

Starfish Social Services continues to serve the community

Late 2017, Starfish Social Services relocated to their new premises at 15 Gordon Terrace, Matamata. Starfish Social Services is a non for profit community based organisation that supports youth and family by journeying alongside them in a holistic way - meeting emotional, spiritual and physical needs. Starfish works using strengths based approaches to empower individuals and whānau to achieve what is important to them.



Daniel Lansdaal is part of Starfish's Youth Development and Leadership Programme, and in 2016, he was head boy at Matamata College. Daniel joined Starfish to work as part of a team of young leaders in creating an event for youth, run by youth. This event became known as the 'Domaininator' and the event was a day filled with sports, an obstacle course, and an outdoor movie. Daniel found the experience helped shape him into a better leader.

"It was an incredible thing at the ripe old age of 17 to be put in with a team of young people and create something which could be enjoyed by everyone in the town. Even through this one event, Starfish was inadvertently making me develop into a better leader" says Daniel.

"One of the things which stood out for me in the Domaininator creation process was that it was entirely youth running the show. The so called 'big kids' completely stood back and let us do the work. We were on our own, but had that support network to guide us should we need it" says Daniel.

Daniel found that his involvement with the event really challenged his ideas on what organisations like Starfish are really here for.

"To most people, I would seem like the last person who would need to utilise Starfish Social Services. I was Head Boy, a hard working academic, I had a job, and was part of many recreational groups throughout the community. The general perception is that only those who are at risk need them. But Starfish is aiming to help all youth. I am pure evidence that Starfish is doing all it can to help develop all kinds of youth in the community" says Daniel.

Deborah Galloway, Wellness Facilitator at Starfish says that since Starfish's inception 8 years ago, Matamata has seen growth in its community and this is mirrored by an increased need for practical and emotional support for youth and whanau.

"Our historic building has a heritage of providing exceptional care for the community, we will continue this legacy. Our new whare 'Starfish Community Hub' is a 'one stop shop' providing care, support and increased access to services for the local community" says Deborah.

Starfish are interested in hearing from health and social service providers who deliver outreach support services in Matamata

“We invite the community, agencies and visitors to call in for a visit to our new whare” says Deborah.

Starfish aims to strengthen relationships within local communities, improve outcomes for youth and whanau and build community capacity in Matamata- Piako and South Waikato. The new building provides new places to learn, teach, counsel, hold meetings, stage events, and more.

Find out more at starfishservices.org.nz