conference. Auckland, October 2013.*

Foster-Cohen, S. *Profiling DCD/Dyspraxia. Keynote presentation to the 6th National Dyspraxia Conference. Auckland, October 2013.*

The following publications by staff members have appeared or are in press this year:

Wylie, J. & Foster-Cohen, S. (2013) *Musical play as therapy in an early intervention programme. Approaches: Music Therapy & Special Music Education. 5(1) 2013.*

van Bysterveldt, A. K., Westerveld, M. K., Gillon, G. & Foster-Cohen, S. (2012) *Personal narrative skills of school-aged children with Down syndrome. International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders 47.1 (2012): 95-105.*

Foster-Cohen, S. *Review of handbook of generative approaches to language acquisition. Jill de Villiers and Tom Roeper (Eds.). New York: Springer, 2011. Pp. vii+ 403." Studies in Second Language Acquisition 34.04 (2012): 690-691.*

van Bysterveldt, A. k., Gillon, G. & Foster-Cohen, S. (2013). *"A phonological awareness intervention case study of a child with Down syndrome." On-line October 2013; to appear in Speech, Language and Hearing.*

What if....The Champion Centre without private funding

Government funding for our services comes from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Social Development. However, these grants cover only some of what we provide and altogether only about 65% of what it costs to run the programme each year. This is because while all children are partially funded by one or more of these agencies, no child in the service is fully covered by government funding.

If a child were receiving only those services for which government funding is provided to the Champion Centre, here are some of the things that would have to change....

- There would be no individual or group music sessions for any children.
- There would be no computer supported learning sessions for any children.
- Children on the Assessment and Monitoring Programme for the consequences of prematurity could never have an Early Intervention Teacher in their team to assess cognitive development.
- At any one time, there would be between 15 and 20 children receiving no therapy services at all. This is because the Ministry of Education only funds 77 children in the service at any one time. If other children arrive with more severe conditions, they 'bump' those who have the least severe conditions off the list. And if children improve to the point where their challenges are more 'moderate' we cannot provide services using the Ministry of Education funds.
- Significantly fewer hours would be put into the transition to school process. For example, if a family needed to renegotiate their child's entry into school (e.g., change to a new school, or have more than one meeting with school personnel), this would not be possible. No Education Support Worker hours would be available once a child started at school.
- We would only be able to employ approximately half of the number of staff in the family support team. So, instead of them being able to complete an average of 175 pieces of work in a year, they would only be able to complete half that number. That is not enough for even one piece of work per family, and certainly not enough to provide the support needed for those families who are facing more complex issues.

We are often being told to live within our means, but if we did, we would not be the Champion Centre! Don't all children deserve the best start in life?



Donate and make this little **champion's** life more ordinary



The Champion Centre
TAMARIKI TOIORA

BUILDING FUTURES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

We just want these children to have the same chances in life as everybody else's children. We help families of those born especially challenged, to lead more ordinary lives – like yours. **Please donate and help us do that.**

Proudly supported by GAA Nelson and The Press

donate now

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The Champion Centre:
A centre of excellence in early intervention 2010 - 2015

The Champion Centre provides specialist early intervention to infants and young children with disabilities and their families through a centre-based multi-disciplinary approach that:

- Is based on the very best scientific understanding of child development and disability.
- Supports family and whānau to foster and encourage their child’s development through playful relationship-based activities.
- Works holistically with infants and children to support all areas of development: social, intellectual, physical, emotional.
- Advocates with other agencies and individuals on behalf of children and their families/whānau.
- Is proactive in supporting a bi-cultural approach with all families and whānau.

This strategy document makes the following assumptions: That sustainability of the Champion Centre involves:

- Maintenance of a staff to client ratio that sustains the provision of a best-practice service.
- Hiring and retention of suitably qualified therapy and support staff who are fairly remunerated and adequately supported.
- Ongoing partnership with all client families at all levels of the service.
- Maintenance of physical facilities capable of supporting the programme.

That the advocacy role of the Champion Centre for all children with developmental disabilities involves:

- Dissemination of the Champion Centre model of practice to other professionals through training.
- Public education including of policy makers and others with power over children’s lives.
- Engagement in appropriate research both local and nationally.



GOAL 1: TO PROVIDE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CHAMPION
CENTRE SERVICE FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

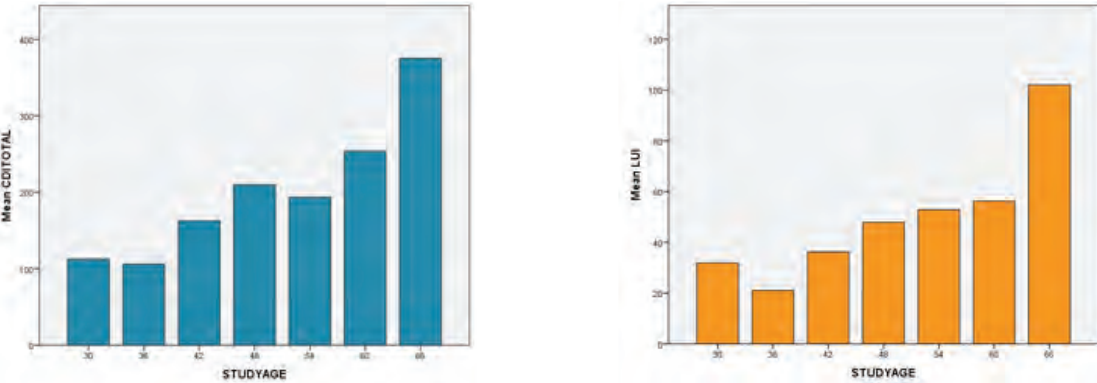
OBJECTIVES	KEY ACTIONS	MEASURES OF PROGRESS
Maintain core service funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase government contributions to service delivery• Increase private support of service delivery• Develop a long-term funding plan that includes a capital base• Maintain prudent budgets• Explore opportunities for partnerships and joint funding with other appropriate agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government funding increases• Private funding increases• Maintenance of overheads at 20% or less of total expenditure• Appropriate service connections are maintained / developed
Maintain service effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain appropriate ratios between staff and client numbers• Maintain appropriate distribution of staff expertise• Work towards market rates for all staff• Ensure succession of senior and junior staff• Maintain high professional standards of all staff• Maintain effective partnership with all client families• Maintain and develop connections with other providers• Maintain bicultural and multicultural effectiveness• Develop robust outcome data collection and tracking systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A clear succession plan• Strategic provision of practical training for students and staff• Outcome data shows clear evidence of progress for all children• Maintenance of appropriate staff numbers and expertise distribution• Successful reviews by all the quality assurance bodies that govern the Centre’s activities

GOAL 2: TO ADVOCATE FOR ALL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH
TRAINING AND RESEARCH

OBJECTIVES	KEY ACTIONS	MEASURES OF PROGRESS
To expand the impact of the Champion Centre both regionally and nationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase understanding among early intervention professionals of how to meet the needs of children with disabilities• Increase understanding among teachers of how to include children with disabilities in mainstream education• Increase understanding among child welfare professionals of how to meet the needs of children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivery of face-to-face and on-line training designed to generate income• Delivery of pilot model services with a fee for service• Holding of symposia and conferences with international speakers
To expand the advocacy role of the Champion Centre through training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work to change public perceptions of young children with disabilities and to encourage them being valued by the community• To help government and policy makers to understand the effectiveness of the Champion Centre model of service• To actively support initiatives from government and private sources most likely to support better outcomes for children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive media coverage• Development of collaborative relationships with other organisations.
To engage in appropriate research projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage in appropriate research in collaboration with local, national and international universities and other research units.• To develop the infrastructure to support research at the Centre• To collect new data and exploit existing data held by the Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed responses to tender invitations.• Publication of results.

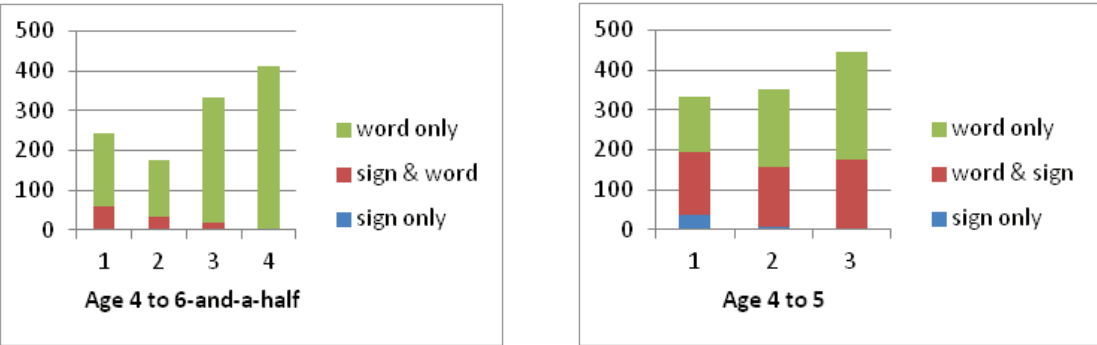
“The research currently undertaken by the director has directly contributed to the service’s early intervention programme.” - ERO Report

The Champion Centre research project has been collecting data on the words children use, through asking parents to complete the Bates-MacArthur Communicative Developmental Inventory (CDI). The graph on the left shows the average number of words used by children in the full programme at six monthly intervals from 30 to 66 months of age. It shows that at 30 months the children use, on average, just over 100 words and by six and a half they use almost 400. These are much smaller totals than would be true of typically developing children who by the age of five have vocabularies of around 650 words, as measured by the CDI. However, they show a steady progression of vocabulary growth across the age span of the children with disabilities.



Another tool we have been using is called the Language Use Inventory. Again, this is a parent report measure that asks a series of questions about how the children use their language to, for example, ask for help, ask questions and make comments, tease, tell stories. The graph on the right shows the average scores of children of different ages at the Centre. Again the improvement over time is clear.

At the Champion Centre we teach New Zealand Sign Language vocabulary to children such as those with Down syndrome, who can then be part of conversations with others before they can speak clearly. Some children make more use of signs than others, for a variety of reasons. Responses to the CDI show that the child in the first graph quickly dispensed with signs in favour of words over a period of two-and-a-half years. The child in the second graph, kept using sign over the course of a year, but only as a backup for words, while continuing to grow the number of words that were only spoken.



Self-regulation, joint engagement, and vocabulary development in preschool children with and without multi-system developmental delay.

(A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science at the University of Canterbury by Jessie Davison, Speech and Language Therapist)

This study explored relationships between vocabulary size and self-regulation and joint engagement in 28 children with multi-system developmental delay (DD) aged 2 years 5 months to 5 years 6 months and a language age-matched control group of 28 typically developing (TD) children aged 7 months to 5 years 6 months. Parents answered questions on a standardised questionnaire that reflected their children’s development of self-regulation and joint engagement. Vocabulary size was measured using an adaptation of the MacArthur Communicative Development Inventory: Toddlers. The results suggest a positive correlation between self-regulation and joint engagement and vocabulary development in both groups of children.

Testimonial: Lyn, mother of Daniel (now 7) sent us this feedback:

“Daniel transferred to the Champion Centre when he was roughly one year old, and we never looked back. Now in a mainstream class at school Daniel is not at the bottom of his class when it comes to reading. However, another child, with Down syndrome at Daniel’s school, but a year ahead of him, cannot read at all. The school did not expect that child to read, because he has Down syndrome. They put no plan in place to help him read. Then along comes Daniel (ex Champion Centre). There’s now a bit of a scramble happening as the school realises children with Down syndrome can read. Thank you all so much for your unfailing belief in our children. For helping us as parents to set the bar high for our children, and to not use disability as an excuse. They are only limited by our expectations of them. I am so thankful that I heard about the Champion Centre and that you accepted us. I believe it has made ‘a world of difference’ to Daniel, and you have helped give him the best educational start to life possible.”



Recognising that having a child with a disability can be difficult and can place a strain on family life, the Family Support Service, staffed by social workers and our kaiwhakapuawai, offers a range of support for parents/caregivers and whānau and their children who attend the Champion Centre for Early Intervention.

Family Support work includes:

- An initial home visit to each family upon entry into the service to gain information about the family's needs and ensure that each family feels supported at the beginning of their journey with the Champion Centre. It is an opportunity for parents/caregivers to tell their story and share their thoughts/experiences/feelings about having a child with a disability. The social workers can often be the first people to begin to help the family cope with the grief they feel at having just given birth to a child with a disability, or having just discovered that all is not well with a child they thought was developing typically. The visit also ensures that an assessment is made of support networks, needs, and entitlements.
- Accompanying families on their first visit to the Centre. The Family Support Worker introduces the family to the child's therapy team and explains how the sessions run. Each family has an assigned Family Support Worker whom they, or their team of therapists, can access for support as required at any time during their journey with the Champion Centre.
- On-going Support to help parents to be fully involved in the Early Intervention Process throughout the time they attend the programme. The Champion Centre programme is based on up-skilling parents to provide the best parenting for their child with a disability and Family Support Workers try to make sure parents are able to take on board their role in this process. This work may involve providing information about the role of the therapists and the programme set-up and helping the parents/caregivers to implement their child's early intervention programme at home. It may also involve providing emotional support and a listening ear to parents/caregivers around issues pertinent to families who have children with disabilities, e.g. grief and acceptance, sibling support, self-esteem, relationship difficulties, solo parenting – or putting them in touch with organisations or professionals who can help. This support may be in the context of attendance at the Centre or through home visits.
- Support to help families access a range of services and resources, e.g. support groups, information, counselling, benefits and subsidies and other types of financial assistance such as grants, transport, budgeting, food parcels, housing, Life links Needs Assessment, respite care arrangements, childcare, health care etc.
- Advocacy support regarding their child's needs and rights. Advocating for the child and supporting parents to be able to advocate for their children now and once they have left the centre.

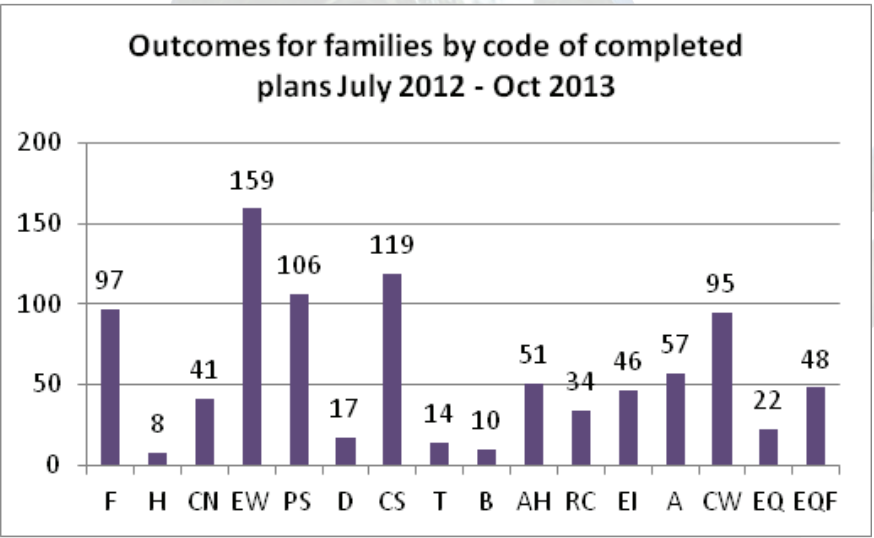


- The Kaiwhakapuawai, who is a member of the Family Support Team, leads the support service for Māori and Pacific Island families. She endeavours to make The Champion Centre a place where Māori and Pacific Island families feel they belong and to support them in ways that meet their specific needs.
- Facilitating a range of regular social support events for families. This is in recognition that many parents of children with disabilities can feel isolated within their communities. Therefore, for many parents, the best support comes from others who are experiencing similar issues to themselves. Events include:
 - An annual Siblings event which allows siblings of a child attending the Champion Centre to get together with others and enjoy a fun-filled morning at the Champion Centre with their parents/caregivers.
 - Annual Christmas Party for all families attending the champion centre
 - A Father's Day week encouraging Dad's to attend their child's therapy session.
 - The annual Pamper Evening for Mums of children who attend the Champion Centre.
 - A shared lunch week for parents to meet together after their sessions.

Family Support outcomes

Between July 2012 and October 2013 the Family Support Team completed 251 separate pieces of work with families attending the Centre. The most common type of work involved improving parent wellbeing (in 159 families – code EW in the graph below); improving families' access to practical (106 – code PS) and community (119 – code CS) supports; and helping to improve the financial situation of families (97 families – code F). The team also succeeded in improving parents' capacity to advocate for their children (57 families – code A); made it more possible for families to access the early intervention service we offer (46 families – code EI) and had a direct impact on improving the child's wellbeing (in 95 families – code CW). 48 pieces of work (code EQF) involved seeking and finding additional funds to support these families for specifically earthquake related hardship. At the same time, 22 of them (either additionally or alternatively) involved work to relieve other kinds of earthquake related need (code EQ). As is clear from these numbers, many families were in

need of multiple types of support. The accompanying graph gives an idea of the scale of the work carried out by the team.



The Cross-Agency Learning Resource Project

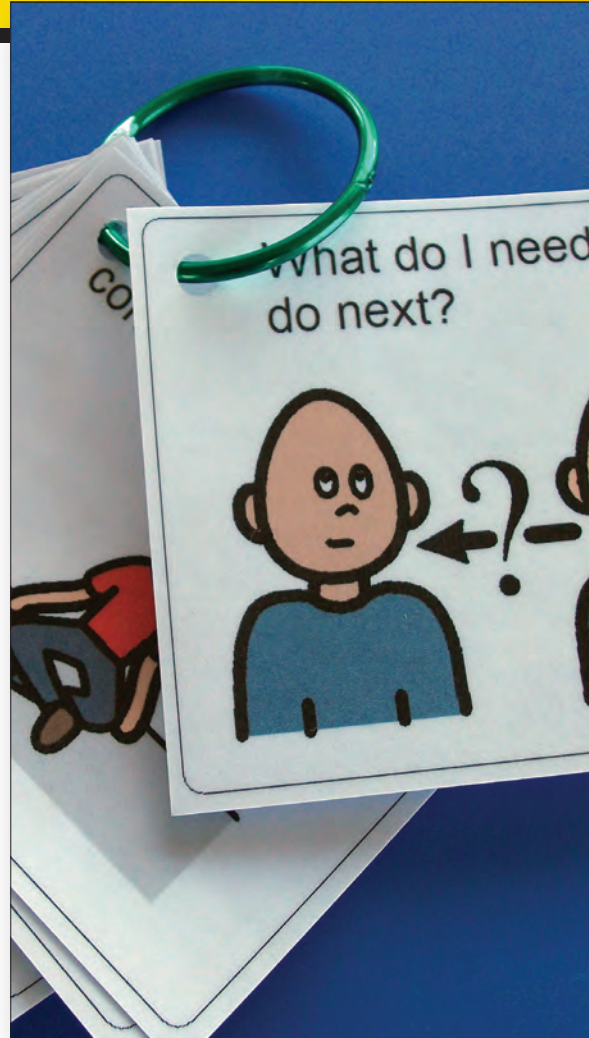
With the support of the Wayne Francis Charitable Trust and the J R McKenzie Trust, four agencies in Christchurch (The Champion Centre, Seabrook Mackenzie Centre, Dyspraxia Support Group and Special Needs Library) joined forces between 2009 and 2012 to explore how children with moderate disabilities who have significant difficulty accessing their primary school curriculum could profit from the introduction of low tech visual supports both at home and at school.

The project provided visual supports (pictures, visual schedules etc.) and training to the families and schools of 23 children between the age of 5 and 10 who found it hard to organize themselves at home and at school, remember and stay focused on tasks, or for whom anxiety about what was expected of them prevented them from performing as well as they were cognitively able. Under the guidance of a speech and language therapist and an occupational therapist, a project team member evaluated the challenges faced by each child at home and at school, developed appropriate visual resources, and trained parents and teachers in how to implement them at home and in school.

At the beginning of the project, teachers and parents reported concerns such as “without structure he is constantly asking questions”, “she gives up easily”, “he gets upset when we do things a different way”, “his independence in the classroom is poor”, and “he gets frustrated and acts stupidly and misbehaves”. At the end of the project these same adults said things such as “he is much more independent”, “she is definitely less anxious”, “I really do feel that it benefitted him for the long term”, and “I’ve got a little boy who can get up every day and get organized for school”. And the children themselves said things like: “I don’t have to ask mum all the time, I can just look at the board and see what I need to do next” and “they do help me to remember what task I need to be doing and which ones I still need to do” and “they are cool to use”!

The success of the project from the perspective of the project team is mirrored in an independent evaluation of the project undertaken by the Donald Beasley Institute who concluded “Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the success of the project”. Feedback from teachers to the DBI team described the project as “very successful” or “quite successful”. There were, however, a number of teachers who did not feel visuals would be an asset in their classrooms, or felt unable to commit to their introduction, and who were resistant to their integration into their classrooms.

Among the recommendations from both the DBI and project teams are that visual resources be implemented into classrooms as a key communication strategy for all children; that a series of seminars be delivered involving teachers who have embraced the visuals and understand their power; that teachers be supported to develop their own visual resources; and that parents receive education in the development of simple visuals that can help them help their children.



Some facts and figures about the Champion Centre therapy and specialist team:

The Champion Centre employs 63 people, of whom 9 are full-time. The total staffing at the Centre stands at 34.4 FTE, providing services to between 150 and 160 children and families at any one time.

59 (31.3 FTE) of the 63 staff members (94%) are frontline staff providing direct therapy and specialist support to children and families. These are Speech and Language Therapists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Early Intervention Teachers, Music Specialists, Computer Supported Learning Specialists, Psychologists, Social Workers, Kaiwhakapuawai, and Education Support Workers. These frontline staff are supported by a team of 4, consisting of the Director and 3 support staff (3.1 FTE) including one part-time staff member with responsibility for applications for donations and other private funding among other duties.

Therapists salaries at the Champion Centre range from \$42,020 to \$52,384 (full-time annual rates) for staff without management responsibilities. Comparable employment in the public sector (Ministry of Education and/or Ministry of Health) would command salaries ranging between \$46,209 and \$95,609 (based on current agreement documents publicly available on-line), with most staff at the upper end of this range because of their qualifications and experience. Champion Centre staff therefore trail their peers in the public sector by an average of 20%

Some facts and figures about the Champion Centre children and families:

We have served 1,609 children since the programme began and our graduates range in age from 6 to 37 years old.

Of the 154 children currently in the service, there are 64 girls and 90 boys. 20 of our current clients identify as Māori, 1 as Cook Island Māori, 1 as Chinese, 3 as Indian, 1 as Malaysian, 2 as Philippino, 1 as Samoan and 1 as South African and 121 as New Zealand European (or simply ‘New Zealand’). Not all parents have reported their home status, but at least 11 children are being raised by solo parents, and 4 are fostered. 41 families come from areas of Canterbury outside Christchurch and 106 from Christchurch.

The largest group of children by diagnosis are those born prematurely. 85 were born anywhere from 2 to 15 weeks early with birthweights as low as 530 grams. Of the 85, 21 have a diagnosable disability requiring a full service and 64 are on the Assessment and Monitoring programme at risk of developmental delay. Of the remaining 69 children, 26 have Down syndrome; 10 have Autism Spectrum Disorder; 13 have a diagnosis of developmental delay of unknown cause; 4 have a primary diagnosis of cerebral palsy; and the remaining 16 have diagnoses of specific syndromes or conditions resulting from other causes.

Children attend individualised programmes with others at their same age and/or developmental stage. In these programmes each child/family has one-on-one time with each therapist/specialist as well as group time for music and kai. 27 children are in programmes for babies, 28 in what we call ‘middle years’ programmes and 28 are preparing for school in our ‘transition’ programmes. A further 7 are currently in our Relating and Communicating programme, but are expected to transition into the appropriate programme before transitioning into school.





Dynamic Controls

Like The Champion Centre, Dynamic Controls strive to make a difference by enhancing the quality of life to those with special needs and also the wider community. During 2013, the Dynamic Controls Social Club is extremely proud to say that we support the wonderful team and families involved with The Champion Centre. In March, our team were energised by a presentation given to us by Marie Stevenson (Education Support Worker), where she spoke with passion, empathy and humour as she described her job and some of the logistical challenges that ESW's face, not the least of which is the need to travel all over post-quake Canterbury on a daily basis. This year, through fundraising we are able to donate \$3,000 to help pay for the travel costs of the Education Support Workers at the Champion Centre. It's been our privilege to help you help others, see you again in 2014!



- Charlotte Walshe CEO
- Greg Rossiter, Dynamic Controls Social Club

The Press

Three years ago the Arts and Music Editor of The Press, Vicki Anderson asked me whether we could support in some way the incredible work of The Champion Centre. Like many people, I didn't know what the Centre did and had to do some investigation to discover the invaluable work that this Christchurch gem does to provide early intervention services to infants and young children in our region. Since that time, The Press has worked to support the Centre through the provision of advertising that helps spread the message of the Centre to our readers and through fundraising at events around the city. I hope that many supporters and parents have had the chance to see the beautiful full page colour advertisements in The Press throughout the year. I think they send a profound message for all of us that there are all kinds of champions in this world – and that includes the wonderful staff of The Champion Centre as well as the parents, families and, of course, the children. On behalf of everyone at The Press, we thank all of you involved with The Champion Centre. It's only left for me to wish you best wishes for the year ahead.



Kind regards
Grant Torrie, South Island Marketing Manager – Fairfax Media

The Champion Centre is sincerely grateful for the generous support of our community, through donations of time, energy and funds during the financial year ending June 2013.

We thank the following for donations of \$500 and over:

- | | | |
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| Champions of The Champion Centre | Abrahamson, J & M | Blackwell, W |
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| Lobblin Farms Ltd | Mortlock, S & B | Moseley, A |
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Events

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| 123 Breathe Concert | 2013 Autumn Fair | Deloittes Golf Tournament |
| Mad Butcher Nights | Papanui Primary School | Rangi Ruru Girls School |
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Gifts in Kind

- | | |
|---|---|
| New Brighton Community Craft Group - Crochet rugs | Orion (Stephen Godfrey) - Flatscreen Monitors |
| Seaview Lions Club - Wooden Toys | The Press – Advertising & Tactix Sponsorship |
| Hairy Lemon - Website Design | Carolyn Jenson - Photography |
| Brian Thompson - Marketing Material | |



The Champion Centre
TAMARIKI TOIORA

"Tuia te rangi e tū iho nei. Tuia te papa e takoto nei"
"As the sky joins the earth, so people depend on one another"

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