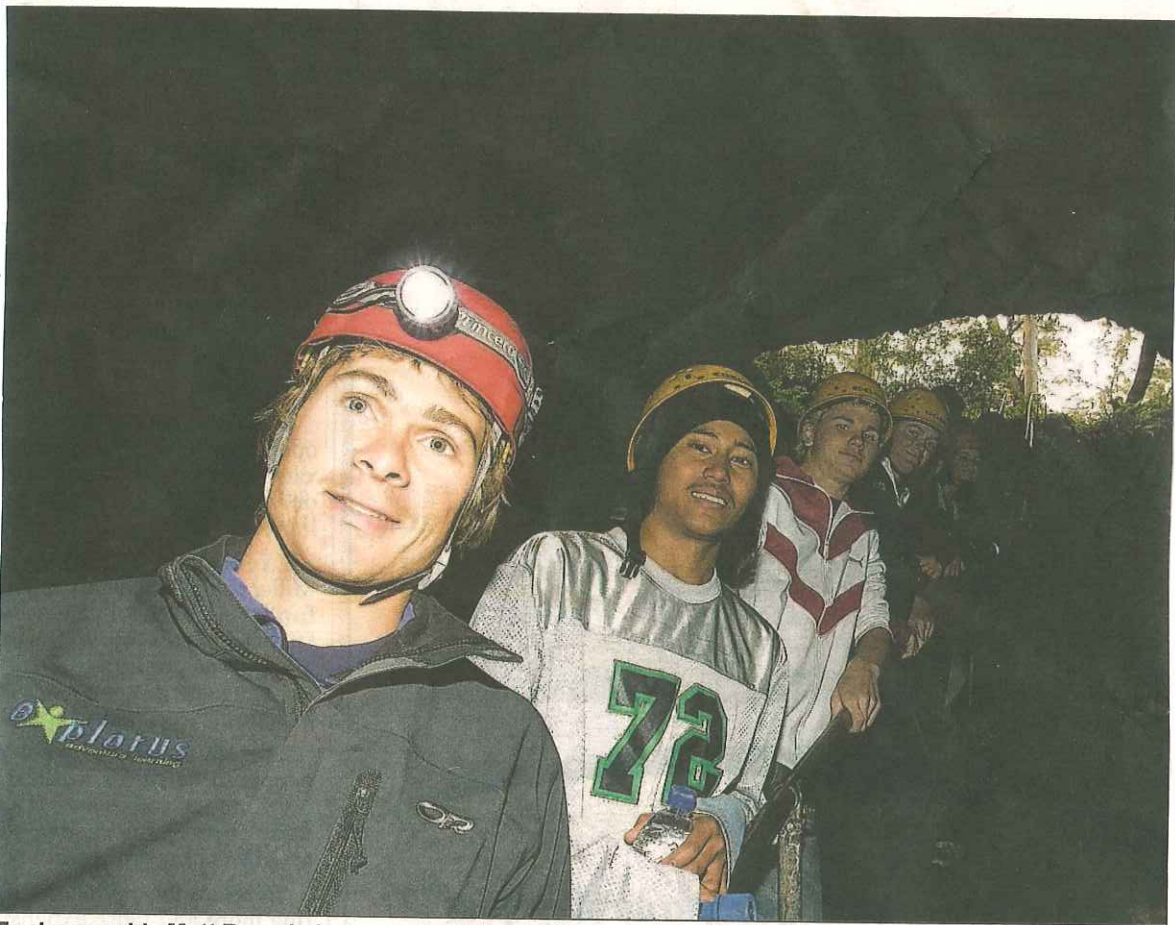


## NEWS



Explorus guide Matt Berry led a team of youths participating in the Take the Lead program, including Tang Phrommak and Dion Schilmann down Giants Cave. PICTURE: DEREK POOL

## Taking the lead around the region

LEADERS of the future are caving, climbing ropes and even gardening with a new Busselton-based self-esteem program.

The Warren Blackwood Education Office has developed Taking The Lead as a project for young people who have left school at 16 without a clear plan.

In 2008, the Government raised the school leaving age to 17 so that

16 to 17-year-olds could no longer do nothing and must do a Department of Training-approved activity.

Youth worker Dee Shade has created the program to bring challenging activities to the teenagers in a supportive environment. In the past two weeks, a group of the young people who no longer attend school have started the journey

towards a Certificate 1 in Leadership.

On Tuesday they travelled to Karridale to do a high ropes course before going caving at Giants Cave. In the future they will also develop a garden plot at the new Busselton Community Garden and will be looking for sponsors to raise money for the garden with a sponsored walk on the Munda Biddi Trail.