

9. THE BIG SK8 OUT

Officer responsible Leisure Manager	Author Community Recreation Adviser
Corporate Plan Output: Recreation Promotion and Programmes	

The purpose of this report is to inform Board members of a recent series of innovative skateboarding workshops delivered by the Recreation and Arts Team during the January 2001 school holidays.

INTRODUCTION

Following the success of 'The BIG SK8 Out' in January and April 2000, a series of skating workshops was again held during the January 2001 school holidays. As with previous workshops, the aim was to provide introductory level skaters, ages 10 – 14 years, with the skills and expertise to confidently and safely skate Christchurch skate parks. A specific workshop was also held for female skaters. The workshops were very successful and created a lot of interest and energy amongst Christchurch skaters.

PROGRAMME CONTENT

The 'The BIG SK8 Out' consisted of a series of 5 skating workshops spread throughout the city. Each workshop met at a local skate park and spent the day touring other skate parks around the city. The participants learnt how to skate each park, and also covered issues such as etiquette, "slam prevention" and maintenance of skateboards. A crew of experienced skaters and skate tutors instructed the workshops.

There are a number of Council policies that support the staging of The BIG SK8 Out, including the Youth Policy, and Recreation and Sport Policy. Both these policies set out a commitment to meeting the recreational needs of young people in Christchurch.

BENEFITS

The BIG SK8 Out gave participants the opportunity to learn many new skills in a safe and supportive setting. There are a myriad of moves, jumps and combinations that make up the abstract fabric of skating. Not only were the participants able to learn how to execute these moves, they were also able to see them executed by the experienced tutors. The tour of various skate parks gave the young skaters an appreciation of the different skate parks and the styles to skate them.

The BIG SK8 Out created an appropriate forum to educate the participants on what is and is not appropriate behaviour at a skate park. Safety issues were also covered - 'Slam Prevention' showed skaters how to prevent themselves from falling off their boards, and if they do fall off, how to land safely.

As in earlier workshops, one of the major benefits was the networking that took place between participants, in particular amongst female skaters. This is a particularly important aspect of these workshops, as skating is a typically individualistic pursuit, that is dominated by male participants. Having someone to skate with is a real safety issue for female skaters.

FUNDING

Many of Christchurch's leading skate businesses supported The Big SK8 Out, assisting with promotion, word of mouth advertising, and discounts on safety equipment. Funding for the extension of this programme to include Fendalton Waimairi came from the Leisure Unit operational budget.

STATISTICS AND FEEDBACK

Enrolments were taken around the city from keen skaters and catered for a total of 99 participants. As with previous workshops, feedback from both parents and participants has been very positive, with the main criticism being there were not enough workshops!

FUTURE DIRECTION

After the SK8 Out workshops held in January and April last year, it was envisaged that the development of a local skate club would assist in the delivery of skate programmes in Christchurch. For a variety of reasons this has not eventuated, but is still a possibility for future programmes.

There are indications that some of the leading skating retailers in Christchurch are planning to run skate workshops in the near future. This presents an ideal partnership opportunity, and would build on the good relationships already established.

Consideration is currently being given to staging another series of SK8 Out workshops for the April school holidays. Feedback from both participants and parents suggests there is a strong demand for this.

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the foregoing recommendation be adopted.