

A message from our Chief Executive

Kia Ora

Welcome back to 2022 – I can't believe it's almost April! Despite Omicron now in our communities, I am still positive about 2022. Able Minds continues to operate at red light settings providing help and assistance to many people across our divisions.

This year we are focussed on growth – growth in our reach, growth in our services and staff capability.

Johnny Romano has now aptly taken the reins of the whānau division and placed emphasis on supervision and improving the standard of support provided as well as referral networking.

We are grateful that Rachel Loper has joined our team to head up the RAW (Rangatahi and Wellbeing) Programme and will be completing her first programme shortly. Look out for a RAW programme in your area soon! Rachel has also connected with Emma at our Activity Centre in Dunedin, to start a new youth club – providing a safe, warm and fun place to hang out after school, download with friends but also reach out if needed.

We also welcome Natasha Barrett to the team - based in Invercargill and a qualified social worker with a vast experience in helping youth – she has hit the ground running and will be an asset in the whānau division.

Rachael Roberts has added another peer support group into her programme at Invercargill, using exercise as a means to establish connection and support in its members.

It's all go for 2022 and that's just a snippet of what we have planned! Stay safe and take care.

Nga mihi

Sarah Dowie

Chief Executive



SPOTLIGHT ON RAW (Rangatahi and Wellbeing)

Hi I'm Rachel Loper

I'm married to my awesome husband Tane and between us we have 4 beautiful children aged 22,20,16 and 12. We love heading away in the caravan or away on the motorbikes with like minded friends. I am a very spiritual person and love anything hooky spooky!

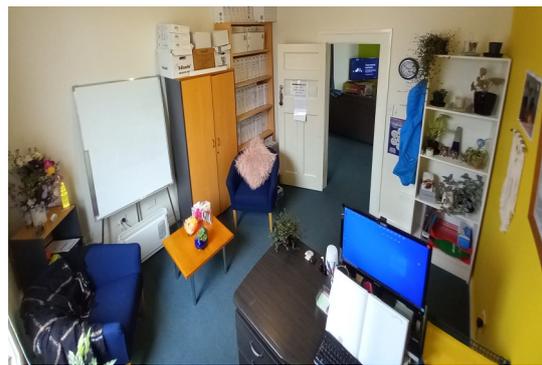
I have worked in the healthcare/education sector for 20+ years in different roles such as support work, teacher aide and coordinating programmes for children with disabilities and behavioural issues. I've completed my youth work and behaviour management certificates along the way. I thoroughly enjoy working with children and find it extremely rewarding. So I am very excited and feel very privileged to have been given this opportunity.

The main focus of the RAW programme is to help our Rangatahi work through the struggles they are experiencing and support them in finding strategies and coping mechanisms that will enable them to maintain good and healthy wellbeing.

I aim to do this by working alongside them to identify their triggers, early warning signs, safe people and places as well as any organisations and or helplines they may need.

All of this information is then made into an individualised wellbeing plan. My aim is to empower them to take control and start creating autonomy over their wellbeing, build confidence, self esteem and resilience so when they eventually finish the programme they feel confident to self-manage in their day to day lives.

If you have any referrals or questions, please call me on 027 500 2057.



Dunedin Activity Centre has opened its space to a Youth Drop in Centre.

Running every Thursday afternoon from 3pm until 5pm.

Contact Emma on 022 043 3672 or Rachel on 027 500 2057 for more information.

What's happening in Invercargill

Invercargill Peer Support

I'm Rachael Roberts, the Peer Support Co-ordinator in Invercargill. I've been working with Able for four years and have a passion for creating opportunities for our community to connect and helping people achieve their steps to wellbeing.

Peer Support Groups in Invercargill are a space where people who have experienced mental distress, their families and whanau come together to connect with each other, share stories and learn new skills on this journey to well being.

Our Walkers Group is on a Tuesday afternoon, meeting at 12:30pm. Starting at a relaxed pace, to warm up, and connect with others walking alongside you. The location varies each week and is confirmed on a Tuesday morning by text.

Our Cuppa and Chat Group is on a Thursday, from 11:30am. This is a space for the group to meet, share kai, share stories, share time and learning together.

Our Collective Creators Craft Group is a pop up group on a Thursday at 1pm. From mindfulness colouring, to shared group creations this is a very popular group that people love to attend.

If you would like to know more please contact Able Minds on 0800 494 262.



What's happening in Invercargill

We have welcomed Natasha Barrett to the team.

Kia Ora

My name is Natasha, I am Southland born and bred. I left New Zealand when I was 18 years of age and travelled around Australia for 12 years. I returned to Invercargill in 2008, enrolled into Southern Institute of technology and completed the Social Services course which pathed my way into Otago University the following year where I graduated in 2014 with a Bachelor of Community and Social Work. I have been privileged in my career to have practiced in many different sectors in various community based and management roles. I'm passionate about social change and social justice, and feel humbled to have been given the opportunity to utilise my skills within Able Minds and support Whanau in our community that have challenges with Mental distress and addiction.



Congratulations to Johnny Romano who is our new Practice Manager.



Contact us:



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