

## Trippin - a website for Taranaki youth

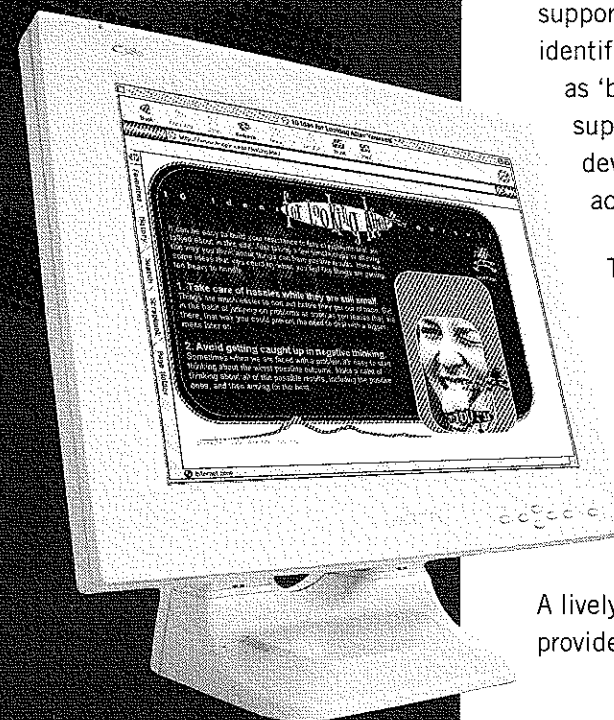
*Trippin is for youth, by youth in style as well as content, providing information about a range of common adolescent concerns, self-help ideas and self referral options, and is highly rated by Netguide.*

'Trippin' was developed by Taranaki Health, and is managed by the Youth Mental Health Coordinator based as part of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Young people in the Taranaki area are its primary audience, but many from beyond the region and New Zealand make contact with it

It was set up to try to get young people with mental health difficulties to contact professionals, and to encourage them to seek help early. While initiated and supported by the health service, the site is not clearly identified with officialdom to limit turn-off and rejection as 'boring'. The informality of language and style is supported by thoroughly professional management, development and support to ensure it delivers accurate and up-to-date information.

To get the right "look" and words, the coordinator approached a young and dynamic design company, and formed a youth advisory group to over see and direct the sites development. Mental health professionals wrote the original text and the young people re-worked it into youth-friendly language. Frame design makes a point of no scrolling, so that every page can be seen in full on a computer screen.

A lively alien-type figure features throughout and provides both personal imagery and continuity.



**Website** [www.trippin.co.nz](http://www.trippin.co.nz)  
**Contact** Craig McKenzie  
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**Email** [craig.mckenzie@thcl.co.nz](mailto:craig.mckenzie@thcl.co.nz)

Marketing to the target audience has been important. A big site launch event generated local media publicity, and T-shirts and the NetGuide award increased awareness. The name itself appeals to the young people the site wants to attract

The site has been funded as a pilot by the HFA and cost \$10,000 to develop, promote and launch. \$3500 per year has been set aside for annual upgrades and maintenance.

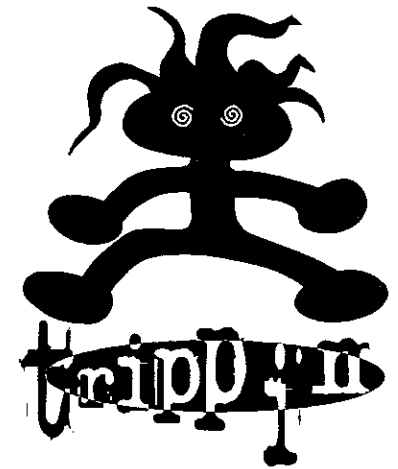
#### Most requested problem definition pages:

1. Depression
2. Sex and Sexual Health
3. Drugs
4. Sexuality
5. Suicide
6. Alcohol
7. Other
8. Relationship Hassles
9. Psychosis (losing touch with reality)

#### Most requested pages about helping services:

1. School Guidance Counsellors
2. Friends and Family
3. Public Health Nurse
4. GP
5. CAMHS
6. Youthline

Formal evaluation of the site is currently being completed. Hit analysis shows 2200 users per month on average since the site was launched. About a third of users are from New Zealand, 60 percent from the USA and the remaining users are from other countries around the world. It is too early to know whether any of the 22 services listed on the site are showing any change in youth contacts but some do have anecdotal evidence from new clients that they found out about them from Trippin. Half of the feedback from the "email us" request comes from other organisations, and half from site visitors.



The only thing the originator would do differently if starting over, would be ensure that extra funds were put aside for ongoing maintenance and marketing of the site. There is clear evidence of increased New Zealand based hit rates as a result of site marketing.

#### Key Success Factors

- Using youth advisers and 'youth-culture' professionals and to get the right look and style.
- Keeping all relevant information on a single screen.
- Choosing a name which has currency in the youth culture and appeals to young people who may have motives other than seeking health information.

*"It really helped me to think about life and how you shouldn't get too stressed over small things. Thanks for giving me information on where to turn to when I'm feeling depressed." (Male High School Student)*