

For immediate release

27 August 2007

## **Trust Supports Child Protection Programme**

Support from the Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust will assist the Institute of Child Protection Studies (CPS) to run its five-day child protection programme in Rotorua.

The programme, to be held 8 – 12 October, offers people working with children and families the skills to recognise if a child is at risk or being hurt and how to respond positively for the benefit of the child. Deborah Newburn, CPS Funding and Marketing Coordinator, says so far there has been a very positive response to the Rotorua course and it looks like all 22 places will be filled. “There are a range of people who usually attend from teachers and Plunket nurses to social workers and early childhood educators - anyone working with children and families.” She says people who have attended the course, which is run throughout the country, say it is very empowering. “They say it gives them a new confidence when dealing with at-risk children and empowers them to act in a positive way and intervene in preventing a child being harmed.”

The course is facilitated by a highly experienced tutor, along with local guest speakers. “Bringing people together from a range of organisations to learn for a week and giving them a chance to meet the guest ‘experts’ enhances the safety net around children in Rotorua. Networking and collaboration is also a key part of this programme,” she said. Local people invited to the talk with the group include a Child, Youth and Families representative, a doctor working in the area of sexual abuse, a lawyer for children and a child-worker supervisor who looks at issues such as the importance of caring for ‘self’ while working in this field.

The Institute of Child Protection Studies is primarily an educational provider offering workshops and the five-day programme, as well as a diploma course. It also offers a consultancy service for people who might contact it with concerns about a child. “We can provide them with information and guide them in the right direction.”

For the last five years Progress Ngongotaha has been working on restoring the Ngongotaha Stream to its former ecological standard.

Heather McKechnie, Progress Ngongotaha Community Coordinator, says with the planting of many trees and shrubs, and other work on the stream the animals, fish and birds that used to live here are returning. To commemorate the work two interpretative panels have been made by local artist, Paul Nicolai. Heather says the 1.2 metre by 1.2 metre panels depict the urban Maori and Pakeha history of the Parawai – the historical name of Ngongotaha. The panels will be positioned at two strategic locations on the edge of the stream.

Progress Ngongotaha has also recently commissioned designer, Jamie Pickernel, to build shelters over the panels. “The two big shelters, which have chunky seats in them, are really more like sculptures and will mean people can sit and enjoy the panels, and the stream in any kind of weather.” She says Progress Ngongotaha works to promote Ngongotaha as a wonderful place to live and work.

The community group began about seven years ago with the combining of the business association and the ratepayers group. “We have a big community conscience and work hard to ensure everyone living in Ngongotaha is part of the community, and is aware of community issues.”

Dogs at the RSPCA will now have more space to run around thanks to a new fence built on the front lawn area.

The newly fenced off area is grassed and planted and will make a great meeting area for the dogs. Britta Bowden, RSPCA President says anything up to around 100 animals, including dogs, cats, guinea pigs, rabbits and ducks, can be in residence at the RSPCA at any one time. She says the number of animals increase significantly from late October through until April or May, which is in line with the cat breeding season. In the month of July there might be 70 cats but in a busy month it may be as many as 220.

“Winter is definitely slower – although this year has been fairly steady throughout.” While there are more cats than dogs it is always a challenge to rehouse the animals, which she says is “heartbreaking”. Recently the RSPCA held a very successful ‘Adoptathon’ weekend. Cats were able to be purchased for less than the usual \$50 charge for a de-sexed adult cat. She said more than 40 cats were adopted. It generally costs \$90 to adopt a dog and kittens cost \$40 – and have a voucher to return for desexing when they are aged between four and six months.

Local groups to receive funding from the Rotorua Trust this month were:

<b>ADHD</b> Workshops and training	<b>\$9,000</b>
<b>Challenge Violence Trust</b> Upgrade of phone and computer systems	<b>\$5,016</b>
<b>Hamurana Play Centre</b> Heating, relining ceiling and painting	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Homedale Kindergarten</b> Books, resources and puzzles	<b>\$2,500</b>
<b>Institute of Child Protection Studies</b> Child protection studies courses	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Jambalaya Festival</b> Festival	<b>\$30,000</b>
<b>KidsCan Charitable Trust</b> Raincoats, food and shoes	<b>\$3,000</b>

<b>New Year's Mardi Gras</b> Mardi Gras	<b>\$12,500</b>
<b>Progress Ngongotaha</b> Shelter for interpretative panels	<b>\$30,000</b>
<b>RSPCA</b> Fence and gate	<b>\$8,350</b>
<b>Te Papa Takaro O Te Arawa</b> Rangatahi awards	<b>\$7,500</b>
<b>Waiariki Women's Refuge</b> New van	<b>\$10,000</b>

## **Ends**

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