

# Youth Development Forum

## Thursday 13 August 2009

### GENERAL BRAIN STORM OF ISSUES FACING YOUNG PEOPLE IN DUNEDIN

- Resilience issues – poverty of spirit
  - Lack of direction / vision and apathy among youth.
  - Drug / Alcohol issues
  - Lack of boundaries
  - Access to youth benefits.
  - Youth being overwhelmed by choices they have to make and becoming apathetic as a result.
  - Young people having to make decisions that impact on the rest of their lives at a very young age (eg what parent to live with)
  - Hopelessness and the adolescent mind-set.
  
- Education
  - Options for education decreasing (funding cuts and capped entry)
  - Training providers full – no places left for young people.
  - A shift in “quality control” for young people to get into educational opportunities.
  - Reduced literacy among youth.
  - The impact that tertiary youth have on non-tertiary youth.
  
- Lack of employment options
  
- Community / Environmental
  - Seen as a problem to fix rather than part of our community to be valued and nurtured
  - Youth should not be looks at separately, but in the context of whanau and community.
  - A lack of social cohesion around how youth see the world.
  - The “have now, pay later” attitude prevailing in society.
  
- Access to recreational services difficult
  - Cost of transport
  - Cost of entry
  - The lack of a dedicated youth venue in Dunedin.
  
- Family
  - Family dynamics
  - Family issues including financial and violence
  - Lack of financial stability in families – inter-generational poverty.
  - More young people doing crime to help families.
  - Adults abrogating responsibility, leaving young people to make huge life decisions.
  
- Technology.
  - Issues around use and access

- At a very young age being overwhelmed with information about the world and the problems that exist globally they can access online.
- Greater awareness of what the issues are
- General
  - Intervention delayed too long.
  - Young people having to become adults before their time.
  - Also, young women having babies to get on the benefit as another way of getting money for the family.

**General discussion:**

The discussion then became more general – with debate and ideas exchanged in a variety of areas.

- It was agreed that young people are happiest with a routine, when they know what is happening and when. From a mentoring point of view, it is the relationship that makes the difference.
- Young people are receiving mixed messages about their status – it can be really important to give young people the opportunity to “be their age”. They are having to make huge life decisions, such as which parent to live with in a divorce, and are then left to face the consequences.
- New Zealand's massive drinking culture is acceptable in general, so young people also see it as acceptable.
- A major issue for young people for next year, is the large number of training places providers have lost. Most have had their numbers halved. Kokiri will have to close one of its courses for next year because of it.
- Up to 40 youth places across Dunedin will be lost. A group of private training providers have written a letter back to the Tertiary Education Commission about it, and will be issuing a press release.
- Dealing with fickle government policy around funds is annoying when providers are trying to make the best use of their resources.
- With regard to employers, it is difficult for young people as employers are unwilling to take risks on them. This makes it even more difficult for young people to gain the skills and experience they need.
- Erin at Work 'n' it Out spoke of the sad situations she sees, in which young people who are passionate and experienced are trying and failing to get jobs for many months. No one is willing to take them on, and there are no apprenticeships

**GROUP DISCUSSIONS TO EXPLORE THREE QUESTIONS**

- 1) Wouldn't it be great if / when?
- 2) What would it take to get there?
- 3) Who should be partners in making that happen?

## **GROUP ONE**

### **Wouldn't it be great?**

- More information on available resources – education
- If people realized the power of people in groups
- If we didn't have to fight for a piece of the pie – funding
- If parents felt affirmed in their roles, and kept contact with their children's friends and families
- If home was the safest place to be
- Emergency housing for youth
- If parents made clear boundaries and stuck to them

### **What would it take to get there?**

- Facilitate supportive parenting networks
- Having a system where each individual's talents are nurtured

## **GROUP TWO**

### **Wouldn't it be great if.....**

1. Services didn't have to keep applying for money... this would imply youth were respected and their empowerment was valued!
2. All youth had access to "the missing link" and they can ask for what's needed with the expectation someone will care enough to walk alongside and find it!
3. We had a descent pool of families/adults who would care for adolescents/youths/children
4. Young people could expect to get a job when ready... or they training needed to get meaningful work
5. There was meaningful education for all... e.g. (Stuart Middleton – Manukau I.T) including – life skills, financial literacy, assertiveness
6. There was cheap / affordable access to "furi" positive activities – e.g. transport, administration (student ID equivalence for training providers)
7. Opportunities for generosity and service to others ... with good mentors to encourage it.
8. Safe youth housing – supported 'RA' type person
9. "Grown ups didn't bag youths so much"
10. Youth venue / one stop shop / Hub... for people, skills, info

### **How**

1. ?
- 2.

### **Partners**

- Collaborative voice – MSD invites!  
10 could be a solution...DCC, COSS, Partnerships

### GROUP THREE

#### Wouldn't it be great when....

- ORC and the DCC work together for our communities – there is free parking
- 'The community' would see young people as assets
- 'The community' connected in meaningful real ways and owned its young people and their future
- Our 'communities' fostered hope and connectedness within its members
- Had two opportunities to be valued through:
  - Employment
  - Decision making – involvement at local level DCC
  - Health support
  - Fun activities
  -

#### How are we going to get there.....?

- Tourism apprenticeships – set it up  
Who: Polytechnic / University = Working it Out
- Stadium apprenticeships, set number of jobs for youth apprenticeships, community organisations for free use of space
- One free day transport per month? Or per week? To access market day, museum, Moana pool etc – for families
- Free bus at 8-9am, 3-5pm to school and home
- Free activities per with e.g. sailing, biking, day hikes... how to do it? Free 'ecofriendly' courses – plant gardens etc, support community gardens

### PARTNERSHIPS (MULTIPLE)

