



life

Girlfriend advice



All questions are answered by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, GF's adolescent psychologist.

Single lady

Q I'm 14 and I've literally never had a boyfriend. My friends tease me about it and tell everyone, and then they come and tease me too. It's really getting to me because all of my friends have had at least six boyfriends and they've all had their first kiss. What should I do?

Lonesome

A We all grow, learn and experience things at our own pace. What's "normal" for one person, might not be standard for someone else. You don't need a boyfriend to define you. Tell your friends that you are happy being you and that everyone matures at their own rate. If you concentrate on being your own person, developing your own talents and interests, then the boys will come running in time. Confidence comes from having faith in yourself, so be patient.

Disaster aftermath

Q Over the last couple of months I have been feeling really, really down. One of my best friends started to notice, so she dragged me to the school's guidance counsellor to talk about it. The counsellor said she doubted I had depression and she thought it was just the shock of the Christchurch earthquake, but it's now months since then and I still feel down. I can't sleep and I always feel sick. Mum says it's a lack of food, but I eat (unless I'm not hungry). I'm scared and nervous all the time. The other day I logged onto the Beyond Blue website and took the depression test. My result came back 47/50, so now I don't know what to do. I feel trapped, with nowhere to turn. I want to tell someone but I just don't have the confidence. Please help me!

Down

A Like many of our readers, you have been through a very difficult time and it takes a while to recover. Given the fact that your depression score is very high, the best move would be for you to go and see your GP or family doctor. If you don't feel you can manage that then try ringing 0800 WHATS UP and talk to someone on their helpline. Alternatively, people looking for support in the Christchurch

area can call Relationships NZ's earthquake counselling service (03) 366 8804 or the 0800 RELATE number - 0800 735 283. Good luck.

Sex mad

Q My ex-boyfriend and I still really like each other and I can't focus on anything because I'm always thinking about him. The problem is I don't want to be in a relationship with him because all he talks about is sex. I don't know what to do, help!

Looking back

A You need to think about this differently. There is a common thinking error that many GF readers make, called black and white thinking. This is where we think in absolutes - things are either black or white, and it is hard to see shades of grey. You need to think about your ex in a more flexible manner. It's not a matter of being in a relationship or not. Meet him halfway. There is nothing to stop you from being good friends. Sit him down and tell him that you want to be a good friend and outline what that means to you. If he is sensible, he will see this is a great option.

"I make the most of all that comes and the least of all that goes."
SARA TEASDALE

Unsafe sex

Q I had this boyfriend and I stupidly sent him a topless picture, and he showed everyone at his school. I'm really paranoid my friends and family will find out about it. I really regret it and am so scared. What do I do?

Freaking out

A I am so sorry to tell you that there is nothing you can do, except don't do it again. Sending nude or near-nude photos is not just unwise, it is also illegal. The law says that, "possessing, controlling, producing, supplying or obtaining child pornography material for use through a carriage service" is an offence. Young people charged and convicted under this law run the risk of being put on the child sex offender register. While you got away with it this time, the fact is that you took the picture and he distributed it, so you are both technically in breach of this

law. The saddest thing is that this image may stay on the internet forever. Nothing you upload is ever private. Never do this again and just hope that no family member sees it.

Sick days

Q I have cancer so I've been missing quite a lot of school. I missed half of last year and a lot this year. I'm worried about falling behind. I still can't go back to school full time. I go to the school at the hospital when I'm there, but I'm really worried my school marks are going to suffer. Do you have any advice?

Away

A Having cancer at your age is awful, but there are ways that you can keep up at school. Send your teachers an email, letting them know that you can't go back to school full time, are worried about falling behind but would like them to email you extra work so that you can keep up. Cancer treatment can be pretty draining, so make sure you pace yourself. The great news is that with modern medicine more people make full recoveries from cancer now than ever before. We all wish you the best. You may like to get in touch with fellow cancer patients through CanTeen's website - they have a range of support services just for you.

Cancer support

- The Cancer Society is a not-for-profit organisation that offers a range of help and resources for cancer sufferers and their families. Visit cancernz.org.nz.
- Canteen.org.nz provides a supportive, informative and inclusive online community for young people living with cancer.
- Visit paidfarmobiles.co.nz to sell your old mobile phone - this company will recycle it, sell it and give proceeds to Canteen!

LOG ON... canteen.org.nz

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO:
GF LIFE Advice
 Response Bag 500107
 Auckland
 New Zealand
OR
 email girlfriend@nzgirlfriend.co.nz
 with the subject line "Life Advice"

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY DR MICHAEL CARR-GREGG GO TO MICHAELCARR-GREGG.COM.AU COMPILED BY JENNA TAMPA



New wheels for teen cancer charity

Stacey Kirk

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Out of the thousands of wheels which burnt up the asphalt in last year's Tour de Manawatu, money for a brand new set has been raised and given to CanTeen Manawatu.

The keys to a brand new van were handed over to the teen cancer charity yesterday by Fitzherbert Lions Club chairman Phil Theobald.

The Fitzherbert Lions organise the Tour de Manawatu cycle challenge each year, and the funds raised go to a predetermined major recipient to be spent on a specific project.

Mr Theobald said he was thrilled to be able to give the van to CanTeen.

"We might be a group of mainly old people, but we are fairly biased towards giving to the youth, and CanTeen is a very deserving group."

Over the past 11 years the tour has been running, Mr Theobald said many charities had benefited.

"We tend to ask a number of charities each year if they would like to submit a plan, and from there our major recipient is chosen."

"That way we can make sure the money is going to something tangible that the people who need it most can use, and it doesn't just get absorbed into administration costs."

Mr Theobald said CanTeen was their major recipient, but many other charities also received smaller amounts of money.

CanTeen Manawatu support coordinator Suzen Adams said the van

was "fantastic".

"We do a lot of activities for the people we support and, for example, we take the kids camping and on smaller trips this would mean it would be \$135 we don't have to spend on a van."

Mrs Adams said they quite often had to shell out \$400-\$800 to go shares with other groups in buses if they wanted to take the kids anywhere on a larger trip.

She said the van would be used for any kinds of activities, camping trips and funerals.

Mr Theobald said planning was already under way for this year's event on November 6, and the next major recipient would be identified in the near future.



Generous gift: Fitzherbert Lions are donating a vehicle to Manawatu CanTeen purchased with proceeds from the Tour de Manawatu. CanTeen members Caitlin Kilpin, top left, Adrian Bradley, Anna Hocquard and Sarah Champion, back seat window, check out their new van. Photo: MURRAY WILSON



Young volunteers are honoured

by Alice Te Puni

ABOUT 100 people gathered to pay tribute to a dedicated group of community-minded young people last night during an awards ceremony to celebrate their volunteering efforts.

The 18 Gisborne and East Coast youth aged between 15 and 23 were presented with certificates of appreciation for services to the community.

Gisborne Volunteer Centre Youth Awards for Volunteering 2011 is in its second year and support for the event has grown tremendously, says Gisborne Volunteer Centre manager Jenny Greaves.

"The importance of the evening was to recognise the voluntary contribution of young people in the community. Our youth are out there making a difference."

Mrs Greaves said the favourite part of her night was witnessing the beaming faces of proud parents and loved ones as the award recipients stepped forward to be honoured.

The 2011 award recipients fill a wide range of roles, included sports coaching, peer mentoring, emergency and life-saving services, helping on marae and at community events, conservation, animals, taking part in friendship programmes, technology and advocacy.

"They are an inspiring group of individuals, who are providing positive role examples for other youth and whanau members."

"In addition to their school

commitments, part-time jobs and personal hobbies, these young people have found the time and commitment to help others."

"They are doing so much for our

community. It bodes well for our society with such a high calibre of future leaders coming through the ranks."

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One of the youngest award recipients, 15-year-old Tondra Gerrard, is a level one basketball referee and volunteers at the Trade Aid shop, while

17-year-old Courtney Fairbank is the CanTeen East Cape branch president, coaches intermediate netball and is involved in highland dancing.

Their fellow award recipients give the

same passion and commitment in their specific areas of volunteering.

The awards evening coincided with the nations awareness raising Youth Week.

Although New Zealand census data from 2001 and 2006 indicates that while young people do volunteer, as a group, fewer volunteer proportionally compared with older age groups. However, Gisborne Volunteer Centre statistics for the past year show 26 percent of people registering to volunteer with the Centre are under the age of 25, in comparison 27 percent over 50.

"There is an indication that young people here are equally as interested in volunteering as those in the older age bracket," said Mrs Greaves.

Profiles and pictures of the award recipients will be published in the Herald's youth pages Voice on Monday.



YOUTH HONOURED:

Young Tairāwhiti volunteers honoured for their acts of goodwill during a special awards ceremony at the Salvation Army building last night were from: Isopi Darius Eyer, Ashleigh Taurai-McLeod, Elen French, Courtney Fairbank, Britta Carroll, Nick Thurston, Elliot Sonny George, Julia Muir, Nicholas Griffin, Alice Talmage, Kayleigh Hogan, Tondra Gerrard, Peraniko Buchanan, David Callaghan, Hinerangi Kaia, Kaitiana Waikari. Absent from the picture were Kayla Cooper and Nikki Kennedy.

Pictures by Rebecca Grunwell



Mountain Scene

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WAKATIPU WATCH

Long run, good cause

QUEENSTOWN Resort College students Michael Jones and Jock Barr are organising a fundraiser on Saturday for youth-cancer charity CanTeen. Twenty runners, some solo and others in relay teams, will run 46km from the Glenorchy Hotel back to QRC. Organisers are looking to raise \$5000 from their street appeal.

Speech and drama festival

SPEECH and drama students took to Arrowtown Hall's stage last Sunday for the Wakatipu Performance Festival. Thespians aged four to 18 read poems, improvised, and did solos and group drama in the annual competition. Ellie Brinsley, 18, won best young performer in musical theatre, Victoria Boult, 13, won speech and drama, and Sophie Lake won the Overall Acting Award.



Cancer Society on the move

The Wanganui Centre of the Cancer Society of New Zealand has moved to temporary premises as a forerunner to returning to Koromiko Road and new \$400,000 premises.

The centre moved this week to 142 Guyton Street, occupying the bottom floor of the old UCOL fashion building.

Centre manager Wendy Paterson said it was hoped that the centre would be in its new, purpose built, building in six months, although that time frame could be shorter.

Funding from grants and donations was in place for the new building.

Wendy emphasised that the centre had not used money for support services.

Funds for the new building were external.

"I would like to thank Powerco Trust, which has been a big contributor."

It had been decided in 2005 that the centre needed

new premises.

The centre had looked at various properties in the city. It had looked for new premises because it was operating in an old house that was deteriorating and needed considerable maintenance.

The centre had been no longer adequate for the services being provided.

"The services we wanted to offer were limited because we did not have the room."

The centre had looked at renovating and extending what it had and had also considered new sites for rebuilding or combining with other organisations.

The executive had decided the centre should remain where it was because everybody knew where it was and, importantly, it was close to the hospital.

Options before that decision were moving to the new Gonville Centre or to premises in Victoria Avenue, while there had

also been discussions on possibly going on to the hospital site.

The cheapest option had been to build on the established Koromiko Road site.

Several quotes had been sought for the new building, which will cost approximately \$400,000.

The building will be complete for that price, including carpets, curtains and kitchen fittings, ready for staff to walk in and start work.

"We hope the new building will allow new programmes, such as 'Look good, feel better', but we would like to include other like minded organisations with no presence in Wanganui such as Canteen, Child Cancer and the Breast Cancer Foundation. Those organisations could use the Wanganui Centre offices in establishing a presence here.

"We are hoping that with the extra programmes we can make it better for rural

people to access."

Volunteers this week had kept moving expenses to a minimum.

Wendy said the new building would be functional and practical rather than flash. The executive had been careful with the cost for the new building.

It would have three toilets, including disability access, and a larger meeting room, including a small kitchen, which any community group could hire for a fairly nominal sum. In addition a set-off room would provide an area for patients and there would be a reception area. A big asset would be the specific area for storage, given that the centre loaned equipment to patients and had materials related to the 'Relay For Life' events.

Wendy said the Koromiko Road site had been procured in the early 1960s.



The old Cancer Society premises on Koromiko Rd will be uplifted and taken to a new site.