

MEDIA RELEASE

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Smokefree parks get the nod from Rotorua residents

A policy to make Rotorua's Redwoods and children's playgrounds Smokefree has won widespread approval from Rotorua residents.

A survey conducted by Toi Te Ora – Public Health in December 2008 shows 85% of people in Rotorua think having a Smokefree outdoor policy is a good idea. A third of the people surveyed were smokers.

More than 500 people were interviewed about Rotorua District Council's Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy, which came into place last December. The policy aims to normalise non-smoking and encourage positive role models for children and young people in Rotorua.

"The survey shows that Rotorua residents care about the future of our children and young people and want to provide a clean, healthy place to play," says Toi Te Ora – Public Health Regional Manager Graeme Savage.

Field research will continue in February to measure effectiveness of the policy, signage and marketing, and to gauge public support. The information from the survey may be used to advocate the benefits of having a Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy to other councils in the Bay of Plenty and Lakes districts.

"We are encouraging all district and city councils to adopt a Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy to help make non-smoking the norm and move towards a cleaner and healthier place to live," says Graeme Savage.

Editors notes:

- 85% of people think a Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy is a good idea
- 7% don't think a Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy is a good idea
- 8% were 'unsure' whether a Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy is a good idea
- 43% of participants are Maori and 42% are NZ European
- 61% regularly care for children aged 16 and under.

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**Toi Te Ora - Public Health provides health protection and promotion programmes aimed at supporting groups and communities to improve and sustain health.
We serve the greater Bay of Plenty and Lakes districts.**