

Breakfast club born as offers flow in

Offers of help to provide breakfast food in south Auckland schools have overwhelmed ABE'S Real Bagels' co-owner, Megan Sargent.

She put out a call for help from other food manufacturers and volunteers in the last issue of *Business to Business* (December 2004) to help children who arrive at school hungry.

"We've got lots of people (jugglers, unicyclists, a project co-ordinator) wanting to help - a waiting list of volunteers!"

One working woman has put forward a formal proposal offering to voluntarily co-ordinate the scheme. A church group which has provided food to schools for some years has also offered its logistical experience and list of doctors, lawyers, builders and all sorts of people who want to volunteer time to hand out food.

"Apparently kids like neutral outsiders to do the handing out. They talk to the volunteers about their jobs and it turns into a sort of mentoring. And teachers are too busy to do it. But the one thing we'd still like is for some food manufacturers to come forward and donate."

ABE'S will donate bagels, but Sargent would like other firms to donate toppings or other breakfast food that is shelf stable, easy to serve and doesn't need cooking, eg, muesli bars, cereal and fresh fruit.

ABE'S has been trucking spare frozen bagels to five schools sharing the Southern Cross Campus in Mangere for a few years and is now turning this into a "breakfast club" - a wider programme of nutrition education and entertainment, with help from other organisations.