

## **Recognising strengths builds success**

Julie France, part of the team at West Auckland Family Services (WAFS, Methodist Mission Northern), sums up the success of their strengths based approach by telling the story of a family who had been linked to virtually every statutory and community agency possible before being referred to WAFS.

Without mentioning details she talks about recognising the strengths of one particular 'problem child who was kicked out of school'. When she first entered the family's home to offer them assistance, it was the boy who made sure she had a place to sit, and that she had the family's attention saying "this lady has come to talk to us".

Now, sometime later he is motivated and involved in a vocational training course. When Julie asked him what the difference was he told her "you noticed the good stuff, not the bad stuff I was doing".

As Julie sums it up, "if by working with a family you concentrate on the problems, it just magnifies them. But if you work on the good aspects of parenting then that is what grows."

**West Auckland Family Services** is committed to

- Achieving positive outcomes for children and families
- Working to a strengths based model
- Growing and developing new quality services within the community

For more information call (09) 818 6834.