

Hi all, here's an article for the girls common room pinboard, this is our first article

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Tom McLeod - Wang Gang



LEADING THE WAY: Students (from left) Tom McLeod, Jeremy Piper, Sarah Wallis, Madi Muir, Dani Adams and Bridget Lorenz are tackling youth homelessness.

PHOTO: Cheryl Browne

Teens raising awareness of youth homelessness

By **TRISH GALLAGHER**

SIX high school students who hate the thought of people their age being homeless have tackled the problem head on.

In their nine-week stay at the School for Student Leadership, formerly called the Alpine School, the year nine students from Wangaratta High School took on teenage homelessness as their special project.

Jeremy Piper, Tom McLeod, Madi Muir, Sarah Wallis, Bridget

Lorenz and Dani Adams worked with NESAY - North East Support and Action for Youth - to get statistics and information.

"The statistics were really shocking," Sarah said.

"One in 10 youths are likely to experience homelessness at some point in their lives.

"The percentage of homelessness in Wangaratta is higher than in Melbourne, but this is not reflected in funding for NESAY."

The group said homelessness in Wangaratta wasn't highly vis-

ible because it didn't necessarily mean sleeping on the street.

"Couch surfing is the main form of homelessness," Madi said.

"A lot of this is caused by family breakdown, and it can be lack of money."

Often the homeless couch surfers don't let people know what's going on, the group discovered.

With no emergency accommodation in Wangaratta and not a lot available in Albury-Wodonga, the

young leaders would have liked to raise money for this purpose.

They figured they couldn't raise money for such a building but they could raise awareness - speaking at four Wangaratta primary schools and their own school.

Primary schools are being asked to donate non-perishable food items to NESAY and students have organised a gold coin donation casual day at the high school on August 7 to further their cause.