

Rural Scholars Tongan Language Week

WAVE 5+ a Day Wero

Each term our faiko look forward to incorporating and promoting healthy eating and living, inspired by the WAVE 5+ a Day Wero (challenge). With Tongan Language Week approaching the faiko had been busy planning learning opportunities to combine this, but covid-19 has unfortunately had other plans for many situations this year and the option of preparing and sharing of food at Rural Scholars was off the table.

Despite the hindrance of this, the celebration of Tongan Language Week has still had many rich and valuable learning experiences for our Tongan fanau and all of our other ākonga (learners), with our faiko recognising the importance of cultural identity in fostering a healthy mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. We acknowledge a balanced and healthy diet is important for healthy growth and development, but it is also just one element that needs to be nurtured and interwoven for a flourishing hauora.

Acknowledging the theme of WAVE's wero 'cultures from around the world', our Tongan Language Week was planned with the Pasifika values identified in the Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017 of love, service and respect, including our famili in the talanoa and establishing what was important to their fanau. This guided our planning and the learning we offered for all of our learners to be meaningful and respectful of the beautiful Tongan culture.

Throughout the week, fanau were offered learning experiences enhancing their knowledge of lea faka-Tonga and the Tongan culture through play including hiva (songs), art forming ngatu (tapa) patterns, identifying the colours in Tongan and shape memory. On Tuesday we came together for our Tongan fanau to teach and share their culture, supporting their sense of wellbeing and building their confidence and pride in their culture through our Fiefia Tusite. Our five Tongan learners came dressed in Tongan attire, and one ta'ahine (girl) performed a tau'olunga in traditional dress – teunga.

The sense of pride in these children's face, and in their families emphasises why this is so important for their hauora, and fostering confident and competent learners in all that they do with the knowledge that they are respected as individuals and their culture is a part of them.



