

14. PROGRESS REPORT ON SPECIFIC PROJECTS WITHIN THE YOUTH ADVOCACY PORTFOLIO

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The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an overview of activities and projects benefiting mainstream young people and with involvement from the Youth Advocacy Office over 2002 and to date in 2003.

ST JOHN'S AMBULANCE YOUTH CONFERENCE

In January 2002 the Youth Advocacy Office joined with the St John Ambulance Association to run a day long conference for young people to discuss global issues. This capitalised on the fact that between three and four hundred young people from around the globe would be in Christchurch for the World St John Ambulance competitions. For one day (from their week in Christchurch) these international visitors mixed with local young people representing secondary schools and youth organisations. This gave our local youth an opportunity to discuss such things as health, education and employment with young people from every continent. It was an inspirational and thought provoking day for everyone involved.

FIRE SERVICE PROJECT

Over the last year the Children's & Youth Advocate has worked with the New Zealand Fire Service to co-ordinate key organisations and individuals who need to communicate regarding school fires. Through utilising contacts of the Children's & Youth Advocate, the Fire Service now hosts a meeting approximately four times a year which brings together Youth Specialty Service (mental health), the School Trustees Association, the Principals' Association, Police, the Youth Workers Collective and many others. This project has the potential to impact markedly on school fire statistics in Christchurch and it could be very interesting for the Committee to hear from the Fire Service first-hand regarding this work. If so desired the Children's & Youth Advocate will liaise with the Fire Service to arrange a presentation.

COUNCIL MEETING HOSTING SCHEME

For three years the Advocacy Office has co-ordinated this scheme which was initiated by Councillor Anderton. Councillors can choose where they would like to source students and Advocacy Office staff then endeavour to link interested students with a City Councillor who will host them for part of the Council meeting.

Although from time to time we have experienced hiccups with no arrivals, the scheme receives excellent feedback from young people who have participated in it, some of whom have gone on to further their experience by participating in Council-run projects and consultation initiatives.

THE HUB TV PROGRAMME

The Advocacy Office is working in partnership with CTV on this exciting project designed to "encourage and inspire young people by highlighting their peers who are already exploring their individual talents, while providing insight into potential careers, charities and locations" - The Hub's Mission Statement.

The Hub has a group of young researchers/presenters one of whom meets with the Children's & Youth Advocate on a fortnightly basis. This is a time to share ideas for stories and to act as a 'conduit' to provide feedback to "The Hub" team.

YOUNG ENTERPRISE SCHEME

The Children's & Youth Advocate is an active member of the Young Enterprise Scheme's reference group here in Christchurch. The Youth Advocacy Office has assisted the scheme with publicity and in particular helped facilitate a system whereby school leavers who had experienced the scheme promoted YES to teachers and principals throughout the city. This was to encourage more schools to participate in YES. The Young Enterprise Scheme is a learning experience for young people, their teachers and members of the business community. The students form a company, become directors, write a business plan, develop products and services and the market and sell them. "YES is school based and teaches skills in budgeting planning and decision making. There is also emphasis placed on teaching students the basis of reporting, communications, risk management and interpersonal relations and teamwork" (Young Enterprise Scheme Website).

This year there were grave concerns for the future of YES in Christchurch as the part time co-ordinator moved on to another job and the organisation that had provided general support and office facilities decided that the programme no longer fitted within its business. The Children's & Youth Advocate met with Wellington based representatives of YES and with a representative from CDC. The two organisations were linked together and CDC will now take responsibility for the co-ordination of the Youth Enterprise Scheme in Christchurch.

POSITIVE YOUTH PROMOTION POSTERS

Last year the final in a series of five posters depicting the lives of young Christchurch residents was released. The series of five posters were designed to show the rich and varied lifestyles of Christchurch youth and were gradually released over a three year time span. These posters have proved overwhelmingly popular and can be seen all over the city. The posters take the viewer beyond the initial image of the young person to their world of family, leisure, work and study. When the final poster (of a young nursing student) was released the opportunity was taken to invite all five participants and their families to a function hosted by the Mayor.

YOUTH ENTREPRENEUR WORKSHOPS: "BAD GUYS AND BIG WIGS"

Last December Youth Advocacy joined with Actionworks to provide an opportunity for people working with Christchurch youth and Christchurch young people to attend workshops run by Louise Earnshaw. Louise lectures in the school of Psychology and the School of Management at the University of Queensland. She was in New Zealand as a guest of Te Ora Hou running similar workshops in the North Island. Two workshops were held in Christchurch - one for workers and one for youth. They introduced the principals of entrepreneurship and explored linkages between behaviour traits of risk taking teenagers and the behaviour traits of successful entrepreneurs.

TE HEKENGA 2002

The Youth Advocacy Office supported the organisers of Te Hekenga 2002 in their endeavours to find funding for this project. This project brings together senior Maori secondary students from throughout Christchurch to get to know and support each other. In many schools few Maori students are in evidence in senior classes and some of those who are there find it a lonely experience.

Te Hekenga 2002 has been a multi-faceted approach in that these students are given the opportunity to come together regularly. Many of them trained for, and attended, the ASB Pacific Festival in Auckland and these students are provided with academically successful Maori mentors. Retention of senior Maori students within secondary schools is assisted through this mentoring process.

PACIFIC YOUTH FORUM (FREE II C)

Youth Advocacy has assisted the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs to provide a participation opportunity for Christchurch young people to feed into the Ministry's policy development process. Free II C is designed to provide Pacific secondary students with information about career development and to hear how the young people view their own economic needs, aspirations and priorities. The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs has indicated that information received from young participants at this event will be collated, analysed and incorporated into the development of a set of long term key strategic priorities for government. Free II C will take place on 31 March 2003 at Riccarton Park Function Centre. The event will be opened by Councillor Stonhill.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Currently work is underway to develop a Youth website. This website will provide young people with the opportunity to participate in online consultation initiatives. It will also be one avenue to register on an 'interests' database so that Council staff can then link young people with specific interests into part of Council (or other services in the city) relevant to those interests. Registration on this database will not only be via the website – schools and youth organisations will also be provided with hardcopy material about this initiative to give young people another avenue in.

Special interest forums continue to be supported by the Advocacy office and two we are currently involved in are the Pacific Youth Forum and the Model United Nations, both outlined in another section of this report.

Another youth participation initiative is the setting up of a Youth Advisory Group. Staff are following the process signed off last year by Council. A meeting was held with a wide range of interested people from the community last year, and a youth forum is planned for April. Positioning the forum in April was to ensure that schools could co-operate as fully as possible considering the exam season at the end of last year and a settling in period at the beginning of this year. This Youth Forum will provide valuable information for us to move forward in a clear and decisive way and is part of the process agreed to by Council.

The Advocacy Office provides an ongoing advisory role working with Council Units to increase the level of youth consultation and meaningful youth participation.

YOUTH VOLUNTEER AWARDS

The Canterbury Volunteer Centre and Youth Advocacy have worked together for the last three years to ensure that the contribution of young volunteers is celebrated. An event is held in December whereby young volunteers who have been nominated by an agency or an individual receive certificates and a gift to celebrate their contributions to making Christchurch a better place. The award ceremony also features entertainment by young people and speeches by young people.

WORKCHOICE DAY

The Children's & Youth Advocate works with the WorkChoice Trust each year to involve different Units of Council in WorkChoice day. This year WorkChoice Day will take place on 13 May. This will see groups of young people hosted by Council Units being given an explanation of the business of the Unit along with the opportunity to meet a variety of different employees who can talk about their careers, qualifications and job roles. Wherever possible the young visitors will be given a hands-on practical task to do.

WorkChoice Day is an opportunity for students who have not chosen a career path to receive a taste of various options. Last year, students allocated to Christchurch City Council provided the WorkChoice Trust and their schools with overwhelmingly positive feed-back about their experience.

MODEL UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations Youth Association of New Zealand is working to bring 50 senior secondary school students together to take part in the Canterbury Model United Nations Conference on Friday 28 March. The Children's & Youth Advocate is assisting the organiser by providing sponsorship, advice and helping with media liaison. At the Conference, the students will be diplomats for a day and represent a UN member/nation as they lobby and debate topical resolutions on such issues as drug trafficking and global warming. This process not only teaches the students the ways of formal debate, it also gives them an opportunity to argue for views that may not be their own. Should you wish to know more about the Canterbury Model United Nations Conference, please check the following website www.unyanz.co.nz.

POSTCARD PROJECT

Last year we undertook a project whereby two postcards were developed and distributed to community organisations focusing on older persons and community organisations focusing on youth. The idea was to increase intergenerational communication by encouraging young people to send a 'thank you' to adults who had assisted them and vice versa. Community organisations were very keen to accept these cards and to encourage their members to use them.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FORUM

Once again, the Youth Advocacy Office had significant input into the 2002 Youth Mental Health Forum. In particular, we provided funding to ensure youth participation in the event, and also had representation on the organising committee. The 2002 Forum comprised a youth day which was attended by approximately 100 young people, followed by two days of workshops and keynote address for those working with young people.

At the Youth Day, a wide cross-section of young people spoke about their life experiences, and their experiences using various services.

Overnight this youth input was collated and then presented to the workers. The youth input was presented under the following categories:

- Drugs and alcohol
- Music
- Family
- Immigration and employment
- Sexuality
- Body image
- Relationships
- Residential care
- Role models
- Young people's rights
- Youth suicide
- Violence

In addition to hearing and discussing the information from the Youth Day, those attending the two day Forum were treated to keynote addresses by Lloyd Martin (a well known youth worker based in Porirua), Hine Martin (a public health consultant), Dr Sue Bagshaw (a Christchurch doctor who as well as her work for youth in Christchurch is also International President of the Association for Adolescent Health Development) and Dr Peter Watson (a specialist health physician based in Auckland). Workshop streams over the two days included: Learning for the Future, Mental Health, Well-being and Mental Illness, Trauma and its Effects on Young People, Valuing Young People, and Diversity and Difference.

The Youth Mental Health Forum is a true inter-agency effort and the organising committee has representation from Community Public Health, Christchurch City Council, Actionworks, Mental Health Foundation, SPINZ, Youth Specialty Service, Just Us Youth, Hauora Matauraka, Union and Community Health Centre, and the Christchurch Polytechnic Youth Workers Course.

YOUTH PARTY NETWORK

This network was established in March 2001 to develop strategies to look at the issues around minimising the harm suffered by young people as a result of alcohol misuse in the context of parties planned and unplanned. The network has representation from the Youth Advocacy office of Christchurch City Council, the District Licensing Authority, Police, Canterbury Youth Workers Collective, Community Public Health, Safer Community Council, ALAC, Hauora Matauraka, ACC and the Alcohol and Drug Association of New Zealand. Two interested young people play an important role within this network. The network is currently concentrating on lobbying, sharing ideas and press releases.

LEGAL ART PROGRAMME

The Committee has been briefed on this programme and its positive aspects, including getting young people into work. Legal Art staff report to the Children's & Youth Advocate who provides management support.

CITY COUNCIL / POLICE YOUTH WORK PROJECT

This project is jointly managed by the Children's & Youth Advocate and the Police Youth Aid Sergeant. Although the Youthworkers work with a caseload of youth offenders for Monday to Thursday they also provide general support (along with a Police Youth Aid Officer) for any young people in the Central City on a Friday night. They are a point of contact for young people in town on Friday nights and they are also frequently able to diffuse potentially unpleasant situations between different factions of young people on the street. This joint Police / Council initiative helps keep the central city safe for all.

CONCLUSION

This summary essentially consists of edited highlights. It in no way covers all work undertaken by the Children's & Youth Advocate. Aspects of work such as advice to Council Units regarding youth consultation and participation are integrated into day to day work and are ongoing. The same must be said with regard to the multitude of general inquiries received.

Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That the information be received.
 2. That the Children's & Youth Advocate arrange for a presentation of the Fire Service Project to be made to the Community and Leisure Committee.

Chairman's

- Recommendation:** That the above recommendation be adopted.