Water only at Kimihia Parents College

The Canterbury DHB is working with Kimihia Parents College to become a Water Only School.

The college is a Teen Parent Unit set up to provide a learning environment for pregnant teenagers or teenagers aged 19 and under who are parents.

Students’ children can be cared for next door to the school in a purpose-built Early Learning Centre. The students are offered transport to and from school in vans with car-seats provided for babies and children. Kimihia support going water only as it is very healthy for mums and mums-to-be says student Rebeka Fair.

"Being healthy for ourselves and our children is important and it’s good to encourage our children to drink water only as well. Last year Kimihia introduced water bottles to encourage the students to drink water at school and we made it that the only drink you’re allowed to have during class is water."

The college held a competition between the tutor groups in Term 2 2016 to see who could make the best flavoured water without adding sugar to it. Each tutor group made their water every Thursday for three weeks for the school nurse Alison to judge.

“It was a hard competition to judge with such yummy flavoured waters. The winner was a group that created a honeydew melon and mint,” says Rebeka.

The following week involved a competition to see who could make the best water only poster. Posters were judged on the best information and design by Health Promoting School Advisor Sarah Macfarlane. The college is now trialling being a Water Only School.

“At school we are only allowed to drink water at school, or coffee and tea at breaks. Students have been given a 2.2 litre drink bottle each – the amount of water we should drink each day to keep healthy,” says Rebeka.

So far everyone has increased the amount of water they drink, and students are already seeing the benefits on their wellbeing.

Contact Education Team Leader Tim Weir at Community and Public Health if your school would like to explore being water only (tim.weir@cdhb.health.nz or 03 364 1777).