

Help 4 U

Pathways Waikato Service Leader Tracy Hudson talks with Davita* and her husband about the difference the [Healthy Lifestyle](#) programme has made to their family.

Davita is an inspiration to us all. She's attended three of the 10 week Help 4 U programmes in Hamilton and seen some fantastic results! I met with Davita and her husband recently and both were enthusiastic about the positive influence it's had on herself and their family group.

Davita proudly tells me when I arrive that she's lost seven kilograms and both her and her husband have noticed a great change in her body shape. She's also pleased that her latest blood test results were perfect. She's feeling healthier and happier and both her husband and doctor are happy with how she's doing.

Prior to attending the Help 4 U activities Davita stayed at home all day, rarely leaving the house. She believes her medication made her gain weight as well as making her sleepy and lethargic. She found it difficult to do the housework or spend time with her daughter.

Davita now has more energy and is getting out of the house on a daily basis. Everyday she gets out of bed and takes care of her home, she walks her daughter to school and back each day - a round trip of about four kilometres and attends most of the Help 4 U activities. On the weekends the family look for cheap or free activities to do together. She enjoys the walks, the fresh air, the dietician's tips about healthy foods for home and her improved fitness. She's feeling good about herself!

But it's not just a change in Davita's energy and happiness that her family has noticed. They say there's also been a big change in her self esteem and confidence. Her husband believes that the Help 4 U activities have been better than medication in terms of helping with Davita's recovery. The activities have reduced the medication's side effects and made it work better for her.

When our conversation turns to the social aspects of Help 4 U, Davita's face lights up as she speaks about enjoying the social interaction and a friend she's met. They don't meet outside of the activities, but Davita looks forward to seeing her friend and catching up on how they're both doing.

It's not just the encouragement to take part in these healthy activities that Davita appreciates. She says without the help of transport that Pathways offers she wouldn't be able to manage. For Davita it would take two bus changes for her to attend the activities and she explains she would have difficulty managing her time between getting to and from activities and picking up her daughter from school. Cost would also be a problem as her husband is a full time student and Davita does not work.

Davita hopes that she can continue on the programme throughout her recovery journey, focusing on getting fit and losing more weight.

* Name has been changed.

