

25 January 2006

Media Release

For immediate release



Whanau Nui/Family Learn to Swim and Survive Lessons in Manukau

Water Safety New Zealand (WSNZ) has endorsed the valuable community initiative in Manukau that offers free lessons to families wanting to learn and develop swim and survival skills. The one week long programme provides the opportunity for children, parents and whanau to learn together and develop core survival skills in the water.

Injury Free Counties Manukau in partnership with Manukau City Council Leisure Services have facilitated the lessons, which aim to reduce the number of non-intentional injuries in the Counties Manukau area, with a specific focus on high risk groups such as Maori, Pacific Island and Migrant/New settler communities.

The Whanau Nui Swim project provides a valuable stepping stone for the development and establishment of WSNZ's Pacific Peoples Water Safety Strategy. Project Manager Ben Taufua explains "the role of encouraging and ensuring the development of water safety skills amongst Pacific People sits with the community itself. Families, Churches and community groups need to embrace what is both an issue and an opportunity for our people."

WSNZ Maori Water Safety Project Coordinator Mark Haimona has been involved with the Whanau Nui Swim project since 2005. Haimona comments; "the Whanau Nui Swim project has provided Maori in Manukau with an opportunity to learn an essential life skill whilst embracing our culture."

"Some outstanding resources have been developed as by-products of the project including the Akona Te Kauhoe learn to swim guide produced by Manukau City Council, which provides specific learn to swim commands for instructors in te reo Maori to communicate with tamariki and whanau."



Information and resources for the Maori Water Safety Strategy can be viewed at www.maoriwatersafety.org.nz for all water safety education information go to www.watersafety.org.nz

...Ends...

For more information or interview contact:

Matt Claridge

Operations Manager

Phone: (04) 801 9600

Mobile: (027) 478 1836

Email: matt@watersafety.org.nz

Mark Haimona

Maori Water Safety Coordinator

Mobile: (027) 684 0408

Email: mark@watersafety.org.nz

Ben Taufua

Pacific Peoples Water Safety Project Manager

Mobile: (027) 472 0037

Email: btaufua@xtra.co.nz

