



# Community

A PUBLICATION OF YMCA AUCKLAND

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## Learning to swim a family affair for Tuaras

Addressing the vitamin D deficiency in early learners

YMCA pledges support for youth employment





**YMCA is here  
for your community!**

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## Community

*Community* is the official publication of YMCA Auckland.

*Community* provides YMCA a way to recognise the achievements of our members, individuals, teams and organisations that we work with and support.

We are pleased to be able to keep our wider community up to date with news of the work YMCA is engaged in and to share our successes with you. We hope you enjoy reading this issue of *Community*.

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It's hard to believe we are nearly half-way through 2017. As we approach mid-year it's an opportunity to look both forward and back. At an individual or organisational level, how we view what has been can have a profound influence on how we approach and prepare for what may come.

A story in this edition of *Community* really drives that home for me. Recently one of our Early Learning Centres undertook an appreciative inquiry review through the Ministry of Education. The approach of the review was very much grounded in looking at the positives - what do we do well and how can we build on our strengths?

This approach can pay dividends in our personal and professional lives. By taking the time to focus on the positives, we can empower ourselves with the knowledge and confidence to keep working towards our bigger goals.

Since summer, YMCA Auckland has had a number of successes. In mid-April our Raise Up youth programme received a 2017 New Zealand Youth Award from Youth Minister Nikki Kaye. Less than a week earlier our swim schools received an award from Swimming New Zealand.

Awards are a great recognition that serve to tell me we're on the right track from an industry perspective, but it's the personal member stories that really reveal our impact. Take for instance Lisa Tuara's story in this edition of *Community* about what YMCA swimming lessons have meant for her family following a scare at the beach last summer.

I'm very proud of what our 700 YMCA staff across Auckland and Hamilton achieve on a daily basis. I'm also very grateful for the strong partnerships we have forged to help amplify our efforts. If the past is anything to go by, the second half of 2017 is sure to be a good one.

Peter Fergusson  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
YMCA Auckland

# Learning to swim a family affair for Tuaras

**A**sk Lisa Tuara, mother of three children, why she decided to send her family to swimming lessons and she can trace the decision back to one definitive moment last summer.

“We were swimming at a beach up north last Christmas and a large wave came in and bowled one of the kids over.”

Lisa says what followed was a stressful few minutes that felt like hours for the family.

“The kids struggled to correct themselves and find their feet, and it became really apparent at that point the importance of knowing how to swim.”

In 2016 there were 21 preventable drownings at New Zealand beaches. The sobering statistic is the highest it has been in recent years, and hints at the hidden dangers along our coastlines and the need for water safety skills across the population.

Lisa, who originally hails from Northland’s Cape Reinga, her husband Dayton and their three children, Wiri (3), Jaden (10) and Tengaire (12) regularly spend time at the beach, but no one in the family has ever formally learnt to swim.

The opportunity for lessons soon arose when Lisa entered a YMCA Auckland competition on radio station MoreFM in February. As one of five competition winners, Lisa received a family membership to the Onehunga War Memorial Pool and Leisure Centre managed by YMCA.

Lisa says entering the competition was also prompted by her own health goals: “I’m really conscious of the fact that I need to get healthier for my family. I’ve got three

children and I want to be around for them.”

Through their membership the Tuara family received two terms of swimming lessons for Dayton and their three kids, and gym memberships for Lisa, Dayton and her father.

Four months on and the results speak for themselves. Lisa has lost weight, her three kids have become more confident in and around the water and her husband has learnt to swim.

“Prior to the lessons my husband Dayton was unable to tread water. Now when we come to the pool he’s off and trying to do different things like freestyle.

“He had no idea how to do all that before he started his lessons. I can’t imagine what else he’s going to learn as we go along.”

Dayton’s progress is also setting an example for young Wiri who is following in his father’s footsteps and can now confidently put his head under water. And for Lisa’s two daughters, Jaden and Tengaire, the swimming lessons have been invaluable in teaching them new skills.

“At first I didn’t want to go to the lessons because I thought I could already swim, but then I started learning all these things and realised I couldn’t swim,” Tengaire says.

The whole family is now confident their next trip to the beach will be a relaxing one thanks to their newfound skills. Lisa says anyone thinking about swimming lessons for their family should go ahead.

“It’s really amazing. I keep telling people, whenever I meet people – do you do swimming lessons? You should do it.”

*“We were swimming at a beach up north last Christmas and a large wave came in and bowled one of the kids over.”*





# Massey **Raise Up** secures funding for new Youth Hub

## Massey's Raise Up youth group

has secured over \$38,000 in funding for a new Youth Hub to be located at Massey Leisure Centre managed by YMCA.

Funding for the Youth Hub was attained via an online public voting competition called the 'Million Dollar Mission' run by West Auckland's The Trusts. Massey's Raise Up coordinator Conin Bowker said a rapid population increase and injection of new families into Massey has seen a growing need for more designated youth spaces in the local area.

"The closest current youth space is in Henderson," Conin says.

"A lack of dedicated youth spaces in the local area means young people are missing out on resources and support that can empower them to develop events and programmes that benefit the Massey community."

Last year members of the Massey Raise Up crew presented a case for a youth hub to the Henderson-Massey Local Board. The idea was met with enthusiasm from local board members.

"We're pleased to say funding for phase one of the project has now been secured through The Trusts Million Dollar Mission."

Massey Raise Up is hoping to secure further funding for the project to enable an outdoor extension to the space. The opening of the Youth Hub is anticipated for late 2017. YMCA Auckland thanks all supporters who voted for the Youth Hub in the Million Dollar Mission and West Auckland's The Trusts for their generous contribution to the project.



## About Raise Up

Raise Up is YMCA's youth development programme run by youth for youth and operates in 11 locations across Auckland and Hamilton.

The programme began at Massey in 2002. Since July 2016 Raise Up youth crews have provided 16,321 hours of voluntary service to their local communities. In April 2017 the programme received a Youth Group Award from Youth Minister Nikki Kaye in the 2017 New Zealand Youth Awards.

Visit [raiseup.co.nz](http://raiseup.co.nz) for more information.

*"The funding will enable us to develop a space that will meet the complex and diverse needs of youth in our local community."*



# Addressing the vitamin N deficiency in early learners

## Step inside YMCA's Manurewa

Early Learning Centre and what's immediately apparent is the flow between the indoors and outdoors.

"The doors to the outside play area are open all the time," centre manager Shannon Keane explains. "Closed doors present a barrier to the children that says it's not safe out there."

YMCA's Manurewa Early Learning Centre is part of a growing movement amongst early childhood centres to address what's been dubbed the 'Vitamin N deficiency'. N stands for nature.

"We're not experiencing enough of the outdoors with our children in New Zealand," Shannon says.

"Instead we're often distracted by screens or we feel too time-poor for outdoor activities."

To tackle the problem, Shannon and her team are working on pulling back the

technology and helping their students get in touch with being a bit muddy. The result is regular trips to a local bushland and the integration of a number of natural objects into the centre's onsite play areas.

"A lot of the objects we have found and collected from local bushland have become the go-to play objects for the kids, rather than their plastic toys," Shannon says.

## Building on their success

In April 2016 Shannon and her team undertook an appreciative inquiry review through the Ministry of Education. Shannon says the review enabled teachers, students and parents to focus on how they could enhance their positive experiences and risky play in the outdoor environment, and helped them put in place a number of steps to ensure their students could explore the natural world in a safe but self-directed way.

"It really made us as teachers think about how we were interacting with the children, and how the positive experiences of risky play outside are enhanced when children explore and experiment in the environment and are viewed as capable, competent and confident independent learners."

Feedback from parents and caregivers has been positive, Shannon says, with many finding their children were wanting to play outside more often when at home.

"It's been really great to support our children and families in forming connections with nature and helping them fall in love with the outside world."

Shannon and YMCA's Early Learning Centre Group Manager Lorraine Duncumb recently presented the findings of their appreciative inquiry review at the 2017 Child and Nature Network Conference in Canada.



# YMCA pledges support for youth employment

## YMCA Auckland has become

one of the latest signatories to the Youth Employment Pledge - an initiative by Auckland Tourism Events and Economic Development (ATEED) aimed at getting more young talent into work and on career pathways.

Nearly 50 per cent of YMCA Auckland's 700 employees are aged under 25, says CEO Peter Fergusson, and the organisation is committed to recruiting more young talent and providing career pathways for youth.

"Our 22 fitness, recreation and early learning centres across Auckland benefit from the diversity and fresh ideas introduced by our younger employees."

Peter also noted a significant portion of people in local communities serviced by YMCA fall into the 18-30 year old age bracket.

"It's important we have staff that can understand the needs of youth and challenge us as an organisation to engage more effectively."





# YMCA Swim Schools receive Swimming New Zealand award

**YMCA Swim Schools in Auckland** has received a Quality Swim Schools award at the 2017 Swimming New Zealand Awards.

The award acknowledges outstanding performance from swim schools around the country.

YMCA Swim Schools in Auckland

has worked tirelessly to become an industry leader by placing a strong emphasis on teaching water safety within its learn to swim programmes.

YMCA also aims to break down barriers to swimming and water safety lessons by providing affordable or subsidised classes to communities

across Auckland. Over 10,000 students have participated in YMCA Swim School lessons in the past year.

In March a new partnership was launched with Plunket Auckland to offer half-price lessons to Plunket clients with children under 5. Visit [ymcaauckland.org.nz/plunket](http://ymcaauckland.org.nz/plunket) to find out more.

## Running for Family Camp

**A group of 10 eager fundraisers** donned their running shoes at the Ports of Auckland Round the Bays event on Sunday 5 March in aid of the YMCA's Family Camps cause.

The YMCA team runners managed to raise over \$1550 to help send several families to YMCA's iconic Camp Adair. The Family Camp programme is a weekend of cabin-based camping and activities that provide families an opportunity to spend quality time together. YMCA thanks the fundraisers for their hard work and amazing effort.



YMCA Auckland sincerely thanks the below funders for the following donations over the last quarter. Their generosity provides vital contributions to YMCA's community-based work across Auckland and Hamilton.

FUNDER	VALUE	CAUSE
Aktive Targeted Populations Innovation Development Fund	\$8,500	Jumpstart Indian pilot project
Puketapapa Local Board Strategic Relationships Grant	\$15,000	Lynfield Raise Up
Constellation Communities Trust	\$8,899	Shakespear Lodge equipment
BlueSky Community Trust	\$3,508	North Shore gym equipment
The Trusts Million Dollar Mission	\$38,375	Massey Youth Hub
Lottery Community Grants (National)	\$36,812	Raise Up
Transpower Community Care Fund	\$50,000	Camp Adair renovation
Papakura Quick Response	\$2,000	SPACE
Waitemata Local Grants	\$4,500	City Stadium resources
Sargood Bequest	\$2,500	Raise Up
Henderson-Massey Quick Response	\$2,000	SPACE
Manurewa Quick Response	\$2,000	SPACE
Len Reynolds Trust	\$2,500	Raise Up
Whitehouse Tavern Trust	\$3,875	SPACE
The Trusts Community Foundation	\$10,000	Massey ELC outdoor development
Regional Events Fund	\$4,000	Raise Up Walk the Line 2017
Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust	\$40,000	Raise Up



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