

I have said before I've always found casework one of the most rewarding parts of my job. There is something really satisfying in helping deliver a good outcome for people who are in need of support. One recent case really affected me though, in a positive way. I was approached by a constituent seeking help in securing part funding for their disabled son to attend a Magic Camp just 4 days after contacting me.

The camp is billed as a fun and effective therapy programme that integrates magic tricks into an intensive therapy programme for children who suffer from hemiplegia (a neurological condition the effects of which are similar to a stroke on one side of their body).

After some pleading phone calls we managed to secure the necessary funding from the local health commissioner which was great. But what I didn't quite appreciate until after a little research and a visit to the camp by my office was the outstanding affects that the camp had on the children that were taking part.

Working alongside magicians, occupational therapists and physiotherapists the children learnt magic tricks and theatrical skills which not only work to improve their motor skills including use of their helper hand but had the most astounding impact on their wellbeing and confidence.

The children were not only accomplishing what we would all consider simple tasks for the first time, such as opening a packet of crisps or doing up a zip, but every single child by the end of their first week was able to eat with a knife and fork.

It is a wonderfully innovative programme, which really made me grateful for the new focus on wellbeing in our support services – an immeasurable and vital gift. And to see the look on the faces of the children and their parents, well that really was magic.