

AUT

Sport as a Social Development Tool- Evaluating the Perceived Effectiveness of the Touch NZ Community Projects

Tristan Brotherton and Dr Kirsten Spencer

Auckland University of Technology, Sport Performance Research
Institute, NZ

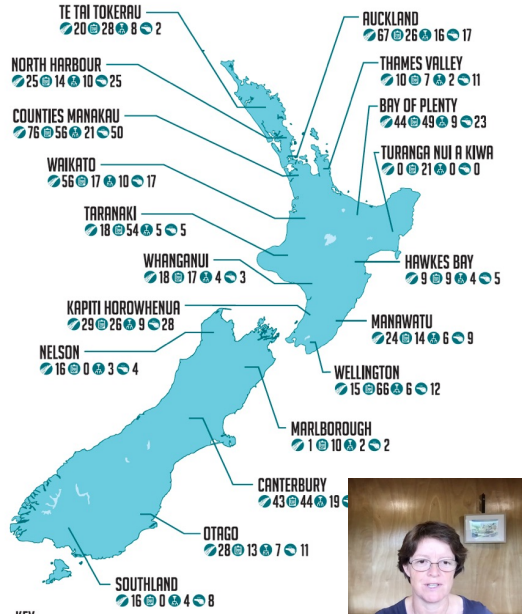


107,000 players participated in Touch competitions in New Zealand in 2018



Touch in NZ

Touch in Our Provinces

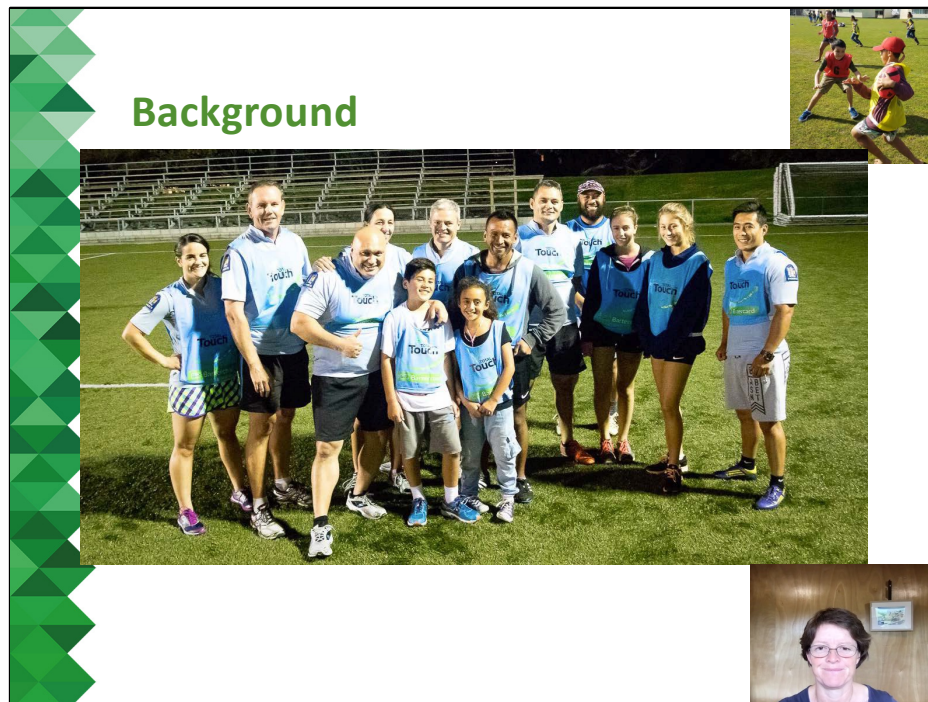


KEY:
 NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE 2018 PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME
 NUMBER OF BOWLS WHICH WERE COMPLETED
 NUMBER OF TEAMS ENTERED IN LEADER REGIONS AND NATIONALS
 NUMBER OF REFEREES WHO ATTENDED THE 2018 NATIONAL EVENTS



- Touch is a big participation sport and
- very popular in Pasifika culture

12



Background

Ta-maki Touched is a collaboration between Touch New Zealand (Touch NZ), the New Zealand Police and Ruapotaka Marae in Auckland's Glen Innes.

Together, these organisations saw an opportunity to achieve community engagement and positive community outcomes through the medium of sport and active recreation.

Since its inception in April 2016, Ta-maki Touched has made significant progress towards this

overarching goal by creating a programme that focuses on:


- establishing community buy-in through engaging local champions
- walking alongside and empowering the community to build on its strengths
- having a wh-anau focus so there is something for everyone.

Six Ta-maki Touched sporting modules have now been delivered, alongside a range of family

friendly opportunities, reaching more than 2100 participants. But Ta-maki Touched is not just

about participation – it has also led to increased community engagement, positive




community interactions with police and a decrease in antisocial behaviour.



Getting Started

It's an opportunity for us to be involved in more of the prevention side, and for us to do our job effectively we really need the support of the community."

- INSPECTOR JOE TIPENE, NEW ZEALAND POLICE

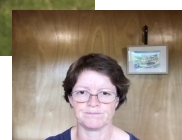
The Tamaki

Touched concept was developed in October 2015 following a meeting between Touch NZ and the New Zealand Police, which discussed ways to use sport as an engagement tool to help achieve positive community outcomes in at-risk communities.

The plan was to use the skills and existing networks of Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs), which are small teams of police officers working in neighbourhoods where people are more likely to be victims of crime. NPTs aim to have a highly visible and accessible presence in these communities and to develop local knowledge and form partnerships to help with identifying and preventing potential issues. Having an NPT operating in the area was an important criterion for choosing a community for the pilot project. With this in mind, the Auckland suburb of Glen Innes was identified for the pilot.

The Glen Innes community has high M-aori and Pacifica populations. Research has shown that, within these communities, importance is placed on playing sport as a family as well as on opportunities that support social and cultural connections. Research by Innovate Change highlighted that gender roles and family responsibilities could be barriers to participation for Samoan women (a group focused on for Sport Auckland's targeted population fund).

The Initiative



Steering group establishment

Thanks to connections from the NPT, a local steering group was established with

representatives from community groups, the Local Board, Auckland Council, Glen Innes Business Association and Auckland District Health Board. Sport Auckland played an advisory role and added value

through its expertise in sport, physical activity and health, as well as connections to local

schools, clubs and facilities. Auckland University Rugby and Auckland Basketball have also

joined the steering group as the programme has evolved.

By using sport as the delivery mechanism, the steering group's overarching goals were to

increase community engagement, achieve better health outcomes for the population groups,

reduce crime and create positive community outcomes.

The steering group initially met fortnightly to plan the competition. The original parameters

were that:

• the module would be held on a Friday night because this is when crime rates are traditionally high

• the opportunity must be whānau centric – where the whole family can participate

• the module would run outside the traditional touch seasons so as not to compete with and affect participation of established competitions.

A free six-week touch module running on Friday nights was agreed on, and the Tāmaki Touched pilot was launched in April 2016.

After the launch, the steering group played an integral role in the implementation of

Tāmaki Touched. The focus was on sourcing funding and planning for future development,

diversification and growth of the programme to meet the community's needs.

Creating an environment in which the whole community can participate



A whānau focused format – creating an environment in which the whole community can participate

Ta-maki Touched aims to bring together wh-anau and friends of all different ages, genders

and fitness levels to get active and have fun, regardless of skill levels.

Sport Auckland initially partnered with Touch NZ in 2016 to pilot a Family Fun Club approach

identified through research conducted by Innovate Change on behalf of Active – Auckland

Sport and Recreation. The model's aim was to engage Pacifica families by structuring

opportunities around four elements: have a go sport, dance and fitness, children's cultural

activity, and goal setting.

Ta-maki Touched offers two competitions a night, a children's competition (up to 12 years)

and a family competition, which must be mixed gender and have at least one under

12-year-old and an adult aged 35-plus on the field at all times.

As well as touch, other activities are offered to cater for the whole family, including a boot camp delivered by local provider “Move Ta-maki” and a programme for tamariki involving cultural dance and songs, games and other activities. A DJ helps create a fun atmosphere, and free food and prizes from sponsors are used as incentives to encourage attendance. The programme’s structure aims to shift the emphasis from “winning” to fair play and positive role modelling. Five Good Sports positive sporting experiences workshops have been delivered as part of the module, to help reinforce this message.



Working alongside the community to build capability
An important focus for Ta-maki Touched organisers is to build on the passion and strengths of identified local champions and work alongside them to deliver the programme in a mentor capacity.
With support from Sport Auckland’s targeted population fund, the steering group appointed two young local Pacifica women to be programme coordinators. The pair provide support with programme logistics, such as registrations, draws and programme promotion.
Touch NZ representatives work alongside these coordinators as mentors.
“Free” costs money
The pilot survey showed that, to engage the local community, all Ta-maki Touched activities needed to be free. When asked if anything could be improved, 48 per cent of participants said free food and 13 per cent said free water.

However, being free costs money, and this is an ongoing challenge for the Tamaki Touched Steering Group. The steering group applies for grants, and leverages off local business connections to help with sponsorship. For example, Kennards Hire (an equipment hire company) provides power generators for running the DJ boxes, and St Johns Butchery donates sausages for the barbeque.



IMPORTANT SUCCESS FACTORS

Community buy-in and local champions are essential. Community buy-in has been fundamental to the success of Ta-maki Touched, both in its development and implementation phases. Inviting key members of the community onto the steering group, as well as appointing local coordinators, has ensured that Ta-maki Touched can better understand the needs of its community. Along with this, the establishment of a clear governance structure and forward-looking plan have been particularly important to demonstrate to funders the group has a clear purpose and outcomes. Establishing a steering group and building relationships and trust can be difficult for an outside organisation. For Ta-maki Touched, creating links with the NPT and groups with existing networks in the community was a crucial step.

Wh-anau focus

Being wh-anau centric is important to the Ta-maki community, so an important success factor

for the project has been making it about more than just sport. The provision of a variety of

physical activity opportunities, programmes for tamariki and free food and music means

something is available that appeals to the whole whanau.

Empowering the community and stepping back

One of the main outcomes of the programme is to support and upskill groups within the

community to deliver the programmes on their own.

Touch NZ has taken the lead within Ta-maki Touched and is a driving force for both the

programmes and coordinators. An important learning for the organisation has been recognising

that there is a fine line between building capability and not placing too much reliance on

outside providers. Touch NZ is currently navigating this path to readdress roles within the

steering group and the wider project, to support the community in taking a leading role.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES?



six Tāmaki Touched sporting modules have been delivered to the Glen Innes community, engaging over 2100 participants. However, the sporting outcomes are secondary to the social outcomes of the programme. These include bringing families together to play sport, leading healthier lifestyles, and positive engagement with the local police and other community organisations. Feedback from participants includes the following.

- 79 per cent agreed it was a positive outcome for the community.
- 17 per cent acknowledged a relationship with the police and staying out of trouble on these nights.
- Around 70 per cent enjoyed the positive side to playing sport, meeting new people, socialising with family and friends with significant focus on watching and engaging with youth and children.
- 27 per cent indicated they would normally have been drinking if the event was not on.

Ta-maki Touched continues to go from strength to strength, and the steering group has widened the sports on offer to include rippa rugby and basketball. Furthermore, Touch NZ is continuing its work with the New Zealand Police to take their “touched” model to other communities throughout New Zealand.