



On Thursday 30th November we celebrated our end of year Prizegiving. Prizegiving is a time for us to reflect on the year that we have had and celebrate the amazing achievements of our young parents and their children. And what a great year it has been! This year our students have exceeded their own expectations and achieved more than they thought was possible. But this is what our students do, they do exceed expectations, they break through barriers and on days like Prizegiving we get to publicly recognize and celebrate this.

This year we have worked on reviewing our school values. Our student voice has been integral in this process. We started by asking them what YPS means to them, what they believe we are about here and what is important. Their voice is strongly echoed in Manaakitanga, Whanauangatanga and Growth and it feels so right that these become our YPS values. We are about family, we are about empowerment and we are about growth and development. This year's cohort really embody this. They support each other and work together to solve problems, they are respectful, show integrity, and they are all on a journey of growth.

This year's group have had some big achievements. A contributing factor is the high attendance rate which we have seen this year, particularly over the winter term which is notorious for low attendance in schools. This high attendance has led to some really successful academic moments and opportunities. All our students have a licence, they all had the confidence to attend an NMIT taster course, and all those with the goal of achieving Literacy and Numeracy have done this. We have had numerous level achievers this year and added a name to our University Entrance board.

We have also had a lot of fun – boxing classes have become a regular part of the week for many of our students and staff! We have shot arrows at Archery, paddled across to the Boulder Bank and climbed up the lighthouse. Students learnt how to make a really good coffee during the barista course at NMIT. We have had some lovely excursions with Potiki to the swimming pool, park and Te Mana Kuratahi – the primary schools Kapahaka competition. We had a day at Whenua Iti on the high ropes course where everyone stepped out of their comfort zones and learnt something about themselves. We have visited Helping Families, op shops and The Bike Hub. At Fantastic Futures we climbed scaffolding and dressed up in hardhats.

And let's not forget that our students are also all parents. They arrive in the morning having already done a full day's work and sometimes a full night's work too. They leave here at the end of the day with pepi, go home to cook dinners, wash clothes and read their child's favourite picture book for the hundredth time. Our students are a devoted and engaged group of mothers, they have a strong sense of what they want life to look like for their children and are actively working to ensure this becomes a reality. As I said to them at Prizegiving:

“You chose this path, but what impresses me most, is that you walk it with mana, determination and love.”

We hope everyone has a lovely break over the summer and we look forward to welcoming our returning and new students at the end of January 2024.

Ineke Reynolds—Head Teacher

PRIZEGIVING

Congratulations to all our students on a very successful year achieving both academic and personal goals and a big thank you to all the friends and whānau who attended. We have four distinction awards to give out each year. The ASPIRE award recognises a student who is aspiring to create a positive and meaningful life for themselves and their child. The Personal Development award is presented to a young parent who has shown considerable progress towards their personal development. The Mentoring award is given in recognition of a student's positive contributions to the school community and culture. The Top Academic Achiever award acknowledges the student who has excelled in their academic learning.

Our Distinction Award winners for 2023 were:

ASPIRE Award



Raine Tapiki-Higson

Nelson Soroptimist Personal Development Award



Kaitlyn Bremner

Mentoring Award & Top Academic Achiever



Sienna Rajek

CAREERS Study Taster Week

During Term 3 our students took the opportunity to attend two hour 'taster' workshops at NMIT/Te Pūkenga. Some of the study areas that our students chose to explore included: Adventure Tourism, Arts and Design, Beauty Therapy, Business, Conservation, Cookery, Hairdressing, Hospitality, Interior Design, Māori Studies, Nursing and Social Sciences. Next year we have two students who will be participating in Trades Academy programmes through the Top of the South Trades Academy (TOTSTA).



PŌTIKI CHRISTMAS PARTY

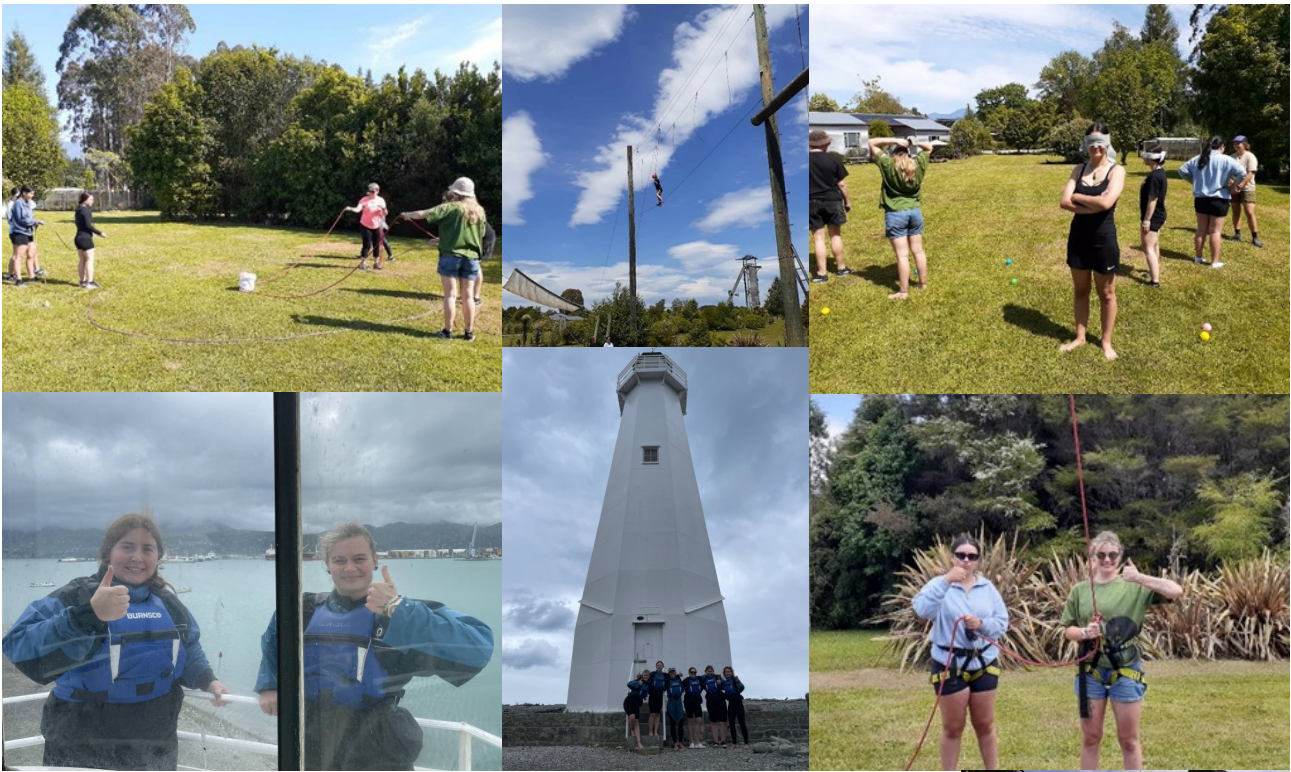
The day before Prizegiving, we celebrated the end of the year with our Christmas Party in Pōtiki. All the Pōtiki tamariki got a gift from Santa and shared some delicious kai prepared by our students.



PŌTIKI EXCURSIONS



We have continued to enjoy some wonderful, shared experiences outside the classroom in Terms 3 and 4, visiting Te Pā Harakeke, Te Matatini and the Aquatic Centre. These excursions give students the chance to spend quality time together with their children, experiencing some of the special and fun things to do in the Nelson region.



ACTIVE LIVING

Ever since our active living sessions at Victory Boxing in Term 2 our students (and staff) have been keen participants in public boxing classes each week. A big thank you to staff at Victory Boxing for making us feel so welcome.

Some other experiences we have enjoyed in the second half of the year include pilates, yoga, sailing and paddle boarding. Our final Active Living session for the year was an amazing day out at Whenua-Iti where we relished the opportunity to step outside our comfort zones, participating in some team building games along with low and high ropes challenges.

BOOK CLUB

You can't have an English teacher at YPS without some book-themed activities. Danielle brought in some of her tamariki's favourite books and talked about what she looks for in a good kid's book, Ineke also brought in some personal favourites for her kids and herself. It started a great korero about reading in general and how hard it is to find a good book for grownups too.

We were very lucky to be able to get in touch with the lovely Kirsty Stark from the Nelson College for Girls Library and have her visit us with a whole trolley of books for our students to look through. She brought in a great range of books, and we ended up taking out a big stack. Talon as particularly inspired by Parris Goebel's autobiography 'Young Queen' and laminated some awesome quotes from the book. We will look into making this a regular occurrence for 2024.

STUDENT WORK

We wanted to share a recent piece of student work with you. We feel that this piece of writing produced by Raine gives some great insights into how attending a teen parent unit like our school benefits our students and how much they appreciate the support. We hope that you enjoy reading it as much as we did. You can read Raine's work on the next page.



Young Parents Should Engage in Education – Raine Tapiki-Higson, NCEA Level 1 English

Young parents should engage in education because it is such a beneficial decision to make for you and your pepi's future. Although being a teen parent is viewed as a risk for you and your pepi, by participating in a Teen Parent Unit (TPU) it sets up a positive future for you both. As a teen parent myself, I think the best decision I have ever made is to have my son. The second-best decision was moving away from home and enrolling in Nelson Young Parents' School (YPS).

As humans, we all have risk and protective factors. Risk and protective factors come from Oranga Tamariki, a system for measuring the safety of a child. In 2008, there were 5,223 births registered to teen women (under 20). That is 1 in every 12 births. Those statistics have more than halved in the last decade, for 1,719 were born in 2022. Especially if you are under 16, like I was, you do not have many legal rights. Because of that you are less likely to have any independence. This makes you more dependent on others' support. We cannot have our own home, sign consent for our own children and so much more. This can lead to vulnerability because just like our child, our brains are still developing. Which means you need the right support to help make wise decisions. This is where protective factors come in. The 3 main ways TPUs increase protective factors is through education, mental and physical wellbeing.

There are protective factors you are eligible for. Such as attending a TPU and obtaining free education. There are TPUs all around NZ for teenagers who are hapu or parents. It is a very fortunate privilege for young parents as well as pepis.

Education is important because knowledge is power. At YPS we are in control of our own learning plan and education. We all work at our own pace, to pick up where we left off in school. You get the opportunity to study level 1,2,3, university entrance and/or work experience. While at the same time it is a system nothing like school. There are individual learning plans to suit individual needs. We set our goals on what it is we want to accomplish, and they help and encourage us to get there. Also, having the ability to bring our pepi with us and confidently knowing they are also getting well cared for is relieving.

YPS Nelson is a very helpful place not only in school but in our personal lives also. Firstly, we have transport available to and from school for those who do not have their own. They take us to appointments when needed and have car seats pre-installed for our Tamariki. Secondly, they provide us with healthy and delicious morning tea and lunches every day. While also offering breakfast when we arrive in the mornings. Third, we participate in active living weekly. Active living is when we do fun, different activities each week outside of school. For example, things such as ten pin bowling, boxing, water rafting etc. Maintaining our physical wellbeing. And to top it all off these amazing things are free. All these aspects increase our protective factors.

Another protective factor is the connections they have, and the ability to use them for our advantage. Things like budgeting, first aid, health and safety, NMIT and parenting courses. They have the right resources to get you on the right path for whatever it is. Also, going to school with young parents with a lot of similarities as yourself, creating bonds is great for you and how you will spend your time at school. Creating close relationships with the teachers, students and Tamariki makes for a great social support system. Creating a healthy mental wellbeing.

The young parent payment. A benefit the government created for parents under 20, is so we can have financial stability while still being able to go to school and raise your child.

If ever you would like to look further into it, or are convinced this is something you, or someone you know, would benefit from, I would suggest having a look at their website <https://teenparentschools.org.nz/schools/nelson-young-parents-school/> for all the information about the nearest TPU to you. These resources are valuable for the long term because once you are qualified you can aim for a preferred, well-paid job for good financial independence. As a young mother myself who is currently attending YPS, I would recommend giving this school a chance to any young mama and papa out there.

Nelson Young Parents' School

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