

POSITIVE VIBES ONLY

Zespri AIMS Games - Year 2

The 2025 Zespri AIMS Games involved 14,022 athletes – the highest in its 22 year history! There were 431 schools represented across 27 sporting codes and 29 venues, making it the perfect event to showcase Positive Vibes Only once again.

Sport Waikato's alignment, in partnership with Sport BOP, to a youth sports event that also embeds values such as inclusion, environmental stewardship (kaitiakitanga), collaboration, partnerships, healthy communities, and cultural appreciation has been hugely valuable.

Creating great sporting experiences for athletes as the common goal, with Positive Vibes Only the mechanism to recognise and celebrate those adults who bring this to life.

As in Year 1, Sport Waikato provided the leadership and guidance to develop a Positive Vibes Only programme and enhanced presence in 2025. Our strengthened partnership and collaboration with Sport BOP was also a highlight of Year 2. The initiatives in 2025 included:



A digital campaign across social media, newsletters and event platforms



Pre-event webinars for coaches, managers, and supporters



Bespoke resources for coaches and managers to support positive sideline conduct



Onsite signage and event ambassadors promoting the message throughout tournament week



Launch of the Positive Vibes Only Champion Awards

CASE STUDY



WATCH
THE VIDEO!



DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

Imagery and wording provided by Sport Waikato that linked to the PVO experience, coach appreciation, keeping sport fun, measuring success, supporting officials, and the car ride home.

BESPOKE RESOURCES

Development of **a guide** for parents, coaches, managers and supporters

CHAMPION AWARDS

Recognising individuals and teams who exemplified the campaign's values.

The nominations helped to showcase what a **PVO Champion** looks and sounds like, and encouraging everyone to look out for and celebrate these individuals.

180+ nominations with 10 trophies awarded throughout the week.

ONSITE SIGNAGE & AMBASSADORS

Development of an Ambassador Guide

98% of coaches, managers and sport coordinators noticed the presence of PVO with the following ranked as the top sources:

- Visually at the event
- Website
- Ambassadors
- Newsletter
- The AIMS Gamer publication

Players frequently approached ambassadors for stickers, often excited by the pink branding and high-vis vests, whilst supporters and coaches responded with smiles, shared stories of positive sportsmanship, and expressed familiarity with the kaupapa.

Ambassadors noted that this year's AIMS Games felt like the most positive yet in terms of sideline behaviour and sportsmanship. The campaign's visibility, tone, and engagement tools (stickers, costumes, games) were effective in sparking conversations and reinforcing the kaupapa.

PRE-EVENT WEBINARS

154 webinar participants



- At table tennis, players paused their game to greet the ambassador and collect stickers.
- Hacky sacks and pink ribbons were popular, and one team planned to wear full pink gear the next day
- At the golf course, players encouraged each other after both good and bad shots, reflecting the PVO spirit.
- Hockey stood out for fully embodying the PVO kaupapa at both venue and organisational levels. Messaging over the loud speaker was kind and friendly.
- The Rugby 7's referees wore the PVO brand and were supported at each game by PVO support people

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Signage consistency:** Some venues lacked PVO signage, ambassadors and activations and so the presence of PVO was missing.
- **Capturing participant feedback** and voice about their experience and whether PVO makes a difference to their experience
- **Opportunity to create more visibility** of PVO through referee and umpire uniforms, promoting increased support for their roles as well.
- **Sporting role models:** Involve local athletes as PVO ambassadors to inspire youth.
- **School kits:** Provide PVO resources (stickers, conversation starters) as part of involvement
- **Registration:** capture more adults to attend PVO webinars and grow the number of PVO Champions

IMPACT

45% of coaches/managers and 50% of school sport coordinators said that team culture was better due to PVO



45% of coaches/managers and 51% of school sport coordinators said that sideline behaviour was better

70% of coaches and managers said that they felt more supported and encouraged to act on creating a positive environment because of PVO



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The overall environment was more positive than previous years. Our team enjoyed meeting and supporting fellow netball players/ teams. There was a real sense of Whanaungatanga after competing against teams.

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Our kids wore pink socks in all their chosen events, had photographs with the ambassadors, labelled their strapping tape with the positive vibes only words, and they also wore their pink socks for their official team photo. We were really proud to support this kaupapa and so pleased to see it actively pursued throughout the week.

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Positive Vibes ambassador present at most main sports areas e.g. netball, rugby, rippa etc. Having these ambassadors present might encourage coaches, managers and supporters to engage in the positive vibes focus.

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We discussed the Positive Vibes at our team talk prior to the Opening Ceremony (the reason for it and how it impacted the enjoyment of the AIMS experience). The Managers and house parent wore outrageous pink to the ceremony. We had a grandmother of one of the players knit the managers' pink beanies.

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Loved the Sportsmanship medal!

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Just helped to create a great vibe at bball!

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The person on the loud speaker during hockey finals day reminding people how to behave - let the refs ref, coaches coach etc. great messaging delivered in a kind and engaging way :)

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Lovely interactions with all teams we played against and overall great atmosphere

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