

NPiS

New Plymouth
Injury Safe

COMMUNITY PROJECTS UPDATE

11, Feb 2005

New Plymouth's Injury Prevention projects are supported by ACC Thinksafe

New Plymouth iS working towards an injury free community

New Plymouth District – A Safe Community?

NPiS is spearheading the drive towards New Plymouth District making an application for accreditation as a safe community.

“Safe Communities” is a World Health Organisation (WHO) concept that recognises “safety as a universal concern and the responsibility for all”. The WHO model was initiated in Sweden and is administered from the Karolinska Institute for Social Medicine in Stockholm. Last year (2004) the Safe Communities Foundation of New Zealand (SCFNZ) was established to support the development of injury prevention and safety promotion here.

SCFNZ can assist the New Plymouth District to achieve WHO accreditation as a Safe Community and you can help too.

Demonstrate your support

Find out more about SCFNZ and WHO Safe Communities at www.safecommunities.org.nz

If you would like to add your weight to the application you can write a letter of support. For more information contact any of the NPiS team – details at the foot of the page. We would very much appreciate your support.

Driver Reviver Stops

The latest road safety collaboration between the police and ACC is a series of “driver reviver” stops designed to alert motorists to the danger of driving for long periods without a break. Between 2000 and 2002, driver fatigue was identified as a contributing factor in 132 fatal crashes and 1,486 injury crashes (approximately 12% of fatal crashes and 6% of injury crashes each year).

Driver Reviver stops have been held at Mokau at Labour weekend and Auckland Anniversary Day and, with the help of mums from the local Tainui Playgroup, information packs with tips for recognising and dealing with fatigue have been distributed to motorists along with a voucher for the two local cafes to encourage a proper break.

Most drivers spoken to recognised that it's important to take a break at least every two hours on a long drive.

ACC has produced a driver fatigue brochure that can be ordered at www.acc.co.nz/acc-publications/#ip or by calling 0800 THINKSAFE

Taranaki HSE Centre a first for NZ

The soon to open Taranaki Health, Safety and Environment Centre is a training facility for workers, school leavers and tertiary students as well as the wider community.

The NZQA accredited programme presents safety training through practical interactive modules that involve exercises; hands-on facilitated direction; and feedback. It has the support of major Taranaki businesses that have committed to sending 1000 fee-paying workers to it each year. Their financial contribution will make the centre self-funding so that community groups and schools can also use the facility, either free or at nominal charge.

The HSE Centre is on track for a high profile launch at its newly customised premises in Constance Street, Waiwhakaiho, next month.

Older adults programmes update

The Otago Exercise Programme to prevent falls in the most vulnerable age group of 80+ is now into its second year. The programme is delivered by TDHB physiotherapists and aims to reduce falls by improving participants' strength and balance. It's never too late to do this and results from the first 47 people to complete the six month programme show that 86% improved their strength and 65% their balance. More importantly, although it is estimated that 50% of people aged over 80 will fall in a 12 month period, only 29% of the exercise group experienced a fall. People over 80 can request an assessment for the Otago Programme by calling the Physiotherapy Department (753 6139) directly or asking their GP for a referral.

Encouraging results have also been reported in a follow up survey with 50 New Plymouth District Council tenants aged 65+ who received falls prevention advice and home safety checks. Over half have taken some action to reduce their fall risk. The incidence of falls experienced by tenants aged over 80 was slightly lower than would be expected within the same age group of the general population and was considerably lower among those aged 65 to 79. The survey was conducted by WITT nursing students.

Finally, demand for the Tai Chi falls prevention classes for over 65s continues to grow. Nine classes are now established in New Plymouth and Stratford. These include two beginners courses from which people can “graduate” to more advanced classes. A tenth class is planned to start in Waitara soon.

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