



15 August 2023

20,000 kiwi kids kick off the fourth Zespri Young and Healthy Virtual Adventure

20,000 children from 747 classrooms and 261 schools across New Zealand have today embarked on the annual five-week Zespri Young and Healthy Virtual Adventure, which inspires and educates kids to make healthy choices for a lifetime of good physical and mental health.

The launch day was celebrated at Te Ākau ki Pāpāmoa with 150 students from years three to five and a special guest appearance from ASICS Ambassador and sporting legend, Kane Williamson, who shared his favourite health and wellbeing tips for an inspiring start to the programme.

Young and Healthy Charitable Trust and Virtual Adventure Founder Kim Harvey is excited to get started and continue sharing the foundations of good health with this year's participants.

"The Zespri Young and Healthy Virtual Adventure is designed to encourage and educate tamariki to create their best health and wellbeing practices, and influence their friends and family to get involved too.

"Research shows the first 10 years of a child's life set the foundations for good health, so we've designed the programme in a fun and interactive way to help kids understand and notice for themselves what it feels like when they make healthy choices.

"The kids earn points for simple healthy habits like drinking plenty of water, eating fruit and vegetables, caring for their mental health and looking after our environment, which helps them travel virtually to different locations around the world with their classmates," says Ms Harvey.

This year includes a focus on 'Moving in Nature' to encourage more activity outside during the cooler months which is linked to many health benefits.

"We're so lucky to live in a country surrounded by natural beauty and we're encouraging our kids to get their nature's fix in winter by playing on the school field at lunch, walking or biking after school, or planning a trip to their local beach, lake or mountain in the weekend.

"We chose this new focus for some extra encouragement during the cooler months and because we know how important it is for our mental health, that exercising outside magnifies the benefits of movement, and also how noticing nature influences us to take greater care of it," says Ms Harvey.

Zespri New Zealand Government & Regulatory Affairs Manager Rachel Lynch says Zespri is proud to partner with the Young and Healthy Trust for the fourth year running to help Kiwi kids thrive.

“Zespri’s purpose is to help people, communities and the environment thrive through the goodness of kiwifruit and this programme does just that by making a positive difference to kids and communities all over New Zealand.

“We’re looking forward to kicking this year’s adventure off today with the help of Kane and our world-famous Kiwi Brothers and wish all the 20,000 kids taking part this year an action-packed and hugely fun five weeks,” says Ms Lynch.

This year the programme reached new milestones with 121 new schools and 320 schools all together applying to participate from nearly every region in New Zealand.

The programme is complemented by a series of in-person school visits, including special guest appearances by sports stars and ASICS ambassadors and 13 deserving classrooms will receive free ASICS sports shoes.

Zespri’s support means the five-week challenge is free for 20,000 primary and intermediate students across New Zealand each year.

This year’s adventure finishes on 19 September 2023.

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Image attached. Caption: Black Caps captain Kane Williamson, Zespri's Kiwi Brothers and students from Tauranga's Te Ākau ki Pāpāmoa celebrate the start of the 2023 Zespri Young & Healthy Virtual Adventure. Photo by Jamie Troughton/Dscribe Media

ABOUT ZESPRI

Zespri is 100 percent owned by current and former kiwifruit growers and has a global team of 850 based in Mount Maunganui and throughout Asia, Europe and the Americas. Our purpose is to help people, communities and the environment thrive through the goodness of kiwifruit, and we work with 2,800 growers in New Zealand and 1,500 growers offshore to provide consumers with fresh, healthy and great-tasting Zespri Green, RubyRed™ and SunGold Kiwifruit. In 2022/23, we supplied 183.5 million trays of kiwifruit to consumers in more than 50 markets, and recorded global operating revenue of NZ\$4.22 billion. Zespri is committed to sustainability, with areas of improvement identified right through the supply chain including our pledge that by 2025 we will use 100 percent reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging, do more to help the environment, and work with our partners to be carbon positive by 2035