

14 December 2011

To: Cotton On Foundation
From: Te Korowai Youth Well-Being Trust
Re: Cotton On Foundation Disaster Relief Fund application

Te Korowai Youth Well-Being Trust is grateful for the invitation to apply for a donation from the Cotton On Foundation Disaster Relief Fund. We are well aware of the good work of your foundation in supporting children and young people in Australia and overseas, and feel privileged to be under consideration for assistance.

Challenges for Youth in Post-Earthquake Christchurch

The Korowai Trust shares your deep commitment to the well-being of children and youth. Our core team previously operated the highly successful and well-loved 198 Youth Health Centre (as the Youth Health Trust) between 1995-2010. The 198 clinic provided medical, mental and sexual health services to young people using a no cost/no appointment model. This approach proved to be a very effective way to render vital services to a constituency often under-served by other models of health care delivery.

Since 2010, Te Korowai Youth Well-Being Trust has taken over the work of the 198 Youth Health Centre by founding the new 298 Clinic, but we have been hampered in our work by the lack of consistent access to a purpose-built venue. This situation has been exacerbated by the three major earthquakes Christchurch has suffered in the last fifteen months.

The earthquakes have also greatly increased the need for the services we are able to provide. Youth are currently facing challenges on a number of fronts:

- **Home:** With over 6,000 homes red-zoned and scheduled for demolition, and countless more severely damaged, many young people face serious disruptions to their home environment. Given the scale of the disaster, repairs and/or relocation will take years rather than months to complete, creating ongoing stress for children and their families.
- **School:** The February earthquake caused substantial damage to half of Christchurch schools, requiring schools to share premises and operate morning and afternoon shifts. Class time was reduced, and many students faced long commutes to unfamiliar premises. While most students were remarkably resilient in the face of these challenges, the toll this has taken should not be underestimated.
- **Family:** Many young people have their own experience of trauma from the quakes, yet are also supporting their younger siblings, caring for frightened elderly relatives, and doing their best to help their exhausted parents. Providing support for them as they juggle these multiple family responsibilities, often when they are still quite young, is a key priority.
- **Employment:** Large numbers of families have been affected by the high rate of unemployment and loss of businesses in post-quake Christchurch, yet unemployment in the 15-24 age group is at the astonishing level of 33%, in part because of the loss of

entry-level positions in hospitality and tourism in the central city. This figure represents not only economic hardship, but also a potential loss of hope for the future at a crucial stage in development.

***“Let me know what I can do to get things going again,
I’ll do anything to help. 198 saved my life” -
a former 198 peer support worker***

Te Korowai Trust cannot magically turn Christchurch into an easy place to be right now. But it can provide children and young people with the services and tools they need in order to stay healthy and develop the emotional resilience and maturity required to deal with these ongoing challenges.

We have experienced staff, grounded in research-based best practice, who are eminently qualified to take up this challenge. While one of our very esteemed doctors passed away in the February earthquake in our temporary premises, we retain doctors, nurses, youth workers and counsellors who are eager to get back to providing these essential services for young people.

Where we have struggled until now is in finding a suitable venue in which to house our Centre. Fortunately we have recently gained access to what could be, with assistance from your foundation, an ideal site for the permanent home of the 298 Health Centre. Since October we have leased this site on a month-to-month basis, pending funding to allow for a longer-term commitment. We have begun to occupy the site, and it is highly suitable for our purposes, but requires alterations in order meet the basic requirements of our clinical services.

This site has the additional advantage of being surrounded by a group of quake-resistant wooden houses. Since the opportunity arose to move to this building, Te Korowai Trust has attracted complementary services into what is now becoming a de facto Youth Hub. For example, Action Works (our local youth transitions programme assisting young people moving from school into work) and Youth WINZ (a government agency providing income support) have already occupied premises in these houses. There is also keen interest from other youth support social service agencies including employment programmes, refugee and migrant resettlement, depression support and family support. Te Korowai has been instrumental in the creation of this Youth Hub, and the 298 Clinic is a key partner in rebuilding this crucial set of social and health services for young people in Christchurch.

We are taking a community development approach to creating the Hub, engaging with the wider Christchurch community and Tangata Whenua (local Maori iwi/tribe) in order to get broad buy-in and ensure that the Hub operates in a ‘win-win’ fashion for all the children and young people of Christchurch.

Youth Involvement

The creation of the Youth Hub also presents an excellent opportunity for young staff and customers of Cotton On to serve their local community. The 198 Health Centre had a long history of engaging peer support workers, and 298 is actively keeping that tradition alive.

Youth will also be actively involved in selecting and organising activities for the Hub, which could include any of the following:

- exercise classes such as pilates, yoga or aerobics
- art or music classes, open mic events, poetry slams
- alcohol and drug-free dances
- street theatre

There are also plans to create a community creche and cafe run by young people, and to set aside a house for youth transition housing based on the very successful North American Covenant House.

How a Cotton On Foundation Donation Will Help

We currently have access to 50% of the continuous funding needed to maintain the ongoing viability of the 298 Centre. A one-off donation from the Cotton On Foundation would allow us to bring our facilities and services up to full capacity, putting us in very strong position to obtain the remaining 50% of sustainable funding from other sources. Donated funds would be used as follows:

- To pay for alterations to bring the building up to the standards required for a health service. This includes basins in the clinical rooms, and disability access in the form of a ramp and toilet facility.
- Funding to provide temporary wages for a part-time doctor and nurse, youth worker, and a manager who will be tasked (in part) with securing additional sustainable funding streams. Ongoing funding for counsellor wages has already been secured.
- Rent and running costs while we negotiate with City Council to ensure ongoing funding.
- Seed money for community development programmes that will become self-sustaining over time.

In the interest of transparency, please be advised that we are also seeking funding from other sources which has not yet been secured. If this funding comes through, there may be a slight variation to how a Cotton On donation would be utilised, but any spending would still be within the parameters of your funding criteria.

***“I haven’t been to a doctor since 198 closed
– I wouldn’t trust anyone else” - a young woman
brought to 298 by a battered woman support worker,
when asked which doctor she’d seen before***

The 298 Health Centre provides crucial medical, mental and sexual health services to the children and youth of Christchurch, services that are especially needed during the difficult times that have followed the Christchurch earthquakes, and that will affect our lives for many years to come. The earthquakes have also taught all Christchurch residents, young and old alike, that giving something back to the community is the quickest way to recovery, and the 298 Centre provides help here as well. With its myriad of opportunities for young people, including staff and customers of Cotton On, to get involved and make a real contribution to the well-being of their peers, 298 and the associated Youth Hub can help both volunteers *and* clients gain a sense of belonging, purpose, safety and empowerment.

In order to ensure ongoing viability and quality of this service, Te Korowai Youth Well-Being Trust has placed the following structures and practices into place:

- A highly qualified and diverse board composed of professionals from business, law, management, and medicine.
- A not-for-profit business model that links specific funding streams to specific service provision.
- Strong relationships with stakeholders, including young people, funders, the local community, business leaders, and other related service providers.
- Strong investment in staff with the right training, attitude and skills to provide a high-quality, in-demand service.
- Systematic, regular and rigorous evaluations of service outcomes to ensure best practice and measurable quality control.

Please see the attached budget figures, and thank you again for your invitation to apply for funding.