

Whaia e koe ki te iti kahurangi; ki te tuohu koe, me maunga teitei
Seek the treasure you value most dearly: if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain

Cave Crawlers



At TSB TOPEC, NCEA stands for Natural Cave Exploration Adventure

Caving has been the ultimate outdoor experience during Term 2 to assist senior (NCEA Level 2) students gain skills and credits in Adventure Based Learning (ABL) and Risk Management. TSB TOPEC operates primarily in Skyline Cave just north of Taranaki in the Mahoenui area with features aptly named The Gallery, The Formations, Elephants Foot and The Crawl opening the students minds to a whole new hidden world.

During the unique underworld experience, the emphasis is on safe fun as students learn how to prepare for cave trips, the features and the critters that we find in caves, how to protect the fragile cave environment from damage, and how to respect the cultural history around the cave sites.

Preparation for a trip includes risk management analysis, knowledge of gear and equipment, food and drink, maps and emergency plans. Instructors facilitate cave conservation and group dynamics alongside how to keep yourself and others in a group safe whilst crawling, crabbing and creeping through the dark caverns. Finally, students are assessed for their risk management as they explore their underground classroom – curriculum in a cave!



Term Highlights

TSB TOPEC has welcomed over 500 students through the gates this term (around 1100 for the year so far). Whether on a Year 10 experiential-week camp or week-long NCEA course Caving, Rafting, Tramping, Climbing and Abseiling have dominated the students' outdoor experiences. With rain filling the rivers, students have been getting wet with RiverSafe, practising flipping rafts and honing their river rescue skills. Our challenge-by-choice philosophy, alongside manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga kaupapa, means tramping up and around our mouna is always a highlight for students. Many have also experienced a night out on the mountain. The High and Low Ropes Course challenges have raised the adrenalin levels while students have learned about risk management, perseverance, the benefits of teamwork and the impact an individual can have on group dynamics. Caving has added darkness as a new dimension to learning about your comfort zone and the benefits of group collaboration.



NCEA Level 3 Students on the Level 3 NZ Certificate in Outdoor Experiences have been busy doing Bush Survival over Term 2. Every Thursday and Friday the students have mixed classroom learning with education outside the classroom learning to explore and guide safely in our Taranaki bush surrounds, selecting appropriate garments and equipment, making shelters, traps and fires when lost, as well as participating in First Aid and Search and Rescue (SAR) processes. Enrolments for 2020 can be made by contacting office@tsbtopec.co.nz.



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Young Volunteers Visit

Highlands Service Day at TSB TOPEC

Students from Room 9 at Highlands Intermediate recently spent a day volunteering their services at TSB TOPEC. Top-quality top soil was sifted from bark, wheelbarrows filled, and then the dirt transported and spread around the new cabins. The area was levelled out with rakes and grass seed scattered. The outcome for the several hours of service was a lawn that students will have ownership of and be proud to see when they come back to TOPEC during secondary school. TOPEC Instructors also gave the students the reward of some high ropes thrills with the flying kiwi, rock wall and shackle drop producing laughter and screams.

Room 9 Class Councillor Jackson Bigwood made the Service suggestion to his class and the students jumped at the chance to have a day out of class helping a community organisation. "I heard that TOPEC needed a lot of dirt moved," said Jackson "so I asked our teacher Mr Smith if it was okay, next minute we had a great day at TOPEC." At Highlands students can gain points towards badges in Service, Academic, Sport and Culture. TSB TOPEC Director, Grover Worsfold was full of praise for the Room 9 students.



BRONZE



SILVER



GOLD

"Service is also a component of the Duke of Edinburgh Award which we offer at TSB TOPEC and the day with Room 9 was an excellent example of what students can do to help in the community. We have plenty of environmental projects at TOPEC that students can complete either for Duke of Ed or as a school project-based learning initiative."

TSB TOPEC is an award holder for the Duke of Edinburgh Hillary Award and students complete the Adventurous Journey part of the Award when attending a residential camp week at TOPEC. This is currently being promoted to Year 10 students at Taranaki secondary schools. See previous Issue 1, Term 1 Newsletter for more information or contact sam@tsbtopec.co.nz.

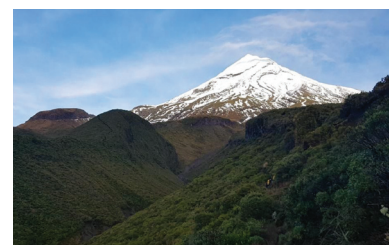
TSB TOPEC News



New Staff New additions to the TSB TOPEC team this term are Katrina Shepherd and Justin Bigwood. The two are job-sharing with Katrina a raft, bush and rock Instructor and Teacher of the Level 3 NZ Certificate in Outdoor Experiences. Justin's role is as Leader of Learning, administering assessment and moderation, appraisal and professional development, and all school and PTE requirements.

International Student Course Term 4

Another new initiative at TSB TOPEC is an International Outdoor Experience course for our visiting international students. During Term 4 for one day a week over six weeks, students will get to experience everything adventurous that Taranaki has to offer under the expert instruction of Seton, Josh, Zoe or Sam. TSB TOPEC is also looking at offering a 4-day camp during the October school break. Any schools interested contact office@tsbtopec.co.nz.



Predator-Free Araheke Staff and students at TSB TOPEC are working with DOC maintaining pest traps in Araheke Reserve. TSB TOPEC is also looking at forming a partnership with Papa Taiao Earthcare, a national environmental sustainability and social enterprise training organisation. A NZQA-approved Trapping and Pest Control short course is set for late August, Term 3. A Papa Taiao or TOPEC representative will be in touch soon, if they haven't already.