

## **Growing Active Citizens**

Youth apathy is often cited as the reason why young people don't get involved in politics or the community. We don't think it is that simple.

Research shows many young people are interested in politics and think that they can make a difference. So what are the barriers to participation? Meet the 'confident and convinced', 'tentative triers', 'distrustful and disillusioned' as well as those 'living for the weekend' and how they think about politics. These labels derive from interviews with young non-voters and their attitudes towards politics and the barriers to their participation as active citizens. Understanding these barriers and attitudes helps us to plan for a transformation in the future.

So what can we do to grow active citizens? Make it real. Empower. Demystify.

The Growing Active citizens group, coordinated by Local Government New Zealand, has a twenty-year plan to make a difference. The aim is to grow active citizens through encouraging and facilitating rich resources for use in schools. The second part of this session will introduce the plan and the current resources.

Presenters will include: Victoria Owen, Senior Policy Analyst from Local Government NZ, Shailer Hart, Acting Community Development Manager from Christchurch City Council; and Helena Catt, Electoral Commission from Electoral Commission.