

Newsletter #1 | November 2008



### Here's Helen

The year is winding up, in a satisfying way for the NPA team as we feel we have made real progress.

We now have the results of our NPA

Baseline Health Survey, which covered 1800 people in the Top of the South, revealing their exercise and eating habits. When the information is collated in the different communities of interest it will be a fantastic tool for us, and our stakeholders, into the future. There will be summaries for the different areas and for older people, males, females and other groupings.

Early in November we were enlightened with the visit from the EPODE team (translated from French the acronym means Together, We Can Prevent Obesity In Children), a programme involving 10 French towns, launched in 2004. The visit was a great opportunity to hear about what's happening internationally, and it was particularly interesting to hear about their community focus and their work with councils and industry.

We have some exciting developments to our website that will make it a lot more useful, with downloadable resources and information sharing that will allow the results of our grants to become an inspiration to others. The next round of grants funding will be in early 2009, so start thinking now about ideas that could help your students or clients to be healthier. Grants are already being used to make positive change throughout Nelson and Marlborough. Have a happy, safe and healthy Christmas break, and do make the most of what our region has to offer – whether that's on your bike, in a kayak, at the river, beach or in the hills. Enjoy the time with friends and family.

*Helen Steenbergen*

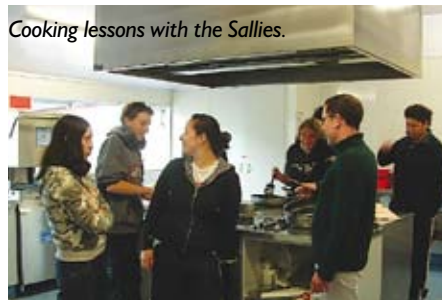
NPA Programme Director

### What's cooking?

*"Don't you get custard out of a tin?"*

Joyce Somerville's heard a few questions like this from the students in her cooking class as Manager of the Salvation Army Community Ministries in Blenheim. The cooking classes started seven years ago after young mothers asked how to cook vegies for their babies at a Plunket meeting, and now there are students coming through the Sallies' Employment Plus programme. Joyce says for school leavers the cooking classes help change lifestyles and attitudes: "I try and get them to see that they don't have to spend all afternoon in the kitchen to prepare a good meal, also that a home cooked meal is a lot cheaper than takeaways and better for them."

Nutrition and Physical Activity funding helps buy the ingredients and Joyce gives the students a recipe folder, a non-stick frypan and fish slice if they stay with the course. Meantime Birthright Marlborough is teaching parents to cook healthy meals on a budget.



### Kitchen Timesaver

For a healthy quick summer evening meal try the concept of turning a salad into your main dish...or only dish!

#### Potato and Smoked Fish Salad

Cook new potatoes and arrange on a large platter, with other vegetables (eg tomatoes, pepper, asparagus).

Prepare smoked fish by microwaving lightly for a couple of minutes, or use canned fish. Flake it over the potatoes and top with a light dressing of yoghurt seasoned with salt, pepper, mustard and chopped fresh herbs from the garden. Crumbled blue cheese on top is nice for grownups.

### Breast cancer prevention

The reasons to eat healthy food and take regular exercise just keep growing. Leading Auckland breast surgeon Trevor Smith says the focus should shift from screening, treatment and searching for a cure to prevention through improved lifestyles. About 2400 New Zealand women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year, and about 600 of them die. Trevor Smith's preventive approach, in his new book entitled Breast Care recommends that women should:

- Have a lean weight
- Regularly exercise
- Avoid sugary drinks and energy-dense foods
- Eat more vegetables, fruit and whole grains
- Limit red meat, alcohol and salty or processed foods
- Be smoke free
- Have children young and breastfeed as long as possible.

International research suggests such changes could reduce the incidence of breast cancer by between 30 and 40 per cent.

### Council Signs Up!



Congratulations to the Nelson City Council on signing up to the International Walk 21 Charter that promotes and plans for pedestrians. The charter has eight principles covering everything

from pedestrian safety to creating a culture of walking. Nelson Mayor Kerry Marshall (above) says many of the actions recommended in the Charter are already part of council's day-to-day practice. However, he says there's always more that can be done to encourage walking. Nelson city joins the Marlborough District Council and the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board as local signatories to Walk 21, along with other councils around New Zealand and overseas.

## It's Feedback Time

We had a great response to the feedback survey we ran recently in our print features in community papers across the Top of the South. Most of those who responded reported they always read the NPA feature, and the recipe section was the most popular item in the feature, with those who like it also going on to try out the new recipes. Next most popular were the stories and photos about what people are doing to improve their health in our region, followed by our Top Tips and the What's On column.

Here's how people in our region are keeping healthy: 126 people report they enjoy walking, 72 people go cycling, 25 people play sport and 127 people choose eating well to be healthy.

We're pleased to hear the word is getting out about the NPA with people reporting they had heard about it on the radio and had seen it advertised on the buses. Others had heard about NPA at Playcentre, through their doctor's waiting room, the DHB newsletter, through SPARC and by word of mouth.



*Congratulations to the two survey respondents whose names were drawn to win a \$500 cycle voucher: Julie Penman from Nelson and Fiona Dowling from Blenheim.*

## Nutrition and Physical Activity

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## Christmas is a coming

*The geese may be getting fat... but you don't want to follow suit!*

With celebrations revolving around food and drink it can be a hard time to keep up healthy eating and exercise, but Christmas is also an opportunity to shift the focus to healthier options. There are lots of ways to present attractive and healthy festive meals and to involve children with the preparation of traditional foods and family traditions.

Here are a few suggestions from us that you might like to pass on to those you work with.

- Grandparents can teach and pass down to their grandchildren those good old family recipes - treats such as 'Gran's Christmas Pudding', roasted nuts and mince pies are ideal.

**“Encourage children and teenagers into active gifts – we say bikes not X-boxes this Christmas!”**

- Offer a selection of salads rather than a large variety of meats for Christmas dinner – they are cheaper, healthier and less filling on a day when food is plentiful.

- Have berries for pudding – they're at their peak in our region at Christmas and are

yummy with home made custard.

- Games with friends and family are always a terrific way to celebrate the festive times.
- Pop some sports gear such as a volleyball or cricket set into someone's stocking.

*Send fruit platters or kebabs for end of year school and club events – mix pineapple and strawberries with cheaper fruits like apples.*



## Open Orchards

Take a stroll through your local reserve or park and pick a few plums or feijoas ... it's a great idea that's taking shape under the Nelson's Open Orchards scheme, with support from the NPA. Nick Kiddey from Nelson's Waimarama Community Organic Garden put the Open Orchards group together, fired by concerns about increases in the cost of fresh fruit and vegetables, obesity and increasing social disconnection within communities.

An NPA grant bought enough trees for the initial Open Orchards, which also aim to address the loss of many heritage varieties of fruit and nut trees that used to grow in our region with little maintenance and no chemicals. So far the Woodstock Reserve in Stoke has been planted with feijoas and apricots, the Frenchhay Reserve in Atawhai

is sprouting citrus and apples donated by local residents, Linden Reserve in Brooklyn has almonds, hazelnuts and feijoas and more Open Orchards are being planted at Victory Primary School and Fairfield House. The Nelson City Council is also doing its bit with large numbers of fruit trees planted in Stoke's five neighbourhood reserves.

