

Tell Us . . .

JONATHAN Koenig was 12 when he was hit by a car near his Menai home and doctors feared he wouldn't survive his severe brain injury. Now 26, Jonathan shows what is possible with a supportive family, determination and a sense of humour. Jonathan and his dad Robert tell **LOUISE GOODWIN** about work and perseverance.

What are your duties as an office assistant at Slater & Gordon Lawyers in Liverpool?

JK: I make sure the photocopier has enough paper for people that do the photocopying. I also open the mail and put letters in envelopes to be posted.

Why do you enjoy work?

JK: I just like turning up to work. It's important to me because I'm accepted here, and it's the people I work with who make me feel this way.

What do you think you can teach your colleagues?

JK: People can take life very seriously when they are working constantly with other very capable people. I think when they see me have a bit of difficulty, they stop and think. I want people to know that people who've been in hospital or are still going to hospital, can cope at work.

How has Jonathan reached this point?

RK: Jonathan's initial accident was the worst case scenario in



Jonathan Koenig, pictured with his dad Robert, at Slater & Gordon Lawyers in Liverpool.

Picture: ARMEN DEUSHIAN

terms of injury. We had a lot of rehabilitation to get him up and going. Just recently, this mainstream work has come into play, and he has been building from there. Jonathan also had a lot of help and support from Head 2 Work (a vocational assessment service provided by Liverpool

Hospital's Brain Injury Unit).

What has been Jonathan's response to mainstream work?

RK: Jonathan is a very likeable boy and has a great sense of humour. Being in mainstream work has been tremendous for him. It's important for Jonathan to be involved and accepted.

Every time I pick him up and ask how work was, he says he loves it. His employers tell me how hard he works and how determined he is, and it makes me so proud.

Jonathan's mum Cheryl is an author, speaker and Brain Injury Australia advocate. Visit cherylkoenig.com.au

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