

CLAP takes the stage

Rachel Main's singing in the car with her normally hesitant eight-year-old son became the inspiration for a stage performance at Silverstream Retreat last week.

The retreat was the venue for the performance by Arts a Go Go! children and their parents.

When Rachel Main, founder and director of the Upper Hutt children's performing arts classes, called for an expression of interest from parents to see who would be willing to perform on stage with their children she met some hesitation.

A couple of months later, the show on August 3 was such a success that acts are already being lined up for next year, and families have asked if it can become a yearly event, Ms Main says.

For "Children Linking with Adults to Perform" (CLAP), family members were encouraged to sing, dance, act skits, mime, read poems, play instruments, perform magic and comedy. It gave parents the opportunity to further connect with their

children through practising and performing, and enhanced children's confidence by appearing on stage with an adult at their side.

At the same time, CLAP was designed to bring adults the joy and fun of participating too.

"We could all do with more fun at times," says Ms Main. "The acts were wonderful and varied. Monty Python meets Mamma Mia! Mums danced, dads sang and even a grandma acted.

"I was impressed by the effort the groups had put in."

Ms Main said Silverstream Retreat was perfect for the concert, with a well set-up auditorium, along with a cosy fire and bar nearby to calm the nerves of some parents.

"What great sorts the parents were getting in behind this event. You could see the happiness beaming from the children as they got to perform with their grown-up. Special memories were created, without a doubt."

