



17 JUN, 2021

The trip of a healthy lifetime

Te Puke Times, Te Puke Bay of Plenty

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School children encouraged into better habits

Applications are now open for the 2021 Zespri Young and Healthy Virtual Adventure.

The initiative is a health and wellbeing in-schools programme helping to instil healthy habits in Kiwi kids while rewarding them with a virtual trip around the globe.

In 2020, 20,000 Kiwi children completed the adventure with incredible outcomes including eating more fruit and vegetables, drinking more water and reducing leisure screen time by 71 per cent, despite a tough year in and out of Covid-19 lockdowns.

The 2021 adventure which will see tamariki virtually visit global destinations like Japan and Peru alongside New Zealand sporting legends and Asics ambassadors Ardie Savea, Amelie Ekenasio, Kane Williamson and Samantha Charlton.

Students earn points through completing real-world habits like moving more, drinking water, eating healthy food and getting more sleep.

Classes work together as a team to earn points, to help them move around the global course.

At each destination, they will be met by an ambassador who will show them around and share some interesting local history and geography.

Young and Healthy Trust founder Kim Harvey created the Virtual Adventure after becoming worried about the growing health crisis in New Zealand and understanding that habits formed early can set us up for a lifetime of good physical and mental wellbeing.

“Research has shown that the first 10 years of a child’s life lay the crucial

foundations for attitudes and habits that impact their physical and mental health as adults.

“We must find ways to cleverly engage our tamariki so they understand how the choices they make impact how they feel and function, giving them the power to make the best choices they can every day, for long term health success,” says Kim.

Beyond health and wellbeing, teachers have embedded elements of the adventure across the curriculum to support maths, literacy and geography and have noted improved concentration and teamwork in the children.

“The feedback from teachers has been outstanding and even better, kids have told us that they feel great during the programme and have more energy to learn – and it’s even encouraging their teachers and parents to also adopt more healthy habits,” says Kim.

Zespri CEO Dan Mathieson is excited for this year’s Zespri Young and Healthy Virtual Adventure to get under way and to support another 20,000 children on their virtual travels.

“We’re really proud to support the adventure as we know it brings positive benefits to the lives of thousands

of New Zealanders, helping ensure happier, healthy young people and communities,” says Dan.

“It’s really important we invest in the wellbeing of our people and communities to help them thrive.

“The Zespri Young and Healthy Virtual Adventure makes a real difference by teaching children the importance of eating well and exercising, as well as caring for their mental health and our environment.”

The term 4 program is open to classes all over Aotearoa and participation is free thanks to the support of partners like Zespri.

The Trust ensures teachers in participating schools have the resources and support they need to encourage kids to succeed.

The Details

- When: Term 4, 18 October to 19 November 2021
- Where: Primary school classrooms all over Aotearoa – from the far north to the deep south
- How: Teachers and parents can sign up at youngandhealthy.org.nz



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Te Puke Primary School students were rewarded with Asics shoes for their participation in last year's Zespri Young and Healthy Virtual Adventure initiative.

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