

TRIMMING THE GRASS EVALUATION REPORT 2004

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Manly Drug Education and Counselling Centre (MDECC) have continued to run 'Trimming the Grass' (TTG) after successful outcomes achieved in the pilot project in 2002. The program was held at the St Vincent De Paul Youth Reach Care and Support Centre in Dee Why over four sessions and utilised a workbook created especially for the program. The process evaluation of this program was entirely positive. Participants expressed appreciation of learning more about their cannabis use and having a forum in which to discuss and plan ways of cutting down their use. Treatment outcomes have shown that participants had improved health, and in some cases decreased cannabis use.

In 2003 Unitedway Northern Beaches Youth Community Benefit Fund again generously funded the program to be trailed in schools. There were many barriers in working within the mainstream school systems and it became evident that many were concerned about looking like they had a 'drug problem' in their school if programs such as TTG were openly advertised.

As a result MDECC then approached other alternative school programs such as TAFE, Links to Learning and The Beach Centre. The program was met with great enthusiasm and as a result a program was run for each. 22 participants were involved overall with 9 completing the program.