

## **A. Halberg History**

### **The Development of Halberg Trust's Philosophy and Work around Disability and Sport. Ian McDonald**

#### **1. Beginnings**

Sir Murray Halberg launched the 'Murray Halberg Trust for Crippled Children' after attending a fundraising function in Toronto. The luncheon had been staged to raise money for disabled children so they could achieve their sporting potential. Sir Murray, guest speaker at the event, was so impressed by the concept that he approached his employers New Zealand Breweries to see if they would back a similar event in New Zealand - the response was a definite "yes", and the rest is history. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 1963 the first Trust Deed for the Murray Halberg Trust for Crippled Children was signed. The original Trust Deed stated: "The founder wishes to establish a trust for the benefit of children with physical disabilities".

#### **2. The Early Years - 1963 to 1980**

During the early part of the 1970's the Trust purchased a house in Orewa to be used by families of disabled children over holiday periods. The house was funded by the proceeds of the annual Sportsman of the Year Award dinner, and was maintained through regular working bees involving Halberg Trustees, and was administered by the Crippled Children Society who took bookings. The reason behind buying such a house was that in this time period the standard building code didn't allow for accessible buildings, so the Trust bought the house and made relevant changes to make it accessible. The house was later named "Hendry House" in honour of Leo Hendry (a former Trustee and lifelong Eagles member). In the late 1970's the house was gifted to CCS who ran and maintained it until it was sold (date unknown).

The Trust also had a motel unit in Paraparaumu which was funded by Eagles golf days in the Wellington region organised by Ken Elliott. Wellington also had "Sheltered Workshops" for disabled youth, which were disbanded when it was felt that these went against the principles of inclusion.

Through the 1980's the Trust assisted many at the Mt Roskill Grammar unit with adapted vehicles, and also provided the unit with specialised touch and wand computers for use by the children in the special unit.

Historically, sporting opportunities for children with physical disabilities were very much focussed on the services provided by the New Zealand Crippled Children's Society. Following the introduction of the new Education Act, 1983 which, in part focussed on mainstreaming children with disabilities within the education system, there had been a gradual change in the perception of what is required and appropriate in the provision of sporting and active leisure opportunities. Many young people now began to expect the same opportunities in sport as they had been receiving in education, and in line with taking a more business focussed attitude towards the Trust's goals, Halberg Trust employed its first Executive Director in 1989, Dave Currie.

#### **3. The Nineties**

At the Trustees meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> of February 1994, the Murray Halberg Trust for Crippled Children officially became 'The Halberg Trust', and all funds held by the New Zealand Crippled Children's Society on behalf of the Trust were transferred to the newly named Halberg Trust.

Once the Trust had changed its name it went about re-writing the original Trust Deed which had remained largely unchanged since 1963. One of the main features of the new Trust Deed was the removal of the word "physical" when talking about which children were benefitting from the Trust. This was done to effectively give the Trust maximum flexibility as to who is eligible to receive funds from the Trust (i.e. ALL disabled children), and removed an implied connection with CCS (1). It also added a sixth 'Means of Achieving (the) Purpose' to include the raising of funds through functions to honour sporting excellence and other such celebrity events.

By the early 1990's the Halberg Trust was inundated with requests from sporting and disability organisations seeking funding support for sport programmes for children with disabilities. Whereas once the New Zealand Crippled Children's Society was the pre-eminent organisation in the provision of sports programmes and services for children and young people, other organisations were becoming significant players in the sector, notably Regional Sports Trusts and Parafeds.

In the late 1990's Halberg Trust CEO Dave Currie was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to travel and look at how other countries around the world were bringing together all facets of the disability sector, and the development of policies like 'No Exceptions'. Whilst travelling, Dave identified five key themes for the Trust to develop in order to make real progress in ensuring real sporting and recreational opportunities were made available to disabled children/people:

1. A co-ordinated national strategy
2. All involved in the change process to work towards an overall goal
3. Any plans put in place must deliver consistent messages to the community
4. Time and resource commitment to ensure change in community attitude becomes the norm
5. Every effort made to ensure no group is made to feel special or different

In the mid-1990's various groups were attempting to run sport and active leisure programmes to support children with disabilities, however this was a very fragmented and uncoordinated approach and was difficult to sustain funding and general support. The Halberg Trust was instrumental in bringing these groups together and subsequently developed 'Halberg Sports' in 1995. This was essentially an After School programme for children with disabilities. Over the ensuing four years Halberg Sports spread to more than 40 venues across the country, giving sporting experiences to over 1300 children and young people on an annual basis. The Halberg Trust contracted the Regional Sports Trusts, local CCS, and Parafed branches to deliver Halberg Sports. In the main the programmes were segregated sporting opportunities, but involved quality coaching and volunteer support.

Towards the end of the 1990's, the Halberg Sports programme developed a two-pronged approach to its delivery:

1. Skill Development gave participants an introduction into sport with an objective of learning fitness, movement, games and sport skills in a fun and positive environment.
2. It also intended linking participants with mainstream sport and active leisure. This link-up aimed to give individuals the opportunity to participate in their choice of sport or recreation in a regular community setting.

At the end of the 1990's following discussions with CCS, the Halberg Sports Programme was disestablished due it being seen as a road block towards the ultimate goal of providing inclusive opportunities for disabled children. At this time CCS National Service Development Manager Lorna Sullivan provided further background for CCS's reasons behind eliminating segregated sports and recreation as she believed that organised segregated sport is not

recreation. It was however important for not only CCS and other organisations to provide the appropriate resources that supported people to achieve a certain level of success within generic environments. The year after Halberg Sports finished, CCS stopped their own similar programme which provided recreational opportunities for disabled children, rather than sport.

Around the same time, the Hillary Commission agreed to have an independent review of its services and support for people with disabilities and included a consultative process with key stakeholders in disability sport. The review was completed in 1997 and the Commission convened a committee, chaired by Halberg CEO Dave Currie, to identify the issues facing disability sport and plan a way forward. Internally the Hillary Commission management team also contemplated, discussed and examined opportunities to improve its services and support for people with disabilities.

Following the commission's review, the resultant document was "No Exceptions", the Hillary Commission's policy and strategic plan for New Zealanders with a disability. The No Exceptions vision was clear – to create a sporting environment where people with a disability have the same opportunities as all New Zealanders to participate, enjoy and achieve in the sport and active leisure activity of their choice.

The Hillary Commission developed the No Exceptions Strategy for disabled people in 1998, for the period 1998–2001. The scope of the Strategy was limited to people with intellectual, physical or sensory impairments.

Since that time, there has been a review of the government's recreation and sport structures and the establishment of SPARC (Sport and Recreation New Zealand) in 2001. This new organisation had an aim of encouraging participation by disabled people as a target group, and to recognise the rehabilitative nature of physical recreation and sport.

In September 1998, a trial was commenced in the Bay of Plenty region to pilot the establishment of a Sport Opportunity Officer (SOO). This person's role was the practical implementation of the participation components of the No Exceptions policy. The programme was jointly funded by the Hillary Commission, the Bay of Plenty Community Charitable Trust and the Halberg Trust. The SOO was located at the Sport Bay of Plenty Regional Sports Trust and became an integral part of the trust's organisation.

Four guiding principles were set out for the SOO to work towards:

1. To provide a real choice in sport and active leisure opportunities for young people with a disability at a community level, working with individuals on a one-on-one basis and assisting them on a sporting pathway.
2. To support and work with community deliverers and providers in realistically achieving this, eg; coaches, clubs, schools and facilities.
3. To work with existing disability providers to promote 'No Exceptions' and the vision for people with a disability to access sport and active leisure through sports groups, organisations and facilities.
4. To improve the sport and active leisure community's attitude toward people with a disability to access sport and active leisure in a regular mainstream environment.

#### **4. The New Millennium**

As the education system began to integrate children with disabilities into mainstreamed classes, many of these young people now expected the same opportunities in sport. Following the success of the Sport Opportunity pilot in the Bay of Plenty, the Halberg Trust built on this and employed 10 new SOO's into positions based within the Regional Sports Trusts throughout New Zealand. At this stage Halberg Sports was still operating and the co-ordinators of this programme worked alongside the new SOO's in the regions. Whilst the Halberg Sports co-ordinator ran the sports programme, it was the SOO's role to work with

clubs, sporting organisations, recreational facilities and schools with the aim of developing opportunities for people with disabilities to not only access the sport of their choice, but also coaches, role models, services, sports facilities and public recreational areas.

During the mid-2000's the SOO role became Sport Opportunity Advisers (SOA), which today retains the core principles of the role than when it was first trialled and in 2006, Halberg Trust purchased equipment and intellectual property (Disability Education Programme) from Australian Sports Commission, leading to the launch of Sports Ability and No Exceptions Training (NET), which is facilitated by Halberg Trust SOAs.

Another significant change on the landscape was the launching of the New Zealand Disability Strategy (NZDS) in 2001 by the Office for Disability Issues. This document provides a platform for the government's work with disabled people, and has been used extensively in this review. The NZDS requires government departments to produce an implementation plan showing what they are doing towards putting the Strategy into practice and makes specific references to recreation and sport in several places.

Overall, SPARC invests more than \$70 million per year in organisations and programmes that will help to achieve their mission, and Halberg Trust plays a part in this funding process. Specifically, this means targeted funding to create a sport and recreation environment where more New Zealanders participate, support, and win. Halberg Trust invests funding with national sport organisations, national recreation organisations, RSTs and local authorities, and also provides expertise that will improve the quality of the services delivered to their members and participants.

The overarching goal of the No Exceptions investment is to 'increase disabled New Zealanders' participation in sport and recreation', and a big player in achieving this is the Halberg Trust. No Exceptions has a particular emphasis on participation, capability and promotion.

## **5. The Trust's Evolution through the eyes of its Founder**

The Trust has evolved immensely over the last 47 years according to Sir Murray Halberg. From its beginnings where the focus was only on children who had a physical disability to its present structure where people with all forms of disability are now part of Halberg. Sir Murray believes this has come about due to the complex nature of many disabilities which have both a physical and intellectual nature, and a need for the Trust to spread its message to a wider base. Sir Murray's ultimate wish is for the Trust to do itself out of a job. He believes that society still has some way to go, but would like to see disabled people accepted as the norm, and for society to remove those barriers which in effect "disable people".

### **Footnotes**

- (1) Letter dated March 27, 1991 from CEO Dave Currie to John Lusk, Halberg Trust Solicitor.
- (2) Key dates and changes sourced from material supplied by Julie Ryan and Mike Jeffcoat.
- (3) Trust Deeds 1993, 2002, 2005 and 2007 sighted.