

Y CENTRAL ANNOUNCES NEW FAMILY CAMPS AT RAUKAWA

\$20,000

Towards helping families in Whanganui and Manawatu connect and engage in the outdoors through family camps at Camp Raukawa.

Y Central is committing \$20,000 in funding to help Whanganui and Manawatu families have a classic Kiwi camping experience. It's an opportunity for families to reconnect in a beautiful outdoor environment filled with adventures and excitement. The fully-funded Family Camp programme is an antidote to being locked down at home, says CEO Brendan Owens: "This is the ultimate chance to forget about Covid-19 and the stresses of the last few months. It's all about spending quality time together after some tough months for New Zealand families."

The Family Camps will be held at Camp Raukawa, set on 17 acres of rural land in the remote Parapara Hills, 50 minutes north of Whanganui. Established in 1956, Camp Raukawa sits on the Mangawhero River – there's a water slide, tubing activities and always plenty of swimming. Families can also try the super-sized flying fox and the climbing wall. All this, plus those inimitable New Zealand camping moments, like the sound of moreporks overhead while you toast marshmallows over an open fire.

"Family Camp is designed to cater to all types of people, because the activities vary depending on your ability," says Brendan. "The instructors are highly skilled and Camp Raukawa has recently been awarded the OutdoorsMark for safety, so all our families are in safe hands. They can really switch off and spend a few days reconnecting with each other."

The Family Camp programme has previously been run at YMCA's Kaitoke Outdoor Education Centre in Upper Hutt, with outstanding feedback. Following their experience, 90% of participants said they wanted to spend more quality time together as a family, with three-quarters saying they had increased their time spent together as a result of the camp.

Family Camp at Raukawa is part of Y Central's wider post-Covid-19 recovery plan. During lockdown, the Y Central team has been thinking about ways to lower the barriers that prevent Kiwi families from being happy and healthy – as a result, new community initiatives are being launched across the lower North Island. And this fresh approach to building healthy Kiwi families also extends to the wider YMCA network. The Covid-19 crisis has led to the launch of Let Kids Be Kids, which aims to support lockdown recovery for young New Zealanders through sport, education, camps and family time.

The nationwide YMCA network is the largest not-for-profit provider of sport and recreation services in New Zealand. Together we provide services throughout the country, including indoor and outdoor sport and recreation options, health and fitness programmes and water-based activities. With over 2.7 million participations nationally in YMCA active recreation programming (as of April 2020), it is estimated that 1 in 6 New Zealanders is involved in some way with the YMCA.

If you'd like to learn more about Let Kids Be Kids, and find out how to support the cause, visit our donation page: ycentral.nz/donate.

 **LET KIDS BE
KIDS AGAIN!**

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