



Pet stores help animal helpers

Kiwis living with a disability can get help with daily tasks from a puppy.

Mobility Dogs will partner with Animates stores across the country throughout September and October to raise funds to train at least one puppy for a disabled New Zealander.

Mobility dogs are trained to assist with tasks most able-bodied people take for granted like getting the phone, taking shoes and socks off, turning lights on and off and even paying for purchases across the counter.

Each dog is trained specifically to meet their partner's needs.

Mobility Dogs general manager Jody Wilson says the

puppies provide invaluable support to people with long-term physical disabilities including muscular dystrophy, stroke, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injuries and cerebral palsy.

"As well as helping on a day to day level, mobility dogs provide their partner with added independence, companionship and a greater sense of security."

It costs more than \$45,000 to train a mobility dog for two years to be ready for their partner and Animates hopes to raise \$50,000 which will go directly to the Mobility Assistance Dogs Trust.

Donations can be made at any Animates store until October 31 or go to givealittle.co.nz and search "RaiseAPuppy".



Partnership: New Zealand Governor-General Sir Jerry Mateparae with Mike Wheeler and his mobility dog Friend.