

Catherine puts scepticism aside for Steven

Catherine Collier has been a sceptic of disability services for twenty years, but this week she put her fears to rest and gave the NDIS a chance.

Catherine's son, Steven, was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy as a teenager, and requires help managing certain tasks.

When Catherine asked for assistance, 20 years ago, she said she was advised to make an impossible choice.

"When he (Steven) was 19, I asked for one day a week of respite. I was told to put him onto the street, and to tell them that I couldn't cope any more...and to give up my rights as his mother. That was the only way," she said.

"That was never going to happen.

"I've been pretty sceptical...but I'm not so sceptical now."

Catherine and Steven have just finished their first implementation session with the IWC, working with one of IWC's official planners.

Her journey started with community meetings in Childers, and with some help she was able to send off the Access Request Form for her son, Steven, this year.

After Steven's planning conversation, the completed plan was received in the mail, with an considerable amount of support included.

Since moving to Bundaberg, the advice about the NDIS has been coming thick and fast. Catherine said she went into the first implementation meeting feeling concerned that her son would not receive adequate support.

However, following the implementation session with LAC Daniel Ashby, she felt he had cleared the air and helped her to understand what each type of funding was to be used for.

Catherine said the feeling was bittersweet, knowing Steven's independence would soon begin to develop through the NDIS.

"I still get a bit teary sometimes, but my husband will tell me because I'm a big sook. I've always been very soft," she said, sitting in the interview room at IWC.

Steven hugged her, and said "you won't lose me, mum".

Catherine said she and Steven felt respected throughout the process, and that their decisions and preferences were taken seriously by the IWC.

The IWC holds information sessions every Monday and Friday at the centre on 184 Barolin St, 10am-12pm. For participants with completed plans, or their family members, informal implementation workshops are held from 9am-4pm every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Formal implementation sessions will continue to occur throughout the region, and the IWC remains committed to its participant-focused, face-to-face strategy.