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**Media Release**  
For immediate release



## **WATER SAFETY AWARDS 2010**

**CATEGORY: EDUCATION**

**WINNER: SPORT OTAGO**

**PROGRAMME: SKILLS 2 SWIM**

Sport Otago were today presented with the Education Award for their Skills 2 Swim Initiative at the annual Water Safety Awards today in Wellington.

The Education Award recognises a programme, initiative or campaign where individuals or specific groups of people develop water safety knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Matt Claridge, General Manager, Water Safety New Zealand comments, "Sport Otago's Skills 2 Swim initiative has been developed to improve swimming skills of children across Dunedin. WSNZ is seeking to address a national decline in swimming ability of our youth through the Sealord Swim For Life initiative and the Otago based programme is a great example to the rest of the country of what can be achieved when communities recognise an issue and work collaboratively to seek solutions. The initiative is broad in its approach and through supporting access to pools, the provision of quality teaching, the collation of city wide assessment data and continually updating schools on the level of achievement is making areal difference in the swimming ability of Dunedin youth."

The initiative has proven itself in its short existence; swimming ability among the targeted age group has risen from an initial baseline of 21% to 59% of children able to swim 200m.



John Brimble, Chief Executive of Sport Otago was delighted to receive the Award, “We very much appreciate this recognition and would like to express our thanks for the support and commitment of Water Safety New Zealand for the Skills 2 Swim Programme.”

Brimble also made special mention of the Dunedin City Council, the Otago Community Trust and SPARC for their assistance in making the programme happen.

Image: Sport Otago representatives receive the Water Safety Award for Education 2010.

*left to right*

Alan Warner QSO, Chair Water Safety New Zealand Board.

Brent Ward, City of Dunedin Skills 2 Swim, Coordinator

John Brimble, CEO, Sport Otago

...Ends...

**For more information or interview contact:**

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**WATER SAFETY NEW ZEALAND**

Formed in 1949, WSNZ is the national organisation responsible for water safety education in New Zealand.

WSNZ targets drowning prevention and water safety in communities through education. WSNZ oversees proven, proactive and preventative education interventions. In addition, WSNZ prioritizes leadership, collaboration and enabling the water safety sector with resourcing, research, planning and communication.



WSNZ is the lead agency for the Swim and Survive sector in New Zealand. The Swim For Life initiative is the major project for WSNZ. WSNZ seeks to address a dramatic decline in swimming ability of our youth. The Swim For Life initiative is an overarching, national project established to:

- Provide all children with access to the water;
- Facilitate the delivery of quality swim and survive programmes in primary schools;
- Provide the foundations for the development of a culture that produces generations of New Zealand families that are water safe.

