

CARETAKER'S COMMITTEE



ANNUAL REPORT

1994-1995



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CARETAKER'S COTTAGE

AGENDA

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1994/1995



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 27th September, 1995

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Minutes from Annual General Meeting - 22nd September, 1994**
- 3 Reports**
 - a) Chairperson - **Richard Miller**
 - b) Treasurers Report - **Russell Sykes**
 - c) Co-ordinator - **Laurie Matthews**
- 4 Election of Officers**
 - Chairperson
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Ordinary Members
- 5 Close**



Minutes
Annual General Meeting
Thursday 22nd September, 1994

1. Present

Richard Miller
Russell Sykes
Shane O'Higgins
Roy Atkinson
Marcello Scali
Nikki Edwards
Shareen Goodger

2. Apologies

Bev Harrington
Jaqui Gerber

3. 1993 Annual General Meeting minutes

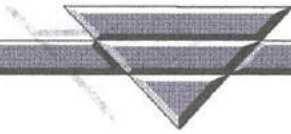
read and accepted
moved Russell Sykes
seconded Shane O'Higgins

4. Chairpersons Report - presented by Richard Miller

read and accepted
moved Shane O'Higgins
seconded Laurie Matthews

5. Financial Report - Audit By Bentley's & Co.

read and accepted
moved Richard Miller
seconded Shane O'Higgins



Minutes
Annual General Meeting
Thursday 22nd September 2004

All positions were declared vacant and Laurie Matthews acted as returning officer

Chairperson	Richard Miller (nominated) Declared elected unopposed
Treasurer	Russell Sykes (nominated) Declared elected unopposed
Secretary	Shane O,Higgins (nominated) Declared elected unopposed
Ordinary Members	Bev Harrington, Roy Atkinson, Marcello Scali, Sharyne Goodger nominated and declared elected.

3. 2003 Annual General Meeting minutes

4. Chairperson Report presented by Richard Miller

5. Financial Report - Audit By Brian & Co.

Co-ordinators Report



The demands on our resources have continued to be unending for another year, the number of young people accommodated has risen as has the level of support required by these residents. Placements at Caretakers are sought by District Officers and other referral agencies specifically because we do not shy away from working with young people behavioural issues. I believe we have met the challenge with care and compassion that has stood our residents in good stead.

The pressure on Caretakers to provide the accommodation, when no one else will, is immense, the proportion of residents who have been excluded from suburban accommodation services, Alternate Care placements and Dept. Community Services placements due to behavioural issues is increasing to such an extent that it is common for the majority of residents to be identified as having a psychological or intellectual disability. The implication of this development include the greater demands on staff resources, the difficulty in maintaining an environment conducive to the well being of all residents and the appalling lack of commitment and direction from the Government Departments responsible for the care of these clients.

The recurring issue of the increasing numbers of young people exhibiting psychiatric and other behavioural concerns remains the area in need of most attention. Some welcome developments such as the inservice training workshops provided by Professor Brent Waters and John Howard through Caritas, clinical support for Caretakers residents by John Howard and his offer of supervision to our staff have stood to reassure us that we are not totally on our own with this client group. The profile of adolescent mental health has been raised in the media and to draw specific funding initiatives from both the State and Commonwealth this year, we must participate in the allocation of these resources.

Co-Ordinators Report (cont)

As we tending to accommodate more young people with behavioural problems it has the effect of making our accommodation less safe for both staff and clients, we no longer accommodate under 14 year olds or first time out of home young people. The incidents of threat and violence continue to be of concern especially in the light of murder of the youthworker at Bankstown refuge, more training will assist us to manage these situation with greater skill but either SAAP needs to provide appropriate courses or more training funding needs to be generated so that we can purchase training for all staff. The safety of residents from assault and exploitation by other residents and on the local streets needs greater attention in the coming year.

Staff movements this year have seen 2 of our longest serving youthworkers, namely Tim Lawrence and Julie Elder move on to new situations, both had worked at Caretakers for the past 4 years which surely must indicate the strength of the team given the early burnout rate that dominates this field, both were instrumental in moulding the casework model of service that we continue to champion. New members of the team include Carrolyn Borstelman who has been working relief shifts at Caretakers over the past 3 years whilst working full time at Guesthaven and Butler Lodge and Charlie Wainohu has recently joined the staff having previously worked at Swanton Lodge.

This year John Van Keppel established an adolescent / parent support group that has subsequently attracted sponsorship from the Sydney City Council, the function of this group is to provide a forum for young people to explore a range of topics that include **juvenile justice, accommodation etc in the context of relationships**. The Council is providing premises at The Rocks along with a financial contribution towards the cost of facilitates and refreshments.

The number of residents attending school and wishing to return to school remains at over 60% but unfortunately our relationship with the Dept Education remains negligible as **local principals have the prerogative to impose conditions that our residents are unable to meet** that include dressing in correct school uniform before enrolling. Fortunately **East Sydney High continues to be very accessible and attractive to our residents**. Access to education needs to be addressed with the Dept during the coming year.

Co-ordinators Report (cont)

Caretakers has been represented on a wide range of committees and projects that include the Dept Community Services Eastern Area Child Protection Committee, Alternate Care Committee, Supported Accommodation Assistance Program as well as Options Housing, South Sydney and Kings Cross interagencies, City Council Youth Development Committee, Homeless Persons Council and the Inner City Mental Health Adolescent Committee..

A new project that Caretakers has played a part in establishing is the DEET funded Inner City Youth Pilot Project staffed by Michael Abbott, it has been an important initiative for the identifying barriers to young people gaining access to Government services. This project has specifically addressed the DSS / DOCS protocol that has had the effect of financially disadvantaging under 15 year olds and the difficulty of gaining Austudy / Abstudy due to the inflexible application of the qualification criteria.

The spirit of cooperation between services has lead to a more integrated response to youth needs in the area. Oasis are putting a lot of work into developing employment based programs that we can access as is the Come In Centre, Cellblock Ways, South Sydney Youth Centre and Glebe Youth Centre all continue to provide recreational support though we are yet to find organised morning activities for those who need them. Kings Cross Adolescent Unit, the Youth Access Centre and the Youth Service Unit at Social Security continue to be the client friendly face of Government, these teams continue to be staffed by workers who have our clients at heart.

Our move to Bondi this year will present wonderful new opportunities and a lot of work, we will have to reassure our new neighbours that we are there to support the local community whilst maintaining our undoubted expertise at working with those most in need. Establishing new associations with new agencies while learning about the street life of the suburbs will probably take time but the rewards of being near the beach should outweigh the convenience of Surry Hills.

Co-ordinators Report (cont)

Much of this report has dealt with the frustrations and difficulties that we encounter on a daily level but don't let that overwhelm you, we are creating opportunities where none seemed possible for our residents every day, we assist young people to reach new milestones and to learn that life is worth the effort. We give kids hope by advocating for them so that they are not alone and having faith in them to succeed, we have been a part of 224 young peoples lives this year.

Our efforts continue to be recognised and rewarded by the ongoing funding of Caretaker's Cottage by the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program administered by the Department of Community Services.

Goals and Objectives Of Caretaker's Cottage

FOR THE RESIDENTS

- I. To have a safe and supportive environment conducive to examining her/his circumstances.
- II. To begin taking steps toward dealing with the problems and the functional resolution of the crisis components of these problems.
- III. To be involved in making decisions concerning themselves and to take responsibility for her/his life.
- IV. To have access to assessment, counselling, resources, referral and follow up to meet individual needs.
- V. To develop living skills necessary to cope effectively in an alternate living situation.
- VI. To have access and encouragement in order to make positive choices and about lifestyle, towards well being and personal development.
- VII. To receive advocacy on their behalf with parents, government departments, the legal system and significant others.

D

OPERATIONAL HOURS OF THE SERVICE

No changes have occurred in this area so Caretakers continues to offer a 24 hour 7 day a week service. At most time 2 or more workers are on duty consequently a high level of supervision can be offered. Though most referrals occur during the day we also receive a significant number from the Police, Dept Community Services through the Kings Cross Adolescent Unit and the Child Protection and Family Crisis Service in the early hours of the morning.

E

Number of Paid Staff and Hours Worked

Our staffing levels have not change during the past year though some of our personnel have which now means we have just 1 youthworker subject to pre SACS Award conditions, this has a negligible financial impact but the perceived inequity is all but gone. 5 youthworkers continue to facilitate the residential aspect of the Service on a 5 week rotating roster with all sifts being in the evening and weekend times.

A casework team of 3 support all of the current residents as well as a caseload of ex residents, these positions are predominantly 9 to 5 Monday to Friday positions though some flexibility is necessary, all caseworkers and the Co-ordinator cover a duty day in the office and time in Lue is available on request.

We continue to employ a book keeper for 3 hours per week and an administrative assistant is employed for 14.5 hours per week.

F

Consumer / User involvement

Consumers have a new avenue to explore their rights and responsibilities whilst living at the refuge through the new adolescent/parent support group. Issues of living in a refuge are commonly addressed in this forum

House Meetings continue to be the formal point of access to management of the house\ and the service for residents, residents are able to attend management meetings but currently no young people are accessing the management committee.

G

Difficulties Encountered in providing the Service

The house has deteriorated to the extent that it is embarrassing to offer accommodation in the conditions, this situation has come about because the Dept Housing local staff apply the same criteria to a refuge as they do to a general housing stock flat rented by a family. It is essential that we have repairs done quickly so that reasonable quality accommodation can be offered. The current policy would appear to be that when a house is worn out CAP will purchase a new one.

Our maintenance needs are special to the extent that many of our residents are angry and disturbed, consequently is common for them to take their frustration's out on their immediate environment. If a bedroom door is kicked off its hinge it needs to be repaired before that room can safely be used, the behaviour that caused the damage is a separate issue. To date it has not been worth wasting the time to make requests to the Dept for repairs, it has been simpler to do them ourselves but some light is at the end of the tunnel in a newly proposed maintenance agreement that would empower us to have repairs done that have not been completed in a reasonable time frame.

A major concern is the Dept Community Services inability to provide safety for wards, young people in the Care of the Director General and those notified as being at risk. It was a relief to see Ormond retained by the Dept but there is a need for more similarly secure accommodation on the basis that the State has an obligation to ensure the safety of these young people as opposed to allowing under 16 year old Wards to live in squats in the Cross because Ormond will not accept the District Officers referral. It is unpalatable to be promoting secure accommodation as the answer but it is fair preferable to the alternative currently on offer from the Department.

H

Information on reviews of the project

On a regular maintenance level we continue to have weekly staff meeting where all client progress is reviewed along with the general operation of the house. A less frequent Caseworker meeting and Youthwork meeting is conducted to look more specifically at issues affecting each team.

2 staff development days have been held during the past year that have resulted in the completion of extensive policy and procedure manual. This manual addresses every imaginable aspect of the organisation and has been constructed in such a way that evolving policy and procedure issues can be easily updated.

I

Other Issues

Caretakers Cottage has been invited to present a request to the Eastern Area Health Board through Dr David Baker for the funding of a medical clinic to be set up in our Bondi Rd premises in December. This will involve the setting up of a small surgery stocked with free medial supplies and a General Practitioner once or twice a week.

We will need to set up other in house resources that should include an art program, it would seem appropriate to approach the Shopfront Art project to assist with our residents creative expression.

J

Service Plan

1995 - 1996

The major challenge for the coming year is to transfer our operations from Surry Hills to Bondi and establish the Service as an integral part of the local community whilst continuing to service the needs of the young people who most need our expertise. We will need to ensure that we provide for the local community and eventually become identified as a Bondi service.

The larger premises will create the opportunity for staff to have more private office space and for residents to have a comfortable environment in which to live. By the same token we will have to learn how to maintain a house with immense public space, I suspect that we will be looking to organise some housekeeping support.

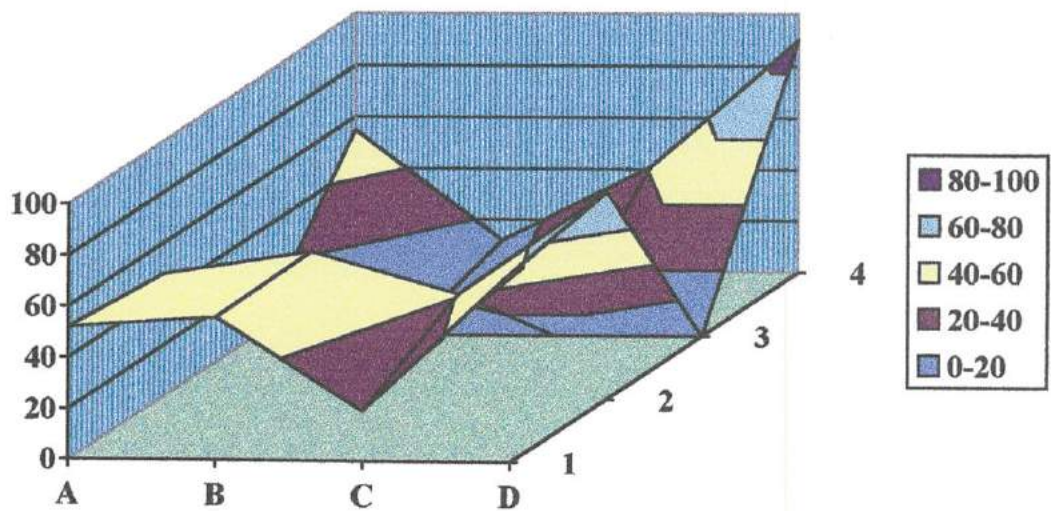
Good links have been established with the Council for Intellectual Disability that will lead to a lobbying process to establish an outreach and training project for homeless young people with an intellectual disability. This is an exciting project that if successful will fill a gap that has been the cause of frustration for years. It would be great if this project could be promoted in the mental health field as well.

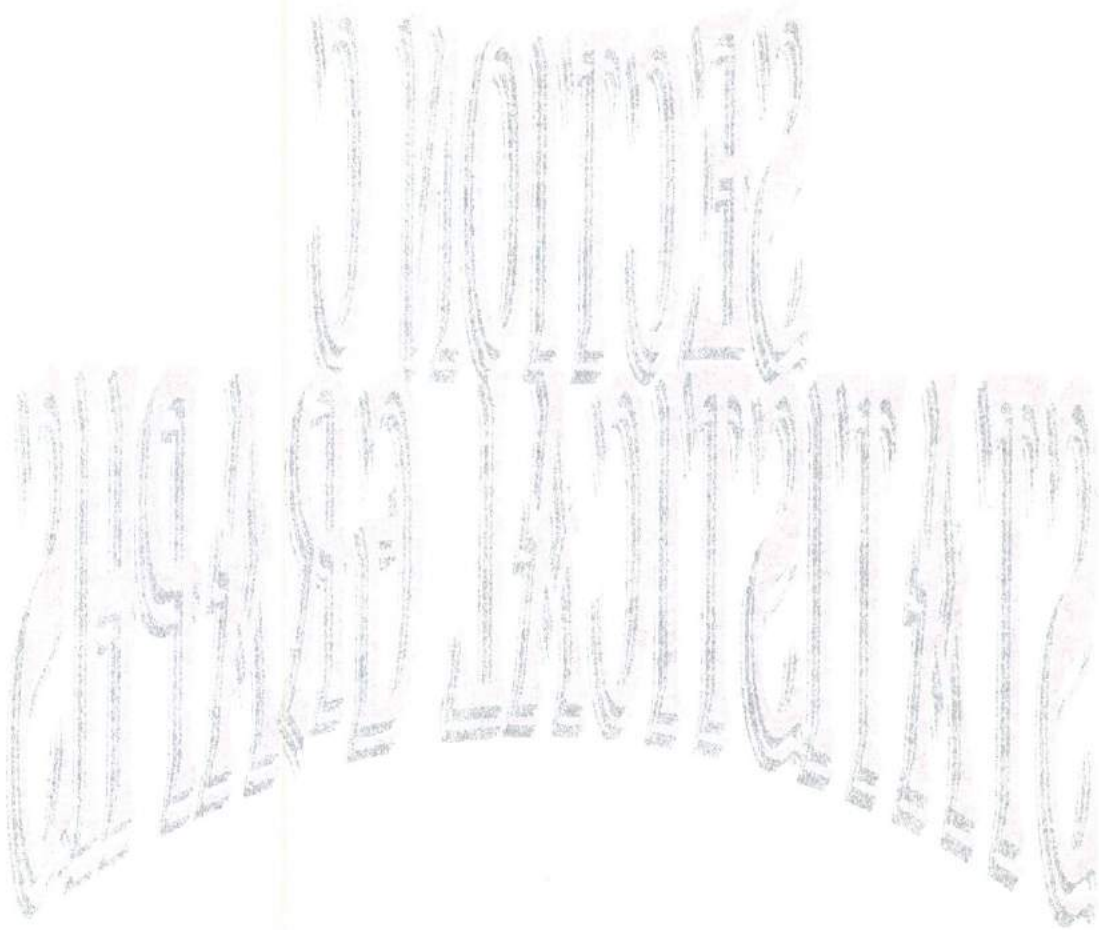
Work clearly needs to be put into gaining better access to the State school system, this will be more difficult with the elimination of the Regional Office level of the Dept School Education. Similarly new relationships will have to be established with TAFE and the Eastern Suburbs employment training providers.

The long drawn out consultation and development of SAAP that has culminated with the new SAAP agreement has also generated a lot of new thought on where the field should be heading. We have a good headstart with casework being the cornerstone however we must adopt and develop the emerging standards of care into our procedures and prepare for the new demands for data collection.

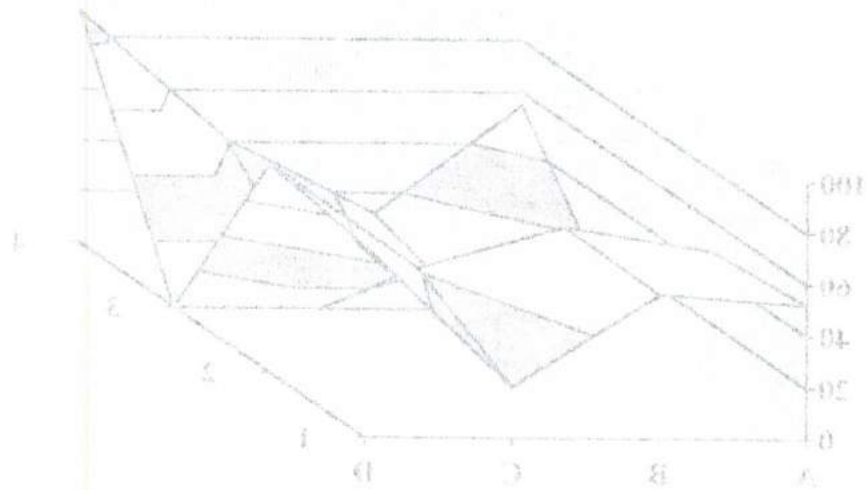
Finally I believe it to be imperative that Caretakers lobby to gain representation on a DOCS Central Office level focus type working group that is pursuing the needs of State Wards and other young people in need of safety. This will enable us to communicate our experience of the past few years so that an adequate response rather than a bureaucratic response can be initiated.

SECTION C STATISTICAL GRAPHS





- 80-100
- 60-80
- 40-60
- 30-40
- 0-30



SECTION C CLIENT PROFILES

The following graphs and tables represent a comparison of our client group for the period June 1993 to July 1994 and June 1994 to July 1995. All information is expressed in percentages and has been extrapolated from a sample of 100 clients.

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- 1/ Occupancy**
- 2/ Age Distribution**
- 3/ Reason Accommodated**
- 4/ Last period of residing with family**
- 5/ Accommodation History**
- 6/ Asked to Leave Accommodation Service**
- 7/ Source of Referral**
- 8/ Parents Place of Residents**
- 9/ Income on Arrival**
- 10/ Court Imposed Penalties**
- 11/ State Wards**
- 12/ Incidents of violence**
- 13/ Police,DOCS Involvement**
- 14/ Family Structure**
- 15/ Suicide Attempts**
- 16/ Overdose Requiring Hospitalisation**
- 17/ Drug of Choice**
- 18/ Education**
- 19/ Currently Enroled**
- 20/ Desire to Resume Schooling**
- 21/ Previous Employment**
- 22/ Completed Employment Training**

CLIENT PROFILE

The following graphs and tables represent a comparison of our client group for the period June 1993 to July 1994 and June 1994 to July 1995. All information is expressed in percentages and has been extrapolated from a sample of 100 clients.

- 1\ Occupancy
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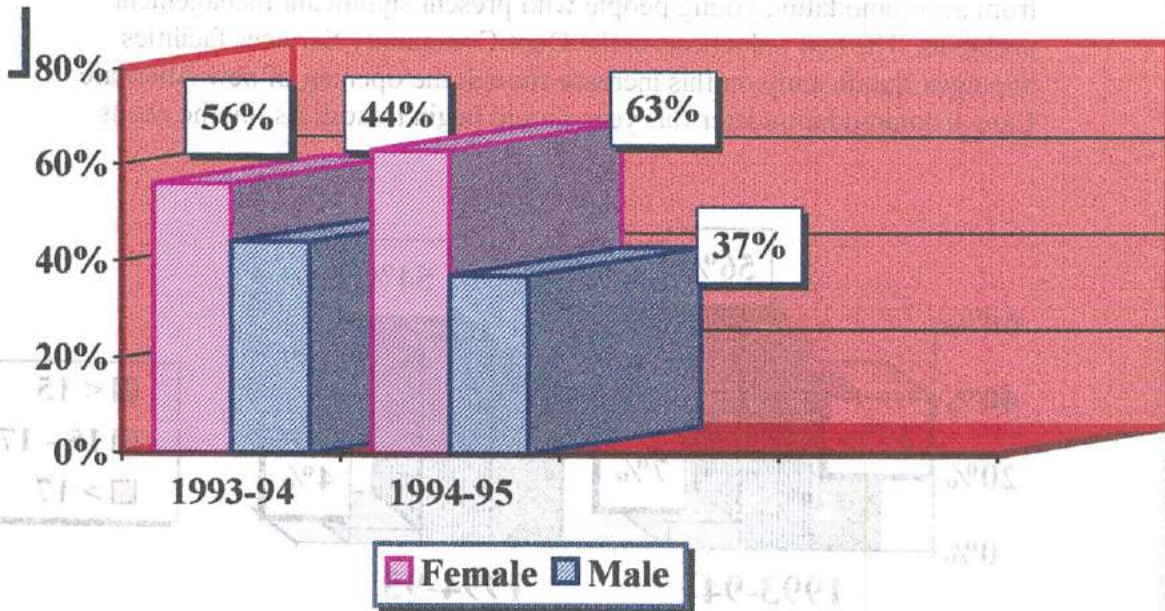
PROLOGUE

A slight increase in the number of clients from 216 to 224 has been noted during the past year. It would appear that the annual number of clients has plateaued to between 220 to 250 following the introduction of the casework model in 1990. We are continuing to focus on accommodating clients who would benefit from casework support though some skewing of the figures occurs if you note that the total number of residents has increased as has the average length of stay yet the occupancy rate has fallen. This is explained by an significant increase in the number of very short stay clients while those who remain resident are staying for extended periods, primarily because suitable medium to long term options are not available to many of our residents. Caretakers tends to accommodate young people with chronic behavioural problems and State Wards both of whom are precluded from many accommodation services.

PROLOGUE

A slight increase in the number of clients from 214 to 224 has been noted during the past year. It would appear that the annual number of clients has increased to between 210 to 250 following the introduction of the casework model in 1966. We are continuing to focus on accommodating clients who would benefit from casework support though some skewing of the figures occurs if you note that the total number of residents has increased as has the average length of stay yet the occupancy rate has fallen. This is explained by an significant increase in the number of very short stay clients while those who remain resident are staying for extended periods primarily because suitable medium to long term options are not available to many of our residents. (waiters tends to accommodate young people with chronic behavioral problems and State Wards both of whom are precluded from many accommodation services.

OCCUPANCY



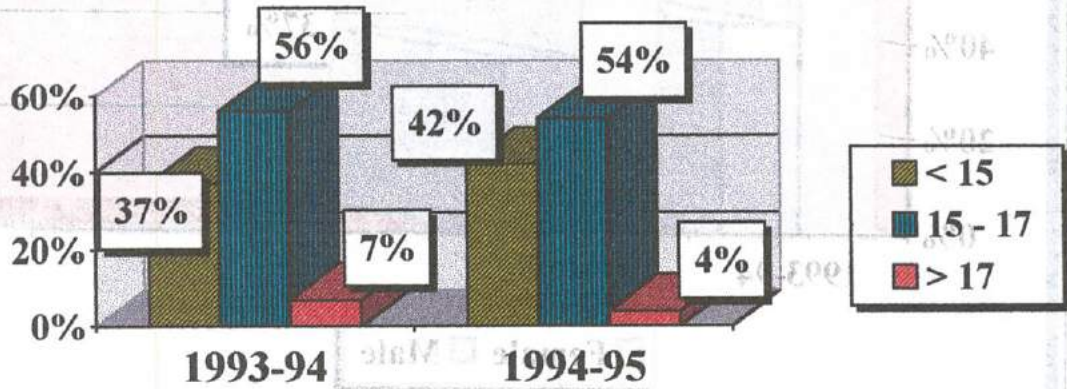
1993-94

1994-95

Total Residents	216	Total Residents	224
Average Occupancy Rate	92 %	Average Occupancy Rate	87 %
Average Length of Stay	15.6 days	Average Length of Stay	18.4 days

1 AGE DISTRIBUTION

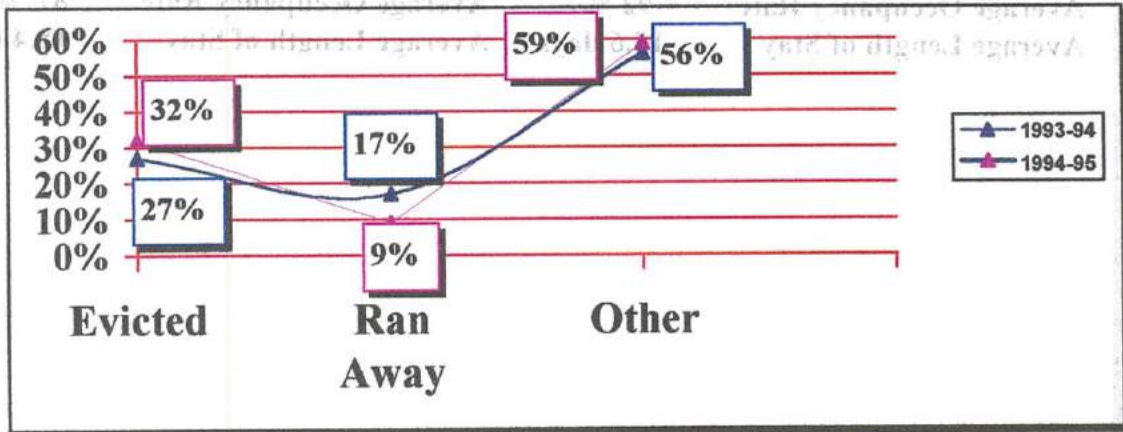
The trend towards accommodating more under 16 year olds has continued while many other crisis services continue to ban State Wards and shy away from accommodating young people who present significant management problems. The bed reductions in the Dept Community Services facilities impinges significantly on this increase though the opening of new Alternate Care accommodation later this year should begin to address the the needs



of this younger client group.

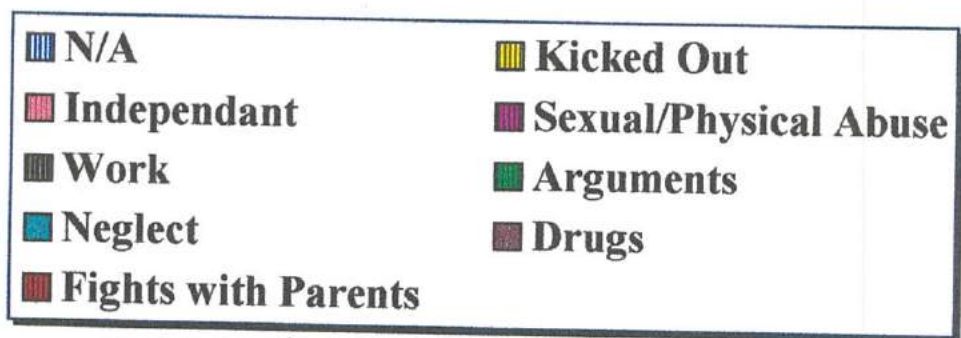
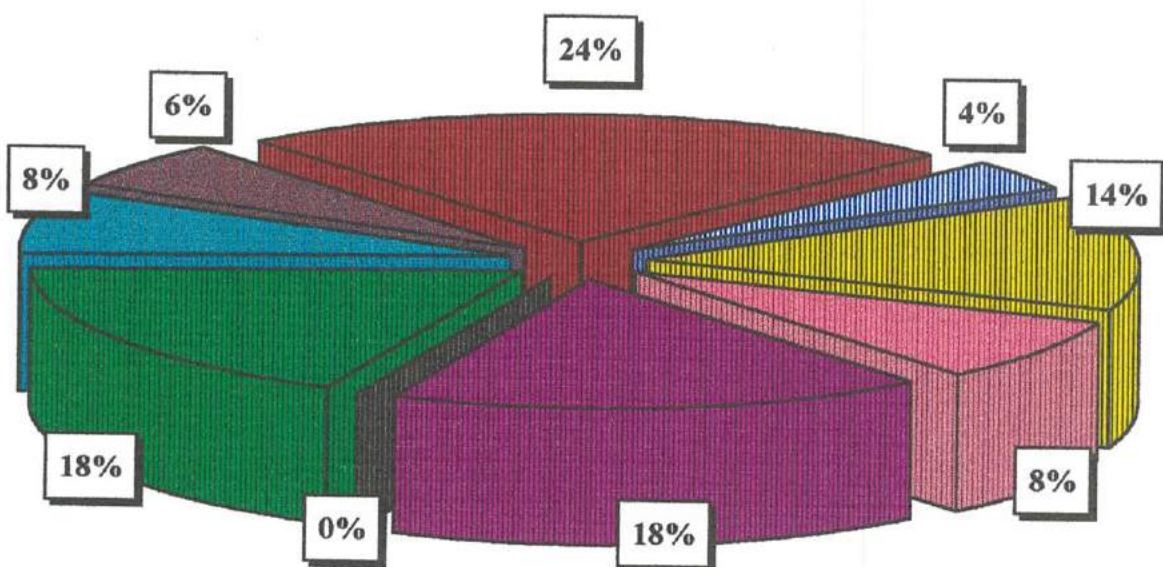
2. REASON ACCOMMODATED

Less than half of all residents have recently left home following eviction or running away while we continue to work predominantly with young



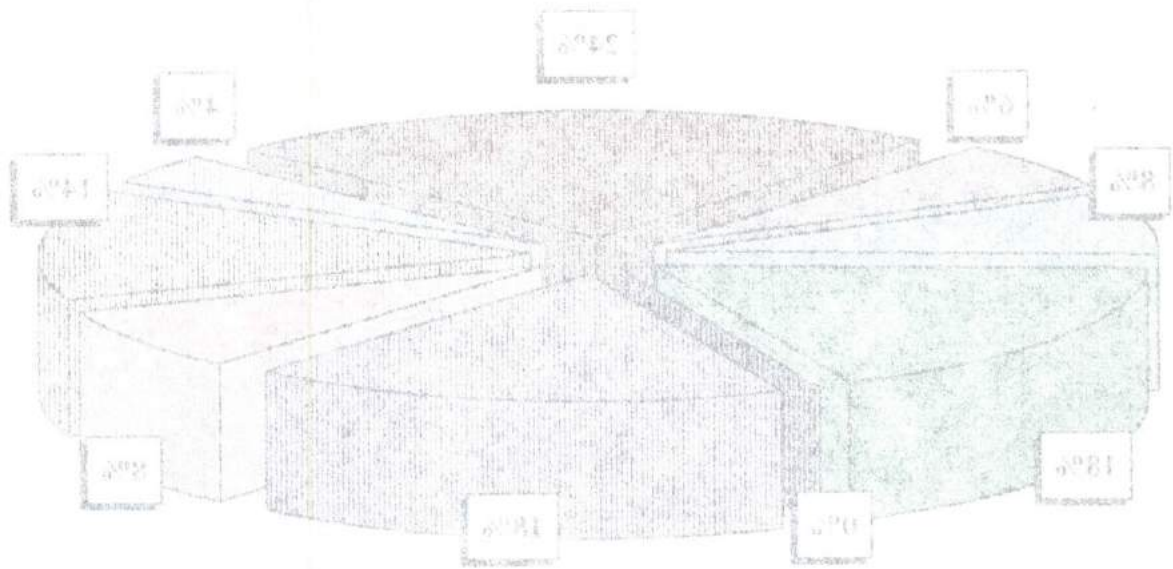
3. Reasons Nominated for Leaving Home

57 % of the residents cite family relationship difficulties without being specific when 12 % nominate sexual or physical abuse as the reason for their leaving home. Our work has been focusing on and encouraging family reconciliation and I believe that this in turn is leading to an increase in the numbers of young people being restored to family care. Abuse issues continue to be significant but relationship issues dominate.



3. Reasons Nominated for Leaving Home

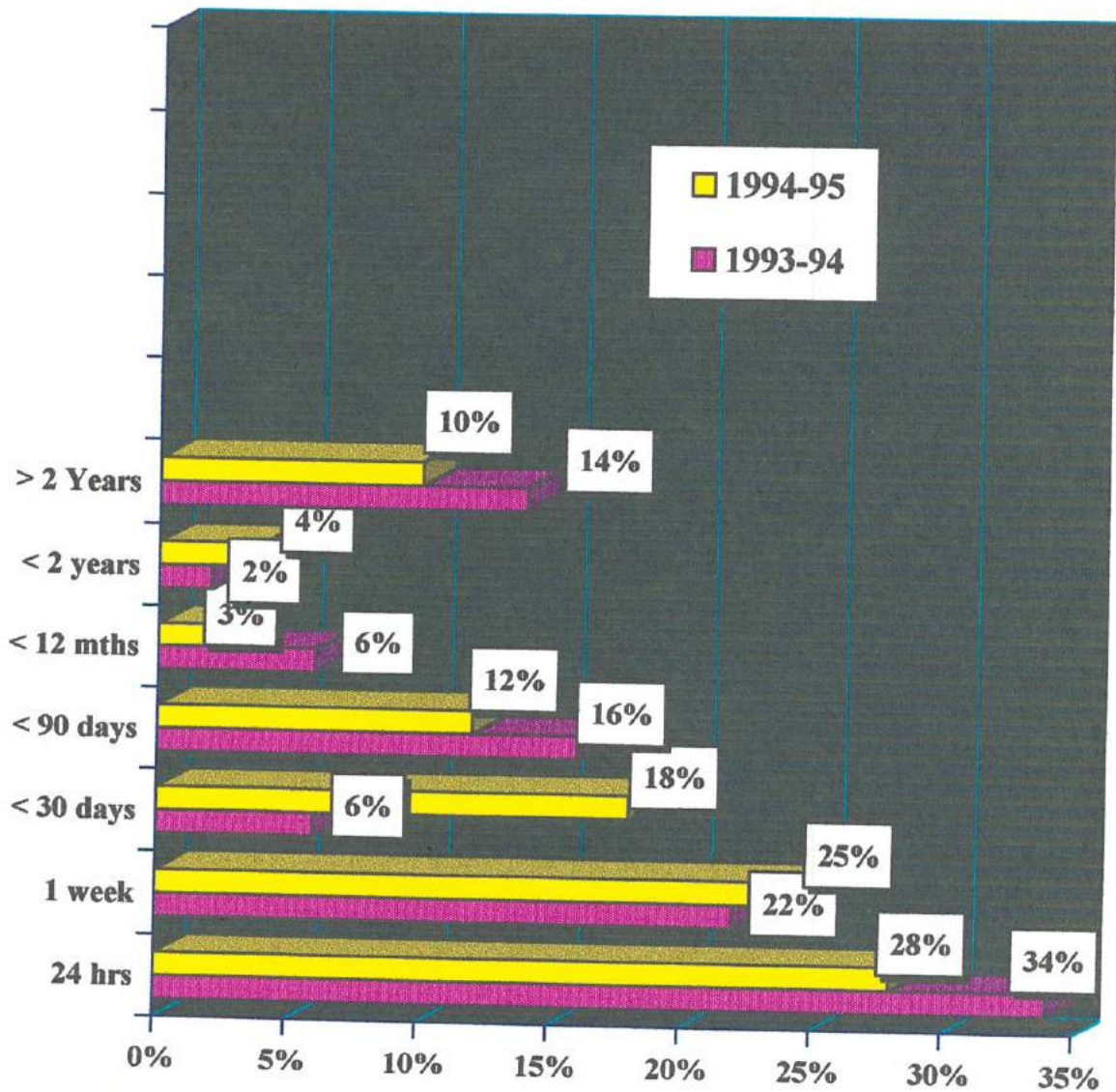
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- N/A
- Independent
- Work
- Fights with Parents
- Things
- Arguments
- Sexual/Physical Abuse
- Kicked Out

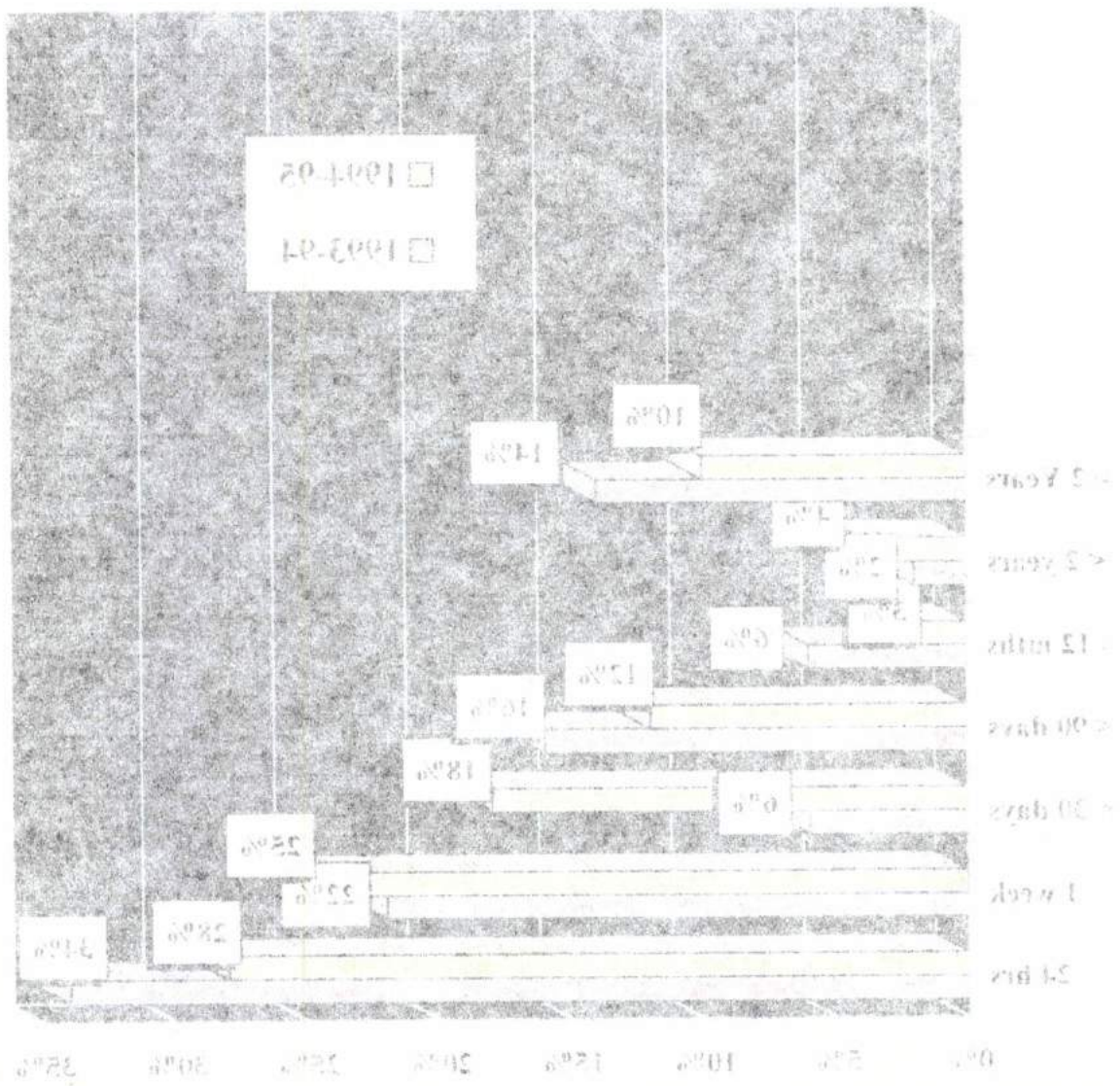
4. Last Period to Reside with Family

A trend is developing that shows our clients have been out of home longer before they come to Caretaker's, this is due, in part, to more thorough screening of first time out of home clients and the concentration working with young people in need of higher levels of support.



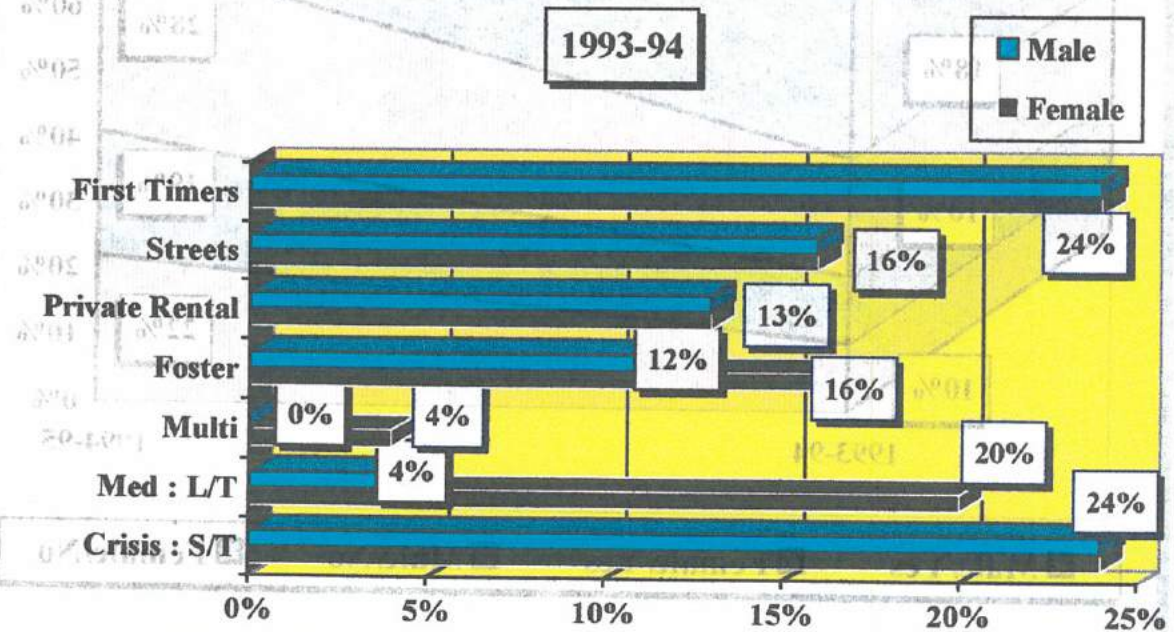
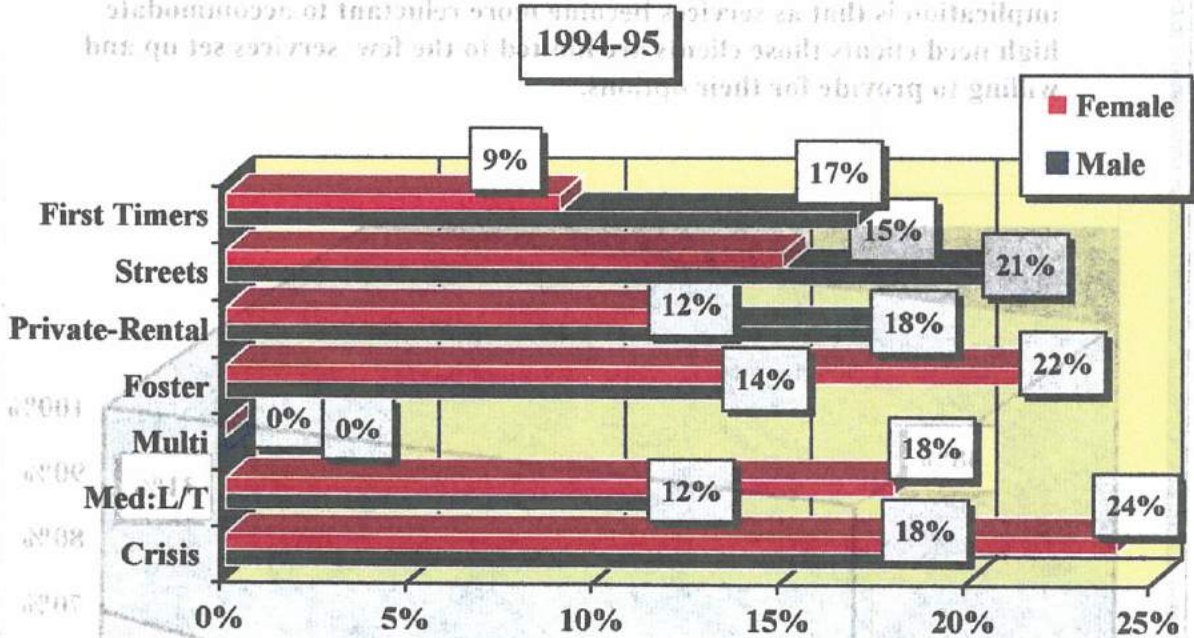
4. Last Period to Merge with Family

It should be noted that those two clients have been out of home longer before they come to treatment, this is due in part to more thorough screening of first time out of home clients and the concentration working with young people in need of higher levels of support.



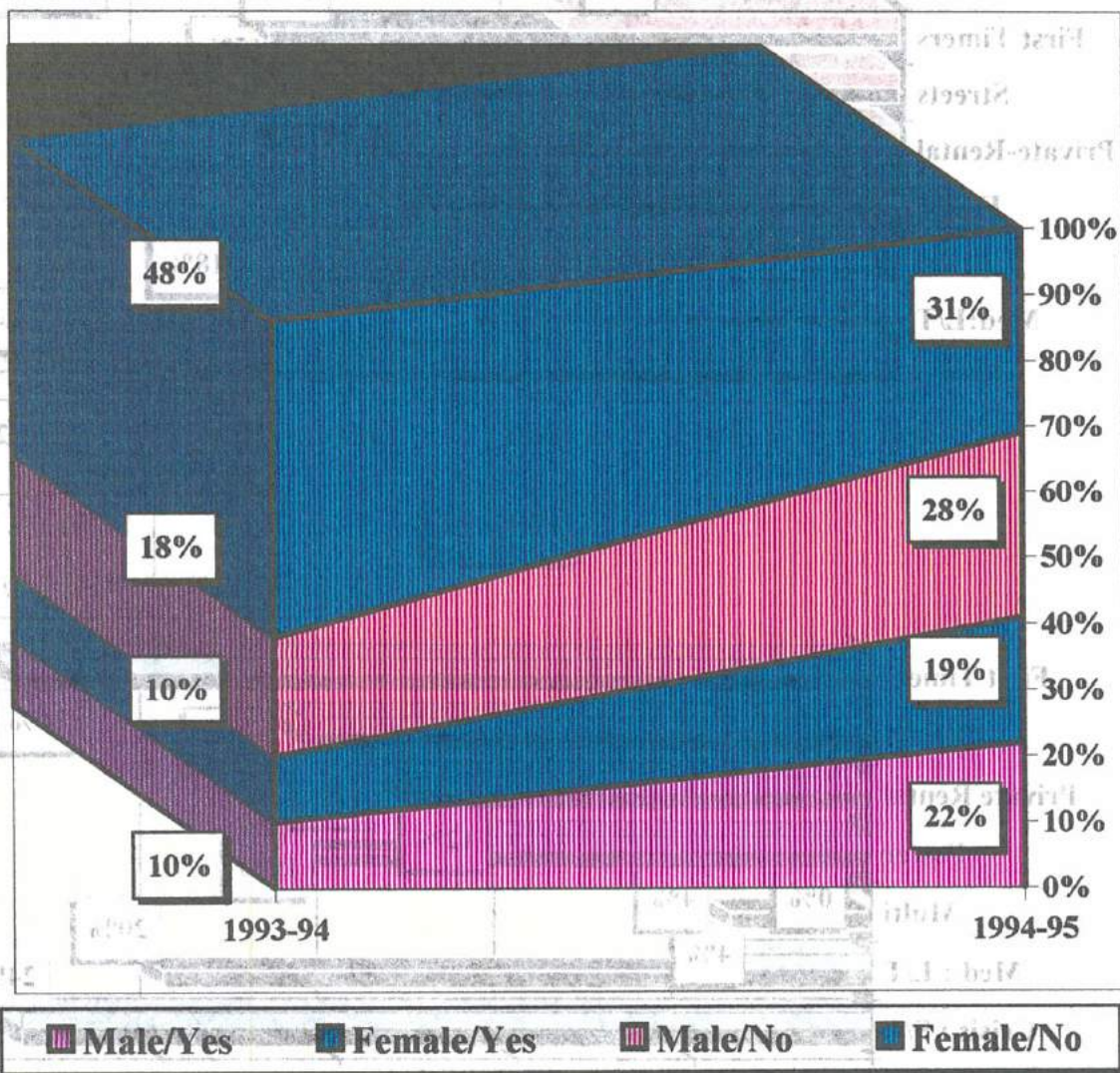
5. Accommodation History

The previous worrying trend of high numbers of young people returning to crisis accommodation from multi house projects has been arrested with no residents coming from these projects this year however, that 30% have previously lived in medium to long term



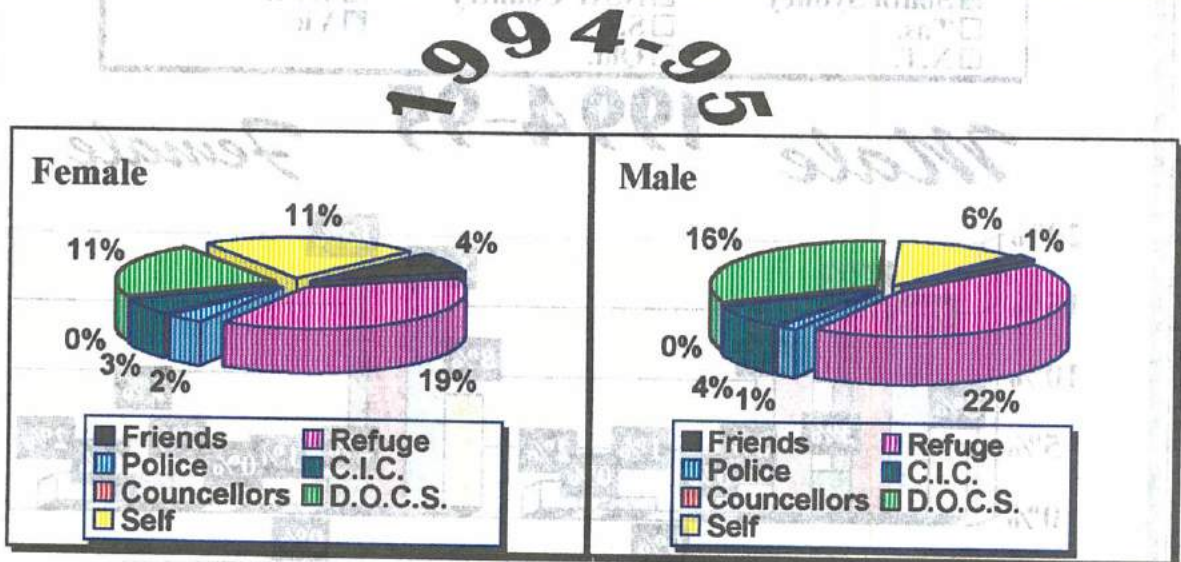
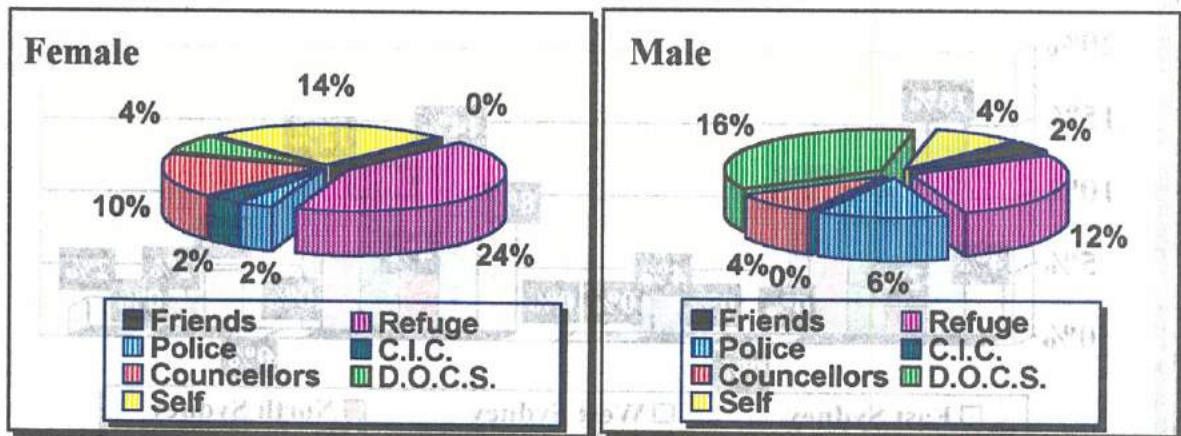
6. Asked to Leave Accommodation Services

Many more of our residents have been asked to leave accommodation services than in previous years, a development that bears greater examination by both the suburban services and the Department. The implication is that as services become more reluctant to accommodate high need clients those clients are limited to the few services set up and willing to provide for their options.



7. Source of Referral to Caretaker's Cottage

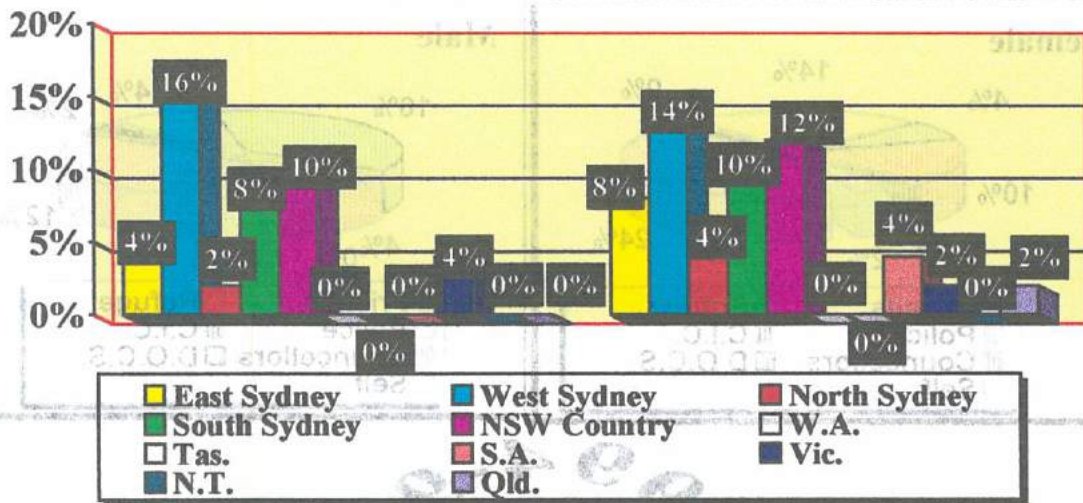
In line with the previous graph an increasing number of residents are coming from refuges and the number of Department of Community referrals have increased significantly, a reflection of the Departments lack of placement options.



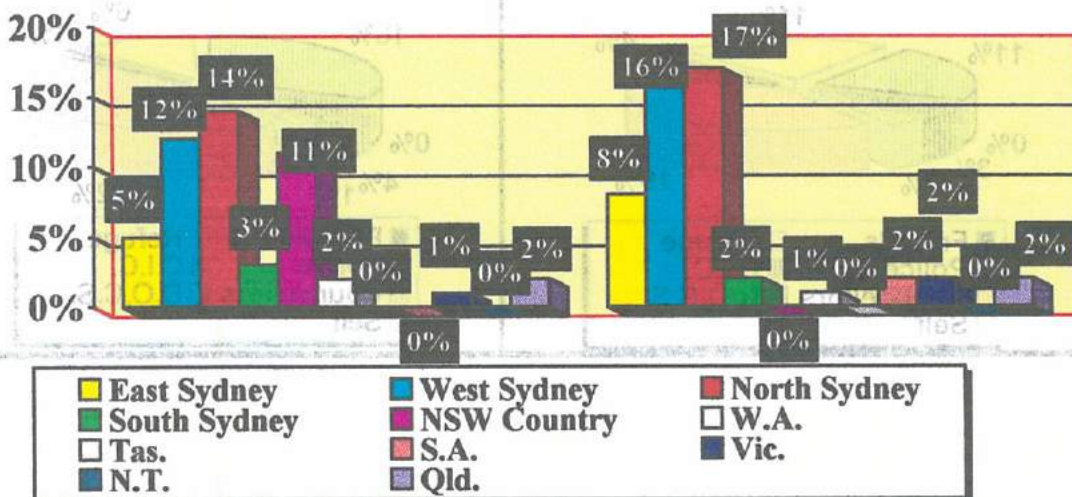
8. Parents Place of Residence

The continued increase in young people coming from metropolitan Sydney is no doubt due to Oasis, St Vinnies for Youth and the Opposition being a more attractive option for young people travelling around the country. Gradually Eastern Suburbs young people are getting greater representation and this trend is likely to increase when Caretaker's is relocated in Bondi.

Male **1993-94** *Female*

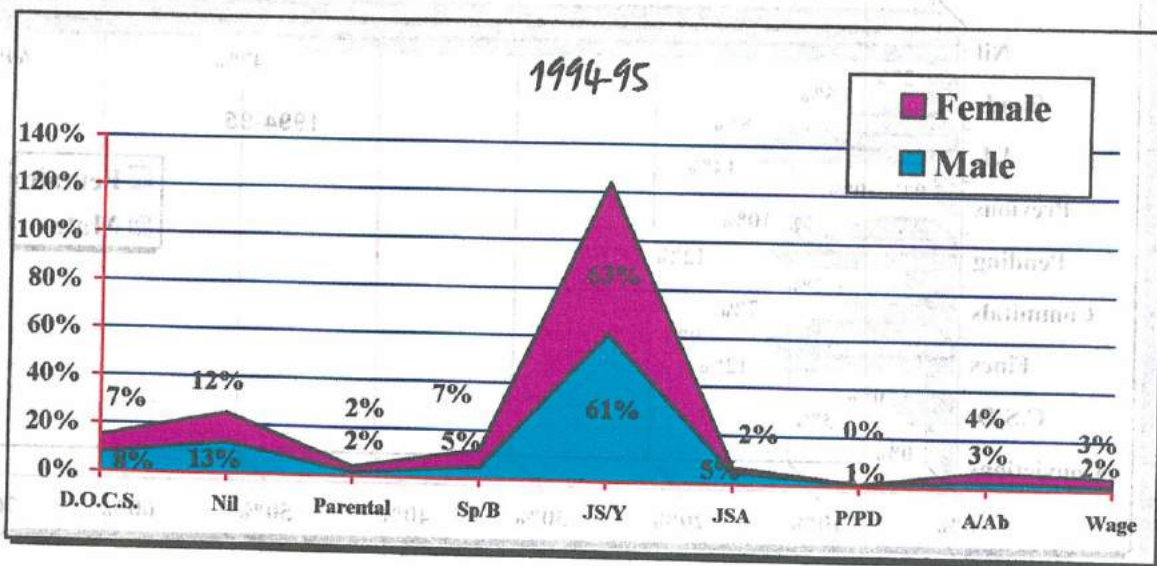
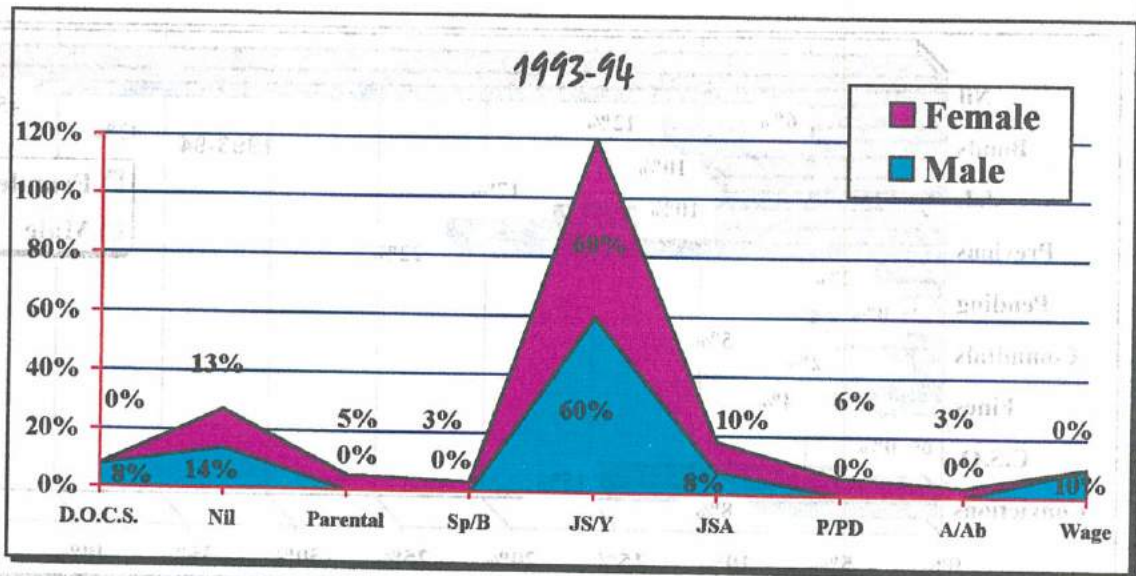


Male **1994-95** *Female*



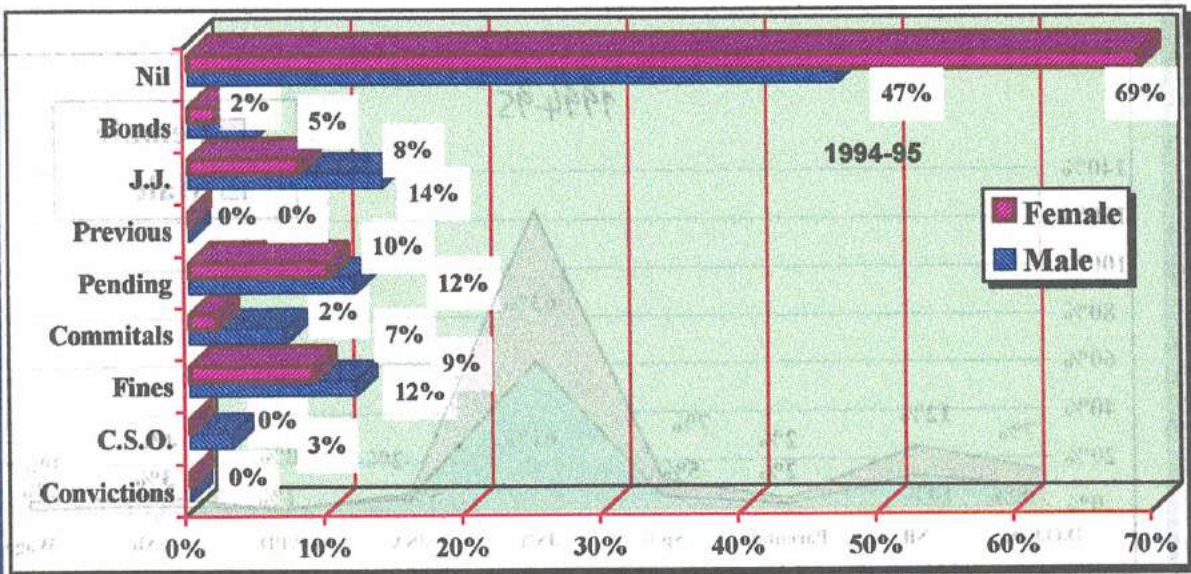
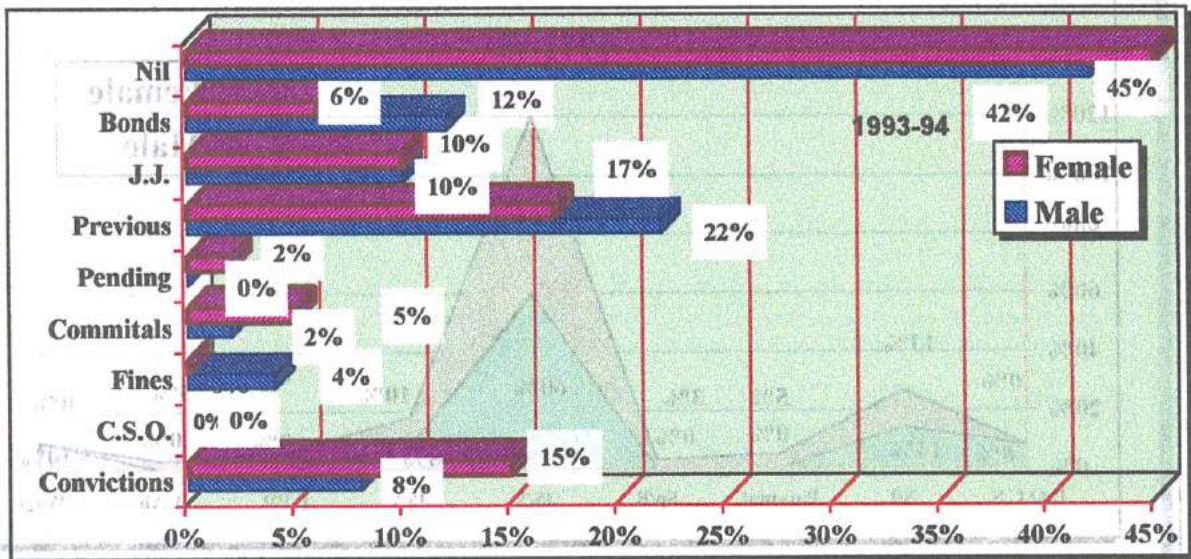
9. Income on Arrival

More Wards would account for the increase in young people receiving more financial support from the Department of Community Services though this remains a problematic area as financial support is inconsistent and often used as a management carrot. D.S.S. continues to successfully provide income support to over 16 year olds through it's youth service units.



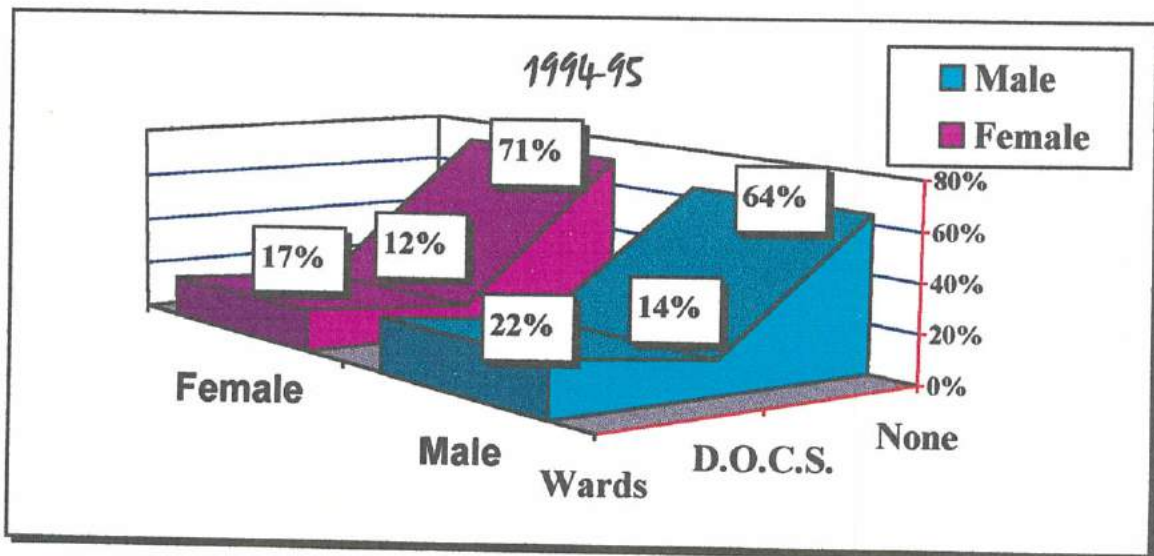
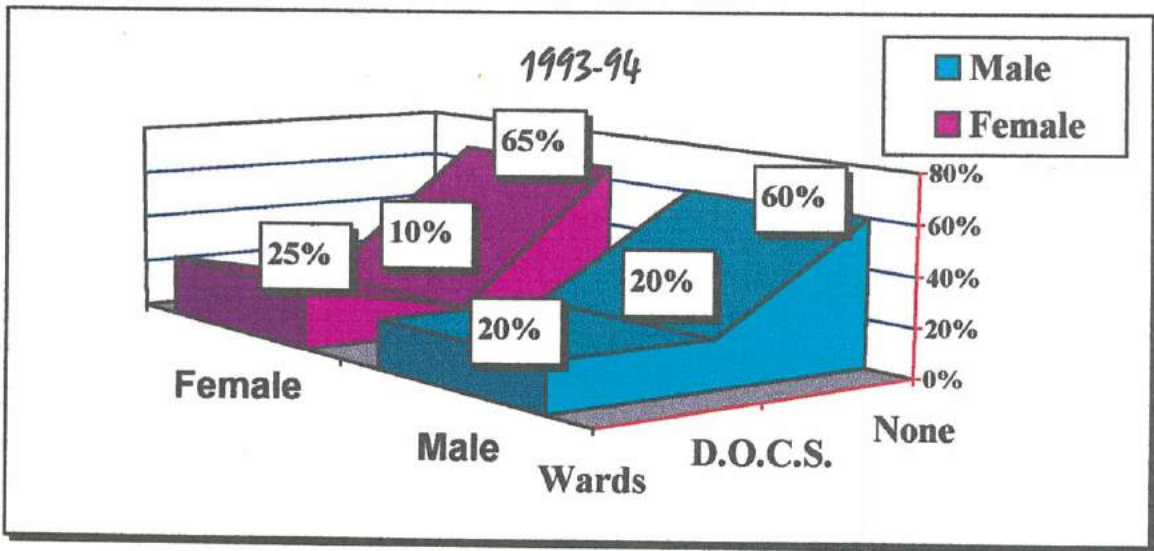
10. Court Imposed Penalties

Our client group continue to exhibit less criminality but for those who have faced the courts supervision orders and fines remain the preferred method of dealing with convictions. The imposition of fines continues to be problematic as clients do not have access to funds consequently much time is expended applying to the courts seeking to change fines into Community Service Orders.



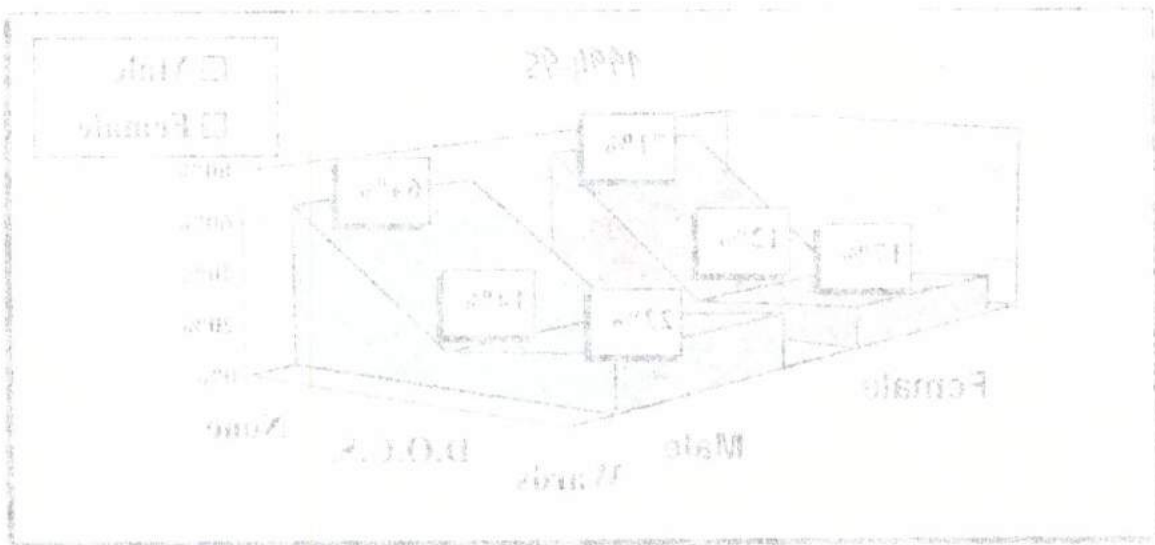
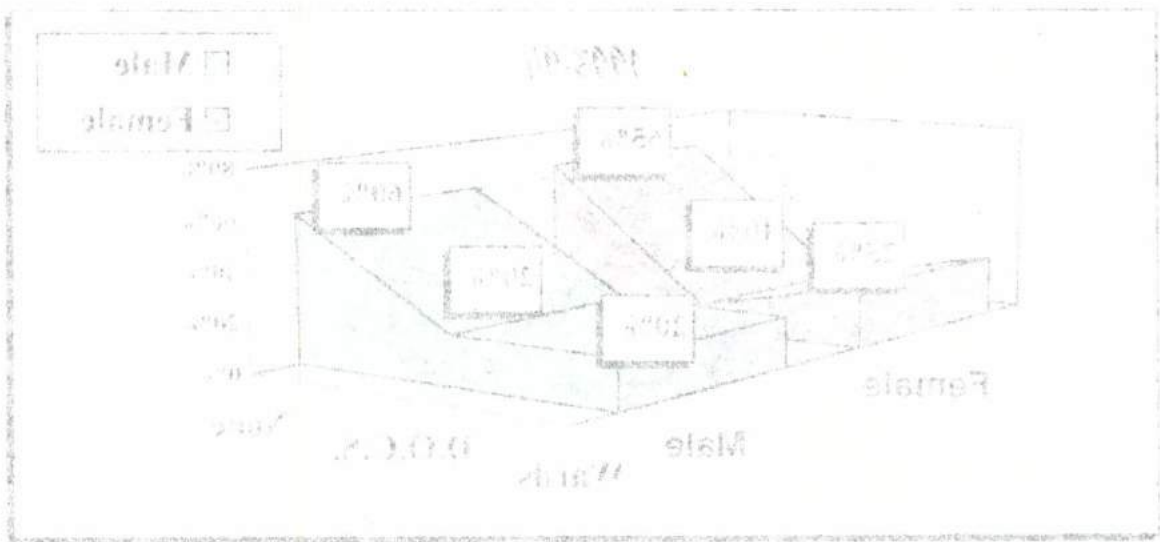
11. State Wards

The past year has seen an increase from 26% to 39% of our clients being wards of the State or in the care of the Director General. This reinforces the previously stated contentions that this State has few placement options for young people in their care. There has been a reduction in the number of young people receiving lower level of support from the Government while the majority of residents have not had contact with the Department at all.



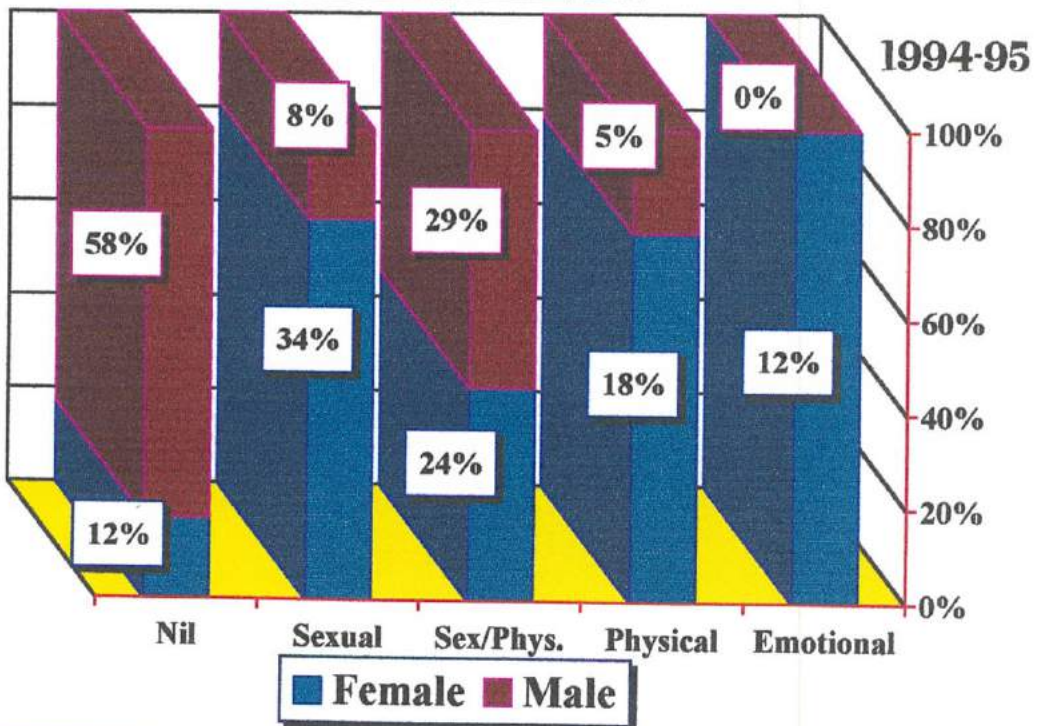
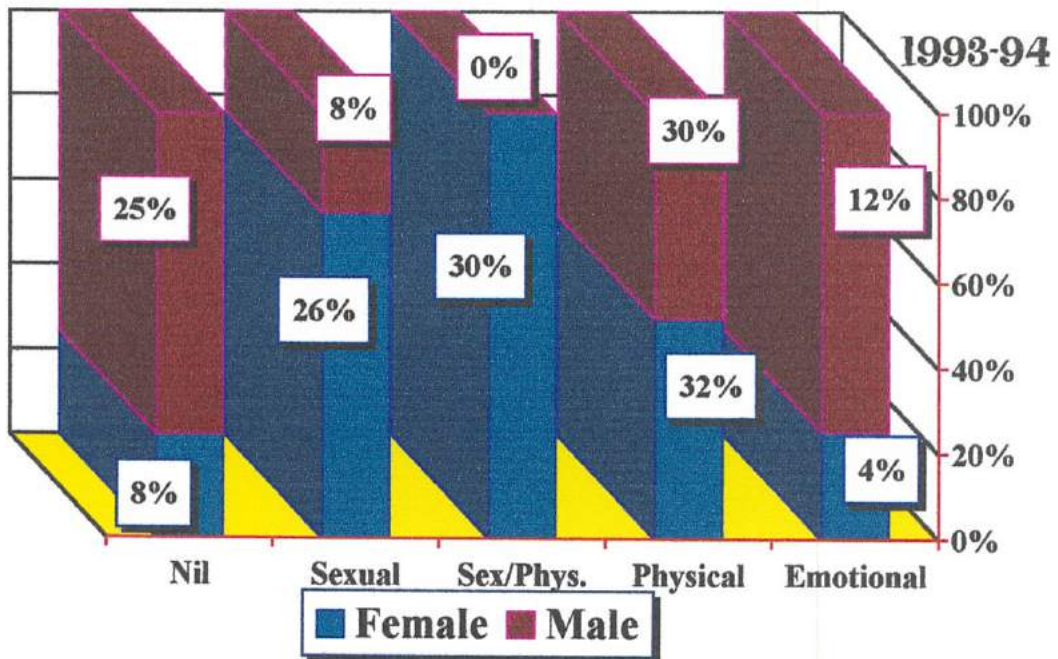
11. State Work

The past year has seen an increase from 1977 to 1978 of our clients being aware of the state or in the care of the Director General. This reinforces the previously stated contention that the state has been generous in providing options for young people in their care. There has been a reduction in the number of young people receiving lower level of support from the Government while the majority of residents have not had contact with the Department at all.



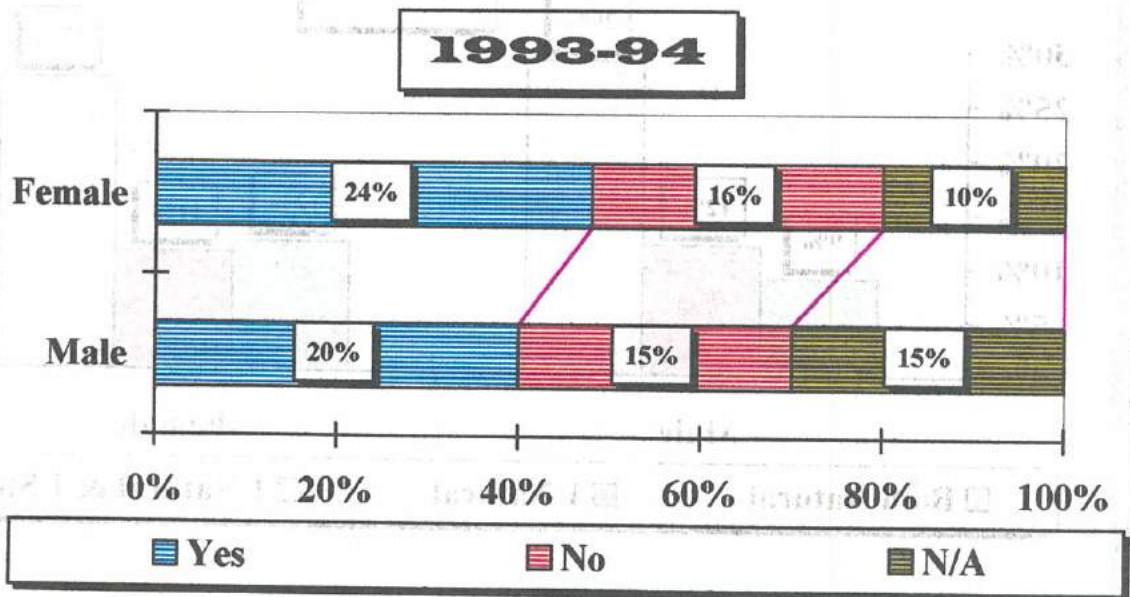
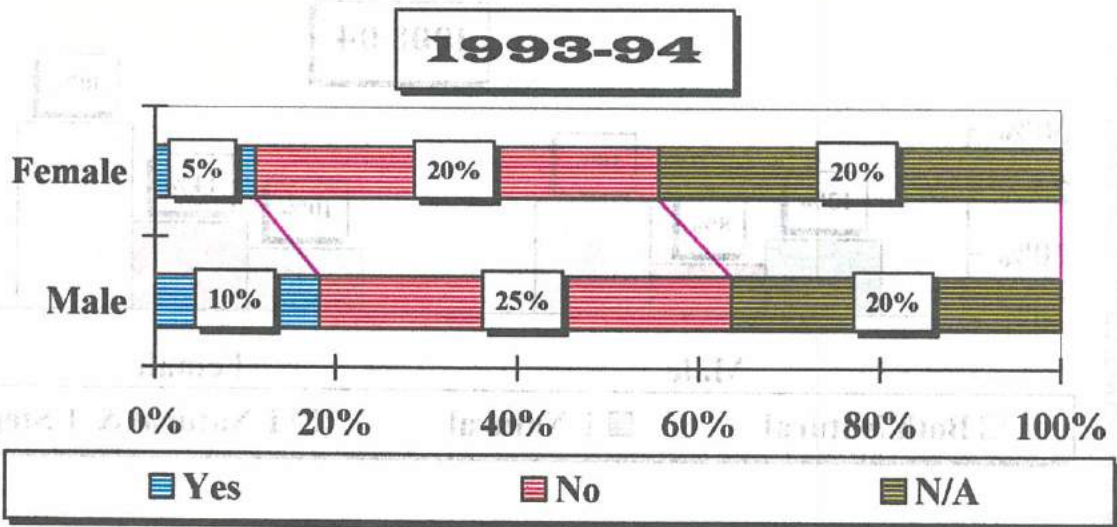
12. Incidents of Violence

A fairly consistent proportion of residents report assaults however a change has occurred in the number of males reporting sexual assault. This has led to us seeking out support services geared to deal with males.



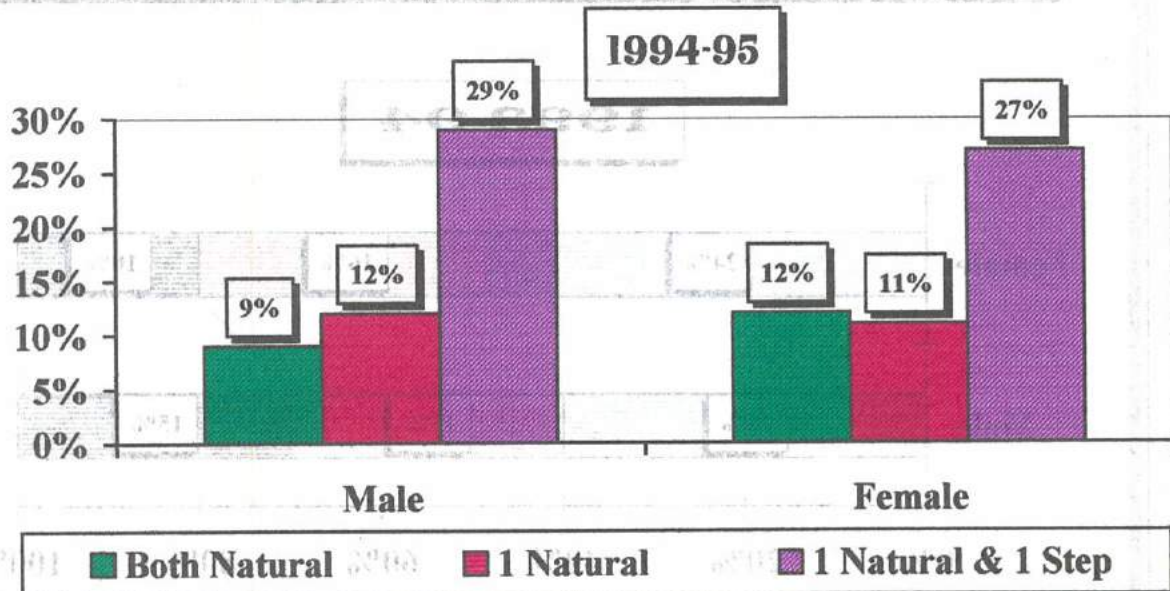
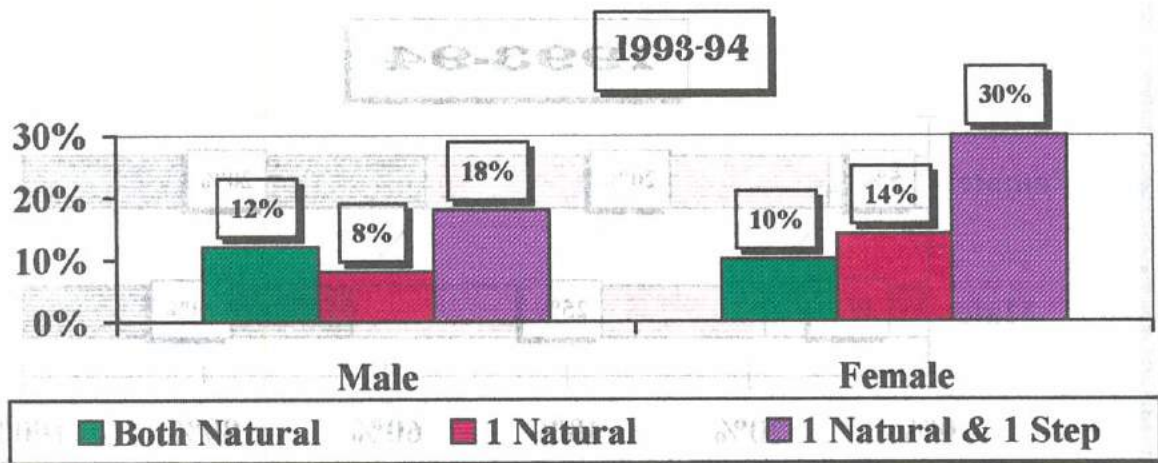
13. Police, D.O.C.S. Involvement (assaults)

The number of residents who have had involvement with the police and/or the Department of Community Services as the result of assault has increased proportionally with the number of State Wards who have been accommodated. The indication is that the assault background of residents is increasing in severity and subsequently leading to the need of greater support for these young people.



14. Family Structure

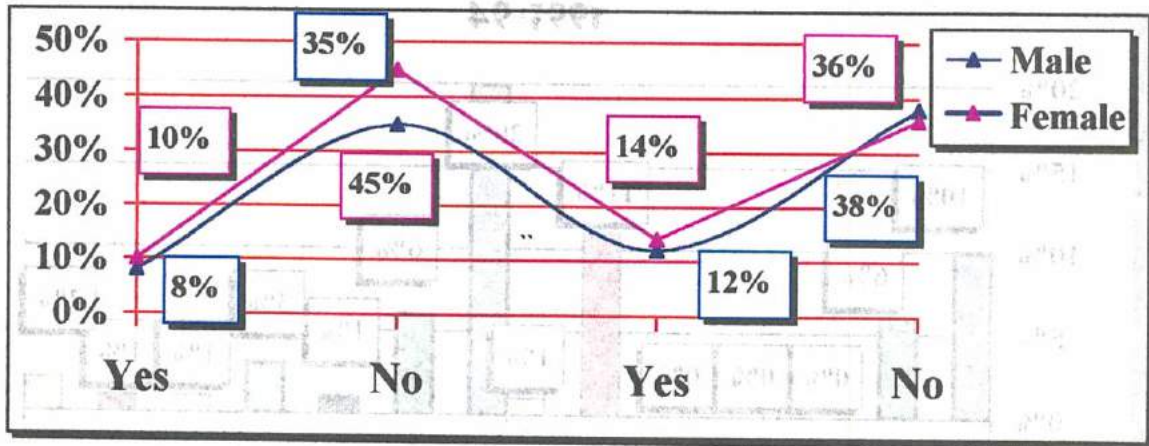
The numbers of young people coming from families where both natural parents are living together continues to decline, and the number of young people from families that include step parents have increased. This leaves me conclude that young people are more often causalities of new parental relationships, these families warrant additional family support.



15. Suicide Attempts

Suicide attempts by males have increased beyond previous levels and generally the number of suicide attempts have increased amongst our residents. This is consistent with the trends that are recognised within the general community and also the higher need population that we are accommodating at Caretaker's Cottage.

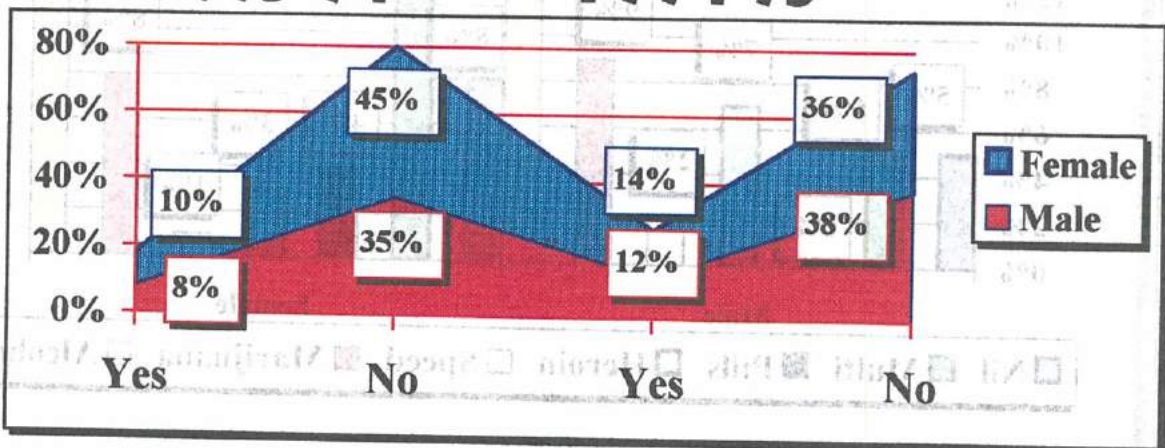
1993-94 **1994-95**



16. Overdoses Requiring Hospitalisation

Most young people accommodated at Caretaker's in the past year have been hospitalised due to an overdose compared to any previous year. A high proportion of our clients are regularly using hard drugs

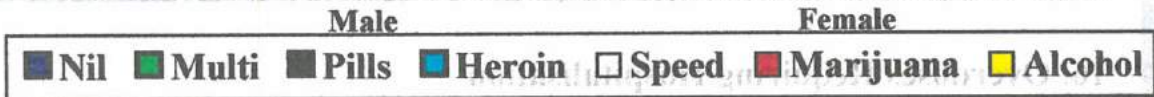
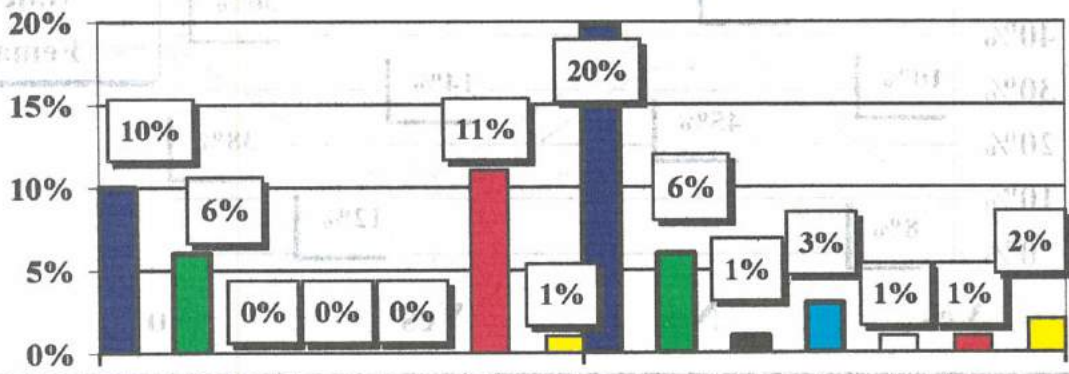
1993-94 **1994-95**



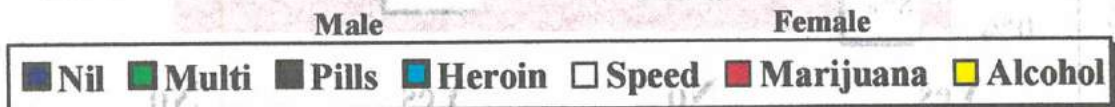
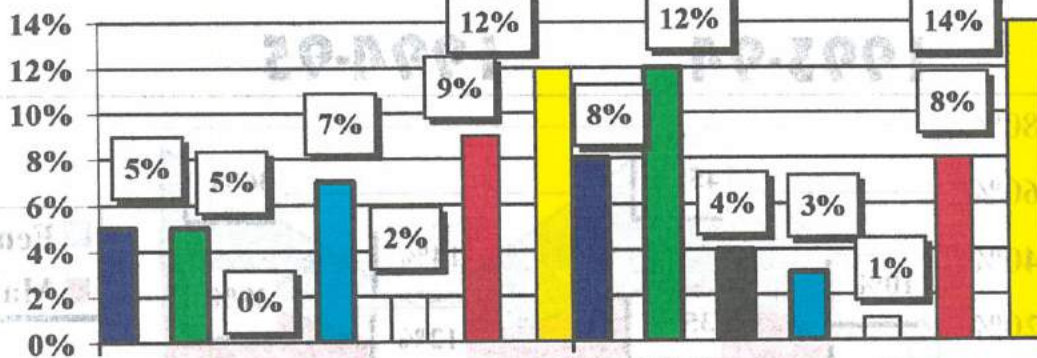
17. Drug of Choice

A marked increase in the number of Heroin using residents has been noted while a lower portion of residents claim not to use drugs of any kind. Marijuana and Alcohol use continue to be the dominant drugs of choice due mainly to accessibility.

1993-94



1994-95

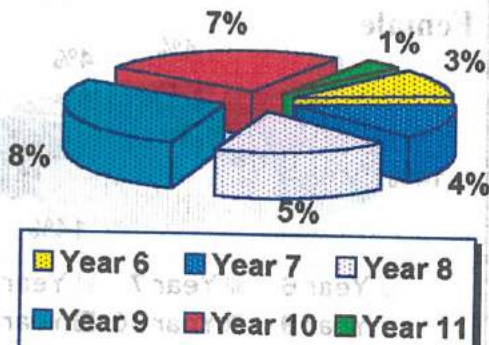


18. Education

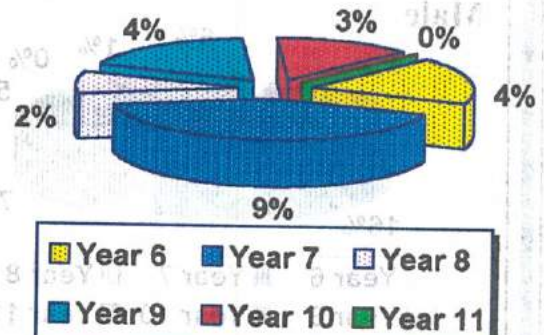
The education level of our residents is improving the high proportion having achieved year nine and ten than in previous years. It is reassuring to know that this year none of our residents had failed to complete year six and a number who had only completed year seven had declined dramatically.

1993-94

Female

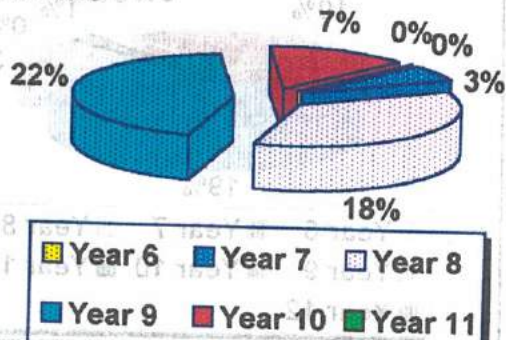


Male

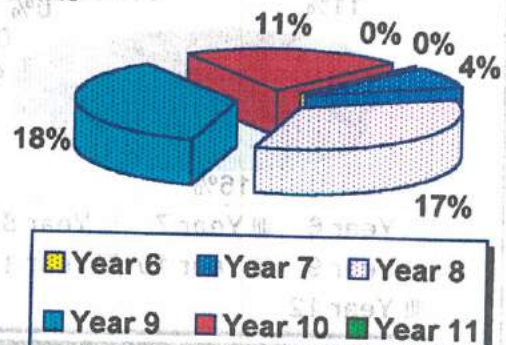


1994-95

Female



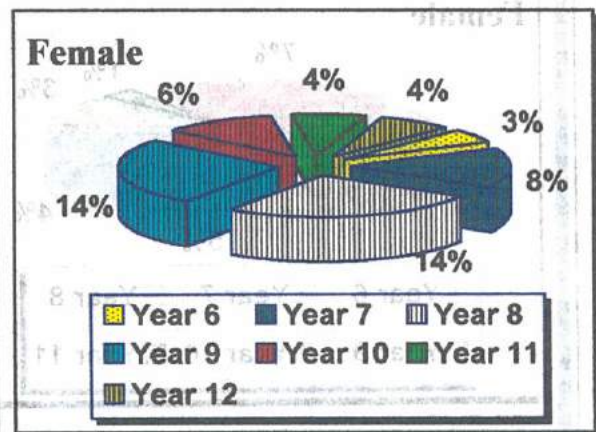
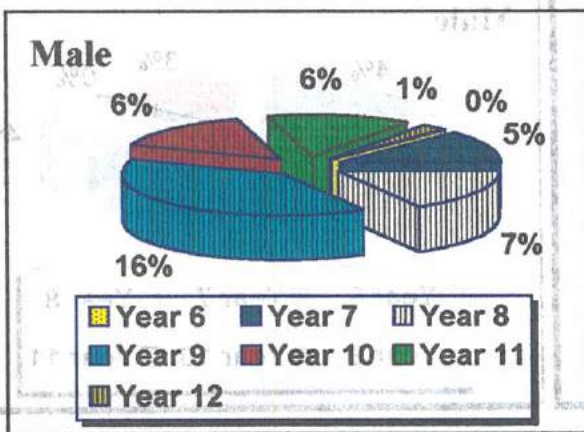
Male



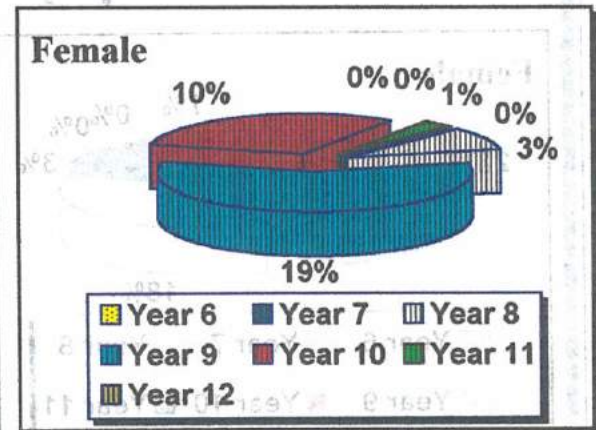
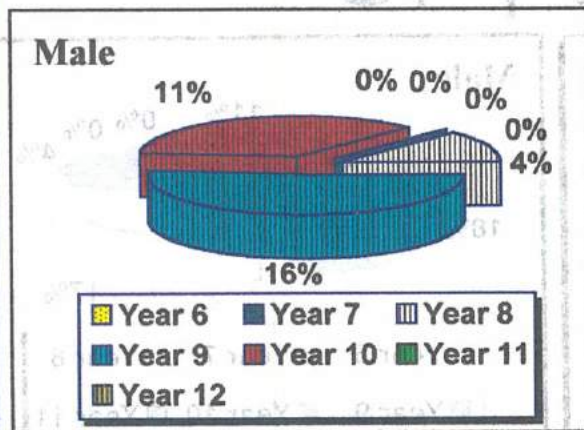
19. Currently Enroled

This year 64 % of residents are enroled at school although only seven percent are Austudy/Abstudy recipients. East Sydney High remains the easiest point of access to education as the local High School system that gives principals the prerogative to pick and choose who will be enroled in their school. Our residents are rarely accepted.

1993-94

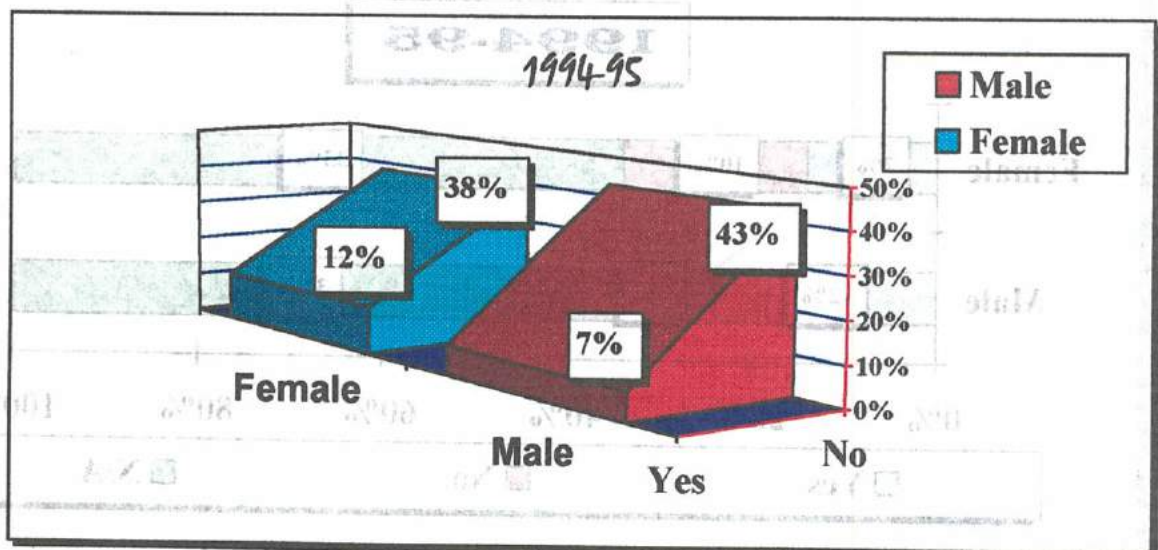
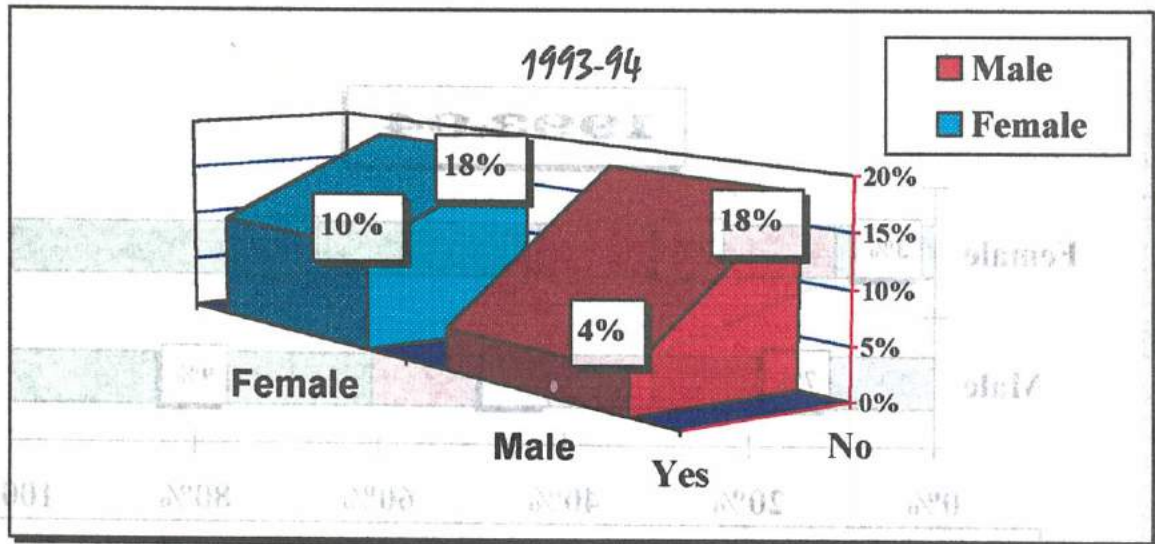


1994-95



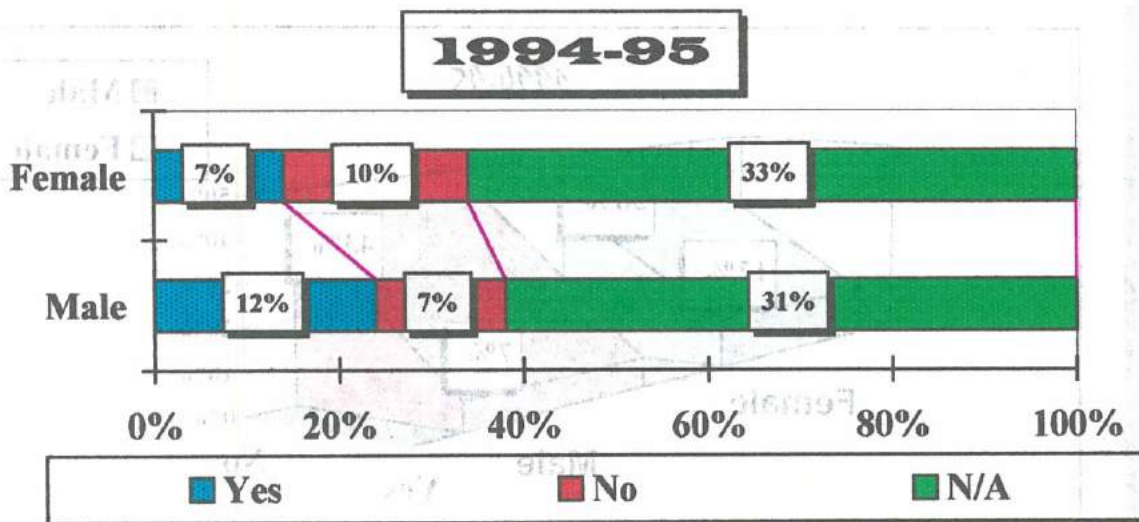
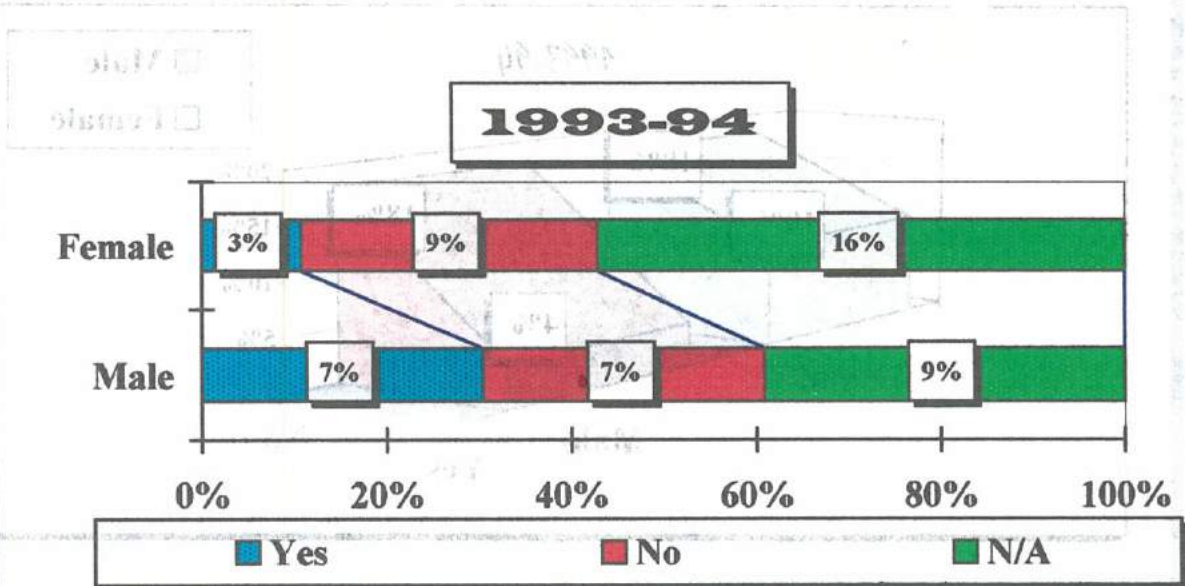
20. Desire to Resume Schooling

Numbers of young people wanting to return to school remain low as a high proportion of residents are already enrolled.



21. Previous Employment

The numbers who have previous employment has increased but the majority of these positions tend to be easily accessible work such as casual positions at Mc Donalds's. Generally though the participation rate remains low due to a high number of school attenders residing at Caretaker's Cottage.

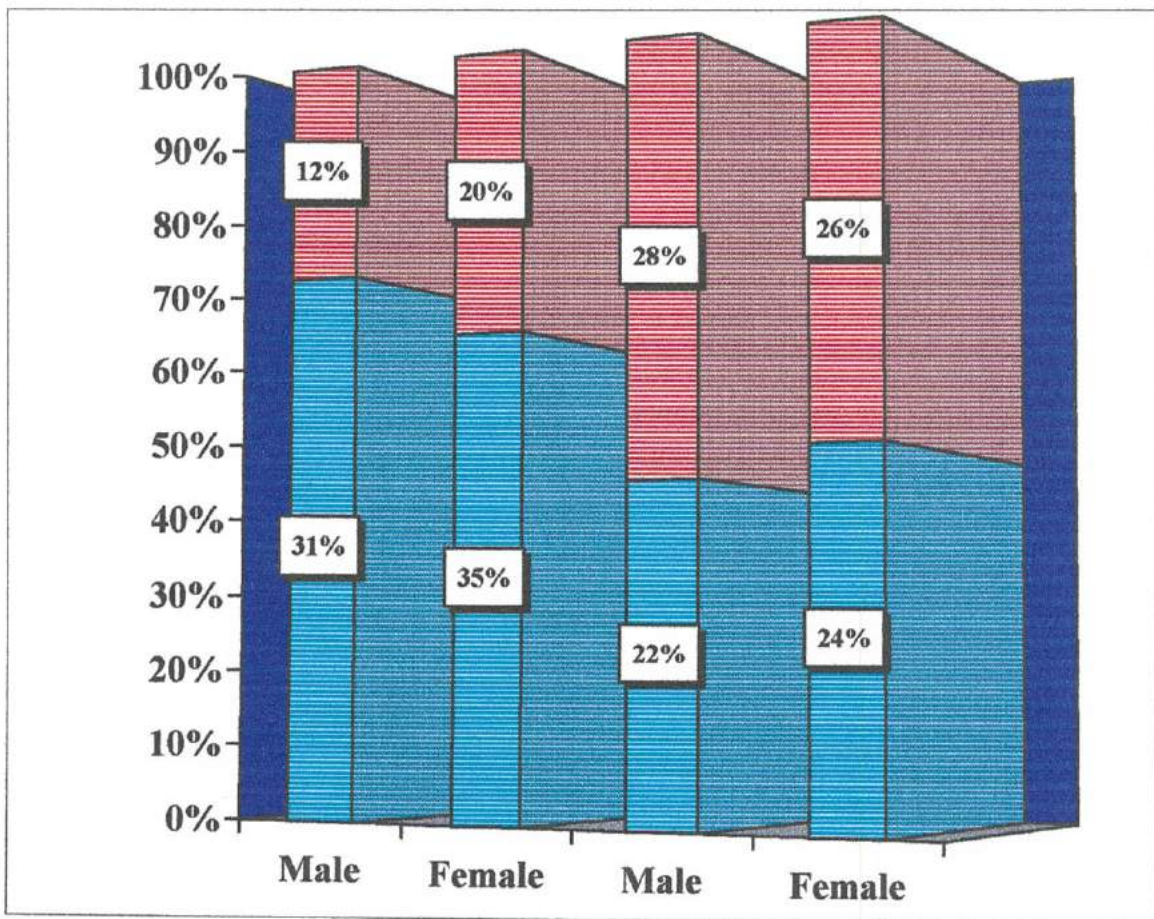


22. Completed Employment Training

The overall number of young people having completed employment training has declined due to the high level of school attenders however it is worth noting that the number of current schoolattenders have also completed employment training and opted to return to school rather than join the workforce.

1993-94

1994-95



■ Yes

■ No

22. Completed Employment Training

The overall number of young people having completed employment training has declined due to the high level of school attainment, however it is worth noting that the number of current school-leavers have also completed employment training and opted to return to school rather than join the workforce.

