

# Media Release

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15<sup>th</sup> October 2008

## Funding helps kids grow their own veggies

Children at Otumoetai Playcentre are planting summer vegetables and herbs and learning about where their food comes from.

“Everyone gets involved including kids from two years upwards who love to help with the digging,” says mum Trish Knox.

The playcentre received funding from the Bay of Plenty District Health Board (BOPDHB) as part of the Healthy Eating Healthy Action (HEHA) Nutrition Fund and is using the money to improve their existing vegetable garden.

“The small veggie patch wasn’t very successful as I don’t think it got enough sun and the drainage was poor. The new raised beds are thriving, we’ve just harvested heaps of broccoli,” says Trish.

A large garden shed is currently being put up to house new tools and equipment.

Parents are encouraged to carry on teaching their kids at home by growing vegetables and herbs in their own gardens.

“Children learn by example and develop lifelong eating habits from their parents and the foods they eat as a child,” says BOPDHB HEHA district coordinator Jessica Burke.

Some families get to take vegetables home if they’re not used up at the playcentre.

“It’s nice to be able to help families out by giving them some fresh vegetables to take home,” says Trish. “Cherry tomatoes are a big hit with the kids – they love them. And they really enjoy the veggies with dips like hummus.”

Funding is currently available for education settings to improve their nutrition environment and help them develop a culture of healthy eating and nutrition. Anyone wanting to apply for funding should register their interest with the HEHA district coordinator, Jessica Burke on 07 579 8283 or email [jessica.burke@bopdhb.govt.nz](mailto:jessica.burke@bopdhb.govt.nz). For more information visit the website [www.bopdhb.govt.nz](http://www.bopdhb.govt.nz) and click on the HEHA logo.

Healthy Eating Healthy Action (HEHA) is the Ministry of Health's strategic approach to improving nutrition and increasing physical activity. This is a joint strategy at a national level between the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC). The goals of the HEHA strategy are to improve nutrition, increase physical activity, and reduce obesity. Regionally, the BOPDHB works alongside its health, education, and sport partners to develop a variety of projects to meet these goals.

#### **Funding available now**

- Education settings are able to apply for funding through the Bay of Plenty District Health Board to improve their nutrition environment and to help them develop a culture of healthy eating and nutrition.
  - Funding can be for anything that relates to nutrition such as building a vegetable garden, health eating shows, compiling a healthy recipe book, improving the canteen.
  - There is one funding round each year during spring.
  - Funding applications for the current round must be received by 14 November 2008.
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*Kids at Otumoetai Playcentre are getting their hands dirty and learning where their food comes from.*

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