

6. OUT OF SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMMES – ELIGIBILITY FOR WINZ SUBSIDY

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Corporate Plan Output: Recreation Programmes and Promotion	

At its meeting on 31 May, 2000, the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board requested information on the criteria set by WINZ for low income families to be eligible for subsidies for children to attend before/after school or school holiday programmes (OSCAR subsidy).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

a. Out of School Care

Up to 20 hours per week of subsidised care during the school term is available to:

- Parents/caregivers who are in paid work (part-time, full-time, casual, short-term; parents/caregivers working night shifts and sleeping during the day) or organised activities (e.g. community work or training required in return for a benefit)
- Where family income is under a certain limit (see below)
- Families with child(ren) between 5-13 years old
- Families where the partner is unable to provide child care.
- Child(ren) must attend an approved programme for at least 3 hours a week

b. School Holiday Programmes

Up to 30 hours per week over the school holiday period. Same eligibility criteria as above.

ELIGIBLE PROGRAMMES

WINZ will only pay an OSCAR subsidy for children who attend an out of school programme that is affiliated to the National Organisation for OSCAR, or provided by Barnados. All programmes are vetted by Children, Young Persons and Their Families Agency fieldworkers and must submit a Policies and Procedures Manual to the Agency outlining health and safety standards and operational policies.

OSCAR SUBSIDY RATES

A maximum of \$1.80 per hour graduating down to 0.70c per hour per child may be available dependant on the weekly gross income (before tax) of the parent/caregiver.

The subsidy is paid direct to the family. Parents/caregivers are responsible for advising WINZ if their child(ren) was absent for part of the programme and didn't make up the time and, if this is the case, for repaying the subsidy.

Number of children	Weekly gross income before tax	OSCAR Subsidy rate per hour
1 child	\$520 and under	\$1.80
	\$521-\$570	\$1.25
	\$571-\$620	\$0.70
	\$621 and over	no subsidy
2 children	\$640 and under	\$1.80
	\$641-\$690	\$1.25
	\$691-\$740	\$0.70
	\$741 and over	no subsidy
3 or more children	\$750 and under	\$1.80
	\$751-\$800	\$1.25
	\$801-\$850	\$0.70
	\$851 and over	no subsidy

ISSUES CONCERNING THE WINZ OSCAR SUBSIDY

From the Recreation and Arts Team's experience in managing holiday programmes the following issues have arisen with regard to the subsidy:

1. The subsidy is not available to Community Services Card holders who do not work or who are not undertaking training and community work. Often these families are also low income, have a need for a break from each other (particularly if there is stress on the family such as unemployment, illness, etc), and the children are not receiving quality recreation experiences (for example we have children on holiday programmes who never go on outings or to facilities such as Queen Elizabeth II Park except when they are on a holiday programme). Currently around 60% of families using Council holiday programmes are Community Services Card holders (but we are currently unable to differentiate what percentage of these families are also eligible for the OSCAR subsidy).
2. There has been limited publicity from WINZ to advise eligible families of the existence of the OSCAR subsidy.
3. The application form is lengthy and complicated, particularly for parents/caregivers with limited written ability.

Recommendations: That the information be received.

Chairman's

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