



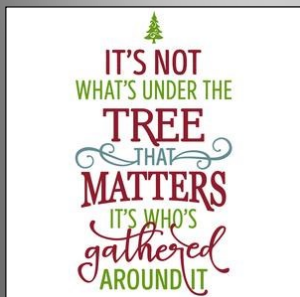
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Welcome to the summer Active Workplaces newsletter. This edition features: Corporate Health and Wellbeing Summit 2021 takeaways, Gut Health, Active Workplaces snippets, New Year events, Healthy Recipe and more!



Step Challenge 2021 Winners - HANSEN PRODUCTS (Above)
KENSINGTON HOSPITAL (pictured below)



Ngā mihi
Sharon Adams
Active Workplace Coordinator

The Wellness Wheel...

Corporate Health and Wellbeing Summit

The Corporate Health and Wellbeing Summit is an inspirational wellness conference with a focus on improving productivity and business performance through a healthy, happy, inspired and invigorated workforce – the healthy heartbeat each and every business needs to thrive. The conference is dedicated to improving the mental and physical health and wellbeing of your business, your culture and your staff.

This year's conference was held on 27 October and for the first time in its history online via think tank media. The conference had some really good speakers with Jase Te Patu opening the summit. Keeping it real, Jase spoke freely and frankly on Mental Health and Wellbeing. Jase shared his personal journey with highlighting how he uses the Te whare tapu wha tool to keep his own self care in check through physical movement, yoga and meditation (Te whare tapu wha refers to the whole person embracing physical/mental, whanau and spiritual wellbeing.) Jase highlighted the need for workplaces to embrace workplace wellbeing, leaders have toolkits available for staff and lead by example.

This year saw Phillipa Powel (Founder of Wellbeing Provocateur), Helana Taylor (Organisational development specialist) and Tamara Buckland (OD consultant) discuss and share thoughts and experience in mental wellbeing. The team highlighted the need for workplaces to look at creating a caring and empathic workplaces within a high trust environment. Being very clear and consistent with the approach with leaders modelling challenges and volatility. Other suggestions included having team meetings that promote conversations and check in's, provide channels for staff to access help in levels of support for with individual apps, trained physiological first aiders, peer support networks and look to being mindful of communication and individual staff needs.

David Downs took the floor with "Leading through crisis" David's personal story in having overcome cancer highlighted the need to choose your own adventure and in times of crisis keep being optimistic. David spoke on the need for leaders to be human/show vulnerability/hear/actively listen/check in with staff and check back as you treat everyone as an individual what one staff may need another may not as people respond to how you treat and empower them.

Hannah McQueen then continued on with the important aspect of workplace wellness – financial wellness. Hannah from Enable Me New Zealand explained that 83% of kiwis feel financial stress due to over spending and debt. Hannah went on to explain an upside, "to be financially free you must be independently accountable, have education on finances, know what you are capable of, have a strategy for action and have it supported".

Sue Kohn –Taylor spoke to workplace wellbeing programmes in the last 3 years coming to the forefront with again changed times highlighting the need for workplaces not to underestimate the digital distractions, energy drainers of zoom on the cognitive brain, uncertainty and on going noise. Can workplaces promote self care for staff to enhance agile thinking, be less reactive and connect to perspective. Sue highlighted "Mental Fitness and self care starts with individual self reflection"

Paula Bennet finished the day with a high energy session on diversity and inclusion in the workplace through lived experience. To grow workplaces must surround themselves with different backgrounds, ethnicity and experience as when you surround yourself with like thinkers you're not challenging yourself or your business. Learn to grow and be a champion for safe workplaces in diversity.

All in all, the Corporate Health and Wellbeing Summit didn't disappoint. Mental wellbeing continues to be an area, workplaces need to prioritize and it can be as simple as having the conversation - "Are you OK?"

The Wellness Wheel continued...

Gut Health?

The gut is a hot topic, and for good reason! Scientists have connected gut health to much more than just how we digest food - from metabolic health, to mental wellbeing, and very topically, our immune system. The driving force behind these connections is our gut microbiota, the trillions of microbes living in our gut which are sometimes referred to as the body's "second brain".

Our gut microbiota perform thousands of functions for us on a daily basis, including hormone and vitamin production, making molecules that strengthen the gut barrier, and communicating with other organs like the brain. Although we know so little about what defines a 'healthy gut', it is quite clear that the diversity of our gut microbiota is a good marker. Dr Megan Rossi likens this to a thriving garden - "if you have all the same type of plants and a certain disease comes along, it could wipe out your entire garden. In comparison, if you have a diverse range of plants it's unlikely that one disease has the right array of 'weapons' to wipe them all out - some will naturally be resistant. The same goes for your gut microbiota".

It's important to recognize that this is SUCH a new area of research. Despite this, there have been a spike in products jumping on the gut health bandwagon, and we should be a little skeptical here. Rather than relying on these supplements or foods that promise to 'boost' your gut health, we like to focus on getting the foundations right - albeit a bit less glamorous!

Before jumping into dietary changes, we can't focus on diet alone when it comes to gut health - regular exercise, quality sleep, and stress management also play leading roles in ensuring we keep our gut bugs happy. The 'gut-brain axis' is an exciting focus of research right now, which pivots around the constant stream of communication between our gut and brain (you might be familiar with this through the feeling of butterflies in the stomach when you're nervous). Not only are diets which target gut health shown to improve mental wellbeing, but disruptions of the gut-brain axis through increased stress or anxiety can play a large role in digestive issues like IBS.

So what are the key things we can do to support gut health through diet?

- The main piece of advice to take away is that variety really is the key to optimizing gut health - more diversity in your diet means a more diverse food supply for our gut microbes so that the 'good bugs' can flourish. Aim for at least 30 different types and colours of plant-foods each week - I like to make it into a challenge with friends/family!
- Ensuring we get enough fibre is equally important - it's our microbe's favourite food! My top tips are choosing wholegrains where possible, choosing a piece of fruit for a snack, adding a roasted nut/seed mix as a salad topper, and trying to centre a meal around legumes once/week.
- Adding fermented foods into your diet can be a good way to give your gut an extra boost if you're getting the basics above right. Fermented foods like kefir, sauerkraut/kimchi, miso, yoghurt, and kombucha contain live microbes, which are shown to have a positive impact on the diversity of our gut microbes. Make sure you start slow and steady if these aren't foods you're having much of - otherwise you might notice some unpleasant side effects!
- Choose as many whole foods as you can, with less room in your diet for processed foods.

It's important to keep in mind that the concept of 'gut health' is so extremely unique. For instance, while prebiotic fibres in foods like onion and garlic might be superstars for gut health, people with IBS are unlikely to tolerate this and our perceptions of foods to support a healthy gut need to adapt to each individual.

www.missionnutrition.co.nz

Wellness - Moving Forward together...

Active Workplaces Snippets!

We saw several Active Workplaces graduating, including Northland Regional Council, Tauroroa Area School, NorthTec as they achieved sustainable practices in their workplace wellness. These workplaces continue to put wellness at the forefront for staff as we travelled through the adversity of 2021... Congratulations to all workplaces.

Northland Regional Council



NorthTec

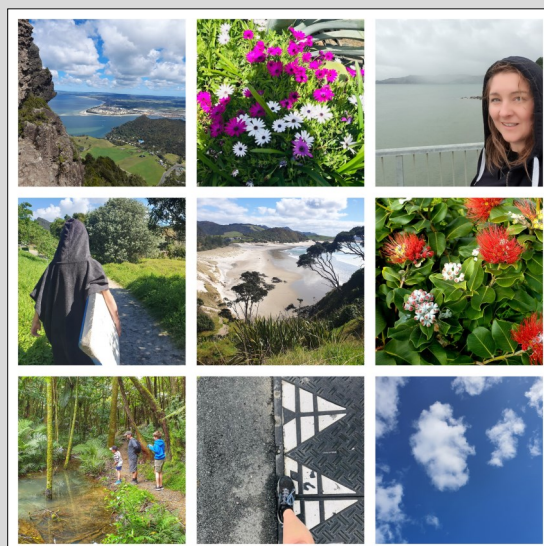


SEPTEMBER 2021

Workplaces **smashed this out of the park** with 130 teams and over 500 staff stepping it up as teams enjoyed connecting together, upping activity and improving mental wellbeing.



GREAT WORK TO ALL TEAMS



HATEA RayWhite
LOOP
CHALLENGE

with a splash of Colour



2022

www.hatealoopchallenge.co.nz

The Ray White Hatea Loop Challenge with a splash of colour! will be a back as 2022 hits! Sport Northland Events and Active Workplaces will celebrate the Hatea Loop Walk/Cycleway - Huarahi o te Whai and Workplace Health with a fun start to the new year—BRING ON 2022!



Our Sport Northland events team will then head into some more fun in the Sport Northland run/walk series with the ever popular family fun “Beach to Basin” and for those trail run/walkers the “Parahaki Trail run”. Please head to www.sportnorthlandevents.co.nz for all dates/information.



Healthy Recipe

Quick and Easy lunch?

Ingredients

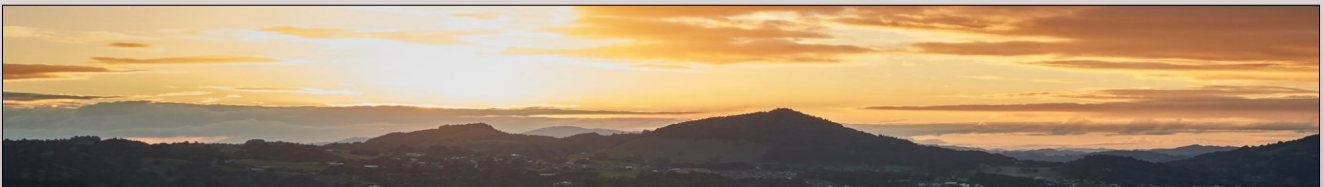
6 corn cobs - husked
1/4 cup red onion - finely chopped
2 red chilies - finely chopped
2 avocados - peeled and diced
1 1/2 cups cucumber -diced
1 cup fresh coriander - roughly chopped
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp lemon or lime juice



Method

In a large pot of boiling water cook the whole corn cobs for approximately 5 minutes
Remove from the boiling water and cool under cold water
Cut the kernels from the cobs and place in a large mixing bowl
Add the remaining ingredients and mix gently
Serve by itself as a light meal or as a side salad

Northland Wellbeing Collective



The Northland Wellness Collective was formed for Northland workplaces to have a place for people responsible for wellbeing within a business to come together for the purpose of networking, sharing and connection. Strengthening the profile and influence of wellbeing across workplaces in Northland. The vision of the collective is to lead networking, sharing and exchange of creative, innovative ideas, wellbeing initiatives, workplace programmes, future trends and predictions within the wellbeing space while nurturing existing people working within this space and building capacity & mentoring opportunities for the next generation of influencers.

Where/How do we Connect?

Monthly meetings are held in Whangarei, hosted by one of the businesses or utilizing technology to host online. We endeavor to provide services/access that allow those located in remote regional areas to participate. If your workplace would like to be part of the collective, please contact Sharon for more details.

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