

GETTING YOUR CLASS INVOLVED IN THE ELECTION



Thousands of students took part in the 2007 local government elections and the 2008 parliamentary elections through Kids Voting.

When you register for Kids Voting 2010 you will receive a resource pack, including a ballot box. The resource pack will include ideas and guidance for running your election, templates and ideas for possible topics.

There is good evidence that programmes which give students an experience of participating in the democratic systems are likely to foster future participation and have a number of benefits for students and teachers including:

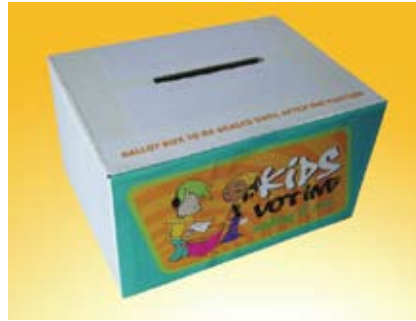
- giving students first-hand experience of the electoral process and removing the fear factor
- increasing interest in politics by involving students in the democratic process
- providing opportunities for supporting activities that can contribute to the achievement of other curriculum objectives.
- raising awareness of issues facing local communities and the nation as a whole.

Kids Voting is fun, it's free and it gives students an insight into what it's like to participate in the democratic process. So take part in 2010!

To register for Kids Voting 2010 and for further information visit:
www.kidsvoting.org.nz

IDENTIFYING LOCAL ISSUES

- Have students bring along copies of local and regional newspapers for study. In groups, have students identify all the topics and issues which are concerning the local community.
- Don't forget to have them regularly read the *Letters to the Editor* section where many local issues are featured and debated. Community issues could include:
 - *the use of land donated to the city*
 - *improvements or new sports facilities*
 - *improving kerbside recycling*



- Have students list and debate all issues. Are there any other issues that students think should be on the list? Why?
- Have students discuss and run surveys at home and in their immediate community to find out more local concerns. Analyse, debate and rank them from *of most concern* to *of least concern*. Publish the results on the class, school web page and have students use these for home discussion.

YOUR LOCAL CANDIDATES

- Why do students think that it is important that people know what the candidates standing for election think about any local issues? How will they find out who are the candidates that are standing in their local area? **eg**
For a full list of candidates, their policies, and to ask questions online visit the Local Government Online free elections portal – available from 30 June 2010 at: www.elections2010.co.nz
- Have them find out who is a first-time candidate, who is already on the council and if there is an election for the mayor.
- Can they think of other ways they can gather information about each candidate? **eg**
 - *advertisements in local papers*
 - *candidate mail drops*
 - *councillors comments in local papers*
 - *interview candidates as school reporters.*
- Better still, invite candidates to speak to the class (some candidates may be prepared to speak to students especially if informed they are taking part in their own election) and share their ideas and concerns they have for the community.
- Encourage students to prepare questions prior to their visit to help identify:
 - *why they are standing for council*
 - *the main concerns they have and the improvements they would like to make.*
- Have students share the concerns they have identified from their research and

Christchurch City Council



Elections will be held for Mayor, 13 Councillors and 40 Community Board members across 7 wards.

For information about the elections contact:
Clare Sullivan, Electoral Officer
Ph: **03 941 8999**
or visit our website at:
www.ccc.govt.nz

ask the candidates to comment. Find out 'where they stand' on these concerns.

- In groups, have students prepare an individual profile sheet for each candidate's concerns, occupation, reasons for standing ... Publish these in print form or on the class school website as an aid to help the voters in their household choose candidates to vote for.
- Prior to the class election, have students share opinions of who they could be voting for in this local government election. What reasons can they give for supporting these candidates?
- Role play various candidates and deliver election speeches.

www.elections2010.co.nz

In addition to being a central portal for election results across the country, it is a tool that is free to use and gives voters and candidates the opportunity to engage on issues that matter to each community.

Each candidate has the ability to load:

- set length video, candidate statement and other information
- identify key election issues
- provide dynamic links to websites, blogs, twitter accounts
- ability to respond, along with other candidates for that role, to questions asked by voters; and
- the ability to load an acceptance speech that will be made publicly available once the successful candidate has been announced.

There is also a video competition that links in with Kids Voting where each school or class can send in a video explaining why they think local government is important.