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Date: 9 April 2010 11:10:52 AM
To: letters@manlydaily.com.au
Cc: "Brenton Cherry" <cherryb@cumberlandnewspapers.com.au>
Subject: Midnight basketball
Reply-To: vdeluca@hn.ozemail.com.au

I refer to the article Proposal to save Midnight Basketball (MD 9 April 2010) and would like to congratulate Cr Christina Kirsch and Youth Reach for their efforts to help our young people on the northern beaches.

It is well known that on the northern beaches we have serious problems with binge drinking, drug abuse and anti social behaviour amongst young people. The recent spike in crime in the Brookvale area with graffiti and the local Chemist being broken into three times is also evidence that we need positive programs to divert kids into worthwhile programs.

What is most alarming is recent figures released last week by the Australian Bureau of Statistics which reveal NSW recorded the highest rates of suicides between 1999 to 2008, in comparison to all other states and territories. In the 1990s the northern beaches had one of the highest rates of youth suicide in the Nation.

As President of Curl Curl Youth & Community Centre for over a decade, I know that this is an excellent facility that can accommodate Mid night basketball and help our young people.

We as a Council have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people in our community but also encourage and inspire our youth. Christina Kirsch and Youth Reach should be applauded for their efforts.

Vincent De Luca OAM
Warringah Councillor