

# Caring For Our Community



May 5 is Balloon Day and a chance to recognise those who have had to breathe a little harder to live.

## Puffing to Success

Last year St Patricks School in Paraparaumu celebrated Balloon Day. Schools can sell balloons for \$2, with \$1 going towards asthma research.



"Puff" the balloon had its first outing over Balloon Fiesta in Levin over Easter to help promote May 5. Balloon Day organiser Jane Patterson says asthma is so common that people tend to trivialise it. "Also a lot of people don't manage their own asthma as well as they could. You may have to taken meditation so you can do the things you want to do," says Jane.



Caleb Pearce is a 17 year old gymnastic from Kapiti College and says having asthma is like "breathing through a straw". He has had asthma most of his life, and his Mum, Ruth, says she nearly lost him when he was six. Caleb hasn't had an attack in five years. He has been doing gym since he was four years old and says "my Mum's always said that you can do anything you try". And he wants to encourage other kids who have asthma to get active. "Just make sure you've got a good inhaler, and you use it," he says. "Then go out and try something new." Caleb is now a mentor for other young gymnasts at Kapiti Gymnastics Club.

It's also World Asthma Day. The Asthma & Respiratory Foundation have organised Balloon Day to help raise awareness and money for more child asthma research. Some parents have nearly lost their kids due to an asthma attack; preventative inhalers have improved, but there's still work to be done.

If you want to get involved in Balloon Day, email [arf@asthmanz.co.nz](mailto:arf@asthmanz.co.nz) or text 'breathe' to 3979 to make an instant \$3 donation. You can also visit any Mitre 10 store on May 5 for Balloon Day activity. For more info check out [www.asthmanz.co.nz](http://www.asthmanz.co.nz).

### Famous people with asthma:

Tana Umanga  
Danyon Loader  
John F.Kennedy  
Liza Minnelli  
Martin Scorsese  
Charles Dickens

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