

# Pitopito kōrero

Quarterly newsletter from Regional Public Health - Wairarapa  
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Issue 15

## Public health: Working with you in our community



## Bikes in Schools

Congratulations to Lakeview School for opening the first 'Bikes in Schools' tracks in the Wairarapa! The Bikes in Schools vision, led by Paul McArdle, is to see more children become active, healthy, develop their cycling skills and ultimately build their self esteem and confidence. Speaking at the Lakeview Bikes in Schools opening, Olympian Alison Shanks encouraged the students to "jump on a bike and give it a go".

Thank-you very much to all of the fantastic organisations who helped make this dream a reality for Lakeview School students. As part of the Bikes in Schools project, Lakeview School received enough funding to build a loop track, pump track and skills track, purchase a fleet of new bikes and helmets, bike storage and undertake cycle skills training.

If your school is interested in exploring a similar project and would like advice or support please contact the Bikes in Schools Wairarapa team at [biswairarapa@gmail.com](mailto:biswairarapa@gmail.com) or contact Rebecca Jamieson at Greater Wellington Regional Council on [Rebecca.jamieson@gw.govt.nz](mailto:Rebecca.jamieson@gw.govt.nz). You can also get in touch with Lakeview School. Check out their journey on Facebook by searching 'Bikes in Schools Wairarapa'.

For more information about Bikes in Schools visit [www.bikeon.org.nz](http://www.bikeon.org.nz)

Keep up the great cycling Lakeview School!



# Whooping cough (pertussis)

## What is whooping cough (pertussis)?

Pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, is a very contagious bacterial illness which affects the respiratory system. It is spread through the community by coughing and sneezing, in the same way that colds and flu are.

## What you should know?

Pertussis is a notifiable disease, this means that cases are notified to the Medical Officer of Health.

Eighty percent of young children with whooping cough catch it from a parent, caregiver or an older child in the family or community before they are old enough to be immunised.

Young children, especially babies under six months old, and people with weak immune systems (immunocompromised) can become extremely ill and occasionally die from whooping cough. Older children, adults and elderly people can get whooping cough too and can easily spread the disease to young children.

Children with whooping cough need to stay away from school or early childhood care for three weeks after the child started coughing or five days after starting antibiotic treatment.

People with whooping cough need to remain at home away from other people until they have completed an appropriate course of treatment.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

Whooping cough affects children and adults differently depending on their age.

Babies less than six months old do not usually 'whoop' (the sound made after coughing). They may :

- Stop breathing.
- Appear to have a cold, then a cough and have difficulty breathing.
- Get exhausted from coughing.
- Not be able to feed because of coughing bouts.

In older babies, young children and adults, the illness has three stages:

- It may start with a runny nose and eyes, mild fever, sore throat and sneezing, just like the common cold. This lasts one or two weeks.
- Next there is an irritating cough. Over one to two weeks, the cough gets worse and young children and adults often have coughing bouts, which may end with difficulties breathing or with vomiting.
- The final stage is the long recovery process. The symptoms get less severe, but the cough can continue for weeks.

## Treatment

If you think you or a family member may have whooping cough, see your doctor as soon as possible.

- You may be given antibiotics. Antibiotics can reduce how long you're infectious for, but unless they're given early, they may not reduce your symptoms.
- Your doctor will also tell you how to care for yourself or your child at home while you're recovering.

## Immunisation

The best protection against whooping cough is to be immunised. Immunisation is free and given at six weeks, three months and five months of age. A booster vaccination is given at four and eleven years of age, as part of the regular immunisation schedule.

All children should be up-to-date with their pertussis (whooping cough) immunisations and are advised to check with their family doctor.

Immunisation is also recommended, but not funded, for early childhood workers, health professionals that care for young children, and families of newborn babies.

A factsheet on whooping cough is available by visiting [www.rph.org.nz](http://www.rph.org.nz) (Public health topics > Infectious diseases > Whooping cough)

## A session with Aunty Mihi



The team at Regional Public Health – Wairarapa have begun regular Māori language and tikanga sessions with Wairarapa District Health Board Kaumatua Aunty Mihi. The first session was held in early May where staff learnt a new waiata and began the process of whakawhanaungatanga (establishing relationships) together.

## Breast Friends graduation



Nine new breastfeeding peer counsellors graduated in May to provide community breastfeeding support. The group of women from Featherston, Greytown and Masterton completed the eight week course with local trainer Julia Oldroyd. The course was made possible with sponsorship from Trust House Masterton, Compass Health and Regional Public Health.

**Congratulations ladies! We are lucky to have you out in our community.**

## Vitamin D, sun exposure and children

Calcium in foods such as milk will help build strong healthy teeth and bones in children, but it is vitamin D that enables the calcium to be used. This vitamin is needed for bone health and muscle function. Without vitamin D, our children can develop rickets which causes bowed legs and knock knees.

For most New Zealand children, it is easy to get enough vitamin D. Their bodies create it whenever they are outside getting the sun on their skin. Unfortunately, over exposure to the sun can lead to sunburn and skin cancers later in life, so we need to understand how to protect ourselves from the sun while getting enough vitamin D.

The Ministry of Health states that "a prudent approach is to recommend that infants are not left in direct sunlight, particularly between 10am and 4pm from September to April." For children two years and older, "Young children, once mobile, should follow the same sun prevention advice as for the general population. Sunburn should always be avoided."

Fortunately, the sun is not the only place where children can obtain small amounts of their daily vitamin D needs. Some foods contain vitamin D, such as oily fish (e.g. salmon, tuna, sardines, eel, and warehou), milk and milk products, eggs and liver.

Also, some foods including margarine, and some reduced fat dairy products, (e.g. milk, dried milk, and yoghurt) have vitamin D added.

### So what can be done to ensure our children are receiving the vitamin D they need to allow their bodies to build strong bones?

The Ministry of Health have noted that as infants are weaned and become more mobile, there will be some incidental sun exposure which will raise their vitamin D levels.

For those who are older, a healthy balanced diet and outside play during the recommended times, according to the season, will increase levels of vitamin D.

If you are concerned as to whether your child may be at risk of a vitamin D deficiency, you can read the Ministry of Health's recommendations available on their website or contact your family doctor for further information.

<http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/companion-statement-vitamin-d-and-sun-exposure-pregnancy-and-infancy-new-zealand>

<http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/healthy-eating/vitamin-d>

## Children/youth exposed to gambling at risk

Many parents may believe that gambling is harmless, even if they gamble themselves. They also may believe that children and youth who gamble are unlikely to face problems because of it. Children today are exposed to gambling, often daily, through social media and other online forums. Also parents buying lotto tickets and scratchies are seen as part of normal everyday life. This normalisation of gambling can help encourage children and youth to participate in gambling activity without understanding the risks associated.

To understand the risks of harmful gambling young people face, consider the following points:

1. Children are only a few years from becoming adults who could legally gamble in gambling venues (pubs, clubs).
2. Many children are gambling without themselves or their parents being aware, as many games aimed at young people are gambling in disguise. It may not include money or only a small bet of one or two dollars. This can seem harmless however it can escalate quickly or normalise gambling behaviour.
3. Research has found that approximately 6% of children who gamble at a young age will develop a gambling problem later in life.

### So what can be done?

Here are a few tips that can reduce the risk of our children experiencing harm from gambling.

#### Lead by example:

Children are watching what we do. Be careful of your own gambling behaviour and attitude towards gambling.

Avoid emphasis on 'winning' through gambling as an easy way to gain money.

#### Be aware of the risks associated with gambling:

- Teach children that gambling is not a risk-free activity. Even though most children will never develop a gambling problem, research has shown that the earlier an individual tries gambling, the more they are at risk of developing an addiction to gambling as an adult. Discuss this with your children and encourage them to not participate in gambling-type games.

#### Talking about gambling:

- When talking with children about the risks of alcohol and other drug use, include gambling as a risky behaviour too.
- Talk about the poor odds of winning and how we cannot rely on luck for a living.
- Talk about the risks associated like loss of hard earned money, debt, damage to relationships and potential crime to get funds to gamble with.
- Encourage discussion with your children; ask your child what he/she thinks about advertising through social media and gaming. Speak about how advertising could influence or attract us to a particular harmful product and how certain games imitate gambling behaviour without the losses of real gambling products.
- Keep checking in with your children and keep open communication so they can come to you if they do find themselves in trouble.

#### For more information on gambling harm services, please contact:

The Salvation Army Oasis  
43 Chapel Street  
Masterton 5810  
Phone: (06) 370 3317

## Keep well this winter! Some key messages from Acute Services

Winter is here with shorter days, cold nights and the usual round of winter colds and illnesses.

Here are some tips for keeping well this winter:

- Get your yearly **flu vaccination**. It's free for many people and one of the best ways to stay well.
- **Keep yourself and your home warm**. Contact Wairarapa Healthy Homes on (06) 370 1019 for heating tips and to see if you're eligible for free insulation.
- Keep **active** and get lots of **fresh air**.
- **Wash and dry your hands** thoroughly to keep the germs away.
- Eat lots of **fruit and vegetables** – they're a great source of vitamins!
- **Cover coughs and sneezes**. Put tissues straight in the bin and wash your hands afterwards.

- **Avoid slips, trips and falls** – watch those frosty steps and paths.
- If you're playing winter sport, remember to **warm up** before the whistle and **cool down and stretch** afterwards.

**If you're unwell, stay at home and keep the bugs from spreading. See your family doctor early on when you are unwell or call Healthline on 0800 611 116.**

**1**  
Family Doctor

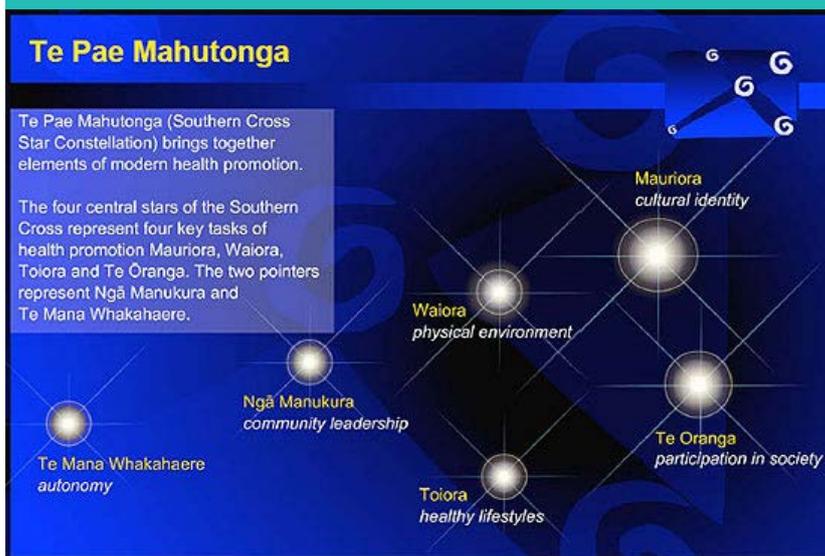
**2**  
After Hours Service

**3**  
Emergency Care

### FEELING UNWELL OR INJURED? Where should I be?

- Contact your family doctor first – they know you and the care you need.
- Call Healthline 0800 611 116 – for free medical advice 24 hours a day.
- Ask a pharmacist – they are a good source of information.
- For weekend help – Wairarapa After Hours service is available 9am-5pm at Masterton Medical Centre. Phone 06 370 0011. You don't have to be a patient at Masterton Medical to use this.

## Te Pae Mahutonga – The Southern Cross Model



Te Pae Mahutonga is a model used in health that brings together the dimensions of health promotion, specific for indigenous peoples, that is underpinned by tikanga Māori (Durie, 2004).

Māori perspectives of health are symbolised in this model as the Southern Cross stars and represent a holistic approach to health:

- Waiora represents "the natural environment and environmental protection".
- Mauri Ora represents "cultural identity and access to the Māori world".
- Toiora represents "wellbeing and healthy lifestyles".
- Whaiora represents "full participation in the wider society".

The two pointer stars represent Nga Manukura (effective leadership) and Mana Whakahaere (autonomy).<sup>1</sup>

Health models specific to indigenous peoples, such as Te Pae Mahutonga, are beneficial in identifying many determinants of good health at many levels and are important vehicles for achieving overall Hauora (health).

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/populations/maori-health/maori-health-models/maori-health-models-te-pae-mahutonga>

**Regional Public Health – Wairarapa works to keep the community healthy by providing services that promote good health practices and prevent disease.**

**We go where you work, learn, live and play to help you stay healthy; health begins before you need medical care. Our vision is health and well-being for the members of our community most at risk.**

**The team is available for advice and practical help. If you would like a public health nurse or advisor to come to see you or for more information about public health services in the Wairarapa call (06) 377 9111 or visit [www.rph.org.nz](http://www.rph.org.nz).**