TĀKARO to play

Inspired by research from Play in the Hutt 2018

HUTT CITY TE AWA KAIRANGI

active in the Hutt

SPORT NEW ZEALAND

healthy families Lower Hutt He oranga whānau

FOREWORD

Hutt City Council's vision is for Lower Hutt to be a great place to live, work and play.

A growing body of international evidence is showing a decline of play in our communities and highlights the detrimental effects lack of play can have on the learning, development and health of our tamariki. This Play in the Hutt research seeks to understand the local state of play in Lower Hutt.

As a city we need to empower our communities to better understand and appreciate play and acknowledge the importance of play in creating a healthy and active society. Increasing access to quality play experiences for our tamariki will enhance their development and enrich the lives of Lower Hutt residents.

Hutt City Council has invested in creating innovative playable spaces in our civic centre and destination playgrounds. Now there is an opportunity to create more playable neighbourhoods and communities with more child friendly streets. It is clear the responsibility of reducing barriers to play is shared by local government and community and that we need to work together to create and enable more quality play opportunities.

By creating more playful environments we will lay the foundations for a healthier future for all of our community.

Ray Wallace
Mayor of Lower Hutt

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is a product of collaboration between Hutt City Council, Healthy Families Lower Hutt and Sport NZ teams. We are grateful for the input and advice from Janette Brocklesby and Amie O'Brien – members of Sport NZ's Intelligence team, Sport Wellington, our local schools, and all of the families who participated and shared their experiences and time in this research. Special thanks to Scott Mackenzie from Sport NZ for leading the way nationally on play and Lara Andrews for leading this work across Lower Hutt.

All statistics, quotes and photos shared in this report are from our local play events.

CONTENTS

TĀKARO To Play

Foreword and Acknowledgements 2

Table of Contents 3

Snapshot 4

Recommendations 5

WHAT IS PLAY? **7**

WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT? **9**

ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS **10**

KEY FINDINGS **13**

Play Radius 13

Play Practices 15

Play Beliefs 17

Play Barriers 19

Enabling Play 21

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN? **23**

What can you do? 24

References 24

APPENDICES **25**

Appendix 1: Research Design and Approach 25

Appendix 2: Mesh Block Tables 26

Appendix 3: Active NZ 2017 Participation Report 27

Play in the Hutt asked parents and children about their experiences of play in Lower Hutt.

THE CHALLENGE

96% Of parents reported that their children are NOT playing every day.

88% Of children in this study reported that they do NOT play every day.

THE BARRIERS

53% Of our barriers are parental fears of cars, traffic, strange people and loose dogs.

GETTING AROUND

How children get around their neighbourhood most often:

7	46	40	50

GETTING TO SCHOOL

How children get to school most often:

14	21	34	31

WHERE WE PLAY

Our children spend most of their time playing close to home, but still feel confident venturing further afield in their neighbourhood.

Home/Backyard *Park/Playground* *Friends house*

WHERE WE WANT TO PLAY

Top 4 favourite places to play according to children in this study:

Pool *Friends house* *Park/Playground* *Home/Backyard*

A SOLUTION

It's easier to play outside if there are things to do, fun events, and things to play with.

Parents **40%**

Children **36%**

LOCALLY LED

There is a strong demand for local play interventions, and a high willingness to engage in any local play programming.

Hutt City Council and their partners work everyday to make Lower Hutt a great place to live, learn, work and play. By making our environments more playful, we're laying the foundations for a healthier future for everyone.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this report aim to answer one question – how do we practically enable our tamariki and rangatahi to play more in their daily activities? Based on the literature and our local insights and data these are the high level recommendations that the Play in the Hutt partners believe will start to address the state of play in Lower Hutt.

PLAY LEADERSHIP

'Play' needs to be on someone's agenda. Local government should consider their role in leading the conversations and actions on play, working alongside community and cross sector agencies. Opportunities include:

- Council officers across all relevant teams committing to creating new play experiences and opportunities and reorienting resources from their budgets to enable local and community play
- integrating play into policy and planning functions to ensure collective vision for a more playable city
- taking practical action to increase safety and reduce barriers to play in our streets and public spaces
- creating and funding a play advocate role to lead and integrate across Lower Hutt
- develop a database of local play champions that can lead play at a neighbourhood level.

PLAY SPACES

For play to become an everyday experience for our tamariki and rangatahi we need to address the opportunities for quality play.

This means:

- Council continuing to grow its focus on activating its many local parks, reserves and hard-spaces in order to bring people out and create playful habits close to home
- increasing access, awareness and social permission for play spaces close to our homes and in our neighbourhood reserves and open spaces
- growing opportunities for intergenerational play that benefits the wellbeing of the whole whānau.

WALK AND CYCLE

More convenient active transport infrastructure combined with proximity of things to do and access to green spaces will entice our young people to play on the way for example to and from school, work and local destinations and activities.

PLAY ZONE SIGNS

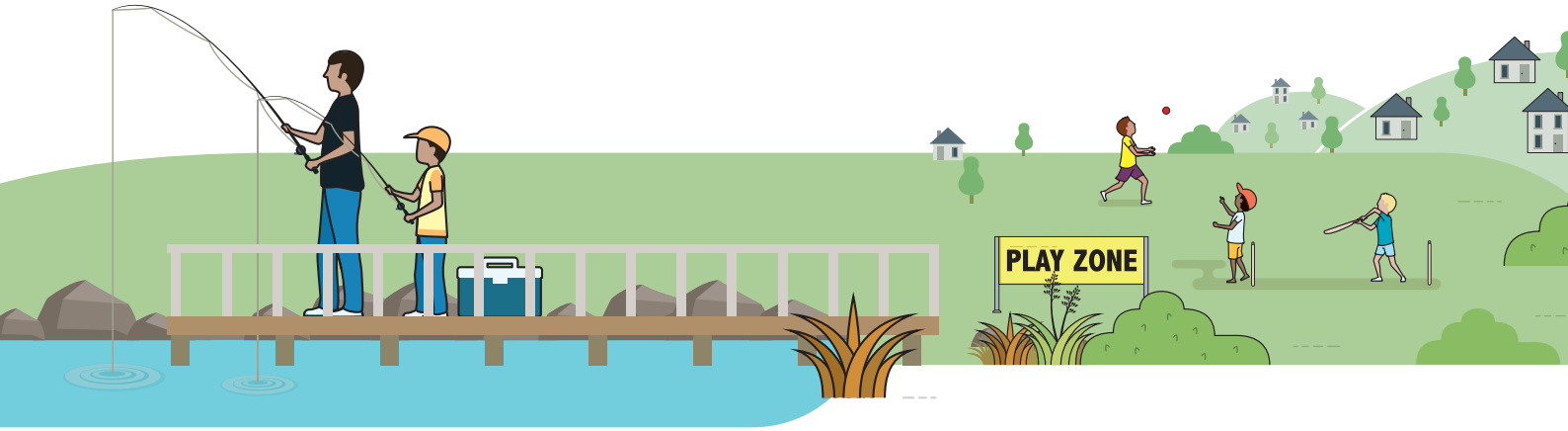
Brightly coloured signs or objects that give children and young people visible permission to play outside on the street, and provide the cues for motor vehicles to slow down.

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON PLAY

Play is deeply influenced by our culture and whānau experiences and expectations of play. There is a need to gain more insights into the multi-cultural perspectives of play to better understand what the barriers and opportunities for play are, especially for our young Māori and Pasifika people. By better understanding play from diverse world views we can strengthen and enrich play experiences for all young people.

play is HAPPY

Riddiford Gardens Play Day, Lower Hutt 2018



WHAT IS PLAY?

Play is:

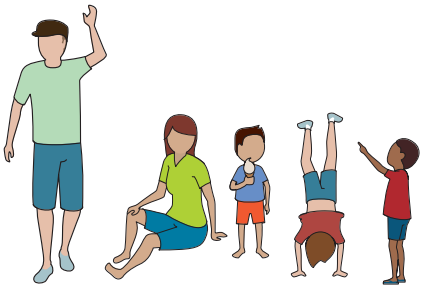
- spontaneous – it will happen anywhere
- freely chosen and self determined
- fun, accessible, challenging, social and repeatable
- for no purpose.

Play is essential for growth in cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.[1] It builds fundamental physical literacy, fosters creativity and innovations, builds ability to identify and manage risk. Play contributes to not only children's lives but also the wellbeing of their families and whānau and wider community.[1]

Play in the Hutt forms a foundation of work that advocates the importance of play and aims to increase accessibility and opportunities for Lower Hutt's children, young people and families to play. This initiative is guided by Sport NZ's Seven Principles of Play.[2]

Hutt City Council want to empower our communities to better understand and appreciate play and the importance of play in creating a healthy and active society.

> *"Play is defined as intrinsically motivated, personally directed, freely chosen and fun"*
> – SPORT NZ, 2017



1 International Play Association, 2018
2 Sport NZ, 2017

play is CONNECTION

Barton Grove Reserve, Naenae, Lower Hutt 2018

WHY PLAY IS IMPORTANT TO LOWER HUTT?

Play is where children practice life

Across NZ 82% of young people aged 5 - 17 play in any given week. On average, young people spend 11 hours participating in play, active recreation and sport and 53% of this time is spent playing.[3]

Unfortunately, this study reveals that Lower Hutt children are missing out on experiencing these essential life skills through play every day.

There is a growing concern that our increasingly risk adverse society is contributing to a generation of 'bubble wrapped' children that have limited opportunities to play creatively, instigate physical activity, overcome challenges independently and learn to manage risks appropriately.[4]

Play is important because unstructured play provides opportunities to be active, to enhance a range of essential skills and is critical for children's healthy brain development.[4, 5] Although, Lower Hutt parents and caregivers agree on the importance of play for children's development, our tamariki are not playing enough. We believe this research is essential to understanding the barriers young people face, so that we can determine the best approach to generating more opportunities for our tamariki to gain quality play experiences in Lower Hutt.

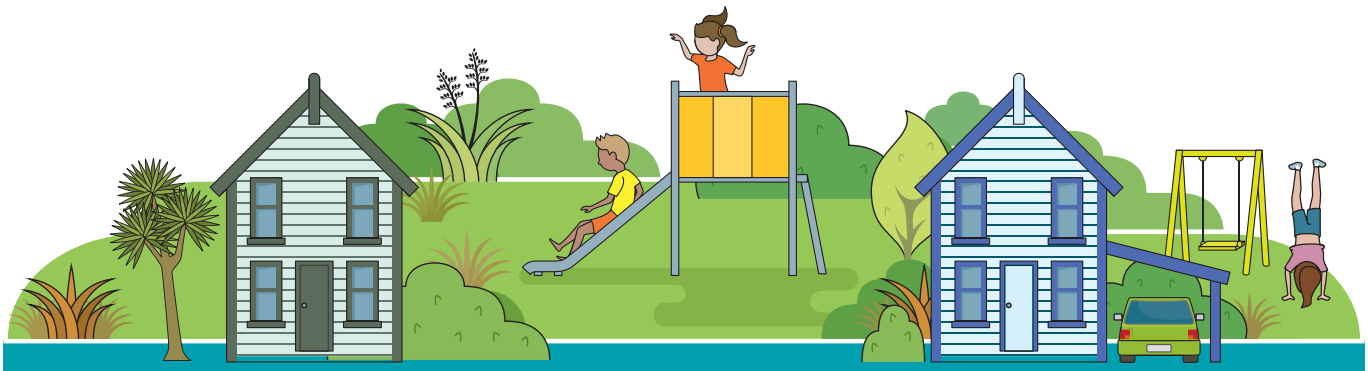
3 Sport NZ, 2018
4 Duncan and McPhee, 2015
5 Schofield, 2013

ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

As there was no current baseline data on play in Lower Hutt, it was important to start with a strong local focus, with the aim of scaling the delivery and impact city wide.

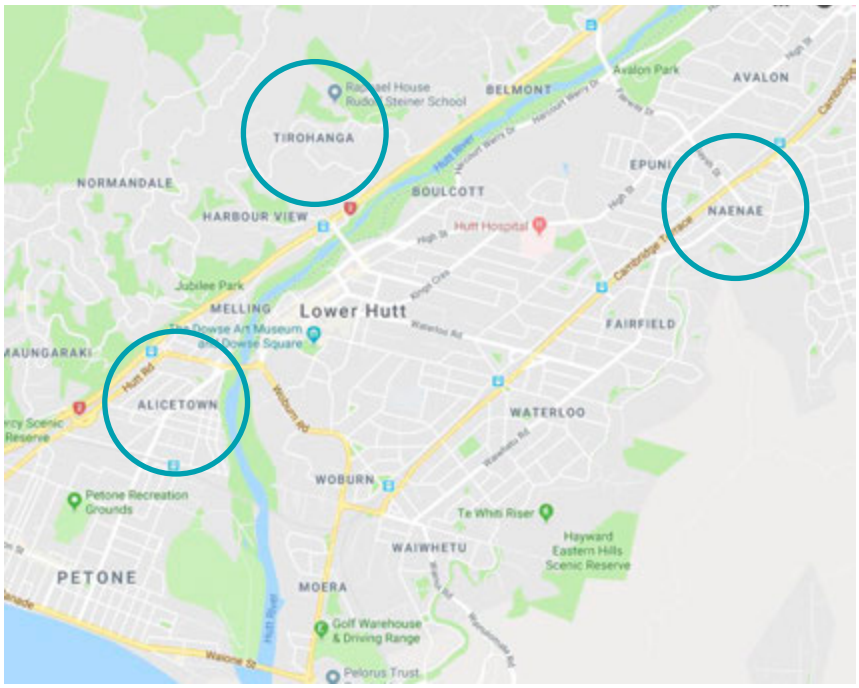
Our play networks were selected to ensure a spread of socioeconomic, urban, suburban and more sparsely populated realities with high levels of young people. We selected area units representing levels 1, 5 and 10 of the deprivation index and then used census mesh block data to define communities at the centre of these measures.[6]

Play in the Hutt delivered street parties in 3 local neighbourhoods: Naenae North, Alicetown and Tirohanga. Online and paper surveys were distributed at each street party and left in every mailbox within a 5 - 7 mesh block radius in each neighbourhood.



See Appendix 1 for full demographic data and Appendix 2 for 2013 Census Mesh block data tables.

6 Stats NZ, 2013



CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

NAENAE NORTH

- High deprivation (10)
- Suburban
- 30% under 15 years old.

ALICETOWN

- Medium deprivation (5)
- Urban
- 25% under 15 years old.

TIROHANGA

- Low deprivation (1)
- More sparsely populated
- 20% under 15 years old.

DEMOGRAPHICS

107

of Lower Hutt parents and caregivers of children 0-18 years old completed our survey.

230

Lower Hutt children were reported on by parents and caregivers.

85

of Lower Hutt children aged 5-18 years old completed our survey.

play is ACTIVE

Taita Play Day, Walter Nash Park, Taita, Lower Hutt 2018

KEY FINDINGS

PLAY RADIUS

Similar to international and NZ trends, Lower Hutt children seem to be getting fewer opportunities to play and are playing less outside due to a combination of limited time, permission and space.[2, 3] Many of our children are living lives which are more sedentary and experience less adventure and risk.[4]

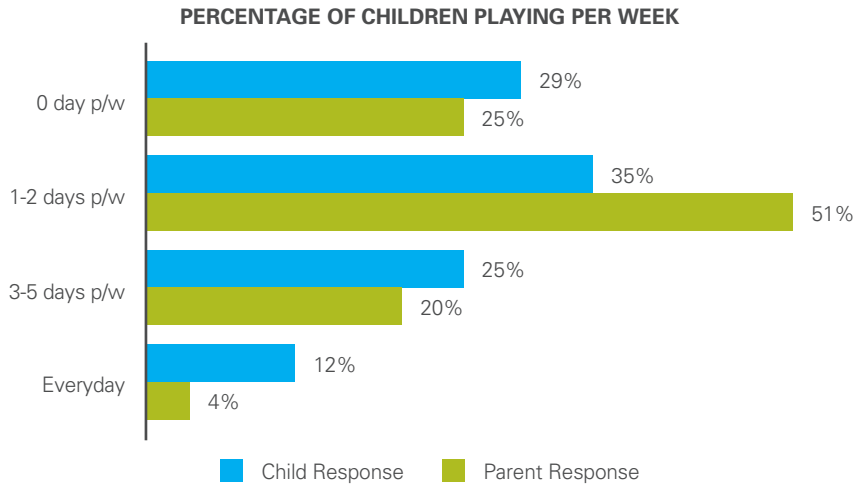
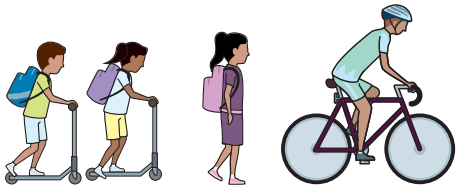


Figure 1. How many days per week children play and hangout in their neighbourhood

This report highlights that when Lower Hutt children are given the opportunity to play outside they tend to walk, bike, scooter and skate around their neighbourhood.

Our findings also showed that most children travel to school by car. However, in general over half of all children in this study use active modes of transport to get to school and around their neighbourhood most often.



PLAY RESULTS

96%

of Lower Hutt parents in this study reported that their children are NOT playing every day.

88%

of Lower Hutt children in this study reported that they do NOT play every day.

29%

do NOT play at all out-of-school time.

playisMESSY

Taita Play Day, Walter Nash Park, Taita, Lower Hutt 2018

KEY FINDINGS

PLAY PRACTICES

The majority of Lower Hutt children spend most of their out-of-school time playing and hanging out at their favourite places: at home in their backyard, at a friend's house, at the swimming pool and at a local playground.

Insights on Lower Hutt children also revealed that playing games and water play were the top two favourite ways to play.

Future play initiatives, policies and urban planning should consider these 'most common' and 'favourite' places to play when looking to increase play opportunities for Lower Hutt children, youth and families.

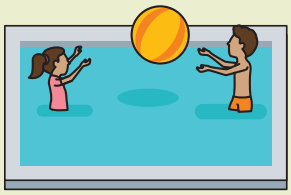
"I love to play games like tag and hide-n-seek, otherwise just hang out." – LOCAL 11 YEAR OLD

"I get really happy when I get to play with my friends"
– NAENAE 10 YEAR OLD

PLAY PLACES:

HOME

FRIEND'S HOUSE



SWIMMING POOL

PLAYGROUND/PARK

play is RISKY

Riddiford Gardens Play Day, Lower Hutt 2018

KEY FINDINGS

PLAY BELIEFS

While Lower Hutt parents and caregivers in this study support the importance of play, **62% OF PARENTS' INITIAL THOUGHTS** about their children playing outside revealed mixed results.

When parents were asked about their first thought on play we found that barriers to play were top of mind. This shows that play is limited by fear and competing priorities.

"I want it for my child but it doesn't seem to be the norm."
– LOCAL PARENT

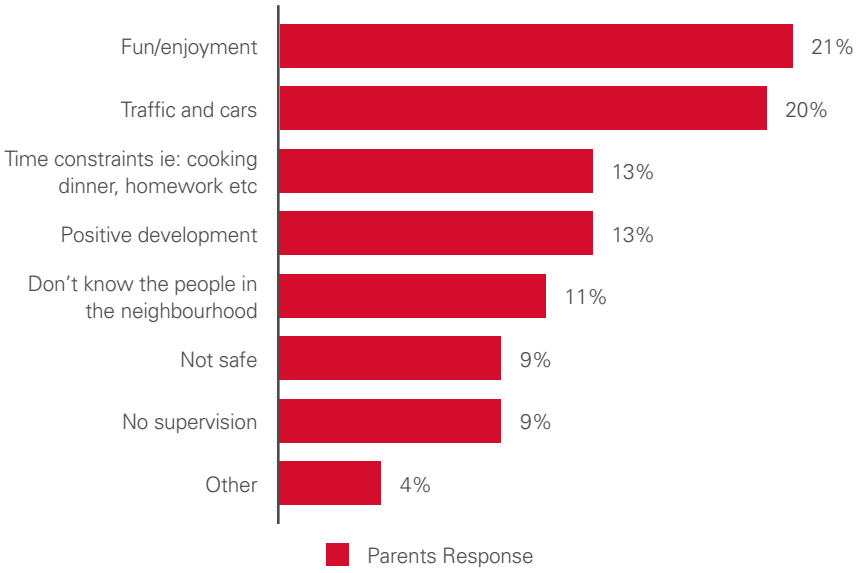


Figure 2. Parents first thoughts about their children playing in their neighbourhood.

In contrast, the majority of children in this study shared their **CONFIDENCE, EXCITEMENT AND ENJOYMENT** to play and travel independently in their neighbourhood.

"I am very happy to play because I am having fun and I am confident." – LOCAL 10 YEAR OLD GIRL

PLAY BELIEFS

34%

of Lower Hutt parents in this study believe play is fun, enjoyable and positive for development.

72%

of Lower Hutt children in this study feel confident playing outside with or without a grown up.

play is INTERACTIVE

Under 5's Expo, Walter Nash, Taita, Lower Hutt 2018

KEY FINDINGS

PLAY BARRIERS

Parental fears and constraints accounted for over half of the barriers that our young people face in order to play outside in their neighbourhood. This report highlights parents' key focus was around **SAFETY CONCERNS**.

As parents' concerns around safety increase, opportunities for children to engage in play outside diminish.[4]

Some children recognised their parents' concerns and felt that their play time was limited due to:

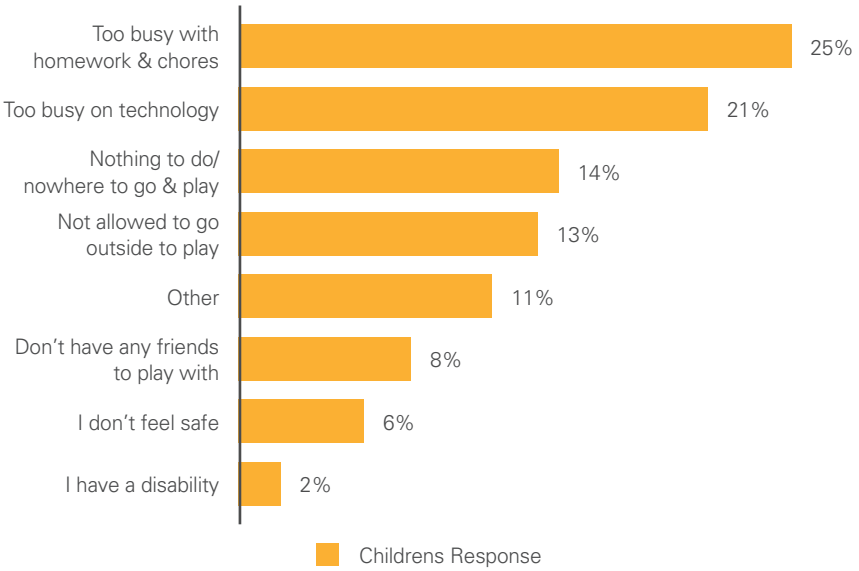
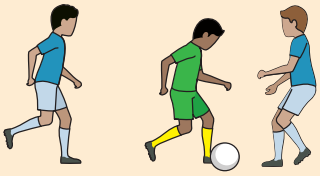


Figure 3. Children's reasons for not playing outside in their neighbourhood.

Overall, children revealed that they are either **TOO BUSY** or have **NO PERMISSION** to play outside in their neighbourhood. This finding is supported by insights from Sport NZ data found in Appendix 3.

"Have a way to slow down the traffic in order for the environment to be safer for children to play." – LOCAL PARENT



WHAT STOPS PLAY

24%

of **parents** are scared of cars, traffic, strange people and loose dogs.

23%

of **parents** reported their children are **not** allowed to play outside unsupervised.

46%

of **children** reported that they are too busy to play outside.

Mayo Grove, Naenae Street Event, Lower Hutt 2017

play is CREATIVE

KEY FINDINGS

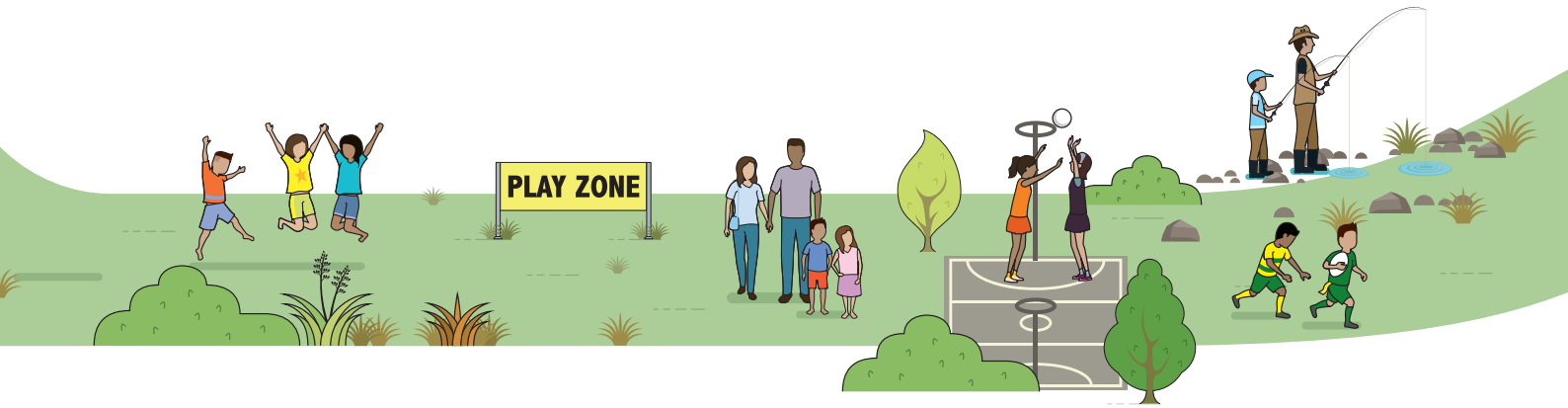
Enabling Play

The majority of **PARENTS AND CHILDREN** in this study want more local play initiatives with a high percentage of willingness to engage in local play opportunities. Sport NZ data also indicates that children want to spend more time being active with their family and whānau.[3] Local play initiatives that help build a sense of community connectedness through neighbourhood events and street parties will make play an easier option for families and their children.

"It would be great to connect with the neighbours so there's a sense of everyone looking out for each other." – NAENAE PARENT

"Build communities - get to know other kids." – LOCAL PARENT

"We put in a basketball hoop on the front of our garage just before Christmas and our son got to shoot hoops with a next door neighbour for a little while on it. First time for him playing with a neighbour and we have been here 5 years!" – TIROHANGA PARENT



play is SOCIAL

Barton Grove Reserve, Naenae, Lower Hutt 2018

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

Play in the Hutt research shows that Lower Hutt children and young people love being active and feel confident playing outside. This research highlighted the lack of play our tamariki are experiencing out-of-school time and is a positive step in gaining insights on what the barriers to play are and what our tamariki need to venture outside. We found a strong demand for local play interventions, and a high willingness to engage.

This research provides us with a deeper understanding of how Lower Hutt children feel about play and how parents and caregivers perceive their children's play and associated safety concerns. Hutt City Council and local communities need to work together to ensure that play becomes a priority for our tamariki and for future generations - to ensure healthy, happy, and active children.

Every child has the right to play
We are all enablers of play
Any space is a play space

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

We all have a role in enabling play. You can take action now to benefit our tamariki and whānau.

- Advocate for play in your organisation and community
- Take action to address barriers to play
- Become a play champion for your neighbourhood
- Share what you're doing to create quality play opportunities in your neighbourhood.

PLAYintheHUTT

WANT TO HELP US CHANGE THE CULTURE OF PLAY?

Sign up to be a local play champion by emailing **play@huttcity.govt.nz** or find out more at **www.huttcity.govt.nz/play.**

REFERENCES

1. International Play Association. (2018). *The Child's Right to Play.* Retrieved from http://ipaworld.org/childs-right-to-play/the-childs-right-to-play/
2. Sport New Zealand. (2017). *Young People Plan.* Retrieved from https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/attachments/Sport-New-Zealand-Play-Principles-Nov-2017.pdf
3. Sport New Zealand. (2018). *Active NZ 2017 Participation Report.* Retrieved from https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Main-Report.pdf
4. Duncan, S., & McPhee, J. (2015). State of Play: Executive Report. *Human Potential Centre, AUT University in Partnership with Persil.* Retrieved from www.persil.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/11/AUT_State_Of_Play-141015.pdf
5. Schofield, G. (2013). *The NZ State of Play Report.* Retrieved from https://www.nestle.co.nz/asset-library/documents/play_movement_whitepaper_nz.pdf
6. Stats NZ. (2013, September). *2013 Census map – QuickStats about a place.* Retrieved from http://archive.stats.govt.nz/StatsMaps/Home/People%20and%20households.aspx

APPENDIX I.

Research Design & Approach

	LOWER HUTT CHILDREN	LOWER HUTT PARENTS & CAREGIVERS
Sample (n)	85	107
Survey Age Range	5 - 18 years old	Parents & Caregivers of 0 - 18 year olds
Methodology	Online Survey (n=14) Paper Survey (n= 71) Creative Drawings	Online Survey (n=71) Paper Survey (n = 36)
Time frame	Surveys conducted between Nov 2017-April 2018	Surveys conducted between Jan - April 2018
Data Collection process	Naenae Street Event Alicetown Street Event Tirohanga Street Event Riddiford Gardens Play Day Rata Street School Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Te Ara Whanui Boulcott School	Naenae Street Event Alicetown Street Event Tirohanga Street Event Riddiford Gardens Play Day Taita Play Day Avalon Play Day Play in the Hutt Facebook Page

Figure 4. Based on data from research on Play in the Hutt 2018

Boulcott School, Lower Hutt 2018

APPENDIX 2.

Mesh Block Tables

Meshblock (2013 Areas)	Age in broad groups, for the census usually resident population count		Total households in occupied private dwellings
	Under 15 years	Total people	
NAENAE NORTH			
MB1959900	33	81	21
MB1959800	24	84	27
MB1959600	39	138	48
MB1959500	27	96	30
MB1959400	21	75	30
MB1959700	30	108	42
MB1959300	18	78	24
TOTAL	**192**	**660**	**222**

Figure 5. Based on Stats NZ (2013) Census map – Naenae North

Meshblock (2013 Areas)	Age in broad groups, for the census usually resident population count		Total households in occupied private dwellings
	Under 15 years	Total people	
ALICETOWN			
MB1924300	18	63	21
MB1924200	27	96	30
MB1923900	39	150	54
MB1924000	42	153	54
MB1924100	21	129	45
TOTAL	**147**	**591**	**204**

Figure 6. Based on Stats NZ (2013) Census map – Alicetown

Meshblock (2013 Areas)	Age in broad groups, for the census usually resident population count		Total households in occupied private dwellings
	Under 15 years	Total people	
TIROHANGA			
MB1919400	30	162	60
MB1919502	36	207	72
MB1920002	9	33	12
MB1919506	9	51	18
MB1919507	27	107	30
TOTAL	**111**	**560**	**192**

Figure 7. Based on Stats NZ (2013) Census map – Tirohanga

APPENDIX 3.

Active NZ 2017 Participation Report

Too busy	42%
No places nearby to do what I want to do	11%
I'm not confident enough	8%
My parents want me to focus on my schoolwork / other activities	7%
I have a disability that prevents me from participating	1%
I don't feel safe	1%

Q23. Why are you not doing as much physical activity as you would like or why do you not want to do more than you are currently doing? *(Asked of those age 8-17 only)*

School work	29%
Other hobbies	19%
Other physical activity	16%
Something else	6%
Work / job	5%
Family/family schedules	0%

Q70. You said you are too busy for more physical activity. What are you too busy with *(Asked of those age 8-17 only)*

Results based on all young people aged 8-17		Results among the 13% of young people aged 8-17 who said they *prefer to do other things*	
Electronic games	13% (based on all young people aged 8-17)	**Electronic games**	60% (based on those who prefer to do other things)
Spending time with family or friends	19% (based on all young people aged 8-17)	**Spending time with family or friends**	56% (based on those who prefer to do other things)

Q71. You said you prefer to do other things. What is it that you prefer doing? *(Asked of those age 8-17 only)*

(There are 2 different wording options at this question: Wording if Q23=code 14: You said you prefer to do other things. What is it that you prefer doing?, Wording if Q70=code 4 AND Q23 code 14 not selected: You said you are too busy with other hobbies. What hobbies are you spending your time on?)

HUTT CITY
TE AWA KAIRANGI

WWW.HUTTCITY.GOVT.NZ/PLAY

active in the Hutt

SPORT NEW ZEALAND

healthy families Lower Hutt
He oranga whānau