

Media Release



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Taupō District kids learn safe skills

Nearly a thousand Taupō District school children were treated to an expo on keeping safe including when it comes to fire, water and road safety, bullying and civil defence.

Taupō District Council and the Safe Kids Coalition organised the Safe Kids Show to teach school kids how to be safe and smart for free, largely thanks to sponsor Contact Energy. The kids came from as far afield as Kuratau, Turangi, Wairakei and Waitahanui to attend the expo, as well as most of the schools in Taupō.

The kids learned about lake and river safety, which is particularly important with summer just around the corner. Taupō District Council's Emergency Manager, Phil Parker, went through the ShakeOut earthquake emergency drill with the kids, which was a good reminder following the eruption of Mount Tongariro in August and the 5.5 earthquake many felt in October.

Council Community Projects Officer, Hellmuth Hartung, says the response from schools that attended the expo had been positive. "The kids really enjoyed it and we've had fantastic feedback from schools already," he says.

Mr Hartung says it was good for kids who did not take part in the ShakeOut earthquake drill in September to be able to learn the skills they need for a civil defence emergency. "We had kids diving under their chairs – they all took it really seriously which is great," he says. "We're directly showing these kids what to do and they, in turn, will tell their families about it and the Taupō District community will be keeping safer."

Taupō District Council's association with the Taupō Safe District coalition, which is accredited by the World Health Organisation, requires events like the Safe Kids expo to fulfil the requirements of the title of being a safe district. Mr Hartung says the expo was an effective and fun way to do this. "It's making Taupō District a safe district to live, work and play, and that's what it's all about," he says.

School children aged between seven and nine participated in the expo and a number of agencies, including the police, fire service, harbourmaster and Violence Intervention Network, attended to teach kids how to be safe. The show was held at the Great Lake Centre on November 1-2.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Tina Jakes • Democracy and Community Engagement Manager • 07 376 0726

Vicki Waterhouse • Communications Advisor • 07 376 0718 • 027 644 1129

Leola Abraham • Communications Manager • 07 376 0762 • 021 227 3781

Taupō District Council

www.taupo.govt.nz