



Media Release – For immediate release
September 16 2009

Te Totara School Achieves SunSmart Accreditation

Te Totara School in Hamilton will have a special visit from Undercover Cody this week to mark becoming a SunSmart accredited school.

A Waikato/Bay of Plenty Cancer Society health promoter will present the school with their SunSmart School sign and Undercover Cody, the cool SunSmart turtle, will perform for the children.

The school is one of 159 SunSmart Accredited schools in the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region.

Health Promotion Manager Melanie Desmarais says teaching SunSmart behaviours and keeping children safe in the sun are key reasons schools take part in the programme.

“New Zealand has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world and it is widely recognised that over exposure to harmful ultraviolet rays plays a significant role in this. The SunSmart Schools Accreditation Programme has been developed to encourage SunSmart behaviour at schools to reduce children’s exposure to UV radiation and their risk of skin cancer.”

To get accredited, schools need to implement a SunSmart policy during terms one and four that encourages SunSmart behaviours such as wearing broad brimmed hats, SunSmart clothes and sunscreen, and seeking shade during peak UV times 11am to 4pm. It also includes creating an environment that promotes the provision and use of shade as well as rescheduling outdoor activities outside peak UV times. Curriculum content on how to be SunSmart is also part of the accreditation programme which is reviewed every three years.

Melanie says the accreditation process is available to all primary and intermediate schools in the country and recognises the implementation of a comprehensive sun protection policy.

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“For many families sun protection may be an important component when selecting a school that ensures their child’s general safety.”

The programme was developed in Australia over a decade ago and has been shown to be the most effective of its kind. It is recommended by the World Health Organisation as the “Gold Standard” schools’ sun protection programme.

The accreditation process is designed to be undertaken on-line through the SunSmart schools website with assistance from a school’s local Cancer Society. The website provides schools with SunSmart information, curriculum materials and draft policy information.

For more information, please visit www.sunsmartschools.co.nz.

Ends

Please note:

Te Totara School will be having an Undercover Cody performance on Friday September 18 at 2:20pm – media welcome

For further information, please contact:

Judy Gould
Chief Executive
Waikato/Bay of Plenty Division of the Cancer Society of NZ Inc.
Ph: 07 838 2027
Email: judygould@cancersociety.org.nz

Editor’s Note:

The Waikato/Bay of Plenty Division of the Cancer Society of New Zealand Inc is a non-profit organisation that receives no direct financial support from the Government. We are funded by bequests and donations from the public as well as fundraising activities.

We are committed to minimising the impact of cancer in our communities by providing:

- Quality support services for people affected by cancer
- Education to promote early detection and help reduce the risk of cancer
- Free information and resources on cancer
- Support for research into the causes, prevention, detection and treatment of cancer

