

Junk Food off the Menu



Uawa Sports Club senior rugby player Rocky Monika (front right) hands out healthy snacks and water to the JAB rugby players at the Club's annual sports day to encourage healthy eating habits. Picture by Darryl Crawford

Uawa Sports Club parents have taken up healthy eating habits and encouraged Te Tairāwhiti whānau to join them. Sports club chairman Darryl Crawford said the club's whānau were committed to improving their children's diet and "normalising healthy eating".

"We as whānau have all agreed to try and change the eating habits of our tamariki while under the mana of Uawa Sports Club."

"The children are our next generation . . . we hope to show them that eating healthy is normal and physical activity is normal."

Junk-food is off the club's menu, says Mr Crawford. "For us, the days of sausage sizzle, chips, pizza, fizzy drinks, pies and plates of chocolate biscuits are gone."

With that in mind, the tasty treats for the 200 Gisborne and East Coast children playing JAB rugby at the Uawa Sports Club Day recently were fruit, muesli bars and chicken salad rolls made by the parents of the sports club.

Bottles of chilled water donated by Te Whare Hauora o Te Aitanga a Hauiti (Hauiti Hauora), kept the 12 JAB, four secondary school and two senior teams and their supporters hydrated throughout the annual sports event.

Horouta Whanaunga Healthy Families New Zealand East Cape manager Albie Stewart applauds the efforts of the Tolaga Bay parents and says everyone can be a leader and role model for a healthy Aotearoa.



"Working together we can create a healthier community now and for future generations," he says.

Mr Stewart says a "mind-shift to normalise healthy eating" was needed to permanently slow the rising rate of obesity and preventable chronic diseases.

The project came about through work with the local kura who were taking a Kai Atua approach to healthy eating. They were looking at how they could greater influence whānau and the wider community. Darryl a teacher at the kura was also the chairman of the local rugby club and saw the opportunity to positively influence the community using the same approach and messages.

Parents at the kura whose children were also involved in the sports club also role modelled to other parents and brought healthy plates and helped get whānau on board with the healthy eating kaupapa.

Keys to success include:

- 🌀 Community buy-in and community-led action
- 🌀 Get to know your community, what's already happening and who the key leaders are.
- 🌀 Positively influence leaders and work alongside them on activities/ local hubs of community action already happening rather than creating new ones.

Making good food choices, being physically active, smokefree and reducing alcohol related harm are the key areas of focus for Horouta Whanaunga Healthy Families East Cape.

For more information please contact:

Alice Te Puni

Horouta Whanaunga Healthy Families East Cape

P: 06 862 6629

E: alice@hauiti.co.nz

W: www.healthyfamilieseastcape.co.nz