

# PATCHWORK

Auckland Youth Support Network Working for young people

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Agencies and local communities are making great progress around creating positive pathways for young people and reducing youth gang activity in Counties Manukau and Otahuhu. We must acknowledge those who have put in considerable time and energy into our young people.

The Action plan - Improving Outcomes for Young People is now fully established within key agencies, including three Police Youth Action teams, close liaison with Maori and Pacific wardens, and thousands of young people attending community youth events around Counties Manukau.

While many of us support and nurture those at risk, we must also take time to recognise young people who are doing well at school, home or in their community.

As one community leader recently said, "we need to focus on raising tomorrow's chiefs, not tomorrow's thieves."

## Bringing young people together

**"Sport is great catalyst. Only this weekend I saw two young guys who are usually fighting each other, play a friendly game of volleyball", says Alan Va'a, team leader of 274 Youth Worker Project.**

This is just one of the reasons why Alan and his team recently hosted a sports camp at the Willow Park Sports Camp and invited 160 young people from the Greater Auckland region.

Eight teams of twenty young people between the ages of 16 and 24 years took part in sport and recreational activities over the weekend.

The aim was to bring together young people from various backgrounds and give them the opportunity to learn from each other.

"At the camp we had young people who were stars, some who needed emotional support, and those who needed to see life beyond their streets", says Va'a.

The teams took part in basketball, volleyball, mini golf, touch rugby, swimming, 4km runs, and multi sport competitions.

The "Originals" team took first place in the weekend competition. The young people in this team had been involved with 274 for several years and came to pass on their experiences.

Every week, 274 operate street clubs in Otara and host a drop in centre on Fridays for about 100 young people.

274 provide youth worker services for the Action Plan - Improving Outcomes for Young People in Counties Manukau and Otahuhu.



*This fantastic wall mural painted by a local artist, greets visitors to the 274 Otara Centre.*

## Youth workers expo

Over 150 people representing 50 organisations who work with young people attended the Counties Manukau Youth Workers Expo, "Youth Workers Together".

The event was organised by the Counties Manukau Youth Worker Workforce Development Reference Group. This is a collaborative initiative established to support the professional development and qualifications of youth workers.

Expo speakers included Terry Fleming from Whirinaki who talked about how to get mental health support for young people, and Yvonne Kainuku Walsh who promoted a Fono on Shades of Pacific Youth.

The Youth Worker Workforce Development Reference Group members are Youthline, Mangere East Family Service Centre, 274 Youthcore, AimHi Alternative Education, Counties Manukau District Health Board, Youth Mentoring Trust, Ministry of Youth Development, and the Ministry of Justice who fund the initiative.

## 250 attend youth event

**The Mangere Genesis Trust hosted a Touch Rugby event to promote the anti gang and anti tag message to young people.**

Twenty-one teams from Otahuhu, Papatoetoe and Mangere Intermediate schools took part in the one-day event before Christmas. Ten youth workers and the Police Kiwi mascot were on hand to show the young people some of their moves!



*Jack Scanlan and Robson Tavita from Genesis Trust in front of the Genesis' Power of Choice Banner. The Power of Choice message encourages young people to participate in positive activities e.g school, sports, and cultural groups.*

Rob Woodley says that the event was an opportunity to interact with the young people and encourage those who normally would not get involved. "We were really

pleased to see the Al Madinah School, a local Muslim school attend.

"The day was a big success, thanks in part to the collaboration and assistance from the Mangere MADD team and Otara 274 group."



*Young people and youth workers at the touch rugby event*

## Wrap around services for young people

Are you working with a young person who is involved with youth gangs, or criminal activity?

Integrated Case Management Coordinators can facilitate and coordinate a wrap around response for the young person and their family.

### Next Step

Call 09 916 1850 or Email [Northern@familyservices.govt.nz](mailto:Northern@familyservices.govt.nz) for a referral form and the ICM Coordinators contacts details.

The young person needs to reside in Manukau City and Otahuhu and be involved with youth gangs, criminal activity or at risk of becoming involved. Referrals can come from schools, police and youth services.

**Do you have a story you think we should look at? Do you have any questions you want answered? Get in touch and email us at [patchwork@msd.govt.nz](mailto:patchwork@msd.govt.nz).**

*The Auckland Youth Support Network members: Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand Police, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth Development, Te Puni Kokiri, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Counties Manukau District Health Board, Housing New Zealand, Auckland City Council and Manukau City Council.*