

Tai Poutini Polytechnic Media Release

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Polytechnic Outdoor Education partnership benefits West Coast

Students teaching students, under the watchful eye of experienced professionals, is an education initiative that's creating benefits for the entire West Coast.

Every year, Tai Poutini Polytechnic's second-year Outdoor Instruction and Guiding students lead local school students on a range of outdoor adventures as part of their training.

Outdoor Education Tutor Zak Shaw and Greymouth High School Principal Andy England call it a "win-win" for all involved, that also has wider benefits for the region.

"This year alone, our Diploma students have delivered 10 weeks of outdoor experiences for West Coast schools. I see the relationship as mutually beneficial: the schools can access well-organised, safe outdoor experiences, while our own students gain an opportunity to develop first hand teaching experience."

Safety is a primary focus on all outdoor experiences, with highly trained and experienced tutors providing TPP students with expert guidance every step of the way. The outdoor education tutors at TPP are industry leaders, providing training based on industry best practice.

Zak says the opportunity to work with people in real situations is an invaluable part of training for Outdoor Education students. "Our students learn how to design and implement teaching lessons, manage risk effectively, communicate well with people, build rapport and support them through outdoor experiences.

"And the benefits aren't just for our students; as a major West Coast education provider, TPP has a role to play in the wider community. We make a contribution to the health of the West Coast by connecting people with nature and involving them in physical activities"

Greymouth High School Principal Andy England agrees that partnerships like this benefit schools, students and the wider community.

"Since the advent of the West Coast Trades Academy, students have become much more focused on their goals for starting careers. This has actually led to a decrease in senior students taking Outdoor Education just for fun, which means schools are less likely to have Outdoor Ed departments of our own. Partnering with TPP has enabled us to continue to offer really high quality outdoor education experiences for students throughout the school, while also adding a pathway to a career in Outdoor Adventure (Leadership and Guiding)."

Mr England says partnerships between education providers are an excellent way to offer education on a regional basis.

“We all want the best possible educational experience for our students. As taxpayers, we also want to know our taxes are being spent efficiently so there's no point in every school having resources that are only partly used.

“By partnering with TPP, our students get to learn from a range of enthusiastic educators and use really high quality equipment. By partnering with us, TPP gets clients for their students to learn about leadership and guiding. Tuakana and teina - it's a win win.”

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