

## **RECREATION CENTRES - NON-USERS**

**IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE USAGE  
AMONG GROUPS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDER-  
REPRESENTED**

S U M M A R Y   R E P O R T   F O R



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# 1 OBJECTIVES

- What role do Non-users perceive recreation centres play in the community?
- What are Non-users' barriers to participation?
- What could be done to improve existing facilities and services?
- Are there gaps in services?
- What other services, programmes or classes could be offered to encourage participation among groups that are currently under-represented?
- How do recreation centres complement other facilities, for example community centres?
- What role (other roles) could recreation centres play?
- How far are people willing to travel to visit a Council recreation centre?

## 2 METHOD AND SAMPLE

### THREE FOCUS GROUPS

- 7 Pakeha and Maori 50+ years
- 8 East and West Asian 20 to 49 years
- 8 Pacific Island and Maori 20 to 49 years

### TWO PAIRED INTERVIEWS

- 2 Chinese speaking males 50+ years
- 2 Pacific Island (Tongan speaking) females 50+ years

### PLUS FOUR DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH EXISTING USERS

- European over 50 years
- Asian 20 to 49 years
- Maori 20 to 49 years
- Pacific Island 20 to 49 years

### 3 RECREATION CENTRES

#### CURRENT SITUATION

##### RECREATION CENTRE LOCATIONS

Are they aware of recreation centres (being there)?

- Yes – most people are aware of at least one location, interestingly it was not always the location nearest to them
- Some of the people 50+ years have knowledge of the centres through past experiences of taking their children to them
- Many people are surprised at how much is offered at recreation centres - they feel that they are not advertised and are under-promoted

*"Half of these new complexes what they build, what you've mentioned – it's not advertised enough" (50+ years)*

*"I know that the kids would take to a place like that, I wouldn't even think of going. There needs to be a lot of advertising done to encourage people to go that wouldn't normally go" (50+ years)*

*"But out of all this that is already offered, there needs to be more advertising about what is there, and make them appealing. If you've got people willing to take, put their time into organising that, then it needs to be advertised so that it will make other people want to do it" (50+ years)*

- Users of recreation centres also felt that they were under-promoted

*"I think the main thing is just getting it out to people. You know, just advertise them all. A bit more advertising because a lot of people, they don't see what actually goes on in the gym, like what they have got. All they see is a gym. They don't see that you can do cardio or you can go do aquasize, or you can go and bounce the ball inside the gym, you can go and play basketball or volleyball, badminton, all that sort of thing, all they see is a gym." (20 – 49 user)*

- There is a low awareness that college locations can be used by the public - many think that these are for students and/or groups

##### DISTANCE

How far are people willing to travel?

- Functionally walking distance is important - people are prepared to walk and most will walk between 5 to 15 minutes to get to a recreation centre
- Functionally petrol cost is a growing consideration - people are prepared to drive up to 15 minutes to get to a recreation centre

*"Q: How many minutes would you spend in a car?  
5 mins.  
Yeah. Not that long.  
Like max 5 mins.*

*Don't want to have to drive to the other side of town just to get to it.  
But then you would if it was free.*

*Q: How far would you go if it was free?*

*15 minutes" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Less than half an hour walk" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"Five minutes drive" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Emotionally, people want to attend a recreation centre in **my** neighbourhood, **my** community (the vicinity where **I belong**) - this theme is becoming more important with the pressures of traffic, increasing petrol costs and busy lives

## IMPRESSIONS OF INDIVIDUAL CENTRES

- Many people have a clear picture of at least one recreation centre but have no idea about other recreation centres
- Impressions tend to be formed through:
  - Childhood experiences of recreation centres
  - Taking their own children or grandchildren there
  - Going in to try it out themselves

### Youthtown

*"Youthtown - it's cool - a pool table, and they've got like a gymnastics thing - pin pong... got a library as well" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Youthtown - for you to go into the gym and stuff you have to pay as you go into there as well, like to do weights, you have to pay to go into there, but then like for you to go into the other gym to play ball or just going to play soccer in the indoor gym or whatever, it's free, ask for the ball, that's it. Pay for using the gym, but just to use the basketball courts and stuff like that, we shouldn't have to pay, we're paying much already in rates and stuff like that" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

### Selwyn/ASB Stadium

*"Netball or basketball (Selwyn College/ASB Stadium) - it's just a stadium - no gym or anything, or doing weights or anything that I could see - no other like, little activities - big hall - just holding games" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"They have a little gym inside. But the thing is like a big fancy place for basketball, badminton and like indoor sport (ASB Stadium)" (20 to 49, Asian)*

### Avondale College Community Stadium and Turf

*"I thought it was their hall (Avondale College)" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"It just feels like they're restricted to what sports activities they play, there's not much variety over there (Avondale Community College)" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"(Avondale College Community Stadium) I mean I talking about the old one. In the weekends, only the student can book. If you've got five people booked on a Saturday, they organise someone to open the door for you" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"Big space, and lots of parking (Avondale)" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## **Sir William Jordan Recreation Centre**

*"We used to do like karate... I was probably about seven - I used to live in it (Onehunga)" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"The Onehunga one - I went there when I was young - don't remember much" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Onehunga War Memorial Centre. Yeah, they've got a swimming pool and a gym and spa - very good, everything's clean and maintained and there's a lot of people - I meet a lot of people - normally we go for swimming" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"(William Jordon Recreation Centre in Onehunga) My daughters go there for their holiday programmes" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"There's too much space - big basketball court that's always empty all the time - gym next to the reception - one is downstairs, but quite claustrophobic (William Jordon)" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## **Lagoon Leisure and Fitness Centre**

*"It's near the stadium (Lagoon)" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Pool's outside (Lagoon)" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"I don't know if they've got like aerobics or anything there, but I think they've got like aqua aerobics that they do in the inside pool and stuff (Lagoon)" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"The name itself Lagoon is popular. As soon as you say the Lagoon, of course, even though you've never been there, you might have just passed it a few times in a few years but as soon as you say the Lagoon, oh yeah, know what you're talking about. It's a very rare, it's a name that they've had for years that you relate to, that particular spot" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"(Lagoon) There's like indoor and outdoor. They have gym. They have a gym that's not fixed in a room. I think they're out like their outside pool. I forget. They're not like fit in the room, you know, some of the gyms they just fit it in a room and just - I think they do have a room and they have ... machines outside as well. So they can still riding on the bike, they can see people like having fun out there in the pool. It's quite good. I like their, sometimes they put some activities like kids things that they pump up a big bubble ball...**I'm not a kid, but sometimes I want to think that I want to jump in and play as well**" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## Tamaki College Community and Recreation Centre

*"It's got a gym (Tamaki College)" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"I've only just been in there, like walked through there" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Not much variety over there.....I've been there" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"It's got a couple of basketball courts and stuff" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Nothing really to like inspire me to work out there. It's just like a school hall" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Just looks like it's for the college kids" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"I just thought it was for students" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Students use it all the time, they got memberships or whatever. Yeah, when I went there like there was stuff there, they were showing me around and that, getting me motivated and I was just no - the environment and stuff, you know, all the kids. They had a couple of benches and a couples of dumb bells, boxing bag, rowing machines and I was like oh yeah, rowing machines, and like two or three treadmills. Wasn't much but I was feeling I couldn't get a proper workout still. I wasn't around people that would want to work out there. I would have been the only one working there and what motivation is that? Sometimes you're motivated seeing another person doing weights as well, you know when you're in a gym. Motivated at him, just seeing him. ....I could do a bit more than I usually do and stuff" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"As soon as I heard the price was like sixteen...and then he started going on about monthly payment, I just clicked off (Tamaki)... anything over \$5, \$10 I just... no - not really interested paying \$16 and coming in here for five minutes, just because there's no one else here. Working out ..... paid sixteen bucks for that. And I think.... benefits they have too at the gym, like some gyms offer crèche, like they can offer to look after your kids at no cost, you know, that's including your membership fee, and that's pretty good for mothers and dads too and some have like a physiotherapist in the gym. Instead of going to the doctors if you've got an injury from sports, you can go straight to physio and you can get ACC from there....the doctors and that's pretty good. They have like saunas and spas and stuff like that which is good, all comes with the membership, especially with the crèche, that's pretty good" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"School kids - they wouldn't want anybody else going into their school hall" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"(Tamaki College Community and Recreation Centre) Normally I buy a card or two cards for - but I never joined the gym, I only swim and go to steam room. I quite like because the class is very reasonable. Fourteen times just \$36, including just \$16 for..... times" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## Lynfield Recreation Centre

*"It caters for kids of all ages and adults. Got a mini gym in there. And it also does like mild aerobics for the elderly over 60 plus. It does, they've got squash, volley ball, badminton, soccer, gymnastics, you name it, they've got it. Just about everything you can think of they've got. And they've even got like a little Boy Scout centre next door plus kindergarten next door and*



*they've got huge fields for league and then they've just got a huge walking area. It's good, it's a family orientated environment - it can involve the whole family" " (20-49 Maori/Pacific)*

*"Got everything going for the kids and that. Open space, you can do things in the parks and that." (20-49 Maori/Pacific)*

## **Ellerslie Recreation Centre**

*"I've taken the kids there – to the pre-school gym." (50+ years)*

*"I know they had rails across the wall, so you could climb up the wall. But they had the equipment for the kids to jump on. I think Jumping Jim's might have used it." (50+ years)*

## **Mt Albert Community and Recreation Centre**

*"(Mt Albert Community Recreation Centre) I wanted to join but I couldn't - expensive, very expensive membership, so I drop - around \$250 or something, for membership for one year. So at that time I think it's too high for me. I was not even having a job that time" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## **Otahuhu Recreation and Youth Centre**

*"(Otahuhu Recreation Centre) From the sounds of it, I don't think I will go there. Well, lot of dodgy people go there. Lot of stealing cars, stealing things.....just no security. I parked my car there and in just two minutes – gone" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## **CURRENT POSITIONING**

What is a recreation centre to Non-users?

- It's a big building

*"A building where people can go in for sport or exercise, provides areas of activity, and they offer equipment for gym, gymnastics, nets for badminton, or equipment for weight training and that" (50+ years)*

- Recreation centres mean "a gym" - they do mean other things, but at their "core" they are a (Pakeha) gym

*"The one at.... is mostly a gym, but they've got a swimming pool there, they've got boxing exercise, what they do, a lot of weights, and walking machines, they've got everything in there" (50+ years)*

*"Just imagine you working on your own" (50+ years)*

*"You go to lose weight. Might be a swimming pool in there, a row boat" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- The core meaning is "fitness" - the desired meaning for Non-users is "wellness"
- The YMCA branding is positive and viewed as having energy

*"YMCA - fun place - activity - kids - more friendly"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"Auckland City Council Recreation Centres? Rates. Fines. Something that I don't know"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

- Recreation Centres are felt to be for everyone, but their image is dominated by "youthfulness" and by "membership"

*"Gymnastics for kids, pre-school..."* (50+ years)

*I've taken the kids there - to the pre-school gym"* (50+ years)

*"Children's playground - and a gym"* (20 to 49, Asian)

- Others, for example, people over 50 years of age, are perceived to "borrow" it rather than "belong" there

*"Young people - 17 to 20 (staff) - it's becoming a bit of a yuppie-ville these days, so I think they're trying to encourage that kind of person.*

*How would it feel to have an older person there?*

*Probably a bit more reassuring, actually. If you walked in there, and there's somebody of a similar age group, you say, hey man, I can do it, man. You don't mind taking your shirt off, you know what I mean"* (50+ years)

*"Instead of showing you the outside of the building, they should have photographs blown up of the inside of the building"* (50+ years)

## NON-USERS PERCEPTIONS OF USERS

Non-users perceptions of "core" users are that...

- Recreation centres meet users needs for "fitness"
- People who use recreation centres are goal orientated (compared with me/us)
- People who use recreation centres like competitive activities (sport)
- People who use recreation centres are more into comparison vis-a-vis others
- Users believe that non-users have this perception but feel that this is not reflective of their experiences of the Recreation Centres

*"Well I think they get the wrong idea about what the gym is actually there for. They probably think that with a lot of the trainers you've got to do this, you know, it is like really really strict, when you know, it is not so. Because people don't know unless they go in themselves and they won't change your attitude at all."* (20-49 user)

*"I think once people start getting more knowledge about it and they are not intimidated about going to the gyms because a lot of people are thinking that gyms are for all these 120kg buff looking guys and all poser type people you know. Just thinking about the gym I go to, it is just such a relaxed environment and you could talk to about 20 members in the place and everyone is just like ra ra ra, it is not one of these, well people are serious*

*but you can actually sit there and chat to a lot of people and you get to make a lot of new friends and meet a lot of people." (20-49 user)*

- Non-users see selves as wanting to "participate" **with** others

*"My name is XXX I'm from Mt Albert, been there for about 2 years originally from South Auckland. I've got 2 kids and I work full time. My physical exercise is walking my kids to school to kindergarten and also helping out on my son's rugby. He has his training on Thursdays, plays for Ponsonby and I play Samoan Cricket, for my dad's village, which is every year at the end of the year and just walking with my husband around the block" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- The social driver is much stronger for non-users than the fitness driver
- Non-users want to **"play"** games more than they want to compete

### **CURRENT IMAGE OF CENTRES HAS PAKEHA ORIGINS**

- Recreation centres have an ethos of valuing independence - the ability to act alone
- Their focus is on the individual rather than on we/us
- There is a lack of a sense of connectedness - togetherness
- "Fitness" is now seen as a rigorous activity, it has become like another form of "work"

*"I don't want to be stuck in a room and running like the crazy woman" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Fitness has become compartmentalised rather than an integral part of life

*"Give people more flexibility" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## 4 WHO ARE NON-USERS?

### WHAT ARE THEIR VALUE SETS?

#### ASIAN VALUES

- Asians fundamental "way of being" is not reflected in the Recreation Centres
- Asians feel that New Zealand has a huge emphasis on sport - they see that this is very much part of the "Kiwi" culture

*"What types of physical activities are part of our culture? I think we're a very athletically-minded nation as far as outdoor sports, such as rugby, league, soccer – we're starting to come into the soccer realm. Pretty much all of our sports – softball, cricket, netball, those fairly physical sort of sports. New Zealand is seen as a nation of fit people, sporting people" (50+ years)*

*"New Zealand is a big green country. I live in Hong Kong and it's just like no place that you can run round. If you're like jogging in Hong Kong, like people look at you and say what's this person doing? New Zealand if you're jogging or running on the street people think it's okay" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- ♦ Asians have a **work** ethic, they have come from countries where the emphasis is placed on working and getting to and from work

*"What I found over here is people are quite encouraging, like for instance in my kids. Although I don't like physical walking or physical activities, like riding a bike and going to the gym, but you will find many people do that and in a slight way that motivated me too. At least contemplate on going to a gym in the near future. In India I would never dream of doing such a thing. You spend most of the time going about, going to work, coming back, you just have Sunday off and back to other chores, other works, so the most of your time goes on like this. So there is no time for any physical activity" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"In this country there is more people is talking about sport.....you walk along the street, someone you don't know but they keep talking to each other, so they're talking about more sport than in other country. So that's why people start talking and like when I came here I know nothing about sport. But all the people around me they just talking about every day even at school. That's why I go to the gym at school too, swimming, diving and all that" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Intrinsic to the Asian culture is the seeking of balance between the mind and body
  - ♦ Tai chi, tae kwondo, etc
  - ♦ Meditation, relaxation, yoga

*"I do lots of walking, yoga kind of exercise" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Sports preferred by Asians are more the non-contact types such as badminton, cricket, golf, soccer and table tennis
- The meaning of dance plays a much stronger role for Asians than it does in the Pakeha culture

*"I do clubbing. You have to have your friends with you, around you. I'll be there. Like some people go for one reason for drinking, my group, they're not - like we might have one or two shots, one or two drinks and we stop. Then just go on the dance floor and dance - that's more entertainment for me. It's not exercise I don't think. Because they're not going to do some physical, like something which you're bound to do... ..keep you fit, they're just really for leisure, for pleasure" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"What I do sometimes at home if it is rain, I turn on the rock music, for half an hour and then I'm just like a crazy woman doing stuff like that, just moving, the whole body exercise" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Elderly Asian people can feel very isolated in the New Zealand culture
  - ♦ They often come to New Zealand to support their children, bringing up their children
  - ♦ They don't drive and don't know the language
  - ♦ They look after the children before and after school but have nothing to do whilst the children are at school and have limited ability to get around
- Younger people tend to do activities in groups - they will tend to follow the lead in a group

*"An organiser like someone takes message or e-mails or even the phone calls, like say that oh this week we have activity for swimming. Who's going to come - and then next day, okay, today we're going to do badminton, who's going to join - if you're tired, okay - want to go to bowling - exercise. My friends, would send e-mail to everyone - hey, this week, everyone keen to go on Mt Eden swimming or whatever, message straight away, I'll be there. So I've got like thirty people in our group, send message out, I would have about like six coming back. But I mean different people, different interests. So the next time, I do not ring same persons" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## PACIFIC/MAORI VALUES

- Maori and Pacific people's fundamental "way of being" is not reflected in the Recreation Centres
- Their cultures value the sense of extended connectedness with each other
- Being **Maori** means a sense of collective responsibility for each other
  - ♦ "We are all responsible for each other"
- Being **Pacific** means a sense of service to/with others
- Their approach is culturally inclusive and is not about putting oneself forward
  - ♦ The emphasis is on connectedness and the well-being of the group rather than individual success
- **Group** physical activities are important for Maori and Pacific peoples. These must encompass all ages, extended family (and beyond)

*"Especially when your kids are at that age where they can join sports clubs and it's just like yeah 2 of my kids yeah and then my husband is in the league so I go there to support" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"My husband and my kids. My son is training, got to go - so I do every week and my husband says do you want to go for a walk down there. My kids are like can we go ride our bikes at the park or something" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

## OLDER PEOPLE'S VALUES (50+ YEARS)

- Older people's (50+ years) fundamental way of being is not reflected in the Recreation Centres
- Their focus is on keeping what they have - this means:
  - ♦ Maintaining a level of health/activity
  - ♦ Not getting injured thereby reducing their ability to move

*"My main job is I'm a mechanical engineer, so it's quite a physical job. I walk and train two or three times a week, up to about an hour and a half a time, mainly in the evenings. I bike in the summer months, but it's getting a bit dangerous now. I don't jog or anything like that because **my knees give up on it**, I'm not a gym person. I do a bit of tramping, but that's about it"* (50+ years)

*"Now the old blood pressure's playing up. I know even at work when I start doing things, it restricts me - if I bend down and get up really quick"* (50+ years)

*"If you've had an accident, or you've had ill health, and you want to do it, but it's like if I do it, will I make myself worse. So even thinking about doing something makes the old heart start racing, it starts giving you...that's what stops you from doing it"* (50+ years)

*"Just frightened of doing too much, you might push it too hard"* (50+ years)

*"I've been retired for 6 years and it's great. I have a problem with my left leg so the only activity I do successfully and that I enjoy, is swimming"* (50+ years)

- ♦ They see activity as a way to continuing their current lifestyle

*"I am here in New Zealand for the last two and a half years - I played football and hockey. Since coming to New Zealand - office job and not much of physical activity. Started getting overweight so join a swimming club - go for walks and outside doing my gardening and lawn mowing. A couple of months back I did my blood reports and I found my cholesterol levels had gone up. Coming to New Zealand, eating all these meat and other things - so that was quite an awakening - so the doctor said we have to exercise, and I'm feeling quite good at what I do - quite fresh and so when I came here every Saturday afternoon, I go to the Domain Park - often play soccer with the friends"* (20 to 49, Asian)

*"I'm sort of semi-retired. I force myself every morning to do a 3km walk around the block - pretty much, that's the only exercise I get, apart from mowing the lawn every now and again, because we have an old push mower - I could probably do a lot more, I think I just need a little push - someone to ring me up, saying 'do you want to go and do this', and then I'm off, I'm gone. But I do my 3k every day, it's not bad. I've had a bout of cancer, I went through chemotherapy about 6 years ago, that sort of diminished my life - that's why I started this 'sit back and smell the coffee,' so to speak"* (50+ years)

*"Enjoy your life more - just being able to play a fuller part"* (50+ years)

- Their focus is more on others - particularly for people who have retired or semi-retired, it is about re-balancing life and getting into a different meaningful routine, either with:
  - ♦ Social connections, catching up with friends, meeting new people

- ◆ Looking after younger family members

*"I've only been there to see my grandchildren in their school sports there, but I was impressed with the swimming complex"* (50+ years)

*"Got a good gym there. The gymnastic instructors, the instructors that I know of, they are very young but they are good and they interact good with the children. They communicate well with the kids. I don't use the gymnasium, I just see it"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

- Their focus is more about balance, feeling good and socialising, rather than physicality

*"You've worked till you're 55 and then you retire, it takes a while to adjust to retirement, and to get to know people that you can do things with, because your friends are probably still working. When you're worked 10 hours a day for 18 or 19 years, in your own business, it's very very hard to get back into an easier mode. And then you realise you've got to do something, and force yourself out of bed, and into a pair of togs, and go to the pool - but if I had a friend ring up, say 'I'm going to the pool today, will you come' - 'yes sure, great'"* (50+ years)

*"Like you can go down to a gym, and you're just a number - do you want walking with a machine? Do you want to go walking with a robot? Not me. I want to go for a walk with a mate of mine, 'G'day mate, how's it going', 'oh, let's go', 'let's run faster', 'let's slow down'. That's what I want. I don't want a machine, a dog can give me more than that"* (50+ years)

*"Well if you don't you just go backwards, you just can't hack it anymore. You've got to sort of keep up to a certain standard I think because, I mean at our stage, like there's no point, I mean younger people go up and progress and they lose more weight, I'm not interested in that sort of thing, I mean I'm just interested in maintaining a certain standard really."* (50+ years)

*"I mean I don't, to be quite honest enjoy the exercise, they're not for enjoyment, I mean you play golf to enjoy the game, and that's, exercise is not enjoyable, as far as I'm concerned it's a means to an end."* (50+ years)

*"Well I mean, it's a game I mean, they will go and have a beer afterwards, you know and there's camaraderie of that."* (50+ years)

## PEOPLE WHO NEED PEOPLE

- Understanding the needs of Non-users means understanding **people** and what they need
- Sport and recreation activities they currently participate in often involve others

*"Part time carpet layer on call and bartender down on Queen Street. Play touch all year round all over Auckland. Move around during the week when I can"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"I am a technician, play rugby for College Rifles, social game. Running around the field. Taking my dogs for a run every now and then"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

- ◆ Running with friends

- ♦ Walking with friends

*"I'm a stay at home mum. I've got 8 year old twins a boy and a girl and my physical activities are, I've got 2 dogs so I mainly just walk my dogs, the kids walk themselves to school and home. I volunteer once a weekend for the SPCA and walk their dogs around the paddocks"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

- ♦ Playing sports/games with extended family or large groups in more relaxed and fun environments like the beach, park or field

- ♦ Helping children/grandchildren delivering circulars or attending/supervising children's sport

*"I generally walk with the kids to deliver their papers, and their leaflets, which is – the wife and I we take it in turns, that's once a week, we cover about 3 or 4 kms"* (50+ years)

*"The kids are not there - the parents that want to be bothered, and make the sacrifice to take them. I know my grandchildren love sport, and I go along and watch them. I think it's good for their health, to be active, good for their hearts"* (50+ years)

- Doing necessary physical exercise with other people is felt to be more pleasant for people because it makes the time and task go quicker

*"It's more interesting if you're walking with somebody - I tried taking the dog, but it wouldn't go. I took him once, and the second time, I got to the end of our street, and he wouldn't budge. But I do think if you've got somebody to walk with, especially if you're at the beach, or going round Cornwall Park or something, makes it better "* (50+ years)

*"When two of you go you talk as you're walking. You're talking about different things in life, and at the end of it the walk, if you're going to do a 5km walk, it doesn't seem half as far if you're talking, because the mind is occupied"* (50+ years)

*"I reckon if you've got a niggling pain somewhere, you're talking, it takes the mind off that pain, whereas if you were thinking about the pain on your own, you wouldn't walk as far, like, you know"* (50+ years)

- The social connection for people is the driver and physical activity is the by-product

*"To get me to go to a gym, you'd have to not drag me, but encourage me. Come and ring me up, say 'come on, I'll come and get you, take me there', then I might do it - someone else to motivate"* (50+ years)

*"Especially for walking - it's better going walking with somebody than going on your own"* (50+ years)

*"Kick yourself and just go. You can be a lazy person, lie on the couch and doing nothing and watching tele or sit in front of internet... some strangers on internet, but kicking yourself is the most hardest part. Sometimes you need friends to help you out"* (20 to 49, Asian)

*"Friends. They are the ones that come round to get you to the games and that. Like training. They are around your house, time to go to training, and it makes you just want to get up and just go to training"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)



*"Someone take you for a walk and that. Motivated. Friends just coming round all the time" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"It's very important, I mean, you don't want to walk by yourself, do you, unless you've got company, like a dog" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"I know - friend - I go for swimming, so he says I know you're going...he don't like to go alone" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## 5 WHAT MOTIVATES PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR NON-USERS?

### DRIVERS AND BENEFITS

#### HOW IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPORTANT TO THEM?

- The importance of physical activity for younger people is in **enjoying** using what they've got, i.e. their (young) body
  - ♦ They perceive themselves as less focused on having "best" body than mainstream "gym" users
- The importance of physical activity for older people is to maintain what they've got

*"If you didn't do anything you're just going to seize up"* (50+ years)

*"Preventing, trying to stave off the inevitable"* (50+ years)

*"I guess when you settle down you don't need to worry about looks"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"Different age level and also maybe how you feel within yourself. Like if you are content with yourself, then you'd be doing it more for health I would imagine. If you are content with yourself because you will be content with the way you look so then you'd be doing it for your health"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"School kids they one would not be health it would be looks - I've got a 12 year old niece, she's only 12 but my god all she is worried about is her image and she's only 12. It's amazing"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"For me my role model my dad, he was the age of 50 and he was a really good tennis player and for me I really look up to that because at that age I was going to do something like my favourite sport. For me hopefully as good as shape"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"I'm planning on outliving my cousin. Health"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"(Get encouragement from) seeing other people doing it, your own age. You're thinking to yourself, they look about 20 years older than me, so if they can do it, I can do it"* (50+ years)

- ♦ They do not want to decline in fitness and they want to avoid future health complications

*"She wasn't physically active, so she got less physically active, which made it harder to do even simple exercises, and she ended up just lying in bed all day - since she's been in the rest home - well, she was 84 I think, she looks about 60 now. She goes to the physio each day, on a walking machine, and it's great to see it - what little exercise she's doing now, it's made a huge difference to her life"* (50+ years)

*"I was told to rest, and I'm just not that sort of person, and it was great going for a swim on Sunday morning, and walking up and down the pool. Just being able to do something I was comfortable with, rather than just sitting around. I mean it's great sitting and watching television all day, especially when you've got Sky, but you find that you're doing less and less, and it becomes a real effort to get out of your chair to go and get a meal or something"* (50+ years)

*"Because of health conscious - gets to the stage when you think 'hang on a minute, what age am I?', and what's around the corner - if you don't do something about it, you know. You see so many sad tales out there" (50+ years)*

*"Want to live long" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- Fitness goals for the older person (50+ years) need to be pitched at what the specific end benefits will be
  - ♦ That they will be fit enough to care for grandchildren
  - ♦ That they will be fit enough to enjoy their overseas holiday
  - ♦ That it will make getting in and out of their car easier
  - ♦ That it will make getting up and down stairs easier

*"More able - manage stairs a bit better. Things that you take for granted all of a sudden become a bit harder, and if you're exercising every day, or as much as you can, at least you're retaining what you've got" (50+ years)*

- ♦ That it will make getting up from sitting down easier

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

- The non-users notice the benefits of physical activity as an holistic thing

*"(Express your feelings about physical activity as a make-believe person) I feel the person would be feeling just like a heroin and drug addict when they come out from a rehabilitation centre. And just feeling the values of life and knowing - to keep the body healthy and good and not abusing it - the joys of life" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- They speak a lot about the positive **emotional**/psychological benefits they feel from physical activity, e.g. confidence, self-esteem, sense of achievement

*"I think a lot of the older generation, you had to do the things yourself, and you had a self esteem in what you'd created through your own work, and the exercise side of it was just secondary, it wasn't a main focus. Because you did all these things, you were actually exercising, and you weren't going round there and saying 'I've got to exercise', you were just doing it. This is what people have lost sight of I think to a certain extent" (50+ years)*

*"I just feel good. Feel good, and I'm not so puffed out - just in my mind really, yeah - I just feel good. Like you've just woken up, I'm feeling good today, I'm not feeling depressed today, I just feel up" (50+ years)*

*"I think if you're doing some form of exercise or activity, especially when you're getting on in age, you don't feel so depressed" (50+ years)*

*"I can do physical activity with a purpose, sort of have fun and exercising, have fun and enjoy what you're doing. Healthy, happy, positive, fun loving sort of person. And I think by having done the exercise, and be full of*

*energy – I'd be well organised and get things done quickly, and then have more time"*

*"Achieve something. Even though it's small at least you've done it. Like it could be like physical activity like walking down to the shop and that's better than nothing. If you do that like every day you will achieve something and you will actually feel good about yourself"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"Q: Tell us about who might use recreation centres, and who might not? Just the way they look - if they're happy, if they look happy and healthy"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"If you do physical activities in the morning you warm up yourself and throughout the day you feel that energy. If you sit all the one place, don't do anything throughout the day, you feel ...and cold, you don't feel like working then"* (20 to 49, Asian)

*"Walking can make life balanced because all the time we are driving our cars, go to school or go to workplace. I'm quite proud of myself. Back to six/seven years ago, I'm a fat girl. I was 70 kgs because I was too lazy while sitting in Australia, you can buy eight litre of ice-cream because of hot weather. This is what I had the whole day. Eight litres, that big. Non-stop. Put it back in the fridge, then back to ice-cream again. And then once I get to New Zealand I stop. I look in the mirror okay I'm fat, I got to change - like today I do ten minutes walk, the next day you add another minute. So just add on certain time, then you're heart will go back to normal. Health is very important. Sometimes you have to look like proud of yourself"* (20 to 49, Asian)

*"(Photosorts - who goes/does not go to recreation centres) I choose all the same pictures. Like all the pictures - are happy and it's just like...all people will go to the gym or do exercise. These kind of people they're not smiling, look like they're tired. They just don't want to do anything"* (20 to 49, Asian)

- They speak of **functional** benefits they experience from physical activity, e.g. sleep well, function effectively, act sharp

*"it makes you more alert, I think"* (50+ years)

- The essential benefit of physical activity for the non-users is "feeling good", i.e. an holistic **wellness**, mentally and physically

*"I just feel good about myself, not lazy or anything"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"A feeling where you can feel yourself you have actually done something. Especially after eating a large amount of food during the day and then you kind of work that out. You feel happy. I would say that because you work hard, you feel good. You lift weights until you body is pumped and that kind of makes you feel good and the results come in afterwards so what you are aiming for is a set goal, everyday that you've done it you will be thinking ok a few more days that goal will actually be reached and that will be a feeling of getting to each stage. Feeling of pride"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

*"If you do exercise for just ten minutes, you don't feel energy, you feel tired, but if you go on for twenty/thirty minutes, you're feeling that you're getting energy and then you don't feel tired"* (20 to 49, Asian)

*"Delivering a newspaper for our neighbourhood twice a week. I deliver newspaper to the neighbours and I come back I feel unsleepy" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"Getting through a day at work and then still having energy to go and do other activities like going to training or going to touch after than and stuff and then getting through that and you still like getting home and feeling relaxed or feeling good, energetic or whatever" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- The effects of not being active (after previously being active) are noticed **quickly** by the non-users
  - ♦ They described it as feeling "blahh/blurrk"
    - Emotionally they feel down or depressed
    - Physically they feel lethargic or tired

*"Feels like he's overweight. He can't dress like the others. They don't fit in because they try to hide themselves. So sneak into this little box and just hide there, don't want to come out - low self esteem" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Normally it's the dogs. They get, I've got pretty big dogs, and they need to get exercise regularly and if they don't get exercise they go hoha. I notice if I go about 2 days of just having a blaaa day, I feel blaaa and I need to go out and do some form of exercise just to get myself back into a motivational mood again. Just to get myself active (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"(Physical activity is all about...) energy. Anywhere I want to go just walk it. Anything you want to do you are ready to do it. Never.....I don't want to do it. I don't like the 'Oh I'm tired, I'm bored'. I don't like that kind of thing" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"I try to put my kids into sports activities, sports clubs but I wish I did, I reckon if I did have the stamina and that vitality" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

## 6 WHAT'S FUNDAMENTALLY MISSING FOR NON-USERS AT RECREATION CENTRES

### LIGHTEN UP

#### PUT THE *FUN* BACK INTO RECREATION

- Activities at recreation centres are perceived by young and old as structured, work-like and stifling "playfulness"
- Older people's needs of recreation are driven by experiences they have had when they were (much) younger

*"It would be lovely to have somewhere safe to ride a bicycle. That you didn't have to take your bicycle into your car, to take it somewhere, to ride it round the park. It would be lovely to be able to ride your bicycle on the road, but it's something you can't do really"* (50+ years)

*"I'd like to get back into swimming. I used to be a great swimmer, once - I come from New Plymouth originally, and they had a brilliant pool down there - the pool I used to go to years ago was a great pool, and there was a great comradeship down there too. Because I used to go early in the morning, there was a whole lot of bunch of older people, just keeping in shape"* (50+ years)

- They have an unconscious desire for play and **games**
- They yearn to get back to feeling like they did earlier in life
- There is nostalgia for "old **games**" like running, skipping, jumping (pre-TV)

*"We were out playing in the street, today you can't do that"* (50+ years)

*"Well, we'd go out and play - we used to go out on the beach and play games, and run around on the sand hills, and build your own castles, and build a little tree hut and stuff like that - we had no TV you see"* (50+ years)

*"You were out there playing hopscotch, throwing a ball, you were doing something - you were playing rounders in the summer time, and all those sort of things - skipping, with a big long skipping rope"* (50+ years)

*"It was never done as a weight control thing, it was just part of our way of thinking in those days, and you just did that - kids these days have got no active way of looking at things, they don't free-think... they don't know the simple physical things in life"*

- A sense of physicality for older people (50+) is needed to support future dream goals, e.g. to feel like **I could** (physically) bungee, tandem skydive, jump off Sky Tower (if I chose to)

*"Tandem skydiving - jumping out of an aeroplane - I'd like to go jet-boating, I'd like to go really fast round the harbour here. Or something like that, sort of major, get a bit of excitement going there. On my 70<sup>th</sup> I've promised myself I'm going to abseil - not bungee - abseil"* (50+ years)

*"Happy and well contented - mentally wired - unafraid of trying out new things"* (50+ years)

# 7 BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

## TWO KINDS OF BARRIERS - FUNCTIONAL AND EMOTIONAL

### EMOTIONAL BARRIERS

- Fear is the major emotional barrier for non-users going to a recreation centre on their own
- They feel intimidated by the people and the equipment, this increases their:
  - ♦ Sense of vulnerability
  - ♦ Sense of isolation
  - ♦ Sense of not doing what should be done
- Many non-users are followers - they want a leader among their family, friends, work mates, acquaintances to take the initiative (to go to recreation centre)

### FUNCTIONAL BARRIERS

- Non-users do not want to feel restricted in their choice or ability to access what they need
- Non-users do **not** want
  - ♦ Their money locked in, where they can't access their money when they need to
  - ♦ Strict attendance where they have to go, or have to go at certain times
  - ♦ To have to pay separately for use of each service/facility
- Non-users **do** want
  - ♦ Flexible, casual attendance

*"Me, I like to pay per visit because I'm not looking to become a member, I'd rather go when I felt like it, ad hoc" (50+ years)*

*Casual - it gives you a chance to see it without being committed. Give you a week. Choose all year. Gives you a chance to actually think about paying the whole cost or just doing it at a time" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Oh well sometimes you can't make it. You work late or you don't feel like working out that day, you just have a game of touch, don't feel like working out. Not flexible enough with your life or lifestyle or whatever. Like if it is casual go in probably once a week or something, or twice a week after a year or so or whatever" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- ♦ To pay \$5 for casual use, anything over this threshold is a functional and emotional barrier to them

*"It needs to be affordable - which is very important on a fixed income. You don't want to have to go to Pilates and pay \$8 a session - it's too much. About \$5 would be fair enough - probably on once a week" (50+ years)*

*"A workout gym. I think they've got big aerobics classes too, running Monday to Friday, \$6 - \$12 is just too much" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"I wouldn't spend twelve dollars on that. I would not. I'd rather spend it on food" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"I'll pay \$5 (for 30 minutes) - I work out in half an hour" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Depends what it is because if it's like a aerobics or something you don't want too much aerobics like you can't do a flippin whole hour of aerobics so the \$5 for half an hour would be all right"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

- ♦ That the price be inclusive of all services/facilities

*"It's too expensive just to go there, just to go to the gym and have to pay for your kids (additional creche fees)"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

- Money is a significant barrier

*"Some clubs that charge you \$50 a month - I can't afford to go there. I can't have time to go on every day, I'd love to but I can't, that it's like wasting money because they charge monthly. But we can still do a lot, like people that don't have too much money and they enjoy walking, they can do it for free, like on the street"* (20 to 49, Asian)

*"Every time you go there you pay \$2. Would be a lot better, I don't think any gym is doing that now. Because what they were saying is they love making money. So that's why they charge it, like they either charging monthly or yearly"* (20 to 49, Asian)

*"For me I don't mind paying \$40 a month to join in there because I've got a proper job, but for the one that hasn't got a job, you know, they can have a lower price to go there"* (20 to 49, Asian)

## **YMCA PERCEIVED AS REASONABLE COST**

- The YMCA is perceived as affordable for the average person

*"(YMCA) When you walk in the door it's just somewhere that's cheap, that people can afford to pay and reasonable price and good service"* (20 to 49, Asian non-user)

*"YMCA if you say that it's free then I can say that there will be a lot of like different people, dodgy people there. But if you like charge a reasonable price, that would be good"* (20 to 49, Asian non-user)

*"(YMCA) For ordinary people - you won't find the high class people to come over there"* (20 to 49, Asian non-user)



## 8 POTENTIAL TO GET HELP FROM EXISTING USERS

- Existing users are energetic and enthusiastic about the benefits of physical activity

*"I would say exactly what it did for me, like you start getting your confidence back and once you start seeing changes, it will just make you set off a, like a light in your head, you know, wow, I can do it, and like I say, it's a mental thing." (20-49 user)*

*"Well I mean, apart from your health you feel better. No question about that. I mean, you know you're more wide awake, you're not sleepy, you know you can do more. You are generally more alert I think." (50+ years user)*

- Know that it is difficult to get started and have had to find ways to get themselves active

*"And if you are physically lazy it's a hell of a lot more of an effort to do it than if you're not. I think you've got to push yourself." (50+ years user)*

- Users see routine as an important part of continuing exercise

*"For me now, it is just a routine. It is something that I will know to wake up early in the morning, go to the gym. It is just something that I have set in my life. It took me a while to actually get into the whole stem of things, just trying to get into it. But now I wake up at 5.30 in the morning, go to work, go to the gym, do all that stuff. Just because, it's just like waking up and brushing your hair or waking up and having breakfast." (20-49 user)*

- Feel that using others to help motivate themselves is important

*"So I was sort of used to it and when I actually got there, I used to go to Uni with one of the trainers there you see, then I got to meet everyone there and they are just a great bunch of people really." (20-49 user)*

*"More motivation, it is just like having a workout partner, they can motivate you to do more and it is not necessarily a competition thing but there is a sort of a little, not like bribery, I can't think of the word but you know, it is probably just to give you that little bit of extra push." (20-49 user)*

- Are willing to support others

*"I will always say to them if you need someone to work out with, come and work out with me, and I will always say it is not about how much you push, it is how you push it, you know, like your technique, it doesn't matter how big or small your weights are, just as long as you are doing it properly, I am not fussed, it doesn't phase me. Just do it right." (20-40 user)*

- There is potential for Users to share their energy and enthusiasm with non-users

## 9 HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OUR EXISTING RESOURCES?

### FOCUS ON PERSONNEL AHEAD OF PRODUCT AND PLACE

#### PERSONNEL WILL DRIVE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- The mandate is to "lighten up"
- Use the recreation centre's personnel to bring the facilities alive. They are the essential **source** of energy and enthusiasm that people are seeking

*"Atmosphere. When I get to a place and I want to work out, I get to a place where there's people that want to work out, not people lazing around on this machine. Some other person just standing there watching me working out. Why are you watching me"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

- Non-users want to go to places that have a sense of liveliness and a buzzing in the air
- Personnel need to come from across the age spectrum
  - ♦ A range of people with life skills and experience to make the experience feel authentic

*"Some staff a bit too motivated up there, over active, they try to get you to push but you push at your own rate. Some of the staff need to know that. When to push and not to push"* (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

- May mean providing **more** personnel because it is important not to over extend existing resources

*"(Staff) Someone that's looking, like smiled at you, you don't even have to say hello"* (20 to 49, Asian)

#### PROMOTE PRODUCTS THAT CONNECT PEOPLE

- Provide opportunities and activities that are designed specifically for friends, couples, families and groups to do together

*"The ideal thing would be to take a service, to have the thing that everybody wants, so it's there. So the grandparents can do it, and the grandchildren are doing something else, or the parents or whatever"* (50+ years)

- Consider the role of music in setting the mood and tone

*"The only one that I think of as not too expensive and enjoyable, is dancing. (the RSA club). My mum and my dad, go to Mt Eden club and every time on entry it's only like five bucks. That is quite good. Like you can dance with a whole lot....it's just really nice and just like spinning around in a hall. It's so amazing and I can see that my mum is sweating. It's a good exercise. At night time they can look very pretty and ...this is a cheaper thing.....and it's a good exercise"* (20 to 49, Asian)

*"The old time waltz, the hokey-tokey - I was talking to an old friend at the weekend and she's into rock and roll"* (50+ years)

*"Hip hop - it's just like dancing but for young groups that you move a lot of - but it's exercise" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Consider the role of colour in setting the mood and tone

*"It's all metal and sterile. It looks boring. It just looks grey as, no colourful stuff. Mechanical and just boring. Doesn't look very inviting. Have piles of carpet. Mirror. Plants. Plants are good because they bring oxygen, so that's good while you work out and stuff" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"They've made an effort to make it colourful. I mean they've got the yellows, lines on the floors and the floors colourful. The equipment is colourful" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Colourful, that's better. Doesn't look boring. More challenging for the kids" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- Provide options that people can opt into, that are fun and that are about bettering themselves but that are done with a collective e.g. opt-in cardio championship for people to move forward (individually)

## PRODUCTS WITH A COVERT PURPOSE

- Every product/programme no matter how "playful" has a sub-text of serious purpose of getting people active
- Build in some kind of check, a natural way of highlighting progress and that shows the benefits of regular activity
  - ♦ To keep them in touch (with their progress)
  - ♦ To help set a potential routine
- **Overtly** the product range for this target group is playful, but **covertly** it seeks to convert people from drop-in (drop-out) or casual users to **regularity**

## REINFORCE FREEDOM IN THE FUNCTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- Not feeling physically constricted is very important, movement is about using the body without restriction, having an environment that encourages a sense of being able to do this is important

*"Like it's more open. So you can have different people coming in. Like that looks expensive to go work on a machine... might break it. ....you pay for it" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"The lights, lighting, equipment, up-to-date equipment" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- ♦ Create a sense of open space

*"Spacious and wide - perhaps white walls..." (50+ years)*

*"Too small, too stuffy, it's just like a room that you stuck in there" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"Like if that's a gym that is outdoors in a big area, then I would like to go more. Thinking about if you're eating rice every day, you get sick of it. Like if you go in the gym every day, you get sick of it. But it wouldn't be like that, not in a room that they can ??? all the time (spacious)" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"It's got lot of open space and it looks healthy" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- ♦ High ceilings
- ♦ Lots of windows, mirrors

*"Look out the window rather than look at everybody else" (50+ years)*

*"Depends on who's using it. Because some people prefer women only gym, they don't want men around" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"Some people don't want men around because men sometimes ogle, you know, they always look at women. So women feel uncomfortable" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- ♦ Large rooms
- ♦ Space between people/equipment stations

*"If you're with a lot of other people working out, you want to have a bit of space between the machinery and you want to feel comfortable. You don't want the person next door so close to you that they can see what you're up to, etc. And it's a bit claustrophobic if you're too close together" (50+ years)*

*"Squashed together. It's not appealing when you look at it. Doing your weights over there and then those bar bells or whatever, what do you call those things, yeah those dumb bells they're in the way, so it's like squashing.. So if you do your weights whatever and that's in front of you, you don't want to look at that" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

- ♦ Connection with the outdoors, indoor-outdoor flow, and activities conducted **outdoors** are very important. People want to feel in touch with the natural world

## **A POOL IS A HUGE ASSET**

- Has a serious purpose - it requires some sort of physical activity
- Also contributes to fun and relaxation
- Being supported by water/buoyancy facilitates movement for people (of any age) whose movement is impaired
- Water experiences touch people at an almost "primal" level

*"The pools are absolutely wonderful. They have pools there where the oldies can walk up and down, and the pool next door has children learning to swim, and they have a wave pool, or whatever you call it, and a big main pool. And there's coffee facilities for the mums that have got their toddlers there, and that sort of thing. I was most impressed with the complex, it was really lovely. And in the building they seem to have Plunket rooms and*

*other things too, from what I can see. It's a very big building, and only part of it is the pool complex. A great big car park" (50+ years)*

# 10 WHAT ELSE CAN WE OFFER TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION?

## UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR LEISURE ACTIVITY

### TRANSPOSE THE "LEISURE" VALUES FROM THE HOME

- It's all about leisure and getting activity through leisure
- Have a caring caller, a person who calls up regularly to see if you are coming? This provides people with:
  - ♦ A feeling that someone cares whether I come
  - ♦ Encouragement if my "others" aren't coming
- Have a host/hosts that is a separate role from trainers, this person would:
  - ♦ Greet me

*"Not growling at me. Makes a big difference you know. Somebody's not welcoming you properly" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"When you go in a hotel there's one person standing at the door and open the door, 'Hi'....as soon as someone walk in, just a smile and a handshake" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"Sometimes problems are there for different people, like some people they can't speak English. Sometimes people are expecting that there should be some other person who communicate in the language, but it is not possible to provide the person... but at least for the group of people they're expecting that there should be one who can understand them" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- ♦ Notice me, know me
- ♦ Ensure I'm participating
- ♦ Set the mood and tone of the "event"

*"Make sure that is warm welcome. As soon as the door open there's a counter there where one or two persons smile at you and the place must be clean. On the side must have lot of pot plants so when you walk into indoor place it's still like you're in outdoors. Bright, not a dark place" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Get outdoors by creating indoor/outdoor flow and by making as much use as possible of the outdoors
- Design games for big people so that people are moving and being active as a by product of any activity that is fun and light hearted

*"Different kinds of dances because I think dancing is a good physical activity" (20 to 49, Asian)*

### CREATE A "PEOPLE PLACE"

- Physical activity is not an end in itself and is not enough of a draw to get non-users involved
- The social factor is crucial

*"If you went to somewhere like that you'd meet like-minded people" (50+ years)*

*"It's no good going to a class, and then everyone goes home. You've got to have somewhere where you get together afterwards to chat. Because you don't really if you're exercising. You're not really talking to people, are you. You might say, hello, how're you going, but that's as far as it goes. There needs to be a meeting point" (50+ years)*

*"Out of interest, so you'd want to go. See who's down there tonight, or what's happening tomorrow" (50+ years)*

*"After when you've exercised you can talk with friends make sure they feel very well, healthy and just chat and after a hard work day..." (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Combine physical activity and socialising either as part of the activity itself or as part of the process (e.g. do something physical and then socialise in a relaxed setting that is part of the complex afterward)
- Facilitate ways for people to naturally interact - provide areas where people can relax and socialise after the activity within the facility e.g. a cafe

*"Cater for all ages, and there's a coffee shop... I think that's important actually, to be able to have a coffee with your friends" (50+ years)*

*"Well, you've worked out. And you've gone with, or you meet up with people, and we have a cup of coffee so you sit down and you have a chat for half an hour, so you wind down. It's all part and parcel of the same thing. It's not just about exercising, it's about chatting to people, meeting people" (50+ years)*

*"Like after people when they exercise, normally male and female they're in separate, they've got to have shower, but this is a good place where everyone meets together (cafe)" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"(Portraying ideal recreation centre) I like to have the café at the outside...a person can meet other people. And I hope everybody very friendly and comes forward and just shakes hand. The migrants in this country, we don't take the first step, we will expect the Kiwis to come and just say hello and more than...because we're feeling alienated, I mean, it's not our country" (20 to 49, Asian)*

- Support families and friends in having fun and doing physical activity together by having facilities, pricing structures and activities that are integrated and inclusive

*"Old-time darts" (50+ years)*

*"A band so you could go and dance around on the floor" (50+ years)*

*"A chess club up there - a dart club" (50+ years)*

*"An outdoor area so you can have a barbecue" (50+ years)*

*"Maybe something like, if you went and played a game of badminton, and then stayed on for a meal after" (50+ years)*

*"Like great big modern funky coloured planet. Spacious, energetic happy workers like greeting people coming in. They have a room for the kids only like and they have their own little equipment like Jimbaroo, or something,*

like gymnastics for them and the other one would be just ladies to have their own equipment and the other one would be men with their own equipment. There would be a crèche available from new-born up. They'd be a cheap activity available for kids that parents can volunteer to run in the school holidays. If they want to. There would be coffee groups for new mums. Community activities available in evenings. Like cake decorating and all those kind of things. Sewing. And you just pay your class in advance, cheap. Lots of parking and there would be a parent's room available for mothers, change kids. And distance would be less than 20 mins and it will be cheap. Probably \$10 a week (to access all those facilities) and half price for kids. Do a subsidy. Depends on how many kids you've got too. Like 3 kids you know. Depends. Maybe a discount for how many kids you've got. And like if you've got a kid who wants to do something instead of being in the creche with the younger kids, have passes for them while you are at the gym. Like you want to be able to go to gym and know that your kids are doing something fun because there's a big age gap between both of my kids and my daughter's likes dancing around and stuff and she could be like a hip hop class or whatever and the other one could be in the crèche like at the gym" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)

"(Imagining ideal centre) Reasonable prices. It is a place where we can go - people coming from different culture background. I can go to the recreation centre once every day for three to four of us with my family. I can share my feelings to the other culture people. I like having different age groups. Some yoga practice, drawing and swimming and then to have a cup of tea and snack" (20 to 49, Asian)

"(Portrayal of ideal recreation centre) The staff and cleaners should have a sense of humour and a smiling. It should give a feeling of belonging, that's very important. Good people around. Courtesy. It should have different types of activities for different people of all ages under one roof. So that a family can go and each one can do their own, and wherever they like. It's better that people come in groups and go in groups" (20 to 49, Asian)

"(Portrayal of ideal recreation centre) Peaceful. Come up and everyone important - if you want to go in to - where you go in the door there is no one there while you stand there waiting and you see no one to come...so there's a warm welcome...everyone have a bad experience they go somewhere or do something or buy something, so like sometimes there have been like at reception. Two people is there but no one come - they talking to each other, just like they didn't see you. So have to behave like...I would like that it's in a open area. Not like feeling close to other - more open area, like some chairs around like grass or path and not too many around. It feels very relaxed. So what I think people want is more relaxing more than anything else at this stage. So you have most of the sporting equipment or games for age groups or different backgrounds like different cultures for people. And maybe like some games or some equipment probably would be new to some people but different background people would be doing different things or different way to exercise or playing games. So more new games I think. Like the one that other countries have. New Zealand now many people come from different countries. So like probably Tai Chi. That's an example - not many Chinese here, but now there's more Chinese here so that's something new. So it might be other people or other countries. More light, not too dark" (20 to 49, Asian)



## ACTIVELY PROMOTE THE CENTRES

- Actively promote the recreation centres in the context of "invites" rather than "advertising". This gives it a friendly personable feel
- Things like:
  - ♦ Open day invitations, where people can come along with friends and family and have a go
  - ♦ Buddy invitations, where people bring along a friend
  - ♦ Letter-box drops – **invitations** to people to come and try out activities
  - ♦ Talk to community leaders - **invitations** to them and their groups to try out the activities and facilities
- Limited trials – **invitations** to trial the activities and facilities that are time limited
  - ♦ A month
  - ♦ Is this for you?

# 11 GO BEYOND TOKENISM FOR OLDER PEOPLE

## FROM "BORROWING" THE CENTRE (OFF-PEAK) TO TRULY BELONGING

### SENSE OF WORTH IN THE WORLD OF FITNESS

- Non-users feel that in the fitness world their sense of worth is defined by how fit they are
- They have an expectation that you have a certain level of fitness to go to a recreation centre
- However despite their lesser strength, children are valued for their future contribution to society
- Despite their lesser strength, older people need to be valued
  - ♦ Less physical strength means they feel they are not seen as an "effective" person

### A PLACE WHERE OLDER PEOPLE BELONG

- Within the recreation centres places are clearly designated for children and fitness buffs but where is the physical place for older people that **signifies** them?
- They feel that they sneak in and "have a go" while the others are not using it. The recreation centres need to feel to older people, that it is "our" place as opposed to borrowing "theirs"
- The Recreation centres need to create a sense of efficacy for older people and respect for older people. This can be created by having visible older staff who are seen as knowledgeable and efficacious
- The older people need to be taken care of, that is having people ensuring that what they are doing is optimal for them and their bodies and will not injure them. The care needs to be delivered in such a way that people feel like they are seen as people in their own right and not just old people
- Older people like to know what the minimum standards/guides to being physically active are. These guides need to be neutral, factual and not about comparison with others

## 12 UNDERSTANDING WHERE CREATIVITY FITS IN

### WELLNESS ENCOMPASSES THE "WHOLE PERSON"

#### PEOPLE YEARN FOR CREATIVITY IN THE WIDER ENVIRONMENT

- In people's ideal, wellness goes beyond physical strength and heart rate
- Wellness is physical, mental and spiritual and they want nourishment on **all** these levels
- Wellness is based on balance:
  - ♦ Between physical exertion and relaxation (hard workouts, massage, meditation)
  - ♦ Between the mind and the body
  - ♦ Between self and others

*"A park outside with a playground, and not a very big playground for the children, but lots of room for them to run around and everything, and then they've got a gymnasium and an outdoor pool, and 3 indoor pools, and an upstairs that's a beauty therapy sort of place. And in the school holidays we can get a cup of coffee" (50+ years)*

*"Different areas, the first one is like cultural, dances, music, aerobics, next one gym, climbing, and third one all the stuff outside. Tennis, but that would cost separately. Personal trainers. And there would be swimming pool, spa pool, saunas, private physio. And a personal trainer that has the equipment that is suitable and comfortable for you. So be like \$3 an hour. Nothing comes for free. The equipment costs a lot of money. Cheap but suitable" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"A relaxation room" (50+ years)*

*"Cards - I was going to say cards, but that's not an activity - it's only exercise with your brain" (50+ years)*

*"A meditation room" (50+ years)*

*"If you're a mum and you've got like some kids at school and some with you, you want to work out but your husband doesn't finish work till like later on and you want to work out for that time, the only way you can get women or people to come to your gym is if you've got a crèche, child minding service which is good. A crèche, like they have a set time and leave your kids and go work out. Some have like a hairdresser in there - you feel pampered. You can just (after your work out) go do your hair while your kids are taken care of, which is good" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"My one (fantasy ideal) got valet parking and you are greeted at the door and you've got separate gym for the men, separate gym for the women and the children have got their own like free fun time facility but the children are looked after while they are there and just go and go their workout. Then after the workout you get like free towels and free robes and you go for your spa or your mud bath or whatever, you facial and then you have a huge eatery and it's all eatery is all healthy food and juices and drinks and they are all healthy and you have soothing music to make people relax. Oh and for the workouts you'd have an instructor, on the floor, watching everyone doing their workout, helping everyone" (20 to 49 years, Maori/Pacific)*

*"(Portraying ideal recreation centre) For me I think the environment must be very attractive. For example I wish the place looks open to everybody and it let's people feel relaxed and welcome and also the service must be a*

*standard and also must have fresh air and also enough space for people to work. For me I like sports and indoor games, outdoor games - and also I think this place must have a shower facility. People having sports or exercise, they must be hungry and they must be thirsty so it's necessary to have a shower and have something to entertain themselves" (20 to 49, Asian)*

## **IDEAL ENVIRONMENT FOR A RECREATION CENTRE**

- Ideally a recreation centre is not a "stand-alone" place
- People reach out for ...
  - ♦ A library
  - ♦ Art and craft for all ages
  - ♦ Exhibitions
  - ♦ Cooking groups

*"There's a park right next to it - it's classed as more than one building now - there used to be just one, but now there's about four - got the library there, and the pool, all sorts of activities there. Last time I went there it was a Buddhist sort of thing - out on the forecourt as well as in the building, like ethnic tasting. And they have heaps of exhibitions and things like that - travelling exhibitions" (50+ years)*

*"I think it would be handy to have everything under one roof. Almost like the mall" (50+ years)*

*"You want committee rooms for women where they can go and learn their quilting, they can do their yoga, they can do their keep fit, their line dancing. It needs to be something that the whole community can use for whatever activity" (50+ years)*

*"It's not just the physical things. People want to do other things as well. They're into sewing. Kids can do dancing - whatever" (50+ years)*

*"First Aid - I'd like to learn" (50+ years)*

*"Drawing and painting something" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"Puzzles also because it can make our brain working better and also some other games like art, fine arts or something, or jewellery or something like that" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"Lots of big rooms for all the indoor activities like Tai Chi or it can be like flowers or art" (20 to 49, Asian)*

*"I just think if it's like a small library in the recreation centre - make more value for the recreation centre because sometimes people just like company with somebody to go to, they don't want to join - so they can stay quietly to read books" (20 to 49, Asian)*

# 13 CONCLUSIONS

## A WELLNESS STORY - FIT FOR LIFE

### CONCLUSIONS

- Recreation centres need to have a stronger sense of being "people places" as opposed to a set of facilities. People are intimidated by complex looking machinery, empty rooms and big buildings. It is the people who are the main attraction, so centres need to be felt by people entering them as warm, friendly and inclusive.
- Activities that are designed to include family and friends are essential. People want to do activities **with** each other, in ways that build and foster relationships. The focus must be on being inclusive through the age ranges and groupings.
- Design activities that are fun, light hearted and have physical components that are integral to the carrying out of the activity. People want to enjoy what they are doing and ideally get fitter as a result. The aim needs to be enjoyment.
- Many Non-users are followers. Tap into the leaders that they follow, teachers, friends, family members and find ways to assist them to bring people in. People are affected by the attitude people around have toward physical activity. Use people who are enthusiastic and energised about the facilities at the recreation centres to draw people in.
- Flexible pricing is essential. People don't want to be tied in to something. Money is often a problem and they might need to be able to divert it at times. This makes people very reluctant to "commit" their money to one thing.
- Make the whole place and experience fun and friendly for people of all ages. People pick up cues from the building, décor, people and equipment about how an experience will feel. They are drawn to colourful children's section that is designed to reflect fun. For adults the current fit out does not reflect fun, but functionality – fitness. This does not capture them, because for them it needs to be about fun and enjoyment.
- Personnel need to form a bridge between clients and equipment. They are crucial in adding the human element (feeling comfortable, confident, included, belonging) to the experience for people. Having personnel from a range of ages and backgrounds adds authenticity to people's experience and can provide effective role modelling.
- This may mean either more personnel or another person in a distinct role as a host. The host would welcome and build relationships with people. They would ensure people felt included, facilitate relationships between members and non-members and call if they hadn't seen someone in a while.
- Possibly look at volunteer hosts as well, e.g. as per hospitals, other public/local body facilities. Also look at how members can be included in encouraging new people into activities.
- Understand the appeal of things like...
  - ♦ Badminton
  - ♦ Biking
  - ♦ Dancing
  - ♦ Bowling
  - ♦ Ten pin bowling

These are activities that are leisure, that involve play and pleasure and are about connecting with people as opposed to activities that are more work-like such as competitive sports or gym-style fitness.
- People are looking for balance in life and are looking to be more holistic. Have a mixture of activities that are:
  - ♦ Active and relaxing, e.g. gym and then cafe

- ♦ For the mind and for the body, e.g. yoga and massage
- ♦ Physical and creative - e.g. games and painting

This allows people to make choices based on how **they** feel and what they feel they need to do to "rebalance" themselves.