

Community Partnership 2014-15

Active Mums, Dads and Kids

For many new migrant families living in West Auckland, language and cultural issues are barriers to participating in exercise. Encouraging these families to be physically active was the aim of an exercise programme organised by the Chinese New Settlers Services Trust (CNSST) in West Auckland.

The trust, which started in the garage of its founder Mrs Jenny Wang QSM, provides social services, education and social housing.

Its goal is to establish Asian community multi-service centres and to help all Asian new settlers to integrate and contribute to New Zealand society.

Consulting the target audience

The Active Mums, Dads and Kids programme was developed after consultation with local mums. The mums were keen to see dance movements included in exercise classes with their children as they had previously enjoyed CNSST's aerobics classes. There was also interest in yoga.

Under this new initiative, CNSST focused on involving the whole family in physical activity, with yoga classes for mums and dads and baby dance classes for young children.

The classes were a chance for parents to meet other new migrants and to find out about other low cost exercise classes running in the community. Parents were also given information about healthy eating ideas for children under five-years-old.

Making it easy to participate

The programme was designed to make it easy and low cost for parents to get involved. Eight weekly sessions of yoga classes were organised



on Saturdays at the Blockhouse Bay Community Centre. Baby dancing classes were also for eight weeks but held at the New Lynn Community Centre. A gold coin donation was suggested for attending the classes, to cover venue hire.

Mums and dads were encouraged to bring their children with them to the community centre so they could be looked after during the class. There were lots of toys and books on hand to keep the kids happy whilst their parents exercised.



Sustainability was one of the aims of the initiative. Mums and dads were encouraged to take an active role in the classes by learning how to lead the group and collecting the gold coin donations.

Targeted Promotion

CNSST has developed relationships with all the Chinese media channels in Auckland including newspapers, radio and social media. The classes were promoted through these channels to reach as many new migrant families as possible.

Maintaining Momentum

Gloria Gao, Social Services Manager for CNSST, says the Active Mums, Dads and Kids classes have been a success with over 30 families taking part in the programme and 100% satisfaction rate reported by participants.

“All the families have improved their lifestyle and level of exercise through participating in the programme. They are keen to attend other exercise classes in the future too.”

Top tips

- » Get input from your community when you are designing your programme.
- » Make it easy to participate – think about what factors might prevent people participating.
- » Promote your activity widely through local media channels.