

***The ChainBreakers***  
***Men's Shed***

- The Chainbreakers Shed uses intergenerational mentoring but in an unusual way.
- The Shed is setting up a community program to help the often forgotten members of society – ex prisoners

- The majority of ex prisoners and detoxed addicts do not want to return to their previous lifestyles
- They are told that to achieve this they have to change their old '**playmates**' and '**playgrounds**'
- However, it is not always possible for the recovering addict /inmate to change home areas, suburbs or even State.

**To successfully rehabilitate,**  
**the participant needs to:-**

- Find a Job & develop work skills
- Develop relational and social skills
- Continue rehabilitation care

The Chainbreaker program for ex prisoners or addicts uses the supportive, non threatening environment of a Men's Shed to provide the re-hab requirements in one place.

- The Shed will run in a conventional manner, open to all men, for most of the week.
- For two days, the facilities will be used to provide a training course for up to six participants (service users)

## *Selection of Participants*

The participants will have to prove that:-

- They want to make a permanent change from their past lifestyles
- They want to learn new skills to help them become productive members of their community
- They will probably have been recommended by Probation Services
- They have to complete a satisfactory interview before being accepted for the programme.

- Initially older participants (over 35) are being selected because they are more likely to be keen to re-habilitate.
- When they succeed they will be the mentors and role models for the 18 to 24 year olds and eventually the younger men.

## *Developing Work Skills*

- TAFE Outreach are developing the course as a module and are supplying a teacher
- This should lead to a Certificate II qualification upon successful completion of the work (1 Year)
- Activities are very practical :- painting, gyproc work, basic woodworking and metal working etc.
- Basic computing skills will be taught to enable participants to prepare personal resumes & other work documents etc.
- Shed management will help with job applications

## *Developing relational and social skills*

- Learning socialization skills and confidence building is more difficult
- The program relies on the older, mature Men's Shed volunteers who will also attend on the training days
- These men are not counsellors but act as mentors or role models
- A course has been developed to train Shed volunteers before they are involved

## *Continuing rehabilitation care*

- Prisoners develop trust in their case workers over time
- Once released, ex-prisoners have no further contact with their counsellors/case workers
- Some participants want to continue this work but are unable to as there are no opportunities in the community.
- The program enables men to continue their group work
- The healthy recreational activities in the atmosphere of a Shed enables participants to develop trust in the volunteers
- This also assists Probation & Parole officers in their workload

## **Stakeholders**

- Nominate service users
- Monitor their performance
- Provide support and advice

## **Stakeholders**

- Probation and Parole
- Dept. of Community Services
- Dept of Housing
- Parramatta City Council
- Telopea Christian Centre
- CareWorks NSW
- Centre Link
- TAFE Outreach

## *Other involved organizations*

- WayBack Committee
- Prison Fellowship NSW
- Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre
- Service Clubs including
  - Dundas / Carlingford Lions Club
  - Rydalmere Rotary Club

***Queries and more information  
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