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Communicating Social Welfare



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A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Master of Management Studies
at
The University of Waikato
by
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The University of Waikato, 2009.

Abstract

This thesis examines the ways in which public sector organisations communicate with people from lower socio-economic communities. The study is guided by the research question: Do the existing communication strategies of public sector organisations serve the needs of low decile communities in New Zealand?

The study looks at the communication strategies used by three public sector organisations – Ministry of Social Development, Inland Revenue and Hamilton City Council – to interact with residents of a low-decile neighbourhood in Hamilton. Positioned within the critical theoretical paradigm (e.g., Deetz, 2005; Mumby, 2000) which looks at issues of power, domination and asymmetry in terms of communication practices, the research shows how social policy is socially constructed in order to serve the political aims of the public sector but is not necessarily constructed in terms of the target publics of that organisation.

The study uses a three dimensional discourse analysis – text, context, and social practices (Fairclough, 1992) – to analyse the formal communication and information dissemination structures, processes, and texts of these organisations and to examine the ways in which some of the intended target publics of these organisations make sense of them and respond to them. The study includes an analysis of public documents put out by the organisations as well as interviews with youth workers, social workers, and representatives of the specific neighbourhood community. Juxtaposing the textual analysis with the analysis of the interviews facilitates an evaluation of whether the communication strategies

of the organisations relate to the context of the socio-cultural practices of low-decile neighbourhoods.

Acknowledgments

This work is dedicated to my grandparents, Avraham and Sarah Altaratz, and Egon and Eileen Schoenberger. Although I was not fortunate enough to know all of you in life, I know you through your stories and the legacies that you have each left with me today. Each of you was a revolutionary in your own way and, as I walk through this life and act in this world, I know that you walk with me wherever I go.

To my parents, Michele and Mutzi (Papa!). This thesis would never have become a reality without your support and guidance every step of the way. You provided me the foundation from which to grow and to be strong enough to achieve anything I put my mind to. Most of all, Mum, you were essential to the completion of this work and, without you, I would have no sounding board, no shoulder to lean on, and no enthusiastic cheering in the background as I proceeded step by step through this journey.

Milan and Dor, no physical distance was ever an issue with the support and love that I felt from you. Thanks for checking –in and the motivational prep talks when I needed them.

Namu, Paul, Nathaniel, Daniel and Sandra - you have been an inspiration from the beginning and no words can ever explain how grateful I am to have had you in my life. You have humbled me. Thank you for helping me to develop this study, guide me in areas where you thought I was completely losing touch, and

snap me out of feeling sorry for myself. You have helped me to place my feet firmly on the ground.

Mark, Fay, Mikey, Addy and the rest of the Walker *whanau*. Your friendship and support has meant a lot to me over the course of this study. Who could have imagined the experiences that unfolded through knowing each of you! Thanks for the hugs, cups of milo and endless discussions on how this world works!

It is with deep gratitude that I acknowledge the help and constant support of my supervisor, Debashish Munshi. You have provided me with both professional support as my supervisor to this work, but most importantly, moral support throughout all of my adventures so far, and my development as a person overall. Thank you for your guidance and friendship.

To David McKie, thank you for being there for the advice and guidance, love and support that you constantly give at exactly the right time! You have shown me clarity in some of the foggiest moments. Thank you.

And finally, to the residents of Poets Corner, and the community members whom I have had the privilege of meeting. Thank you for the inspiration and motivation that you provided for this study. My experiences at Enderley have ensured that whenever I open my heart, my soul or my mouth, a touch of Enderley shines out.

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1. Introduction

“Aww, can you come with me please girl? I just don’t understand what they saying to me, and I don’t wanna flip out again”

A thirty- something- year old woman was pleading for me to accompany her to an appointment with her case worker at Work and Income (WINZ) because I had helped her fill out one of the forms for her benefit application.

I couldn’t really say no to her request as I seemed to be helping just by explaining what was written on the brochure, and I wanted to help more. And so, my introduction to communication breakdown, and the follow-on effects of that breakdown became part of my everyday reality. Thus, the rationale behind this thesis is the need to explore the communication perspectives of public sector agencies in Aotearoa/New Zealand and how people in the lower socio-economic communities respond to communication that is directed at them. Positioned within the critical theoretical paradigm (e.g., Deetz, 2005; Mumby, 2000) which looks at issues of power, domination and asymmetry in terms of communication practices, the research shows how social policy is socially constructed in order to serve the political aims of the public sector but is not necessarily constructed in terms of the target publics of that organisation.

Up until the particular request made by the woman I refer to in the opening paragraph, my world seemed pretty straight forward – where everything was as it should be; where people were all treated as I was; where questions were being answered and solutions were being found for the trickiest of situations.

After all, this is a welfare state, where successive Labour governments took pride in the ways in which they re-built communities after the “mother of all budgets tore them apart”. What I didn’t know, however, was how the devastating loss of jobs, income and community welfare of the early 1990s was still making a significant impact on the generations to come.

I come from a well- educated background. I am a white, middle class girl who grew up in a family which bases its dinner table discussions on educating one another, asking questions and helping each other find the answers. My dinner discussions contributed to the majority of my education, where I learned about history, current affairs and, most importantly, my own personal history and where I had come from; who had come before me and why it was important for me to take every opportunity as it came my way. However, although I was educated and earned average grades at school, I remember how naïve I was, and perhaps as every girl from my kind of background may have been.

I often recollect a particular situation which exemplifies this naivety. I was dating a young man from high school who was Māori, and came from an area in town that was known to be “the hood” area of town. Although I was familiar with what it might have meant for him to be living in this area, I never really understood the parallel universe that was his reality. In getting to know him, I would often be the one talking, specifically telling him about my family, my brothers and my parents and any conversations that we might have had that night around the dinner table. I remember complaining to him about my parents at one point; that I thought they were a nuisance because I had to be home on time, and tell them exactly where I was going or else they would worry. He

remained silent for most of the time that I spoke, apart from that time where he stated “well, at least your parents care about where you are, and that you come home”. Later on that night, we were talking about seeing each other again, and I hinted flirtatiously that he call me if he wanted to, to which he replied “umm, do you have a phone?” I burst out laughing because for me, it was ridiculous for any one not to have a phone. It was my reality, and I took it for granted that I had a phone, and could use it whenever I wanted to. At that stage however, I never even imagined that someone in the same peer group as me perhaps would not have the same resources.

I guess my relationship with this person added another layer to my “education”. My understanding of people, families and situations which I had never even thought about sucked me into a tail spin and spat me out with a new perspective, and with stories which I want to tell, and that people need to hear about. These stories however, are not narratives which I intend to shock people with, or launch into descriptive, novel-like moral lessons. These stories will be told in order to illustrate a framework of communication which exists to help people who are in need, yet in its very existence may marginalise people who do not fit within the framework, and don’t understand why.

When I was a child I was encouraged to ask questions and to find out the answers. In the case of the family of my friend, questions were often met with violent answers and finding out any information could prove to be a challenge that might risk the little livelihood one had, or make one vulnerable in exposing oneself to further interrogation by people who could fundamentally reach into one’s bank account and take out or stop any funds or transactions that may exist.

This young man was, in fact, the oldest son of the woman who had pleaded with me to be present at her appointment. This family is just one case of thousands who belong to a community where education is not a priority, where dinner table conversations are silenced by the television screen, and where problems often do not find solutions. Communication in this context takes on another shape all together, where perception, experience and silence speaks volumes.

The essence of this research project can essentially be characterised through my continuous need to ask questions. I grew up being encouraged to ask as many questions as I could, and in my teenage life started listening to popular artists who promoted the need to seek knowledge in order to find freedom and equality:

With all this extra stressin

The question I wonder is after death, after my last breath

When will I finally get to rest? Through this suppression

they punish the people that's askin' questions

And those that possess, steal from the ones without possessions

The message I stress: to make it stop study your lessons

Don't settle for less - even the genius asks questions

Be grateful for blessings

Don't ever change, keep your essence

The power is in the people and politics we address

(Shakur, 1995)

The lyrics of songs such as these were the first examples that I have heard of someone actually verbalising and expressing issues which people are still scared to discuss openly today. This communication through music played a huge role in the ways that I began to understand human issues which are real, and are reflected in society all over the world today.

Reflecting on these early experiences, I have not only begun to perceive a new depth in my thinking, but I have also noticed a change in my own communication practices. Today, I feel comfortable walking into almost any environment, from having a cup of tea with a group of people that consists of a gang leader, an escaped convict, an armed robber and a battered woman to walking into board meetings and negotiating with case workers and government officials. These experiences will continuously shape the ways that I think about my research, in order to focus it from a critical theoretical perspective. These experiences may also contribute and/or intrude on the way I analyse my data. As Prichard, Jones and Stablein (2005) suggest, these experiences and knowledge provide “much of the ‘between the lines’ knowledge that can lead to successful research outcomes” (p.213).

From a critical theoretical perspective, I understand organisations as “social historical creations accomplished in conditions of struggle and power relations” (Deetz, 2001, p.25). It is this concept that leads me to consider a stimulating working environment in an organisation as one that challenges, encourages and develops my thinking about the social forces which impact on organisations, the people who interact with them and their problems and allows me to do “good

work” that is ethical and socially responsible (The Good Work Project, 2003).

Deetz (2001) states:

The central goal of critical theory in organisational communication studies has been to create a society and work places that are free from domination and where all members can contribute equally to produce systems that meet human needs and lead to the progressive development of all. (p.26)

This quote inspires me to think about the purpose of organisations, particularly in the public sector, and allows me to reflect on the experiences which have brought me to the stage of wanting to carry out research focusing on diverse voices that are often silenced or marginalised in public service organisations.

May and Mumby (2005), discuss the ways in which authors may engage with their readers through connecting “knowledge claims” and “personal experience and biography” (p. 9) in their work. As they point out in their introduction, it is important for the readers of research to understand whether the researchers “view their own personal biographies as peripheral to, or constitutive of, the ways that they produce knowledge” (p.10). This is central also in autoethnographic research where the researcher identifies where they are positioned in their research because they can never be sure how the reader interprets what they have written. As Carolyn Ellis (2004) states: “In autoethnography, we’re usually writing about epiphanies in our lives and in doing so, we open ourselves up for criticism about how we’ve lived” (p.34).

By positioning myself and taking on board my own personal biography as constitutive (May & Mumby, 2005) of the way I produce knowledge, I believe that my research will gain legitimacy and validity. I would like my research to be read and considered as a contribution to the wider body of knowledge as well as a practical application to improve the lives of others. In the next section, I will draw a picture of the community that is the subject of this research, including its identity, location and demographic description.

The Enderley Community

Shakespeare, Eliot, Tennyson, Wordsworth, Byron, Keats, Coleridge, Dryden and Spenser are recognised names of poets who were masters of the English language and who produced literary works which will long be remembered throughout the world. These poets, however, have also been honoured by Hamilton City and its residents through their naming of streets in one particular neighbourhood. Residents from the neighbourhood have affectionately dubbed their neighbourhood “Poets Corner” and this term is used with pride when people from the area identify themselves as part of it. Hamilton City Council (HCC) has also legitimised the name of “Poets Corner” in its plans and specifically in its Social Well-being Strategy that is part of this study and my analysis.

Situated in one of Hamilton’s most dense state housing areas, this community is one of the main areas where residents are predominantly from a Māori and lower socio-economic background. (Statistics NZ, 2008) Nestled in the heart of the “hood” (neighbourhood) is the Enderley Community Centre (ECC) which is governed by the Enderley Community Part Incorporated Society and looks after

more than 50 children a day and brings together people from around the neighbourhood who need support guidance and healthcare.

The Enderley Community Centre was originally built for the Eastern Suburbs Rugby Club in 1968, purchased by HCC and relocated to Enderley Park in 1996 (Carlson, Courtenay-Clarke, Hill, Marshall, McKenzie-Norton, Nelson, Tongi, Masters-Awatere & Huygens, 2008). Today, key services to community residents are run through the community centre. The services include a community constable, community doctor, a gym, breakfast club and after school programmes for intermediate and primary school children attending schools within the area. Youth workers employed by the Incorporated Society Committee of the centre look after approximately 50 children per day.

In recent times the Centre has been the focus of media attention after a shooting incident which took place early in 2007 on Tennyson Road on a property directly opposite the community centre (Radio New Zealand, 2007). Because of the media interest, Poets Corner became the focus of attention and there was a growing awareness that attention needed to be paid to social issues and lifestyles of those people living in the community. A community constable was assigned to the area and a series of community meetings were held with representatives of social welfare agencies such as Child Youth and Family (CYF), WINZ, Housing New Zealand and Hamilton City Council (HCC).

The community centre is currently managed by two organisations – those employed by Hamilton City Council, and those employed by the Enderley Park Community Centre's Incorporated Society. All staff members who work in the

centre have lived in the community for over 10 years, and are familiar with most, if not all community members who come in and out of the centre.

My research is focused on the residents of Enderley as this community provides an exemplar of a target audience with whom public sector organisations must communicate in order to provide specific services to those in need. My research specifically looks at the ways in which organisations such as WINZ and HCC communicate with lower socio-economic communities.

My interest in this particular community stems from my own life experiences and finding myself in situation where I was advocating firstly, for one particular family, and then the entire extended family (*whanau*). As this advocacy role increased I would find new problems to solve and bigger battles to fight. What started at Shakespeare, ended at Tennyson, and from Tennyson I found myself popping over to Wordsworth, and from there my adventures linked me to people from Dryden. I saw a range of communication interactions – from long email communications with Inland Revenue about a family member's application for child support through to negotiations with Housing New Zealand on whether three young children should be evicted from a house because their mother abandoned them, leaving only their 24-year old brother to look after them all.

Appointments, problems and communication from social welfare agencies are a regular occurrence with people from this neighbourhood. Not being allowed to enter the premises of a government agency is also a problem for people from this neighbourhood. On one occasion I was sent in to advocate for a friend and

her family members after she was issued with a trespass order because she got frustrated at her case worker and assaulted him.

Although my research looks at written and published communication material from public sector organisations, it also identifies frustrations and misunderstandings, and notions of mistrust among residents as they engage with the communication. My research problem is concerned with identifying ways in which communication interactions can be positive and fruitful for both parties. To facilitate this process, I developed the following central research question: Do the existing communication strategies of public sector organisations serve the needs of low socio-economic communities in New Zealand?

The next chapter provides a platform from which to explore the issues that arise from this research question by looking at past and current literature in the field. This is followed by the methodology and methods chapter which explains the lens through which the empirical data are analysed and the methods of gathering and carrying out this analysis.

These preliminary chapters are followed by two chapters, the first analyses the texts from the public sector organisations using the critical discourse analysis method. The second analyses the interviews gathered from participants in the research. The final chapter draws conclusions from the analysis of the data and makes recommendations by identifying ways in which communication interactions can be improved to make them a positive and effective negotiation between public sector organisations and the communities they serve.

2. Literature Review

What is out there? What do we already know? Is this a study about New Zealand social welfare? Am I looking at policy? Organisational communication? Where does this all fit?

One of the biggest personal challenges of this study was finding out where and how this thesis can add to the body of knowledge about social policy communication. I am inspired by this topic, and feel obligated to the people who have been a part of this project to make sure that the ideas presented contribute to the way that social policy is designed and ultimately communicated. At the heart of it, my research looks at the ways that New Zealand public sector organisations communicate with citizens from low socio-economic communities. However, the study also draws on key research areas such as organisational communication, social welfare policy in New Zealand and literature which examines external stakeholder engagement.

I begin by examining the conclusions that have been drawn from research that has been conducted on the overall communication between social welfare agencies, or public sector organisations, and their stakeholders. Internationally, the research in this area is vast, but has become dated rather quickly. Although dated, some research is quite significant in understanding specific areas that need to be referred to in order to examine the dynamics of communication in the public sector.

Communication in Social Policy

In his seminal work dating back to 1980, Lipsky (1980) examines the perceptions, relationships and interpersonal communication that affect outcomes of social policy. He discusses the ways in which policy analysts underestimate the effects that “street level bureaucrats” (p. 4) have on the delivery and accessibility of the policies that are designed to help those in need. He discusses the implications of these street-level bureaucrats as policy designers and argues that people who are making the decisions, setting routines and precedents, are in fact creating policies based on biases developed through their experiences as case workers and through dealing with clients first hand:

...routines and simplifications are subject to biases from a variety of sources. While they often may be oriented toward fulfilling agency objectives, these measures are also structured to aid workers’ job requirements, which may conflict with agency demands. Furthermore, routines and simplifications are subject to workers’ occupational and personal biases, including the prejudices that blatantly and subtly permeate the society. (Lipsky, 1980, p. 85)

This means that it is the people working at the “coal face”, the implementers of policy, who communicate and interpret the issues from their own perspectives and these perspectives may or may not have been taken into account when policy was written. This idea is crucial to my research as it provides a strong backdrop to communication issues in the public sector. Moreover, the study conducted by Lipsky is one of the few studies that have been done in the public

sector or social welfare communication field where interpersonal and external communications are examined and illustrated in a way which draws attention to the impacts of these practices on clients of these agencies. It legitimises the general notion of what the clients have experienced personally from their efforts in trying to access services that they are entitled to as well as communicate their situations and difficulties to the organisation.

Hill and Hupe (2002) also pay tribute to Lipsky's work stating that he was "the founding father of the 'bottom up perspective'" (p. 51). They discuss the importance of his study and its influence on the foundation of implementation studies. They legitimise and position implementation studies by providing an historical overview of the research into the implementation of public policy through public service. Furthermore, they discuss how research in this field has led to a paradigm shift in the area of research concerned with organisational communication and organisational behaviour. The importance of this study in relation to organisational theory is in terms of the ways in which implementation studies examine two themes which are evident in organisational research. It focuses on the "human organisation" of policy implementation as well as the legal and governance contexts of policy implementation.

Through their analysis, Hupe and Hill (2002) provide a valuable resource and insight into the ways in which organisational theory takes on yet another dimension in terms of communication. It provides an understanding for research specifically concerned with social policy and how it is implemented; that is, the

practice of policy on the ground, and more specifically the study of what happens between the “policy formation and policy output” (p. 197).

However, in order to specifically look at the communication of the policy in order to get a certain output achieved, my study needs to also take into account the developing perceptions of both policy and implementation and how that affects the outputs overall.

Fischer (2003) discusses the perceptions that are constructed about social policy and welfare agencies from a general perspective and tries to dissect the elements that go into presenting policy to the public: “From this perspective, it is not the actual policy outcomes but rather the *expectations* of outcomes that determine policy issues and shape their politics” (p. 65). This suggests that the focus on social outcomes is predetermined when writing policy.

In many ways, Fischer’s (2003) nuanced discussion adds further value to Lipsky’s (1980) portrayal of public sector communication because it provides a more up-to-date, and strongly theorised look at the ways in which public sector organisations take into account their target publics, the impacts of policies on those publics, and how society as a whole examines and perceives policies that are delivered. In examining “The War on Poverty”, a plan for policies to address government practices to meet the needs of poor constituents, Fischer (2003) dissects how this strategy is communicated to different publics and how

different perceptions have been drawn from the communication of this strategy.

With this, he points out that:

The implications are that each policy is likely to have different meanings for different participants; that the exact meaning of a policy, then, is by no means self-evident but, rather, is ambiguous and manipulable; and that the policy process is – at least in part – a struggle to get one or another meaning established as the adopted one. (p.65)

This suggests to me that meanings of policy are many and varied and those working within government organisations, particularly in the communication of policy, will have different views of the impacts and outcomes of those policies. Furthermore, Fischer (2003) addresses these topics and cites Steinberger's (1980) work in addressing questions around the multiple understandings of publications and communication of policy. Again, we see the importance of seminal research, similar to Lipsky (1980), when analysing the impacts of initial communication from the public service sector to clients who wish to access entitlements and services.

As a researcher, I am able to relate to Fischer's work as he quite clearly describes the idea that communication from the public sector can take on multiple meanings for different target populations:

As signifiers pointing to specific characteristics or conditions as opposed to others, policies specify – directly or indirectly – which players are virtuous and which are dangerous, which actions will be punished or

penalized, and which will be encouraged and rewarded. (Fischer, 2003, p.66)

Although this idea may address the way in which actual policy is designed, this description now lends itself and links into the theory and framework of social construction which is important to the way my study can be structured and discussed.

Social Construction of Reality

The term social construction was initially coined by Berger and Luckmann (1966) and is defined as “the relationship between human thought and the social context in which it arises” (p. 16). This means that as we learn things about each other, we translate our thoughts into expectations of what the other person is likely to do – which is often expressed by “that’s so typical” – which is a typification (Berger & Luckmann, 2002). These typifications then become so expected that they are likely to become “habitualizations” meaning that the role that each person plays is entirely expected and, in time, become institutionalised:

Habitualized actions, of course, retain their meaningful character for the individual although the meanings involved become embedded as routines in his general stock of knowledge, taken for granted by him, and at hand for his projects into the future... (Berger & Luckmann, 2002, p. 42)

For instance, in the context of my study, clients accessing the services of social welfare agencies have already typified the experience they are about to have. At the same time, the case worker also has developed a typification of what he or she is about to experience. As Berger and Luckmann (2002) point out, “Institutionalization occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors” (p.42). From this institutionalisation comes the idea of a shared history. Institutions, themselves, by their very nature have a history which informs the actions of employees. They also have a certain element of control of these typifications by having a defined organisational culture which requires particular patterns of conduct. Therefore the participants in these social interactions have socially constructed a reality which fits with their positive or negative expectations of their current situation.

Since Berger and Luckmann’s (1996) definitive work on the social construction of reality, Allen (2005) has extended the discussion of this subject and identified several key assumptions. She states that understandings of the world and ourselves should be constantly observed, evaluated and critiqued; all knowledge is based within specific historical and cultural contexts; and that “social processes sustain knowledge” (Allen, 2005, p. 37). Furthermore, Allen (2005) suggests that knowledge and social interaction are strongly connected, thus identifying that language is not only used to produce knowledge but also is the means of making sense of the world. In my study, those requiring help from social welfare agencies have sustained their understandings of what the agencies offer, how they are likely to be treated and act within that knowledge base. On

the other hand, those working in the agencies have also developed their own knowledge based on the social construction of their particular reality. However, when it comes to social policy design, this too is constructed through typification, habitualisation and institutionalisation. But, it is also constructed to serve the political aims of the public sector, and is not necessarily constructed in terms of the target publics of that organisation.

Social Construction of Target Publics

Schneider and Ingram (1993; 1997; 2005) develop these ideas further into a discussion of social construction in policy making and in the political sector. Their discussion looks firstly at how policy is the “primary tool through which government acts to exploit, inscribe, entrench, institutionalize, perpetuate, or change social constructions” (2005, p. 5). Secondly, they demonstrate how social constructions can be, and have been used as a framework in which government policies are designed and communicated to different target publics. In essence, they identify two main target publics, the “deserving” and the “un-deserving” (1993, p.336).

For example, Schneider and Ingram (1993) discuss how social constructions take on “positive and negative” characteristics and interact with political powers to “produce several different types of target population” (p. 335). This means that “advantaged target populations” such as business owners, scientists, military personnel and middle class European people have a significant amount of political influence on legislation and public policy. They are targeted and

communicated with in a way which treats them as “deserving people” (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p.335-336). On the other hand, there are the “contenders” who are constructed with more of a negative connotation as those who also have a substantial amount of influence over the political sector, but have an image that has been constructed as “greedy”, rather than “deserving”. This target public is usually made up of farmers, minority groups, cultural elites and big unions (p. 336).

Kingfisher (1996) illustrates that in some situations, “social reality is not a ‘given’ but is continually produced and reproduced” (p. 537). For example, women on welfare in the US, discursively constitute themselves as “welfare mothers”, with the emphasis on “mothers” thereby taking a positive connotation of mother “as caring, responsible and morally pure in an attempt to partially offset the stigma associated with public assistance, thereby redefining the second term, ‘welfare’” (Kingfisher, 1996, p. 537)

In terms of the dynamics of social constructions, Schneider and Ingram (2005) indicate that there are strong implications of these social constructions in the design of policy. Social policies are all about allocating benefits and obligations in society. As they point out:

There is nothing benign about the tendency people have to construct divisive, value-laden differences between themselves and the ‘other’ – who becomes the object of disdain. The damage is especially acute when

these differences become embedded in public policies. Once embedded in policies, the differences take on the power of the state and its legitimacy. (pp. 16-17)

This clearly connects with Berger and Luckmann's (2002) characterisation of typifications, habitualizations and institutionalisations. Thus, the social construction of reality penetrates the design and, implicitly, the implementation of such policy.

In terms of my research question, Schneider and Ingram (1993) provide a helpful framework as indicated above, which enables me to theorise how existing communication strategies from public sector organisations serve the needs of low socio-economic communities in New Zealand by constructing messages and images which either resonate or cause dissonance with this specific target public.

Social Marketing and Public Education

An emerging area concerned with promoting behavioural change in target publics is social marketing. It sets out to achieve a public good. It is often confused with public education, or public information campaigns and, as such, needs to be differentiated clearly. Social marketing is evaluated in terms of behavioural change rather than simply awareness of an issue. In the case of this research, many of the documents examined are part of public education programmes which were initiated in the hope of achieving a change in the behaviour from their target publics. One of the main differences between social

marketing and public education is that social marketing campaigns are audience-focused, long term and dependent on responses and feedback from target publics in order for the campaign to change and evolve from information received. On the other hand, public education is simply subject-focused and is one-dimensional and static (Bridges & Farland, 2003). Therefore social marketing could also be considered as excellent public relations in that it is responding and developing from two-way symmetrical communication.

Social welfare agencies are considered a “stop-gap” for those with temporary needs for state help. Much of the official communication coming out of these agencies is to encourage people to move beyond their dependence on welfare payments and become contributors to the economy through work and income. Maibach, Rothschild and Novelli (2002) propose a continuum which has, at one end those who are likely to change their behaviour to the desirable behaviours (prone) and, at the other end, those who are unlikely to change their behaviour unless forced to do so (resistant). As Bridges and Farland (2003) point out, it will be enough to provide public education to those who are prone but for those who are resistant it is necessary to enforce their behaviour change through legislation. For those in the middle section (neither prone nor resistant), social marketing campaigns are the most likely to encourage gains in behavioural change. It is these audiences who are the most likely to be open to listening and responding to suggested changes in the way they do things.

Social marketing campaigns take on greater challenges when audiences are “culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)” (Noble & Camit, 2005, p. 1).

Differences in cultural values, practices and attitudes are not recognised because

they extend beyond the mainstream focus of many social marketing programmes. If there is some recognition, it is usually dealt with simply by translating the main document(s) into other languages, thus presuming that it is through language only that understanding is achieved. Furthermore, “it is common practice to simply adapt mainstream campaigns for use with different ethnic groups” (Noble & Camit, 2005, p. 2). This also assumes that ethnically diverse audiences are literate in their indigenous language as well as in English.

This research contributes to the development of such social marketing campaigns as it seeks to identify what is being understood from current communication strategies and how this communication is interpreted by target publics.

Public communication models

Society is intended to benefit from the introduction of a range of public policies which have been developed by governmental organisations for specific purposes. However, it is not a given that policies are understood in the way that they are anticipated. This is often caused by the fact that the policy does not resonate with target publics and, instead, results in a lack of understanding and lack of engagement in the process of implementing the policy. Evaluations of social policy take into account how the messages within the policy are received and acted upon. Young (2007) discusses the movement within government organisations to improve the communication standards between the public sector and their publics. Her discussion examines various channels of communication and communication tactics that the Australian Federal Government has used in order to increase citizen and community participation

and engagement. Her evaluation of communication efforts provides a model which illustrates the “levels of community engagement in government communication” (p. 233). This model illustrates three different stages of government communication. The first level of this model is a one-way relationship in which the government produces and disseminates information to citizens; the second level introduces a consultation process (two-way) in which communities and individuals give feedback on information received. The third level of the model is an active, dialogic level in which a relationship is developed between citizens and communities with government officials to jointly engage in the policy making process.

Young’s (2007) model was adapted from the Queensland Government’s Community Engagement Division. It can be compared with Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) public relations models in which they discussed organisational public relations and stakeholder engagement. Grunig and Hunt’s model structure can be used to identify an organisation’s strategy for communication with their publics. These models are: press agency/publicity (one-way asymmetrical); public information (one-way symmetrical); scientific persuasion (two-way asymmetrical), and mutual understanding (two-way symmetrical). These functionalist models look at the way an organisation operates within its environment and stresses the organisation over the publics addressed.

One would also assume, then, that Young’s (2007) second level of her communication model would correspond to Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) two-way asymmetrical model. The “excellent” model of two-way symmetrical applies to

Young's third level in which there is a dialogue between government institutions, citizens and communities who interact through a two-way system of communication in order to form policy and provide feedback. Again, this issue is integral to my study, as I will be reflecting on these models and their critique as I form an understanding of how public sector organisations use public relations models in order to communicate with their target publics, and if these models are indeed useful in effectively delivering the intended messages to reach those target publics who have not been captured by the communication strategies to date.

These examples enable me to breakdown how and what practices are being used, and in what form they are used, when looking at the actual examples of communication from the public sector organisations that I am examining. These models allow me to understand theoretically what an organisation may be trying to achieve via their web sites, pamphlets and brochures, stakeholder meeting and general advertising campaigns. More importantly, Young's (2007) model captures the focus of Grunig and Hunt's (1984) model of corporate public relations, and is able to apply it to a public sector organisation context.

It is also important to understand the ways in which an organisation perceives its own communication channels and how it implements communication strategies. Leitch and Neilson (2001) address the idea of an organisation's functionalist approaches to communication with its stakeholders. They discuss the concept of publics and how this relates to public relations. They state that the "organizational perspective has tended to overwhelm and marginalize publics

within public relations theory” (p. 127) and conclude that “although organizations may orchestrate the development of publics to serve organizational objectives, there is no guarantee that such publics will be content with their status as organizational artefacts” (p. 138). This means that publics are likely to form their own views rather than automatically subscribe to what the organisation is communicating.

Public Relations and the Public Sector

For public relations, the two-way symmetrical model which requires mutual understanding between the organisation and its publics is the dominant theoretical paradigm. It is considered to be the ideal model in which public relations should operate. It is also understood to be the ethical practice of public relations although, as Leitch and Neilson (2001) point out, this may be the ideal in theory but may not be so realistic in practice. They critique not only Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) models, but also further developments and extensive studies by Grunig and Grunig (1992) in which they find that there is little evidence of organisations using, or even trying, to implement a two-way symmetrical model for communication. As Munshi and Kurian (2005) identify, this model does not include reference to a diversity of publics, nor does it deal with issues relating to power. The absence of power in this model leads to the one-sided influence of organisations to maintain and legitimise their dominant control of communication.

From the perspective of Grunig’s two-way symmetrical communication, it suggests that an organisation is willing to listen to its publics and, in turn, respond to any concerns or comments. This response should be, according to the

model, “a substantive one, not just a discursive shift” (Roper, 2005, p. 69). In a two-way asymmetrical model, the organisation only listens without doing anything about the information it gathers. Overall, the discussion and critique of Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) models and overall theory is vital when examining public relations perspectives because one must also understand and recognise the realities of how such theories may or may not be implemented in practice. Power is clearly the key element of this gap between theory and practice.

Issues of Power and Dominance

Kincheloe and McLaren (2000) define power as “a basic constituent of human existence that works to shape the oppressive and productive nature of the human tradition” (p.283). The concept of power can become vague through various interpretations, representations and through a variety of concepts and contexts. For my research purposes I look to examine the concept of power through the ways in which texts are created, disseminated and finally interpreted by various publics. Other issues of power which stem from a critical discourse analysis of the texts are the issues of how people engage with the dominant powers of an organisation, after being accustomed to the ways in which they have been communicated to as marginalised publics.

For Foucault (1980), it was power that produced reality and that the notion of power is intertwined with knowledge. He argues that power is pervasive throughout social structures and that it is not exerted from the top down, but rather inherent within these structures (Mumby & Clair, 1997). Foucault believed that power could be both positive and productive and “not only offered positive benefits to individuals and society but underlay all aspects of human existence”

(Motion & Leitch, 2007, p. 265). Foucault challenges the more traditional understanding of power as being a negative coercive force, such as the law or the effects of prohibition on particular behaviours:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. (Foucault, 1980, p. 119)

Furthermore, Foucault (1980) believes that power is intimately connected to knowledge. As Leitch and Motion (2005) point out, "The traditional axiom has been that knowledge is power. To this, Foucault added that power is also knowledge and that the two concepts should be considered together" (p. 258). As such, it is the powerful in society who determine what is knowledge and, at the same time, support the position of the powerful in society.

Associated with this concept of power is Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony which can be defined as "domination without physical coercion through the widespread acceptance of particular ideologies and consent to the practices associated with those ideologies" (Roper, 2005, p. 70). This means that once ideas or ways of doing things are accepted within a society, anyone who questions it is considered to be on the periphery of the social group (Leitch & Motion, 2005) and could thus be a member of the "undeserving" public (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). In terms of power, Gramsci, along with Foucault, suggests that it is through consent (rather than coercion) that power is gained

but in order to maintain this consent concessions need to be made “at key areas of contestation”(Roper, 2005, p. 70).

This discussion plays a significant role in understanding the implications of power on communications from authoritarian establishments, and how people, especially those who may not perceive themselves to be powerful, could be marginalised through the very fact that they do not have the understanding of what is happening around them. The fact that there is little or no understanding of processes, communication and information leads sections of target publics to be further disempowered by the fact that they have little trust in the system, and lack confidence.

Luhmann (2000) discusses the concepts of trust, confidence and familiarity. He suggests that familiarity and trust can be confused but that:

Familiarity is an unavoidable fact of life; trust is a solution for specific problems of risk. But trust has to be achieved within a familiar world, and changes may occur in the familiar features of the world which will have an impact on the possibility of developing trust in human relations. (p.95)

Trust suggests that people understand, participate and conform to the expectations of society. However, when trust is lacking, an element of risk enters the relationship. Rather, it is only through familiarity on a one-to-one basis that some trust is built between people in the public sector. Any government system “requires trust as an input condition” (Luhmann, 2000, p. 102) but because of the nature of the system, confidence and familiarity may be undermined and therefore publics will not engage with the organisation. A good way to make

sense of the dynamics of power, social construction of reality, and the inherently asymmetrical communication between public institutions and publics on the lower end of the scale is to draw on critical theory.

Critical Theory

Critical theory pieces together viewpoints, voices and discourses to enhance an understanding of a situation, possibly even providing another angle from which to view the common perspectives which construct our reality. Deetz (2005) defines critical theory as the “exploration of alternative communication practices which allow greater democracy” (p. 85). This then requires more consultation and consideration of stakeholder needs in terms of governance and decision making.

Deetz (2005) frames the essence of critical theory by stating that: “It is not enough to understand this world: One must act in it” (p.91). This statement is important to me as a researcher and as a person who is not shy in fighting for the ideal. The concept of having courage as a researcher, asking questions “challenging assumptions” and acting in this world, with the knowledge and understanding that we gain, is the fundamental motivation behind this study. Furthermore, it is also the reason I position my research around critical theory. Developing a forum in which to debate and discuss the issues of power and dominance in any organisation, be it corporate or public sector, provides opportunities for us to look at how decisions are influenced, how processes are developed and how choices are made.

Through a critical perspective, organisations are seen as “political sites” which have been created in “conditions of struggle and power relations” (Deetz, 2001,

p. 25). Critical theory in communication research works to break down any barriers that may jeopardise clear communication in an organisation. Deetz (2001) explains the importance of critical theory in organisational communication research by stating that:

While organizations could be positive social institutions providing forums for the articulation and resolution of important group conflicts over the use of natural resources, distribution of income, production of desirable goods and services, the development of personal qualities, and the direction of society, various forms of power and domination have led to skewed decision making and fostered social harms and significant waste and inefficiency. (p.26)

Here, Deetz highlights a central idea of how power and domination have significant influence over the decision making process, potentially resulting in wasted efforts, time and money. Even in organisations that are set up for the good of the community and society as a whole can come under the pressures of the “values” of those who have dominant voices, and who are likely to use this power as part of their decision making (Deetz, 2000).

Communication from public sector institutions are designed and disseminated to various target publics. It is through this critical paradigm that I explore the ways in which those communications are designed, how they are informed in their design, and the process in which target publics are consulted in order to ensure that those communications are understood. The decisions that are made in a

policy's conception and then its implementation are vital to the ways it is communicated to those that it is designed for.

One of the ways that public relations research has contributed to practice has been demonstrated by the use of critical discourse analysis in order to understand how organisations can have control over certain messages. Such an analysis allows me to identify the dominant voices as well as those which are being marginalised through the communication activities. Critical discourse analysis essentially stems from critical theory and the analysis of discourse. When the two are combined we get a result of "discourse analysis 'with an attitude'" (van Dijk, 2001, p. 96). Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is both a theory and a method, located within the critical social sciences (Chouliariki & Fairclough, 1999) and has its starting point in social issues. As a critical method, CDA tries to discover and identify the connections between language and other aspects of social life which may not be immediately obvious (Fairclough, 2001). According to van Dijk (1993), CDA is concerned primarily with the "discourse dimensions of power abuse and the injustice of inequality that results from it" (p. 252). Further, he insists that any scholar using critical discourse analysis as a method must identify their personal socio-political stance – "spell out their point of view, perspective, principles and aims, both within their discipline and within society at large" (van Dijk, 1993, p. 252) and as such, make a contribution to understanding change in society. Since CDA is concerned with issues of discursive power and domination, and that this research is being conducted within the context of governmental agencies which are dominant and powerful, a critical discourse analysis will reveal how power is expressed in New Zealand's bicultural society.

In today's globalised world, it is evident that organisations need to consider their multiple publics and instead of drowning out marginal voices, it is incumbent on the organisation to not only acknowledge other voices but to include them in any consultation regarding the organisation's activities. However, in my study I hope to demonstrate that although organisations say that they are consulting with stakeholders and are open to submissions, this does not necessarily translate into the ideal of two-way symmetrical ethical communication processes. Rather it seems to me that this is similar to tokenism in order to get public buy-in and to show that the organisation is doing what is required of it in terms of regulation.

The “linguistic turn”

Deetz's (2003) concept of the “linguistic turn” provided me with an insight into the way that language works to represent organisations as well as the reality we construct about these organisations. The linguistic turn discusses the form of language and the way that language helps us to construct our own realities both as individuals as well as from a hegemonic perspective.

An example that came up in my discussions while trying to understand this idea is the phrase: “Captain Cook discovered Australia”. My response to this, as well as the responses I assume others would have, is “Yeah....and?” The answer lies in the actual information that is not conveyed through the language of this “fact”. Captain Cook is said to have discovered Australia, but what about the Aboriginal people who were there long before any colonial came across this huge island continent and decided to place an English flag on the land, thus claiming rights to it. Here, the hegemonic system of thought and language is apparent in

our interpretation of a simple phrase – that it is common knowledge that Captain Cook discovered Australia, thus normalising the discourse.

The linguistic turn, in this sense, acknowledges and investigates the facts that are absorbed and learned through everyday language. It assists in uncovering marginalised voices, people and practices that have been silenced because they lack or have no recognition whatsoever. In its application to studies of organisational communication, Deetz (2003) states that:

In many ways the 'linguistic turn' provided the most radical and completely developed way of critically engaging both mainstream organisational work grounded in managerialism and the various oppositions to it. It could help reveal the historical and political character of existing organisational forms and practices, and help reveal the forms of advantage and how they were sustained. (p. 424)

In applying this method to my own research, and therefore gaining a deeper understanding of how the "linguistic turn" works to develop critical theory, I am able to examine the name or brand of one of the organisations used in my research, Work and Income New Zealand. I found myself asking the question: what does that title mean? Work? Employment? Income? I then looked at the generalised clientele of this agency, the people who use this organisation who are, in fact, unemployed. The income that sustains their survival is accessed through Work and Income New Zealand. Clearly, this is an interesting twist of ideology. By using this concept as a starting point, I am able to get a sense of not

only how I can understand the “linguistic turn”, but also experience and learn a new and different dimension that critical theory provides to my research.

However, it is also important to discuss the history of critical theory and how it has developed in communication studies over time. Kincheloe and McLaren (2000) present a concise overview of the foundation of critical thought and the development of critical theory and research. They describe critical theory and its accomplishments as “undeniably dangerous knowledge, the kind of information and insight that upsets institutions and threatens to overturn sovereign regimes of truth” (p. 279). Set against a backdrop of major historical events, such as World War I, the Great Depression and then events that led to World War II, Kincheloe and McLaren (2000) tell the story of three academic theorists, Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse who had been displaced from the Frankfurt School and re-established in California. They were fundamental in developing critical thought in response to the “taken-for-granted empirical practices of American social science researchers” (p. 280). By the 1960s, critical theory had become popular as academics found it liberating in the ways that it challenged conformity and domination “from a post-Enlightenment culture nurtured by capitalism” (p. 280).

A second generation theorist from the Frankfurt School is Jurgen Habermas, the “father” of critical and rational thought (Braaten, 1991). Habermas’s theory of societal rationalization deals with the reasons why we give our trust and loyalty to governments. Habermas (1975) argues that it is because we believe that they are going to act in our interests and that they are going to act morally, according to the institutions of a democratic state under the rule of law; that they are

reasonable; and are not dependant on historical ideologies. Habermas states that this decision-making process is in line with a “citizen’s conviction that he [sic] could be discursively convinced in case of doubt” (Habermas, 1975, p. 43). Braaten (1991) explains that societal rationalisation is the way in which laws and norms are developed and aligned in society and the process of rationalisation is there to show up systemic failures in society overall. The essence of Habermas’ work is in his ideas based on the “ability to speak to one another, to decide on the basis of reasons and arguments, to distinguish between understanding and deception” (Pensky, 2001, p. ix). From this we are able to understand how we can construct a rationalization of society. Pensky (2001) states that:

The central claim of Habermas’ theories is that the institutions based on the communicative use of human reason, from our moral intuitions to the institutions of the democratic constitutional state under the rule of law, are reasonable, and not merely contingent consequences of historical circumstances. (p. ix)

This means that the state or government operates in a rational and reasonable manner, within the rule of law, and as such, demands the loyalty of citizens. When researching governmental organisations, this premise provides a starting point to look critically at issues of power and dominance within the organisation. In my own application of this idea, I am able to relate a Habermasian perspective to my own research and to look at the ways in which society and organisations create a rational position through discourse and text. In a public sector institution, rules and norms of the organisation provide the rationale for the

procedures and policies that it puts in place. However, some procedures can be more of an obstacle to both the client and the service worker than a practicality. Often there is little relationship between organizational procedures and the realities that people are faced with. They are unable to discuss or have anyone discuss with them how these realities impact on their own understanding of the procedures and are unable to access the means of fulfilling the procedural criteria.

Mumby (2000) identifies these kinds of thoughts and ideas through his analysis of a common ground in critical research which, I think, resonate with Habermas' ideas of societal rationalisation. It is through argument that consensus is found and it is possible to find common ground for society to go forward as part of the democratic process. Habermas argues that we do this by leaving our ideology at the door and discussing the central issues and problems on common ground in order to develop consensus about the laws and norms which we adhere to and follow. However, it is in Mumby's (2000) critique of a common ground that the discussion becomes more interesting and, to me, a little more practical.

In his discussion, Mumby (2000) critically evaluates the forums that have been suggested by critical scholars to approach discussion and discourse from a critical perspective in order to allow different voices to be heard. In this sense, Mumby suggests another approach to looking at the ways in which society and organisations develop laws, rules and norms of everyday life and practices which we, as both employees and citizens, abide by. He suggests that we can incorporate a model of recognising four characteristics of discourse, which can "bleed" into one another in order to build relationships and correlate with the

external world (Mumby, 2000, p. 78). The four discourses Mumby (2000) refers to are: "the discourse of representation (p.78); the discourse of understanding (p.79); the discourse of suspicion (p.79) and the discourse of vulnerability" (p.80).

Through this model, we can monitor our communication informally by treating language and communication as neutral ways of interpreting existing ideas about the world and make detached observations on it. We then also actively contribute to the ways that we construct knowledge by adding our experiences and using these as our knowledge claims. Furthermore, if we take these discourses into consideration, we can also argue that the agreement of a group can actually hide conflicts and contradictions because it does not allow for genuine dialogue and consensus; and, finally, we bring to the surface the politics of everyday life and see how representations of these politics have been made through the organisational rules and norms and overall identity of the organisation.

Conclusion

The foundations for my research come from literature which examines the elements of how social policy is designed and implemented, how communication of that policy is constructed and becomes a strategy, and finally how that strategy reaches and is received by target publics. The concepts of power and dominance are threads that combine all of these elements together and are central to the discussions that my analysis will develop.

What is out there and what we already know are the theoretical tools which examine social policy, policy implementation, social construction, social marketing and issues of power on a global scale. My research will contribute to

this body of knowledge by firstly providing a New Zealand-based study of all of the elements discussed, and will be one step towards bridging the gap in the literature in order to specifically examine the communication strategies of public sector organisations and their reception in a low socio-economic community in Aotearoa New Zealand.

3. Methodology and Methods

This research examines the communication strategies of public sector organisations to reach and to service people from low socio-economic communities and how these communities interpret this communication. I draw on the theoretical tools of critical theory and social construction to help me to make sense of the data that I have gathered. However, in order to collect rich and valuable data which contributes and informs my study, I have chosen a methodology which suits both the environmental and contextual elements of this study. It is also important to identify the methods which will work best with the participants involved.

“Methodology is inevitably interwoven and emerges from the nature of particular disciplines (such as sociology and psychology) and particular perspectives (such as Marxism, feminist theory, and queer theory)” (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 164). The methodology of this study will make sense of complex social interactions, environmental contexts and participant values. The methods used to collect data are also entirely qualitative, using individual and group interviews of participants from both the community and public sector organisations.

The objective of this study is to provide insights into how people from low socio-economic communities perceive, interpret and engage with messages specifically targeted towards their well-being, thus giving them a voice in the process of communication and consultation. This research contributes to the behind-the-scenes processes that inform the design of social welfare policy.

Making Sense of Realities

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), "...qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them" (p. 3). This idea illustrates the essence of what has been at the heart of my study. People's narratives, experiences, expressions and ideas are the very elements which bring life into a study. Through every interview, a different reality is presented. As the researcher, or the "*bricoleur*" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 4), my responsibility to these realities is to, at the very least, mediate and to make sense of the realities that have been presented.

The metaphor used by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) of the "*bricoleur*" or "the maker of quilts" (p.4) helps me to express the experiences that I have had as a researcher by piecing together the realities of the key players in this study, the organisation and their target publics. As a "*bricoleur*" I use a variety of tools to gain an understanding of, on the one hand, what public sector organisations intend to achieve through their communication strategies for low socio-economic communities. Then, on the other hand, this study identifies what those community members understand of these communication strategies, and their interpretation.

From this methodological perspective, I see myself as a reviewer of a play. The stage is set with a backdrop of the Enderley Community Centre where the main cast members are the interview participants and the public sector organisation representatives. The extras, if you will, are people humming in the background who visit the centre regularly and who are exemplified by the individuals who

have taken the time to speak to the audience about their experiences. The interviews from the participants are like the monologues of those characters. There is a scene change when characters from Hamilton City Council try to describe to the audience their perspective of how they see the characters at the Enderley community. The extras in the background disappear and the Community Centre transforms into office blocks where organisational representatives from Hamilton City Council and Ministry of Social Development deliver their monologues. They describe how they see the community, how they consult with members of that community and how they design communication with that target public in mind.

The texts of the organisations are props that remind the players of their lines and their stage directions. The characters in the play use the pamphlets and booklets by flicking through them or hastily turning pages in search of information. The texts are handed between one character and another until they become creased and wrinkled by their handlers. Each character has a different opinion to express over the text that they hold. The stage lighting begins to dim and, once the characters exit the scene, the stage becomes littered with the documents which have been dropped on the floor carelessly, with no concern or any afterthought.

As the reviewer, I am piecing together what I see played out in each scene of the play. That is, everything that is on stage, setting the background for each of the characters. From the state houses that surround the area, to the empty beer bottles that lie discarded in the gutters along the roadside, I review and make sense of every bit of drama that has an effect on a person and their world view. I review each character's story and what makes up their reality.

As Watson (1994) suggests, the writer is a craft worker (or bricoleur) who plays the role of identifying and describing a reality objectively and then mediates it by interpreting and theorising it. However, there are dangers for the researcher in this mediation process. Researchers will always “select, interpret, colour, emphasize, *shape* their findings” (Watson, 1994, p.579, italics in original) but they do not invent them. This points to the fact that it is important for me to position myself and the role that I play in the collection of my data.

Me, my Methodology and I

I am most comfortable writing in first person. Literature that has been written in the first person has engaged me right from the beginning of my academic experiences and has had a significant influence over the way I understand and conduct my research today. What I am fearful of, however, is losing myself in the literature and losing focus of how the methodology underpins my aims and objectives for this study. Ellis and Bochner (2000) write about attempts of writing in the first person:

...the ‘I’ usually disappeared after the introduction, and then reappeared abruptly in the conclusion...And the ‘I’ usually was a ‘we,’ and an ambiguous ‘we’ at best, which sometimes referred to the authors as writers of the chapters and sometimes included all of us, whoever we might be (p. 734).

As such, my goal is to emphasise the “I” in my study, making sure that the reader does not lose focus on what it is I am trying to achieve through the story that I am telling.

Writing in a narrative style allows the reader to be taken on a journey of personal and emotive experience in order to understand complex concepts and the dynamics of communication theory and practice. It is important for me to write about my experience in conducting this research in this way as it has the potential to open:

our eyes and ears to the necessity of exposing how the complex contingencies of race, class, sexuality, disability, and ethnicity are woven into the fabric of concrete personal lived experiences, championing the cause of reflexive, experimental, autobiographical, and vulnerable texts (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 735).

This means that because texts are being read through the first person, the experiences of the author help to shape the ideas and discussions that are being conveyed through the research. It allows the reader to momentarily “walk in another person’s shoes” in order to understand the perspective of the research and the reasons why the research is being conducted.

Munshi (2005) exemplifies this method of writing by literally taking the reader on a journey of his experiences of racism in New Zealand and how, in the political arena, the notion of the “other” was being used in the discourses which made up policy and provided authority. Entitled “Through the Subject’s Eye: Situating the Other in Discourses of Diversity”, Munshi (2005) is the subject of study, along with the discourses of governments, policy makers and the media. Munshi (2005) was walking “in his own shoes” thus shaping his own reality for all to understand.

Munshi (2005) talks about his own experience, and is able to theorise issues of diversity in managerial discourses. I talk about other people's experiences, but use a subjective style of writing in order to paint a picture for the reader so that they may be able to understand some of the realities facing marginalised populations.

Critical Discourse Analysis

People's reality of what makes them "deserving" and "undeserving" are formed by discourses and texts. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a tool which brings together theory and method in order to make sense of the discourses that are used in communications from the public sector. As a critical method, CDA tries to discover and identify the connections between language and other aspects of social life which may not be immediately obvious (Fairclough, 2001). According to van Dijk (1993), CDA is concerned primarily with the "discourse dimensions of power abuse and the injustice of inequality that results from it" (p. 252). Further, he insists that any scholar using critical discourse analysis as a method must identify their personal socio-political stance – "spell out their point of view, perspective, principles and aims, both within their discipline and within society at large" (van Dijk, 1993, p. 252) and as such, make a contribution to understanding change in society. This is important to me not only as the researcher, but as a story teller, by focusing on what it is I want to achieve from this study. As a member of society, I have always expressed my "principles and aims" which is why I have been drawn to critical theory, and the application of CDA.

Since CDA is concerned with issues of discursive power and domination, and this research is being conducted within the context of governmental agencies which

are dominant and powerful, the discourses will reveal how power is expressed in New Zealand society. The exercise of power is often obscured through language and is not evident on the surface. Mumby and Clair (1997) state: "One of the goals of critical discourse analysis is to move beyond a surface- level examination of discourse and to show how it simultaneously produces and hides 'deep structure' relations of power and inequality"(p.183). Furthermore, by applying critical discourse analysis to the texts, i.e. brochures and information campaigns, I will be able to interpret and analyse how clients are identified and informed about benefits and services. It will also reveal how they understand the information about policy that is communicated to them through the various communication strategies. By taking a critical discourse approach to this analysis, I hope to be able to reveal the discourses of power and ideology underlying the actual text.

The Three Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis

Fairclough (1995) describes discourse analysis as a method "concerned with practices as well as texts, and with both discourse practices and socio-cultural practices" (p. 16). This method allows effective analysis of the ways in which texts are constructed, produced, disseminated and consumed by publics. The three dimensions of Fairclough's model are social practices which provide the context within which the text exists; discourse practices, which are the production, distribution and consumption of the text; and the actual text itself.

Textual Analysis

Fairclough's (1995) model organises texts into four different categories:

"Vocabulary, grammar, cohesion and text structure" (p. 75). In this framework, texts are dealt with as "words combined into clauses and sentences", how those "clauses and sentences can be linked together", and overall how "text structure

deals with large-scale organizational properties of text” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 75). So in looking at the texts of documents and brochures from Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ), Ministry of Social Development (MSD), and from Hamilton City Council (HCC), I examine particular word choices, key words and the meanings that can be extracted from them. Key words must be interpreted according to the context in which they appear because they are part of a shared vocabulary that has a range of meanings and are used widely “to discuss many of the central processes of our common life” (Williams, 1983, p. 14). Key words in this study include “help”, “benefit”, “family”, “needs” and “support”. Also the way pronouns are used in these documents indicate who is included, who has the power and how it is being exerted. Other language texture features include agency, personification and juxtapositioning as well as the use of metaphors and articulations. Articulation is central to the way discourses are formed and the way in which representations are made. Articulation is a means of joining things which do not necessarily belong together, such as discourses, concepts, ideas. Through articulation, new meanings are created and new sense is made of the text. In effect, it can create a new discourse which may then receive acceptance by target publics as “common sense” (Hall, 1986; Slack, 1996).

I also examine documents to see if there is any ambiguity through the word choice used and if there could have been any alternative language to frame the information differently. A key part of this discourse analysis is to look at who the organisation identifies within the text, how the target publics are constructed through the text, and the particular discourse that is drawn upon in this construction, for example, whether it is a market or economic discourse, welfare

discourse or medical discourse. The texts examined in this research have been produced by the Ministry of Social Development, Inland Revenue and Hamilton Council. In particular, the texts disseminated through the Work and Income service centres to low socio-economic populations are examined through this critical discourse analysis.

Discourse Practices

The production, dissemination and reception of text is the second dimension of Fairclough's (1995) model. What is also important in this area is the fact that discourse practices and social practices are not entirely different from one another. Rather discursive practices are made up from social practices, because of the social factors that contribute to the construction of discursive practice. However in this dimension, the focus is specifically on the production, distribution and consumption of texts. This means that I will examine textual documents from public sector organisations with a particular focus on who is doing the writing, for whom, and how the texts are used. Through this dimension we can identify what the strategy is behind the construction of the text, and how these texts are interpreted and used.

The discourse practices also include the action part of the text, namely those parts of the text which perform a function – to give orders, to threaten, to promise, etc. (Fairclough, 1992). These parts of the text are vitally important within this context, because they can only be coherent if they make sense to the person reading or receiving the messages from that text.

Social Practices

This dimension of the model contextualises the production and construction of the texts. It examines how language makes up social realities and how those realities are understood. In this sense, examining social practice looks at how worldviews impact on peoples' understanding of texts, and how they see themselves in the discursive action that contributes to the ways in which society is structured, and how they live their lives. It is the way that we create and make sense of our lives. These are the practices that illustrate how things become "common sense" and how we automatically adjust to the ideology shaping the discourse. They also contribute to the maintenance of a particular belief system as part of our reality. In this study, there is a governmental discourse shaped by the socio-cultural practices of New Zealand society.

This project utilises Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional model of textual analysis to examine documents such as brochures, posters, websites and application forms produced by one major government organisation and one local government organisation which focus on interaction particularly with communities such as Enderley. For example, Hamilton City Council (HCC) has recently published and disseminated a booklet on their new Social Well-being Strategy. This publication specifically mentions the Enderley Community as well as surrounding neighbourhoods in the city's long term plans and goals. Through textual analysis, I examine how the expectations of this strategy have been communicated in this document, as well as how community expectations have been constructed by HCC for community ownership of the strategy. This will be supplemented by interviews with a management representative from the

Hamilton City Council as well as a Constable from the New Zealand Police. The New Zealand Police have signalled their commitment to the strategy by signing the agreement, and facilitating community initiatives within the Enderley area. Their representatives have relationships with both the council and individual members of the community. The documents relating to the strategy will be analysed for their content and language construction in order to understand how they communicate the strategies and ideas of social wellbeing to members of the community.

The Interview

Let's go back to the stage setting that I illustrated above with the stage set up with the Enderley Community backdrop. This scene takes place shortly after the Community Constable had been appointed to the centre following a shooting incident that had happened at a property directly across the road. It is eleven o'clock in the morning and the people working in the centre are quietly going about their business, mindful of the dramas that may happen at any moment due to the restlessness of the community around them. (ENTER FRONT STAGE RIGHT) A young pakeha woman with curly blonde hair appears at the front desk of the centre and asks to speak with the Centre Manager. She feels the tension in the air and notices the suspicion of the reception staff. The Centre Manager is not in the office, so the woman decides to take a look around the centre. Although she is familiar with the area, she is not entirely familiar with all of the people who are milling about. She makes her way to the gym, where she has been told the youth workers can be found. At the gym she is greeted by a man who seems to be in his early forties. She introduces herself and tells him about

her interest in the centre and that she would like to interview some people from the community. The man seems guarded, and nods from time to time when the woman tries to communicate her enthusiasm for the community. It isn't until she says *"I am a friend of N's, he told me that you helped him out at league"*, that the man's eyes light up. *"Oh, is that right girl? How do you know him"* The woman notices that she has struck a familiar chord with the man and explains to him that she attended the local college, and drops in some names of people who live in the area with whom she had grown up.

The snapshot described above shows how if I wanted to conduct interviews with the people from the Enderley community, I had to establish a level of trust and familiarity with interview participants. I began by introducing myself to the two main youth workers who had been employed at the community centre for over seven years. I was fortunate enough to have something in common with them. To solidify my relationship and to show my commitment to people in the centre I became a member of the Incorporated Society responsible for the operations of the Breakfast Club, After School Care and Holiday Programmes.

I visited the centre as often as I could, from time to time participating in the homework sessions with the children and, at times, participating in community events. It was important for me as a researcher to be seen continuously by members of the centre so that they would be familiar with who I was, what I sounded like, looked like, and that I would soon, over time, become approachable for them to speak to me personally.

Fontana and Frey (2000) discuss the importance of how interview subjects perceive the interviewer and how everything, from the way that the interviewer presents themselves, to the ways they build a “rapport”, is all vital to the success of the study. Fontana and Frey (2000) outline the various styles of interviewing and also provide an historical overview and examples of how methods have been used and developed. The method that I utilised was that of a semi-structured interview. This means that, unlike a structured interview where “all respondents receive the same set of questions asked in the same order of sequence” (p. 649), and where questions are all the same in each interview, semi-structured interviews have some guiding questions. However they become progressively more open and conversation and discussion is encouraged. This means that all interview situations are likely to differ from one another.

Janesick (2000) also discusses the importance of “establishing trust and rapport”. She adds that this “authentic” communication allows the interviewer to “better capture the nuances and meanings of each participant’s life from the participant’s point of view” (p. 384). In my situation, I feel an obligation to the people that I have interviewed to portray their stories in order to inform future communication of policy in the welfare sector. By capturing participants’ understanding of their own place in the world, their world view, and their understanding of a situation ultimately informs my analysis and is the basis for my findings.

Although I read as much as I could about the interview process and what I could possibly expect, nothing really could have prepared me for my very first interview, no matter how familiar I was with the people and in environment that

I was putting myself into. The first interview I conducted introduced me to the nervous feelings and anxieties that I had not at all expected when planning out my interview questions:

“Want a cuppa girl?” my first participant is smiling at me while I organise my papers and digital recorder at her kitchen table. This is my first interview, and although I am rather familiar with this person, I feel a little anxious about talking to her ‘officially’ and asking her questions about her experiences and what she understands. I let out a sigh of relief at her offer, and tell her a little about how I am feeling. As she stirs the milk into my cup of coffee, she stops to look at me almost in a startled way, *“But why girl? It’s just me aint it? You just wanna write about me...and everything that you have always talked about doing”* By that, she is referring to the many times that we have discussed her situation with her children and the frustration that I would express to her every time we seemed to hit a brick wall. I would announce that I was going to try to make a change, and that I would write her story so that others may be able to learn and make a change somewhere. Although I have always spoken about writing my thesis, and finishing my Masters, the act of actually sitting down properly to make it happen felt somewhat surreal. I took the cup of coffee from her and took my seat at the table. She sat in front of me, and I started to pull out the information sheets and consent forms that she had to fill in. This started to feel really strange. Too official.

“Ok, look, because this study may be presented to and seen by a number of people, I have to make sure that you are totally aware of where this information is going, what will be involved in this interview, and what your rights are...” A

huge burst of belly laughter erupted from my interviewee, *“Gees girl! Far out you sound like... I don’t know...someone else...all official and that”*. More hysterical laughter erupted and I could feel myself starting to blush. For some reason, I seemed to take on another persona to the person that she knew me to be. Hearing the laughing going on in the kitchen, her two children came running in to see what they were missing out on. I suddenly became really nervous and anxious again because if this was the reaction to just how I introduced the actual interview process, then how on earth is she going to react to any questions that I had written out ready to ask? And worse still, if she was reacting this way, how would the rest of my participants going to view this scenario, and react?

I laughed, nervously, as I gathered my thoughts about how I was to proceed. Meanwhile the children started talking and playing in the room, and I realised that background noise was going to make transcribing a long and arduous process. *“Hey you fullahs go into the room and watch T.V aye? I need some quiet around here, or else I can’t get my work done.”* I noticed immediately, after I had said this, how my persona had changed in the very second I started talking to the children. I was a completely different person to the one who had just introduced the interview to their mother. What was going on? The fact is that I was familiar with these kids and could speak to them colloquially.

I needed to make this situation more familiar to the people that I was already familiar with. My study is about communicating to people such as this participant, and yet, as the interviewer, I couldn’t even get that right! After the kids had settled down, I had another go.

“I guess what I mean is that, you know that I have been talking about writing a thesis right? Well, in order for this thesis to be of use, I need to make sure that I cover my bases, that I do everything legit, and that I go through the right processes through the university so that I can constructively use the information that you are going to be talking to me about”

“Ohh, yea, yep. I get ya. But what if I don’t know any of the answers?” My participant seemed to be more comfortable now, and understood what I needed from her. I explained that I was not looking for any particular answer, and that there was no right or wrong way of answering my questions. This was about her, her opportunity to express how she feels about engaging with a public sector organisation, what she understood, and what her frustrations are. We spoke briefly about this, and I decided that this was a good time to turn my recorder on and placed it on the table in front of her. At that precise moment, she froze, *“Oh girl, what if what I am saying sounds dumb? And then you can’t use it?”* she asked, looking up at me. I could sense that she was becoming nervous, and wanting to move away from the recording device. *“This is not a test”* I assured her, *“I just use the recorder cos I suck at taking notes. This helps me to recall what you have said when I come to writing all of this up,”* I explained to her, and moved the recorder back towards where I was seated, and not completely in front of her face. *“Oh, yep, ok then, let’s go then, ask away!”* She beamed back at me, more confident than I had ever seen her, and focussed on the papers that were in front of her.

It is important for me to illustrate this situation, as this was a lesson for me as a first time interviewer. This interview served as a model for me to follow when

interviewing the other participants from the community. I needed to prepare in advance what to have ready, when to talk about filling out consent forms, what words to use so that the participants understand the process and their role within the process and what kinds of hesitations participants may have with regards to pulling out a recording device.

Although this preparation helped me with the majority of the interviews, three out of the ten of the participants found it too difficult to speak, aware of the fact that they were being recorded. All three of those participants were young male and from a Māori background, and all three had expressed to me that they wanted to participate in the interview, but got too nervous when I switched the recording device on.

There is an overall issue of people becoming uncomfortable in talking about what they understand from brochures and information from Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) and what they have seen from Hamilton City Council (HCC). People were shy and apprehensive about explaining their difficulty in understanding policy and how their situation is affected. Over time however, after spending many afternoons outside whilst on their cigarette break, or over a cup of tea, the informal conversations were starting to develop into discussions about their lives and how they had got to be where they are today. Experiences at WINZ and other public sector organisations became regular discussion topics and eventually I became confident enough to ask people if they could participate in an interview. I had to make it clear to participants that the interview was not a test by any means, but more of a conversation about any difficulties that they

may have in understanding messages and what they perceive is positive from any of the communications from the public sector organisations discussed.

I interviewed ten community members and discussed with them the information from Work and Income New Zealand and the Hamilton City Council. I also interviewed senior staff who are responsible for the implementation of the Social Well-being Strategy as well the community constable who has been allocated to the Enderley area, and has a stake in the implementation of the social well-being strategy in the area as well as being responsible for various community meetings between representatives from public sector organisations and the community.

Interviews with staff representatives did not need as much attention and work behind the scenes as it did for members of the community. There was a genuine feeling that representatives from public sector organisations wanted to participate in the interview as well as follow up on the findings at the end of my study. Interviews with staff took place at their place of work and have been followed up with email correspondence to provide any further information that I may need.

In order to analyse the information from the interviews, I have drawn on analysis techniques introduced by Owen (1984), and then later developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) to draw out themes and key points for discussion overall.

Thematic Analysis

A thematic analysis (Owen, 1984) of the data was conducted in order to identify the major themes that occur in the narratives. Owen (1984) suggests that a theme is present if there is recurrence, repetition or forcefulness in the text

being analysed. Recurrence is identified when the analyst can identify “the same thread of meaning” in more than one part of the text(s); repetition refers to “explicit use of the same wording or keywords and phrases; and forcefulness refers to the manner in which the text is vocalised” (Owen, 1984, p. 275).

Through thematic analysis of the interviews, I am able to identify the themes that are important to the interviewees, and therefore draw some conclusions as to the way questions are answered and honestly in interviewee responses.

The importance of thematic analysis to my methodology is that it allows me to “report experiences, meanings and the reality of participants, or it can be a constructionist method, which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of discourses operating within society” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.81). For example, it allowed me to report on instances where emotions and frustrations were evident in answers by the community participants and allowed me to examine the difficulty they had in understanding certain messages and language used in communication strategies. These types of situations provided an insight as to how deeply communication can have an impact on an individual’s life and their perception of where they see their role in society overall.

A range of themes emerged from the data collection process and each of these themes is illustrated through a particular experience and story from each of the participants. Each of the interviews has captured important points, all of which relate to answering my research question. Thematic analysis, as discussed by Braun and Clark (2006), enables the researcher to be flexible with the ways in which themes are identified. In this case, interview participants have had a

number of experiences which add a dimension to my study overall, and in line with the concepts outlined by Braun and Clark (2006), my thematic analysis would be at a “latent” level where a theme is examined “beyond the semantic content of the data, and starts to identify or examine the *underlying* ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations – and ideologies – that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data” (p.84). The opposite of this level would be that of a semantic thematic analysis where themes that are identified are done so primarily at a level where patterns are constructed and data has been “organized to show patterns in semantic content, and summarized” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.84).

The combination of semi-structured interviews, the background and context of the participants and the critical theory that underpins my study, leads me to analyse latent themes in my data. It allows me to include the intangible elements which inform my study on a contextual, cultural and social level, and thus provide a deeper understanding of the data collected.

I aim to show how there is a disjuncture in the understanding between what public sector organisations communicate and what their target publics understand from those communications. The interviews focus on what people read, see, hear and experience when looking at an application form. The discussions that arise in the interview pay particular attention to what it is that participants understand from the information that is presented to them through brochures and advertisements, and whether they have been inclined to look for information online. Interviews with public sector representatives are also focused on understanding how a communication strategy is designed and then

disseminated in low socio-economic communities. Issues of understanding those communications are also addressed and analysed in this study.

I chose to interview members of the Enderley community as it is situated in an area that is identified as one of the lowest socio-economic areas in Hamilton City (Statistics New Zealand, 2008). Due to a high unemployment rate, people who live in this community participate regularly with the services and communication from social welfare organisations and require attention and information from these agencies in order to carry out their daily lives. More importantly, the policies and services that are designed for people in these situations are designed for the improvement of their lifestyle and the well-being of their families and the community overall.

Government services are essential for the well-being of people in this community, and similar communities in New Zealand overall. This study draws on methodologies which enable me as a researcher to bring experiences together with cultural and social concepts to tell the stories of people in this community. I examine the ways in which communication can be developed in order for people in similar situations to better understand information from the public sector and empower them to engage with that information. By using a critical discourse analysis of the texts and the contexts of communications from government organisations, I attempt to determine the realities of the organisation, and how this affects their understanding and the design of communication which is targeted at people from low socio economic backgrounds. Combined this with a thematic analysis of the interviews, allows me to determine if more work is needed to develop communications so that they

are more accessible to people who live in low socio-economic communities, where people's education and knowledge of the world is limited and confidence and trust in the system is low. This research aims at examining the ways that communications may be developed in order to engage with people from this area in the hope that policies which are targeted to them may reach them and benefit their well-being overall.

Data Analysis

Through repeated readings of the data, I identified patterns of themes emerging from the transcriptions of the interviews. Each theme became evident in terms of the ways in which an issue was discussed and also through the use of specific terminology describing particular situations and experiences. I organised the themes into groups of text, and used a simple colour coding of sections that represented a certain theme. I then compared each of the transcripts to examine the themes that were similar to each other, as well as discussion points that arose from only one or two specific interviews.

The themes that emerged for discussion in my study are: Filling out the forms; powerlessness; constructing ourselves; social construction of power and authority; confidence, trust and familiarity; being familiar with what you know; and community knowledge.

During the interviews, I used the organisational texts to identify specific gestures or actions that participants used when discussing the material. I made notes of non-verbal reactions. I compared notes from the physical signals to compare if any similarities in physical reaction existed generally.

I looked at the themes that emerged from the interviews in relation to my research question and used the critical discourse analysis of the documents to supplement the findings.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations in this research project. Firstly, I was unable to gain interviews with representatives of the Ministry of Social Development.

Perhaps it was because the national elections were taking place at the time of correspondence, the Ministry was unable to secure a time with me to meet, and to interview managers as I had desired. However, I did manage to have email discussions and several telephone conversations with a representative, but this could not replace a face-to-face interview. The Ministry did send me a letter in answer to the questions that I had asked via email communication, as well as a copy of an evaluation of the communication strategies of the Working for Families policy. This was helpful and contributed to my analysis and recommendations.

A further limitation associated with the interview part of the research was the fear of the recording device. Participants openly consented to my recording of the interviews, but the moment the recorder was switched on, some of the participants were unable to articulate their thoughts. This limitation should be considered in future research with people who live in communities such as Enderley.

4. Analysis and findings (1): What the documents say

Introduction

As outlined in the previous chapter, discourse analysis is a method “concerned with practices as well as texts, and with both discourse practices and sociocultural practices” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 16). The three dimensions of an effective analysis of the ways in which texts are constructed, produced, disseminated and consumed by publics are, according to Fairclough (1995), social practices, discourse practices and text. At the level of texts, I take a close look at brochures, pamphlets and application forms issued by the WINZ and IRD. I also examine a document which is aimed at communicating a particular strategy of the Hamilton City Council.

On the one hand the leaflets and brochures of welfare organisations give information about benefits and what requirements are needed to be eligible for them. On the other, the information is disseminated alongside application forms for the benefits thereby both transmitting and soliciting information. Such practices have often been subject of complaints because, as Fairclough (1989) says:

such material is inaccessible to a substantial proportion of the people supposedly addressed by it, because of indigestibility of format and layout, complexity of syntax, technicality of vocabulary, and so forth. This complaint has been linked to the low level of uptake of benefits: many people who qualify do not apply. (p. 218)

Fairclough’s (1989) comments underpin my assumptions in this study. He suggests asking the following question: What bureaucratic objective(s) or

purpose(s) do the texts serve, and how are these reflected in textual features?

This question provides an appropriate framework for the discussion of the documents and encompasses the parameters of my overall research question:

Do the existing communication strategies of public sector organisations serve the needs of low decile communities in New Zealand?

I particularly focus on the documents produced by Work and Income New Zealand, a department of the Ministry of Social Development. These documents are targeted at communicating policies relevant to the needs of the people from the Enderley community.

All of the documents I analyse are publicly available and are usually displayed or referred to at the Community Centre. For example the document entitled “How Can We Help You?” an eight panelled document filled with information about every benefit that a person may be eligible for, was a focus of discussion in most of my interviews with community participants. Other documents include a range of DLE size pamphlets and brochures – in a variety of colours and with different pictures on the front. I have chosen for analysis ones that were available, and that were going to be relevant to my community participants. I later conducted an internet search to see if there were any brochures that were not available at this particular service centre. These will also be included in my discussions.

It is important to note that all these publications have a Māori translation of the name of the organisation that produces it. Work and Income, for example, is translated as *Te Hiranga Tangata* which can be translated to mean *The Importance of People*. Working for Families is *Me whakaruruhau te iwi* meaning,

The tribe should be sheltered (to shelter the tribe). In both examples it is possible to interpret two different meanings. The Māori title for Work and Income stresses the people focus, and the ascendancy of the client over the department. The English terminology, Work and Income, suggests a cold calculated market economy and the role of the organisation.

All government organisations in New Zealand have a Māori name or title since it was declared as an official language of New Zealand in 1987. This provides a translation or interpretation of the work of the organisation and adds another dimension of meaning to the organisation and the services offered to the people of New Zealand. As Te reo Māori is the indigenous language, organisations often symbolise their commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi through the translation of their names and titles. However, as can be seen from the two examples above, often the translation connotes different meanings to Māori publics than the official government department title.

Language is indeed central to the process of how realities are constructed by text producers and understood by text receivers. I start with a textual analysis of some of the documents produced by welfare agencies and then follow it up with an analysis of the contexts in which communication between text producers and receivers play out.

Textual Analysis

I have gathered a sample of brochures, pamphlets and application forms, predominantly from what was available at the WINZ service centre, as well as the Enderley Community Centre. I have analysed these documents separately and

conducted an analysis based on the textual features of structure, format, visuals, language style and accessibility.

How can we help you?

The document entitled “How can we help you” is an A4 six panel brochure (see Appendix A), with a tear off panel for a summary of what a client may have discussed with a case manager. It is in standard WINZ colours which are dark blue and orange. On the top right hand corner is a block in dark blue with a list of contact numbers for general enquiries through to help for deaf clients. There is an item of information for those whose first language is not English. In this case, WINZ offers to find a translator to help the client talk to them.

The main “bureaucratic objective” (Fairclough, 1989) of this document is to present all the services in one place in one document. By examining the document closely, we discover the power positioning and the means by which the organisation is attempting to achieve its objectives.

The introductory paragraph, at the top of the document is in italics and gives instructions about the content of the entire document:

At Work and Income we're here to help all New Zealanders in any way we can. Please tell us everything about your individual situation so we can help. We want to make things as easy as possible for you, and to help you get all the financial and job search help you need. If you have any questions please talk to your Case Manager or contact us on 0800 559 009 or visit our website www.workandincome.govt.nz . We can grant you

financial assistance from the date you first contact us, if you complete your application within 20 working days of that date.

Below are some of the financial assistance paid for the situations described.

Fairclough (1989) uses the term “easification” to describe a textual feature which exhibits “a manipulation of aspects of the contents of the text, but in this as in many other cases of easification in bureaucratic discourse, it is accompanied by manipulation of relations and of subjects, by synthetic personalization” (p. 221).

The text is simplified by using simple sentences, no jargon and graphic and design features to encourage people to engage with the text. The use of key words to emphasise the objective of the document “eases” the way for clients to understand what is required.

In this example the organisation takes the position of marketing the services and constructs the reader as a consumer of these services who needs to be persuaded that there is something there for them: *At Work and Income we’re here to help all New Zealanders in any way we can.* This sentence is constructed to encompass all target publics, including the bureaucrats, so that it becomes like a mission statement for the organisation. However, the manipulation appears in the document format which is text-heavy and the language style which uses subjunctive clauses which allow the organisation to withdraw assistance.

The key word in the first paragraph is *help*. It appears in each of the first three sentences and has the connotation, along with the title of the document, that the client will receive assistance in completing the document as well as from the

organisation. It frames the organisation as a friendly, helpful organisation with the clear aim of assisting those in need. This is indeed in line with the Māori translation of the organisation – *the importance of people*. Moreover, the first sentence also suggests that help will be forthcoming in one way or another when it states: *At Work and Income we're here to help all New Zealanders in any way we can*. The phrase “in any way we can” opens up the idea that whatever a person’s situation, there is someone to listen, to consider and to find ways to help. Furthermore, it suggests that one size does not fit all but rather that the service can be tailored to individual requirements.

There is also an attempt to make the language colloquial and easy to read, for example, “we’re here”; “we want to make things as easy as possible for you”. The use of the contraction of “we are” suggests that the agency is approachable, friendly and willing to help. It also uses an inclusive language in that it refers to “all New Zealanders”. However, the “we” is quite clearly WINZ, and “you” and “your” refer to the client. The power is evident in the sentence beginning “we can grant you” but only if “you complete”. This strategic ambiguity (Eisenberg, 1984) is important when examining documents such as this one as it shows the strategic placing of words and ideas to present an opportunity, but in the same token, control the client’s actions and information so as not to guarantee the expected outcome.

The final sentence refers to a table in two columns which has on the left hand side all the different personal situations the client may fall into and, on the right hand side, all the benefits they may be eligible for. The grammar of this sentence makes it difficult to understand how to read the table and is not a particularly

user-friendly introduction to what follows. In effect, the table identifies different categories that people may comply with, but not all the categories. A characteristic of the entire document is that it is written in the subjunctive case: “you may be able to get”; “this is only a quick guide, and there are other conditions”; “this is how much you are likely to get”. Each of the paragraphs describing the benefits available includes the phrase, “you may be able to get”; “you may be able to get this”, or “you may qualify”. The main message throughout this text-intensive document, which has the appearance of providing lots of information about every benefit available, is that the organisation will decide on any benefits the client may be eligible for. What it does not say, or even give an indication of, is the apparently arbitrary eligibility criteria for each of the benefits.

By stating all of the ways in which WINZ may be able to “help you”, it neglects to inform whether or not there may be more than one way to help a client who may be in multiple situations. What the brochure does not specify is how much help the organisation can deliver, but gives the impression that it is absolutely there to help anyone who is in need. By listing all of the benefits that are available for any given situation, the perception can be that there is more than one type of benefit that a client may be eligible to receive.

This document is text heavy and requires the client to work through each of the criteria and pieces of information quite thoroughly in order to understand what he or she may be eligible for. It targets people who are in need of help, but are often unable to identify the kind of help they need. It is similar to a puzzle that you need to work through in order to put together the pieces. A good metaphor

for this situation is a crossword puzzle for which you are given clues with specifications (as you would the number of letters in the word), and then to try to get them all to fit together. A case manager can be seen as the quiz master who identifies which answers are the right ones.

In his discussion of conventions in discourses, Fairclough (1989) discusses how “power-holders” in the institution” enforce specific power relations in discourse by “policing” conventions and enforcing messages of both negative consequences and positive affirmations when people abide or challenge those conventions. This is evident in the example illustrated above with the use of “we” and “you”, and “we may be able to grant you”, which are explicitly illustrating who holds the power in this situation, and the fact that the client should indeed be uncertain as to how their application may be viewed by the institution. The client, in this case, should also be grateful if he or she is lucky to have a successful application.

Furthermore, by applying Fairclough’s (1989) textual analysis to this document, I am able to see how a text like this one constantly use this kind of language and format in order to form a “memory resource” (MR):

The MR which people draw upon to produce and interpret texts are cognitive in the sense that they are in people’s heads, but they are social in the sense that they have social origins – they are socially generated, and their nature is dependent on the social relations and struggles out of which they were generated – as well as being socially transmitted and, in our society, unequally distributed. (p. 24)

The MR shapes the idea of what a person is already interpreting from their situation and what they can expect from their experience with this organisation. As illustrated above, the message that is constantly repeated in the brochure is that a client “may be able to get” something, rather than actually qualifying or being assured that they are eligible. The example given above illustrates both the cognitive and social aspects and, as such, fuels the inequality that is prevalent throughout the communication strategies of these welfare organisations.

The *How can we help you?* brochure, with colours that are recognisable and a format which is familiar is, in effect, emphasising how the institution wants its clients to feel and interpret the messages. Words and phrases are repeated in order to emphasise a sense of the unknown and to reinforce the notion that the institution has the final say about what one may or may not be eligible for. Indirectly, it illustrates the dominant voice of the organisation in the relationship with the client. There is no mention or reference to the fact that this organisation has a responsibility to help out those who are in need. Nor is there any reference to the fact that a client has the opportunity to get support from the state and, with this support would be in a better position to positively affect their lifestyle and the future of their family.

The language used in the brochure is formal social welfare jargon which immediately makes a differentiation between social classes and levels of education. That is, those who understand it, and those who do not.

Extra help for New Zealand Superannuitants

The two sided DLE size brochure on “Extra help for New Zealand Superannuitants” (Appendix B) is also in standard WINZ colours, dark blue, orange and white and provides a list of contact numbers for you to call if you are looking for financial assistance as a superannuitant. Again, the words *you may be able* are part of the introductory paragraph informing the client of what they could get assistance with. On the other side is another list of examples of the situation that you could be in, followed by a subheading of the assistance that *you may* be eligible for if you fit the criteria. The actual criteria are not stipulated on this brochure, but the brochure does note that *extra help is income tested and some is also asset tested*, and urges the client to *find out if you qualify*. By emphasising the fact that nothing is certain, the organisation is hedging its message and, as with the previous document discussed (How can we help you?), this document is consistent with other texts from the organisation in its ambiguity through stating that it wants to help, but is not sure if it can help you. As with other conditions that apply to the services for beneficiaries, the onus is on the client to disclose all information about their situation, therefore making them vulnerable to any outcome that may occur.

The emphasis that is placed on clients to declare any changes in their personal situation is repeated in this example as well. This speech act is used and normalised in all collateral collected, and is used to give an order to demand that clients disclose all information about themselves. Fairclough (1989) explains that speech acts are used in textual discourses in order to command or to order an action. He states that: “The conventions for speech acts which form part of a

discourse type embody ideological representations of subjects and their social relationships” (p. 157). This illustrates how clients may fear engaging with the organisation due to the speech acts used in the collateral commanding them to declare all information to the institution and, if they do not, then they may suffer the consequences, one way or another.

These speech acts allow the organisation to know everything about the client and their situation. From the client’s perspective, the organisation should also be providing them with appropriate information: what benefits are available; what special needs can be considered; what happens when there are changes in a person’s situation; and so on. From these documents, it is clear that the organisation is forcing the client to disclose all personal information without letting them know what the consequences and/or the opportunities are through their disclosure. This will be discussed further in the interview analysis section.

Managing your debt

The brochure entitled “Managing your debt” (Appendix C) is a bold yellow DLE size document issued by Work and Income New Zealand. The strap line of *How to repay your debt and stay out of debt in the future* is a positive message for finding a solution for anyone who is anxious over debt that they may have incurred. The strap line suggests that the service centre may also provide an advisory or mentoring role to those who need help in order to improve their financial situation. The six-page booklet, however, is only concerned with the debt which one may have incurred due to a fault in one’s benefit application, the

payment of a benefit or a change in one's income due to an employment situation. The use of *we* and *you* clearly depicts who is in charge, and the brochure does not hesitate to emphasise the fact the organisation will claim any monies that one may owe:

We actively collect debt owed to us, and take the time to trace people who owe us money. One of the ways we do this is by comparing records with other government departments (see the Benefit fraud leaflet for more details). We also have certain legal rights if you don't repay us, for instance we can have money deducted from your wages or bank account.

There is no doubt from this wording that the organisation seriously means business. The legitimacy of power and authority has been articulated clearly in an effort to communicate that the organisation has the *legal rights* to reclaim any monies they feel that a client may owe them. To the client however, their rights in this process are unclear, and are in fact not referred to at all.

In the WINZ documents that I have collected, the recurring message to clients is that they are to inform WINZ of any changes in their situations: *Tell us about any changes*. In this document, the message is also emphasised, outlining to the client what kinds of changes are relevant for the organisation to know about and that the client should inform the organisation about any change in their financial situation.

It is also important to note that on the last two pages of the brochure, the organisation takes on more of an advisory role in suggesting a budget plan and

listing helpful contact numbers or agencies who may be of some assistance.

Please give us a call is also a message that is repeated throughout the brochure, to encourage readers to ask for assistance if they need it. The problems associated with calling WINZ will be discussed later in the interview analysis.

Domestic Purposes Benefit Application Form

Twenty-four pages in length, the “Domestic Purposes Benefit” application form (Appendix D) provides a good example of the style used in the design and template that the organisation uses in order to gain all the relevant information from clients in order to process their applications for financial support.

Likened to an exam paper, the application form is characterised by the colours and font of the WINZ style and logo, as well as the vast amount of boxes and blank areas for the client to fill out. On the right hand side of the document, instructions are given, with notes directing the client to provide extra evidence and documentation, such as a birth certificate and bank account statements.

The first two pages outline all of the criteria that the client must fulfil in order to be successful in their application. A helpful checklist of all of the extra documentation that they may need to show their case manager is listed on page 1 of the document, followed by a list of legal clauses that the Privacy Act requires the organisation to inform the client about how much information the organisation is able to access about the client individually through information sharing with other welfare and government agencies.

This lengthy legal statement is then followed by informing the client of their obligation to inform WINZ immediately of any changes in the client's living situation such as:

- *have a change in work situation,*
- *become self employed/start to run a business*
- *have any changes to my income or financial circumstances*
- *intend to travel overseas*
- *start/finish full time study*
- *have a change to personal details*
- *have changes to my living situation*
- *am imprisoned/held in custody or remand*
- *am admitted or discharged from hospital*
- *have been granted an overseas pension*
- *have any other changes that may affect my benefit entitlement rate.*

This list gives examples of changes in lifestyle and work situations to provide clients with enough information concerning the kind of information WINZ is seeking. It is important to note that there is a "catch-all" phrase which encompasses absolutely every possible interpretation of what a changed situation might be. This covers the organisation in terms of its decisions whilst, at the same time, warning the client that the organisation expects the client to know their individual benefit entitlements.

Once again, the list is followed by further legal jargon which informs the client of the consequences of not informing the organisation of any changes to their

situation. Because the organisation is a public sector organisation, responsible for the accountability and transparency of its services, it is understandable that it is required to obtain as much relevant information as possible in order to fulfil its obligations to the state. However, through its design, the application form does not communicate any of these responsibilities to the client, nor does it make it a comfortable and easy process for the client to disclose all the information asked for. Unfortunately, because the language used is quite formal, the application form comes across as difficult to fill out as well as being difficult to interpret what it is that the organisation is looking for. For example:

*Please provide details of any child(ren) in your care for whom the legal identity of the **father has not yet been established**:*

Have you seen a solicitor to assist you with legal identification of the father of the child?

No - Please discuss this with Work and Income

Yes - Please provide solicitor's name and address details below:

What is the solicitor's advice/action?

Not only does the style of questioning come across as difficult to understand, but also puts the responsibility back on the client to reply to the questions in legal language when explaining the legal advice that they have obtained, if that is the case.

Overall, the style of language used in the application form is similar to that of the language used in the brochures described above: difficult to understand; filled

with jargon; and riddled with speech acts such as commands to re-emphasise the disempowerment of the individual by the organisation. Furthermore, this legal discourse convention identifies not only the dominant voice but also emphasises an organisational environment of “we” versus “you” For example:

*How **we** can help you depends on **your** own individual situation; Where Work and Income refer **you** to a job vacancy, **we** may also contact the employer to discuss the result of any job interview that **you** attend; The legislation administered by the Ministry of Social Development allows **us** to check the information that **you** give **us** in this form.*

Interestingly, this “We You” convention slightly changes when the client’s responsibilities are listed. The “You” becomes an “I”, suggesting that the responsibilities are now more personal to the client and takes on more of a legal discourse, which reinforces the legal jargon set out in the privacy statement earlier in the document. The following shows how the organisation uses its form as a legal document (similar to an affidavit):

I must tell Work and Income immediately if I:

have a change in work situation

become self employed / start to run a business

have changes to my income or financial circumstances

intend to travel overseas

start / finish part-time or full-time study

have changes to personal details (such as name, address or bank account details)

have changes to my living situation

am imprisoned / held in custody on remand

am admitted to or discharged from hospital

have been granted an overseas pension

have any other changes that may affect my benefit entitlement or rate

I understand that:

*if I have made a false statement **or***

*if I have failed to answer all the questions in full **or***

if I do not tell Work and Income about changes in my life that might affect my entitlement or rate•

then

*my benefit may be reviewed and cancelled **and***

*I may have to pay back the total amount of any overpayment that I have received **and***

*Work and Income may impose a penalty (up to three times the value of the overpayment) **or***

I may be prosecuted and fined or imprisoned.

This document overall, encourages the applicant to ask for help when filling out an application form. However, the help that a client actually receives when attempting to fulfil the requirements of the application, as well as basically filling in the form, will be discussed in a later part of this analysis.

WINZ Communication Collateral

Much of the hard copy material available at the WINZ service centre use a style of language that becomes almost formulaic in how the information is presented to the client in order to reinforce the culture and the practices of the organisation onto the client who is seeking assistance.

I have specifically analysed the documentation described above because these brochures presented a good cross section of what kinds of messages are being published and disseminated to all clients of WINZ. Most importantly, however, these brochures were also the ones that were easily recognised by interview participants and the ones discussed in the interview situation.

All of the brochures direct clients to visit the website and, through the website, more brochures can be downloaded in *pdf* format. It is important to note that, generally, the language used in all collateral seems to have a repetitive structure to the way that information is produced. Similar to a style guide or brand requirements, WINZ brochures are easily recognised through the colours and logos on the document. What is also important however, is how the information is similarly framed in all brochures. In most DLE sized brochures, the cover has an image or picture which illustrates the theme and subject matter of the information contained in the brochure. For example, *Managing your debt* shows an image of a receipt; *How to avoid benefit fraud* has an illustration of an alarm clock, suggesting perhaps that time is running out and the *Independent youth benefit* brochure has an illustration of a toy aeroplane, perhaps suggesting that the person applying may be flying away from home, or rather just an image that younger clients may be able to relate to.

What these images suggest, on first glance, is that the organisation is trying to convey an introductory message to those clients picking up brochures. Whatever the images are supposed to mean to the reader, it is interesting to view all of the images on the covers of all brochures to understand what the organisation may be trying to illustrate as the main idea of the information presented in the brochure.

Inland Revenue: Working and raising a family?

Another document that I collected during a short visit to the service centre was a brochure informing people of the Working for Families tax credits (Appendix E).

The by-line on the document is: "See if you qualify for extra money..." inviting the reader to take an interest. The photo on the cover is of two children and a woman, all seemingly of non-European origin. The brochure is a small eight-page booklet, put out by Work and Income and Inland Revenue. A logo has been used to brand the publication, suggesting that this is an initiative that is, separate, and yet part of, both these two agencies. On the inside cover, there is another colourful picture of a European toddler with an introductory paragraph, in large font, with a suggestion to go online and visit the website for more information.

The rest of the brochure is in standard font divided by colourful tables and more images of teenagers of ethnic descent. The Working for Families colours are deep purple, green and white. The word 'families' is accentuated by the *ili* in *families* which looks as though they form one adult and a child on either side. A connotation that may be derived from this is that if you have a child, or if you are single with a child, you may still be in a family situation. The logo and strap line

Working for Families is an articulation which brings together the concept of working, an economic activity, and families which is a social institution, which together form a new discourse which emphasises the economic dimension of raising a family. It could also be understood that the organisations themselves are working for families.

Advertisements get their audiences to draw upon ideological elements in their Memory Resource (MR) in order to establish an 'image' for the product being advertised (Fairclough, 1989). This is an important point to consider when analysing the imagery used in this specific document. Why are the images of young children used in this brochure? To emphasise the idea of a growing family? What is being implied by using images of people who are recognisable as being from an ethnic background? Are the people used in these images relevant to the target public of the organisation?

In relating these questions back to Fairclough's statement, a MR is again being reinforced, and being redeveloped in communicating with those the Working for Families service is targeting. It is important to draw on the fact that the Working for Families information campaign was one of the few information campaigns that used television broadcasting to communicate to its target audience. Similar images were used in the television advertising campaign with a voice-over explaining what the Working for Families package was about and where one could find out more information. The television advertisement was recalled

frequently in many of the interviews with community participants, and will be discussed in a later part of my analysis.

Unlike the previous brochure from WINZ, this pamphlet does not excessively repeat the term “you may”, or “we can grant you”. Although these phrases do occur in some parts of the brochure, the approach in the language is different in the sense that it outlines what each of the payment packages offer and what you can expect when applying for this assistance. However, it is similar to the documents described above in terms of the technical information and organisational jargon that is used. It appears more accessible because of the images that break the text up and provide a colourful backdrop. The information may be familiar to those implementing the policy, but not necessarily to those who are trying to gain access to it.

Is your family entitled to extra money? See inside...

Another brochure designed to inform the target public of the Working for Families (WFF) benefit is a six page booklet which entices people to read through its title: *Is your family entitled to extra money? See inside...* (Appendix F). Given the hook in the title, who wouldn't want to read on? From the very first page this booklet is clear in what it wants to communicate to the reader.

An introduction to the policy is outlined opposite a black and white photo of three children wearing school uniforms making themselves something to eat. The image that is presented here is one which most people may be able to relate to: kids coming home from school and making themselves something to eat. This

image is appropriate to use in the sense that it symbolises that “extra money” can mean extra support for one’s family’s well-being.

The title on the opposite page reads: ***More Money for more families***. Here we can see that the play on words through alliteration can help emphasise the idea and purpose of the text. The following paragraph re-emphasises the message of “more money”:

You may now be entitled to extra money through Working for Families – a package designed to help with housing and childcare costs, and make it easier for you to work and raise a family.

- *Almost all families earning under \$45,000 a year*
- *Many families earning between \$45,000 and \$70,000 a year*
- *Some larger families earning more*
- *Families receiving a benefit*
- *Some people without children may qualify for help with housing costs*

These changes began in October 2004. From 1 April 2005 and over the next two years there will be more changes to help families.

As an advocate who has struggled in the past to understand the process of applying for this benefit – as I was advocating for beneficiaries who were, up until this time, not eligible for the WFF benefits – this introduction to the changes in the criteria was clear in outlining how this benefit may also benefit families receiving a benefit. The information provided in a checklist indicated

why these families may now meet the criteria. Furthermore, the use of numbers and words makes the language easier to comprehend.

Overall, the booklet breaks down the information into smaller chunks for people to examine and work out eligibility for themselves. Furthermore, it explains what each category of assistance means and how people may or may not fit the criteria. An interesting and helpful tactic that is used in this booklet is the way that examples have been given to illustrate various family situations so that people may be able to identify how they may qualify for assistance from the policy. Each example is illustrated by a photo image of a family situation, and introduces the reader to the family using first name familiarity. For example:

Sue and Nick - \$163 a week better off

Sue and Nick have two children and live in Oxford, near Christchurch.

Between them they work 60 hours a week, earning 37,440 a year before

tax. Each week they pay \$120 in rent and \$69 in childcare costs. Sue and

Nick currently receive Family Assistance and a Childcare Subsidy.

In total the booklet presents five different cases similar to this one, each introducing the reader to the family and their individual cases. Each family presents a different case scenario, with one particular example illustrating how a single person can also benefit from the policy. For each case, a table is displayed, breaking down the figures and dates to show how the policy will be implemented and how this affects the family that is being featured:

Table 1. Working for Families Information Brochure

After	Sue and Nick will get each week	In total, they will be better off by
4 October 2004	\$42 more Childcare Subsidy	\$42 a week
1 April 2005	\$40 more Family Assistance (with the Family Support increase)	\$82 a week
3 October 2005	\$6 more Childcare Subsidy	\$88 a week
1 April 2006	\$55 more Family Assistance (with the introduction of In-Work Payment and increased abatement thresholds*)	\$143 a week
1 April 2007	\$20 more Family Assistance (with the Family Support increase)	\$163 a week

***Note:** These figures are estimates only, and actual gains may differ slightly. *The Family Assistance abatement threshold is the amount of money you can earn before your Family Assistance payments begin to reduce.*

(Source: Inland Revenue and Work and Income. (n.d.) *Is your family entitled to extra money? Working for Families.* Wellington, New Zealand: Author)

It is important to look at how the information is displayed through the use of a grid or a table which breaks down the information and organises it into scenarios and estimates. Although the estimates are low (for example, paying only \$120 per week in rent for a two child family living close to Christchurch) the table attempts to be as clear as possible in showing the way the policy works.

The Working for Families policy is an ideal example of how a communication strategy of a policy can be effective in achieving the objectives of that policy, and therefore making a difference to people's livelihoods and social well-being.

Website as a text

All brochures that I have examined have referred to the Work and Income website: www.workandincome.govt.nz. As I visit the site and look at the screen I interpret the texts and messages that the organisation is sending. I am trying to see myself as the target public as I have come to understand it to be: limited in my education, little confidence in how things work and what big words mean and especially suspicious about giving away any information that might get me into trouble in the long run.

The gradient orange background of the site is inviting to those expecting a similar design theme to the brochures: heavy text with block colours. The opposite is seen at the home page which tries to be as user friendly as possible by dividing the information into three categories and tabs: *Individuals, Business and Community*. What is striking in this page is the image used in the centre of most of the information, a photograph of children running on a beach, amongst

waves, with the word *Success* in the centre of the image. The text around the photograph does not discuss the picture at all, nor does it have any reference to the *Success* heading. Instead, the panel to the left introduces the user to *What's new* with the site and with the organisation and services. On the right hand side of the *Success* image there is a menu bar with a list of online services that the user may be looking for. Towards the bottom of the page, the three tabs which can be viewed at the top, *Individuals*, *businesses*, *communities* are expanded on and a brief description given as to why one may click on either tab.

I clicked on each of the tabs separately, exploring everything that is available online in each of the categories. *Individuals*: a picture of a young Māori-looking woman outside a house, smiling. *Business*: A picture of two European men and one European woman, each in corporate suits, but obviously on a construction site looking down at a clip board, and the woman holding a cell phone.

Community: A picture of a Māori or Polynesian-looking woman smiling at the camera and helping herself to some vegetables in a market scene. Without reading any of the text, it is clear that the organisation has constructed an idea of what each target public may identify with in each of the tabs listed. So, if I am an individual looking for financial assistance, I am obviously single and perhaps of ethnic descent, and in a positive frame of mind. However, if I am searching this page as a business representative, I am involved with other people, am a busy person (too busy to look at the camera perhaps) and you would only really find me wearing a suit, even in a construction yard! If I am the representative of a community organisation, I must again be of ethnic descent, a happy person who is so in touch with my community that I go to the local market to shop for my

vegetables. I wonder at this stage of my website perusal if there is any point to even using any of these images. What messages are Work and Income trying to send by portraying these people as those who are in need of the specific service outlined in the site?

Everybody's situation is different. We offer a range of assistance to support you and your family when you need it.

The introductory sentence in the *Individuals* section of the site offers a bit of relief, as I have already made up my mind that I do not fit into any of the categories provided on this site. The offer of assistance and support is a nice way to welcome any client, and the bold listing of main headings also makes the site appear easy to navigate. Most information on financial assistance and support services of the organisations can be found through this site. Unlike the brochures, the website does not use the frequently used terms of *You may be* and *You may qualify*. Instead, under the subheadings, a brief description of each of the items is listed:

Looking for work

Help finding work and support you while you're looking for work or starting a new job.

65 years or older

Superannuation and assistance with health, housing and living costs.

Disabled or ill

Support while you're not able to work and assistance into work.

Supporting children and families

Assistance such as tax credits, help with accommodation and childcare costs and support as you move back into the workforce.

The click through to each of these sub headings then leads the user to a page where they can view further information and access specific application forms to fill out and send in. In this section of the website, the language used is a lot more positive than that seen in the brochures and hard copy collateral. It is positive in the sense that rather than questioning from the beginning if indeed the client may qualify for help, the site urges one to complete the application for grants and services so that they are of benefit. Overall, the navigation through the website is clear and straight forward, and the language used shifts the perception of what a client may feel about being involved with this organisation. This is important because unlike the brochures that have been disseminated through the service centres, the language used in the website is optimistic. Although each page is text heavy, the information as it is presented is welcoming and helpful.

The next chapter will develop the analysis by discussing these documents in terms of how they are used by members of the Enderley community. It will look at the interpretation and consumption of the organisational discourses as outlined in this current chapter.

Hamilton City Council - Social Well-being Strategy

In focusing on a local organisation committed to the wellbeing of Hamilton, I obtained a printed copy of the Social Well-being Strategy (Appendix G) from the

City Council's publication stand. The cover, bright green, clean with no illustrations, displays the title in a banner at the bottom of the page and the following text as the focal point on the page:

*Having a job. Enjoying good health. Feeling valued. Having security.
Getting a good education. Taking personal responsibility. Owning a home.
Feeling pride. Enjoying time with family and friends. Being able to
contribute. Living in a healthy home. Having hope and big expectations.
Enjoying an income that supports everyday needs. Having choices. Living
in a tolerant community. Being happy. Feeling safe. This **Social Well-being
Strategy** identifies these aspirations for **Hamilton** and the ways in which
we can work together to achieve them.*

The title, placed at the bottom of the page, reads: **Social Well-being Strategy a place called home.**

Along the right-hand side of the page, horizontally and in a transparent font *a place called home* is repeated. Hamilton City Council also has a *pdf* file of the strategy as well as a summary of its contents.

On the web page introducing the various strategies developed by Council, the Social Well-being Strategy appears thus:

Towards social well-being in Hamilton

The Social Well-being strategy is about positively changing the city that we live in and making a real difference for real people. It sets out our key priorities and how we will respond to the needs, challenges, and opportunities of the city.

The flagship projects represent agreed aligned actions between agency programmes. They are just a start - our first response to some of the pressing issues facing our city. They complement and connect a wide range of projects, programmes and actions happening throughout the city and have clear linkages to work occurring in the other key city strategies

(http://hamilton.co.nz/page/pageid/2145826971/City_Strategies)

Using words instead of images, the text printed on the cover of the document provides an illustration in the reader's mind. The wording on the title page draws on an image of an ideal domestic economic situation for citizens. Home is a place where people feel happy, comfortable and amongst friends and family. The placing of these words, both in the title and in the main text, immediately draws on a set of values that the organisation is trying to convey to the reader. However, this representation is formulated by drawing on an economic discourse feeding into an image of having money to spend, living comfortably and being financially secure.

The target audiences for this document are the rate payers of Hamilton City Council and residents who live within Hamilton city, as well as the businesses and organisations who have signalled their interest and a stake in the objectives of the document. The social well-being strategy as a concept is introduced, and is followed by the presentation of the signatures and titles of people who are members of the "steering group" who had participated in fleshing out the key

ideas and principles of the strategy overall. Their signatures are presented alongside the introduction and rationale of the strategy.

This interest is formally presented and signed off on the first page of the document by the key social welfare agencies operating in Hamilton: Ministry of Social Development; Tainui Company Ltd.; NZ Police; Te Puni Kokiri; Child, Youth and Family; Housing New Zealand; Te Runanga o Kirikiriroa; Ministry of Youth Development; Family and Community Services; Social Services Waikato, Ministry of Education; Waikato District Health Board; and Hamilton City Council.

The twelve page document outlines and explains the vision for the strategy and illustrates how it was put together and the thought processes behind it. There are five priorities for action to positively change the city to make “a real difference to real people” (Social Well-being Strategy, p.2). This statement is there more to emphasise that the strategy wants to make a real difference through its repetition of “real” rather than having a clear meaning of what or who makes a “real” person. The five priorities are: City leadership/collaboration; Community capacity and pride; Vibrant young people; Quality of life; and Community safety.

For my study, I specifically examine the fifth page of the document as it outlines the projects and objectives for the Enderley Community. This section falls under the main heading of *Community capacity and pride Maa Pango, Maa Whero, Ka Oti ait e Mahi*. Translated, this means: *By white, by black, the task will be completed*. A bulleted overview of the section follows:

As social well-being agencies, we commit ourselves to life our city so that...

- *People are truly vibrant. They feel empowered to do well, and take pride in their contributions.*
- *Our elders/kaumatua are respected and valued.*
- *Children are nurtured and whanau/family bind our communities together.*
- *People, especially our youth are actively contributing to the leadership of our city.*
- *People take responsibility for themselves and celebrate the communities in which they live.*
- *Iwi, Hapuu, and Marae are flourishing.*
- *People value and foster their own culture while respecting the cultural perspectives of others.*
- *People can afford to live and are able to determine their future.*

One of the projects identified within this priority is a community renewal project at Poets Corner. The aim of this project is to turn the neighbourhood into a “great place to live”:

This project will make Poets corner becomes a great place to live [sic]. The outcomes we seek are simple. We aim to create a healthy community where:

- *Children are well fed*
- *Children succeed throughout the education spectrum*
- *Alcohol and drug issues are reduced*
- *There is zero tolerance to all forms of violence starting with family violence*

- *All residents are in employment, education, training, or are gainfully engaged in their communities*
- *People are encouraged and supported to purchase their first homes*

The Council still needs to develop an action plan which will involve Housing NZ; Hamilton City Council; Ministry of Youth Development, NZ Police; WINZ, Ministry of Education; Child Youth and Family; Te Puni Kokiri; Te Runanga o Kirikiriroa; and the Waikato District Health Board.

The language used to outline the objectives of the strategy aims to create an “ideal” community but there are no familiar references to aspects of life that the people of the Enderley community may relate to. Even though it spells out an “ideal “scenario, it fails to address the actual target public who need to be involved in the changes envisioned.

This one-size-fits-all strategy is illustrated through ideas presented such as: *“Children are well fed”; People are encouraged and supported to purchase their own home; children succeed throughout the education spectrum”*. Although these ideals may be important to the general public, and perhaps the target audience of the document as a whole, the strategy is talking about people who live in a community where education standards are low, where the reality of buying a home is as realistic as flying to the moon, and where children need to have a Breakfast Club and Afterschool programme to ensure that they get at least two meals a day. What this document fails to do is address the social issues that impact the well-being of Poets Corner residents, and give them a voice with which to try to find solutions for their families and their community.

Deetz (2003) uses the theory of the “linguistic turn” to theorise the phenomena of marginalising voices through organisational communication and, in particular, text. He states that: “The ‘turn’ as a possibility grows out of the birth of social constructionism and ‘perspectivalism’ – the recognition of the constitutive conditions of experience and the de-centering of the human subject as the centre or origin of perspective” (p. 422). Thus, the social well-being strategy, as a whole, identifies objectives which may cater to the general public and talk about Enderley from this general perspective. What it does not do, is portray Enderley as it is recognised by those who live there, thus further marginalising their voices and perspectives in the overall strategy.

The social well-being strategy was released in 2007. All of my interview participants from the Enderley Community were unaware of the strategy and were somewhat bemused by the fact that it featured a specific project to renew Poets Corner. Upon viewing the document, people were interested in what it had to say, but did not understand what the strategy meant, or whether they were supposed to be a part of it:

“Are they saying that this is going on now?” (Interviewee A)

“Are they going to be doing all of this?” (Interviewee B)

“That sounds cool aye? Who’s doing all of that then?” (Interviewee D)

“Nah, I’ve never heard about it, what does it mean?” (Interviewee E)

“Oh, is that how come they are doing all the building and stuff around here?” (Interviewee C)

I feel that it is important to bring these comments into this part of the text analysis as it highlights how the text itself does not speak to the people who are indeed a key part of the strategy. The document may very well identify the community, but this does not necessarily mean that the community has bought into the strategy that it presents.

On the other hand, in an interview with a Hamilton City Council representative, the discussion around the dissemination of this document suggested that the Council did not expect community members from Enderley to necessarily read it or be aware of it as a text. He implied that it was more through the action that people would have been made aware of the strategy and council's role with that:

"I think the reality is that that they [people from Enderley] would more likely be able to understand the action from the strategy as opposed to the actual strategy. We've got a long term council community plan that details all of our projects and money we spend but, you know people don't necessarily read it through, you know and start memorising it."

(Interviewee K).

A form of communication which this representative believed was more beneficial in communicating the strategy to community members was through the use of media, and releases put out by the council which advertise and promote the strategy and its benefits to the community. As discussed in the analysis of the Working for Families information campaigns, media was one of the main reasons that the campaign was so visible and recognisable to its target audience. However, the media that the Hamilton City Council representative specifically

referred to is a monthly magazine published by the Hamilton City Council and disseminated to all Hamilton City residents. Unlike the Working for Families advertising, the messages of the Social Well-being Strategy are not repeated every day and are only produced in a text form of communication.

As part of the of implementation of the strategy, the Enderley Community Centre has expanded to accommodate extra office space for Hamilton City Council Youth Workers, as well as an office for the Community Constable and meeting spaces for representatives of Housing New Zealand, WINZ and Child Youth and Family. Some of the community members commented on the fact that now, after having the Social Well-being strategy explained to them, they understood why *“all of a sudden”* they were getting more attention from these public sector organisations, and were no longer suspicious nor negative about the amount of room they were taking up in the centre.

This document and well-being strategy developed by Hamilton City Council and related agencies has had little effect on the Enderley community. Not only was it unknown, unseen and unexplained, but also did not encourage any community participation in the plans for the emerging projects in the community. Things happened, nobody explained why, where, how and what for, thus assuming that the community would simply accept what had been decided for them. This is a further illustration of the linguistic turn, in that marginalised voices have no place in the production of official documents.

This close analysis of the documentation produced and disseminated by public sector organisations provides this study with a platform from which to look

further into how texts are received and consumed by target publics, such as those in Enderley. The second and third dimensions of the textual analysis build on this platform to develop a framework which allows us to examine how social contexts and discourse practices shape the ways in which communication is consumed and acted on by people from low socio-economic areas.

Discourse practices: Producing the texts

This dimension of Fairclough's (1989; 1992) three-dimensional model contextualises the production and construction of the texts produced by WINZ and disseminated through their service centres and online through the website. Most importantly, it allows us to examine how language makes up social realities and how those realities are understood. As Fairclough (1989) suggests, "We ought to be concerned with the processes of producing and interpreting texts, and with how these cognitive processes are socially shaped and relative to social conventions, not just with text themselves" (p. 19).

Although there are a number of WINZ service centres situated around the city, I decided to make use of the centre which is the nearest in location to the Enderley Community Centre and the community members who live around Poets Corner. As I entered through the automated glass doors I automatically took my place in a queue which already had five or so people who had entered before me. Although I was not there to see anyone in particular, I felt as if queuing for assistance was the only thing to do. After about ten minutes of waiting in this queue I decided to step out of line and head towards the brochure stand which was to the right where people who had been queuing were taking a seat, waiting for their appointments with a Case Manager. Enderley forms part of the lower

socio-economic area of Fairfield in Hamilton and the service centre at Five Cross Roads is generally the first port of call for people in need.

Fairclough (1989) suggests that the social conditions of interpretation and production should be examined when conducting a textual analysis. It is important to examine the social conditions of texts as they “shape the MR people bring to production and interpretation, which in turn shape the way in which texts are produced and interpreted” (p.25). The social context of the production of the texts is quite different to the site of dissemination of the texts in this case. The texts have been produced through the Ministry of Social Development in Wellington, whereas the site of consumption is in a low socio-economic neighbourhood in Hamilton. However, dissemination of these texts covers the widespread communities throughout New Zealand, not all of which are necessarily serving lower socio-economic areas. As Fairclough (1992) points out, “Texts are consumed differently in different social contexts” (p. 79).

White, Gunston, Salmond, Atkinson and Crampton (2008) provide an understanding of what low socio-economic communities look like in New Zealand. By mapping New Zealand’s socio-economic structure in the Atlas of Socioeconomic Deprivation in New Zealand, the authors provide clear definitions of what they believe to be the conditions and the issues facing people from lower socio-economic areas. This Atlas is designed to aid social service planners within the health, central and local government sectors by providing a snapshot of the social structure of communities in New Zealand. The Atlas draws on the definition from Lynch and Kaplan (2000) of the socio-economic position as “the social and economic factors that influence what position(s) individuals and

groups hold within the structure of society” (p. 14). Following on from this, deprivation is defined “as a state of observable and demonstrable disadvantage relative to the local community or the wider society or nation to which an individual, family or group belongs” (Townsend, 1987).

The Atlas places the Enderley community within the 10th decile of socio-economic deprivation which means that this small area is in the most deprived 10 percent of small areas in New Zealand as measured by the index (White, et al., 2008, p. 10). Education and occupation are major factors that contribute to a community’s deprivation status, and the people who walk through the doors of the Five Cross Roads WINZ Service Centre are dealing with the issues that come hand in hand with little to no education and a low income. Generally, this is the context in which we must consider the texts that are being examined.

Townsend (1987) distinguishes between deprivation in terms of material resources and social deprivation. The former refers to deprivation of the environmental aspects of life in these areas (including goods, services, amenities), whereas social deprivation is concerned with the social life and status (including relationships, roles, rights and obligations) of the citizens living in that particular area. Townsend’s distinction between the two ideas of deprivation is important because it highlights how society can assume who is deprived and who is not based on the material assets and goods that a person may have in their possession. The idea can also be aligned with the thinking behind Schneider and Ingram’s (1993, 1997) social construction models when categorising who in society is deserving, undeserving, advantaged or dependant based on the

assumptions and perceptions that have been created about a particular group of people.

The social construction process is one through which values and meanings become attached to events, people patterns of action, or any other phenomena. These values and meanings enable interpretation and provide rationales for action...The social constructions of people or events sometimes are so ingrained that most people accept them as real and as the only interpretation they can imagine. (Schneider& Ingram, 1997, p. 106)

The theory behind social construction can also be linked to the historical context of the mapping of socioeconomic conditions. White et al. (2008) note that in creating coloured maps of inner London in the late 1800's, Charles Booth labelled and categorised socioeconomic areas using his notion and his understanding of people's behaviour in the areas which they inhabit. Booth also used a specific colour scheme which corresponded to each of the categories. For example, "Black areas were labelled 'Lowest class. Vicious. Semi Criminal'. At the other end of the socioeconomic spectrum, yellow areas were labelled 'Upper middle- class and Upper classes. Wealthy". (Jones, 1966, p. 174, cited in White et al., p.1). In this sense, it is interesting to see how groups of citizens have been categorised and constructed historically through those who have been in a position to articulate and express their impressions publicly which then, in turn, advises how people are treated through organisational, institutional and societal structures.

In relating this analysis to the design of policy and communication strategies which accompany that policy, Schneider and Ingram (1997) argue that the context "is probably the single most important predictor of what type of design will result" (p.69). By theorising the design of policy through the social construction model, Schneider and Ingram (1997) argue that stereotypes, impressions and hegemonic interpretations have directed the ways in which social policy has been designed and communicated throughout society. Ultimately, "policy makers, interest group leaders, political parties, media, scientists, and others anticipate how an issue needs to be framed so that public policies advantageous to their own cause will appear to be the only rational response" (p. 102).

The social context that surrounds these texts adds a crucial layer to the overall analysis of how organisations such as WINZ communicate to citizens who live in areas such as Enderley. The context forces the analysis to consider how people are able to access and utilise vital information for their well-being when they fundamentally do not understand the information that they are provided with. As a result, people from low socio economic areas such as Enderley become further and further disempowered by the experience they have when seeking help from an organisation such as WINZ, and that disempowerment is further reinforced when picking up a brochure, or filling out a form which is difficult to understand and also uses language formulas which contain terminologies and conventions of discourse which enforce dominance and authority over an individual.

Socio-political context

In this dimension, examining social practice provides insights into how particular worldviews impact on peoples' understanding of texts and how they see themselves in the discursive action that contributes to the ways in which society is structured as well as how people live their lives. It is the way that we create and make sense of our lives. These are the practices that illustrate how things become "common sense" and how we automatically adjust to the ideology shaping the discourse. These practices also contribute to the maintenance of a particular belief system as part of our reality. In this study, there is a governmental discourse shaped by the socio-cultural practices of New Zealand society.

Fairclough (1992) understands ideologies "to be significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination" (p.87). The New Zealand welfare state provides the overarching ideological framework for public sector social welfare organisations. The government provides social safety nets for citizens who are unable to care for themselves, and provides for those who require assistance at certain periods of their lives. This is consistent with New Zealand's social democratic political ideology.

Comments on social welfare policies such as "we need to give people a hand up, not a hand out" are common in political discourse and it is a phrase that gets repeated in political speeches, newspaper articles and opinion pieces (Kleinman,

1998, p.5). The alignment of this phrase with social welfare schemes and benefits in New Zealand is emphasised when searching the phrase on search engines such as Google. Articles on benefit schemes, charitable organisations and politically-related opinion pieces flood the search results pages. Furthermore, searching the term “dole bludgers” is also a good way to see how beneficiaries are identified in the media and by politicians nationally and internationally. “Dole bludgers” is a derogatory label which has randomly been applied to beneficiaries. For example, a website entitled “Urban Dictionary” provides three definitions for the term as well as providing a mechanism for people to rate the definitions on whether they agree with them or not. The following definition of a “dole bludger” received fifty votes in agreement, and six votes against the definition:

Australian: Someone who receives unemployment benefits (the dole) from the government but are too lazy to look for work.

Harry had to do work for the dole because Centrelink thought he was a dole bludger.

Another definition, which did not stipulate a country of origin, gave the following definition which received thirty eight votes for, and six votes against:

A person who has no real interest to work and is happy to live off the hard paying tax payer for survival without feeling guilty. The person has little or no self worth but is happy to go on living in their little routine.

Let us go to the movies next week when my dole payment gets paid.

I can finally get that dvd box set next week and also buy some long needed chocolates and chips for the DVD night.

I am a dole bludger and proud of it, I can sleep in Monday mornings when all you guys get ready for work. Just dont wake me with your loud car engines.

(<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=dole+bludger>)

Other examples can be found on news websites, where comments have been left by those reading specific stories on social welfare news or opinion pieces. One example that I have picked out is a debate by two readers (A and B) commenting on a policy announced by Pita Sharples, co-leader of the Māori Party, before the New Zealand national election:

A: *"their[sic] are many that are happy to abuse the system"*

There aren't. Only about 11% of people on an unemployment benefit at the start of a year are on it at the end of that year. People have not been moved onto sickness benefits - that's a total myth. There are fewer beneficiaries (adding them all up - unemployment, sickness, invalid, DPB) now than there ever were in the 1990s.

Dole bludgers are a complete myth.

B: *"Dole bludgers are a complete myth."*

That comment just proves how disillusioned you really are, dole bludgers do exist, absolutely not all unemployed are, but bludgers do exist. I think you need to get out of your chair and investigate the real world A.

([http://www.3news.co.nz/News/M-party-suggests-500-Christmas-present-for-poor-](http://www.3news.co.nz/News/M-party-suggests-500-Christmas-present-for-poor-families/tabid/423/articleID/78426/cat/496/Default.aspx)

[families/tabid/423/articleID/78426/cat/496/Default.aspx](http://www.3news.co.nz/News/M-party-suggests-500-Christmas-present-for-poor-families/tabid/423/articleID/78426/cat/496/Default.aspx))

This illustrates how social stigma can be attached to different sectors of the population, especially those in need of social welfare assistance. Kingfisher's (1996) work on women in welfare discusses the stigma associated with mothers receiving welfare payments generating a "negative valence of public assistance" (p. 532). Such a stigma continues to be central to welfare discourses and is aligned with the social construction that surrounds the production of the texts. So, when considering the bureaucratic objective that the texts serve (Fairclough, 1989), it is important also to consider the socio-political context in which the documents operate. The documents, in fact, are required to serve two purposes: the needs of those who require services; and the political and policy decision makers at higher levels of government. With this in mind, we can also see how the theory shows that text production, through social construction, can be produced to inform and be consumed by specific target publics.

The social constructions that the society and social welfare organisations have of the people who require assistance are derived from early interpretations and political perspectives of those holding power and authority over the development of policy and the communication of that policy overall (Schneider & Ingram, 1997). Therefore, the texts produced by the organisation are done so within the social construction model of who is "deserving" and "undeserving", "advantaged" and "deviant" already set out by the social and political conditions of society (p.113). These constructions categorise target publics who are perceived in a certain way by those who have authority in society.

The style of language used in all of the hard copy documents lends itself to constructing a perspective that the organisation has the overall power to say and

to do whatever it sees fit in terms of a person's welfare and well-being. For example:

We can grant you financial assistance from the date that you first contact us, if you complete your application within 20 working days of that date.

(Appendix A)

Tell us about any changes (Appendix C)

The legislation administered by the Ministry of Social Development allows us to check the information that you give us in this form (Appendix D)

From this perspective, my analysis argues that the hard copy documents such as the brochures and application forms add to current social constructions that form the realities of what people believe that they are entitled to, what they believe they will experience when asking for help from a service centre of WINZ, and how they will be dealt with when asking for assistance from the organisation. This too is part of the overriding ideology present in society because the people using the services have also socially constructed themselves to fit in with the prevailing ideology. Further examples of the language used in the documents will be discussed in the textual analysis section.

Schneider and Ingram (1997) illustrate how discourse conventions can fall into various categories of the social construction model, thereby enforcing societal stereotypes that have characterised certain target publics. The model also seeks to explain how the political powers benefit from the stereotypes and the perceptions that are reinforced through communication. Welfare is always a site of struggle in power relations and in politics.

However, in its production the documentation is designed for a high level understanding of what assistance is available and how the state can appease the opinions of those outside the Enderley community in the explanation and commands. In a political sense, this makes the organisation appear to be something more acceptable to the target public, and build reputable public opinion to reinforce the policies set out by those in power.

As a social practice, the documents that are produced and disseminated by WINZ have been designed and produced through one main production area, the central office for the Ministry of Social Development in Wellington. The language used throughout all of the documents illustrates that the organisation is the dominant power, and has both authority and control over a person's livelihood and lifestyle choice when seeking financial and welfare assistance from the government. As will be illustrated in the textual analysis, the communication strategy used in the production and dissemination of pamphlets, brochures and application forms has enforced the sense that the institution wants its target public to feel a particular way.

In Enderley's case, people have been grouped together to form a target public that has been socially constructed as "Dependent" but have also been made to feel "Weak" and, in some cases, "Deviant" (Schneider & Ingram, 1997). The following is an extract from an interviewee's perspective on how they see themselves. This analysis will be developed further in the interview analysis chapter: 'The Play in Action'.

Well they make me feel small, and when I go there I'm thinking, oh yeah they are higher than me. Aye, you know? And it's like, well for me, I haven't got much knowledge on those sort of things, and I already feel like I'm a dumb nut and so I turn around and I'll leave it. Cos to me, I'm going in without that brain...or what they want...it makes me hoha (laughs). (Interviewee D)

In turn, the justification for policies has also been communicated through these documents, appealing other target publics who have designed policies and welfare legislation to suit their political masters. Therefore, the communication channels designed to target those who are from low socio-economic backgrounds and communities are consuming the texts with the understanding that they are either “Deviants”, “deserving” or “undeserving”, and may or may not access the services that they are entitled to in this light.

The textual analysis of the documents identified how organisations produce, and disseminate information in brochures, pamphlets and application forms to their target publics. The analysis showed that through the production of these texts, the organisation does not consider the socio-cultural context of its publics, but rather has a “one-size fits all” message that is reinforced time and again.

In the next chapter, I develop this analysis further by looking at how the participants in this research project used the texts, tried to make sense of them and talked about them.

4. Analysis and Findings (2): The “play” in action

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Enderley

“How can we help you?” see even that...well, how can you help me? You can put little words up there, big words down here, see I want help already! (pointing to words in pamphlet), you see? I don’t understand what you are talking about. See there is a lot of things in there, you only need three to cut you out. See that’s a confidence thing aye? Three times you have been declined, and well that’s it, I might as well walk out the door” (Interviewee B)

This response from an interviewee from the Enderley community to my first question captures the gap in communication between welfare agencies and the community. This was a part of a person’s story, and reflected the desperation of people not being able to understand something that they needed to. In this short emotional statement, at least three communication issues can be identified: Powerlessness due to language and literacy barriers, a person’s confidence in themselves, and the communication between individuals and the social welfare organisations. Interestingly, each of these themes is consistent in the transcripts of each of the interview participants from Enderley community.

This chapter examines the existing communication strategies of Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) towards low decile communities such as the Enderley community in Hamilton. I do this by considering the themes that have emerged in the interviews including: access to information leading to issues of

power and authority; lack of confidence; and the organisation's efforts in communicating to the clients overall, interpersonally and textually.

Unfortunately I was unsuccessful with my requests to interview and discuss my research with the Ministry of Social Development which would have contributed a great deal in understanding the organisation's perspective on how they design and implement communication strategies in order to reach those target publics from low socio-economic communities. However, I was grateful to receive a package from the Ministry outlining research and evaluations conducted on the communication strategies of one of their key policies: Working for Families.

Using thematic analysis, I identify the main themes discussed in each of the interviews conducted with members of the Enderley community. Concurrently, I use critical discourse analysis to provide a theoretical anchor to the discussion of the themes identified.

Scene 2: Filling out the forms

"When they say fill this out, well we don't know how to do that."

(Interviewee C)

The Enderley area is recognised as being one of Hamilton's lowest decile and most deprived area in Hamilton (White, et al., 2008). Therefore, education and literacy are part and parcel of the social issues that the members of the community are faced with in their daily lives. Although I could delve into the realms of research on literacy and education in low socio-economic areas, I feel that, although important, my research needs to stay focused on the issues which

arise from this situation: The limitations and barriers to information access and consumption; and how public sector organisations acknowledge these issues when designing communication strategies and policy overall.

Understanding information as well as knowing that information is power is a real challenge to people in the community. With knowledge, people know how to make use of information, know how to deal with a situation and know how to articulate themselves to others (Foucault, 1980). In this scene, members of the Enderley community do not have the understanding of the information presented to them by the organisation. They do not have the knowledge to guide them through official environments and situations when enquiring about services and benefits and making appointments with their case managers. Their understanding is limited and only encompasses what they have learned from others in their community and from their peers who have had particular experiences. Below is an example of a person's reaction to an official document which asks for personal details from the client. He describes how, with little support and guidance, processes such as reading and filling out a form are easier to avoid, rather than putting one's self through the difficulty of trying to make sense of something so complicated.

"You can understand that bit there, but when you read all the rest of it....and a lot of our people have a short attention span you know, like kids? These parents, they start looking at a few things like I would.

"ooh...ummm...ooh,"(scratches his head and makes gestures that he is uncertain) you know, once they start thinking that...gone! They give up."

(Interviewee B)

Another interviewee spoke about having to get help every time he received a letter or information about his case from either Inland Revenue or WINZ:

“Well, my girlfriend helped me sort all of that out, because I couldn’t really understand what I needed to write, and what information that wanted from me... I don’t really understand the language and it is usually really complicated.” (Interviewee I)

It is this background that has shaped the expectations of the client, from the moment they glance at a document that provides information, through to the moment that they meet with their case manager. This sense of not knowing, not understanding and ultimately, not wanting to be engaged, leads to issues of power and authority right from the moment a person asks for help. Following Deetz’s (2003) concept of the linguistic turn, it is the organisation that fails to take account of marginalised communities in their approach to documentation and, indeed, the entire experience of a client from a low decile area. By acknowledging that facts and experiences have been absorbed and learned through everyday language (speaking to one another; telling stories; complaining about what has happened; re-telling a troubling experience), when people are confronted with an organisation “grounded in managerialism” (Deetz, 2003, p. 424), they simply fail to engage even though the stakes are high. It is language which initiates this cycle and prevents communication happening in a positive manner.

Scene 3: Powerlessness

For the community members of Enderley, the feeling of powerlessness is a prominent theme in the interviews. The participants did not understand the information that is produced and disseminated by the organisation but rather, are confused by it. This developed a sense of hopelessness when confronted with documents, forms and relations with case managers at WINZ.

As Foucault (1979) has identified, it is power that produces reality and that the notion of power is intertwined with knowledge. He argues that power is pervasive throughout social structures and that it is not exerted from the top down, but rather inherent within these structures (Mumby & Clair, 1997). As discussed in the textual analysis, communications by the organisation are designed without the acknowledgement (Deetz, 2003) that their target publics may not be able to read, understand or comprehend the information that is printed on brochures and text. This is an important issue to focus on when considering the communication strategies of the organisations, and how these strategies have shaped the client's overall perception of the organisation. This results in the client's voice being marginalised because of their difficulties in communicating their needs to the organisation, as well as understanding how the organisation may be able to help them.

When participants discussed their feelings with regards to not having knowledge or understanding of what is required, they often spoke about themselves and the community as a group. The following example is from a member of the community who often accompanies others to appointments with case managers at WINZ and at IR:

“That’s why these people goin’ down. They don’t know... and there’s quite a few.

And you got some of these case managers that have got all this... power because they know...and we don’t. So we, and with this community too, we feel low low, low - you know and while we are here talking this is what these people of our community are feeling” (Interviewee C)

In this excerpt the interviewee is expressing quite clearly the feeling of powerlessness that she feels in many situations, as well as how she understands other people’s situations. It is because she can relate to how they are feeling. The feeling of not believing in one’s own abilities was mirrored for me in a feeling that followed me in every time I walked through the doors of the community centre. Personally, the feeling of not being able to do something, or feeling as if I was a small voice being drowned out by stronger, louder voices than mine, is unusual for me. It no longer took a leap of the imagination to understand what members of this community might feel when approaching a WINZ service centre. It was only after a few months of talking to people and getting to know them and being really familiar with their families and their lives that I began to be part of this community. After hearing their stories, listening to the ways in which they are treated by almost everyone they encounter, I felt as though I was experiencing a sort of culture shock. This “learning to walk in their shoes” equipped me with some insights into the attitudes and reasons for why people behave the way they do and why they believe that they have no power to change their situation.

One particular instance that has never faded from my memory resource (Fairclough, 1989) was when I bore the brunt of a woman breaking down, and completely lose all sense of rational thought. At that moment, I felt scared, hopeless, and quite sure that I was going to be physically attacked. I didn't know how to react. A fly- away comment brought this explosion of emotion onto my shoulders; one thoughtless comment about her struggle to feed her children was all it took for all of her anxieties, sadness, anger and frustrations to come out in a very terrible way. Within the ten minutes of her swearing at me, banging her fists on the table and eyeballing me in a way that made me freeze with fear, her anger subsided, and she collapsed to the floor, grabbing my hands and begging me to forgive her. After that moment, I remember going home to my parents' house; my home which all of a sudden I saw in a very different light – a brighter light. It was as if I had transitioned between hell and back into heaven, back into the safety of my home, where people were waiting to love me, feed me, talk, listen to me, but overall, care about me. This woman doesn't have any of those things, her children don't, and none of them know or have ever experienced most things that I take for granted such as help, love and being treated like a human being.

I am using this example in order to illustrate the social stresses of people who live within this community, and how, like baggage, they carry these emotions and past experiences around with them to every situation and scenario in their everyday lives. It is with this baggage that they walk into an organisation such as WINZ to ask for help.

ACT TWO

Scene 1: Constructing ourselves

Due to the lack of comprehension by interview participants of the organisational texts, it is important to examine the issues of power which stem from how people engage with the dominant voices of an organisation after being accustomed to the ways in which they, personally, have been communicated to as a marginalised public. The text analysis shows how social construction theory plays a key role in the design of social policy as well as in its communication to the public. Through the interview process, I was able to understand how the social constructions that are developed through the organisation impact an individual's impression of themselves.

For instance, Berger and Luckmann (1966) define social constructions as “the relationship between human thought and the social context in which it arises” (p. 16). This means that as we learn things about each other and experience different situations, we translate our thoughts into expectations of what the other person is likely to do, or how something may happen. This process then evolves into a typification (Berger & Luckmann, 2002). These typifications then become so expected that they are likely to become “habitualizations” meaning that the role that each person plays is entirely expected and, in time, becomes institutionalised. Furthermore, Berger and Luckmann (2002) also point out that, “Institutionalization occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors” (p.42). From this institutionalisation comes the idea of a shared history.

Organisations, themselves, by their very nature have a history which informs the actions of employees. They also have a certain element of control of these typifications by having a defined organisational culture which requires particular patterns of conduct. Therefore the participants in these social interactions have socially constructed a reality which fits with their positive or negative expectations of their current situation. This idea is extremely important overall to my study, as it demonstrates how organisational texts become fundamental to the ways in which an organisation presents its culture, its behaviour and thus develops and emphasises its social constructions of society. Everything that it presents to the client, from brochures, letters through to face-to-face interaction, emphasises the social constructions of clients that the organisation operates with. The following quote expresses this phenomenon, when an interviewee describes how she feels when she is faced with having to go into WINZ or any social welfare agency, and having to ask for help:

Well they make me feel small, and when I go there I'm thinking, oh yeah they are higher than me. Aye, you know? And it's like, well for me, I haven't got much knowledge on those sort of things, and I already feel like I'm a dumb nut and so I turn around and I'll leave it. Cos to me, I'm going in without that brain...or what they want...it makes me hoha (laughs). (Interviewee D)

As I sit listening to this woman telling me about what she feels I notice how, instead of sounding angry, sad, or disappointed, she is laughing and smiling while

she rolls up another cigarette and continues to tell me about her situation, her kids and why she tries to avoid contact with any social welfare agency as much as possible...although, she relies on them for assistance. What I find ironic, and very much in tune with the theoretical perspective of social construction, is the fact that even though she recognises the ways in which she perceives herself in the context of seeking help, yet she discusses it candidly as if it is normal to feel this way.

As the interviewer, and a self-proclaimed social constructionist in the making, I became excited when reading back over this particular concept and thinking through the process of how this idea links in with the other interviewees' perspectives of how they see themselves and how, theoretically, the social construction framework can help make sense of why a person's basic understanding of the world is shaped the way it is. Allen (2005) discusses this idea and articulates the case that, as researchers, "Social constructionists maintain that humans construct the world through social practices" (p. 36). Her discussion is important because it articulates the very essence of what each interview participant from Enderley community has expressed about how they see themselves and why they see themselves in that particular light:

Social constructionists assert that meaning arises from social systems rather than from individual members of society. They contend that humans derive knowledge of the world from larger social discourses, which can vary across time and place, and which often represent and reinforce dominant belief systems (Allen, 2005, p. 35).

These discourses include the texts and talk produced by the organisation and its employees. They are consumed by the clients thus playing a role in the never ending cycle of creating social norms and stigmas through the use of their language and how they portray certain stakeholder publics. This is exemplified through the stories of most participants when discussing what happens when they don't understand the documents or texts. They are automatically put off by the interaction that is to follow:

"They don't break it down to me to understand what it all means. I can't understand what they are talking about when I go in." (Interviewee A)

Here we see that the client has already constructed a perception of the reality that is *likely* to occur, based on the discourse presented in the written documents.

Scene 2: Social Construction of Power and Authority

I examine the concept of power and authority because these concepts identify the levels and the status of the Enderley community members. Identifying who has the power and the authority allows me to explore and understand the socio-political context in which communication strategies are designed in public sector organisations and whether they are successful in communicating to those less powerful in society overall. The social construction framework is helpful in this area of my analysis as it helps me to identify how language, social norms and behaviours emphasise who is powerful in the organisational context and how much power citizens have in this situation. Allen (2005) suggests that power plays roles in the social construction framework because it enables researchers

to investigate issues of power, control and authority in organisational communication. Schneider and Ingram (1997) put this into the framework of the social construction of target publics:

Social groups that lack significant political power are vulnerable to being socially constructed as deviants or dependants. Demonizing social groups creates opportunity for political capital by inflicting punishment policy on powerless, negatively constructed groups and gaining widespread public acclaim for having done so. (p. 192)

The interviews reinforced the feeling of powerlessness in the face of overwhelming helplessness in understanding the process, the documents and the interpersonal communication with employees of the organisation. They feel both deviant and dependent and concerned about the punishing aspects which are reflected in the documents they have been given.

As I fan out the documents in front of interviewees, I try to read my participants' expressions to see if they are at all familiar with what they see in front of them. It was important for me to consider all of the reactions to the documents from each of the participants as I noted that on two specific occasions, an interviewee became a little subdued, looked up at me, looked at the documents, leafed through them and then asked if they had to read them. This immediately made me feel as if I was in a position of authority over them. The majority of the participants acknowledged that they had seen the documents, or recognised them because of their style, but had not ever really thought of picking them up:

“You know...when you see something like this, you already know that you already have a mission on your hands when you know that you have to go and talk to them, you know?”(Interviewee B)

Did this mean that the interview participants do not pick up information because of how it is presented? That they had had previous experiences with this information? That they had enquired about it, thus shaping their expectations of the organisation and how it was going to help them? The answer to these questions quite simply is ‘yes’. Although these documents were discussed, and used to encourage discussion at the beginning of each of my interviews, participants seemed to use the discussion of the documents to segue into how they felt in walking into the organisation, in phoning in and asking for help – confused, disempowered and not at all confident in themselves.

From the first few interviews, I was beginning to get a sense of the disempowerment that people who live in this community feel when they approach a welfare organisation or make enquiries about getting help. These feelings were expressed consistently:

“They make us feel like we are begging. My children are probably entitled to some help, but they just don’t want to go and find out, cos they feel shame, its shame! (laughter). Cos they make you feel like that.”

(Interviewee G)

“I didn’t know how to speak...or say what I wanted to say.” (Interviewee F)

“Well they make me feel small, and when I go there I’m thinking, oh yeah they are higher than me. Aye, you know?” (Interviewee D)

“Well, you know it bores me? And like...well... mind you I have read this, but when I go into the interview with WINZ or with Inland Revenue, it’s totally different .Cos you gotta have...what you are there for. They are all:” what is it about and why do you want it?” And its like...cos you are entitled to it? You know? And it makes you feel like you’ve gotta beg for it. That sort of thing.” (Interviewee D)

In the first quote, the word “shame” is used. When questioned why it was shame, the answer came back *“that it’s shame going in there”*. The word is used in a colloquial sense like when young people comment on others who are in an embarrassing situation. Their exclamation is “Shame!” Interviewee G was at a loss for words – both to verbally articulate her position as well as in terms of the organisational environment in which she found herself. In the third quote above, Interviewee D states that *“they make me feel small”* and that they are *“higher than me”*. The choice of words illustrates exactly the perception of power and authority in relation to the person and as such, the helplessness is reinforced.

From a critical perspective, the issues of power and authority are easy to identify in these instances. However, it is the underlying problem of how a person understands the information from the organisation’s communication which then allows issues of power and authority to be identified between the organisation and those who are trying to access services.

The perceptions that people in the community have of themselves lead to the ways in which interactions with the organisation are understood, as well as the ways in which power relations play out between the organisation representatives and the client. In this sense, it is ultimately the organisation's representative or case manager that holds the power, the knowledge of how to access benefits, and what requirements the client must meet in order to be eligible. The client, on the other hand, is going into the organisation already knowing that they are powerless, have no say in how the organisation perceives them and their situation and thereby making the decisions by giving them the information, or not giving them the information they need. By having all of the organisational knowledge, the case manager knows exactly what the client is entitled to and because the client is already disadvantaged by lack of knowledge or understanding, the case manager has the power to tell them or not to tell them about various services and benefit opportunities. Unknowingly, the client has no choice but to allow, and to accept this type of interaction.

Foucault (1980) provides a theoretical explanation as to how this power situation develops and, in a cyclical way, is adopted as "normal" behaviour or interaction because of this power relationship:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. (p. 119)

Power is intimately connected to knowledge (Foucault, 1980). As Leitch and Motion (2005) explain, “The traditional axiom has been that knowledge is power. To this, Foucault added that power is also knowledge and that the two concepts should be considered together” (p. 258). As such, it is the powerful in society who determine what is knowledge and, at the same time, support the position of the powerful in society.

ACT THREE

Scene 1: Confidence, trust and familiarity

“Ok, this is not a test; I am only using this recorder because I suck at taking notes. There is no right or wrong answer; I just want to hear about your experiences, your thoughts and your feelings”

This is the way that I had to learn to start all of my interviews with people from the community. When arranging the interview, setting a date, time and venue, people seemed excited at participating. However, as soon as I pulled out the information sheets, consent forms and then finally my digital recorder, it was like a wall of silence was put up between us, silencing the discussion between me and the interviewee. I learned very quickly that I had to explain to my participants that I was not testing them, and not using this information for anything apart from a study on how public sector welfare agencies communicate with them. Furthermore, I discussed with them why I was conducting this research, and that although I wasn't able to change the world, I was trying to

change the ways in which people such as themselves are able to access services and benefits in order to improve their own and their family's livelihood.

It was after these initial discussions that people became more comfortable in opening up, in answering questions and having discussions which were descriptive and informative. However, in at least three cases, interview participants could not get over the "questioning" of the interview process. When I turned off the recorder they told me that they were sorry because they just did not feel confident and thought they may have "*sounded dumb*". (Interviewees A, I and L). When I asked about why they thought that they may have sounded "dumb", their response was unanimous in the sense that each of them did not have the confidence to speak on the record, and thought that they "*were not good enough*" (Interviewees A, I and L) to be interviewed.

Confidence was a major theme that emerged through all of the interviews with members of the community. Whether it was the confidence to participate in the interview process, the confidence to fill out a form, or the confidence to go into WINZ and ask for help. In each case, the interviewees expressed trepidation and apprehension at facing these hurdles. The concept of having confidence was discussed at length through different examples and stories of people's difficulties accessing information and understanding it. Confidence can only be gained when a message is understood and can be acted upon. It comes from an expectation that you will not be disappointed (Luhmann, 2000). In this community, however, participants had no confidence in themselves to understand the processes, make the right choices, or to ask about their possible entitlements:

“See it makes things difficult for us, when they even just say “No you can’t”, that just makes us want to go away and say...”oh, um ok...” that’s our confidence gone aye?” (Interviewee B)

The feeling of confidence is so vital in the ways in which people approach situations and the ways in which they make decisions. People may not be confident for a variety of reasons, however, in this scene, the people at Enderley have not been encouraged to ask questions, to speak up, and to say what is on their mind. In fact in many of these cases, the life experiences of the interview participants have taught them to keep quiet, deny any knowledge that may get you into trouble with the authorities and, if you are thinking of asking any question, you better think again. That might make you sound like a “smart arse”. In this scene, a person’s confidence is suppressed, and can only be expressed in an environment which is normal to them and what they know, have grown up with, and acceptable to others in their environment.

I remember going into the community centre for a visit to see the kids who participate in the after school programme. At this stage I was becoming more and more familiar to the people in the centre, especially the kids in the after school programme and the youth workers who coordinate the programmes. Every time I walked into the gym, or the reading room where they were doing activities, I would get tackled with hugs and embraces by nearly every child in the room. This was only because the children had seen the youth workers embrace me because they had developed a strong relationship with me.

However, there was one particular instance when I was waiting for a couple of people for an interview and a few teenagers from the neighbourhood were hanging around. They belonged to another group that meets three times a week for activities and mentoring in the evening. This group are a few years older than the kids who are involved with the after school programmes and were not familiar with me since I normally visited during the hours of the afterschool programme. There was a ping pong table in the foyer and I picked up a paddle and asked the people in the room if anyone wanted to play. Everyone turned around and just stared at me, looked at each other, giggled, and then looked back at me as if I was some alien who had just beamed down from out of nowhere.

“What’s your name?” I asked one of the girls who was sitting in the corner, eyeballing me up and down. Her face turned bright red while she looked at her peers all giggling around the room. She just shrugged at me. *“You don’t know?”* I asked, *“You don’t know what your own name is? Gee that might be a little difficult for you in the long run huh?”* I joked, to which I heard a little more giggling erupting in the background. Just then, to my relief, one of the youth coordinators, M, came through the double doors and greeted me.

It was at that point that I realised that it was only because M had been confident in greeting me and showed that it was acceptable to talk to me, that the others felt more confident in getting to know me and to talk to me as well. He was someone whom they look up to as their role model and he gave the confidence to speak up themselves.

The feeling of trust, confidence and familiarity are the reasons why I was able to get to know and understand the people of Enderley. Those same concepts also provide the key for engaging with situations that they are unfamiliar with, particularly with organisations and bureaucracy. Luhmann (2000) discusses the concepts of trust, confidence and familiarity and suggests that familiarity and trust can be confused but that:

Familiarity is an unavoidable fact of life; trust is a solution for specific problems of risk. But trust has to be achieved within a familiar world, and changes may occur in the familiar features of the world which will have an impact on the possibility of developing trust in human relations. (p.95)

Trust suggests that people understand, participate and conform to the expectations of society. However, when trust is lacking, an element of risk enters the relationship. Rather, it is only through familiarity on a one-to-one basis that some trust is built between people. Any government agency “requires trust as an input condition” (Luhmann, 2000, p. 102) but because of the nature of the system, confidence and familiarity may be undermined and therefore publics will not engage with the organisation.

When discussing the concept of confidence with members of the community, the examples that people used were varied in articulating how they felt and why they felt like that. In the following statements, interviewees talk about how the confidence is lost just by discussing the different criteria for eligibility with a case manager:

“You’ve got this Mr so and so’, they read through the list and, “you can’t have this...” you see the heads already going down and underneath the table before you go anywhere, aye?” (Interviewee B)

In this example, the interviewee is describing his experience with his case manager, trying to illustrate the feeling that he gets when the case manager is telling him what he can or cannot apply for. His example of his own feelings that his head is going down and he wants to crawl under the table illustrates his lack of confidence in this situation.

The next quote positions the interviewee and the case manager:

“It’s really that person who is up there, whether you get a good one, or whether you get a bad one, you get a sad one, you get a grumpy one...but at the end of the day...it’s just too complicated...you go through the paper work and have to see too many people. And paper work is a lot of our people’s problem here.” (Interviewee C)

This illustrates again the lack of confidence of many people in applying for help from WINZ. The process and the people at the service centres are the key to successful outcomes, and they are also the key to much of the frustration felt through the process.

Lack of confidence is expressed again, this time in terms of the tools that the case manager has at his or her fingertips and the client does not have access to:

“There is a lot that they don’t tell you, they don’t tell you what you are entitled to, and the only way that you can find out is by asking them. And then when you do that, they take you back, all the way back on the computer and you don’t really know what they are looking at”.

(Interviewee D)

The computer in this reference provides a barrier between the case manager and the client. Again the client’s powerlessness is reinforced and the case manager’s authority is enhanced. As D points out, she didn’t know what the case manager was looking at and lost confidence in herself because she had not prepared her application on any prior information that she may have given.

In the next two examples, the interviewees are clearly aware that they have no confidence in the situation they are facing:

“Nah , shy...yeah, I don’t feel confident .I don’t know, I just don’t get them... They make me feel dumb (Interviewee H)

Yeah I know where he is coming from; I had to get someone to come with me. See if I went by myself, then they would say what they want to say, and I don’t understand it, and I will leave going along with what they say. They mucking me up!” (Interviewee F)

The situation of not having the confidence to articulate themselves, ask questions and seek information in an organisational environment, is similar to the teenager who was not confident enough to talk to me, even to tell me her name. This example, coupled with the statements of the interviewees above,

show that there is a need for trust and familiarity in order to develop the confidence with which to engage the organisation.

Luhmann (2000) shows how these concepts need to be identified and recognised separately but, how at the same time, they are processed through human thought and behaviour simultaneously:

Avoid confusion between familiarity and trust. Familiarity is an unavoidable fact of life; trust is a solution for specific problems of risk. But trust needs to be achieved within a familiar world, and changes may occur in the familiar features of the world which will have an impact on the possibility of developing trust in human relations. (p. 95)

In all of the interviews concerning experiences with WINZ, familiarity with the organisation was expressed, but it was a familiarity associated clearly with a lack of trust. So, it was not only a lack of confidence in themselves, but also a familiarity with the way the organisation (and case managers) operate, which brought about the lack of trust in the organisation and its willingness to provide a solution.

Scene 2: Being familiar with what you know

That people are only comfortable in talking about and participating in situations and environments that they are familiar with is exemplified in the idea of community at Enderley. Most people know each other and know who their neighbours are. Kids play in the park and in the playground with other kids down the street. Overall, there is pride in belonging to Poets Corner.

In this tight-knit neighbourhood, people take care of one another, share their houses with each other and attend events and meetings in the comfort of knowing that they will know most people who are going to be there; the youth workers who coordinate the Breakfast Club and after school programmes know every child in the neighbourhood by their first names, who their parents are, and what their parents do. In this sense, these characteristics embody what a “real” community should be like: “Not so long ago, people used to know each other within a community and many in the neighbourhood were present during the day. This meant that people had time for each other and the capacity to volunteer their help” (Hamilton City Council, 2006, p. 4).

This community, however, is deprived of many lifestyle benefits. For example, the level of education, economic well-being and poor health all contribute to the cycle of poverty that is embedded in the community. There is the sense within the community that it only knows what it knows and understands life to be. Anything different and unfamiliar may not be understood in a positive light due to past negative experiences of change or “improvement”.

Interviewees spoke about the fact that they knew that their lives weren’t at all perfect, but they were doing what they were doing in order to survive. Some considered asking them to make changes to their lifestyle, was an insult because change is too hard to implement in a community which is so accustomed to simply surviving:

It’s hard to get out of this mind set once you are there, cos its like...yeah – the friggen government again, wanting us to fit into society. And that

mindset is what holds a lot of people back. Why should we fit into what they want, we are not up to scratch with what they want. That's why it's hard to get out of that mindset. Thinking any different would be thinking out of the square that you are accustomed to, it's that safe, comfort zone.

(Interviewee A)

This quote is particularly important because it exemplifies the idea that a vicious cycle, fuelled by the lack of confidence and the need for trust exists in the realities of people in low socio-economic communities. It aligns with Luhmann's (2000) argument:

A system – economic, legal, or political – requires trust as an input condition. Without trust it cannot stimulate supportive activities in situations of uncertainty or risk. At the same time, the structural and operational properties of such a system may erode confidence and thereby undermine one of the essential conditions of trust. (p. 103)

So, although social welfare organisations are set up by the state in order to provide financial benefits and assistance to those who are in need, people coming from low-socio economic backgrounds are mistrusting of their assistance due to past experiences and understandings of those organisations. The lack of trust leads to a particular negative familiarity with the organisation and then, ultimately, to a lack of confidence in themselves. Thus, the interaction that takes place between the client and the organisation may be predetermined by the preceding environment.

The following statements are some more examples of how people are so ingrained with what they know or don't know, which then determines the outcomes of their interaction with the organisation:

Its cos they don't know. And it's because they don't know that they don't want to pay attention (Interviewee B)

If they don't know how, they won't ask (Interviewee C)

This illustrates the inability to deal with bureaucrats at the organisational level because of the conflicts of what Mumby (2000) suggests are the four characteristics of discourse: the discourse of representation; the discourse of understanding; the discourse of suspicion and the discourse of vulnerability. At the organisational level, when people from Enderley approach WINZ they are faced with the discourse of representation – everything that WINZ produces and represents to them – which should, in effect contribute to a discourse of understanding. However, this is the point at which the communication strategies of the organization are unsuccessful in reaching their target publics. Instead of contributing to the building of relationships, it is the point of breakdown before any relationship can be built. Instead, the discourse is one of suspicion – on the part of the case manager – resulting in a discourse of vulnerability for the client.

Scene 3: Community Knowledge

People invariably found out about services or benefits that they were entitled to, from people they know: *“Through friends”* (Interviewee C), *“through whanau”* (Interviewee E), *“through people around here, yeah, we just find out from*

someone who has already been there” (Interviewee D), “my girlfriend helped me out, and told me what I can get and what I should apply for” (Interviewee I).

Communication by word of mouth seemed to make a lot more of an impact rather than having read any of the advertising brochures and pamphlets. People find out about events such as community meetings through one another and only decide to go if they are aware of others they know who will be attending as well. Welfare information is communicated between family members and friends when talking about their problems and situations, and when advice is given.

Communities such as Enderley are tight-knit, where most people in the neighbourhood know one another, and are proud to belong to the same place. In my introduction, I referred to a situation where I was having a cup of tea with a gang leader, an escaped convict, an armed robber and a battered woman. In this scene, I was actually visiting a friend of mine, who was at the time homeless, and was staying in a bedroom with three of her children. The house that she was staying in belonged to the gang leader. While discussing her situation, the battered woman came in with a cut above her eye. It looked like she had been crying, although she spoke in a reasonably calm voice: *“Aunt, can you go and give him a hiding? He’s been drinking and punched me in the head, asshole. I’ve already called the police”*

“Nah girl, I’m already in enough trouble as it is” the older woman laughed out loud, and motioned for her friend to come in. *“What happened? You fullahs been drinking too much?!”* My friend broke into a cackle of laughs, and soon enough everyone in the room was laughing along with her, including her battered

neighbour. The discussion then unfolded into how to deal with the police once they arrived, and who she needed to go to see. Each person in the room had a piece of advice to give to the other, followed by an explanation as to why their strategy worked, or why it was not successful. Everyone related to the other, and could understand the other's situation. The atmosphere in the room was so relaxed that no one noticed the police car pull into the drive until the armed robber who had just robbed a chemist jumped from her seat and, before running to escape from the back door said: *"Oh shit, gotta get outta here, I'll see you fullahs later on"*.

Interview participants commented on how they try their best to help people whom they know are in difficult situations. Even though their roles are not in any way official, in terms of coordinating or facilitating meetings, key figures within the community are sought out by their peers to help them with advice or to help in any situations that they themselves are uncertain of:

"People would come in and ask me what I did with Housing New Zealand or whatever, and I just told them how it was for me. I help them by giving them information that I got, and then if they wanted me too, I would ring up and make the appointment for them as well, cos I know what to expect from those places" (Interviewee C)

Interviewee C comments on how she has helped people find out the information that they need and from which agency. She indicates that she knows the information because of her experiences in the past, and therefore knows what to expect from the organisation and how to best advise her friend.

The idea that I present here of community knowledge, means that people from within the community know and understand one another, the context in which they live and their every day realities. The environment that is generated in terms of people coming together and asking for help is informal and unofficial, thus taking away the burden of having to go through an unfamiliar process with people whom you don't know and who do not know you. The informal practices and information that is fostered in this situation takes the communication from a public sector organisation and transforms it to communication from one person to another in more familiar surroundings so as to make it work in this particular community.

A way forward - with some better work stories

The idea of community members coming together in order to figure out their problems and understanding information has come to the attention of some people who have worked in the Enderley Community Centre. In order to promote more of this type of dialogue, as well as involve organisations further, community meetings have been implemented and are organised by the New Zealand Police.

These community meetings are held bi-monthly and are advertised through brochures and newsletters delivered to the residents in the neighbourhood. The police facilitate the set up and administration of running these meetings and also take responsibility for recording the minutes and reporting those minutes in follow-up meetings. The police invite representatives from major public sector organisations which are relevant to the people from Enderley: Ministry of Social

Development, Ministry of Education, Hamilton City Council, Child Youth and Family and Housing New Zealand.

In the course of the meeting, each representative effectively stands up and takes questions from the people in the community. This is one strategy that has been designed in an effort to enhance the communication between members of the Enderley community and people working in the public sector. I decided to interview a constable who was helping to facilitate these meetings in order to gain his perspective on communication between public sector organisations and people from communities such as Enderley.

In my interview with the constable, I discussed how the idea of community consultation was identified in communication strategies in the public sector as well as policy papers that I had researched. He indicated that, although it was good to recognise the need for community consultation, a lot of the efforts and initiatives that are started in the consultation process are often unacknowledged or, as he put it:

“It’s really tough as we need the communication. People say it’s between the community and the workers -but I know it’s probably between the workers [organisational representatives] and the workers, and those workers and their bosses.” (Interviewee J)

Here the constable is suggesting that when these organisations consider that they are “consulting with communities”, it is really members of the same organisations consulting with themselves. For instance, Hamilton City Council staff, working in the Enderley Community Centre, consider themselves to be the

representatives of the community. This idea was exemplified in my interview with a manager of community workers in Hamilton City Council:

“Poets Corner is different as well oh I would say unique. In Poets corner we’ve got 5 or 6 council staff who are working there, who have worked for 12 years, who have grown up there, who have been community educated, have been in the community for 100 years...” (Interviewee K)

This illustrates, in effect, what Cheney and Christensen (2001) refer to as “auto-communication” because the messages get blurred between internal and external organisational stakeholders. These organisational representatives actually believe that they are the ones who are the community and therefore speak on their behalf without consultation.

This example is vital when considering community engagement in government communication. Through the constable’s statement we can see that there is a division between what is being communicated from the community to the organisation, and vice versa. There is no dialogue and, in fact, little communication. In Young’s (2007) model for evaluating community engagement, the second level, a consultation process (two-way) in which communities and individuals give feedback on information received, corresponds with Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) two-way asymmetrical level in public relations. However, the information gathered through this research shows that although ideal, the process of communication relating to both Young (2007) and Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) models of communication is not a reality in this instance. There is little consultation, and what consultation there is, is asymmetrical. The Enderley case

illustrates the need for a third party to facilitate the communication between organisation and client in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

In order to create dialogue and consultation between social welfare organisations and the Enderley community, the constable facilitates a bi-monthly meeting, inviting anyone who is a resident in the area, as well as those representatives from the public sector organisations who were present at the initial meeting outlined earlier. Furthermore, the constable has tried to facilitate a sub-group of community representatives – one from every street in Poets Corner who get together to discuss government initiatives and policies, and to gauge from them how to best present those initiatives to the community. In this sub -group, societal issues such as crime and domestic violence are also discussed, and community representatives are then asked for their perspectives on how to confront these major problems:

“I try and have with all the meetings or the initiatives - I try to find out whether they need it first or how they’re needed and where they’re needed. And through that community consultation that is the only way to find that out. We sit them (public sector representatives) all in front of the community, we invite the whole community to come, and we stand up one at a time and people just hack at them” (Interviewee J)

The Community Constable has found a strategy to try and get communication channels opened between the community and the social welfare agencies.

Minutes are taken at each of the meetings and the representatives of the various organisations are committed to attending the meetings. However, it is yet to be

determined whether this strategy will produce the positive outcomes hoped for in the community. It is within this framework that I develop my conclusions and recommendations in order to formulate an answer to my overall research question.

This example draws on Habermasian perspectives on the actual “ability to speak to one another, to decide on the basis of reasons and arguments, to distinguish between understanding and deception” (Pensky, 2001, p. ix). It illustrates the way in which information can be transmitted and absorbed, thus resulting in positive action. Obviously, the big question is then – if a community can articulate and be pro-active about a particular situation that affects, why is it that they are unable, as individuals, to be pro-active about their individual situations in terms of the welfare agencies?

It may be possible for low socio-economic communities, like Enderley, to translate their community confidence into an individual ability to succeed in using the bureaucratic services that are available to them. This would lead to more successful outcomes for individuals and the community.

5. ANOTHER ACT: On an adjoining stage

The fact that I was not able to meet or to interview any representatives from the Ministry of Social Development proved to be a limitation to this study. However, I am grateful for the package I received containing the communication plan for the Working for Families benefit – an initiative between MSD and Inland Revenue. A letter accompanying the information was also very helpful in gaining an understanding and perspective on the communications from the Ministry to its clients overall (see Appendix H).

The letter outlines how communication is a vital component of MSD's service delivery to ensure that "*all New Zealanders are aware of their entitlements and can access them.*" It goes on to explain two of its most recent initiatives: Working for Families (WFF) and the Super Gold Card campaign. Because all of the interview participants identified and recalled WFF as an information campaign that was relevant to them, I focus primarily on the material relating to the communication strategies designed for WFF. However, the letter provides salient information when considering how much importance is placed on the communication strategies of all services and policy from the Ministry. For example:

The Ministry's communication staff are spread throughout the Ministry's business and service lines. They develop, write, design and deliver communication materials to more than one million clients and nearly 10,000 staff. They manage more than 18 websites, produce nearly 200 publications a year and deal with thousands of media enquiries. In

addition to communications staff, all Ministry staff, particularly frontline staff, play a crucial role in making people aware of the Ministry's services and assistance available to them.

This section illustrates how the Ministry recognises that, without clear communication strategies, their initiatives and policies would not be communicated successfully and therefore not achieve the organisational objectives. This paragraph also identifies the levels of bureaucracy that exist within the organisation because these staffing levels must cater to and service *“more than one million clients”*.

In examining the information provided to me on the communication strategy of the Working for Families (WFF) benefits, I refer back to my research question of whether the existing communication strategies of public sector organisations serve the needs of low decile communities in New Zealand. From the documentation provided, the communication strategy clearly indicates that the target publics for this campaign are all working families and that the objective of this particular communication strategy was to communicate that this benefit is available to all working families, including high income families rather than simply low income families or beneficiaries.

This could suggest that MSD perceives the “high income” target public as not responding or identifying with public sector advertising due to the perception that advertising a benefit does not interest or engage with those who are not in need. This indicates to me that the organisation believes that their existing communication strategies do indeed serve the needs of low socio-economic

communities because the organisation is specifically identifying the need to communicate the eligibility of all working families in this communication strategy.

The information on the WFF campaign provided sufficient detail of how communication strategies were designed and the specific tactics used. It is important to note that the differentiating element of this campaign is the fact that television advertising was used to inform people of the policy and its benefits to working families. This is important because when asked to recall any information campaigns that people may have seen from WINZ or any social welfare agency, participants from Enderley all recalled the Working for Families television advertising.

Table 2 outlines the timeframes and strategies used in order to inform publics of the Working for Families policy. It identifies the responsibilities of the two organisations involved in this communication implementation, Inland Revenue and WINZ. The information illustrates that the organisations have considered specific areas in which to advertise and display information on the WFF policy. It also addresses how both organisations can engage with existing clients as well as inform potential eligible clients.

In considering the information in this table and reflecting on the information gathered from my interviews, I conclude that the strategies used to communicate the WFF benefit successfully serve the needs of low socio-economic communities. The methods used to reach and inform target publics through television advertising and then by reinforcing their messages through

communication initiatives in the communities contributed to the success of the campaign throughout New Zealand. My interview participants from Enderley all agreed that the WFF advertising had informed them about the benefits that they may be eligible to receive. When asked if they understood what they saw, most responded by saying that the advertising prompted them to find out more by calling into a service centre, or making enquiries by phone with the assistance of either a family member or a friend. When asked why they thought they engaged more, or related to the information presented through the advertising, the answer was simple. The following examples illustrate how all of the interviewees responded and recognised the information on the WFF benefit.

“Because it was always on T.V, and I could relate to what they were saying” (Interviewee E)

“Because you could hear about it, and you see it all the time, so then you can ask about it” (Interviewee D).

Interviewee E talks about being able to relate to the messages that are being presented through television advertising. Interviewee D says that she hears about it and sees it all the time, therefore engaging with the information or finding out more about it is easy.

These quotes illustrate how people from low socio-economic communities are able to engage with information more easily because it is presented both visually and verbally. The messages are also received at a time when they may be more open to messages and information because they are receiving them along with any programmes or entertainment that they are watching at the time. The

organisation is then able to further engage with existing clients or potential clients by being prepared to discuss the initiative through community displays and forums, as well as their more traditional forms of communication. (See Table 2, Case Managers etc).

When considering the communication strategies implemented by MSD for the communication of all benefits and services that WINZ provides, the letter outlines important information with regards to the production and dissemination of information brochures. The letter (see Appendix H) states that the Ministry places a high level of importance on communication and it is this communication which contributes to successful outcomes. The dissemination methods are through publications which are distributed to a variety of places where the public can access them as well as being available online. Furthermore, MSD says that they translate a range of their documents into a number of different languages and offer help for those with language difficulties: "Documents are made easy to understand as possible, particularly where there are legislative requirements that certain information must be included, such as on benefit application forms" (Appendix H).

In addressing the Ministry's point on translations, it is important to remember that simply translating the documents into other languages does not necessarily achieve the objective of people understanding what it is they need to do.

Differences in cultural values, practices and attitudes are not often taken into consideration because of the mainstream focus of many information programmes. Thus, translations do not make it any easier for people to understand what it is they are reading (Noble & Camit, 2005).

Clearly, as illustrated in both my textual analysis and results from the interview analysis, more work is needed in the design, production and dissemination of information pertaining to all benefits and services from WINZ. MSD was successful in this particular example of communication to low socio-economic communities because it considered how target audiences could be engaged effectively, in the comfort of their own home, and in a way which didn't require them to read any organisational jargon. This information was then reinforced by setting up convenient sites which people could easily go to for further information in their community. The information was also available in other places where people gather such as union centres, places of work and child care centres.

I appreciate that budget constraints would determine how much the organisation was able to spend on advertising campaigns such as the WFF campaign. However, in my conclusions and recommendations I make suggestions on how the organisation is able to shape the communication strategies of their general information in order to engage with their target publics to achieve the same success as they did with the WFF campaign.

Table 2. Description of WFF active engagement with clients and potential clients
(in addition to broad-based communications such as television advertisements)

Work and Income responsibilities	IRD Responsibilities
Introductory and ongoing initiatives since 2004	
<p>WFF Promotional Case Managers, Working Families Case Manager and Childcare Co-ordinator roles</p> <p>Workbrokers used to help access employers</p> <p>Exit interviews used to inform clients transitioning off benefit</p>	<p>Social Policy Liaison Officers used to promote WFF; also where appropriate Community Liaison Officers, Māori Community Officers, Business and Tax Information Officers, Agent Account Managers, Call Centre Customer Service Reps and Pacific Island Community Liaison Offices engaged in promotion</p>
Maintenance of 0800 numbers and call centres	
Extended office hours including Saturday and home visit options (in some service centres)	
<p>Joint community promotions (eg stands in public areas or at local events, shopping malls and supermarkets, doctors' surgeries, school uniform and stationery shops, at health immunisation campaigns; promotions through employers, trade unions, etc and via Inland Revenue's Industry Partnerships)</p>	
<p>Joint presentations to organisations serving the same target groups (eg Housing New Zealand Corporation, Accident Compensation Corporation, Citizens Advice Bureau, Budgeting Services, parenting and childcare organisations)</p>	
Supplying promotional material to employers	
Interagency collaboration in Heartlands sites which provide people in rural and provincial New Zealand with access to government services	
Additional activities in 2005	
WFF outbound calling to existing clients who may	Direct mail to a first set of front-end WFF Tax

be eligible for Accommodation Supplement and Childcare Assistance	Credits clients inviting them to apply for the In- Work Tax Credit
Additional activities in 2006 and onwards	
Letters sent to selected beneficiary families (with children) advising them of the new In-Work Tax Credit	Direct mail to another set of WFF Tax Credits front-end clients and to year-end clients inviting them to apply for the In-Work Tax Credit
Auckland Outbound Calling Initiative to Employers	
Ten temporary staff appointed in Auckland to promote WFF in communities (staff speak English and Pacific languages)	
Work and Income promoting WFF within industry partnerships	
Work and Income Multilingual Contact Centre providing information about WFF Tax Credits for calls generated by in-language posters	
Meetings with Council of Trade Unions to discuss WFF promotion to 350,000 plus members	
Childcare Co-ordinators contacting all schools promoting WFF	
Joint operation of stalls at malls and a number of home shows, parent and child shows, markets, festivals, cultural and community events	

(Source: Ministry of Social Development. (2007). *Receipt of the Working for Families Package*, 2007. Wellington, New Zealand: Author)

6. Conclusions

“What is your thesis about?”

“It’s about the communication between social welfare agencies and clients from low socio-economic backgrounds”

“True? You need to talk to my....”

Over the last two years of my research project, this conversation took place over and over again. ‘You need to talk to my mother; my brother; my aunty; my mate’ – everyone knew of someone who was not being heard and felt that they were being mistreated by a public sector organisation. This was one of two reactions that I would get after explaining what my research was about. The second was: “well that shouldn’t take you too long, there is none!”

My research question asks: Do the existing communication strategies of public sector organisations serve the needs of low-decile communities in New Zealand? I have answered this question by critically analysing the discourses of the texts and found that they were produced by the organisation with little reference to the socio-cultural context of the target publics. The language used relied on jargon and ambiguity in order to satisfy a political system which fails to embrace the needs of low socio-economic groups.

These groups struggle to gain access and consume information because of the ways information is constructed, produced and disseminated. People who depend, and have to rely on, public sector organisations for financial assistance and welfare support, are at risk of feeling a lack confidence and, ultimately,

disempowered in gaining access to information from the moment they read and see something which challenges their day-to-day understanding of any given situation. These feelings, coupled by the actual experiences they carry with them when they walk into an organisation to ask for help, all become part of the shaping of the context of the communication process and interaction.

Throughout this analysis, I have attempted to peel back the layers of meaning in terms of language and power. By looking at texts, in the first instance, I revealed how text is socially constructed to appease policy makers and opinion leaders in the first instance, rather than appealing to particular audiences who need to access and use the information. By combining the textual analysis of the organisational texts of WINZ, IR and HCC with the interview analysis of the community participants I am able to illustrate how, through the discourse practices and socio-cultural contexts, organisational texts impact on clients from Enderley in ways that may be taken for granted by policy makers and those who design the communication strategies. By placing the text analysis alongside the actual reactions and discussions of the participants in the research, it is possible to reveal how these texts are consumed and acted upon, thus providing insight into how discourse practices impact on society. These impacts are as diverse as the society in which they operate.

The Working for Families campaign was an exception in the way that communication strategies were formulated with target publics in mind. This strategy was reasonably successful in reaching the appropriate publics, and getting them to act upon the information they received. Part of that success was that the messages also targeted middle-income families, as well as those in lower

socio-economic communities. It is interesting to note this particular success when people, other than beneficiaries, are also targeted with similar messages.

In finding answers to my research question, I made a point of asking every participant what it would take to make their experiences different, or make the communication process clearer for them as clients of the organisation. Interview participants all had a positive comment to make on something that has worked well for them, even if it was simply the ways in which they were greeted by a case manager. Each idea was then built on and ideas were developed through a discussion to try to find out how communication strategies could be developed further. Messages could then be consumed by specific target publics, such as the members of the Enderley community, so that help will never be too hard to find.

This thesis concludes that, for the most part, the communication strategies used by public sector organisations, do not serve the needs of low socio-economic communities in New Zealand. This research shows that more attention must be paid to the means by which people in these communities interpret and understand information, as well as the channels through which it is communicated.

Recommendations

The recommendations presented below are based on discussions with the participants in this research project and also from observations of successful strategies in this particular community. Some aspects of the recommendations have been successfully implemented in the community by individuals taking the initiative to help one another and to mentor each other to gain empowerment and take control of their own situations. It is from this standpoint that I put forward the following recommendations:

1. Communication strategies should target particular publics through correct identification of appropriate tactics.

This recommendation is for public sector organisations to take the successful example of the Working for Families initiative and apply it to the broader communication strategies of the different sections of the Ministry of Social Development.

The Working for Families initiative is a success story that other public sector institutions should examine when developing and designing a communication strategy to implement a social welfare strategy. The strategy was successful in that it recognised the social constructions that people had of benefits, receiving a benefit and working out if you were eligible to receive a benefit.

As discussed in the text analysis, through its publications and information brochures, the organisation made sure to illustrate different case scenarios and break down the information in the clearest way possible in order for people to practically work out if this was a benefit for them. The policy, as a whole, was

designed to help *all working families*. With this, MSD identified that people in middle to high incomes did not engage with, or were slow to consume, information on this benefit, because they did not see themselves as beneficiaries and therefore believed that they were ineligible. Furthermore, MSD also recognised that people on low incomes also needed to be targeted. They needed to communicate that this benefit adds to the weekly income, rather than abating it.

The use of television advertising proved to be invaluable in communicating to all target publics. The participants from the Enderley community all recalled the television advertising used in this information campaign and at least half confirmed that this prompted them to make further enquiries. As a side note, I think it is also important to point out that in most houses that I visited in Enderley, all participants owned a television, and most people had a habit of leaving it on at all times when the children were at home, or when they were doing chores. This means that, while the information campaign was running, they would have seen and heard the information voluntarily and would become more and more familiar with it every time it aired. Moreover, the television advertising was more attractive to interview participants because there were no forms to fill in or brochures to read.

The existing communication strategies from MSD with regards to the Working for Families policy serve the needs of the Enderley community. The community members could draw their own conclusions regarding the policy because it had been communicated to them using appropriate tactics. Furthermore, MSD has also communicated that they understand communities and people to be

different from each other and that they have different lifestyles which are not based on a “one-size-fits-all” formula. The organisation communicates this by illustrating different examples through imagery and illustration of people’s financial situations, thus making the information relevant to their target public and to *all working families* across the socio-economic spectrum.

In order to effectively communicate with clients from low socio-economic areas such as Enderley, WINZ needs to draw on the successes of the Working for Families campaign, as well as consider how to develop this success further by re-constituting the stigmas and social constructions that exist in the communication strategies from WINZ overall. Public sector organisations must understand who their target audiences are and the different communication tactics that are likely to reach them.

2. WINZ should train community leaders to help

Through both text analysis and interview analysis, I have uncovered some of the issues that people are faced with when seeking help from this social welfare organisation.

One key insight that I have taken from this study is how communities such as Enderley naturally have leaders or people who are well known, and who are looked up to in their neighbourhood. These community leaders may be *kaumatua* and *kuia* who have lived in the area for a long time, and have the wisdom and guidance that others look to for comfort, support and advice. They may also be people who work hard in the community, mentoring children and to whom young people can relate and respect. Whoever they may be, these people

need to be identified by public sector organisations such as WINZ so that they can be trained to help communicate messages and provide guidance and support that is relevant to the people of the community.

If people from Enderley could identify and relate to a community member, the communication process instantly becomes a lot simpler and clearer for the person trying to access information. They can take solace in the fact that the person giving them the information knows and understands the context in which it should be understood and therefore removes the power that is perceived to be at play between a regular case manager and the client. This is an opportunity for WINZ to train and guide community leaders to communicate and help their peers, thus helping them engage with the information that they need and gain access to the appropriate services that are provided by the organisation.

3. Public sector organisations should engage with their local communities

WINZ need to localise and shape their communication efforts in order to work through the barriers that communities such as Enderley are faced with, and use their characteristics in order to encourage communication and interaction. They can do this by identifying the characteristics of their key communities, and use those characteristics to enhance the experiences and relationships with community members overall. Furthermore, by understanding what makes people from specific communities patriotic to their area, WINZ can develop communication strategies and tactics in order to relate more to their target audiences.

Because all information on policy and services is designed and disseminated through the main central Wellington office of the Ministry of Social Development, WINZ can become out of touch with the communities in which they are situated and what they may need in order to understand general information.

For councils working at developing social well-being strategies for their “high deprivation areas”, engaging with that community has to become a top priority for neighbourhood development units and departments. Although staff may have been located in these areas to implement the council’s strategy, this does not mean that they then have the mandate to represent community thoughts and ideas back to the council. The perspective and perception fundamentally changes, no matter how many years staff may have been working in the community. The difference between a staff member’s perspective, and that of a member of the community is that they are on council’s pay-roll. Members of the community are not. A member of staff, who is paid regularly and has job security has a reality that is completely different to that of a member of the community who lives within the context of that community with no job security or financial stability.

Social well-being strategies that identify low socio-economic communities need to get the buy-in and engagement of the community into which they are investing time and money, rather than assuming that what works for other communities who are not so deprived, will work for everyone. The one-size-fits-all model does not work in the welfare context, and this includes city council strategies.

4. Shift the focus from “you may be able to get” to “is there a way that we can support you?”

The way that language is used is fundamental to the ways in which messages are interpreted. Throughout the text analysis I illustrated how power is conveyed through the production and dissemination of texts and how people automatically understand how little power they have when accessing information from WINZ.

By using language to entice people to learn more about services rather than try to scare them away, an organisation already positions itself into a more positive situation. There is already an ingrained perception that people expect to be treated without respect when asking for help from WINZ. It is possible to challenge that perception by changing the way the organisation communicates with people through its texts. People want and need support. That is the reason why they have made the time to seek information about how they may be able to access it. Communication strategies need to promote how they can support people and rather than bullet point how a person *may* or *may not* be eligible for something. By re-wording and changing the power equation in the texts, the organisation can start to develop a way to provide help and support rather than relying on ambiguity to weed out those not eligible for help at all.

Through these conclusions and recommendations, this thesis makes a contribution to the empirical data available on lower socio-economic communities with a view to encouraging social change within society for the benefit of all. As Deetz (2005) identified when he addressed these issues, “Once

we understand that our world, our cultural life, is a social construction, we should know by whom and to what ends it was constructed in this way and have some choice in the matter” (p. 89).

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Appendices

Appendix A: How can we help you?

Appendix B: Extra help for New Zealand Superannuitants

Appendix C: Managing your debt

Appendix D: Domestic Purposes Benefit Application form

Appendix E: Working and raising a family?

Appendix F: Is your family entitled to extra money?

Appendix G: Social Well-being Strategy

Appendix H: Letter from Ministry of Social Development

We may need more information

If we have asked you to give us more information it's really important you get this information to us as soon as possible – so we can start paying your income support.

Please get your information to us by

Here is what we need from you...

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Tell us about changes

When you get income support you need to tell us straight away about any changes to your personal situation. If you don't you could miss out on extra payments – or end up with a debt to pay back. Here are some things you need to tell us about

- any changes in your income
- any changes related to work or study
- any changes in your home or family situation
- if you intend to go overseas
- if you go into hospital
- if you change address
- if you change your name or bank account
- any change in costs you get extra help for.

A final note

We are here to make things as easy as possible for you – and to help you get all the financial help you're entitled to. So if you have any questions about anything in this brochure please call us free on **0800 559 009** or talk with your Case Manager. We'll be happy to help in any way we can.

When you get income support you can quickly check your benefit details by calling Service Express free on **0800 333 030** anytime. For anything else call **0800 559 009** Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm or Saturday 8am to 1pm, or contact your Case Manager, or visit our website www.workandincome.govt.nz

Remember, 0800 numbers are free from public phone boxes.

Financial assistance (continued)

Widow's Benefit

You may be able to get this benefit if you are a woman whose partner has died and you have not remarried or got a new partner.

War Pensions

If you have a disability that is due to your service as a member of the New Zealand Armed Forces you may get a Veteran's Pension or a War Disablement Pension. If you are the surviving spouse of an ex-service person who has died from disabilities you may get the Surviving Spouse Pension.

Working for Families Tax Credits

Working for Families Tax Credits are entitlements for families with dependent children 18 or younger. There are four types of payment and you may qualify for one or more, depending on your personal situation.

Family Tax Credit

This provides ongoing financial support for families. You can get it while on a benefit or while you're working (Inland Revenue pays it if you work).

The other payments have different rules and you can only get them if you're not on a benefit.

In-Work Tax Credit

This is a payment for working families. It pays up to \$60 a week per family with three children and an extra \$15 a week for each other child, providing you normally work a minimum number of hours each week.

You can get in-work tax credit if you're self employed. It's not available to families receiving an income-tested benefit or student allowance.

Minimum Family Tax Credit

If your family's income is \$22,645 a year or less before tax, you may be able to get a family tax credit. This payment tops up your family's income to at least \$355 a week after tax (rates at 1 April 2008). To get this payment, at least one parent must be working for salary or wages.

Parental Tax Credit

This payment helps with the costs of a new baby for eight weeks after your baby is born. You could get up to \$1200 depending on your family income. But if you received weekly accident compensation payments, an income-tested benefit, a Student Allowance or New Zealand Superannuation during the first eight weeks after your child was born, your entitlements could be affected.

To find out if you qualify for Working for Families Tax Credits contact Inland Revenue on **0800 227 773**.

Employment and Training Assistance

These are some of the employment programmes we have available to clients.

Business Training and Advice Grant

This grant can help with the costs of paying for advice and training from professionals to help you start a business. Talk with your Case Manager about it.

Course Participation Assistance

If you are attending an employment or training programme with us we may be able to help with your course fees, caring and transport costs.

Enterprise Allowance

The Enterprise Allowance can help with the costs of starting a business, such as buying the first lot of stock and your weekly living expenses.

Modification Grant

If you have a disability this grant may be used to remove the physical barriers at your workplace so you can get work and keep working. We can pay for special equipment and/or modifications to the workplace.

Skills Investment Subsidy

We may be able to pay a subsidy to an employer for wages and/or pay for training so you can get the skills you need to do the job, this can be paid while you are working.

Taskforce Green

Taskforce Green is a subsidy that allows a client to participate in project-based work where they can develop work habits and general on-the-job skills.

Transition to Work

This grant can help with the costs of searching for or starting work – like clothes for work or travel costs. It may also help meet your living costs until you get your first pay.

Work Experience

Work Experience gives you the opportunity to gain up-to-date Work Experience to explore whether a job or career would be suitable, and to develop informal contacts.

Community Activities

Activity in the Community

This offers unpaid work experience opportunities in sponsored community projects and helps you learn work skills while you help the community. You may be able to get some expenses paid.

What to bring to your meeting

Below is a basic checklist of what you need to bring along to your meeting with us. It is important that you bring everything that way we can move things along faster. If there is anything on the list you don't think you have access to, or if you are not sure about what to bring, please give us a call.

If you are applying for one of our health or disability benefits or allowances, we may need to see forms from your doctor or any existing reports or assessments, or if you are looking for help with childcare costs, we need to see information from your childcare provider. Check on the application form for more details. To receive a form call **0800 559 009** or pick one up from your nearest Service Centre.

We need to see proof of:	You will need to bring:
Your identity and New Zealand residency (and your partner's if you have one)	Two forms of identity – one must be birth certificate, passport or citizenship papers, the second can be a driver's licence or firearms licence.
Any name changes you and your partner have had	Marriage certificate or deed poll papers
Your bank account(s) numbers	Bank book or statement with your account number
Children living with you who you support	A full birth certificate for each child
Your (and your partner's) IRD number	A form or letter from Inland Revenue
Your (and your partner's) last pay and all income for the last 26 weeks and/or 52 weeks	Items such as payslips, bank statements a letter from your employer(s)
Any assets you (or your partner) own, which could earn income	Items such as bank statements, share certificates, property valuations
Any benefit or pension you (or your partner) get from overseas	A letter, statement or payslip showing your payments
Your housing costs	Items such as a tenancy agreement or a letter from the person you board with; if you own your own home bring details of your mortgage, rates, insurance and home repair costs
Costs and expenses for other allowances	Please talk to us about what to bring
Emergency	Proof of what created the emergency and/or receipts to show where your benefit/income has been spent. Quote(s) for the goods or services required (no quote for food is required)

By **income** we mean any income you (and your partner) get from any source, such as work, regular insurance payments like ACC, investments, business, private pensions, rent or boarders.

By **assets** we mean anything you or your partner own which you can earn income from such as savings, shares, stocks, loans to others or property you don't live in.

Information matching

The information you have provided may be compared with information held by Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Corrections, the New Zealand Customs Service, the Department of Internal Affairs, the Accident Compensation Corporation, Housing New Zealand Corporation and New Zealand Immigration Service. It may also be compared with Social Security information (for example, pension or benefit information) held by other governments (including Australia and the Netherlands).

Sharing information

Under the Tax Administration Act 1994, if you have dependent children, the information you have provided may be shared with Inland Revenue for the purpose of administering Working for Families Tax Credits. Inland Revenue may also:

- use the information for the purposes of child support, student loans and taxation
- disclose it to the Department of Labour, Statistics New Zealand, the Ministry of Justice, the Accident Compensation Corporation, and the Ministry of Education
- disclose your personal information to your partner.

Reviewing your benefit

From time to time, your benefit may be reviewed, and you may need to provide us with an update on any change to your circumstances. We will contact you at the time.

Reviews and appeals

If you're unhappy about a decision we have made, we want to resolve things quickly, so we have a special review process and a Benefit Review Committee. Most misunderstandings can be resolved quickly and easily just by talking things over, so please try talking with your Case Manager first. If you're still unhappy, you can go through our appeals process. Ask for our *Reviews and Appeals* brochure.

Our Services and Standards

For a guide to the services we offer and what you can expect from us ask for *Our services and standards* brochure. It tells you about your rights as a client and how you can help us provide you with better service.

If you have any questions, you can call us free on **0800 559 009**.

How can we help you?

If you have any questions please call us free:

General enquiries **0800 559 009**
Service express **0800 333 030**
Community Services Card **0800 999 999**
Working people **0800 774 004**

If you are deaf or find it hard to communicate by phone, you can send a message to our Deaf Link free-fax on **0800 621 621** or email MSD_Deaf_Services@msd.govt.nz

If English is not your first language, we will do our best to find an interpreter to help you talk with us.

At Work and Income we're here to help all New Zealanders in any way we can. Please tell us everything about your individual situation so we can help.

We want to make things as easy as possible for you, and to help you get all the financial and job search help you need. If you have any questions please talk to your Case Manager or contact us on **0800 559 009** or visit our website www.workandincome.govt.nz.

We can grant you financial assistance from the date you first contact us, if you complete your application within 20 working days of that date.

Below are some of the financial assistance most commonly paid for the situations described.

If you are...	You may be able to get...
Working and on a middle to low income, facing high costs or in financial hardship	<input type="checkbox"/> Extra financial support (see the next page)
Aged 65 or over	<input type="checkbox"/> New Zealand Superannuation <input type="checkbox"/> Living Alone Payment <input type="checkbox"/> Extra financial support (see the next page)
Caring for someone sick or infirm	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Purposes Benefit
A woman alone 50 years or over or your partner has died	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Purposes Benefit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Widow's Benefit
16 or 17 years old, unemployed and looking for work or can't work because you're sick, injured, disabled, or still at school or training	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Youth Benefit only if you can't live with or be supported by your family <input type="checkbox"/> Invalid's Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Sickness Benefit
Looking for full-time work	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Benefit
A trainee on an approved work-related course	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Benefit
Not able to work because of an illness, injury or disability or pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Invalid's Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Sickness Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Benefit
A person with a disability from NZAF service or the surviving spouse of an ex-service person	<input type="checkbox"/> War pensions
Raising children alone	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Purposes Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Maintenance Allowance <input type="checkbox"/> Widow's Benefit
A refugee, or someone who can't get other types of income support	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Benefit
Caring for someone else's child	<input type="checkbox"/> Orphan's Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupported Child's Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Purposes Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Widow's Benefit
Going to a hospital or rest home long term	<input type="checkbox"/> Residential Care Subsidy <input type="checkbox"/> Special Disability Allowance
Caring for a disabled child	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Disability Allowance

If you have an immediate, essential or emergency need for an item or service that you cannot afford to pay for right now, you can make an emergency appointment.

To do this, please phone the Work and Income Contact Centre on **0800 559 009**, your case manager or your local service centre.

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More about financial assistance

Here's more information about the financial support you and your family may be able to get. It's only a quick guide, and there are other conditions. If you'd like to know more, please call us free on 0800 559 009, get in touch with your Case Manager, or look at the brochure stand in your local Work and Income Service Centre.

Accommodation Supplement

This payment can help with your rent, board or the cost of owning a home. You may be able to get it if your income and cash assets are lower than a certain amount, but you or your partner can't get it if you rent a property owned or managed by Housing New Zealand.

Advance payment of benefit

If there's something you really need but can't afford to pay for right now (like appliances, rent or school uniforms) you may be able to get some of your benefit paid ahead of time. You need to pay it back and there are other conditions.

Away from Home Allowance

If you have children 16-17 years old living away from home to go on a tertiary or training course you may be able to get this allowance to help with their living costs.

Care Supplement

This payment is for former foster parents who are caring for someone else's child and getting an Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit for the child after that child has been discharged from care under the CYPF Act.

Child Disability Allowance

You may be able to get this allowance if you are caring for a disabled child. It doesn't depend on your income or costs, but the child must be under 18, have a physical or mental disability and need constant care and attention. A Disability Allowance is also available.

Childcare Subsidy

If you have pre-school children who go to an early childhood education service, the subsidy can help with your childcare costs.

Community Services Card

This card gives you and your family discounts on doctors visits and prescriptions. You'll get one if you get a benefit – or you can apply for one if you don't get a benefit but are a superannuitant or on a low to middle income.

Debt Repayment Protection

If you receive a Pathways Payment this provides assistance to you. You must have dependent children, have cancelled your benefit because you have moved into paid employment. Talk to your Case Manager.

Disability Allowance

This allowance can help towards the extra costs you, your child or partner have because of a disability. It can help pay for things like regular visits to the doctor or hospital, medicines, extra heating, special food or travel.

Domestic Purposes Benefit

If you are 18 or over (or 16-17 if you were legally married), you may be able to get this benefit if you are

- raising children alone or
- caring for someone sick or infirm (not your partner) or
- a woman alone aged 50 or over.

Emergency Benefit

If you're in an emergency situation and need financial help but don't qualify for another type of benefit, you may be able to get an Emergency Benefit. There are other conditions so talk with your Case Manager first.

Emergency Maintenance Allowance

If you don't qualify for the Domestic Purposes or Widow's benefits but are in an emergency situation and need financial help you may be able to get this allowance. You'll need to meet certain conditions so please talk with your Case Manager about it.

Funeral Grant

If your partner, child or parent has died – or you are arranging the funeral of someone with no family, you may be able to get this grant to help with their funeral costs.

Home Help

This allowance can help if you've had a multiple birth, have a domestic emergency or need domestic support with things like housework, cooking or childcare.

Independent Youth Benefit

You may be able to get this benefit if you are 16-17, can't live with your parents, are independent and

- unemployed and looking for full-time work or
- still at school or on a work-related course or
- can't work because of sickness, injury or disability.

Invalid's Benefit

If you have a permanent and severe sickness, injury or disability that stops you working or makes it difficult for you to work, you may be able to get this. You must be 16 or over and have lived here for a number of years.

Living Alone Payment

If you live alone, you may qualify for the Living Alone Payment in addition to your New Zealand Superannuation or Veteran's Pension. You can get the payment from the date you started living alone or the date we receive your application, whichever is later.

If your partner has died recently and you apply within 28 days, the payment can be started from the day after your partner died.

New Employment Transition Grant

You may be able to get this grant if you have been working for 6 months or less and you miss out on income because you, your partner or child are sick, or you have problems with childcare arrangements. You need to have a dependent child or children.

New Zealand Superannuation

You may qualify for this if you are 65 or over and have lived in New Zealand for a total of 10 years since you turned 20 (5 of those years have to be since you turned 50). If you live alone you may be able to get a Living Alone Payment.

Orphan's Benefit (also see Care Supplement)

If you are looking after someone else's child because the child's parents have died or can't be found, or can't look after their child because they have a long-term illness, you may be able to get this benefit. You need to be

- 18 or over and the main caregiver of the child and
- expect to care for the child for 12 months or more and
- not be the child's natural or adoptive parent.

OSCAR Subsidy

If you have school-age children and you are working, training or taking part in a work-related activity, the OSCAR Subsidy can help pay for your children's care before or after school and in the holidays.

Recoverable Assistance Payment

This is for people not receiving a main benefit. If you need something but can't afford to pay for it right now (like appliances, rent or school uniforms) you may be able to get this assistance. You need to pay it back and there are other conditions.

Residential Care Subsidy

This subsidy can help with the costs of long term residential care in a rest home or hospital. It is paid by the Ministry of Health.

Sickness Benefit

If you temporarily can't work full-time because of sickness, injury, pregnancy or disability, you may be able to get this benefit. You need to be 18 or over (or 16-17 and living with a partner and children you support) and

- have a job now but had to reduce your hours and income or
- be unemployed or working part-time and find it hard to look for and do full-time work.

If you are 16 or 17 you can also get this benefit on the grounds of hardship if you are pregnant.

Special Disability Allowance

The Special Disability Allowance may help with the costs of visiting your partner if they are in hospital (for at least 13 weeks) or getting a Residential Care Subsidy. You must be on income support to get this allowance.

Special Needs Grant

This payment can help with urgent things that you really don't have any other way to pay for, like food, bedding and emergency dental or medical care. You won't usually have to pay this grant back. There are other conditions so talk with your Case Manager if you'd like to know more.

SuperGold Card

The SuperGold Card will entitle you to discounts from participating businesses and give easy access to concessions on government and local authority services. This card will be sent to you automatically soon after your New Zealand Superannuation/Veteran's Pension is granted. If you have a non-qualified partner included in your New Zealand Superannuation, they will also get a SuperGold Card.

Temporary Additional Support

If you're in hardship and urgently need help with your essential living costs and you have no other way of meeting these costs, please talk to us.

You will not get Temporary Additional Support if you currently receive a Special Benefit. Your Special Benefit will continue until you no longer need it.

Training Incentive Allowance

This allowance is for people on Domestic Purposes, Widow's or Invalid's benefits, or Emergency Maintenance Allowance, who are training to better their work skills.

Unemployment Benefit

If you are 18 or over (or 16-17 and have a partner and child you support), you may be able to get this benefit. You need to be

- looking for full-time work and able to start work now or
- on a work-related training course full-time.

If you need extra financial support talk to your Case Manager.

Unsupported Child's Benefit (also see Care Supplement)

If you are looking after someone else's child because the child's parents can't support them due to a family breakdown, you may be able to get this benefit.

- You need to be
- 18 or over and the main caregiver of the child and
 - expect to care for the child for 12 months or more and
 - not be the child's natural, step parent or adoptive parent.

Do you need extra financial support with...	You may be able to get...
Housing Costs <i>for example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> rent, board or mortgage payments overdue rent or power account buying household appliances and furniture urgent and essential house repairs 	<input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation Supplement <input type="checkbox"/> Advance payment of benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Additional Support <input type="checkbox"/> Recoverable Assistance Payment
The cost of setting up a business <i>for example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> professional fees for business advice purchase plant and equipment or initial start-up stock buy materials required to produce goods for the business 	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Training and Advice Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Enterprise Allowance
The costs of working <i>for example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> buying work clothes, safety boots or tools paying for travel when you start working necessary living costs until you get your first pay weather conditions affect your seasonal work childcare, after-school care or holiday care 	<input type="checkbox"/> New Employment Transition Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Recoverable Assistance Payment <input type="checkbox"/> Transition to Work <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Additional Support <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal Work Assistance Payment <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare Subsidy <input type="checkbox"/> OSCAR Subsidy
Health Costs <i>for example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> prescriptions and doctors' visits extra costs of having a disability transport costs to doctor or hospital ambulance fees dentures, glasses or hearing aids 	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Services Card <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Allowance <input type="checkbox"/> Child Disability Allowance <input type="checkbox"/> Home Help <input type="checkbox"/> Recoverable Assistance Payment <input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Additional Support <input type="checkbox"/> Advance payment of benefit
Study Costs <i>for example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> course fees and costs such as stationery, text books and travel living costs for children studying away from home 	<input type="checkbox"/> Training Incentive Allowance <input type="checkbox"/> Away from Home Allowance <input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Recoverable Assistance Payment <input type="checkbox"/> Advance payment of benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Course Participation Assistance
Family Costs <i>for example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> childcare, after-school care or holiday care school uniforms, books and exam fees caring for a special needs or disabled child car seats and safety helmets costs of having a multiple birth 	<input type="checkbox"/> Childcare Subsidy <input type="checkbox"/> OSCAR Subsidy <input type="checkbox"/> Working for Families Tax Credits <input type="checkbox"/> Recoverable Assistance Payment <input type="checkbox"/> Child Disability Allowance <input type="checkbox"/> Advance payment of benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Home Help <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Additional Support <input type="checkbox"/> Care Supplement <input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Course Participation Assistance
Funeral Costs <i>for example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> funeral costs of your child, partner or parent travel costs to attend the funeral of a family member 	<input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Advance payment of benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Recoverable Assistance Payment
Emergency, Essential or Immediate Needs <i>for example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> emergency dental and medical care food and bedding power reconnection fees hire purchase debt and loan repayments 	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Additional Support <input type="checkbox"/> Recoverable Assistance Payment <input type="checkbox"/> Advance payment of benefit

If you want to know about other support agencies in your community that may be able to help, please contact your nearest Work and Income Service Centre or talk to your Case Manager.

Your personal assessment

Your Case Manager will fill in this section with you.

Here's a summary of what we talked about today.

This is how much you're likely to get. It's only a guide so we'll send you a letter confirming exactly how much you will get. If you have any questions please give your Case Manager a call.

This is your client number

Main benefit \$

Other allowances \$

\$

\$

\$

\$

Less deductions for \$

\$

TOTAL INCOME SUPPORT per week \$

will be made to your bank account(s) each week/fortnight on a Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday.

Your share is \$

Your partner's share is \$

The first payment is \$

due to be paid on / /

Your share is \$

Your partner's share is \$

The rates and payments shown above are only an estimate that is based on information you have given us at the time this assessment was calculated. You will get a letter with your final assessment later on to confirm your payments. Please note we can only give partner details if your partner has given us permission to do so.

more over the page

Extra help for New Zealand Superannuitants

You may be able to
receive extra financial help.
What you qualify for depends
on your personal situation.

If you would like to know more

- call us free on our dedicated
NZ Superannuation line
0800 552 002
- send a message to our Deaf Link
free-fax **0800 621 621**
- visit our website
www.workandincome.govt.nz
- visit your local Work and Income
Service Centre

Most extra help is income tested
and some is also asset tested. Contact
Work and Income to find out if you qualify.



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If you need help with housing costs for example...

- Essential house repairs
- Rent, board or mortgage payments
- Rates
- Overdue power account
- Buying household appliances and furniture

You may be able to get

- Living Alone Payment
- Accommodation Supplement
- Special Needs Grant
- Temporary Additional Support
- Advance payment of Benefit

If you need help with health costs for example...

- Doctors visits and prescriptions
- Medical and health related travel
- Ambulance fees
- Extra power, gas and heating
- Dentures, glasses or hearing aids

You may be able to get

- Community Services Card
- Disability Allowance
- Temporary Additional Support
- Special Needs Grant
- Advance payment of Benefit

If you need help with emergency costs for example...

- Emergency medical or dental treatment
- Buying food
- Power reconnection fees
- Travel costs to attend a family member's funeral
- Funeral costs

You may be able to get

- Special Needs Grant
- Advance payment of Benefit
- Funeral Grant

What you qualify for depends on your personal
situation. If you are finding it hard financially then
contact Work and Income.

Managing your debt

How to repay your debt and stay out of debt in the future



If you're reading this brochure you've probably been paid more income support than you're entitled to, or received an advance payment that you've agreed to pay back.

This brochure tells you how you can repay your debt to us, and what you can do to help prevent getting into debt in the future.

If you have any questions after you've read this please give us a call – our numbers are listed throughout this brochure.



Work and Income
Te Hiranga Tangata

A service of the Ministry of Social Development

ALLA0022 – APRIL 2007



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Repaying your debt

If you're on income support we usually take a set amount out of your payments every pay day to repay your debt – until the debt is fully paid off.

The amount we take depends on what you can afford, and can change if your circumstances change. If you want to pay off your debt faster you can choose to make extra repayments at any time.

Talk with your Case Manager if you have any questions about your repayments.

If your income support stops

You need to call us straight away on **0800 558 008** and arrange to repay the money you owe. We will explain your options and help you work out a repayment plan to suit your budget.

You can pay off a lump sum at any NZ Post Shop, send us a cheque, set up regular deductions from your wages or bank account, or make repayments by phone or internet. While you're repaying your debt you'll have a Debt Management Officer you can call if you have any questions.

Keeping track of your debt

It's a good idea to keep track of your debt so you can budget for your repayments.

We don't send out regular statements unless you ask us to – but you can call us anytime to find out how much you owe.

If you're not coping

We know it can sometimes be difficult making repayments while you're on a low income. So if you have trouble keeping up with your repayments please call us as soon as you can.

We may be able to help by reducing your repayments or providing extra income support for instance – or refer you to someone else who can help. You may also find our booklet *Need extra help with costs* useful.

- intend to travel overseas (even for a short time)
- start/finish part-time or full-time study
- are imprisoned or held in custody
- are admitted to or discharged from hospital
- have been granted an overseas pension
- get married, or separate, start or end a civil union or de facto relationship with someone of the same or opposite sex
- have a change in the number of children living with or supported by you
- have a change in your income

If you have any questions, you can call us free on **0800 559 009**

Remember your debt won't go away

We actively collect debts owed to us, and take the time to trace people who owe us money.

One of the ways we do this is by comparing records with other Government departments (see the *Benefit Fraud* leaflet for more details).

We also have certain legal rights if you don't repay us, for instance we can have money deducted from your wages or bank account.

Who you can talk to

If you have any questions about your debt or repayments please call

- **0800 559 009** if you get income support, or
- **0800 558 008** if your income support has stopped.

If you have any questions,
you can call us free on
0800 559 009

4

Preventing debts in the future

Once you've paid off your debts, it's really important you try and stay out of debt. Here are a couple of things you can do to help prevent getting into debt in the future.

Tell us about any changes

By telling us straight away about any changes to your personal situation, you can help ensure the right amount of income support is paid to you so you don't end up owing us money. You should tell Work and Income straight away if you:

- find a job or have a change in the hours worked whether paid or unpaid
- become self employed or start to run a business
- intend to travel overseas (even for a short time)
- start/finish part-time or full-time study
- are imprisoned or held in custody on remand
- are admitted to or discharged from hospital
- have been granted an overseas pension
- get married or separate, start or end a civil union or de facto relationship with someone of the same or opposite sex
- have a change in the number of children living with or supported by you
- have a change in accommodation costs

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- have any other change that may affect your benefit entitlement or rate of payment of income support
- change your name, address or bank account number

Create a budget plan

A budget plan can help you manage your money better. It means you can be more prepared if you suddenly have an unplanned expense – and it means you may not need to borrow money to meet these expenses. Ask your Case Manager for advice or pick up a copy of our *Managing your Money* brochure to help you get started on a budget plan.

Please call us if you have any questions about your debt or repayments.

If you have any questions,
you can call us free on
0800 559 009

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Useful contacts

Work and Income

Debt enquiries	0800 558 008
Allegation line	0800 556 006
General benefit enquiries	0800 559 009
Accommodation and childcare	0800 774 004
New Zealand Superannuation	0800 552 002
Veteran's Pensions	0800 553 003
Community Services Card	0800 999 999
Deaf Link fax	0800 621 621
StudyLink	0800 889 900

Inland Revenue Department

General enquiries	0800 227 774
Working for Families Tax Credits	0800 227 773
Child Support	0800 221 221

ACC

General claims	0800 101 996
Sensitive claims	0800 735 566

Others

Citizens Advice Bureau	0800 367 222
NZ Federation of Family Budgeting Services (Inc)	
Listed in your local telephone book under:	

Budget Advice Services

7

Domestic Purposes Benefit Application – Sole Parents



Work and Income
Te Hiranga Tangata

A service of the Ministry of Social Development

If you need help with this form call us on ☎ **0800 559 009**.

Who can get this benefit

If you need help filling in this form, please ask at your nearest Work and Income Service Centre.

Mehemea e hiahia me awhina a koe ki te whakaki i tenei panui, haere patai ki te poari o te Work and Income tata tonu ki a koe.

Afai e te mana'omia se fesoasoani i le faatumuina o so'o se pepa talosaga e uiga i penefiti, faamolemole faafesoota'i le ofisa o le Work and Income.

To be eligible for the Domestic Purposes Benefit for Sole Parents you must be:

- 18 years or over **or**
- 16–17 years and have been legally married.

You must also:

- be living without a partner **and**
- be supporting a child **and**
- have lived in New Zealand continuously for two years at any one time since becoming a New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident **and**
- usually live in New Zealand.

If you can't get the Domestic Purposes Benefit for Sole Parents, you may be able to get another benefit. Please ask us about this.

What to bring

Please ask Work and Income staff for help if:

- you do not have any of the documents we have asked for
- you think there could be a delay in providing this information
- you would like to know about extra help.

Proof of your identity history

You must provide one form of identification that proves you have been using your legal identity for at least 2 years.

What other help can you get?

If you have dependent children and they attend either a childcare service, or before or after school care programme, please talk to us about how we can help with childcare assistance.

You may also be able to get the Child Disability Allowance. Please talk to us about this.

If you are finding it difficult to meet some of your daily living costs, such as food, power, accommodation or medical expenses, we may be able to help. There are different types of extra help we offer. How we can help you depends on your own individual situation. If you'd like to know more please read our brochure "How can we help you" or call us on

☎ **0800 559 009**.

When you apply for the Domestic Purposes Benefit for Sole Parents, you will need to complete this application form and provide the following:

- Proof of your lawful residence in New Zealand (eg New Zealand birth certificate or current New Zealand passport, or other country passport with residence visa).
- One other form of identification (eg driver's licence, firearms licence or a bank card with signature). If you are unable to provide at least one form of photo identification you will need to provide one further form of identification (3 forms of identification in total).
- Full birth certificates for your children.
- Proof of any name change.
- Marriage or civil union certificate (if you have one).
- A form or letter from Inland Revenue showing your IRD (tax) number.
- Gross income details (eg weekly gross wage and gross holiday pay) for the 52 week period immediately before application **and** details of your last 26 weeks gross income.
- Proof of any accommodation costs.
- Proof of bank account details.
- Your school leaving certificate (only if you have recently left school).
- Proof or quotes for any expenses relating to your disability.
- Proof of any other essential ongoing costs (eg hire purchase agreements).
- Verification of assets.



Privacy Statement

The legislation administered by the Ministry of Social Development allows us to check the information that you give us in this form.

This may happen when you apply for a benefit and at any time after that.

The Privacy Act 1993 requires us to tell you that:

- The information you give us is collected under the authority of the legislation administered by the Ministry of Social Development.
- The information will be held by the Ministry of Social Development.
- The information is collected for the purposes of the legislation administered by the Ministry of Social Development (including Work and Income, Child Youth and Family and other services lines of the Ministry), and in particular for:
 - granting benefits and other assistance under the Social Security Act 1964
 - providing employment related services
 - statistical and research purposes
 - providing advice to Government
 - care and protection needs of children
 - providing support and services for you and your family
 - providing education related services.
- Work and Income may contact health providers to verify any health related information you give us.
- Work and Income may give employers information about you to find you employment. Where Work and Income refer you to a job vacancy, we may also contact the employer to discuss the result of any job interview that you attend.
- Work and Income may share information you have given us with childcare centres to administer your entitlement to childcare.
- Other information that you give us on your skills, aspirations, family circumstances etc, and that is not required to assess your entitlement to a benefit may be used to provide a better service to you by the Ministry of Social Development.
- The information you give us may be compared with information held by Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Corrections, the New Zealand Customs Service, the Department of Internal Affairs, the Accident Compensation Corporation, Housing New Zealand Corporation, Ministry of Health and Immigration New Zealand. It may also be compared with social security information (for example, pension or benefit information) held by other governments (including Australia and the Netherlands).
- Under the Tax Administration Act 1994, if you have dependent children, the information you give us may be shared with Inland Revenue for the purpose of administering Working for Families Tax Credits. Inland Revenue may also:
 - use the information for the purposes of child support, student loans and taxation
 - disclose it to the Department of Labour, Statistics New Zealand, the Ministry of Justice, the Accident Compensation Corporation, and the Ministry of Education
 - disclose your personal information to your partner.
- Under the Privacy Act 1993 you have the right to ask to see all information we hold about you, and to ask us to correct that information.
- You are not required to give us information, but if you do not give us all the information we ask for, your application for benefits may be declined.

Obligations

Work situation changes include starting part-time, casual or full-time work, whether paid or unpaid.

Changes in your living situation include:

- getting married
- entering a civil union
- starting a de facto relationship with someone of the same or opposite sex
- change in the number of children supported
- change in accommodation costs.

I must tell Work and Income immediately if I:

- have a change in work situation
- become self employed / start to run a business
- have changes to my income or financial circumstances
- intend to travel overseas
- start / finish part-time or full-time study
- have changes to personal details (such as name, address or bank account details)
- have changes to my living situation
- am imprisoned / held in custody on remand
- am admitted to or discharged from hospital
- have been granted an overseas pension
- have any other changes that may affect my benefit entitlement or rate.

Important

I understand that:

- if I have made a false statement **or**
- if I have failed to answer all the questions in full **or**
- if I do not tell Work and Income about changes in my life that might affect my entitlement or rate **then**
 - my benefit may be reviewed and cancelled **and**
 - I may have to pay back the total amount of any overpayment that I have received **and**
 - Work and Income may impose a penalty (up to three times the value of the overpayment) **or**
 - I may be prosecuted and fined or imprisoned.

Additional information

Information required by

--	--	--

Day Month Year

Contact name

Your client number is:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



Domestic Purposes Benefit Application – Sole Parents



Work and Income
Te Hiranga Tangata

A service of the Ministry of Social Development

CLIENT NUMBER

Please read this before you start

Please check that you have all relevant "What to bring" items on the front of this form.
Please complete all questions – if not applicable write N/A.

Name

1. What is your name?

First name(s)

Surname or family name

Q2 note: Give any other names that you use now or have used in the past (including your maiden name).

2. Are you known by or have you used any other names?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

1.

2.

3. What gender are you? Male Female

Q4 note: Please tick one box to show the title you want to be known by.

4. What do you want to be called?

Mrs Miss Ms Mr No title Other

Birth date

5. What is your date of birth?

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Day	Month	Year

Address

Q6 note: If you live in a rural area, a house number could include:

- RAPID number
- fire number
- emergency services number.

Q7 note: Mailing address includes:

- postal box (PO Box)
- rural delivery details
- C/O address.

6. Where do you live?

Flat/house no. Street name

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------

Suburb

City

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------

7. What is your mailing address (if different from above)?

If you live at a rural address please include your rural delivery details here:

8. How can we contact you?

Work phone

Home phone

Mobile phone

Email

Fax

Past benefits

9. Are you currently receiving any type of benefit?

No Yes ▶ What type of benefit?

10. Have you ever received any type of benefit before?

No ▶ Go to Question 12 Yes ▶ What type of benefit?

11. What was your client number?

Residency

Q12 note: Tick one box.

12. Indicate which describes your residency situation:

New Zealand citizen (by birth) ▶ Go to Question 16

New Zealand citizen (other) ▶ Go to Question 14
Date of citizenship
Day Month Year

Permanent resident ▶ Go to Question 14
Date permanent residence granted
Day Month Year

Other ▶ Go to Question 13

13. What is your residency status?

14. When did you arrive in New Zealand?

Day Month Year

15. Where were you born?

16. Have you lived in New Zealand continuously for two years at any one time since becoming a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident?

No ▶ Talk to us about other assistance you may be able to get Yes

Q17 note: This means that you consider New Zealand your home, you are a legal resident, usually live here and intend to stay permanently.

17. Do you usually live in New Zealand?

No Yes

18. Have you lived in any countries outside New Zealand?

No Yes ▶ Please fill in the Overseas Residence Details section of this form on page 20

Ethnic group

Q19 note: You don't have to answer this question if you don't want to.

This information is for statistics and will be used for research and future development work.

19. To what ethnic group do you believe you belong?

New Zealand Maori ▶ Which tribe(s)/iwi?

New Zealand European Niuean Samoan Indian

Other European Tokelauan Tongan Chinese

Cook Island Maori Other ▶ Please specify below:

Tax number

20. What is your Inland Revenue tax number?

Bank details

Office use only

Verified by

21. What bank account do you want the benefit paid into?

Name of bank (eg ANZ):

Name of branch (eg Lower Hutt):

The account is in the name of:

The account number is:

Bank			Branch			Account number														
	/																		/	

Reason for application

Q22 note: Reasons could include:

- breakdown of a marriage
- birth of a child
- partner's imprisonment
- having given up or lost work.

22. What is the reason for your application?

23. How have you financially maintained yourself immediately prior to the application?

Q24 note: A partner is your spouse (husband or wife), your civil union partner, or a person of the same or opposite sex with whom you have a de facto relationship.

24. Have you ever lived with a partner?

Yes No ▶ Go to Question 38

Partner details

Q25 note: A partner is your spouse (husband or wife), your civil union partner, or a person of the same or opposite sex with whom you have a de facto relationship.

25. Are you living apart from your partner?

No ▶ Please discuss with Work and Income Yes ▶ Go to Question 26

26. What is your partner's name?

First name(s)

Surname or family name

27. What is your partner's date of birth?

Day	Month	Year

28. How long did you live with your partner?

Years	Months

29. If married or in a civil union, what date did you marry or enter the civil union?

Day	Month	Year

30. When did you stop living with your partner?

Day	Month	Year

31. Please describe below, in your own words, the reason or event in your relationship that resulted in separation:

32. What is your attitude to the relationship, and how do you feel about the separation?

33. What do you consider to be the future of the relationship?

34. Has your partner died?

No Yes ▶ When did they die?

Day	Month	Year

35. Is your partner in prison?

No ▶ Go to Question 36
 Yes ▶ What was the date of imprisonment?

Day	Month	Year

▶ Which prison?

--

36. Are you getting any money from your partner?

No Yes ▶ How much each week? \$

--

37. Is your partner paying for any of your expenses?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Type of expense	Amount
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

Employment

Q38 note: Paid employment includes employment for which you receive non-monetary benefits, eg free board, payments in kind, or drawings from an unprofitable business.

Q40 note: Give the name, telephone number and address of the firm or person you work for.

Q41 note: Give gross (before tax) amount of wages and the value of any non-monetary benefits received, eg free board or any drawings, whether or not the business makes a profit.

Q42 note: If your child(ren) attend either a childcare service or before or after school care programme, please talk to us about how we can help with Childcare Assistance.

Q44 note: Give the name, telephone number and address of the firm or person you worked for.

Q45 note: Give gross (before tax) and net (after tax) amounts and the value of any non-monetary benefits received, eg free board or any drawings, whether or not the business makes a profit.

Q48 note: Give gross (before tax) amount.

Q49 note: Give the name and address of your employer, and the start and end dates of your employment.

Q50 note: Give type of payments, eg long service leave, payments in lieu of notice, etc.

38. Are you working or have you been working in the last 52 weeks?

No ▶ Go to Question 50 Yes

39. Are you still working?

No ▶ Go to Question 44

Yes ▶ Is the job: Full time Part time Casual
 Seasonal Voluntary Self employment

40. Who are you working for?

1
2

41. How much is your gross weekly wage? \$

42. Are you paying childcare costs?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

43. Have you had any other employment in the last 52 weeks?

No ▶ Go to Question 50 Yes

44. Who did you last work for and what sort of work did you do?

45. What was your weekly wage in your last job?

Gross Net
\$ \$

46. How long did you work for?

Start date Finish date
Day Month Year Day Month Year

47. Did you get sick pay when you left the job?

No Yes ▶ Please provide gross amount: \$

48. Did you get holiday pay when you left the job?

No Yes ▶ Please provide gross amount: \$

49. Have you had any other employment in the last 52 weeks apart from that answered in Questions 38-48?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

50. Did you get any redundancy / termination-type payment in the last 52 weeks?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Gross amount	Payment type	Date paid
\$		/ /
\$		/ /
\$		/ /

Other income

Q51 note: Examples of income from other sources:

- wages or salary
- accident compensation
- farm or business income (include drawings)
- self employment
- interest from savings or investments
- dividends from shares
- income from rents
- redundancy or termination type payments
- Child Support
- maintenance payments
- boarders
- Student Allowance, scholarship or Student Loan living cost payments
- any other income, eg family trusts, overseas payments.

Give gross (before tax) amount.

51. Did you get income from any other source in the last 52 weeks?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Source (eg bank account number)	Gross income (eg interest)

52. Do you expect to get other income in the next 52 weeks?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Source (eg bank account number)	Gross income (eg interest)
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

Dependent children currently in your care

Q53 note: Please give the names of any children that you financially support and are living with you as a member of your family, including:

- stepchildren
- children at boarding school
- adopted children
- grandchildren
- mokopuna.

If you are caring for a child who is not your own you may be able to get other forms of assistance. Please ask us about this.

53. Do you have dependent children in your care?

No ▶ Please discuss this with Work and Income Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Child's full name	Date of birth
1	/ /
Relationship to you	Other parent's name
Child's full name	Date of birth
2	/ /
Relationship to you	Other parent's name
Child's full name	Date of birth
3	/ /
Relationship to you	Other parent's name
Child's full name	Date of birth
4	/ /
Relationship to you	Other parent's name
Child's full name	Date of birth
5	/ /
Relationship to you	Other parent's name

Q54 note: You can get family tax credit if the children are 18 or under and not supporting themselves or in full-time employment.

You'll usually qualify for family tax credit if you qualify for a benefit – and depending on your circumstances you can choose to have your family tax credit paid with your benefit. We can arrange this for you.

If your child(ren) attend either a childcare service or before or after school care programme, please talk to us about how we can help with Childcare Assistance.

54. Do you get income for any of these children?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Child's full name	Type of income

55. Do you have a shared custody arrangement for any of these children?

No ▶ Go to Question 56 Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Child's full name	Hours per week in your care	Name and address of person you share custody with

Q56 note: We'll tell Inland Revenue about your choice – so you don't need to.

56. Do you want to have your family tax credit paid with your benefit?

No Yes

57. Is your child(ren) a dependent child, and been maintained by your spouse at any time?

No ▶ Please discuss this with Work and Income Yes

Dependent children previously in your care

58. Have you had any other dependent children in your care in the last 52 weeks who are no longer dependent on you?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Child's full name	Date of birth	Date the child left your care or was no longer dependent
	/ /	/ /
	/ /	/ /
	/ /	/ /
	/ /	/ /

Legal identification of other parent

Q59 note: Please answer this section if you have dependent children for whom the legal identity of the father has not been established.

59. Please provide details of any child(ren) in your care for whom the legal identity of the father has not yet been established:

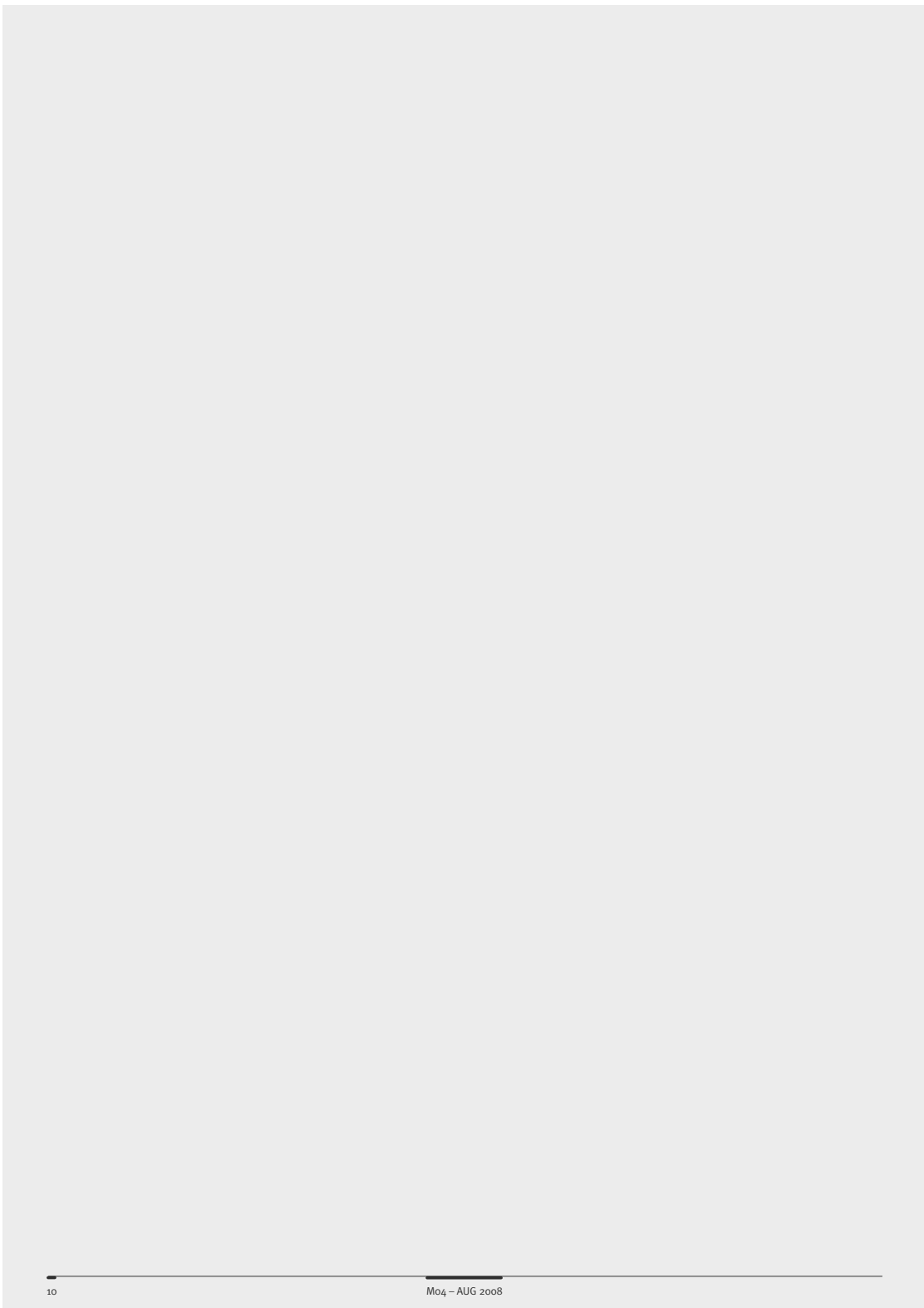
Child's full name	Date of birth
	/ /
	/ /
	/ /
	/ /

60. Have you seen a solicitor to assist you with legal identification of the father of the child?

No ▶ Please discuss this with Work and Income

Yes ▶ Please provide solicitor's name and address details below:

61. What is the solicitor's advice/action?



Accommodation Supplement

Who can get Accommodation Supplement?

If you are renting, boarding or own your own home, you may be able to get extra help through Accommodation Supplement.

62. Do you want to apply for Accommodation Supplement?

Yes ▶ Please provide details below: No ▶ Please go to page 13, Disability Allowance section

Living situation

63. Do you live alone?

Yes No ▶ Please provide the names of the others you live with below:

First name	Surname	Relationship to you


Assets

Q64 note: Examples of cash assets:

- money in bank or savings organisation
- money lent to other people or organisations
- money in Bonus Bonds, shares, debentures or government stock.

Q65 note: Examples of non-cash assets:

- leisure boats
- caravans
- land or buildings other than your home, eg holiday homes.

 You may be required to show proof of these details.

64. Do you have any cash assets?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:


Type of asset	Total value
	\$
	\$
	\$

65. Do you have any non-cash assets?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Type of asset	Total value	Money owing
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$

Rent

 You may be asked to bring something that proves how much you pay, eg rent book, tenancy agreement.

66. Do you pay rent?

No ▶ Go to Question 71 Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

67. What is the total amount of rent paid for your home each week? \$


68. How much of this do you pay for yourself and your family? \$

69. What is the name, address and telephone number of the person you pay rent to?

70. Do you live in a property owned or managed by Housing New Zealand?

No ▶ Go to Question 71 Yes ▶ You are not entitled to receive an Accommodation Supplement

Board

 Please bring something that proves how much you pay.

Board includes:

- food
- power
- cost of room
- telephone.

71. Do you pay board?


No ▶ Go to Question 74 Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

72. What is the total amount of board you pay for yourself and your family each week?

\$

73. What is the name, address and telephone number of the person you pay board to?

Home owner


 Please bring something that proves how much you pay for mortgage, insurance, etc.

Please only include mortgages that relate to the purchase or alteration of the home.

Include both interest and principal.

Do not include contents insurance.

Include water rates if you pay them separately.

 Please bring in receipts for repairs and maintenance.

74. Do you own the home you live in?

No ▶ Go to Question 78 Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

	Name of company	Amount of payment	How often is the payment (weekly, monthly, 2-monthly, 6-monthly, yearly)?
First mortgage	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other mortgage	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
House insurance	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Ground lease	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mortgage insurance	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Rates	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Water rates	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

75. What was the total cost of repairs and maintenance in the last 12 months?

\$

76. If you have a Housing New Zealand mortgage, what is your interest rate? %

77. Have you received a Rates Rebate?

Yes ▶ Amount \$ Rating year 1 July

No to 30 June

Disability Allowance Application

Please complete all questions – if not applicable write N/A.

Who can get Disability Allowance?

If you, or a family member, have a disability, likely to continue for at least six months, you may be able to get extra help through a Disability Allowance.

We may be able to help with costs such as ongoing visits to the doctor, medicines, medical alarms and travel.

Your doctor or specialist will need to complete the Disability Certificate.

78. Do you want to apply for Disability Allowance?

Yes ▶ Please provide details below: No ▶ Please go to page 17, Temporary Additional Support section

Disability Allowance

Q79 note: Please tick one box only.

You may be able to get Child Disability Allowance for the same dependent child. Please talk to us about this.

79. Who are you applying for?

Yourself ▶ Go to Question 80

Your dependent child ▶ Please provide their full name below:

First name(s)	Surname	Relationship to you

Entitlements

80. Is this disability covered by private medical insurance?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

81. Is this disability covered by ACC or War Disablement Pension?

No Yes ▶ If 'Yes', you may not be entitled to a Disability Allowance

Expenses

Q82 note: You must provide invoices, receipts, quotes or printouts for each additional expense before they can be considered as an ongoing cost for Disability Allowance. These must be attached to this form when you have completed it.

All of these expenses must be directly related to the disability and verified as necessary by a registered medical practitioner.

82. What additional expenses are paid for as a result of the disability?

List pharmaceuticals/items/services/treatments (eg medical costs, gardening, transport, medical alarms)	Cost?	How often (eg daily, weekly, monthly)?	Verification provided (please tick ✓)
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		

Disability Certificate

Registered Medical Practitioner to complete



Work and Income
Te Hiranga Tangata

A service of the Ministry of Social Development

CLIENT NUMBER

Please read this before you start

The Disability Allowance is available for reimbursement of additional costs arising from a Disability where the following criteria is met:

1. The person has a disability which is likely to continue for not less than six months; and
2. The disability has resulted in a reduction of the person's independent function to the extent that:
 - the person requires ongoing support to undertake the normal functions of life, or
 - the person requires ongoing supervision or treatment by a registered health professional.

For the purposes of qualifying for Disability Allowance, a disability means:

- physical disability or impairment
- physical illness
- psychiatric illness
- intellectual or psychological disability or impairment
- any other loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function (including sensory impairment)
- reliance on a guide dog, wheelchair, or other remedial means
- the presence of the body of organisms capable of causing illness.

For more information about Disability Allowance, refer to the "Guide for Medical Practitioners – Disability Allowance" brochure.

Name

1. What is the client's name:

First name(s)

Surname or family name

Disability details

2. Registered medical practitioner's name and address:

3. Does the person have a disability that meets the Disability Allowance criteria?

Yes ► Please provide details below: No ► Please go to Registered Medical Practitioner Verification

4. What is the nature of the person's disability? Please tick the major disabilities or specify below:

Psychological or psychiatric conditions

- Stress (160)
- Depression (161)
- Bipolar disorder (162)
- Schizophrenia (163)
- Other psychological/psychiatric (165)

Nervous system disorders

- Epilepsy (120)
- Multiple sclerosis (121)
- Parkinson's disease (122)
- Muscular dystrophy (123)
- Other nervous system disorders (124)

Cardio-vascular disorders

- Heart disease (130)
- Stroke (131)
- Other cardio-vascular (132)

Immune system disorders

- HIV / Aids (140)
- Other immune system disorders (141)

Metabolic and endocrine disorders

- Diabetes (150)
- Other metabolic or endocrine disorders (151)

continued overleaf ...

Substance Abuse

- Alcohol (170)
- Drug (171)
- Other substance abuse (172)

Sensory disorders

- Blindness (180)
- Other visual / eye (181)
- Hearing / ear (182)
- Other sensory disorders (183)

Accident

- Burns (190)
- Fractures, dislocations, soft tissue injury (191)
- Poisoning, toxic effects (192)
- Internal injuries (193)
- Injury to the nervous system (194)
- Back pain / injury (195)

- Overuse injury [RSI] (196)

- Complications of medical or surgical care (197)
- Other injury (198)

Other disorders

- Congenital conditions (103)
- Intellectual disability (164)
- Cancer (104)
- Infectious / parasitic diseases (105)
- Musculo-skeletal system disorder (106)
- Respiratory disorders (017)
- Genito-urinary disorders (108)
- Blood and blood forming organs (109)
- Skin disorders (110)
- Digestive system disorder (111)

5. Please indicate the expected duration of the disability:

- Less than 6 months ▶ There may be no entitlement to Disability Allowance
- 6 to 12 months 1 to 2 years 2 to 3 years Permanent ▶ Never reassess

Verification of doctor or specialist visits

6. Please list the type, cost and how often visits to doctors or specialists are necessary and result from the stated disability:

Type of consultation	Cost	How often (eg daily, weekly, monthly)?	Registered Medical Practitioner's initials
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		

Items / services / treatments / pharmaceuticals

7. Please list the pharmaceuticals, items, services or treatments that are necessary and of therapeutic value for the stated disability:

Item / service / treatment / pharmaceutical	Registered Medical Practitioner's initials

Registered Medical Practitioner's verification

Please print or stamp your full name, address, telephone number and Medical Council registration number.

Registered Medical Practitioner's stamp or name and address Medical Council registration number

Medical Practitioner's signature Day Month Year

▶

This information is required under the Social Security Act 1964.
Privacy Act: The person has been advised and understands that this information is required for benefit assessment purposes.



Temporary Additional Support Application

Who can get Temporary Additional Support?

If you are finding it hard financially, extra help with essential costs may be available through Temporary Additional Support.

It's important that you take all necessary steps to get other assistance towards costs and take reasonable steps to increase income and reduce costs where possible.

To get Temporary Additional Support, your cash assets will need to be below a certain level.

83. Do you want to apply for Temporary Additional Support?

Yes ▶ Please provide details below: No ▶ Please go to page 20, Overseas Residence Details section


Assets

Q84 note: Examples of cash assets:

- money in bank or savings organisation
- money lent to other people or organisations
- money in Bonus Bonds, shares, debentures or government stock.

Q85 note: Examples of non-cash assets:

- leisure boats
- caravans
- land or buildings other than your home, eg holiday homes.

 You may be required to show proof of these details.

84. Do you have any cash assets?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Type of asset	Amount
	\$
	\$
	\$

85. Do you have any non-cash assets?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Type of asset	Total value	Money owing
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$

Working for Families Tax Credits

Q86 note: Working for Families Tax Credits payments include:

- family tax credit
- in-work payment
- minimum family tax credit
- child tax credit
- parental tax credit.

86. Do you receive any Working for Families Tax Credits payments from Inland Revenue?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below and provide a Certificate of Entitlement from Inland Revenue. You can get a Certificate of Entitlement by calling Inland Revenue on **0800 257 720**. Please have your IRD number available

Type of payment	Amount	How often (weekly, fortnightly etc)?
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$

Employment costs

Q87 note: Employment costs include:

- vehicle running costs or public transport to employment
- childcare if the caregiver is working
- telephone if it is a condition for employment.

 You may be required to show proof of these costs.

87. Do you have any essential employment costs?


No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Employment cost	Amount	How often (weekly, fortnightly etc)?
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	

Temporary Additional Support Application

Accommodation costs

Q89 note: If you don't have a cost, write 'nil'.

 Please provide proof of these costs.

88. Do you have any accommodation costs?

No ▶ Go to Question 91 Yes ▶ Please complete details below if you have not applied for the Accommodation Supplement

89. Please give details of your costs.

	Name of company or person you pay	Your cost	How often (weekly, fortnight etc)?
Rent		\$	
Board		\$	
First mortgage		\$	
Other mortgage		\$	
House insurance		\$	
Ground lease		\$	
Mortgage insurance		\$	
Rates		\$	
Water rates		\$	
Cost of essential repairs and maintenance for the last 12 months		\$	

90. Have you received a Rates Rebate?

Yes ▶ Amount \$ Rating year 1 July

No to 30 June

Credit sales (hire purchases) and regular costs

Q91 note: Essential items that may be included:

- beds, dining suites, fridge / freezer, portable heaters, lounge suite, stove, television
- vehicle repayments
- washing machine (or laundrette costs)
- dryer (disability)
- childcare costs (disability).

91. Do you have any essential credit sales (hire purchases) or regular costs?


Item	Amount	How often (weekly, fortnight etc)?	Start / purchase date	End date
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			

Please talk to us if you or any dependent children have disability costs but have not applied for a Disability Allowance.

Temporary Additional Support Application

Personal safety and special family circumstances

Q92 note: Telephone costs for personal safety or security need to be verified by either the Police, court orders, Women's Refuge, previous history held by Work and Income, Child Youth and Family, or any other relevant organisation.

 You will need to provide proof of your circumstances and your telephone rental costs (excluding toll or call charges and mobile phones) if we do not have these details already.

92. Do you need a telephone for safety or security reasons, or because of special family circumstances?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Details of circumstances

Amount \$

How often (weekly, fortnightly etc)?

Necessary and reasonable steps

Q93 note: Temporary Additional Support is last resort financial assistance. You must take all necessary steps to get other assistance towards costs and take reasonable steps to increase income and reduce costs where possible.

93. Please indicate what steps you have taken to get other assistance, reduce costs or increase income:

We will talk to you about what other steps you might be able to take.

Overseas Residence Details

Periods of overseas residence

Q94 note: Periods of overseas residence may affect entitlement to some benefits.

This information is required to assess eligibility to any overseas benefits and pensions.

For more information call International Services on **0800 771 001**.

94. Have you lived in any countries outside New Zealand?

No Yes ▶ Please provide details below:

Name of country	Entry date	Exit date	Purpose (eg working, immigration)

Overseas pensions and benefits

95. Are you receiving a social security pension or pension of a similar nature from the government of a country other than New Zealand?


No Yes

If 'Yes', what type of social security pension or pension of a similar nature are you receiving from another country or countries?

- Retirement or old age
 War service
 Disability or invalidity
 War widow
 Widow or survivor
 War restitution
 Superannuation
 War injury
 Child or dependant
 Other payments

If you ticked any of the boxes above, please give details about the type of payment you receive below:

Your payment details	Pension 1	Pension 2	Pension 3	Pension 4
Country the payment comes from:				
How much do you receive in each payment? (in overseas currency):				
Is this amount before or after tax?:				
How often do you receive this payment? (eg weekly, monthly, annually):				
Overseas payment reference number:				
Name of your pension, benefit				

 Please attach any documents to your completed application form that confirm the payment(s), eg pension certificates.

If you receive more than four payments, please attach a separate sheet showing the details.

or allowance:

Please read this statement carefully and sign.

I must tell Work and Income immediately if either my partner or I:

- have a change in work situation (such as starting part-time, casual or full-time work, whether paid or unpaid)
- become self-employed / start to run a business
- have changes to my income or financial circumstances
- intend to travel overseas
- start / finish part-time or full-time study
- have changes to personal details (such as name, address or bank account number)
- have changes to my living situation (such as getting marriage, entering a civil union, starting a de facto relationship with someone of the same or opposite sex, change in the number of children supported, change in accommodation costs)
- are imprisoned / held in custody on remand
- are admitted to or discharged from hospital
- have been granted an overseas pension
- have any other change that may affect my benefit entitlement or rate.

I understand that when I get a benefit, I may have to:

- take part in planning interviews
- develop (with my Case Manager) and sign a Personal Development and Employment Plan
- take part in work related activities or programmes which have been agreed in my plan
- take part in activities including rehabilitation (but not including work, unwaged work experience or medical treatment) to help me to get ready to move into a suitable job.

I agree to these obligations:

- if I do not do this, I understand that my benefit may be reduced or stopped. If this happens, my benefit may not begin again until I start to do the activities above.

My obligations have been explained to me and I understand my responsibilities.

I understand that if I have made an application for Temporary Additional Support, my partner and I must take all necessary steps to get other assistance towards costs and take reasonable steps to increase my income and reduce costs where possible.

I agree that personal information relating to job search and training may be collected and given to prospective employers, Skill New Zealand, Work Bridge, training providers, career services or other agencies which have a formal agreement to provide services on behalf of Work and Income.

I have completed all the questions or they have been completed for me in the following applications:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Purposes Benefit – Sole Parent | <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation Supplement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Allowance | <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Additional Support |

The information I have given is true and complete. The conditions for receiving this assistance have been explained to me and I understand these conditions.

I am also aware of and understand the Privacy Act statement contained in this application form.

Name (print)	Client's signature			
--------------	--------------------	--	--	--



Day
Month
Year

Please read this statement carefully and sign.

I must tell Work and Income immediately if either my partner or I:

- have a change in work situation (such as starting part-time, casual or full-time work, whether paid or unpaid)
- become self-employed / start to run a business
- have changes to my income or financial circumstances
- intend to travel overseas
- start / finish part-time or full-time study
- have changes to personal details (such as name, address or bank account number)
- have changes to my living situation (such as getting marriage, entering a civil union, starting a de facto relationship with someone of the same or opposite sex, change in the number of children supported, change in accommodation costs)
- are imprisoned / held in custody on remand
- are admitted to or discharged from hospital
- have been granted an overseas pension
- have any other change that may affect my benefit entitlement or rate.

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- take part in work related activities or programmes which have been agreed in my plan
- take part in activities including rehabilitation (but not including work, unwaged work experience or medical treatment) to help me to get ready to move into a suitable job.

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I have completed all the questions or they have been completed for me in the following applications:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Purposes Benefit – Sole Parent | <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation Supplement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Allowance | <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Additional Support |

The information I have given is true and complete. The conditions for receiving this assistance have been explained to me and I understand these conditions.

I am also aware of and understand the Privacy Act statement contained in this application form.

Name (print)

Client's signature

Day	Month	Year



OFFICE USE ONLY

Statement by Interviewing / Interpreting Officer

I have explained the conditions for receiving a benefit and explained what the client's obligations mean and the reason for them. The client has indicated that he / she understands and accepts responsibility to provide true and complete information and to advise immediately of any changes in circumstances. All questions have been completed.

Name (print)

Interviewer's signature

Day	Month	Year

Additional information:

Decision

--

Processor's signature

Day	Month	Year

Authenticator's signature

Day	Month	Year

10% 100% Critical data

--	--	--

Checker's signature

Day	Month	Year

Bring up

B	F
---	---

Day	Month	Year



To check if you are eligible visit:
www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz

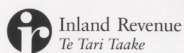
Accommodation & Childcare 0800 774 004
Mon - Fri 7am - 8pm, Sat 8am - 1pm

Family Assistance 0800 227 773
Mon - Fri 8am - 8pm, Sat 9am - 1pm

Please pass this information on to
someone you know who could also be
entitled to extra money.

Working and raising a family?

See if you qualify for extra money...



You may be eligible for extra money
through Working for Families,
a package designed to make it easier
for you to work and raise a family.

Here is a quick guide to what you may
qualify for. To find out more, visit
www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz

Help with family costs

If you have dependent children 18 or under, you may qualify for Family Assistance.

Family Assistance is paid by Inland Revenue to families whose main income is from working. It is made up of four types of payment and you may qualify for one or more, depending on your personal situation.

Family Support

This is ongoing financial support for families with children. How much you get depends on a number of things, like your level of income, the number of children you have, their ages and your custody arrangements.*

If your oldest child is	Your weekly payment could be up to
16, 17 or 18 years old	\$85
15 or under	\$72
For each other child who is	Your weekly payment could be up to
16, 17 or 18 years old	\$75
13, 14 or 15 years old	\$55
12 or under	\$47

Rates current at 1 April 2005.

On 1 April 2007, Family Support payments go up \$10 for each child.

*While you're on a benefit you will usually receive your Family Support from Work and Income. Some families on a benefit will have part of their payments transferred to their Family Support. This will affect their benefit but they will still be better off overall with the increases to Family Support.

Child Tax Credit

This is a payment for families for times when they are not receiving:

- an income-tested benefit
- New Zealand Superannuation or a Veteran's Pension
- a student allowance
- weekly accident compensation payments (from ACC, a private insurer or an employer), unless you get these for less than three months.

You could get up to \$15 a week for each child.

Family Tax Credit

If your family's income is \$18,368 a year or less, the Family Tax Credit tops up your family's income to at least \$286 a week after tax. To get this payment, at least one parent must be working for salary or wages and:

- if you're a single-parent family, you'll need to work at least 20 hours a week or
- if you're a two-parent family, you and/or your partner will need to work at least 30 hours a week between you.

Parental Tax Credit

This payment helps with the costs of a new baby - for the first 56 days after your baby is born. You could get up to \$1200 depending on your family income. How much you get also depends on the type of income you received in the first eight weeks after your child was born.

To find out if you qualify for Family Assistance, visit www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz or call Inland Revenue on **0800 227 773**.



Help with childcare costs

You may qualify for help with your childcare costs from Work and Income:

- The **Childcare Subsidy** can help with childcare costs for children under 5 (or under 6 if you get a Child Disability Allowance). You may be able to get help with up to 50 hours of childcare a week while you're working.
- The **OSCAR (Out of School Care and Recreation) Subsidy** is for children 5 to 13. It can help with the costs of before and after school care (up to 20 hours a week) and care during the school holidays (up to 50 hours a week).

To qualify, your income has to be under a certain limit:

If you have...	And your family's weekly income before tax is less than	The subsidy per child per hour is up to
1 child	\$770	\$2.91
1 child	\$850	\$2.03
1 child	\$930	\$1.13
2 children	\$950	\$2.91
2 children	\$1040	\$2.03
2 children	\$1130	\$1.13
3+ children	\$1110	\$2.91
3+ children	\$1220	\$2.03
3+ children	\$1330	\$1.13

Rates current at 1 April 2005.

On 3 October 2005, subsidy rates will go up an extra 10%, making childcare more affordable.

To find out more about childcare assistance while you're working visit www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz or call **0800 774 004**.

Help with housing costs

The **Accommodation Supplement** from Work and Income can help with the costs of your rent, board, mortgage and other essential housing costs. To qualify, your income has to be under a certain limit, depending on where you live:

If you are...	Your weekly income before tax will need to be under...			
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4
Single with no children	\$901	\$721	\$581	\$501
Couple with no children	\$1122	\$982	\$782	\$702
Sole parent with 1 child	\$1065	\$925	\$725	\$645
Sole parent with 2 or more children	\$1325	\$1085	\$905	\$725
Couple with children	\$1382	\$1142	\$962	\$782

Income limits current at 1 April 2005.

Areas 1: North/Central Auckland. **2:** West/South Auckland, Tauranga, Wellington, Nelson, Queenstown and other locations. **3:** Whangarei, Hamilton, New Plymouth, Napier, Hastings, Palmerston North, Porirua, Upper/Lower Hutt, Christchurch, Dunedin and other locations. **4:** All areas not covered by Areas 1-3.

This is not a complete list. The area that applies to you depends on exactly where you live. For more details, visit www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz

How much you get depends on a range of things, such as your income, assets and housing costs.

You won't qualify for the Accommodation Supplement if you have a mortgage with the Housing Corporation or rent from Housing New Zealand. There are also other conditions, so please call us for more details.

To find out more about the Accommodation Supplement visit www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz or call **0800 774 004**.

Other help when you're working

Here is some of the other government assistance you may qualify for.

Help with health costs

The Community Services Card makes it cheaper for you and your family to visit the doctor and get prescriptions. Call the Community Services Card centre on **0800 999 999** for more details.

You may also qualify for a Pharmaceutical Subsidy Card if you need a lot of prescriptions - talk with your pharmacist about this.

Help for people with disabilities

If you, your child or someone you are caring for has a disability, you may be able to get a disability allowance to help with the extra costs of having a disability. Call Work and Income on **0800 559 009** for more details.

Help with essential needs

If you're finding it difficult to make ends meet you may qualify for a Special Needs Grant, Special Benefit or Recoverable Assistance Payment Grant to help with your essential costs, like food or urgent dental care. Call Work and Income on **0800 559 009** for more details.

Is your family entitled to extra money?

See inside...



WORKING FOR
families

Me whakaruruhau te iwi

Inland Revenue • Work and Income

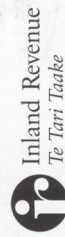
More money for more families

You may now be entitled to extra money through Working for Families – a package designed to help with housing and childcare costs, and make it easier for you to work and raise a family.

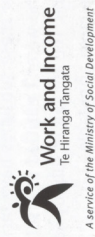
Thousands of New Zealanders are now entitled to more money:

- almost all families earning under \$45,000 a year
- many families earning between \$45,000 and \$70,000 a year
- some larger families earning more
- families receiving a benefit
- some people without children may qualify for help with housing costs.

These changes began in October 2004. From 1 April 2005 and over the next two years there will be more changes to help families.



Inland Revenue
Te Tari Taake



Work and Income
Te Hirianga Tangata
A service of the Ministry of Social Development



More Family Assistance

Family Assistance is financial help for families with children aged 18 or under. It is paid by Inland Revenue to families whose main income is from working.*

Family Assistance is made up of four types of payments and you may qualify for one or more, depending on your personal situation. Working for Families changes mean more families will become eligible, and those already getting it can earn more before their Family Assistance is reduced.

- From 1 April 2005, Family Support (a part of Family Assistance) will increase by \$25 a week for your first child and \$15 a week for each other child.
- From 1 April 2006, a new In-Work Payment replaces the current Child Tax Credit (another part of Family Assistance) and pays at least \$60 a week for each family. Families can also earn more before their Family Assistance is reduced.
- From 1 April 2007, Family Support will increase by another \$10 for each child.

*While you're on a benefit you will usually receive your Family Support from Work and Income. Some families on a benefit will have part of their payments transferred to their Family Support. This will affect their benefit but they will still be better off overall with the increases to Family Support.

More help with childcare costs

If you have children under 14, Work and Income may be able to help with your childcare costs – through the Childcare Subsidy for preschoolers and the OSCAR (Out of School Care and Recreation) Subsidy for school-age children.

Income limits for these subsidies have increased, meaning many families who weren't entitled to a subsidy before may now qualify for one. The amount of subsidy has also increased, making childcare more affordable.

- In October 2005, Childcare and OSCAR subsidies will increase by another 10%.

More affordable housing

You may be entitled to an Accommodation Supplement from Work and Income to help with your rent, board, mortgage and other essential housing costs.*

The income limits have increased so more people qualify for the Accommodation Supplement, and you can earn more income before the amount of your payments will reduce.

If you're receiving a benefit, you can now keep all your Accommodation Supplement, even if you earn extra income on top of your benefit.

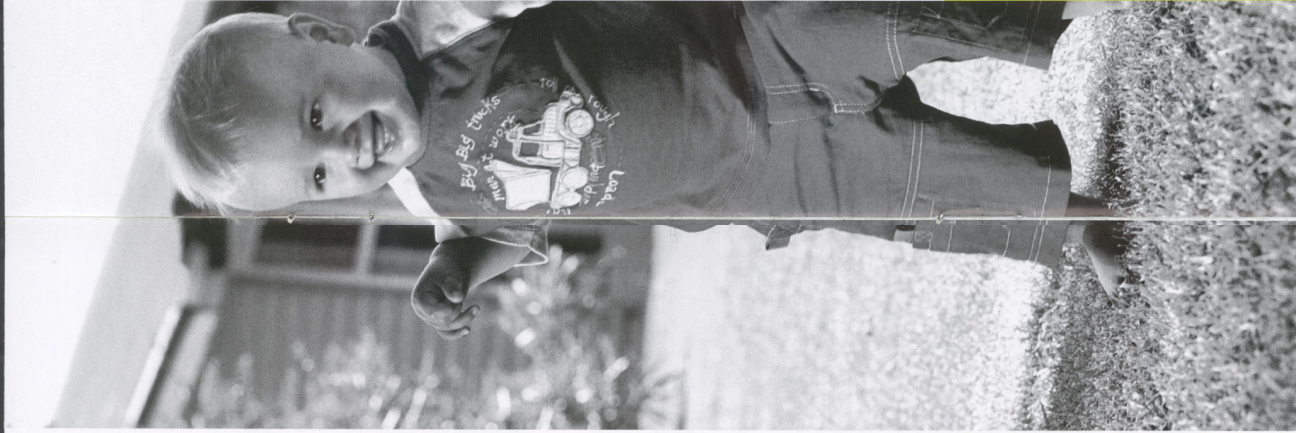
- On 1 April 2005, the maximum Accommodation Supplement payment rates will increase for areas with higher housing costs.

*You won't qualify for an Accommodation Supplement if you rent from Housing New Zealand or have a mortgage with Housing Corporation.

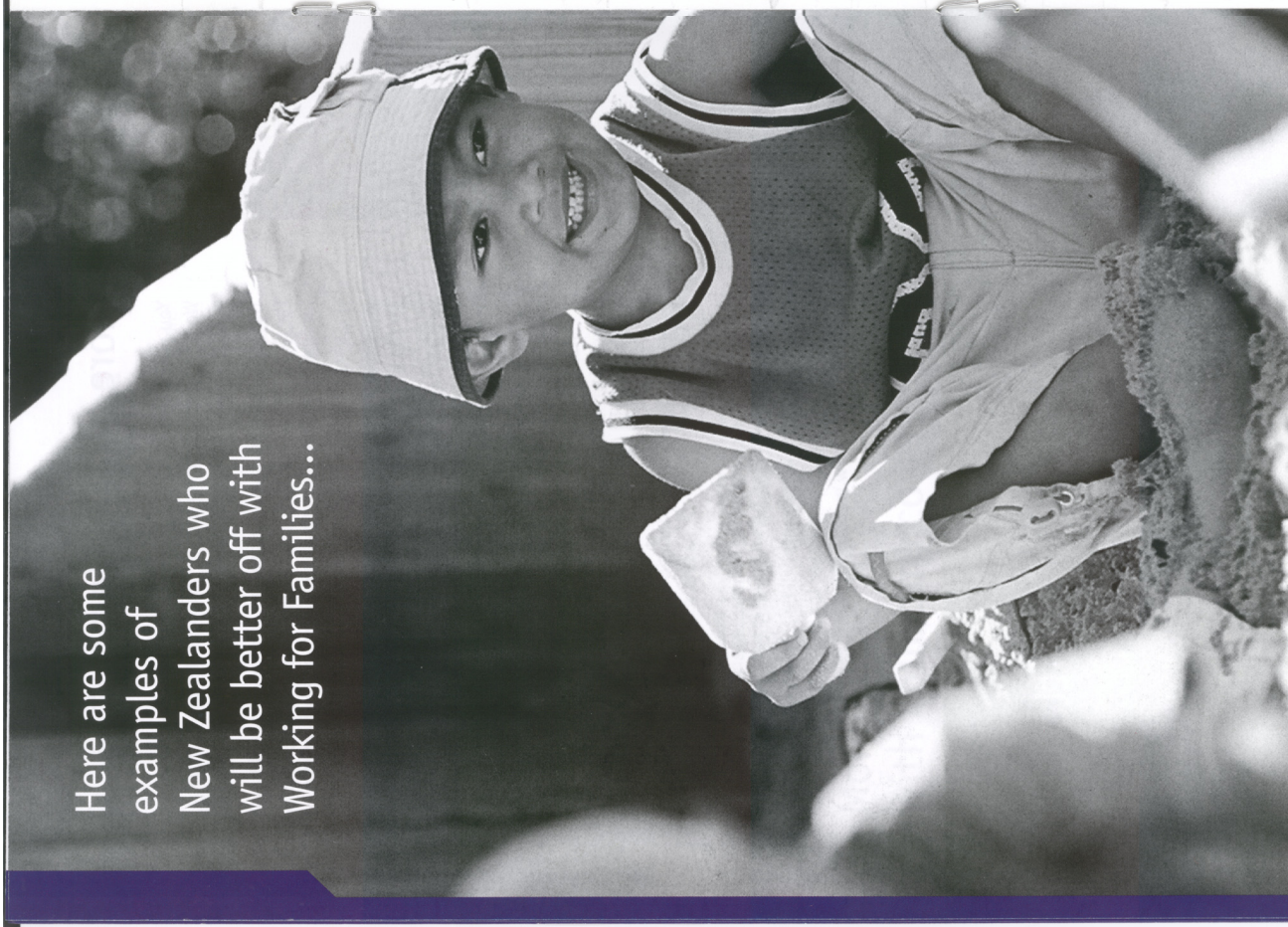
Do you already receive payments?

If you already receive Family Assistance, an Accommodation Supplement, or a Childcare or OSCAR Subsidy, you don't need to do anything. Your payments will be automatically adjusted. If you think you may be eligible for any of the other payments, visit www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz.

See if you're entitled to extra money...
www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz



Here are some examples of New Zealanders who will be better off with Working for Families...



Sue & Nick – \$163 a week better off

Sue and Nick have two children and live in Oxford, near Christchurch. Between them they work 60 hours a week, earning \$37,440 a year before tax. Each week they pay \$120 in rent and \$69 in childcare costs. Sue and Nick currently receive Family Assistance and a Childcare Subsidy.

After	Sue and Nick will get each week	In total, they will be better off by
4 October 2004	\$42 more Childcare Subsidy	\$42 a week
1 April 2005	\$40 more Family Assistance (with the Family Support increase)	\$82 a week
3 October 2005	\$6 more Childcare Subsidy	\$88 a week
1 April 2006	\$55 more Family Assistance (with the introduction of In-Work Payment and increased abatement thresholds*)	\$143 a week
1 April 2007	\$20 more Family Assistance (with the Family Support increase)	\$163 a week

Note: These figures are estimates only, and actual gains may differ slightly.
 *The Family Assistance abatement threshold is the amount of money you can earn before your Family Assistance payments begin to reduce.



SUE & NICK

SALE & BARBARA



Sale & Barbara – \$169 a week better off

Sale and Barbara have three children aged 5, 9 and 12 years and live in Onehunga, Auckland. Sale works full time and earns \$52,000 a year before tax. Sale and Barbara pay a mortgage of \$385 a week and get an Accommodation Supplement to help with their mortgage.

After	Sale and Barbara will get each week	In total, they will be better off by
1 October 2004	\$14 more Accommodation Supplement	\$14 a week
1 April 2005	\$41 more Accommodation Supplement	\$55 a week
1 April 2005	\$44 more Family Assistance (with the Family Support increase)	\$99 a week
1 April 2006	\$40 more Family Assistance (with the introduction of In-Work Payment and increased abatement thresholds*)	\$139 a week
1 April 2007	\$30 more Family Assistance (with the Family Support increase)	\$169 a week

Note: These figures are estimates only, and actual gains may differ slightly.
 *The Family Assistance abatement threshold is the amount of money you can earn before your Family Assistance payments begin to reduce.

Mike – another \$20 a week

Mike is single and lives in Hamilton. He works full time and earns \$20,800 a year before tax. Mike pays \$125 a week in rent and gets an Accommodation Supplement to help with his rent.

After	Mike receives each week	In total, he will be better off by
1 October 2004	\$20 more Accommodation Supplement	\$20 a week

Note: These figures are estimates only, and actual gains may differ slightly.



MIKE

JANE



Jane – \$147 a week better off

Jane has a four-year-old child and lives in Lynfield, Auckland. She gets the Domestic Purposes Benefit and works 30 hours a week for \$11 an hour before tax. Each week Jane pays \$225 in rent and \$115.50 in childcare costs. Jane also gets Family Assistance, an Accommodation Supplement and a Childcare Subsidy.

After	While on a benefit Jane will get each week	In total, she will be better off by
1 October 2004	\$20 more Accommodation Supplement as this is no longer reduced when she works while receiving a benefit	\$20 a week
4 October 2004	\$36 more Childcare Subsidy	\$56 a week
1 April 2005	\$10 more Accommodation Supplement	\$66 a week
1 April 2005	\$25 more Family Assistance (with the Family Support increase)	\$91 a week
3 October 2005	\$10 more Childcare Subsidy	\$101 a week

The 1 April 2006 changes mean that Jane would now be financially better off leaving the benefit and taking up the new In-Work Payment from Inland Revenue:

After	Now that Jane is off the benefit she will get each week	In total, she will be better off by
1 April 2006	\$11 more Family Assistance (with the increased abatement threshold*)	\$112 a week
1 April 2006	\$18 more Family Assistance (from leaving the benefit, receiving Family Tax Credit and the new In-Work Payment)	\$130 a week
1 April 2007	\$17 more Family Assistance (with increases in Family Support and Family Tax Credit)	\$147 a week

Note: These figures are estimates only, and actual gains may differ slightly.

*The Family Assistance abatement threshold is the amount of money you can earn before your Family Assistance payments begin to reduce.

HINEMOA & ANDREW



Hinemoa & Andrew – \$63 a week better off

Hinemoa and Andrew have two children and live in Christchurch. They get the Unemployment Benefit and pay \$280 in rent. They also get Family Support and an Accommodation Supplement to help with their costs.

After	Hinemoa and Andrew will get each week	In total, they will be better off by
1 April 2005	\$17 less benefit*	
1 April 2005	\$40 more Family Support	\$23 a week
1 April 2005	\$20 more Accommodation Supplement	\$43 a week
1 April 2007	\$20 more Family Support	\$63 a week

Note: These figures are estimates only, and actual gains may differ slightly.

*Some families on a benefit will have part of their payments transferred to their Family Support. This will affect their benefit but they will still be better off overall with the increases to Family Support.

To check if you are eligible visit:
www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz

Accommodation & Childcare 0800 774 004
Mon - Fri 7am - 8pm, Sat 8am - 1pm

Family Assistance 0800 227 773
Mon - Fri 8am - 8pm, Sat 9am - 1pm

Please pass this information on to someone you know who could also be entitled to extra money.

Having a job. Enjoying good health. Feeling valued. Having security. Getting a good education. Taking personal responsibility. Owning a home. Feeling pride. Enjoying time with family and friends. Being able to contribute. Living in a healthy home. Having hope and big expectations. Enjoying an income that supports everyday needs. Having choices. Living in a tolerant community. Being happy. Feeling safe. This **Social Well-being Strategy** identifies these aspirations for **Hamilton** and the ways in which we can work together to achieve them.

a place called home

Social Well-being Strategy a place called home

Towards social well-being in Hamilton.

In December 2006, key social development agencies came together to acknowledge the programmes and projects happening in Hamilton. They also came to discuss a new way of solving the problems and issues held in common.

A steering group was formed to oversee the development of a Social Well-Being Strategy for the City. Teamwork is at the heart of this strategy. The basis for this is a clear conviction that Hamilton will benefit more from the uniting of our strengths and the opening of partnership channels.

In taking this approach, a strong collaborative leadership had been launched for the good of the city.

In the spirit of this unified approach, the steering group identified social priorities for the city and recognised key opportunities for working together.

As signatories, each agency has committed to work collaboratively to address the identified social priorities for the city.



Regional Commissioner for Social Development
Ministry of Social Development



Tainui - Waikato Raupatu Trustee
Company Ltd



Waikato District Commander
NZ Police



Regional Director
Te Puni Kokiri



Regional Director
Child, Youth and Family
Midlands Region



Regional Manager,
Housing New Zealand
Corporation



Chief Executive
Te Runanga o Kirikiriroa



Regional Team Manager
Ministry of Youth Development



Regional Manager (Central North)
Family and Community Services



Manager
Social Services Waikato



Regional Manager
Ministry of Education



Planning and Funding
General Manager
Waikato District Health Board



Chief Executive Officer
Hamilton City Council



Hamilton City Mayor

moving forward together

The decision to work together was entirely deliberate.

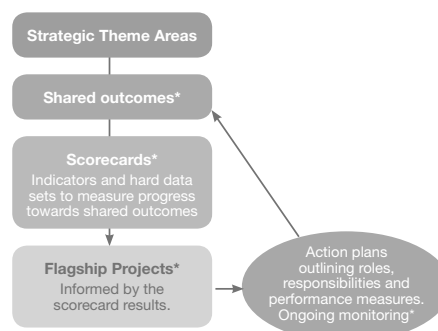
It is based on the belief that comprehensive improvement to the city's well-being will not be achieved by the actions of any one sector. Nor will a single layer of government action suffice.

Our approach is cross cultural, recognising the place of Tangata Whenua and the diverse nature of the communities living within our city.

The steering group that developed the well-being strategy was itself led by these shared convictions:

- **Strong and committed city leadership is needed**, a leadership that primarily advocates for the city.
- **Collaboration and effective relationships are the keys to success.**
- Success will not come by creating more work but by working together in a **resource-sharing, streamlined fashion**. Our strategic intent is not to cover all social well-being issues and services. Rather, the strategy document targets the areas that will make a real difference on the ground.
- **Tangible on-the-ground results** are all that matters and these results will come through **joint flagship projects**.
- Community Outcomes were identified collaboratively therefore this collaborative response in the city was considered appropriate.

Between December 2006 and July 2007, the steering group worked within a consistent thinking framework:



The flagship projects represent agreed aligned actions between agency programmes. They are just a start - our first response to some of the pressing issues facing our city. They complement and connect a wide range of projects, programmes and actions happening throughout the city and have clear linkages to work occurring in the other key city strategies. Information sharing has been critical to this work. The willingness and trust of key staff from each organisation, key NGO's and service providers has made such sharing possible. As social development agencies, this strategy describes our priorities for the city and how we will 'turn the corner' in these areas over the next five years. We will monitor progress annually.

*inter-agency working group

priorities for action

A place called home. This strategy is about positively changing the city that we live in and making a real difference for real people. It sets out our key priorities and how we will respond to the needs, challenges, and opportunities of the city.

city leadership/ collaboration

Na tou rourou na taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi

Hamilton is a great city and we firmly believe that we can make it even better. This is why we have joined forces. By working together...

- Our skill, knowledge, and financial resources are magnified
- Our evolving leadership network enables greater dialogue, action and progress
- Our strong tradition of collaboration in the social sector is reinforced
- The partnership between Maori and the diverse non-Maori population is strengthened and guides our shared work
- Our voice of advocacy is clearer, louder, and more penetrating.

community capacity and pride

Maa Pango, Maa Whero, ka Oti ai te Mahi

As social development agencies, we commit ourselves to lift our city so that...

- People are truly vibrant. They feel empowered to do well, and take pride in their contributions.
- Our elders/kaumatua are respected and valued.
- Children are nurtured and whanau/family bind our communities together.
- People, especially our youth are actively contributing to the leadership of our city.
- People take responsibility for themselves and celebrate the communities in which they live.
- Iwi, Hapuu, and Marae are flourishing.
- People value and foster their own culture while respecting the cultural perspectives of others.
- People can afford to live and are able to determine their future.

vibrant young people

Tama Tu, Tama Ora – Tama Moe, Tama Mate.

Our young people are optimistic about their future.

- They have genuine hope, big expectations and are encouraged to take up challenges.
- They have safe, caring relationships which support their health and well-being.
- They have the skills and knowledge to confidently make choices about their future.

quality of life

Ma te whakaaro nui ka hanga ai te whare a, ma te matauranga ka u ai.

Our people truly enjoy their quality of life.

- They have access to decent, affordable, healthy homes.
- Their homes are a haven of well-being and security.
- Their incomes meet everyday needs and allow for real choices about how they live and play.

community safety

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He Tangata, He Tangata, He Tangata!

Our homes, our neighbourhoods and our city are safe places.

- Communities are free from crime and people live without fear.
- Our children and young people are free from abuse and neglect.
- The right support is there to prevent family violence and help people overcome destructive behaviours.

shared outcomes

leadership/collaboration

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leadership forum for Hamilton

Our people and our communities have real aspirations -to own their own homes, have good jobs, be in good health, feel safe, have an education, be able to interact with family and friends when they want to, and to participate in a compassionate community. With our strong collaborative leadership we can guide the development of our people to the point where their hopes are realised.

We know what we are good at. Hamilton City is a leader – our pioneering spirit, willingness to advocate and collaborate are well

known. This strategy allows us to build on these strengths, but it's the beginning of a new journey.

As an ongoing leadership forum for the city, key social well-being agencies will continue the visionary work of the Social Well-being Steering Group. Its focus will be on driving and monitoring the flagship projects that will make a real difference for real people.

This leadership forum will meet four times a year, bringing city and regional leaders together with a distinctly Hamilton focus.

Great things take time but since

time often dilutes great things, the leadership forum will ensure that the commitment and momentum of the initial Steering Group is not lost. It will facilitate ongoing conversations between key community leaders and the Council and in so doing will strengthen partnerships throughout our great city.

This leadership forum will also be an important touch-point for discussing significant strategic issues and projects. It will raise a stronger voice of advocacy for the city.



leadership

community capacity and pride

Maa Pango, Maa Whero, ka Oti ai te Mahi

As social well-being agencies, we commit ourselves to lift our city so that...

- People are truly vibrant. They feel empowered to do well, and take pride in their contributions.
- Our elders/kaumatua are respected and valued.
- Children are nurtured and whanau/family bind our communities together.
- People, especially our youth are actively contributing to the leadership of our city.
- People take responsibility for themselves and celebrate the communities in which they live.
- Iwi, Hapuu, and Marae are flourishing.
- People value and foster their own culture while respecting the cultural perspectives of others.
- People can afford to live and are able to determine their future.

what are we measuring?



Residents' agreement that they feel they can have an impact on making their community

a better place to live • Residents' rating of sense of pride in the way their city looks and feels
 • Residents' involvement in public decision-making • Community satisfaction with Council's provision of opportunities for community involvement in decision-making • **Residents' sense of community within their local neighbourhood** • **Residents' involvement in social networks and groups** • Residents' frequency of being able to rely on people around them for support when feeling stressed. • **Ability of Hamilton's four Marae to hold hui and tangi** • Percentage of Maori speakers in Hamilton's total population • **Residents' perceptions of the effect of increased diversity in lifestyles and cultures on their city** • **Overall quality of life** • Ease of access to public transport facilities

what do we know?

The majority of **people feel they can make a difference** in their community. However, this sense of influence can vary. Most families at risk have little sense of community participation let alone influence. For these people, their focus is almost entirely on survival.

Young people (aged 15-24) have the potential to contribute more significantly to the city.

We know in 2006, 20% of residents were involved in Council decision-making processes and most expressed a genuine satisfaction both with the process and the outcomes of their involvement.

The nature of our communities is changing. Not so long ago, people used to know each other within a community and many in the neighbourhood were present during the day. This meant people had time for each other and the capacity to volunteer their help. Today, there is a perception that the

village no longer exists. With both parents working in many instances, people often don't even know their neighbours. This changing nature of our communities and family structures has led to a decline in community spirit. In 2004, **only 56% of residents felt a sense of local community.** The remaining 44% feel disconnected. This is especially true of those living in Hamilton South, younger people aged 15-24 years, and those with household incomes of less than \$70,000. Their sense of community ranked significantly lower than other residents in Hamilton.

The implications are serious. There is also an urgent call to assist individual families that make up these communities. Many service providers feel there is a loss in the family values of respect, pride, and nurturing.

There are some encouraging signs. 78% of Hamilton residents feel they usually have someone to

turn to for support when dealing with stress. In Hamilton, such **support is coming from social networks of family, school or work.** One third of residents belong to a church or spiritual group, this is significantly higher than the NZ average.

An indicator of the **health of Maori culture in the city** is their capacity to host tangi and hui. Our urban Marae tell us this capacity is currently good. This is largely due to the voluntary populations in close proximity to each of the four marae. Like many NZ cities, **Hamilton has experienced an increase in cultural diversity.** Only 56% of Hamilton residents believe this to be good for the city. This represents a fairly conservative attitude but is similar to perceptions recorded in the country's other 12 cities (58%). There is a view that the effects of this greater ethnic diversity are felt differently by the various communities within Hamilton.

PROJECT

this is what we're doing

POETS CORNER – COMMUNITY RENEWAL PROJECT

This project will make Poets corner becomes a great place to live. The outcomes we seek are simple. We aim to create a healthy community where:

- Children are well fed
- Children succeed throughout the education spectrum.
- Alcohol and drug issues are reduced
- There is zero tolerance to all forms of violence, starting with family violence
- All residents are in employment, education, training, or are gainfully engaged in their communities,
- People are encouraged and supported to purchase their first homes.

Our first milestone will be to produce a social impact report. This report will guide the overall development of the Poets Corner Project.

A key aspect of this community based project will be the re-development of Housing New Zealand Corporation stock. In respect to urban design, the Hamilton City Council CityScope strategy will provide strong guidance for this part of the project. While this physical phase is underway, social infrastructure will also be developed with the community's involvement. This infrastructure will be crucial to resolving the complex social issues in Poets Corner.

LEAD AGENCY AND PARTNERS:

HNZC & HCC | MYD | Police | Work & Income | MoE | CYF | TPK | TeROK | Waikato DHB

An action plan will be developed for this project. Please contact the Regional Manager Housing New Zealand Corporation, 0800 801 601 for more details



PROJECT

INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR OLDER PEOPLE (KAUMATUA HOUSING)

This project will provide independent living for older people with supportive wrap around services including an on site community nurse/health worker to support residents with health and wellness issues.

This project also addresses the issue of appropriate housing for older people. For many older people, traditional bed-sitters and one bed units do not meet their needs. The aim of this project is to construct two bedroom (minimum) homes to accommodate

any visiting whanau. This project will link directly into all existing services provided by The Frankton/Dinsdale Rauawaawa Trust (transport, social programmes and Health services) and has the capacity to become a model that could be used nationally.

This housing model offers numerous benefits such as our older people feeling safe and valued and having the opportunity to age in a place of choice.

PARTNERS:

HNZC | TPK | Tainui | HCC | Rauawaawa Trust | Waikato DHB

An action plan will be developed for this project. Please contact the Rauawaawa Trust, (07) 847 6980 for more details



vibrant young people

Tama Tu, Tama Ora – Tama Moe, Tama Mate

Our young people are optimistic about their future.

- They have genuine hope, big expectations and are encouraged to take up challenges.
- They have safe, caring relationships which support their health and well-being.
- They have the skills and knowledge to confidently make choices about their future.
- Our rangatahi/young people have pride in their cultural identity.

what are we measuring?



Participation in early childhood education • Qualifications of Hamilton School leavers • Truancy rates and absence rates • Early leaving exemptions • Modern apprenticeship numbers for Hamilton • Youth employment and participation rates • Youth satisfaction with their own lives in general (15-24yrs) • Youth involvement in social groups or networks (15-24yrs) • Youth frequency of being able to rely on people around them for support when feeling stressed (15-24yrs) • Youth frequency of feeling isolated or lonely (15-24yrs) • Youth suicide rates/self harm • Teenage birth rates • Youth mortality rates (0-14 years and 12-24)

what do we know?

The measures show that the majority of children in Hamilton are participating in **some form of early childhood education**. Participation rates for Maori and Pacific island children have increased more rapidly than other ethnic groups over the last six years. This is a positive trend. We know that quality early childhood education programmes are important in preparing young children socially, physically and academically. Participation in early childhood education can help narrow the achievement gap between children from low income families and those from more advantaged families. In 2007, the government introduced subsidies to improve participation in early childhood education for families with children 3 years of age and older.

Hamilton has a significant youth population with 29% aged between 12-24. Increasing numbers of these young people are staying at school to achieve **qualifications** higher than NCEA Level 1. This was especially evident between 2003 and 2004 although the numbers

leaving without qualifications did show signs of rising again in 2005 (from 10.4% in 2004 to 13.9%).

We also know that the number of young people not attending secondary school is increasing. These young people are looking for something to do and are easy prey for petty crime, alcohol and drug abuse, and negative youth behaviour. A number of service providers in the city work with schools, families and young people to keep them in school.

Youth employment has doubled since 2001. In 2006, Hamilton's unemployment rate for youth aged 15-19 years was 13%. At the end of March 2006, 311 people under the age of 20 were on the unemployment benefit. The Modern Apprenticeship scheme, targeted at young people aged 16 to 21 years on entry, has shown a positive growth in numbers since 2002. This gives us a sense that **young people feel more optimistic towards training and apprenticeships.**

77% of Hamilton youth aged 15-24yrs rated their overall satisfaction

with life as 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'. However their life-satisfaction ratings were lower than residents of other ages. Youth were more likely to **belong to networks** at school or work, or an online community or interest group than other residents.

Many young people cite a need for more free programs to connect them and to give them things to do in community. Specifically, this is an issue for youth who live in low-income areas.

Christianity has emerged as an attractive option for belonging for some young people. This is reflected in the numbers of youth attending churches and youth groups. The emergence of new youth cultures are seen by youth workers as largely a positive sign of youth vibrancy. These cultures provide important social networks and a sense of belonging. **74% of 15-25yrs olds said they never or rarely felt isolated or lonely.** They were still, however, more likely to feel isolated or lonely than all other age groups

■ this is what we're doing

PROJECT

COOL THINGS FOR YOUTH TO DO

Providing an environment for youth that is vibrant, interesting and stimulating will contribute to a city where young people are vibrant. This has the potential to greatly impact their future.

This project will seek to increase the range of organised activities that young people can participate in throughout the year. Additionally, by making these activities relevant and cost-effective, they become accessible to marginalised youth. This will engage them in supervised, pro-social, drug and alcohol free activity. Youth that are busy and engaged in some

activity are less likely to become involved in anti-social behaviour. It gives them opportunities to build social networks with other youth in a pro-social environment. Giving them exciting things to do decreases their need to seek fun via risk-taking activities.

Youth are a population of interest for many of the organisations involved in the steering group. Collaborating over this project will make it more likely that the unique goals of each organisation are met. It is in everyone's interest to have a high functioning, engaged community of youth in our city.

LEAD AGENCY AND PARTNERS:

HCC | MYD | Police | Work & Income | TPK | MoE

An action plan will be developed for this project. Please contact the Youth Development Team leader, Hamilton City Council (07) 838 6497 for more details



PROJECT

TAINUI RANGATAHI SUMMIT

The Tainui Rangatahi Summit will involve 200 rangatahi from the Tainui region. Over four days, the Summit will feature a series of keynote speakers, debates, discussions and hands on activities. The aims of the Summit are to improve each participant's sense of pride and self identity as Tainui Rangatahi. The Summit will also seek their ongoing involvement and contribution in the strategic future of Tainui and Tainui initiatives.

There is a need for Tainui Rangatahi to rebuild pathways to their cultural heritage. With urbanisation, there is a growing number of rangatahi who have less contact with their turangawaewae. This can cause identity

development issues for these young people. Not only is identity strengthening necessary for their own personal development, it also enables them to take leadership roles within their Marae, Hapuu, and Iwi.

This project will ensure good leadership for future Maori communities. This, in itself, is an investment in the well-being of Hamilton city. Given the close proximity of the event to Hamilton city, it is expected that the Summit will involve Kirikiriroa Rangatahi of Tainui descent. If local marae, hapuu and iwi function well, this will benefit all Maori who live in Hamilton and access these structures for services and support.

LEAD AGENCY AND PARTNERS:

Tainui | HCC | Work & Income | Police | HNZC | CYF | MYD | Waikato DHB

An action plan will be developed for this project. Please contact the Tribal Development Unit, Waikato Raupatu Lands Trust, 0800 TAINUI for more details



quality of life

Ma te whakaaro nui ka hanga ai te whare a, ma te matauranga ka u ai

Our people truly enjoy their quality of life.

- They have access to decent, affordable, healthy homes.
- Their homes are a haven of well-being and security.
- Their incomes meet everyday needs and allow for real choices about how they live and play.



what are we measuring?



Median house prices as a multiple of median household incomes • Rent to income ratio • Median weekly rents • Percentage of household income spent on housing costs • Percentage of private dwellings that are owned • Home ownership by ethnic group • Percentage change in proportion of people owning and renting • Children reliant on beneficiaries • Percentage of population living in deprivation index deciles • Residents perceptions that their incomes meet everyday needs • Unemployment rate • Total number of benefits given out • Number and priority status of applicants on the waiting list for HNZC housing • Households with access to telecommunications • Percentage of people living in crowded households • Proportion of children living in crowded housing, 0-24yrs (Waikato) • Residents satisfaction with their leisure time

what do we know?

In terms of housing, our measures are telling us that home ownership in Hamilton is becoming increasingly unaffordable. This low has been driven by a steep rise in house prices over the last 5+ years (especially the land component). Section prices in Hamilton start at around \$150,000 and the average section price in the six months to December 2006 was \$221,983 (4.25 times Hamilton's median household income). In Hamilton, new housing development is almost exclusively at the middle to upper end of the spectrum. Little, if any, **affordable housing** is being privately developed. Rising interest rates are making home ownership even less affordable.

As a result of this, the

percentage of people **renting is on the increase**. In Hamilton the trend away from home ownership into renting is occurring at a faster rate than the national average. Home ownership is far more prevalent amongst Europeans than other ethnicities e.g. Maori and Pacific Islanders.

In addition to this, rents have been increasing at a faster rate than incomes between 2001 and 2006 (39% vs. 31%). Home ownership is a key determinant of improving social well being in the city.

Hamilton, like most big cities, has concentrated areas of **poverty and social deprivation**. Many residents in these neighbourhoods feel that they struggle to have enough money to meet their

everyday needs.

The number of children under 18 reliant on a person receiving a benefit is 12,591. This places a significant number of our **children at high risk of poverty**. Low family income is often associated with a range of negative outcomes including low birth weight, infant mortality, poorer mental health and cognitive development and hospital admissions from a variety of causes.

Measures show the level of **unemployment** in Hamilton at a historical low (around 3%).

In 2006, the measures showed that those aged 65 years and over were significantly more likely to have rated the **satisfaction with their leisure time** positively (95%) compared to other age groups.

■ this is what we're doing

PROJECT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH HOME OWNERSHIP

This project addresses the declining affordability of housing for people living on low household incomes (household's where the primary income is between \$25,000 - \$55,000 per annum). With interest rates on the rise again, the need to help low income families into housing is urgent.

This project will involve a number of support mechanisms and actions such as:

- info & advice on how to buy and look after assets, consolidate debt, budget advice
- shared equity, whereby a private entity takes a share in a house (sometimes up to 30 per cent) at no cost to the home buyer. The home buyer then seeks a conventional

mortgage on the remainder of the property. When the property is sold, a percentage of the sale price equivalent to the equity share, is returned to the supplier.

- providing a guarantor for deposits
- rent to buy options

Families on the programme struggling to buy their first home will be supported to develop the knowledge and skills to lay an economic foundation for their children and grandchildren. This project offers numerous health and wellbeing benefits for families participating and may have positive spin offs for participation in tertiary education and employment.

LEAD AGENCY AND PARTNERS:

TeROK | Social Service providers and Primary Lenders | HNZC

An action plan will be developed for this project. Please contact the Manager of Te Runanga o Kirikiriroa, (07) 846 1042 for more details



community safety

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He Tangata, He Tangata, He Tangata!

Our homes, our neighbourhoods and our city are safe places.

- Communities are free from crime and people live without fear.
- Our children and young people are free from abuse and neglect.
- The right support is there to prevent family violence and help people overcome destructive behaviours.

what are we measuring?



Residents' rating of feeling safe in their home after dark • **Recorded violence, sexual, drugs and anti-social criminal offences** • Residents' perceptions of safety in the CBD and in neighbourhoods • **Number of youth apprehensions by age group: under 10 years, 10-13 years, 14-16 years** • Residents' rating of safety of local neighbourhoods for children to play in unsupervised • **Number of notifications to Child, Youth, and Family Services and substantiated child abuse and neglect** • Residents' rating of vandalism as a problem over the last 12 months in their city • Older residents frequency of feeling isolated or lonely • **Number of children in care**

what do we know?

In the past ten years there has been a rise in burglary, theft, graffiti, drug abuse and violence. These crimes impact on the community's quality of life. Interviews by Hamilton City Council staff with local Non Government Organisations state that in some neighbourhoods it is considered generally unsafe for children to play unsupervised. In these areas the street is often considered by kids as safer than the home. Most service providers cite a breakdown in the family unit as the root cause of neighbourhood violence. Violent crimes have risen by 20% during this period.

The numbers of youth offenders apprehended remains static at

around 21% (as of 2006). Youth apprehensions for behaviours such as burglary, theft, graffiti, drug abuse and violence have begun to increase in the past two years.

Negative youth behaviour is clearly not the biggest problem in the city – just one of high profile.

Between 2002–2004, there has been a rise in the number of abuse notifications to Child Youth and Family. This rate of increase may in part be driven by increasing awareness of child abuse and neglect. However, abuse substantiation has also increased over this period. During 2005 there was a total of 4,710 notifications to CYFS Offices within the Waikato

region and of which 85% required further investigation. We know that there needs to be a wider awareness of child safety. It is likely that many of the victims of child abuse remain undetected and that further effort is required to ensure that the health and safety needs of these children are met.

Monthly trends shows a gradual increase in numbers of children in care over the last five years. However the monthly average has dropped for the first two quarters of 2007. Poverty and social deprivation are seen as critical factors for family health.

this is what we're doing

PROJECT

COMMUNITY FIRST; CO-ORDINATED SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

The aim with this project is to offer families the ability to access a range of services and information to meet their needs.

This 'one stop shop' concept will see a network of government and community providers working together to give families the information and support they need - in the right place and at the right time.

This one point of contact for families will allow them to access the full range

of services available without having to search them out.

Our existing coordinated work on family violence has shown us the value of having agencies working closely together. Sharing decision making to ensure the most appropriate path is taken for families will ensure they get the right service without duplication of effort or the possibility of falling through organisational cracks.

LEAD AGENCY AND PARTNERS:

CYF | FACS | Work & Income | MoE | TPK | Police | HCC | MYD | Waikato DHB

An action plan will be developed for this project. Please contact the Regional Director Child Youth and Family, (07) 957 1304 for more details

PROJECT

YOUNG PEOPLE AND GANGS

This is a collaborative project between key agencies and service providers to support young people involved in gang culture to transition into sustainable employment, training, or back into school.

Working together will save time and resources, and, will expedite the successful transition of youth in sustainable employment or training. Developing a successful intervention utilising a number of agencies, NGO's and communities will help build relationships of trust and confidence with youth, and the families of these youth. This will have positive spin offs in developing pathways to employment or training.

The increase in young people who are

finding social connectedness in gangs is particularly seen in communities in areas of high poverty. These communities have instigated public meetings to find an answer to this problem. There is a willingness amongst many organisations to collaborate on this issue.

Research to define the scope of young people and gangs in Hamilton is underway. Recommendations from this research will be used to inform a long-term sustainable solution for young people in gangs. Critical success factors will include well-coordinated leadership, committed stakeholders, healthy resources and finding key champions who people in the community already know and trust.

LEAD AGENCY AND PARTNERS:

HCC | MYD | Police | Work & Income | TPK | MoE

An action plan will be developed for this project. Please contact the Youth Development Team Leader, Hamilton City Council (07) 838 6497 for more details

PROJECT

CAMPAIGN FOR ACTION ON FAMILY VIOLENCE - HAMILTON

The aim of this project is to create a city where family violence is not tolerated. A family violence national campaign is being launched in September 2007. It supports the vision that "all families/whanau have healthy, respectful, stable relationships, free from violence". Hamilton will take a strong stance on this critical issue by giving a local

dimension to the national campaign. The promotional campaign will use local and community leadership to create personal relevance around family violence; helping people to recognise and prevent it. This campaign will complement and support existing local networks and actions to develop good outcomes for the city.

LEAD AGENCY AND PARTNERS:

HCC | Police | HAIP | CYF | FACS | Work & Income | MYD | MoE | TPK | Waikato DHB | HNZC

An action plan will be developed for this project. Please contact the Community Development Unit, Hamilton City Council (07) 838 6626 for more details



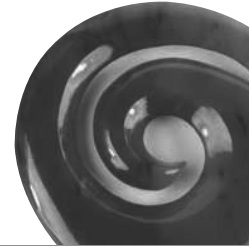
Nga Whakatauki

Nga Whakatauki

Na Tou Rourou, Na taku rourou ka ora ai te Iwi.	By your food basket and by my food basket, the people will be well.
Maa pango, Maa Whero – ka oti ai te mahi.	By the black and by the red the work is done.
Tama Tu Tama Ora – Tama Moe, Tama Mate.	A youngster who stands will be well. A youngster who sleeps, will not.
Ma te whakaaro nui ka hanga ai te whare ma te ma te matauranga ka u ai.	Through wisdom a house is built and by understanding it is established.
He aha te mea nui o te ao? He Tangata, He Tangata, He Tangata.	What is the greatest thing in the world? Tis man, Tis man, Tis man.

It is well to point out that a Maori proverb loses its quality and full force when it is translated into another language. In some instances, the translations are very 'free', but in all cases, the principle of the proverb is retained. Then too, there are a number of well-known Maori words which are best left untranslated to preserve euphony, e.g., "Tangi" is more appropriate than "utter a plaintive cry", and so on.

Source: *Nga Whakatauki me Nga Pepeha A te Maori* by Rev. Kingi Ihaka 1956



glossary

CYF	Child, Youth and Family
FACS	Family and Community Services
HAIIP	Hamilton Abuse and Intervention Project
HCC	Hamilton City Council
HNZC	Housing New Zealand Corporation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MYD	Ministry of Youth Development
Police	NZ Police
SSW	Social Services Waikato
Tainui	Waikato Raupatu Trustee Company Ltd
TeRok	Te Runanga o Kirikiriroa
TPK	Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Maori Development)
Waikato DHB	Waikato District Health Board
Work & Income	Work and Income



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

Bowen State Building, Bowen Street, PO Box 1556, Wellington 6140 • Telephone: 0-4-916 3300 • Facsimile: 0-4-918 0099

22 OCT 2008

Thank you for your email of 30 September 2008 to Elisabeth Hewitt, Manager Official and Parliamentary Information, regarding the research that you are undertaking as part of the Masters in Management Studies at the University of Waikato.

The Ministry of Social Development is New Zealand's largest government department providing whole-of-sector leadership in delivering policy advice and social services to improve social outcomes for all New Zealanders. As part of this, the Ministry is focused on ensuring all New Zealanders are aware of their entitlements and can access them. Communicating people's entitlements is a core role for the public service.

The Ministry's communications staff are spread throughout the Ministry's business and service lines. They develop, write, design and deliver communication materials to more than one million clients and nearly 10,000 staff. They manage more than 18 websites, produce nearly 200 publications a year and deal with thousands of media enquiries. In addition to communications staff, all Ministry staff, particularly frontline staff, play a crucial role in making people aware of the Ministry's services and the assistance available to them.

You have asked about any specific recent campaigns undertaken by Work and Income. Two campaigns that you are likely to be aware of are the Working for Families campaign that has been carried out jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Inland Revenue, and the SuperGold Card campaign.

Working for Families

Working for Families was announced in May 2004 and is a package of initiatives designed to help make it easier to work and raise a family. The package was rolled out between 2004 and 2007 and consists of a number of components designed to work together, administered by the Ministry of Social Development and Inland Revenue.

I have enclosed a copy of the report *Receipt of the Working for Families Package*, which discusses how the Ministry and Inland Revenue have worked through a public awareness campaign to ensure that families have received their entitlements. It provides a description of how we have actively engaged with people and measures the success of that engagement. This report is also available on the Ministry's website at <http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/evaluation/receipt-working-for-families/index.html>.

This site also includes the first evaluation of the Working for Families package. This evaluation will help you to understand the package and the uptake of the assistance up to the end of August 2006.

You will see from the first report that emphasis was placed on ensuring that all possible avenues of disseminating information to people were explored, including working with non-government organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, outward bound calling, sending letters to selected families, targeting community groups using methods such as stands in shopping malls, making information available online with a specific website www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz, extending office hours, and providing information through Work and Income's multilingual contact centre.

SuperGold Card campaign

This is a public education campaign aimed at raising awareness about the benefits of the SuperGold Card. The card was launched on 29 August 2007 and recognises the contribution senior citizens and veterans have made, and continue to make, to their communities and New Zealand as a whole. The SuperGold Card is available to all New Zealand residents 65 years or older, and to those under 65 who receive New Zealand Superannuation or a Veteran's Pension.

The Ministry has undertaken a comprehensive public awareness campaign to ensure that senior citizens, and potential business partners, were aware of the SuperGold Card and its benefits. This campaign was developed in accordance with the guidelines covering advertising by government departments. The success of the launch of the card was dependent on there being a high degree of awareness of the benefits of the card as well as good support from businesses and agencies.

Since the official launch of the card, the number and scope of participating companies and the discounts available to cardholders, has grown significantly. Information on the SuperGold Card, including the discounts and concessions available, can be found online at www.supergold.govt.nz.

I have enclosed a copy of the SuperGold Card launch marketing campaign overview for your information. The communication strategy included the following initiatives:

- a media campaign encouraging businesses to join the SuperGold Card programme as business partners
- a national newspaper, radio and magazine campaign to launch the SuperGold Card
- printing 580,000 SuperGold Card Discount Directories
- development of all the SuperGold Card marketing collateral including card designs, trade marking and registration costs, logo design and development, launch and business campaign advertisement layout designs, window stickers, card carrier sheets, and cardholder/business partner application forms and folders
- ongoing support for advertising and marketing activity throughout the year.

Work and Income brochures

Communicating with people about the way the Ministry can help people is a key contributor to achieving improved outcomes for New Zealanders. The Ministry does this in a variety of ways including regularly running exhibition stands, the distribution of hundreds of publications each year and via the Ministry's websites. At a local level, Service Centres work with community groups to ensure that information is widely disseminated. Information is often available in Citizen Advice Bureaux, advocacy organisations and in community law centres.

All of Work and Income's documents are widely available and many are accessible in a range of languages. Every effort is made by Work and Income to provide support if we are aware that an individual has language difficulties and people can always have another person present at a meeting or nominate a person to act on their behalf. Documents are made as easy to understand as possible, particularly where there are legislative requirements that certain information must be included, such as on benefit application forms.

I hope that you find this information useful and wish you well with your thesis. If you require any further information, please contact me on