WEconnect Project

Encouraging inclusion in our neighbourhoods

Cathy Cameron & Tiff North

Overview of WEconnect

- We have an increasingly diverse community through immigration
- Welcoming communities lead to prosperous and resilient communities
- WEconnect is a Neighbourhood Support initiative, funded through contestable funding
- The WEconnect Project links existing Masterton residents with culturally and linguistically diverse (C.A.L.D) residents for 3-6 months.

New Zealand – a nation of immigrants

"New Zealand has become one of the top five most ethnically diverse countries in the OECD." We have 213 ethnicities - and there are just 196 official countries on the world map."

Berlinda Chin, Director of the Office of Ethnic Communities

Setting up WEconnect

- Applied to Neighbourhood Support NZ for contestable funding
- Sought Neighbourhood Support volunteers to buddy immigrants
- Sought immigrants who wanted support through agencies
- Developed project systems
  - Online registration
  - Documentation ie volunteer agreement
  - Police vetting
  - Induction material
  - Training session – cultural competency and NS messages
- Held an international potluck dinner event to form initial buddy partnerships
- Regular feedback requested from both sides.
- Ongoing monitoring of the relationship
- Three month potluck event to thank agencies, volunteers and to present emergency Grab'n'Go bags to CALD residents

WEconnect – celebrating diversity

“Once you understand and appreciate other people’s cultural backgrounds, then you can also connect with them more.”

Belle Wei
California State University

- WEconnect enjoys working with a variety of nationalities, both local buddies and CALD people
- There are multiple benefits for both sides of the buddy partnership

Project to date

MAY
Project conceived by Cathy. NSNZ contestable funding

AUG
Project launched
Partnerships made
Volunteers sought

SEP
Volunteer induction & training
12 volunteers vetted

NOV
International Potluck Dinner
6 buddy relationships formed

JAN
New C.A.L.D residents registered
4 buddy relationships formed

Partnerships formed
- MCLaSS - English
- CDMP - driving

FEB
More C.A.L.D residents registered
Volunteers sought

MAR
15 new volunteers
- Driving mentors
- Buddies

APR
Potluck celebration of 3 months of buddy partnerships

Next step

- **Joint tender with Red Cross for Refugee Resettlement government contract**

We are working with…

WEconnect

Literacy Aotearoa
Choice Change Freedom

Masterton District Council
Te Kaunihera ā-rohe o Whakaoriori

KiwiClass
MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES | HE AMO TAUNAKI

RATO AKORANGA Ā ROHE
REAP
WAIRARAPA

Citizens Advice Bureau

Neighbourhood Support
NEW ZEALAND

CD CIVIL DEFENCE
WELLINGTON REGION EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Health & Disability Advocacy
Ngā Kaitautoko

WAIRARAPA ROAD SAFETY COUNCIL

Community Driver Mentor Programme

NEW ZEALAND RED CROSS

Wellington Free Ambulance

FENZ

NZ Police

Connecting Communities
WAIRARAPA

Connecting Communities

C.A.L.D resident needs

What do you think might be the needs of C.A.L.D immigrants?

- English language
- Driver's licence
- Jobs
- Friendship & connection
- Local knowledge

WEconnect volunteers

- Induction session – 1 hour
- Training session – 3 hours
- Police vetting and volunteer agreement
- Buddy relationship – 3-6 months
  - Provide neighbourly support to CALD residents

Preferred Skills:

- Good communication
- Welcoming manner
- Open-mindedness / Non-judgmental
- Resourcefulness
- Learnt a foreign language
- Willingness to learn about cultural differences
- Experience living overseas
- Worked with culturally diverse colleagues or clients
- Good Masterton local knowledge

CDMP volunteer

Community Driver Mentor Programme

- Part of Wairarapa Road Safety Council

Mentor drivers

- 30 hours commitment
- NOT an instructor
- Helping C.A.L.D residents pass their theory/tests
- Training is provided

Potluck presentation event

- Thu 11 April
- Celebrating buddy partnerships
- Presenting CALD residents with a Grab ‘n’ Go bag
- Thanking the volunteers and agencies involved
- Celebrating our new driver’s licence holder

Thank you
Any questions?