

Editorial

Every Child Counts

The Government's new schooling strategy was launched on July 28 2005. Amongst other laudable goals is the overall goal of all students achieving their potential.

A healthy school food environment is an essential component in enabling students to achieve their potential. The Schooling Strategy has a big emphasis on evidence-based practice and includes a recommendation that Government use evidence to develop national policies. It is completely at odds with the evidence, not to mention common sense, to teach healthy eating in an environment that does not support or promote it.

The Obesity Action Coalition has recently commissioned a review of the evidence linking school nutrition policies and programmes, what children eat and their school performance. The findings are clear, nutrition policies and programmes combining a focus on the school food environment and teaching healthy eating can and do have a positive impact on what children eat. In turn, what children eat has an impact on school attendance, school behaviour and long-term learning outcomes.

So why is something as simple as a national school food policy so difficult to sell? Perhaps because selling the policy conflicts with what is currently being sold and promoted in schools. In a recent study by the University of Otago Richards and Darling found that 58% of all products sold in primary schools and 62% by secondary schools were high in sugar and fat. Parents clearly have a role in teaching and modelling healthy eating, but how much of this is undermined by the school environment?

Every child has the right to a healthy school environment. One that supports what it teaches. The evidence linking what children eat to how they perform is there, the evidence linking school nutrition policies to what children eat is there. How much more evidence does the Government need to create a national school nutrition policy?

Carolyn Watts

Ministry of Education. 2005. *Making a Bigger Difference for all Students: Schooling Strategy 2005–2010*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

Richards R, Darling H. and Reeder AI. 2004. Current research about sponsorship and fundraising in New Zealand schools. *Health Promoting Schools, Otago, Murihiku and Wakatipu*, Public Health South, August.



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Diabetes
New Zealand



NEW ZEALAND
NUTRITION
FOUNDATION



CHRISTINA'S CORNER



Kiaora,

Laurie Wharemate has recently been elected as chairperson of ANA. Many of you will know Laurie through her work as manager of Nutrition and Physical Activity team at Te Hotu Manawa Maori. Laurie is currently on maternity leave, and so we are very lucky to have Carolyn Watts, remain in a 'caretaker' role as immediate past chairperson until Laurie is ready to take on the role.

In this newsletter, we have attempted to profile some of the nutrition and physical activity networking groups around the country. This is not a complete list and we are developing this section on our website. So if you have a networking group in your area please let us know what you are doing. We have profiled the groups to show the benefits of working together towards key objectives, and to outline ways in which people have gone about this successfully. It's not as easy as you think!

Many of you will remember the presentations by Associate Professor John Coveney at the National Conference in May. I recently caught up with John at a short course on Food Inequalities in Adelaide. We heard from Mark Winne from New Mexico, USA, who talked about 'Food Policy Councils' as a way of bringing together key players to address food policy issues within the community. What was really interesting for me was the food policy councils included representatives from local farmers and fruit and vegetable growers, and actively encouraged local consumption of local food. Something to think about with the oil crisis!

Hope you all get out to your local parks to see the spring daffodils.

Noho ora mai, nā
Christina

WEBSITES TO CHECK OUT:

www.foodsecurity.org

Community food security is defined as *'a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound diet through an economically and environmentally sustainable food system that promotes community self-reliance and social justice'*.



So while it is about making healthy food accessible to all including those on low-incomes, it also considers the wider food system and how this impacts on health. Policies and programmes to deal with community food security usually link with local farmers and consumers, local councils and public health units and local food retailers. For more information about community food security check out www.foodsecurity.org. This is the website of the Community Food Security Coalition in North America. It has an extensive range of resources, publications, and programme information about this area.

Community Gardening Resource Kit

This site has lots of information and resources on how to start a community garden. Available online and printed. For more information check out http://www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening/



Healthy Eating Healthy Action

A guide to nutrition and physical activity networks around the country

'Ehara tāku toa i te toa takitahi, Engari he toa takitini kē',
My strength is not mine alone, it is the strength of many.

The Ministry of Health's nutrition and physical activity strategy, Healthy Eating Healthy Action encourages greater cooperation among groups to work together in order to achieve its objectives. In the following article, we have profiled some of networking groups around New Zealand, and summarised their achievements as a group. For more detailed information on each group check out the 'Networking' section of our website www.ana.org.nz. There are no doubt some networking groups that we have missed in this article so please contact us, and we can add your groups story to this section of the website. Networking is not easy, so we have also included a few guidelines on 'how to network' based on the experiences of the groups we have profiled.



PANINI (Physical Activity and Nutrition Interagency Network) Waikato Region

- Established: 2003
- Members include: Core group: Non Government Organisations including the National Heart Foundation and the Cancer Society, Sport Waikato, Waikato District Health Board, Iwi providers, and Primary Health Organisations. Wider membership includes Hamilton City Council, Environment Waikato transport and urban planners, Private Practice Dietitians and Academics involved in Waikato District Health Board research projects Te Wai o Rona Diabetes Prevention and the Energise Project.
- Vision "Collective voice, co-ordinated approach, consistent messages, collaborative work"
- Contact: Sue Milburn Milburns@wdhb.govt.nz or Jennie Dalton Daltonj@wdhb.govt.nz

Achievements / Highlights

- Submissions to include nutrition and physical activity the priority areas on the Waikato District Health Board annual plan.
- Putting nutrition and physical activity onto other agency agendas. This includes:
 - Seminars on Obesity and the Built Environment and the Draft Urban Design Protocol jointly organised with Environment Waikato.
 - Submissions made on the Ministry of Transport Walking and Cycling Strategy and the SPARC funded Waikato Regional Physical Activity Plan.
 - PANINI members involved in raising public health issues in the Waikato Regional Land Transport Strategy.
 - Development of the Waikato Regional Nutrition Strategy to map nutrition programmes within the Waikato to identify gaps, link with the Regional Physical Activity Plan and feed into the Regional HEHA Strategy. The National Heart Foundation will fund this strategy in the next financial year.
 - "Future Solutions Now" planned in conjunction with Agencies for Nutrition Action and SPARC. A two-day event to update the Midland regions workforce in childhood nutrition, physical activity and obesity. Participants included representatives from territorial authorities, health, regional authorities representing organisations that influence the infrastructure and environment affecting nutrition and physical activity.

Benefits of working together

- A major benefit of PANINI has been the sharing of information and expertise that has taken place, and collectively we have achieved things we couldn't have if we'd been working alone.
- A planning day held this year looked at involving all participants within the network. The terms of reference, the membership list and categories of membership were reviewed. Established was the independence of PANINI to advocate on nutrition and physical issues, to disseminate accurate scientific researched information, as well as assisting in the implementation of Healthy Eating Healthy Action within the region.
- Our focus this year is on growing the network to facilitate the development of the Regional HEHA plan. Specifically we want to work more closely with our Iwi and Pacific partners and with the school sector.

Top Tips

"Good things take time! It doesn't happen overnight but having good relationships and networks are essential to meet the Healthy Eating Healthy Action Oranga Kai Oranga Pumau goals: Improve nutrition, Increase physical activity, Reduce obesity".





PANN Physical Activity and Nutrition Network Rotorua

- Established: 2002
- Members: Lakes District Health Board, Sport Bay of Plenty, Sports Trust, Health Rotorua PHO, Public Health Directorate, Rotorua District Council, Toi te Ora Public Health, National Heart Foundation, Cancer Society, YWCA, Te Papa Takaro o Te Arawa, Te Kahui Hauora, Ministry of Health, Diabetes Educators, Green Prescription, He Korowai Aroha, Golds Gym, Parkinsons Society
- Vision: "Active Options for All" and Mission Statement: "Working collaboratively and at all levels to achieve health gains for the Rotorua community" and "Advocate, Enable, Mediate"
- Contact: *Medadane Kipa*
Email: medadane.kipa@bopdhb.govt.nz

Achievements /Highlights

- Advocacy and support (including submissions, presentations, conferences, teacher trainees etc),
- Projects in Schools, Early childhood centres & Kohanga
- Resource information & distribution
- Key point of contact for Nutrition & Physical Activity in Rotorua

Benefits of working together

- able to support and promote each others mahi
- increased awareness of what other organisations offer
- one stop shop for community to know where to access help with Physical activity and Nutrition
- support for each other, making the most of the skills with in the group
- It's great to have support from others working in the same area especially if you work in a small organisation.



Members of PANN.

Top tips

- Ensure coordinator is identified so Physical Activity & Nutrition members know who to contact and the community know where to go in the first instance.
- Establish agreed Terms of Reference
- Keep the community informed of the group at every opportunity



Tairāwhiti HE-HA Group – Gisborne and the East Coast

- Established: November 2004
- Members: Public Health Unit, Heart Foundation, Cancer Society, Sports Trust, Plunket, Turanga Health, Ngati Porou Hauora, Whangai U (Tairāwhiti Breastfeeding Collective), Local District Councilors, YMCA, Maori Women's Welfare League, Teachers, Tuhono Whānau (Local Family Start)
- Contact: Nicki Mathieson Email Nicki.Mathieson@tdh.org.nz

Highlights

Improved networking and communications between groups working in the Nutrition and Physical Activity Area

Achievements

- Greater sharing of information and awareness about who is doing what, what's happening in the area as far as training, programmes and events are concerned.
- Database developed of who does what in the Nutrition & Physical Activity area.
- Bi-monthly electronic newsletter promotes future Nutrition & Physical Activity events and news in Tairāwhiti, and useful websites.
- Meetings provide an opportunity for the group to look at issues collectively and have their say.

Benefits

- Groups have benefited by being "in the know", acknowledgement of the work being done, and supporting one another.

Top Tips

Think broadly and laterally. There are a wide range of people who can contribute to ensuring the HE HA strategy is effective.

Look at the purpose of your group – is it at a strategic planning, level, operational level, what strategies are in place to measure the effectiveness of the group?



TANGO Tauranga Activity and Nutrition Group – Western Bay of Plenty

- Established: 2004
- Members; District Health Board, Public Health Unit, Sports Trusts, Personal Trainers/Subcontract holders, WINZ, Maori Development Organisation, Primary Health Organisation, Ministry of Health, Polytechnic, Community Sport Organisations, Hauora, Council, Mental Health Workers, Public Health Nurse, Cancer Society, Heart Foundation, Workbridge, Three local Iwi, Age Concern, Clinical Dietitians
- Contact: Kelly Bullen kelly.bullen@bopdhb.govt.nz

Achievements/Highlights

- being able to support individual providers who work in isolation
- provides a forum for sharing information and projects
- working collaboratively on projects
- being able to have input into the long-term council community plan for the Tauranga City Council and working with council staff
- clarifying the different roles and functions of the different organisations helping to prevent duplication
- sharing research from different sectors
- dealing with the whole person, incorporating nutrition and activity thus developing more comprehensive programmes

Benefits of working together – for group members

- Have been able to embrace and support small providers
- networking
- helped with planning and focus
- helped to target specific priorities – where they know there are gaps

Benefits of working together – to community

- continuity of services
- consistent messages
- point of contact
- programmes are more inclusive and specific to individual needs
- community has been encouraged to take lead roles in projects
- given the community a forum to speak and to advocate for their individual needs

Top Tips

Take time to set a solid foundation: develop relationships, set Terms of Reference early, have shared responsibilities so one organisation isn't leading and pushing their own agenda, take broad perspective into establishing the make up of the group.

CITY ON ITS FEET

Tauranga City Council has received a three-year \$430,000 investment from SPARC. 'City on its Feet' is a project that will put in place community interventions to increase physical activity through walking. It is a partnership between Tauranga City Council, ACC, Bay of Plenty District Health Board, Sport Bay of Plenty and SPARC.



Over the next three years two Walking Coordinators will be appointed to work with community volunteers and local agencies to promote and coordinate active safe lifestyles with a walking focus throughout Tauranga. Initially, the project will be looking to support older adults and mothers with young children in becoming more active through walking. Further target groups will be identified as the project progresses. The programme will support the Green Prescription programme by connecting patients to accessible walking groups.

The programme offers a great opportunity for Tauranga people to become active through walking while increasing social cohesion. It is a great initiative which also showcases the ability of partners working together towards common goals.

For further information about 'City on its Feet' please contact Campbell Larking, Recreation Planner, Tauranga City Council, on (07) 577 7257.



Whanganui Wellbeing – Wanganui

- Established May 2002
- Members: Public Health, Sport and Recreation Wanganui, Wanganui UCOL, Wanganui District Council, Whanganui Regional Primary Health Organisation, Wanganui Cancer Society, Wanganui Heart Foundation, Te Oranganui Iwi Health Authority, Wanganui YMCA, District Health Board
- Working together to create supportive environments for regular physical activity and healthy food choices, by effectively utilising collective and individual resources – focus areas obesity and diabetes prevention.
- Contact Anne Kauika annk@ghw.co.nz

Achievements and highlights

Collaborative project – Te Kahui Whai Ora (healthy lifestyle programme) – a 3-year pilot programme funded by the Ministry of Health. Programme has four main components:

1. Afterschool programme for children and whānau – increase skills and knowledge around nutrition and physical activity.
 2. Holiday camp – where children and whānau come together to put into practice the things they have learnt and share concerns and issues.
 3. Whānau support network (trial stage at present) – to support children and whānau who are or have already participated in afterschool programme (talks, guest speakers, weekend get togethers, budgeting advice, group gardening, have-a-go activities etc)
 4. Te Kahui Whai Ora community committee (in its infant stages at present) – a committee of community members and programme participants set up to sustain programme at end of pilot in December 2006.
- Future focus areas are on raising profile of HEHA within different sectors, raising profile of group and what its about, recruiting more members from across sectors, working at coordination level and above, not operational, working closer with council on their plans, strategies and initiatives etc.

THE WHANGANUI WELLBEING JOURNEY

During the journey our group has learnt many lessons and have found out that there are many things that can influence working relationships, there will be times of calm weather and times of rough, but at the end of the day if the group can survive the journey it will strengthen the unity between the members. The key things we have learnt are

- Always remember those paddling the waka are just as important if not more than the waka they represent.
- Look for people with enthusiasm and passion for the kaupapa.
- Try to get organisations from different sectors, it is important to get a cross section of views to build from.
- Respect within the group must come from two angles – on a person-to-person basis and organisation to organisation.
- Take the time to learn about each organisation, their work ethos, their structure and in what ways they are able to work collaboratively.
- Forming any kind of group has to be a building process. You need to be prepared to be flexible at the same time as working within clear boundaries. You need to keep things as interesting as possible and share responsibilities. People may find that they are not suitable for the group and need the freedom to move on if they wish without feeling as though they are letting people down.
- Always look for new people to bring into the group. Nurture enthusiasm and commitment.
- Develop clear lines of communication right from the start. Within meetings individuals need to feel comfortable expressing their opinions or those of their waka without fear of retribution or isolation. Minutes and other correspondence need to be circulated to all in a timely fashion – and be transparent at all times
- Regardless of whether you are starting a new group, or revitalising an old one you need to make sure you have a clear direction and focus. Make this your first task before you do anything else and be sure everyone in the group is clear. Write up your Terms of Reference or group strategic plan based on your agreed focus and targets. Remember all these things need to be reviewed and modified regularly to ensure they continue to reflect the feelings of all the group.



CIPANG – Canterbury Intersectoral Group for Physical Activity and Nutrition Group, Canterbury

- Established mid 2004
- Members DHB NGOs and Sports trusts, 3 out of the possible 6 TLAs, Pacific and Maori community and provider groups, tertiary education sector, all PHOs,
- Contact – Nadine Milmine Nadine.milmine@cdhb.govt.nz

Highlights

- Successful joint endeavour to secure funding for SPARC Active Communities funding
- Joint survey of activities in Canterbury that has led to better understanding of currently work and gaps
- group will be presenting at the annual Canterbury PHA seminar about what is happening in Canterbury

Top Tips

- be inclusive and patient – it takes time
- it is good to find something to do together – because talking will only take you so far
- Terms of reference are important to figure out – as this will give a platform for action. It did take us a year to get them finalised, so not a speedy job.

SOWING THE SEEDS OF HEALTHY EATING

Families in New Plymouth, Waitara and Patea are discovering the many benefits of growing their own vegetables. Te Maara Mo Nga Whanau (Food For The Family) is an innovative programme which started in November 2003 and was then extended. It is run by Te Hauora Pou Heretanga, a health promotions and disability advocacy service which is affiliated to Tui Ora Limited, a Maori health provider in Taranaki. The Food For The Family concept was the brainchild of diabetes advocate Sandra Humphreys and manager Carleen Broughton.

Diabetes is a big problem in Taranaki, and affects Maori disproportionately. A Taranaki District Health Board needs assessment 2001 report stated that "nutritious food is unaffordable for people on low incomes and there is a need for more health education regarding healthy food choices." So the local environment was perfect for introducing people to gardening as a way of encouraging both healthy eating and physical activity.

As project co-ordinator Cathy Morgan says, the objectives of the Food For The Family programme are:

- To encourage whanau to become empowered and confident in the art of vegetable growing with the view of being able to provide a cost-effective and nutritional addition to the family diet
- To encourage physical activity with the increased mobility involved in gardening
- To provide knowledge of gardening and a desire for self-sufficiency, thereby role modelling for future generations, whilst raising awareness about diabetes and the advantages of making healthy lifestyle choices

Funded by the Primary Health Organisation Hauora Taranaki, the programme sources its clients through hui, self-referral and Sandra Humphreys. Clients are given plants, tools and watering cans if needed, and some dig the gardens themselves. The idea is not for Cathy to be the 'muscles' of the project, but to get the teenagers and whanau out in the fresh air to do the digging – hence getting invaluable physical activity at the same time.



This is from one of our original participants who lives in a set of five flats and grows veges outside all the flats and they all share them.



This is a beautiful cauliflower grown by a 5-year-old-boy. His mum had a garden at the back but he wanted to grow his own veges so she encouraged him, and this is the result.

Education is an important component of Food For The Family, with clients given a resource book about what they are growing, with hints on buying plants and companion planting and how to make compost; as well as recipes and information about being active. A cooking class was held, teaching clients about alternatives to boil-ups (such as buying meat with the fat trimmed); oven-baking wedges instead of cooking or buying fries; using herbs instead of salt to flavour food; and making cheap meals with a combination of their garden vegetables and ingredients like cheap canned tomatoes.

"People in our area who are beneficiaries are limited to buying their groceries locally as many do not have transport to get to supermarkets or it's too far to walk, or they have always lived on frozen mixed vegetables," Cathy says. "They've been surprised that they can make nice food, and cheaply."

If clients have shown commitment, they may get their gardens replanted for them. So far 20 gardens have been planted through the programme, as well as a community garden in Waitara. Cathy says the response has been positive. "One client who has diabetes started losing weight, and he ended up planting vegetables in front of all the flats in his block. Another little boy grew his own cauliflowers. They enjoy just being able to go outside and pick their own vegetables and then use them – it's great."

A team from Stepping Stones, a programme assisting people with disabilities into the workplace, has helped with the manual labour involved in setting up gardens. Stepping Stones promotes community participation rather than paid work.

For more information contact Cathy Morgan: 06 759 7303, or email cathy@thph.tuiora.co.nz

The above article is available on the Healthy Eating Healthy Action website: www.moh.govt.nz/healthyeatinghealthyaction

This newsletter is funded by the Ministry of Health and SPARC

First – do no harm!

Associate Professor John Coveney, from the Department of Public Health, Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia, spoke to “Call to Action” conference in May, about how not to widen health inequalities in food and nutrition initiatives. His presentation entitled ‘First – do no harm’, urged the audience to, ‘Don’t just do something – stand there’, and think about how the following tools and principles apply to the intervention/programme you are planning.



John Coveney

Evidence: Apply the laughter (so what?) test

When reviewing the evidence for a proposed intervention, John suggested the laughter or so what? test is useful to consider the relevance of the research to your intervention. The criteria for the laughter test is:

- to what extent has the environmental context been considered? Consider location, access, availability, affordability
- to what extent has population characteristics been considered? Consider gender, race, class, ethnicity, age
- to what extent has the complexity of the problem been considered? Consider social, political, educational, biomedical
- transferability and completeness as key criteria... i.e. could research be transferred to your situation

For more information:

Rychetnik et al. ‘Criteria for evaluating evidence on public health’ *J Epidem Comm Health*, 2002;56:119–127
Hawe et al. ‘Complex interventions’ *BMJ* 2004;328:1561–3.

Health inequities – apply the equity lens

John also reminded the audience to apply the equity lens when planning and evaluating programmes and policies. The equity lens is a set of questions to assist programme planners, to consider how inequalities in health have come about, and where the effective intervention points are to tackle them. The equity lens has been included as appendix to Healthy Eating Healthy Action Implementation Plan produced by the Ministry of Health. (MoH 2003 page 61)

Lay knowledge – apply the asset principle

John discussed the findings of the Adelaide Family Food study, which found that people have different ways of understanding food and health. The study found people from higher socio-economic areas were more likely to talk about food and health the way health professionals do, using words like ‘nutritious, nutrients, vitamins, calories, fibre, and bran’. However people from lower socioeconomic areas were more likely to talk about food according to its function using words like ‘growth, vitality, stamina, resilience and energy’. John suggested it is more helpful to view the different understandings as an asset, and to use them as a starting point for productive engagement with communities recognising that lay knowledge represents a form of expertise. For more information about this see Coveney J. ‘A comparison of socio-economic differences in knowledge of food and health’, *Public Health Nutrition*, vol 8 (3) 290–297, 2005.

Participative practice – apply the partnership principle

John urged programme planners to form partnerships with those who are supposed to benefit from our actions, paying attention to their problems, their approaches, their solutions and most importantly their experience. For more information or a copy of John’s handouts from the conference contact John on john.coveney@flinders.edu.au



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We are grateful to the Ministry of Health and SPARC for supporting this newsletter