

NSW POLICE CITIZENS YOUTH CLUBS STEP UP YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION INITIATIVES

Throughout 1992 the Federation of NSW Police Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC's) have increased the number and range of crime prevention programmes aimed at educating young people at both primary and secondary school levels.

Chief Superintendent Perc Carter, who is responsible for managing the State's fifty two clubs is keen to keep the profile of school age based workshops high on the agenda. He feels that it is important to educate children and young people throughout their school years in order that they will join with adults in making their communities safer places to live.

As well as working through local schools, the Federation has been co-operating with the NSW Office of Juvenile Justice in developing special programmes for young offenders.

An impressive list of initiatives includes:

* **CRIME PREVENTION WORKSHOPS** - The workshops are conducted from 1-3 days in which police, teachers and students discuss a range of issues relating to crime and crime prevention. Programmes are available for both primary and high school students and on occasions PCYC personnel have been involved in implementing the workshops in juvenile justice (detention) centres and special schools for state wards.

A new resource kit is currently being developed between the Federation, the Police Service and the Department of School Education to assist police and teachers in delivering this programme.

* **COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS** - Many Clubs provide supervised placements for young offenders serving Community Service Orders involving close liaison with staff of the Office of Juvenile Justice. Individuals

during their placements perform a variety of cleaning, maintenance and clerical tasks and are encouraged to utilise the Club facilities and have an ongoing involvement with the organisation.

* **TRUANCY REDUCTION PROGRAMMES** - A number of Clubs have approached local schools and Regional Office's of the NSW Department of School Education to develop programmes to deal with reluctant attenders. Such programmes include:

- alternative school programmes located at clubs e.g. Bathurst, Orange, Shoalhaven and Wollongong;
- incentive based programmes for improved attendance e.g. Taree, Tamworth;
- camps for problem attenders held at the PCYC's Camp Mackay;
- breakfast programmes with transport provided to school e.g. Mt. Druit.

These programmes involve co-operation between Youth Club Police and the Department of School Education's Home School Liaison Officers.

* **EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING** - A number of programmes concerned with employment and training have been conducted at Clubs including:

- building improvement projects involving local TAFE colleges;

- joint ventures with Skillshare and other training providers utilising club facilities e.g. computer skill courses at Newcastle, Lake Illawarra and Lake Macquarie;
- career advise exhibitions organised by and held at various clubs;
- personal development, job search skill and career advise camps e.g. Lake Illawarra;
- Police career lectures;
- displaying job vacancies provided at Clubs by local CES offices.

* **COMMUNITY AID PANEL** - The panel provides the NSW juvenile justice system with a community based sentencing option for young offenders. One panel has been operating at the City of Sydney Club since mid 1990 with over 200 young people appearing before the panel per year. The panel consists of duty solicitors from the Children's Courts, PCYC Police Officers, community workers and a young person. Young people are referred to the panel from the children's court and come to an agreement with the panel on various forms of restitution within their community to be performed and if considered appropriate some form of personal development course to be undertaken.

* **FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMMES** - Self help groups usually involving single mothers meet at Clubs for discussion groups, to utilise facilities and involve their children in playgroups. Camps and outings have also been conducted for such groups at inner Sydney and outer Sydney locations such as Blacktown, Glebe and Campbelltown.

* **DRIVER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES** - Lectures are delivered at schools, Clubs and other settings to educate young drivers and potential drivers on safety issues particularly speeding and drink driving.

The majority of police personnel attached to Clubs were trained in 1992 in the "Road Whys" driver education programme developed by the RTA and the Police Service. This programme is aimed at senior high school students (years 10-12) and courses commenced in a number of schools in late 1992.

* **BICYCLE SAFETY** - A number of programmes aimed at educating children on bicycle safety are provided by Clubs. They include school lectures, safety clinics and provision of safe riding areas.

The Wagga Club opened a Road Safety Training System in April 1992 which comprises a simulated road system complete with traffic lights, round-about, rail crossing and extensive range of traffic control sign posting complete with bikes and helmets. The system was largely funded by the RTA with assistance also provided by council and a local service club.

A comprehensive bicycle safety programme has been developed by police personnel in conjunction with the local Road Safety Consultant from the Department of School Education. Apart from local schools the facility is also being utilised by other PCYC's in the Riverina zone.

The Federation is encouraging Branch personnel to further develop bicycle safety in their communities through the provision of resource material from the RTA and joint initiatives with the Department of School Education.

- * **PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE-** A range of approaches to deal with the problem of child abuse have been initiated by PCYC Officers in conjunction with local police patrols and community workers. Such approaches include community awareness campaigns, information seminars, and school lecturing programmes.

A number of PCYC Officers have attended training programmes to introduce an educational programme on protective behaviours for primary school children by the name of "Pete and Penny".

- * **SELF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES** - A variety of programmes are conducted to develop self esteem and skills of young people at risk. Such programmes include peer support camps, living skills courses and lectures.
- * **YOUTH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES** - A number of Clubs have formed committees of young people to; assist in the development of activities and programmes, develop a

greater sense of ownership of clubs amongst young people, increase at the branch level an understanding of youth needs and issues, and improve police/youth relations.

- * **PASSIVE RECREATION AREAS** - The majority of Clubs provide passive recreation areas or "drop in" centres to cater for young people who tend not to participate in the more structured and competitive Club activities. This type of service attracts a high proportion of at risk youth who participate in such passive recreation activities as playing pool and video games, listening to music and watching television.
- * **DRUG AND ALCOHOL EDUCATION AND PREVENTION** - Various Clubs have been involved in conducting a range of programmes to educate young people on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. Club staff are implementing such programmes in conjunction with Drug Education Consultants from the Department of School Education and trained Drug and Alcohol workers. Programmes include education, diversionary and skills based activities conducted in schools, clubs and other settings.



WAGGA'S BICYCLE SAFETY TRACK