



DRAFT Media Release
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Nationwide campaign to give more Kiwi kids free zoo visits

In a first, a nationwide 'Zoofari' campaign by The Warehouse begins today to enable thousands of children from low-decile schools to receive free conservation-based educational experiences at zoos across New Zealand this year.

Zoofari is an innovative partnership programme co-created by The Warehouse and zoos to provide wildlife experiences to children, partnering with the Jane Goodall Institute of New Zealand (JGINZ). The programme has now been expanded to cover all major zoos and regions across New Zealand.

All 93 The Warehouse stores are delighted to be supporting Zoofari with an add-a-donation campaign in store from 7 to 27 March, and all partners are hoping New Zealanders will be equally as excited and keen to support Kiwi kids as they are.

Shari French, General Manager Community Relations at The Warehouse, says visiting the zoo is a quintessential part of childhood for many Kiwi kids, but for some families facing hardship, it can be something a child never gets to experience.

"There's so much a child can gain from an educational visit to a zoo beyond the enjoyment of seeing animals. They can learn about everything from caring for the environment, recycling and conservation, to the science of animals and nature. It can be an experience that really helps open up the world to a child."

Zoofari also provides students with the opportunity to participate in Dr Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots programme, which empowers young people to change the future. Roots & Shoots can be adopted by schools to continue student learning in local and global environmental issues.

JGINZ CEO and Co-Founder, Dr Melanie Vivian, says that Zoofari provides a wonderful opportunity for the animal ambassadors to become points of inspiration.

"Through our Roots & Shoots programme we empower young people of all ages to undertake action projects. Being present with animals and learning about the ways in which we can all make a difference to their lives and the wellbeing of the planet that we all share is a fabulous way to engage students to make a difference."

The Warehouse spearheaded the Zoofari programme back in 2012 when it developed a partnership with Auckland Zoo in association with Ritchies Transport, to help children from low-decile schools in areas of Auckland and Northland visit Auckland Zoo. Now children in Hamilton, Wellington and in the South Island are also benefiting.

The Zoofari experience is certified by the Ministry of Education and the entire visit is facilitated by zoo educators in partnership with teachers to ensure integration into the school curriculum.

