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Michelle Newland on giving inspirational talks about survival

AUGUST 30, 2016 10:42 AM
BY BEN CAMERON

BRIMBANK MICHELLE NEWLAND MY BRIMBANK



MICHELLE SPENT 16 MONTHS IN A NURSING HOME LEARNING TO LIVE AGAIN. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Michelle Newland has come to personify determination and courage. She talks to Ben Cameron about how she suffered a brain injury at the age of 19 following an asthma attack, but now gives inspirational talks about survival at local schools.

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I had to relearn everything. How to walk, how to talk ... slowly things improved. Mum was a big mentor for me. Dad was always there. When I look at the pictures now, I can't believe that it is me. The doctors said there wasn't much hope for me. I've still got big dreams. I've written a book for kids. I have a card-making business. I'm helping in a primary school now, just like I always hoped.

You now give talks to local youth groups and schools ... what are your key messages?

To give hope to others that anything is possible. I speak about how a positive attitude is imperative, as well as good support and, of course, determination and hard work. I encourage people to never give up, and to break down their goals into baby steps, achieving one at a time. I have learnt that I am strong and can cope with anything that life throws at me.

How long has Brimbank been home for you?

I have lived in the Brimbank area all my life. It was only in February of this year that I moved out of my family home and into my own place, which is also in the Brimbank area.

What do you enjoy most about this area?

It's where I have always called home. My family and most of my friends live in the area ... Everything is familiar to me and people are friendly and down-to-earth.

What's your advice to anybody going through tough times with their health?

My advice ... is to work towards accepting what you can't change and do your best to look after and improve the areas of your health that you can do something about.

Consistent small steps add up over time and can make a big difference to your health in the long run. Surround yourself with positive people.

What's the next challenge for you?

My next challenge is to consolidate all the learning I have been working hard on in my new home, learning all of my routines, so that I can begin to transition into more independent time in my home.



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—
BEN CAMERON

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