

Y CENTRAL COMMITS TO HELP KIDS BE KIDS AGAIN

\$100,000

Towards helping local families as they recover from the lockdown, in conjunction with the nationwide Let Kids Be Kids campaign.

Healthy, happy Kiwi families – that’s the YMCA’s goal. Usually that happens through community sport, camps, education and affordable after school care. But this year, the covid-19 lockdown brought all those activities to a halt. Now Y Central has committed more than \$100,000 towards initiatives that help local families as they recover from the lockdown, in conjunction with the nationwide Let Kids Be Kids campaign.

“We know COVID-19 has impacted family life,” says Brendan Owens, YMCA Central CEO. “School, sport and socialising are all important ways that we stay connected and healthy. So, we’re trying to help whanau get those back.”

The team at Y Central worked together during lockdown to come up with ways to help families in the Greater Wellington, Palmerston North and Whanganui regions get back to normal:

- ▶ **Around \$20,000** will go towards providing zero fees for all junior sports leagues in Porirua and Masterton for the rest of 2020. After several months of missing out on sports and the community connection they provide, the free fees scheme breaks down barriers for local kids to get back into volleyball, football or basketball.
- ▶ **Around \$20,000** is being spent providing Whanganui and Palmerston North families with a classic Kiwi camping experience at Camp Raukawa, in 17 acres of remote rural land on the Mangawhero River. The camp caters to all ages and abilities, and YMCA research shows that family camps lead to more quality time spent together as a family, even months later.
- ▶ **\$50,000** has been allocated to building a new high ropes course at Kaitoke Outdoor Education Centre in Upper Hutt. This will benefit school students at camp by building their confidence and gives older students a way to push themselves further. The new ropes course also provides a training pathway for senior students who’d like to pursue a career in outdoor education.
- ▶ **Up to \$50,000** is going toward providing half-price programmes throughout the July school holidays for families across 10 locations in the lower North Island. Plus, by staying on-site, the overall cost of the programmes is significantly lower. Designed to help families where parents’ jobs have been lost and hours have been reduced, the 50% price reduction is available to anyone who signs up before June 26.

There has already been strong uptake on the fee-free sports leagues and the half-price holiday programmes, with strong positive feedback at community level across the region. It’s also been hugely rewarding for the Y Central staff who have seen their initiatives put into place and happy kids returning to our facilities.

“Thanks to the wage subsidies, the lockdown allowed everyone at Y Central to work together and define where our priorities lie,” says Brendan. “The YMCA isn’t just a sports club or an outdoor facility. We’re part of New Zealand’s heritage and now we can also be part of its recovery.”

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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