



Outcome 8 - Leadership



“We have great opportunities to demonstrate our leadership”

New Zealand Disability Strategy, 2016-2026

There should be a level playing field where everyone is recognised for their skills and talents and is supported to fulfil their leadership potential. Disabled people need to be recognised as experts in their own lives. Where non-disabled leaders make decisions that are important to disabled people, they need to act as allies and work closely with the disabled community.

Strategy In Action

Roger Marsden, Community Radio Broadcaster of “Listen! Our Voices Count”

When Christchurch-man Roger Marsden was told he was “too brain damaged and too disabled” and “would never get married”, he didn’t listen. Today he is a community radio broadcaster, has a wealth of experience in governance and advocacy roles, and has been married for nearly 35 years.

In 1980, when Roger left school, he started working at a sheltered workshop earning just \$5 for a 40-hour week doing industrial work. He was told then he’d amount to nothing, and that just spurred him on. He did lots of volunteer work and earned himself a Certificate in Small Business.

Roger is now doing something he loves and is a positive role model for those living with disability.

“I have always wanted to work – I like it. I am the creator and radio broadcaster of my own radio show, and I also have a Facebook Group under that name, with followers from all over the world. I’ve had some wonderful opportunities in life – I’ve met and interviewed so many inspirational people from around the world, including New Zealand.”

As well as being a radio broadcaster, in the past he has been a youth leader, an officer for the Boys Brigade, a trainer and facilitator of Tu Tikanga Rights and a President of the Disabled Persons Assembly Christchurch.

Roger’s work, as he explains it, aligns very nicely with the New Zealand Disability Strategy. He says:

“I have a disability and I want to ‘do my bit’ for disabled people. My community radio programme is all about letting the community and beyond know that disabled voices do count...So it’s about educating the community, changing attitudes towards disabled persons, and promoting employment and economic security. All people with disability want is to be treated like everyone else.”

Roger’s positive attitude has helped him through life. He says:

”Just go for it – anything you want to do! Your life, your choice. Use your abilities.”

Resources and Guidance

Resources and guidance aimed at supporting disabled people to reach their full potential:

“Listen! Our Voices Count” radio programme

→ website plainsfm.org.nz

→ Facebook group [Listen! Our Voices Count\(Plains FM 96.9\), New Zealand](#)

People First New Zealand

People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi is a national disabled persons organisation that is led and directed by people with learning (intellectual) disability.

→ website peoplefirst.org.nz

Attitude Live

Attitude Live offers a large collection of videos about chronic health and disability. It works with organisations, service providers, government agencies and brands to develop online and broadcast content. The organisation promotes achievement through its annual Attitude Awards.

→ website attitudelive.com