

Support for Smokefree Parks Stronger than Ever

A public survey has shown overwhelming support for Rotorua District Council's Smokefree Outdoor Spaces policy. The most recent survey shows 93% public support for the policy, which covers the Redwoods and all of Rotorua District Council's children's playgrounds.

The policy aims to normalise non-smoking and encourage positive role models for children and young people in Rotorua. "We are so pleased that Rotorua residents have embraced the policy and really thankful for their commitment and support," says Gary Page, Parks and Reserves Manager, Rotorua District Council.

It is not just the health impacts of smoking that this policy seeks to protect. Cigarette butts have a huge impact on the environment. A cigarette filter soaks up the most potent poisons in a cigarette, which are then washed into our land and our waterways posing risks to our local wildlife and water supplies.

Toi Te Ora - Public Health Service has written a full evaluation report on the findings of the study, which is available on their website – www.toiteorapublichealth.govt.nz. The positive results will be used to advocate the benefits of having a Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy to other councils in the Bay of Plenty and Lakes districts.

"These survey results are fantastic, the results of the latest survey reinforce how important the health of our children and environment are to Rotorua residents," says Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service Regional Manager, Graeme Savage. "We are continuing to encourage all district and city councils to adopt a Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy to help make non-smoking the norm and move towards a cleaner and healthier place to live."

Editors notes:

Results from the second survey

- 421 People surveyed
- 32% Maori, 44% NZ European
- 35% of people surveyed were smokers
- 35% male, 63% female
- 57% of people regularly cared for children aged 16 and under
- 93% public support for the policy

The initial survey conducted when the policy was first introduced showed 85% public support for the policy.

ENDS

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