



02 DEC, 2020

Health project puts a spring in pupils' step

Whanganui Midweek, Whanganui

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Work of class rewarded with new shoes

Logan Tutty

A class of Whanganui pupils has been rewarded with new shoes for excelling in a nationwide programme promoting the importance of healthy living and exercise to children.

Class 5 from Kaitoke School has been participating in Zespri's Young and Healthy Virtual Adventure for the past five weeks.

The initiative was created to encourage schoolchildren and their families to eat better, exercise more and lead more environmentally conscious lives.

Each student created their own unique avatar to represent them on the virtual adventure with their classmates, earning points in the real world for simple healthy habits like moving as much as possible, minimising screen time, drinking plenty of water and eating fruit and vegetables.

The students were recognised for their commitment and efforts during the challenge, with the Zespri team surprising each class member with a new pair of Asics shoes.

Class 5 teacher Jacoba Glenny said it was a great learning experience for the class and created a lot of healthy discussions.

"Interestingly, they really enjoyed

entering all the data and keeping track of what they were doing and eating," she said.

"Them being able to track everything and see what weighs each other out made them think about what they were doing."

Zespri spokeswoman Amy Porter said Kaitoke School excelled in the challenge and the students were deservedly rewarded.

"We have managed to reach 20,000 students across 250 schools all over the country," Porter said.

"It runs for the whole term. We just want to instil some really good healthy habits that set them up for the future. It was exciting to be in Whanganui."

Glenny said the programme helped raise awareness of the importance of small things such as eating, drinking and sleeping.

"Sleep was a big one for us. Kids are just not sleeping enough.

"This journey helped them learn how important sleep is for learning and general function."

The new shoes were the cream on top, Glenny said.

"Some of these kids haven't had new shoes before. They've had hand-me-downs forever. They are just extremely grateful.

"For them to just have a gift like this, they are just so appreciative."



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Pupils, including Tehoe Paamar (front), from Class 5 at Kaitoke School, try out their new Asics shoes.



Kids from Class 5 will be stepping out in style in their new shoes.

Photos / Bevan Conley