

Hon Tony Ryall

Minister of Health



Media Statement

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Green prescriptions helping inactive children

Health Minister Tony Ryall says a survey of families involved in a Government programme to get inactive children moving underscores the importance of teaching the benefits of both physical activity and good diet.

The Government is spending nearly \$1 million on the *Green Prescription: Active Families* programme which identifies children who are at risk of long-term health problems due to their weight. More than 900 children and their families got support to lead more active and healthier lifestyles in 2009/10.

"The Government is also investing \$20 million in the Kiwi Sport programme, supporting sporting and physical activity at schools and sports clubs."

"Addressing problems early means you can take a child who might be destined for a life of unhealthy weight, with the associated health problems, and quite literally you can change their destiny," Mr Ryall says.

"More than 70% of these kids are now encouraging other members of their families to get more active - and 95% of families report that they've all improved their diets since their child began the programme.

The families themselves have changed their outlook on life - with 97% recognising the value and importance of being physically active, and 93% of parents reporting improvements in their child; including more energy and confidence, weight loss and the child requiring less medication.

Mr Ryall says the survey shows 96% satisfaction with Active Families, and that should inspire health professionals and educators alike.

The report is available from: <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/grx-active-families-survey-finalrep-jun2010?Open>

MOH Media contact: Antony Byers 04 817 9648 or 021 241 7449