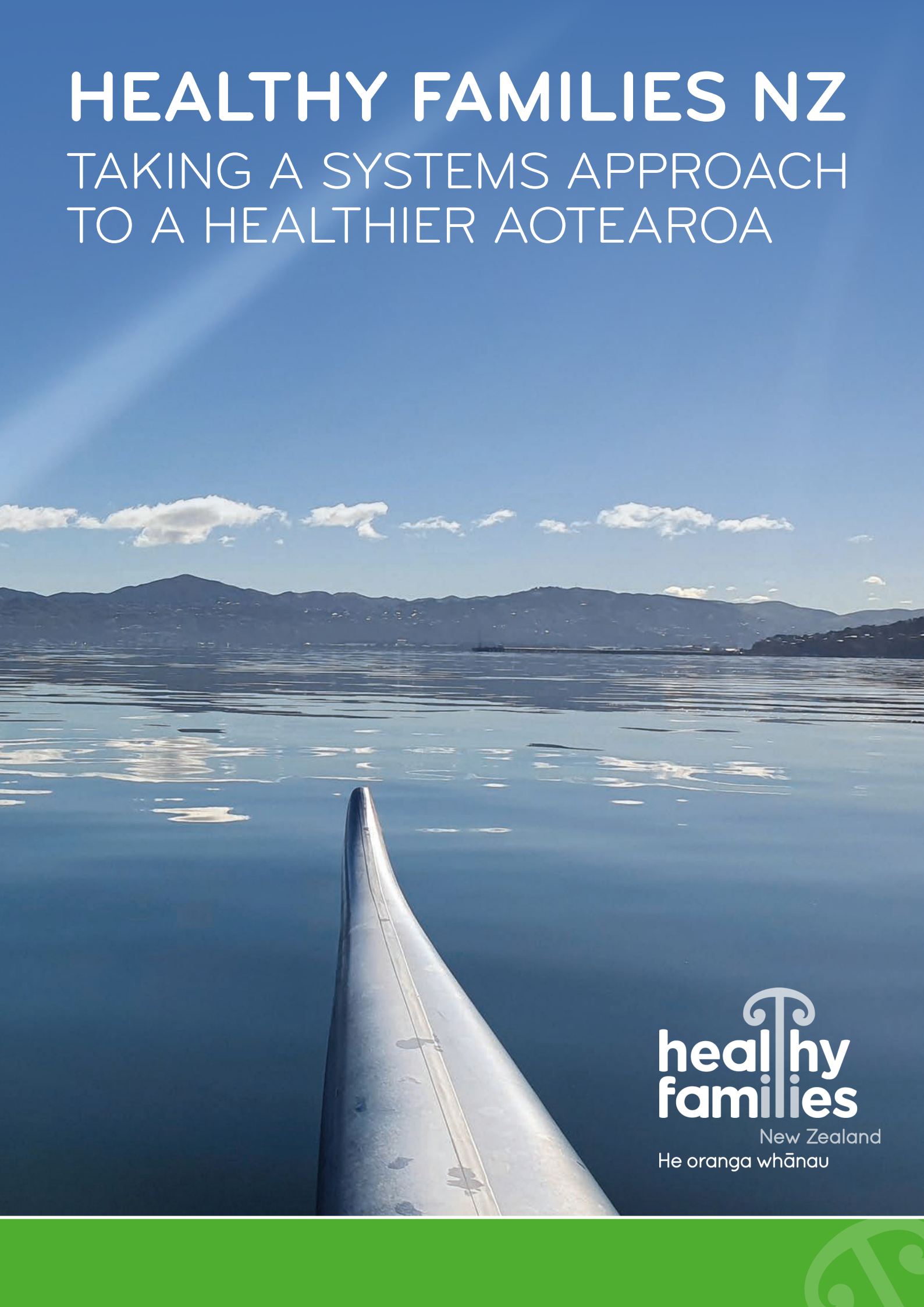


HEALTHY FAMILIES NZ

TAKING A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO A HEALTHIER AOTEAROA




**healthy
families**
New Zealand
He oranga whānau



“We want all New Zealanders to enjoy health promoting social and physical environments that enable healthy food and physical activity choices, being smokefree, reducing the harm from alcohol and increasing mental health resilience and wellbeing.”



ABOUT HEALTHY FAMILIES NZ

A healthier Aotearoa starts in the places where we live, learn, work and play. In healthier environments, children learn better, workplaces are more productive, people are healthier and happier, and communities thrive.

Healthy Families NZ is a large scale **prevention** initiative that aims to create a healthier Aotearoa by addressing the **systems** and **environments** that impact our health and wellbeing.

Healthy Families NZ has 11 teams across ten localities embedded in a range of lead providers including Iwi, Whānau Ora, Local Government, Regional Sports Trusts and Pacific-led Social Change organisations. Each locality has its own unique systems and environments that impact the health and wellbeing of the people who live, learn, work or play there. Each lead provider was chosen as they were best placed to work in partnership with the communities and organisations in their locality to create sustainable change. Taking a locality approach acknowledges that the most effective and sustainable solutions to our health and wellbeing challenges are best driven by the people who are most affected.

Our journey has been to implement a national initiative that responds to the unique context of each locality. Through aligning ourselves to our guiding principles, being outcome focused, maintaining a high-trust partnership with the Ministry of Health, lead providers, and community champions, we have tested our approach, learnt and adapted along the way, in order to create significant impact with our communities. In doing so, we have built a workforce that is skilled in social innovation, systems thinking and comfortable to learn by doing.

“We are only as healthy as our least healthy environment”



PREVENTION

The word **prevention** can mean different things to different people. We see prevention as a spectrum; just like care and treatment in the health system is a spectrum. We all see and can understand the difference between primary care in the community and highly specialised treatment in tertiary hospitals. We can also easily understand that both are important and needed.

The end of the prevention spectrum that is easiest for most people to picture is the step right before primary care. It tends to be at an individual or household level and the direct link to an improvement in health and wellbeing is fairly obvious. For example, someone joins a local exercise group to help them be active more often. This is prevention.

The word prevention often also brings to mind screening for preventable disease. Screening works to identify people that might be at higher risk of a health condition so they can be offered early intervention or treatment. This might look like a heart health check-up that leads to changing eating patterns to include more heart-healthy foods. The actions taken (eating heart-healthy food) is also prevention.

The other end of the prevention spectrum is less obvious. This is the end that Healthy Families NZ focuses on. Prevention in a Healthy Families NZ context focuses on addressing the **underlying conditions** that impact our health and wellbeing, in order to reduce the risk of preventable chronic disease. We seek to uncover the journey that leads to chronic disease, understanding the **lived experience** of whānau and communities so that we can determine **together** how best to address the conditions that lead to experiencing preventable chronic disease.



HEALTHY FAMILIES NZ PRINCIPLES



IMPLEMENTATION AT SCALE

Strategies are delivered at a scale that impacts the health and wellbeing of a large number of the population, in the places where they spend their time – in schools, workplaces and communities.



ADAPTATION

Strengthening the prevention system requires constant reflection, learning and adaptation to ensure strategies are timely, relevant and sustainable.



COLLABORATION FOR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Long term commitment is required by multiple partners, from different sectors, at multiple levels, to generate greater collective impact on the health of all New Zealanders.

Knowledge is co-created and interventions co-produced, supported by a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, ongoing communication and a 'backbone' support organisation.



EXPERIMENTATION

Small scale experiments provide insight into the most effective interventions to address chronic disease. These experiments are underpinned by evidence and experience, and are monitored and designed to then be amplified across the system, if they prove effective.



EQUITY OF OUTCOME

Health equity is the attainment of the highest level of health for all people.

Healthy Families NZ will have an explicit focus on improving Māori health and reducing inequalities for groups at increased risk of chronic diseases. Māori participation at all levels of the planning and implementation of Healthy Families NZ is critical.



LEADERSHIP

Leadership is supported at all levels of the prevention effort including senior managers, elected officials, and health champions in our schools, businesses, workplaces, marae, sporting clubs and other settings in the community.



LINE-OF-SIGHT

The line of sight provides a transparent view on how investment in policy is translated into measured impacts in communities, ensuring best value from every dollar spent on prevention.

WHOLE OF COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Taking a whole of community approach helps identify the **systems** and the social and physical **environments** at play, rather than looking at individual choices and behaviours. Taking a **systems** approach recognises that the relationships and connections within a system are key, and that by looking at a system as a whole we can find effective ways to challenge the status quo and use the relationships and connections to disrupt the system to get a desired outcome. It also recognises that no one individual, organisation or sector can do this alone, so working deliberately and collectively is essential to creating change. This disruption creates opportunities to adapt the system to better serve our people. **Environments** are the social and physical contexts where we spend our time like our streets, churches, schools, marae, workplaces, community spaces and natural spaces.

Taking a whole of systems approach is not new thinking. Māori and other indigenous peoples have always known that the health and wellbeing of people is inextricably linked to that of their environments. Māori Systems Regeneration understands deeply that changing peoples' relationships with their environments will change the wellbeing of the people. "Manaaki tangata, manaaki whenua, haere whakamua" - Care for the land, care for the people, go forward.

MĀORI ARE VISIBLE DRIVING CHANGE

Healthy Families NZ has an explicit focus on improving equity and health and wellbeing outcomes for Māori. Each locality team works with Māori leaders in their rohe to prioritise opportunities to create meaningful impact. Within the Healthy Families NZ workforce is the dedicated Kāhui Māori, a collective that supports the whole workforce to use frameworks that sit within a Māori world view, te ao Māori. The Healthy Families NZ Kāhui Māori is intentionally connecting communities to share and revive Māori knowledge to improve equity and optimise health and wellbeing for Māori, now and for future generations. Healthy Families NZ Kāhui Māori brings to life the aspirations of Māori health and wellbeing by leveraging the approach of Māori systems return.





“Our line of sight is for all New Zealanders to enjoy social and physical environments that contribute to their health and wellbeing and prevent the rise of chronic disease.”

THE CHALLENGE

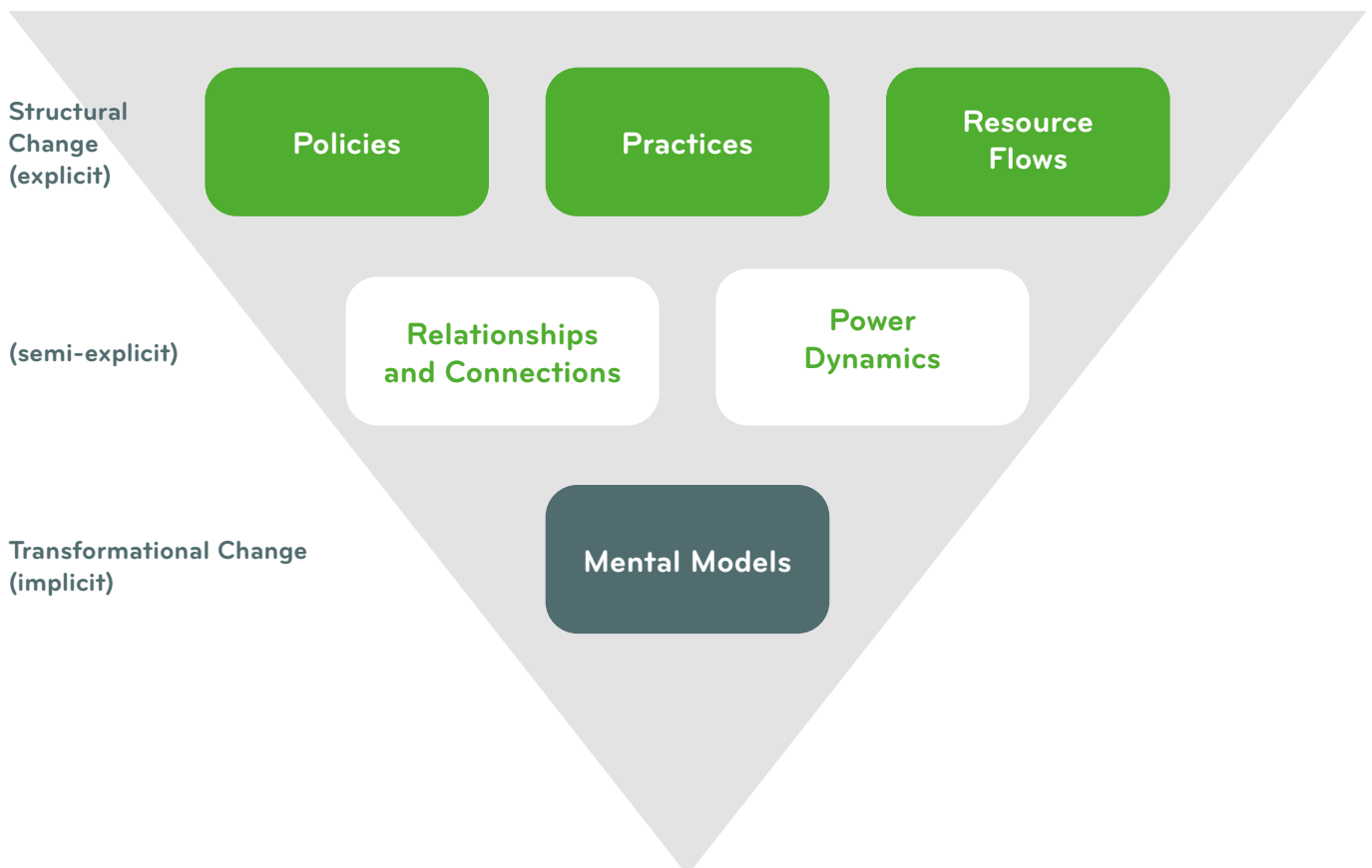
Approximately 86% of premature deaths are due to non-communicable diseases, with the top five of these preventable conditions (heart disease, stroke, chronic pulmonary disease, dementia and lung cancer) taking the lives of around 15,480 New Zealanders each year.¹ Persistent inequity means that "In Aotearoa New Zealand, people have differences in health that are not only avoidable but unfair and unjust. Equity recognises different people with different levels of advantage require different approaches and resources to get equitable health outcomes."²

We can make the greatest impact to reduce the risks and consequences of preventable chronic disease on our whānau by making it easier and normal for **everyone** in Aotearoa to eat healthy food, be physically active, be smokefree, reduce the harm from alcohol and increase mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

There are **conditions** in the places that we live, learn, work and play that make it easier or harder to be happy and healthy. For example, it is easier to eat good food if it is readily available and affordable in your community, whereas not being able to easily access good food makes it a lot harder to maintain your health and wellbeing.

The conditions that make it easier or harder to be healthy might be structural, for example policies or regulations, practices (how things are done) or where resources (money, people, knowledge and assets) are, or are not available. They could also be relational, for example the relationships, connections and power dynamics within and between our communities and society. The conditions that hold a problem in place can also be implicit, for example our habits of thought and the systems and environments we experience.³

CONDITIONS OF SYSTEMS CHANGE



1 <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/longer-healthier-lives-new-zealands-health-1990-2017>

2 Ministry of Health definition of equity signed-off by Director General of Health, Dr Ashley Bloomfield in March 2019

3 https://www.fsg.org/publications/water_of_systems_change



“Our kaupapa is the same - our principles, building blocks and intention is the same. Our overarching model is the same. These are the fundamentals to the backbone of our movement.”



CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR IMPACT

When Healthy Families NZ was launched in 2014, it represented a new approach to preventing the rise of chronic disease. It recognised that a whole of community, systems change approach with a mandate to work differently and challenge the status quo was needed, alongside existing population health efforts to address the complex problems that are preventable chronic disease and health inequity.

The problems that lead to preventable chronic disease are by their nature complex, dynamic, and can have multiple potential interrelated causes that have no clear solution. Healthy Families NZ recognises that many of the conditions that hold these complex problems in place can be best influenced by organisations that sit outside of the traditional health sector. It also acknowledges that no one organisation, sector or community can do this alone, instead the approach harnesses the influence, levers and momentum of cross sector collaboration to create the collective impact our communities need and want.

Healthy Families NZ has seven years experience in balancing a national large scale initiative with a locally led kaupapa. During this time the Healthy Families NZ movement and workforce have listened, learnt and as a result continued to evolve to maintain our line of sight – **for all New Zealanders to enjoy social and physical environments that contribute to their health and wellbeing and prevent the rise of chronic disease.** We have evidence that supports the approach and what has enabled it, as well as capturing and sharing some of the impact created collectively by the organisations and people we have worked within our localities.



BALANCING A NATIONAL INITIATIVE WITH LOCAL NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS

How do we balance a national initiative while ensuring the unique needs and aspirations of iwi, whānau and local communities are met? It takes leadership, innovation capability and mindsets, thinking differently about what we consider as evidence and above all else, it takes trust.

TRUST

Trust is the thread that holds our systems change approach together as a national movement and in our localities. For Healthy Families Hutt Valley our communities demonstrate the shared trust we have built when they share their stories of what makes it easier and harder to live well. Our funder and partner the Ministry of Health and lead provider Hutt City Council, trust us to create positive change that responds to the needs and experiences of our local people while keeping our line of sight to preventing the rise of chronic disease. Our partners trust us, and we trust them. We each play our part in making it easier to live well. When our approach is grounded in our local area, and focused on local needs and aspirations and we are trusted to take action, then we have the opportunity to generate positive impact.

COMMISSIONING

The commissioning approach to Healthy Families NZ underpins this trust. Localities are contracted for outcomes, not outputs. We are guided by principles rather than defined deliverables. By taking a relational commissioning approach, the Healthy Families NZ team within the Ministry of Health have demonstrated that they trust us to create positive change with our communities and that they are committed to walking alongside us as partners to also learn by doing.



LEADERSHIP

We've seen that it takes strong leadership at all levels to have a high trust way of working. Leaders that can let go of the power to be the expert and decision maker and allow resources to flow to where they can best make impact have made positive change possible. This approach creates space for community leaders to drive action, it also acknowledges and values the role community plays in determining what they need to thrive. Communities are in the best position to understand the challenges their people face as well as the opportunities that can lead to positive change. Valuing lived experience as evidence and grounding our mahi in community insights, ensures we balance our national intentions with local aspirations.

LIVED EXPERIENCE

Our community's lived experience is the starting point for creating change. Healthy Families NZ localities have been weaving mātauranga Māori, social innovation methods and systems thinking together alongside our communities to address the conditions that undermine our health and wellbeing. Being trusted by our funder, partners and communities has made it safe to learn by doing. We have failed along the way but used our innovation mindsets⁴ to learn from our failures. Our learnings fuel the next collective solution.

It has been a new way of thinking and acting for our teams, leaders and communities. However, being comfortable and trusting each other to learn by doing has enabled us to collectively change the systems that influence our health and wellbeing.



⁴ <https://www.innovationunit.org/thoughts/mindsets-for-social-innovation/>

EXAMPLES OF IMPACT – THE HEALTHY FAMILIES NZ APPROACH IN ACTION

The following examples capture just a snapshot of the impact from across our localities. Each locality has their own suite of impact reports and case studies which evidence the impacts for their communities.





MĀORI SYSTEMS RETURN – REVITALISING MARAMATAKA

Since 2018, Healthy Families Whanganui Rangitīkei Ruapehu have been pivotal in the revitalisation of maramataka in their region, utilising the process of co-design to convene with local knowledge holders to research the localised maramataka and build on the knowledge of this mātauranga.

The team have been convening and supporting collaborations to safely experiment mātauranga Māori systems like maramataka as prevention solutions, to accelerate progress, identify levers for change, ensure sustainability, and share the learnings across sectors and regions.

In early March 2020 an international pandemic had reached the shores of Aotearoa creating a pivot in how to engage at workshops, especially to reduce close contact. Covid-19 meant a reduction in contact with communities ā-kanohi and therefore they utilised the support of an online Instagram platform Maramataka_in_action, hosted by a local practitioner to engage with followers in the actional practice of maramataka through daily content and a prototype maramataka calendar app.

The scale and reach of this project have gone far beyond what it had initially set out to achieve, with well over 5000 followers for maramataka_in_action in its first 16 months as a platform and supporting the development of a Maramataka Insights Report, showing the role that can be played in providing opportunities to demonstrate mātauranga Māori shifting systems change. Healthy Families Whanganui Rangitīkei Ruapehu is now in a position to continue to measure their own narrative as indigenous and demonstrate through building a compelling case for change with prototypes across the systems of our mahi, from maramataka journalling with rangatahi male, maramataka development for location specific maara knowledge and mātauranga Māori protective factors campaign to name just a few of the new iterations over 2021.

PASIFIKA LED SYSTEMS CHANGE – WEST AUCKLAND SAMOAN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION COLLECTIVE

Increased wellbeing, greater fellowship with colleagues and sharing culturally specific approaches and methods to improve their teaching practice are just some of the many benefits reported by teachers at the end of the first phase of a significant community of practice (CoP) for Samoan early childhood education (ECE) teachers.

Tāfesilafa'i (the West Auckland Samoan ECE community of care) was created to address a lack of resources and support for teachers that was centred on Samoan cultural values and language. The aim of the group is to build teachers' capacity to grow and exchange knowledge in order to develop a way of teaching and curriculum with a Samoan worldview.

Tāfesilafa'i is used as a concept to reflect and acknowledge the essence of collectivism and communitarianism as the core of establishing and maintaining mutual engagement and nurturing connection with Samoan people. This refers to talanoa as a powerful way of constructing, deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge. It is taking time to connect and establish an environment where experiences can be shared, and aspirations reached. The practice of Tāfesilafa'i is grounded on Samoan cultural values.

The Tāfesilafa'i innovation has provided a space for Aoga Amata teachers to come together, connect, share and grow their confidence in weaving their cultural practices and beliefs into their educational practice. Underpinning this are cultural values of alofa (love), faaloalo (respect) and tautua (service).

Since May 2020, Healthy Families Waitākere has been working alongside the Samoan early childhood centres in West Auckland to understand the impacts of Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns. A successful funding application with the Ministry of Education's Pacific Education Innovation fund allowed the development of the Tāfesilafa'i: Samoan ECE Community of Care in West Auckland.

Bringing this idea to life has meant that 300 children from 200 families have been supported, due to more than 60 ECE teachers and staff members having access to culturally centric professional development.

Key enablers for wellbeing and happiness for the teachers was the time spent together, sharing knowledge and experience, developing and deepening connections with other aoga amata and the increased confidence and courage that resulted from these interactions.

Looking ahead, it is hoped that this innovation will continue so that Samoan families of West Auckland can benefit from strong ECE settings that adequately reflect cultural values and beliefs.





LOCALLY LED SOLUTIONS – PAPATOETOE FOOD HUB TRANSFORMING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Since emerging as an idea in 2017, the Papatoetoe Food Hub in South Auckland has been growing a community-based approach to providing good and affordable food. Four years later, huge progress and learning have occurred.

The Healthy Families South Auckland team, part of The Southern Initiative at Auckland Council, started the Papatoetoe Food Hub initiative and have captured the journey along with their partners in their impact report [Papatoetoe Food Hub transforming local food systems](#).

The Food Hub concept in South Auckland is good for the pocket, puku and planet and the drive for more sustainable local food systems coming from communities. The Food Hub concept revolves around community-led enterprise, within a circular economy model in which surplus food is rescued from being wasted and turned into good affordable food for the community, within a zero-waste approach. This concept has led to an entity called The Food Hub Collective.

The Food Hub Collective is a social enterprise providing an umbrella entity for collaboration among Food Hubs, as well as mentoring and practical support. The Food Hub Collective aims to nurture and develop new approaches towards community food resilience by providing food that is affordable, nourishing, locally produced, and culturally appropriate. Community groups and organisations who align with the Food Hub kaupapa and wish to collaborate have the option of joining the Food Hub Collective.

The Food Hub is a model that can help local food resilience and be replicated in Auckland and other regions. Food can be a catalyst for wider systemic change. Creating a more supportive ecosystem for Food Hubs and other local food resilience initiatives should be a national priority. This includes normalising and incentivising supply and demand for good kai and addressing food waste. There are amazing people in our communities and many stand-alone initiatives that together, can build a powerful movement towards a sustainable food system.

INVESTING IN WORKFORCE – SHARED ROLE GIVES ACTIVE TRANSPORT A BOOST IN INVERCARGILL

Southlanders could soon be swapping their cars and utes for pedal and foot power a lot more thanks to the investment in an Active Transport Innovator.

The role is a joint initiative between Healthy Families Invercargill and the Invercargill City and Southland District Councils. It is the first time such a position has been created in the south, with Invercargill identified as an ideal location to have an active transport network.

The role has been formed largely as a coordinated approach to promote active modes of transport within the scope of Invercargill's changing physical environment. The Active Transport Innovator takes an overview of the active transport system in Southland – using physically active ways to travel around and between our towns and cities (cycling, walking, and scooting) and how our towns and cities are connected. While collaboration is a major part of the work undertaken by the Healthy Families Invercargill team, this is the first time a shared position has been created.

Having someone on the team dedicated to supporting high level changes in the way the region looks at and thinks about active transport, goes a long way in changing perceptions and improving the region's use of active transport.

Physical activity is vital for our physical and mental wellbeing. Across Aotearoa, motorised transport to school is widespread and on the increase, and Southland's rate is higher than the national average. But many of these journeys are within walking distance. Active transport is an inexpensive and convenient way to incorporate physical activity into a young person's day.

Through working with councils, decision makers, and stakeholders in active transport, the way we get around, and how we view physical activity, will be front of mind when planning and decision making. This is informed by working with the community to understand the barriers, needs, and wants, when it comes to making active transport easier and more accessible.

Having better governance and leadership in place will also drive opportunities for people to walk, cycle, or scoot safely around our towns and cities and was all part of a commitment to ensuring the region was a fantastic place for families and individuals to live, learn, work, and play.

The organisations behind this initiative are really looking forward to seeing the progress from working together to ensure as many positive outcomes are met as possible. They acknowledge it will be a challenge changing mindsets, but are committed to doing it, for the good of our community.



COLLECTIVE IMPACT - ROSEBANK LEADING THE WAY IN GROWING WORKPLACE WELLBEING

The Rosebank Business Association is demonstrating its commitment to growing workplace wellbeing. It can be challenging to invest in workplace wellbeing amidst the everyday demands of running a business, but research shows that businesses that do, are more financially successful.

Recognising this, the Rosebank Business Association (RBA) started the Rosebank wellbeing initiative in partnership with [Healthy Families Waitākere](#) in 2020. Thought to be a New Zealand first, the project gained further momentum as part of the wider Covid-19 recovery efforts.

Healthy Families Waitākere facilitated a co-design process alongside Business Lab to help understand the challenges and opportunities for workplace wellbeing in the area. This started with forming a core leadership group with representatives from Rosebank businesses, together with participants from government and community agencies.

The group set out to understand the main causes of stress for workers and co-created a shared vision and roadmap for what growing wellbeing in the Rosebank business community could look like. This was then tested and the worker voice in Rosebank was amplified to validate some of the assumptions. This led to a number of well-informed opportunities to support employee health and wellbeing.

2021 saw a reset for the collaboration between 34 key business, community and government stakeholders and there is now a clear roadmap in place. The core leadership group's ongoing role is to champion and guide the wellbeing initiative and create a community of practice where business leaders can share knowledge, resources and tools to support employee wellbeing within their workplaces.

The most significant achievement during this period was the RBA board committing both financial and staff resource towards the wellbeing roadmap and agreeing in principle to include wellbeing as a key focus within their broader strategy.

A number of initiatives have been implemented as part of the wider collaboration, including a Wellbeing Business Challenge event and health checks that were available for all workplaces, with a longer-term intention to increase uptake of this service in the business community. Over lockdown, workers from Rosebank were encouraged and supported to get vaccinations through the RBA in partnership with Pharmacy Care Group.

Healthy Families Waitākere worked with the RBA to implement the first Rosebank Wellbeing Survey. The results from the survey found most employees in the business community preferred greater work life balance, supportive management styles and better workplace culture. Positively, 71% of the respondents believed their workplace does enough to support their wellbeing in Rosebank.

The findings provide a further important step forward in shaping how broader wellbeing strategies can be delivered across the business district. Looking to the future, understanding the main stress factors in the community gives us an opportunity to find new and innovative ways to address them and help our members continue to build wellness and health-promoting strategies for their people.

The Rosebank Business Association represents more than 600 businesses and 9,000 plus people across the 154 hectare Rosebank Peninsula in West Auckland.





CREATING CHANGE AT SCALE – SOUTH AUCKLAND LEISURE CENTRES HELPING KIDS EAT HEALTHY

It didn't take long for staff at Allan Brewster Leisure Centre to notice the change.

Children attending OSCAR or Kauri Kids early childhood education (ECE) programmes at the Papatoetoe-based leisure centre have seen their morning and afternoon meals transform over the past 12 months into healthier options like fruit platters and pita pockets.

The changes are noticeable not only with the kids but also parents and staff. Parents used to prepare lunch boxes that included chips and sugary snacks. But since they now see their children getting nutritious meals for morning and afternoon tea, they're starting to pack their lunch boxes with just simple healthy food like sandwiches and yogurt.

There is now a more efficient system that allows staff to know what meals are being prepared each week. Before this change in approach, the team were looking at what was in the cupboard and starting from there.

The improvement in nutrition has been done with support from The Southern Initiative and Healthy Families South Auckland as part of its Healthy Environment Approach. The Healthy Environment Approach is an initiative which promotes healthy principles through the four South Auckland Local Boards via leisure centres, community grants, community facilities and places.

The initiative has had a positive effect, with recent data taken over a three-month period showing 38,000 healthy meals had been served in South Auckland Kauri Kids and OSCAR programmes.

The staff have been driving this initiative with support from Healthy Families South Auckland and it has proven to be a real educational tool on how to budget for better ingredients and serve it in a way that the children will enjoy.

A recent evaluation has shown significant increases in confidence and efficiency of staff in providing healthier kai. Feedback has been very positive with the children learning the importance of healthy eating and taking that knowledge back home to share with their whānau.

Healthy Families South Auckland ran workshops with staff from all the South Auckland-based OSCAR and Kauri Kids programmes to reset budgets and ensure a focus on healthy kai.

The main aim is to get better equity with health outcomes in South Auckland and the Kauri Kids and OSCAR programmes are two services by Auckland Council where that can be achieved.

None of this work can be done without the leadership of our four South Auckland Local Boards, Parks, Sport and Recreation and the staff working at OSCAR Kids Club and Kauri Kids to ensure our children enjoy the best healthy kai from an early age.



LOCALLY LED - TUPU TAHI WHANGAROA GROWING TOGETHER INITIATIVE IN THE FAR NORTH

In November 2020, Healthy Families Far North held a series of workshops in Kaeo under the banner of their "Tupu Tahī Whangaroa Growing Together Initiative." They asked the question "How might we create a secure and sustainable food system for future generations of Whangaroa?" What stuck out most was the disconnection that our tamariki and rangatahi have with the maara kai (garden to plate).

The team held a series of co-design workshops and landed on four prototypes, one of which was an edible playground. Kaimahi went out into the community and tested and interviewed whānau who saw the value in this kaupapa, one comment that sticks out from a Kuia was "teaching how to garden and produce a maara kai in schools is as important as teaching numeracy and literacy."

Throughout the four workshops that followed and working with the core co-design group, they looked at creating a space that was interactive with nature focusing on fresh kai and nature play. The group looked at all elements through a Māori lens which also included Kaumatua and Kuia, young mama, and a person with disabilities.

They looked at the spiritual, physical, unique features and the edible components. What came about was that this was not just a playground but somewhere our parents and grandparents can come with our young tamariki and connect with them through kai, the whenua and each other in a holistic way. Following on from this a landscape designer was contacted to come up with a blueprint for a nature playground. It incorporated all the important aspects that whānau identified and is an exemplar of a design which can be used throughout Te Tai Tokerau and beyond in new and existing spaces.

The Healthy Families Far North team set out to shift the system to create healthy relationships with fresh kai through play. They engaged with whānau and created a space where their voice and creativity could be expressed. The ideas were tested and trialled and if further investment can be shifted more play spaces in the Far North can have an edible component. This movement acknowledges local whānau belief that edible play spaces help support whānau relationships with kai.

LEAD PROVIDERS WITH LEVERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT

A strength of the Healthy Families NZ approach in the Hutt Valley has been the reach and influence of Hutt City Council as the lead provider, supported by the Healthy Families Hutt Valley Strategic Leadership Group that includes a wide variety of voices and influencers in the community.

Local government has considerable influence on the built, social and natural environment as well as having direct relationships with the people that live, learn, work and play in its territory. Embedding a systems approach to population health in local government, which act in partnership with the health and social sector, is a model that can bring significant benefit to our communities.

The reinstatement of the four wellbeing into the local government legislation recognises the benefit of and provides the mandate for the important role it has in enabling communities to thrive beyond delivering core services.

An example of the levers that local government has is the reach and impact of creating smokefree public places. Led by Healthy Families Hutt Valley, Hutt City Council and Upper Hutt City Council now have two of the most comprehensive smokefree policies across Aotearoa.

Smokefree public places enable our communities to be liveable, family-friendly spaces and bring benefits for the whole community including reducing exposure to harmful second-hand smoke, supporting smokers to quit, reducing the environmental impact of cigarette litter, providing an opportunity for healthy role modelling to our tamariki, and supporting people to lead smokefree lives by targeting where people spend their time.

By using their leadership and the levers available to local government, Healthy Families Hutt Valley has taken action to support the Government's goal of a Smokefree Aotearoa 2025.

Imagine if our public places and spaces were all smokefree and vape-free and smoking isn't visible to our tamariki.





PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH – CONNECTING GOVERNMENT TO COMMUNITY

One of Healthy Families Hutt Valley's roles is to collapse the space between the lived experience of our people and the organisations and people making decisions that impact the lives of our communities. Through our partnership with the Ministry of Health we can lift the voice and experiences of people in Te Awa Kairangi to government decision makers.

Through the Healthy Families NZ team at the Ministry of Health and their strong relationships across government, Healthy Families Hutt Valley was able to host a hui bringing together the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Ministry of Social Development with a range of partners all of whom have a passion for an Aotearoa where everyone has access to good food.

At the hui, local providers shared their experiences of responding to community need during the first Covid-19 lock down period.

Since this hui, we've been continuing our conversations with members of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, exploring together the wider kaupapa with a focus on play, deeper conversations about kai and the food system, and the Healthy Families NZ way of working.

We really value the opportunity to share our insights and the voices of our communities to those that can make wide ranging systemic change for the benefit of our tamariki and whānau.

MĀORI VISIBLE DRIVING CHANGE – WAI WARRIORS: RANGATAHI GUARDIANS OF WAIARIKI

Healthy Families Rotorua and Te Arawa Whānau Ora Collective Impact Team are collaborating on the 'Wai Warriors' initiative which focuses on co-designing activities with rangatahi (13–15 years).

Wai Warriors supports rangatahi to co-design activities that build leadership in all capacities and ultimately, prepares them to be future guardians of our water.

The initiative enables local young people to effect change in the following settings:

- Identifying kaupapa Māori practices relative to Te Arawa and water – Wai-Māori
- Matauranga Māori and Science on the water – Wai-Ariki
- Healthy and safe activities on the water – Wai-Ora
- Applying traditional systems and practices on the water – Wai – Kawa/Tikanga
- Connecting traditional systems and practices on the water, with land and celestial beings (sun, moon, stars, and flora/fauna).

In 2020, Te Arawa Wai Warriors hosted a wai wānanga in Rotorua to understand how Te Kete Waiora (a rangatahi co-designed water testing kit) can improve our water quality knowledge in real time. Led by recognised Tohunga Maramataka Rereata Makiha, Te Pū a Ngā Māra and a representative of Auckland University, the Wai Warriors were taught by other rangatahi, how to use Te Kete Waiora to test the locally collected water samples. Rereata recited te whakapapa o te wai which opened the doorway for rangatahi to access ancient mātauranga, handed down through generations in the oral traditon.

Healthy Families Rotorua has also supported the integration of maramataka into the initiative as a planning tool for the team. Maramataka provides guidance to achieving successful environmental reconnection and sustainability through iwi relationships with land and sea.

Wai Warriors is arming a generation with the skillsets to make water and by extension, communities more liveable.



**Ngā mihi nui to all our Healthy Families NZ
whānau, partners and communities for contributing
to the mahi included in this publication.**

If you are interested in partnering and would like to
find out more about this kaupapa please contact:

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Ngā mihi to John Kingi from Kōkiri Marae for creating
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