

## ***New Plymouth iS working towards an injury free community***

### **Public Attitudes to Speeding**

Over the past three years Roadsafe Taranaki has run campaigns with the aim of reducing speed-related crashes in the region. Each year, random telephone surveys of the region's drivers have been carried out to monitor changing attitudes. This year's survey of 400 drivers shows that 62% (248) of participants strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement "it's okay to speed if you're careful." This represents a decrease of 7% (69% to 62%) when compared to the 2002 survey results. 43% thought it "likely or very likely" that someone would be caught by Police if speeding. 78% had seen the ACC speed trailer in the past 12 months. 84% of this group said that seeing the speed trailer would make them slow down if they were speeding. Police speed camera statistics show that the percentage of vehicles photographed in Taranaki exceeding the speed limit by more than 15kph in 100kph areas has decreased from 49% in 2001/02 to 21% in 2003/04. In 50kph zones there was a decrease from 41% to 30%.

### **NZ Injury Prevention Strategy Workshop**

New Plymouth was well represented at a forum in Wellington organised by the New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy secretariat. The aim of the forum was to determine how best to integrate injury prevention activity through effective collaboration and co-ordination. It was a great opportunity to hear from communities where injury prevention is well established within the local council, such as Waitakere and Waimakariri and also to hear about the challenges facing communities just starting out towards creating a culture of safety. The Injury Prevention Research Centre at Auckland University is a World Health Organisation safe community resource centre and has a large on-line database of publications and research on a wide range of injury prevention topics.

They can be found at <http://www2.auckland.ac.nz/ipc/>

### **Words of welcome**

New Plymouth injurySafe is very pleased to welcome Matiu Julian as Tui Ora's representative on the group and Elaine Jamieson, Community Development Adviser who is now representing New Plymouth District Council. We'd also like to acknowledge the contributions made by Pania Ruakere and Leighton Littlewood and particularly thank Leighton for his great work on the Council tenants' falls prevention project.

### **Tai Chi steps up**

Two more modified Tai Chi classes have started in the past couple of months taking the number of regular participants to over 150. Tai Chi, modified to suit older adults, combats falls by strengthening lower limbs and improving balance. Many of the group members report a variety of other health gains as well. To celebrate International Day of the Older Person, on 1 October, a Tai Chi demonstration is being organised for Puke Ariki. Our other older adults falls prevention project, home based exercise for people aged over 80, is also expanding thanks to joint funding coming from Taranaki DHB. The programme is delivered by DHB physiotherapists and with the additional funding, will now reach 100 people this year, twice as many as last year.

### **Child falls projects update**

Last year's child falls projects have again delivered some very positive results. The general project delivered 39 parent education sessions to a total of 396 people, 97% of whom said it increased their knowledge of how to prevent childhood falls. In follow-up contact with a sample of 70 participants, 64% said they had increased or improved their supervision and 59% had made changes to the home environment. The Tamariki Maori projects, delivered by Piki te Ora Nursing Services in the North and Ruanui Health in the South reached a combined total of 167 participants through a mix of group sessions and one to one discussion. 96% became more aware of ways to prevent falls and reported changes to the environment and supervision were also very similar to the general project results. All three projects are continuing again this year with a combined target of reaching 500 more parents and caregivers. The ongoing focus on childhood falls reflects the marked prevalence of falls as the leading cause of hospital injury admission aged under five.



*Participants at a child falls workshop for kohanga reo whanau at Wharepuni Marae delivered by Rita Snooks, Ruanui Health*