

Intensive Wraparound Service

Support for learners with highly
complex and challenging needs



At the Ministry of Education, we know that helping all children and young people to learn really matters – and we know that all children can learn with the right help and support.

Some children and young people need more assistance than others. These children need intense specialised assistance to help them learn new ways of doing things and make positive changes for life.

Introducing the Intensive Wraparound Service

The Intensive Wraparound Service (IWS) makes sure that the services and resources are there to support the small number of children and young people who have highly complex and challenging behaviour, social or education needs and their family/whānau. This includes children and young people who also have an intellectual impairment.

The intensive support can be provided from a learner's local school and community and may include a period of support from a residential special school where that is seen as needed.

The IWS supports children and young people to:

- learn new skills and ways of behaving
- stay at or return to their local school
- behave in a positive and social way
- enjoy a successful home and school life.

The IWS is run by the Ministry of Education from our regional offices. Children and young people are referred to the IWS by Ministry special education staff or a Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) following discussion with the child's school and parents or caregivers. Children and young people are referred to the service because they are really struggling to stay at school and learn.

For example, they may have been (or are at risk of being) suspended or excluded from school and need some extra specialised support to get back on track. Or they may be returning home after a time at a residential special school and need resources and support to go back to their local school. In most cases, the usual resources and support available from the education system will not have been enough to meet the needs of the children and young people referred to the IWS.

How We Can Help

When a child or young person has been referred to the Intensive Wraparound Service (IWS) an assessment of their needs is completed by one of our IWS facilitators.

Our facilitators are trained psychologists. Their job is to develop individualised plans for every learner they work with. They are based in Ministry of Education local and regional offices throughout New Zealand.

The plan sets out all the things that everyone will do to help a child or young person succeed.

For example it may suggest professional development and training for a child's classroom teacher to help the teacher learn new teaching and behaviour management strategies. Or it may recommend a young person attend one of the country's residential special schools for short term, intensive residential learning support.

Initiatives set out in the plan cover a period of up to three years and are funded by the Ministry of Education through the Intensive Wraparound Service for up to two years.

A learner's plan and funding is managed by their IWS facilitator in partnership with the team supporting the child (this includes the school, family/whānau and other agencies).

Our facilitators work with all the people who support a child – including their parents, family and whānau, their teachers and other people such as special education specialists (from the Ministry of Education). Other people from agencies such as Child, Youth and Family and residential special schools might also be involved as well.



How We Know It Works

We know the service works from the results and changes we are seeing in the lives of children and young people with complex needs who have been receiving a similar intensive service since 2010. The Intensive Wraparound Service is based on the same model.

Here are some of the different ways people throughout the country are successfully using the intensive wraparound model (please note, we have changed the names of children and some of their details to protect their privacy).

Sonya

Sonya, 10, joined the service with a history of absconding from class. She had emotional outbursts involving kicking, hitting and destroying property. She was impulsive and hyperactive.

Sonya had been in and out of foster homes after Child, Youth and Family removed her from her mother in early childhood and has not seen her mother or her father since.

Records showed Sonya struggled academically, but had a vivid imagination and an obvious love of the performing arts.

What we did

We brought together Sonya's family therapist, her teacher and her foster family to talk about what she needed and to develop an individualised plan.

Sonya's plan featured a series of home and school strategies aimed at building her resiliency skills, managing her anti-social behaviour and introducing enjoyable activities to her life such as acting.

The plan aimed to help Sonya behave better and help her foster family and her teacher reduce conflict at home and in class.

A specialist teacher was employed to develop and implement a remedial literacy and numeracy programme for Sonya.

How it worked

Today Sonya is more engaged in the classroom and is behaving well at home and at school.

She is learning to regulate her emotions and build up her social skills. She no longer hits other children at school and is enjoying group experiences in class.

Her science and sports grades are improving and her classroom teacher reports Sonya has had no incidents since the plan was implemented.

Hone

Hone, a 10-year-old with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), was referred to the Ministry's service after being excluded from school.

He had a history of being physically and verbally aggressive at school and at home and suffered from anxiety.

Hone had been in and out of many schools in his young life. His academic records showed he struggled with maths and writing. But he could achieve well when he was focused on something that interested him.

What we did

We started by bringing together Hone's teacher and parents to develop mutual, trusting relationships and write Hone's individual plan. Hone now receives the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme to provide assistance with his learning needs in the classroom.

His parents attended a successful, evidence-based programme called The Incredible Years to help them manage his behaviour at home.

A specialist teacher was invited to Hone's class to help Hone learn emotional control and social skills. The specialist teacher also talked to Hone about the expectations people in society have of one another's behaviour.

Hone was encouraged to help his peers use a computer, which, in turn, helped to boost his self esteem.

His classroom teacher started to build more of her lessons around topics that interested Hone as a way to keep him engaged.

How it worked

Today Hone attends school full time. He is happy, achieving well and is starting to develop friendships.

He has learned to think about his behaviour and is learning to swim and improve his motor skills. Hone is now able to learn in the classroom without extra adult help.

Darren

Darren is a 10-year-old with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Darren was referred to the Ministry's service due to the effects of his mother's drug abuse during pregnancy, and being neglected and malnourished.

Darren was verbally and physically abusive in class, often shouting and refusing to comply with his teacher's requests. He would leave class, walk throughout the school wailing and sometimes leave the school grounds altogether.

At times, he would hit and spit at his teachers and hit other students.

Darren's background showed a family history of learning difficulties. His academic records showed low academic achievement and speech and language needs.

What we did

We started by developing a sound understanding of ASD among Darren's teacher, teacher's aide and specialists.

Then we developed a plan with strategies for adapting the classroom and curriculum to better suit Darren.

Darren was taught new self-regulation and self-calming strategies to help him identify and manage his feelings and behaviour.

Darren's teachers and family learned new strategies for responding to Darren's anti-social behaviour and supporting his good behaviour.

Child, Youth and Family provided Darren with additional therapy to support the changes he was making.

How it worked

Today Darren wants to be at school and no longer runs away. He's better able to get on with his classroom work and to work independently.

Darren is successfully recognising his own emotions and is starting to recognise the emotions of others. He is becoming adept at using self-calming strategies. His teacher reports Darren is not swearing as much as he used to and is participating well in group work.

Recently he attended a holiday camp and loved it. He's enjoying a new BMX, donated by a local charity, and attends BMX club.





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