

Inspiring the “Go the H2O” movement

HUTT CITY
TE AWA KAIRANGI

healthy families
Lower Hutt
He oranga whānau

Healthy Families Lower Hutt is leading the “Go the H2O” movement to make Lower Hutt a water promoting place to live, learn, work and play – so that water is the best and easiest choice of drink.

“Taking a systems change approach and collaborating with many partners to increase access to clean, fresh and free water is key for Go the H2O,” says Ana So’otaga, settings coordinator from Healthy Families Lower Hutt.



Healthy Families Lower Hutt's hydration station in action at Te Rā o te Raukura Festiva

Go the H2O is an approach that aims to inspire a wide range of community groups and organisations to make being pro-water part of their everyday kaupapa. “We are working together using Go the H2O to turn the tide on our community’s health, everyone has a role to play” says So’otaga.

Go the H2O works across many levels, from providing policy templates and resources, to increasing access to water through more permanent and portable hydration stations. By engaging multiple sectors, settings and communities in the development, Go the H2O support can be tailored to any group or scenario.

Total Touch Wellington is leading the way with the Go the H2O movement. Total Touch reaches on average 2,500 of our tamariki and their whānau from the Hutt Valley. They run touch modules out of two local council parks every week during terms one and four each year. Missing from the council parks used by Total Touch is good access to drinking water. This was a major issue for Total Touch and something that started their korero with the Healthy Families Lower Hutt team.



Total Touch players using Healthy Families Lower Hutt's hydration station

For Total Touch, to become pro water meant doing things differently. First they made sure there was easy access to quality drinking water with the help of Healthy Families Lower Hutt’s hydration station. “The hydration station is a smart option to make water cool again! It makes it easy to get clean, fresh and free water. The way it looks as well as the way it works really engages the tamariki, they can’t wait for their turn to fill up their drink bottles” says Bronwyn Jahnke from Total Touch.

“Total Touch educated our referees to back up the pro water message. Refs now know they can’t drink their fizzy or sports drinks in front of our tamariki. We have even removed fizzy drinks from prizegiving goodie bags for the players. Our next focus is to work with Healthy Families Lower Hutt to have fizzy drinks removed from the food vendors that have contracts for the parks,” says Jahnke.

Hutt City Council is another champion for Go the H2O. With Healthy Families Lower Hutt support they have committed to making all council run events pro water. This means having easy and free access to water from a hydration station or a water truck if there is no mains water on site. Hutt City Council is also increasing access to water through new permanent fountains being installed in community and public spaces in high needs communities.

Go the H2O is now being used by workplaces, sports codes, schools and events as well as within Māori and Pasifika communities in Lower Hutt.

Go the H2O will be one of the topics delivered by Ana So’otaga at the upcoming 7th Activity and Nutrition Aotearoa Conference.

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