

Kathryn Sadgrove

I am married to Greg and have three children and a Grandson who lives in Australia. The youngest of my children Thomas has Down syndrome. We live just 20 minutes from the Whangarei CBD on a life style block in a unique bush setting.

I have a physical condition Rheumatoid Arthritis and my husband Greg is on Dialysis. This can make life in our household interesting at times. I have always believed it is what you can do, not what you can't do. To keep positive and having a good sense of humour helps. I am a creative person and I enjoy gardening, painting, sculpture and fishing.

I have been involved as a volunteer with the local Down Syndrome Support Group for over 20 years and am one of the founding members. I have until recently, been a committee member on the New Zealand Down Syndrome Assn for over 10 years. Part of my role is to visit new parents in the hospital who have had a new baby born with Down syndrome. This is a time of grieving for the parents and having someone to talk to who has been through the experience themselves can help to get through this tough time.

I worked at Work and Income for seven years, as a health and disability information person. This entailed finding information on health conditions and support groups. After two years of doing this I then got the position as an Employment Coordinator supporting people with a health condition or disability into employment.

I now work for Idea Services in the area of Supported Employment. I have a passion for people with disabilities who, with the right support, are active in their communities, whether that is community participation, work experience or employment. My son Thomas works Part-time at Bunnings and is an active member in his community and most of the time he has a better social life than his parents.

I run a Youth Group for young people who have a disability. It is all about the young people just hanging out together, having fun, making friends and just enjoying each other's company.

I am excited to be part of the new Northland DHB Consumer Council. With the knowledge, experience and passion that sits within this Council we can only move forward in a positive way.