



# DOUBLE THE FEET ON THE STREET

NZ Walking Conference 2008  
4-5 August, Auckland

Conference Organisers  
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<b>Presentation topic</b>	<b>Sharing successful community walking initiatives and approaches</b>		
<b>Presentation title</b>	Push Play the walking way.. Sport BOP's Walking Philosophy		
<b>Presentation Style</b>	<b>Presentation</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Workshop / Walkshop</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Estimated Time Required</b>	0-10 mins <input type="checkbox"/>	10-20 mins <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	20-30 mins <input type="checkbox"/>

## Abstract Remit

Sport Bay of Plenty is one of 17 Regional Sports Trusts around New Zealand who promote the 30 minutes a day Push Play message. Sport Bay of Plenty covers a diverse region, in both geography and demographics. The main centers include Tauranga, Whakatane and Rotorua, with smaller communities extending from Te Kaha in the Eastern Bay to Waihi in the Western Bay. The demographics and health statistics of these communities range vastly, and this combined with the issue of regional coverage create a challenge in promoting a consistent physical activity 'Push Play' message across the Bay of Plenty that is applicable and appealing for all.

While the geographical spread of the Bay of Plenty presents issues around taking a 'one size fits all' approach to physical activity, every area of the region boasts superb natural outdoor environments to enjoy. From the spectacular coastline to the forests, lakes and scenic cities, the natural settings right on our back doorstep provides motivation to get active. We believe the key to creating a strong activity culture is to provide leadership and consistent messages around activity that is inclusive and accessible to all. As walking is the ideal form of activity to utilize the outdoor setting and has minimal barriers in terms of affordability, assessability and achievability, Sport BOP has adopted a walking philosophy which has been the focus of our Push Play promotion over the past year.

Sport Bay of Plenty would like to present on three key initiatives which have been implemented as part of our 'Walking Philosophy'. All of these initiatives aim to 'normalise' walking as part of everyday life – both for internal staff and the wider community.

### 1) Push Play Passport Challenge

This community event takes place on Push Play Day each year in both Tauranga and Rotorua. The event has multiple aims; a) to highlight walking as a mode of transport; b) to prove to people that they can fit walking into their everyday life in and around work, school and other commitments and c) to recognise and reward regular walkers. Checkpoints are set up around the CBD and participants receive Push Play Passport which outlines where the checkpoints are. Participants walk from checkpoint to checkpoint with the aim of getting their passport stamped along the way, with checkpoints being set up by other community organizations with a link to walking (eg Heart Foundation and Cancer Society).

### 2) 'Walk the Bays' Workplace Walking Challenge

Increasingly workplaces are proving an ideal setting for reaching people who may otherwise be uninterested in increasing their involvement in walking. 'Walk the Bays' is a virtual challenge whereby staff members compete with their number of steps to complete laps of the Bay of Plenty over a six week period, enough time to enable momentum to be gained toward achieving a walking culture. It is a simple challenge and aims to get staff thinking about how to incorporate more walking into their everyday working lives – as active transport, replacing emails with steps for internal communication and walking to meetings.

### 3) Sport BOP staff Walk the Talk

Last but not least Sport BOP staff definitely practice what they preach with regard to walking. Internal walking meetings are regular occurrences and external networking meetings have also been successfully facilitated while pounding the pavement. Staff members are seen as positive role models within the community and feedback from stakeholders has been that the walking meeting concept has been replicated as a result.

**Author Profile**

Amy Fowler is the Active Living Team Leader for Sport Bay of Plenty and oversees Active Living across the Bay of Plenty region. Penny Mitropoulos is the Western Bay of Plenty Active Living Coordinator and organises a number of successful initiatives to get more people walking, more often. Amy and Penny will team up to present on Sport BOP's walking philosophy and goal of making walking an integral part of everyday living in the Bay of Plenty.