

14. GAP LINKS PROGRAMME – CROSS OVER TRUST

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The purpose of this report is to demonstrate how the Board, by providing funding support for the Cross Over Trust GAP Links programme, can meet its own objectives for the 2000/2001 financial year. A detailed presentation of this project was made by Freedom Preston-Clarke and Don Kempt to the Community Affairs Committee 17 October 2000 meeting.

Board Objectives

The Board has set a number of objectives for the 2000/2001 financial year, including promoting a healthy community, promoting community education, promoting social cohesion in the Spreydon-Heathcote community, and promoting community safety from crime. It should be noted that with “promoting community safety from crime” two particular performance indicators are very relevant to this project:

1. Supporting a variety of parenting programmes.
2. Supporting early intervention programmes in the community.

In addition to these Board objectives, the Council Community Policy provides further justification for supporting this project. The Community Policy states that the “Christchurch City Council will support communities to plan, organise and carry out initiatives that reflect their needs and aspirations.” Moreover, to “supplement the capabilities and resources of community groups and structures”, is a policy goal.

The Project

The GAP Links programme aims to “provide a safe environment for guardians and parents of adolescents in the south Christchurch community, to easily allow relevant information so that family relationships are positively strengthened.” GAP Links has been running for twelve months and is an initiative of parents of adolescents in south Christchurch.

The programme consists of free monthly workshops, which are facilitated by a Cross Over Trust worker, and supported by a team of volunteer parents. The demand for this programme, and its timing and frequency was determined by a questionnaire circulated in 1998. GAP Links is an integral part of the work of Cross Over Trust, being one component of their “multi-module” approach to working with youth at risk. Overall, the development and ongoing functioning of this programme reflects very sound community development principles and practices.

As requested by the Community Affairs Committee, a breakdown of Council funding allocated to Cross Over Trust in the last two years is attached. The original application and updated financial accounts have been circulated to members.

The benefits from supporting this project include the following:

- Facilitating the sharing of information and support amongst parents of adolescents in south Christchurch, leading to higher self esteem and up-skilling of parents.
- Empowering local parents and families to identify their issues and concerns, and act positively to resolve them – support of a “local solution to the local problem”.
- Potential reduction of youth crime in the Spreydon-Heathcote, and wider Christchurch area.

These benefits clearly relate to and complement both Board objectives and Council policies relating to the strengthening of the Spreydon-Heathcote community.

Recommendation: That the Board allocate \$3,000 from its 2000/2001 Discretionary Fund to Cross Over Trust for the continuation of the GAP Links parenting programme.