

Living Streets Aotearoa



New Zealand Walking Conference 2006

Getting There on Foot in NZ Cities and Towns – Taking the Next Steps

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ABSTRACT

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Presentation topic	Hikoi – Walking program focussing on working with Maori Communities		
Presentation title	HIKOI		
Presentation Style	Presentation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Interactive Workshop <input type="checkbox"/>
Time Required	0-10 mins <input type="checkbox"/>	10-20 mins <input type="checkbox"/>	20-30 mins <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Presentation Remit (500 word maximum)

Hikoi is a programme targeted at Māori that aims to address the health disparities between Māori and non-Māori by promoting regular walking in a comfortable and supportive environment. The individuals from communities in Wellington, Porirua, Lower Hutt, Upper Hutt, Wainuiomata, Waikanae, Otaki participated. There is a large Maori presence in these communities and in most cases signs of high deprivation is evident.

The objectives of the *Hikoi programme* are:

- To assist Previously Inactive participants to achieve a level of physical activity of 2½ hours per week;
- For Previously Inactive participants to sustain an activity level of 2½ hours per week for the last four weeks of Hikoi
- To have a percentage of Previously Inactive people still walking 2½ hours per week one to two months later.

Programme description

The programme is managed and run by Regional Public Health. Individuals come from communities in the greater Wellington region. Teams set their own individual and team walking goals and are free to decide how they would achieve those goals (i.e. walking individually or together as a group).

This is a ten-week programme and each week team leader records the time walked by individual team members. Team leaders use occasional spot prizes to reward the efforts of individual team members. There are more substantial prizes for the team and individuals who walk the most overall, awarded at a prize giving ceremony held at the completion of the 10 weeks

Programme outcomes

Previous evaluations reported an increase in physical and mental well being from having participated in the Hikoi programme. Some participants reported significant weight loss and others had successfully given up smoking. Many interviewed stated that the most enjoyable part of Hikoi programme was meeting new people, and many enjoyed spending time with their whānau and socialising whilst walking. The team leaders interviewed for this evaluation felt they had developed new skills in how to motivate groups of people, and derived immense satisfaction from having helped their team achieve a common goal.

Analysis of the outcomes achieved by the sample of 168 participants who had data from at least two out of the three phases (i.e. before, during, and after) of the programme suggests that the Hikoi programme easily achieved its objectives in terms of participation by the target population. Previously inactive people in the sample exceeded the walking activity targets early in the programme and maintained their walking activity not only over the last four weeks of the programme, but well beyond the end of the programme. Both active and previously inactive participants in the sample achieved statistically significant increases in walking activity as a result of the programme.

Critical success factors

The programme represents a unique blend of the organisational capabilities of Regional Public Health combined with genuine grassroots community action. Structuring the programme around walking helps to ensure widespread appeal, particularly amongst the previously inactive participants. The team competition element gives relatively inexperienced team leaders a convenient motivational tool to keep their teams going. The support provided to team leaders by the project's co-ordinators is a vital element in sustaining community action.

Conclusions

The Hikoi programme is a concrete example of how modest increases in physical activity can be achieved amongst a large community of at-risk Māori.