

4. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

RR 10391

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Corporate Plan Output: Youth Advocacy	

The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the positive impact that Council's child and youth policies and advocacy work in Christchurch, is having on the wider New Zealand setting, as demonstrated at the 1999 Dunedin Conference - Children's Rights: National and International perspectives.

PAPER BY LINDA GILBERT: HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

This paper focused on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Article 42 Consultation project. Article 42 is about informing children and young people of their rights under the convention - something New Zealand is obliged to do, as it ratified the convention in 1993. Part of this paper was devoted to examples in New Zealand where policies and processes aim to facilitate children and young people's voices to be heard in community and government. **The Child and Youth policies of the Christchurch City Council were highlighted** (along with examples of policy implementation) as demonstrating how Article 42 can be progressed in this country.

PAPER BY ANDREA JAMISON AND MEREANA RURI: POLICY ANALYSTS, MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS, WELLINGTON

This paper discussed the development of a Government report under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. During the course of this paper examples of creative approaches to implementing the convention were discussed, **including the work of the Christchurch City Council, and the co-operative way in which the Council has worked with community and other government agencies on child and youth consultation processes.** Ministry of Youth Affairs staff had attended the Global Voice Youth Summit which was held in Christchurch on March 26 1999 and this was presented as an example of excellence in youth involvement and consultation.

PAPER BY CHRISTCHURCH YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES AND YOUTH ADVOCATE

At the Global Voice Youth Summit in March two young people were selected (by ballot) to give a presentation at the Children's Rights Conference, reporting on their experiences at Global Voice. (Global Voice had sought the views of young Christchurch people on a range of Social and Human Rights issues covered under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) Vanessa Eggers of Christchurch Girls High School and Andy Sales of St Thomas of Canterbury College, gave an excellent presentation covering the information provided by young people at Global Voice, the atmosphere surrounding the event, and the impact Global Voice had on them personally. Their paper was very well received.

N.G.O MEETING

Non-Governmental Organisations met to discuss the process for the next Non Governmental Organisation's report to the United Nations Committee on New Zealand's progress in complying with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. To date, little has been done to seek the views of children and young people in New Zealand and a youth report is required as part of the wider NGO report. Several people at this meeting referred to Global Voice in Christchurch as being the only known example to date of youth involvement.

YOUNG PERSON'S FORUM

A group of ten young people from Dunedin were joined by Andy Sales and Vanessa Eggers of Christchurch, to answer questions from the conference floor. The questions related to Articles 12 and 13 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. (These articles deal with child and youth participation). Andy and Vanessa were outstanding ambassadors for Christchurch in a question and answer session which lasted 70 minutes. In the audience were delegates from around the globe, all with a strong interest in children and youth rights. These people questioned the panel about youth consultation processes that "work" for young people and both Vanessa and Andy chose to speak in detail as to why "Global Voice" had been a positive consultation experience for them.

CONCLUSION

The Children's and Youth Policies of the Christchurch City Council have clearly been noticed by policy analysts, academics and people interested in children's rights issues in New Zealand and abroad. The work being done within Christchurch City Council is considered ground-breaking and models of work undertaken in Christchurch are being sought by those trying to promote children's rights in other parts of the country.

More directly relevant to our own progress in Christchurch, the young people who spoke about their experiences here, reflected positively about Council and interagency initiatives in the city.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the committee receive this report.
 2. That the committee meet Vanessa Eggers and Andy Sales.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the Committee:

1. Receive the report and note the impact of the work of the Council's Children's and Youth Advocates.
2. Meet with Vanessa Eggers and Andy Sales, and that they be thanked for representing Christchurch in such a positive manner.
3. Thank staff for their efforts in this matter.