

5. TRUANCY COURSES

Officer responsible Community Advocate	Author Bruce Meder, Community Development Adviser, DDI 354-1708
Corporate Plan Output: Community Activities	

The purpose of this report is to seek assistance from the Community Board towards funding of Youth Life Skills Programmes aimed at truancy youth.

The programme contributes to the following Council policies and Board vision:

- Social Wellbeing Policy especially towards the outcome of “people participating in community life and having a sense of belonging and identity”.
- Board Objective “to foster a strong sense of community”.

THE PROGRAMME

The programme is a joint one involving the District Truancy Service, Papanui Police Youth Aid Section and the New Zealand Army.

The course is a seven day one based at Burnham Military Camp and hosts 20 students who have been identified through the Truancy Service and Youth Aid Section of the Papanui Police. The aim of the course is to build self-esteem, teach problem solving skills, challenge mental and physical capacity and develop skills to use instead of resorting to violence or offending.

Two courses have been run over the past two years with a total of 40 students attending. Of these 40 students only four have remained long-term clients of the Truancy Service. Most have returned to school, several have sought and gained employment, three moved to work-based training courses and one was offered officer training with the Army as a result of the leadership qualities shown on the course.

A copy of the course programme is attached for further information.

FUNDING

The cost of each course is \$4,350 which includes the cost of accommodation and catering and is for seven full days with 20 students and two full-time supervisors.

The students tend to come from stressful family backgrounds in low socio-economic situations. Hence, the ability to pay costs themselves is usually prohibitive for most students. The partners in this programme have consequently sought funding from Rotary, School principals contingency funds and pub charities. As Board members will know the call on funds available is very high and this partnership are not alone in finding it difficult to obtain funding.

FURTHER COURSES

A further course is presently planned for 11-17 March 2002 and another for November 2002. Students are drawn from Papanui and Mairehau High Schools.

Recommendation: That a grant of \$1,000 be allocated to the Youth Life Skills Programme, with a request made that following the March 2002 course a presentation be made to the Community Board outlining the outcome of that course, with a view to further funding being made available for future courses. This grant to be allocated from the Strengthening Communities Fund.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the officer's recommendation be adopted, with the proviso that the students selected are from with the Shirley or Papanui wards.