

Spring Back – Piki ake te ora Campaign Report 2022

Facilitated by Alex McNab - BAF

Supported by the WHO Age Friendly New Plymouth Group

Prepared by: Alex McNab

Report Date: Novemeber 2022

Table of contents	Page
1 Introduction	3
2 Conext and rationale	3
3 Discussion	4
3.1 Planning.....	4
3.2 Collaboration and engagement.....	6
3.3 Deisgn.....	6
3.4 Promotion.....	7
4 Feedback	8
5 Limitations	8
6 Reccomendations	9
7 Appendices	10
Appendix I “10 Tips to encourage social and community connectedness” poster.....	10
Appendix II Spring Back logo.....	10
Appendix III Spring Back teaser blurb.....	10
Appendix IV Spring Back advert #1 in the North Taranakai Mid-week.....	10
Appendix V Spring Back advert #2 in the North Taranaki Mid-week.....	11
Appendix VI “Connecting seniors with commuinty” article in the Stratford Press.....	11
Appendix VII “Seniors encouraged to join local activities” article in the North Taranaki Mid-week....	12
Appendix VIII Volunteering New Plymouth Spring Back advert in the North Taranaki Mid-week.....	12
8 References	13

Spring Back Campaign Report November 2022

1.0 Introduction

This report intends to reflect on and provide a recount of the Spring Back campaign that took place in Taranaki in October 2022. To report on the entirety of the campaign from planning through to completion, key sections will highlight the work completed in each of the phases. As a promotional campaign, Spring Back encouraged social and community connectedness among elders/kaumātua in Taranaki, by reminding them of the activities that run in their local area and by encouraging others to help their fellow elderly/kaumātua get involved. This report will begin by explaining the context and rationale behind Spring Back, followed by a discussion of each of the phases, limitations and recommendations for future action.

How social isolation and loneliness are defined and conceptualised in this report is important given the target group and the context of COVID-19. Though social isolation and loneliness are terms often used interchangeably, it is important to make a distinction between the two. Social isolation is defined as having an objective lack of meaningful communication and social relationships, or having infrequent social contact. While loneliness on the other hand refers to the state of distress or discomfort that results when one perceives a gap between one's desires for social connection and actual experiences of it. Such definitions were considered in the context of this project and ultimately influenced the content that was produced.

The limitations of Spring Back are discussed toward the end of the report. The limitation section considers the areas of improvement for Spring Back, but more importantly, the discussion intends to inspire recommendations for future action in the community.

2.0 Context and rationale

Social isolation and loneliness among the elderly/kaumātua are ongoing issues that for many years have impacted people in both urban and rural communities. These issues still remain a problem in many communities, however the context has changed. Elderly persons have been staying inside their homes more often due to the 2020 and 2021 COVID-19 lockdowns. During this time, the elderly/kaumātua felt more at risk of infection therefore it was sensible to stay inside. These lockdowns had/are still having major consequences on all aspects of one's health, particularly among the elderly due to potential co-morbidities or other health concerns. Because of this, community-led initiatives have become increasingly valuable to the restoration of social and community connectedness among the ageing population as part of the COVID-19 response.

Social isolation and loneliness significantly impact all aspects of individual and whānau health. Medical professionals state that: The elderly belong to the at-risk group for COVID-19 and for suffering morbidity and mortality as a result of “withdrawal from social interactions and mental stimulation” (Eisendle et al, 2020). Furthermore, current literature suggests that infrequent social interactions and the perceived feeling of loneliness can increase one’s vulnerability to developing vascular and neurological diseases and premature mortality (Eisendle et al, 2020). While others, Courtin and Knapp (2015) assert that the health impacts of social isolation and loneliness are equivalent to the health risks associated with smoking and obesity. Devastating health and well-being consequences caused by social isolation and loneliness was one aspect that motivated the WHO Age Friendly New Plymouth group to implement a regional promotional campaign.

Spring Back was supported by the WHO Age Friendly New Plymouth group. This group consists of key community organisations that are actively involved with the elderly population in New Plymouth and throughout Taranaki. Such organisations involved in this group are of the likes of; Age Concern, Bishop’s Action Foundation, CCS Disability Action, Grey Power, New Plymouth District Council, Positively Ageing, Sport Taranaki, Taranaki Disability Information Centre, Te Whatu Ora – Taranaki and Volunteering New Plymouth.

3.0 Discussion

During the initial planning stage of the campaign, the four phases were outlined in a PowerPoint presentation and then delivered to the group. Each phase included the partners responsibilities and their relevance in achieving the aims and objectives of Spring Back. Each of the strategies mentioned in this report are linked to these four phases.

3.1 Planning

The initial planning of Spring Back took place at the WHO Age Friendly group meetings. Following the first two meetings, a PowerPoint presentation with an outline of the timeline for Spring Back was delivered to partners. Delivering a presentation to the group was imperative to the cohesiveness and success of the campaign messaging. It ensured that partners had an opportunity to communicate their thoughts regarding proposed ideas and actions, raise any concerns and provide feedback.

The aims and objectives of Spring Back were established based on the context and rationale of Spring Back. As a group, we decided on one overarching aim followed by a list of sub-aims and outlined six objectives. They are as follow:

Aim: To encourage and support elderly out of their homes and to re-engage them in social activities by:

1. Reminding the elderly of activities and services that already exist.
2. Encouraging families and community to maintain social connections and reach out to others.
3. Encourage providers, clubs, and organisations to re-engage with their members and potential members to support participation in their activities and programmes.
4. Help connect people with programmes and activities in the community, Taranaki-Wide.
5. Generically promote the importance of social interaction and activities.

Objectives:

1. Raise awareness of current programmes and activities around the region.
2. Raise awareness of clubs and societies.
3. Remind the elderly of their outdoor spaces and places (Parks, walkways, beaches).
4. To provide resources that Māori and other ethnic groups can utilise and promote.
5. Encourage family, friends and neighbours to actively support elderly out of their homes.
6. Work with current providers and groups to get them actively promoting and supporting elderly into their activities.

The health and safety of the elderly is of great importance to the group partners. It was recognised early on that the campaign message had to align with health advice and legislation. To ensure that Spring Back adhered to COVID-19 mandates and restrictions, the group chose to follow the health advice from Te Whatu Ora – Taranaki and government legislation. This meant that the launch date initially proposed had to be flexible if suddenly the governmental health advice and legislation had changed due to a spike in case numbers.

A key step involved in the planning of Spring Back was establishing a budget. The budget came from the New Plymouth District Council's funding for the WHO Age Friendly city accreditation, with some funding support from the Bishop's Action Foundation. The allocated budget for Spring Back was \$3,000. The majority of this amount was spent on advertising in the four newspapers (South Taranaki Star, North Taranaki Mid-week, Stratford Press, and Ōpunake and Coastal news). The printing of the posters was agreed to be completed internally, therefore it was excluded from the budget figure.

3.2 Collaboration and engagement

Collaboration with partners and key stakeholders was a significant component of Spring Back that acted as a medium for the promotion of campaign material while also providing an opportunity for community organisations to engage more elderly in their services. Collaboration often took place in the form of konohi ki te konohi (face- to-face) or zoom meetings with community organisations, stakeholders and the WHO Age Friendly group.

Building partnerships to invoke collaboration was essential during phase one in July. To reach and promote throughout Taranaki, the campaign coordinator met with the South Taranaki District Council and the Stratford District council Community team managers to get the councils on board. Most importantly, we reached out to the managers of the libraries in the three districts. Libraries are community hubs that run activities for the elderly and provide access/connections to many other services. This partnership enabled us to reach more elderly and promote the library's services.

To hear from the elderly and to gather advice, tips, and motivational quotes for newspaper articles, the campaign coordinator visited Age Concern social groups in New Plymouth, Stratford and Hāwera. The group's input was then published as separate articles in the North Taranaki Mid-week (Appendix VI) and the Stratford Press (Appendix VII).

3.3 Design

Canva and Photoshop were two invaluable resources used to create the Spring Back content. The first design created on Canva was the Spring Back logo. The name 'Spring Back' was chosen as a means of promoting ways to 'spring back' into life after the highly disruptive lockdowns. Spring is known to be the month of growth and transformation as many plants begin to bloom and new life takes place. Changing or reintroducing the social habits of elderly/kaumātua was recognised as a challenge for the campaign. Therefore, it was more beneficial and constructive to encourage this change when the weather was warmer for outdoor activities and people were more motivated to get out of their homes.

The design includes a native flowering Harakeke, placed in the centre of the logo as a metaphor to explain the purpose of Spring Back. Harakeke grow flowers in Spring that produce an abundance of nectar. The nectar then attracts the likes of Tūi, providing it with nutrients for sustenance. Similarly, Spring Back intends to display activities (flowers) from community organisations (Harakeke flax) to attract community members (Tūi) to places and spaces that provide them with sustenance for a better well-being.

The meaning of Spring Back was translated into te reo Māori to reflect a te ao Māori understanding of the campaign message. Piki ake te ora roughly translates to “climb back into health”. Although this is not a direct translation, it portrays a similar message. The logo was completed in phase one for all draft material in phase two.

Other pieces of design content created were a poster with ten tips to encourage social and community connectedness and a campaign teaser. The poster and teaser were both created on Canva and then circulated in either physical or electronic form around various groups. These pieces of design took place in August and September ahead of the promotion.

3.4 Promotion

Phase three, which focused primarily on the promotion of activities and the campaign in general, took place in September and October. Given that the proposed launch date was October 1st (The International Day of the Older Person), September was an ideal time to distribute the material around the community. However, promotion was ongoing throughout October to help engage people with the campaign message and to promote October activities. By circulating promotional teasers one month in advance of the launch, the elderly had more time to consider the campaign message before making habitual changes the following month. One approach we took to ensure the campaign message got out was to use as many promotional streams as possible. Below is a compilation of the types of promotion undertaken.

- Promotional teaser in the North Taranaki Mid-Week, Ōpunake and Coastal news, and the South Taranaki Star.
- Tips poster displayed at Puke Ariki library, Stratford library and the South Taranaki district libraries.
- Poster with 10 tips of ways to encourage social and community connectedness was circulated around partners and community groups e.g. Safe Communities, Mahia Mai and Coastal Health Care.
- 10 individual tips with captions were posted each week of October on NPiS Facebook page.
- Posters at the Stratford International Day of the Older Person’s event, Community Expo and the Ageing Forum.
- Radio announcement on Moore FM and Spring Back discussion on Access Radio
- LinkedIn post

Spring Back promotional material was distributed far and wide throughout the community. An email group consisting of WHO Age Friendly partners and many community organisations were sent a copy

of the poster (Appendix I) and the logo (Appendix II). Additionally, the partners received a promotional teaser template (Appendix III) that they could manipulate slightly to include their organisation's name and then publish in their monthly newsletters. All of the recipients were then asked to internally print and display the posters on their noticeboards and distribute through their personal and professional networks to promote the message.

The promotion of the campaign was delivered in person to community groups. As part of the community engagement for Spring Back, the campaign coordinator spoke at the Ōpunake Tainui Day Centre programme and the Women's Club meeting. These face-to-face deliveries informed the elderly of Spring Back's purpose and the rationale behind it, as well as tips on how to get themselves/others involved. To support the presentation, the audience were given tips posters to take home and were encouraged to share with friends and family.

Feedback

Anecdotal feedback was important when determining the impact of Spring Back in the community. Although intentionally gathering feedback was not part of the evaluation of the campaign, it is worth highlighting the positive outcomes that Spring back has helped to achieve. One scenario where the Spring Back campaign has helped emphasises the importance of community connection and social interactions to support one's health. An elderly couple were connected into an active ageing class offered by Sport Taranaki to help strengthen their muscles and bones, improve cognition responses and social connections. Feedback from the couple about how much they were enjoying the class had been passed on anecdotally. The couple have scheduled the session into their diary, put aside some spare money for the class and look forward to attending it each week. They enjoy socialising with others there and feel physically stronger after attending only a couple of classes. Not only are the older couple happy about going, their GP has approved of their actions and believes it was "the best thing they could have done for their health".

Limitations

Upon reflection, it became evident that the use of te ao Māori and te reo Māori in Spring Back content could have been used more. Ideally, Spring Back content would have been available in both English and te reo, therefore being accessible to and inclusive of te ao Māori. Although offering Māori content was a sub-aim of the campaign, this was not achieved. This matter has prompted ideas to invite Māori to join the group to ensure that all planning and produced work is culturally inclusive in the context of Aotearoa. This idea will be discussed further in the recommendation section below.

During the promotion and community engagement phases, there was a misunderstanding among community members regarding the campaign's intent. The confusion was around people thinking that Spring Back would hold an event. Although this was clarified when mentioned, it added unnecessary confusion. Whether this factor impacted the campaign message or not, is difficult to determine. To avoid misunderstandings, the material could be tested on the elderly to gauge their understanding of the campaign's intent.

Recommendations

The COVID-19 pandemic has raised awareness of the importance of social and community connections for achieving good health and wellbeing and has highlighted the need for more community-led initiatives such as Spring Back to grow and continue.

The continuity of Spring Back should be considered by group partners.

- Spring Back has the potential to become an annual campaign in Taranaki aligned with the International Day of the Older Person. The current resources could be utilised for the following year and the years to come.
- The resources could be tweaked so that they are used by partner groups all year round

In line with the limitations mentioned above, one recommendation that would benefit the group members and the community, is to invite a Māori champion to the group meetings. Increasing the diversity in perspectives and having a strong advocate/representative for Māori voice is important to ensure we are carrying out our obligations under Te tiriti o Waitangi. For instance, this could potentially look like inviting a community-based employee from Tui ora or Mahia Mai to join the group. While having a Māori champion would be incredibly beneficial to the community and the future projects delivered, there are alternative ways to ensure content in te reo Māori. The group could commission a translator at Te Wananga o Aotearoa to translate the texts for promotional content from English into te reo Māori.

In regards to the campaign clarity that was discussed during the limitation section, one recommendation that could increase the effectiveness of the campaign material in the future, would be to include further testing of material on the elderly/kaumātua. The purpose of this action is to ensure that the elderly have a clear understanding of the campaign's intent to avoid any unnecessary confusion. Ideally, the testing would take place prior to the use of the material being utilised in the future.

[Appendix I]

10 Tips to Encourage Social Connectedness

Spring Back is encouraging social and community connectedness in Taranaki for the month of October.

Piki ake te ora

- ✓ Visit your local library
Visit your local library to find out more or collect a "What's On" booklet.
- ✓ Reconnect with friends and family
Give an old friend a call and arrange to grab a coffee and a scene together at a local cafe in your area.
- ✓ Get out into nature
Head out for a walk and stop to look at the beautiful spring flowers in the parks and in your neighbourhoods.
- ✓ Partake in classes and activities
There are many activities for seniors to be involved in. Invite your friends or your neighbours to come along and have some fun.
- ✓ Become a volunteer
Volunteering gives you a sense of purpose in your community and allows you to give back. Head over to Volunteering New Plymouth to sign up by yourself or with a friend!
- ✓ Create a weekly to-do list
This is a great way to stay organised and motivated to do more. You can pack in your week with social outings, hobbies and leisure activities.
- ✓ Keep an eye out
Activities and events are popping up all the time. Keep checking the newspaper, Facebook, or your local library to see what's on in your community.
- ✓ Make an activities budget
To ensure you have allocated enough money for some fun, set aside a weekly allowance that can go towards enjoyment activities.
- ✓ Pick a friend up
Offer to pick a friend up and take them out for coffee. You could even head out for a walk or go see a movie.
- ✓ Shoulder Tap
Personally invite a friend to come along to a class or activity. Seeing a familiar face at a new event can provide comfort.

[Appendix II]



[Appendix III]

Spring! Spring! Spring!

Piki ake te ora

What better time of the year than to create new beginnings and new habits. After all, spring symbolises growth and transformation.

The WHO Age Friendly New Plymouth group is proud to be running the Spring Back campaign this October.

Spring Back is encouraging social connectedness and community engagement among seniors within Taranaki.

For the month of October, beginning on the 1st of October (The International Day of Older Person's), we encourage as many people as possible to get involved in social activities within their community.

COVID has changed the way we live, making it easier to stay inside our homes. So, let's remember the things that we loved doing before the pandemic and ease back into them or try something new. It's simple!

Pay close attention to the many activities that are already running throughout Taranaki, and add them into your weekly schedule or to do list.

Not sure if you want to do them alone? No problem! Take a friend, neighbour, cousin, or sibling. So together, let's spring back into life!

[Appendix IV]

Spring Back

Piki ake te ora

Volunteering New Plymouth
Te Tuari o Ngamotu

Volunteering New Plymouth is your local preferred point of contact for volunteering and Volunteer Groups who serve our New Plymouth Community. This Spring Back month we are supporting Friends of Pukekura Park Buggy rides. These operate Monday – Thursday and Sunday 10.30 – 3ish meeting at Band Rotunda.

This activity costs \$5 per adult and \$2 per child and takes approximately 45 mins including a guided tour and commentary

Contact Wendy for more information 06 758 8986 or 0022 571 4228

Outdoor opportunities

In Taranaki you're never too far from nature. We are grateful to be blessed with many public outdoor spaces that are just waiting for you to enjoy. Below are a few ideas of outdoor spaces.

- Coastal Walkway
- Parks
- Gardens
- Bush walks
- Beaches
- Swimming
- Mt Taranaki visitor's centre
- Reserves

[Appendix V]



SPRING BACK



Strength & Balance classes are available across Taranaki, they are safe, fun and effective at strengthening legs, improving balance and wellbeing. Classes are a neat way to get out in your local area and connect or meet your neighbour or a new friend.

For a class list or more information please contact Sport Taranaki **06 7590930** or **021480180** (Hilary)

Or visit Sporttaranaki.org.nz or livestronger.org.nz

**AGE CONCERN TARANAKI**
He Mānākitanga Kaumātua Aotearoa

Our vision is to support older people to live valued and meaningful lives in an inclusive society. We are all about building friendships and community connections.

Age Concern Taranaki hold coffee mornings, social singing, digital Literacy sessions, in home visiting service, aqua exercise, seated exercise and staying safe driver refresher classes throughout Taranaki.

Contact **0800 65 2 105** or info@ageconcerntaranaki.org.nz

[Appendix VI]

Connecting seniors with community

A Taranaki-wide campaign is under way to get seniors out and about connecting with their community.

Covid-19 has been highly disruptive to everyone's lives, with the social isolation increasing loneliness, Alex McNab, community connector for the Bishop's Action Foundation said.

"Social isolation and loneliness can have a devastating impact on all aspects of health. The campaign idea came about as several community organisations who are part of the WHO Age Friendly initiative, had noticed a drop-off in numbers in their classes and in the community in general after

the Covid lockdowns."

Called Spring Back, the campaign is taking a two-pronged approach, she said.

"On one hand, Spring Back is encouraging seniors to keep an eye out for the awesome activities they can become involved in and on the other hand, people will be encouraged to support their fellow seniors to become involved."

Taranaki has abundant accessible outdoor spaces and many programmes, classes and activities designed for seniors and Spring Back wants to promote what is already available.

Community organisations will be promoting their activities

throughout October along with useful and easy-to-follow tips.

These approaches could involve shoulder tapping friends to join in on classes and events, or taking a parent or grandparent out for a coffee or walk.

They could also involve seeing the gardens in the Taranaki Garden Festival, visiting Govett Brewster, attending activities in their local library, grocery shopping together, starting or joining a knitting circle, having a blokes' shed get-together.

The campaign will run throughout October, beginning on October 1, which is the International Day of Older Persons.

[Appendix VII]



The Stratford Chirpy-Friday group. Photo/Supplied

Seniors encouraged to join local activities

Taranaki's senior citizens are encouraged to spring back to social connectedness with a new campaign.

Spring Back is a Taranaki-wide promotional campaign run by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly New Plymouth groups.

The aim of the campaign is to encourage seniors to participate in activities in the community, and to provide tips on how others can get their friends to come along.

During October the campaign will promote a range of activities from Age Friendly New Plymouth partner organisations New Plymouth Positive Ageing Trust, Age Concern Taranaki, Taranaki District Health Board, the Taranaki Disability Information Centre Trust and the New Plymouth Injury Safe Trust.

Community connector Alex McNab says with the Covid-19 pandemic and social isolation, senior citizens have become more isolated and lonely.

Social isolation and loneliness can have a devastating impact on all aspects of one's health, says Alex.

"The campaign idea came about as a number of community organisations part of the WHO Age Friendly initiative noticed a drop off in attendance numbers for group activities."

Taking a collaborative approach is the best way to promote social connectedness, she says.

"Taranaki has abundant accessible outdoor spaces and many programmes, classes and activities designed for seniors. Spring Back is supporting community organisations, utilising pre-existing resources, and encouraging people to take actionable steps to begin socialising."

One of the activities is the Stratford Chirpy-Friday group. This is a morning activity run through Age Concern, where senior citizens come together to hear a few jokes, sing some songs, and catch up over a cuppa and hiscuit.

Alex attended one of the sessions.

"I asked why they come along to this activity. Some of them said that they love the music, seeing friendly faces, coming along to hear jokes, and they enjoy meeting people."

She also asked if they had any tips to encourage senior citizens to come to different activities.

"They laughingly said just drag your friends out and keep ringing if you haven't heard from them". The atmosphere was very positive and it would be wonderful to see more friendly faces enjoying the company of others."

[Appendix VIII]

VOLUNTEER CALL



Volunteering New Plymouth
Te Tuari o Ngamotu

October is spring -- what better time of the year than now to create a new beginning and new habits.

As one of the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly New Plymouth groups we are proud to support this Spring Back Piki ake te ora promotion.

This promotion is to encourage social connection and community engagement among seniors within Taranaki, which is fitting for October because October 1 is International Day of the Older Person.

It has been great that the Government has stopped the traffic lights system and the mask requirements have changed. It seems like a great time to start getting out and about.

Initially it may seem strange. I have found it strange not wearing a mask after doing so for so many months. However, I also see there are people still wearing their masks and that is great to see as well.

This month, as our part of the promotion, we are supporting the Friends of Pukekura Park and their buggy rides.

These are operated from Monday to Thursday and Sunday from 10.30am-3pm-ish. The cost is just \$5 per adult and \$2 per child. This includes commentary and guided tour of the park.

What a lovely way to start your outings during spring. Contact your friends, who maybe you haven't been out with for a while, and join one of these rides around the park. Then perhaps go for a hot drink and chat at a cafe close by.

There are several organisations that are joining together to include their activities in this Spring Back promotion during October - so look out for the Spring Back logo and also check out the posters "10 Tips to Encourage Social Connectedness" that will be put up around the region.

This is a Taranaki-wide initiative so there will be many events that are going to be included in this promotion.

If you think you may like to check them out, ask at the place where you saw the Spring Back poster or contact Wendy at Volunteering New Plymouth on (06) 758 8986, text/phone 022 571 4228 or email admin@volunteeringnewplymouth.nz.



Spring Back
Piki ake te ora

References

Courtin, E & Kanpp, M. (2015). Social isolation, loneliness and health in old age: a scoping review. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 25(3). <https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12311>

Eisendle, K., Engl, A., Piccoliori, G., Plagg, B. (2020). Prolonged social isolation of elderly during COVID-19: Between benefit and damage. *Elsevier Public Health Emergency Collection*. <https://doi.10.1016/j.archger.2020.104086>