

Healthy Christchurch

Newsletter #66, Paenga-whāwhā (April) 2009

Healthy Christchurch is sponsored by Canterbury District Health Board, Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury, Ministry of Health, Pegasus Health, Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, and University of Otago, Christchurch. In addition to these 7, 194 organisations are currently signed up to the Healthy Christchurch Charter.

From the Healthy Christchurch Coordinators

Continuing the conversation about the results from the evaluation of the Healthy Christchurch initiative

Theme 6 – The value you place on opportunities for networking with other signatories

We heard you loud and clear and have organised a networking gala for you!

Thursday, 21 May 2009

9am -12.30pm

Oxford Terrace Baptist Church

Cnr Oxford Terrace and Madras

Amongst others, it will be an opportunity for you to showcase some of the collaborative work that many of you are engaged in.

We are still finalising a programme. However, please diary this date and time and plan to be there. Watch for more details in the May newsletter.

Theme 7 – An interest in becoming more active in Healthy Christchurch.

Contributing to a collaborative project is one way to become more active in Healthy Christchurch.

The collaborative project to mitigate the high costs of accommodation on people with low incomes, which was written about in last months' newsletter, serves as a real life example of becoming active in Healthy Christchurch at a highly engaged level. A presentation about the outcomes of this project will be part of your networking gala in May.

Another collaborative project that was carried out under the Healthy Christchurch banner was not nearly as involved and protracted. People representing Christchurch Power Consumers Society, Community Energy Action, Community and Public Health (a division of the Canterbury District Health Board), a former member of the Electricity Commission and former Christchurch City Councillor, the Mayor's Welfare Fund, Methodist Mission and Rowley Resource Centre helped draft and then sent a letter to the Public Health Advisory Committee in March last year in which they outlined their concerns about the health effects of unflued gas heaters, particularly on people with low incomes who are known to have a greater burden of illness. PHAC provides independent advice to the Minister of Health on public health matters. In response to the letter, PHAC thanked the group for bringing this issue to its attention and signalled that it would be taking the issue to the Ministry for further consideration and action.

Child Friendly Cities

Children born into families who are living on low incomes can bear the brunt of the family's situation when it comes to their health and wellbeing,. It could be due to reduced access to early childhood education, for example, or life in an unsafe neighbourhoods or poor access to GP, dental or other health and medical services.

Therefore it was interesting to hear Christoph Baker (Executive Director of the Italian Committee for UNICEF) speak about Child Friendly Cities at the first plenary session of the recent NZ Community Boards conference held recently in Christchurch. (Also see **Items of Interest** below for information about other sessions).

The concept of a child friendly city is unpinned by the notions of

- child rights
- sustainability
- biodiversity
- good governance.

The health and wellbeing of children (considered to be aged 0-18 yrs old) are put at the centre of all policy decisions. Care for the environment is essential. A child friendly city is simply 'a local system of good governance which is committed to fulfilling children's rights'.

75 Child Friendly Cities were created over the previous 15 years; however, by now 500 are currently active.

The building blocks for a child friendly city are

- 1—children's participation
- 2—a child-friendly legal framework
- 3—a city-wide strategy based on children's rights
- 4—a coordinating mechanism ie a permanent structure in local government
- 5—child impact assessment and evaluation
- 6—a budget for children's programmes (analysis shows that governments save money by spending money on children)
- 7—production and distribution of a regular 'State of the City's Children' report
- 8—making children's right known
- 9—independent advocacy for children (eg, NZ Commissioner for Children)

A child friendly city has

- child friendly schools, sports and leisure facilities
- baby and child friendly hospitals and health care services
- a sustainable environment
- good intergenerational and multi-cultural relations
- the means and tools to implement children's rights
- warning systems eg in relation to levels of violence

Participation could include

- a children's town council
- a meaningful way of consulting children
- participation in urban planning
- a council that is demonstrably dedicated to children's rights (eg, once a year focuses on children's issues including public expenditure)

- a mayor who is seen to be a Defender of Children

A children's town council works best when the participants are 10-14 yrs old. Four times per year 15-20 children in this age group who have been elected by their peers meet to talk about what is going on in their town from their perspective...problems and solutions. The majority of these councils are facilitated by the schools in the city.

When asked, children from around the world articulate the same 'wish list' which is

- a clean city
- safe playing areas
- being able to go school alone
- more bike lanes
- the equal treatment of all children.

What would a report on the State of Our City's Children tell us?

The Healthy Christchurch priority to improve the physical activity and nutrition of people living in Christchurch

Combine your Easter break with some fantastic walks in Lyttelton Harbour

A fabulous concept to get you and your family out in one of the most dramatically scenic spots on offer to people in Christchurch over 11 & 12 April. The festival is happening under the auspices of the following 3 signatories to the Healthy Christchurch Charter (Project Lyttelton, Sport Canterbury and Active Canterbury Push Play) and others. Not only will you and your family have a great time and experience some breathtaking scenery, you will be contributing to the Healthy Christchurch priority to improve the physical activity and nutrition of people living in Christchurch (namely you!). Oh, yes.....and having a fabulous Easter break!

For more information, you can ring the Lyttelton Harbour Visitor Information Centre on 328 9093, the event manager on 021 558 747 or click on <http://www.lyttelton.net.nz/festivals/festival-of-walking>

Items of Interest

NZ Community Boards Conference

From Thursday 19 March to Sunday 22 March Christchurch hosted the NZ Community Boards Conference. The conference celebrated 20 years of Community Boards with Reflect, Refresh, Revitalise being chosen as the theme.

Below is a short summary of one of the five workshops your coordinators attended, all of which were interesting and informative.

“Achieving Best Practice Consultation with Controversial Projects”

100 community board members attended 4 sessions of this workshop over 2 days.

Exercise 1: “What is the key thing that makes a community consultation successful?”

- Key points that came out of this exercise were: to define what is being consulted on (sufficient information), identify all the stakeholders (the right audience), consult early, consider timing of consultation (length of consultation and time of year e.g. Xmas) , well skilled consultation facilitator and all participants are able to be heard (regardless of outcomes)

Exercise 2: [When faced with a controversial decision]...“What factors would enhance your ability to make a well informed decision?”

the key factors identified were

- In terms of your Environment -
 - Understanding political landscape (risks, future projections)
 - Local knowledge

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- RMA requirements
- Sustainability
- Values
- In terms of your Relationships -
 - Honesty/Trust – staff/board members/community – both ways
 - Be impartial
 - Factual not emotional
 - Involve people as part of the solution
 - Good communication – ongoing throughout process/project
- In terms of Project Information (Consultation)
 - Confidence that the information was unbiased (peer review)
 - Confidence in wide ranging consultation – all stakeholders had opportunity for input
 - Confidence in information provided – trust & respect
- In terms of Project Information (Non-Consultation)
 - Clear and simple terms, cover visual, audio and site visits
 - Trust
 - Financial and environmental impacts if it goes ahead or not
 - Full accurate information
 - Confidence all options properly identified and put forward for consideration

This interactive workshop considered the role of affected communities and decision makers in the development of local projects. The rationale for consultation was reviewed in the context of the public participation spectrum, which ranges from simply providing information through to empowering communities. All participants agreed that public participation was highly important and valuable to decision making. Some discussion centred around the variety of ways good public participation could be gained signalling that a one size fits all approach would seldom give a good cross section of views.

The importance of identifying all of the people, including decision makers that are affected by a development was a key component when planning to consult. Also considered was the value of understanding why a project is controversial and whether its undesirable effects can be mitigated. Participants were involved in activities that demonstrated a range of facilitation techniques, which were shared and discussed within groups. These experiences provided an opportunity to evaluate how this collaborative approach to working with communities can contribute to better outcomes when consulting on controversial projects.

A final word on consultation. It was unanimously agreed within the workshop attended that there is a perception that consultation means “having your say means having your way” when this is not always the case. The consultation process is a valuable opportunity for everyone to have their say, which may or may not lead to changes.

Healthy Christchurch was able to have a display at the NZ Community Boards. Compared to the other displays (which included a working alternative to a cherry picker!), ours was low tech. However, several members of Community Boards from around the country stopped by to find out more about the healthy cities model and took away the free items available.

The Hollywood block-buster of last year’s Healthy Cities and Communities short course

It’s ready! Filmed by a crew of volunteer camera operators, there is one DVD for the presentations on each of the 4 days of the short course. If you were unable to attend but would like to catch up with the fantastic presenters, events, ideas and unprompted comments of participants, here is your chance! These are not available in stores. To order your set of 4, please post a cheque for \$10 made out to Healthy Christchurch c/- PO Box 1475, Chch 8140 and we’ll post a set to you, along with the short course programme. \$10 will cover the costs of the disks themselves and postage and packaging. (NB: The DVDs are not being sold individually.)

Items that are surplus to Healthy Christchurch requirements are free to people in signatory organisations!

Your trusty coordinators are having an office tidy-up and are offering the following items which are surplus to requirements. First in, first served!

- 3 laminated bookmarks featuring the snazzy iconic Healthy Christchurch art work.
- 2 boxed sets of the State Services Commission's *The Treaty of Waitangi*. Each set contains 3 booklets.
- 4 cool postcards of shoes from different cultures produced by the Human Rights Commission.
- 5 laminated copies of the poster 'Simple Tips on Promoting, Protecting and Improving the Lives of People in Christchurch who Experience Mental Illness.'
- 100s of the Healthy Christchurch poster with the snazzy iconic art work.
- 100s of a Ministry of Health brochure called 'Unflued Gas Heaters & Your Health'.....important information with winter not too far away. Would any of your clients benefit from this information?

Leftovers from last year's Healthy Cities and Communities short course

- 2 plastic water bottles featuring the Healthy Christchurch logo and advertising for the short course.
- 2 CDs called 'Urban Design Publications October 2007' produced by the Ministry for the Environment which contains pdf files of a number of Urban Design Protocol publications.
- 4 CDs of a National Radio talk featuring Associate Professor Ralph Chapman (Director of the School of Environment Studies, Victoria University) in which he connects climate change, transport, urban design and health.
- 5 backpacks which were given to short course participants to hold their course materials (black, no advertising on the pack).

Be quick. These are not available in stores either!

Healthy Christchurch Steering Group

At its 1 April meeting, the Steering Group –

- heard an update on the Champions' activities related to working together to reduce alcohol-related harm.
- agreed to work together to propose new strategic directions for the Healthy Christchurch initiative based on evaluation results during a day-long workshop (date/time/venue to be confirmed)
- accepted the resignation of Fiona Pimm from the Steering Group
- reviewed and approved an application from Delta Community Support Trust as a Healthy Christchurch Signatory

The next meeting of the Steering Group is scheduled for 13 May, 11-12.30 at Community and Public Health, 76 Chester Street East.