

Lawyer plays role in supporting the youth of Otago

Young people often struggle with the pressures of growing up in a rapidly evolving world.

Otago's Youth Wellness Trust (OYWT) works to support young people in the 11-18 age group to cope with the challenges that they face as they navigate the pressures of family, social, school and work life.

Anderson Lloyd's Sarah Simmers has been an OYWT trustee for two years. A position she says is "personally rewarding."

"In this case it's not just legal skills, but spending your spare time contributing in a different way."

The Trust's staff and trustees are justifiably proud of their nearly twenty-year history, in which the organisation has been a positive influence on the lives of thousands of young people.

"We pride ourselves in not being too large an organisation, which helps us to really know the community and children we help."

The Trust has up to 100 new referrals each year and works with some 230 teenagers annually.

"We want these young people to grow in confidence and independence while taking on more self-responsibility."

"Part of what the Otago Youth Wellness Trust does is take these children under their wing and help make sure they get everything they need -whether it is health care or a dentist or support for the family," Sarah says.

Anderson Lloyd encourages partners to take part in more formal pro-bono legal work but just as importantly encourages staff to get involved in other community projects.