

The Annual Camp for young people, 2000

The seventh Annual Huntington's Camp for young people from families with Huntington's Disease was organized by the Huntington's Disease Association (Wellington) from 17-25 January 2000. The Camp was held at the Outward Bound School, Marlborough Sounds which is a well known Outdoor Centre specialising in the development of young people.

The Camp venue was at the Outward Bound satellite site at Te Kainga Bay in Queen Charlotte Sound, a very beautiful bay with only sea access. This venue proved to be excellent for the needs of the campers - its amazing beauty and serenity could only but encourage the participants to share their knowledge and concerns on Huntington's and offer support to each other.

The theme for this year's Camp was "*The Journey*" - the journey through life, the journey through life with Huntington's Disease.

As in the past few years, there were two Groups. The first Group (12-16 year olds) attended from 17 to 21 January and the second Group (17-26 year olds) from 19 to 25 January. The two Groups overlapped by two days.

The Camp's Objectives were, for the young people...

- to meet others from similar Huntington's background and circumstances;
- to share information and experiences about Huntington's Disease;
- to support each other and by doing so, develop a mutual support network;
- to have fun.

A total of 25 participants attended the Camp (5 participants pulled out at the last moment). Of these, 19 campers had participated in previous Camps and 6 were participating for the first time.

The campers came from throughout New Zealand as follows:

Ngatea, Hauraki Plains	2	Featherston	1
Waihi, Bay of Plenty	2	Wellington	5
Tauranga	1	Hokitika	3
Taupo	1	Christchurch	4
Palmerston North	1	Dunedin	1
Wanganui	1	Invercargill	1
Napier	2		

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Sir Roy McKenzie, who has supported the HD associations for many years, was one of the main benefactors of this year's Camp. He visited the second Group at the Camp and spent a morning observing them on the rope course, and then joined the Campers for lunch.

The Camp was a great success and all the objectives were met. Campers managed to meet other young people in the same situation and share information on how they coped. They spent time with other people who understood what they were going through and gained support from people in the "same boat". They renewed friendships from previous Camps and made new friendships. They overcame feelings of isolation and provided support and encouragement to one another. They left the Camp more confident and with an increased knowledge of Huntington's Disease and returned home more resilient and with a better understanding of their family member with HD. They strengthened the support network which continues to operate between Camps.

The Association is deeply grateful to the following who provided generous financial support which helped to make this Camp possible :

Sir Roy McKenzie, Lions Club (Taradale), Sutherland Self Help Trust, The New Zealand Save the Children Fund (Marlborough Branch), Ngatea Hotel/New Zealand Community Trust, two families from Tauranga, Castlecliffe & St Johns Clubs, Wanganui, Wanganui Cosmopolitan Club, Grand Lodge of Benevolence (Waikato & Hawkes Bay Districts), Pub Charity/The Royal Tavern 1995 (Featherston), and Parawai Lions Club.

Without this support the Camp would not have been possible.

Dorothy Tortell
Social Worker