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## **Brain Food for Better Learning Diet and Behaviour seminar**

Turner Centre Kerikeri Saturday 25 February, 2017

This seminar promoted formal and informal discussions with teachers and selected professional speakers concerning the links between children's learning behaviour and their diet.

The Kerikeri Brain Food for Better Learning team promoted 5 day/ forever additive free school trials but other schools such as South Auckland's Yendarra water only policy, have similar and very effective approaches.

**Professor Andrew Day** is a paediatric gastroenterologist, head of department at Christchurch Hospital. He thinks that all seven year olds in New Zealand should be tested for coeliac disease. His presentation outlined the effects of bad intestinal bacteria brought about by unhealthy diets, leading to symptoms including brain fog and obesity.

**Professor Elaine Rush** of AUT, with her amazing **Project Energy** for all schools, as a champion of physical activity and nutrition, won a NZ Order of Merit. This week **The New Zealand Herald** is publishing Explore the Gulf posters. Publishing Prof Rush's activity and healthy eating posters would help all those schools struggling to dismantle junk food tuck shops and establish water only policies.

It was very disappointing to find only a handful of Northland schools had taken Project Energize on board, 80% having rejected the offers from Sports Northland and the Health Department. I was very surprised that several Northland schools I'd spoken to on the telephone, felt as though they had adopted a 'damaged children syndrome' I'd encountered in failed East London schools.

The few Northland teachers, who attended this seminar were given instructions on how to enrol their school.

**Susan Dunlop of Yendarra a Dec 1, South Auckland Water only policy school** has created an 'oasis of calm' by not banning any kind of food but rewarding healthy lunches. Her teachers spend 10 mins every day with children eating snacks and lunches, identifying those foods that are healthy and why they are healthy. This school was chosen by Nigel Latta to tell New Zealand that it can be done and is well worth doing for measurable improvements in Health, mood, learning and behaviour.

**Chery Kingi, head teacher of Kerikeri Kindergarten** introduced a 5 day/forever additive free school trial, a few years ago and was amazed at the improvements assessed over one week. Sleep problems just disappeared and families have been inspired to avoid additive junk food in favour of whole foods. The kindergarten has a lively cooking programme with pre-school children inventing dishes, using sharp knives and trying out chopsticks. Chery's little chefs are beautifully photographed and her programmes well documented. ERO expressed the wish that all schools would have this Kindy's approach.

Cheryl Kingi has been invited to visit Yendarra School. Susan Dunlop is going to visit Kerikeri Kindergarten. Healthy Families represented by Raewyn Nafatali wants an invitation to any further Brain Food seminars or promotion of additive free. Teachers are going back to Northland schools to request Project Energize inclusion. Professor Rush is keen to share her expertise with Physical Activity and whole food nutrition.

**Brain Food parent nutrition brochures** are available free of charge to any school thanks to the **Oxford Sports Trust of Whangarei**. Our thanks also goes to the **Whangaroa and Bay of Islands** community Boards of the FNDC who also helped finance this very successful seminar. Congratulations to the private school who sent five teachers.

**NOT THE END**