

Fruit and veges help in the fight against cancer

by Kate Palmer

More than 2000 people have joined a new Cancer Society programme called LiveSmart, which helps New Zealanders decrease the cancer risks associated with obesity and lack of exercise.

Cancer Society national health promotion manager Carolyn Watts says many people don't recognise how eating fruit and vegetables helps prevent cancer.

"We want New Zealanders to understand that it could save their life. If we could increase the population's consumption of fruit and vegetables by half a serving daily we would save over 330 lives a year," she says.

LiveSmart was developed from research detailed in *Pulp Fiction - The Facts Harvested*, published in June by the Cancer Society and Sport and Recreation New Zealand.

Watts says in a press release that the research findings have given important data on relevant motivations, barriers to intake and perceived benefits which have helped develop a sound foundation for a campaign to promote fruit and vegetable intake.

The Cancer Society developed

www.livesmart.org.nz to target work places in a simple and cost-effective way. The free, 12-week email session gives weekly reminders on improving eating and exercising routines.

Wendy Fulton, Auckland Cancer Society manager, says: "It's about getting people to start. People know about 5+ a Day and Push Play but still aren't doing it. This is about accepting where people are at and starting them off with five minutes of exercise a day or putting half a tomato in their sandwich to get them to build up."

The programme is broken into three categories: EatSmart, MoveSmart and GrowSmart.

GrowSmart offers practical suggestions for beginning to grow vegetables at home, whether on an apartment balcony or in a traditional garden.

LiveSmart development consultant Tim Corbett says the Cancer Society wanted to develop a low-cost effective health promotion.

"Our funding is from donations so we wanted something that wasn't resource rich. It was a one-off cost to establish the site with no ongoing costs," says Corbett.

Corbett says the society has received inquiries from corporate and



PHOTO: KATE PALMER

LIVESMART: Educating people to eat and live healthily. From left: Cole, 5, Nyle, 4, and Herne, 6.

non-profit organisations looking to improve the health of employees.

"It gives them a very cheap workplace health programme. It's like a little Jiminy Cricket on your shoulder while you're sitting at your desk. We can even personalise it to include the company logo and add a message from the CEO," he says.

"We want to include texting next, which is why we're asking members for their cellphone numbers. It will use instant prompts to get the positive messages across," says Corbett.

The Cancer Society is emailing questionnaires to members to evaluate the impact LiveSmart is having on their lives.

The email programme will change seasonally with the next 12-week session having a summer focus.

"The anecdotal evidence has been extremely positive from the evaluation tools built into the site. We don't want to tell people they're doing something wrong, that's not going to get the message across," says Fulton.

Wanted — more male teachers to balance primary school's mix

by Kate Palmer

An Auckland primary school is trying to change its staffing profile with a determined drive to recruit more men.

Onehunga Primary School, with a roll of 355 pupils, has extended its male teaching staff to a total of three this year out of 19 teaching staff.

Deputy principal Christine Herrell says the school tries to employ male teachers in a policy that reflects the needs of the clientele of the school, but says new placements still need to be quality teachers.

"It's important for our boys to have good male role models, but we won't take on someone just because he's male," says Herrell.

Male teachers in the primary sector make up 20% of the work force. Low pay rates, with a starting salary of \$34,000, and a fear of sexual abuse charges tend to be the main reasons males steer clear of entering the profession.

Jenny Edmonds, academic registrar at the Auckland College of

Education (ACE), says the imbalance is less in secondary schools, but lack of male students has been the trend.

"We want to attract male students, the question is how to get them," says Edmonds.

Mark Armstrong graduated from ACE last year, attracted to the profession after he spent time in the classroom with his sister, also a teacher.

"I wanted to work with children and have an impact on society. I've had many of my ideals change while I've been in the job and have learnt it's better to keep things simple and basic," he says.

Armstrong, who graduated in sociology and social sciences at Massey prior to teacher training, says friends have been supportive of his career choice.

He says he felt there was an equal balance of male and female students while studying at ACE and thinks male teachers have a lot to offer students.

manager.

He says that the main reason for males not entering the profession is low pay, not fears of abuse charges which are "media driven stories that people can see through".

Ingram has children and wanted a job that allowed him to spend more time with his family. He thought "long and hard" before making the change.

"Men are traditionally seen as the breadwinners so it's really hard to



FAMILY JOB: Geoff Ingram

meet those demands when you're only taking home \$510 a week," he says.

Ingram feels the benefits of the job outweigh the low pay and finds that being in a job where he feels stimulated is worth the balancing of student loan and mortgage repayments.

"I wake up in the morning and am excited about my job," he says.

Children's science photos travel world in pilot study

by Russell Page-Wood

Excited whispers filled the air at Maungatautari Primary School as principal Greg Thomas informed pupils that their science and technology photos would be seen in many places around the world.

The photos were taken by the 39 year 1 to 8 pupils at the school for research, conducted by University of Waikato lecturers Dr Judy Moreland and Dr Bronwen Cowie.

It is a pilot study to explore children's perception and understanding of science and technology through pictures.

"This is a new research technique to overcome language barriers, where the children may not have the right words for explaining their ideas, so images are used instead," said Moreland.

The study has been successful and at first glance shows photography is an accessible technique for helping children to represent their ideas.

"It was interesting to find that most kids found nature and animals to be science because they were living growing things," said Cowie.

Their initial findings were presented at the 35th Australasian Science Education Research Association conference held in Armidale, New South Wales, in July.

Research aside, the study allowed pupils of the school to gain an understanding of how to use a camera, some never having used one before.

Thomas was very supportive of the programme as he thought it was a good opportunity for the children.

"I am rapt by the results. Things really turned out well and the pictures look great," he said.

The prospect of fame and having their pictures viewed overseas excited all of the pupils, Alex McCutcheon in particular.

"I hope they go to Canada. I hope they get there by October. It's my birthday in October so I hope they are there by then," she said.

The project has been a learning experience for everyone involved and Mooreland and Cowie are hopeful they will be able to continue their research on the power of photography and children.



ROLE MODEL: Mark Armstrong

"Males think differently from females and you need that balance in classrooms."

"Males think differently from females and you need that balance in classrooms," he says.

Armstrong says he has had to make changes to his life now that he's taken on the job of being a role model.

"It's changed my life socially, even everyday things like the way I dress."

Geoff Ingram is now in his second term of teaching at Onehunga Primary School, switching to a teaching career after working as a car sales

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