

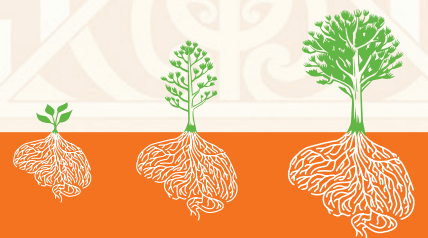


Brainwave[™]
early years last forever
whakamana i te tamaiti



Mahere Rautaki | Strategic Plan Brainwave Trust 2019 – 2023

*Poipoia te kākano, kia puāwai
Nurture the seed and it will blossom*



Mahere Rautaki. Strategic Plan. Brainwave Trust 2019-2023

Vision

Whakamana i te tamaiti.

Brainwave's vision is that all children in Aotearoa New Zealand are valued and nurtured in order to reach their full potential.

Mission

We share knowledge about the critical importance of the first thousand days of life. We make research understandable and accessible to everyone who influences the lives of babies and children.

What do we seek to achieve?

Our particular expertise is in early brain development. There is a lot of consensus on this among researchers, and a wealth of knowledge about child development. Brainwave Trust seeks to make this knowledge accessible to all.

How do we achieve this?

- Provide targeted, culturally responsive programmes that:
 - 1 - make research-based knowledge available to all in a meaningful way and
 - 2 - support people to work out how to improve their care of children based on this information.
- Form partnerships to further disseminate knowledge.
- Make a credible and trusted contribution towards a culture that values good parenting and prevents abuse and neglect.
- Advocate for children and families where societal change is needed.





Priorities for the period 2019-2023

Due to limited resources we have set our priorities for this period:

- Partnerships, collaborations and working “business to business” with other organisations is a high priority. We wish to be a translator of knowledge, empowering others who are expert in their fields to be evidence-based. Working directly with parents is less of a priority, unless they fall into one of our key audiences, listed next.
- We have set four high-priority audiences for this period. (See the rationale for this in Appendices.) In developing any **new** programmes, resources, recruiting and training kaiako etc. These four take the highest priority: NB. Existing programmes are all to continue.
 - 1 - Māori.
 - 2 - Pacific people.
 - 3 - Professionals working with more ‘at risk’ communities.
 - 4 - Policy Makers and Politicians.
- Digital Strategy. Communication via digital media enables information to be shared with a wide community particularly parents. It will be integral to our future programme development.

The way we work

- We aim for bicultural competency and confidence at all levels of our organisation. We strive to meaningfully and authentically include indigenous knowledge and worldviews in our practice.
- We are inclusive. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender, educational achievement or age.
- We are apolitical.
- We demonstrate respect, integrity and humanity in all that we do.
- We value evidence and constantly update our knowledge.
- We value people. He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.
- We put babies and families at the heart of everything.

We can measure our achievement by:

- The number of programmes we deliver by type and audience.
- Our reach on social media.
- Market feedback.
- Programme feedback.
- Partnerships formed and sustained.
- Organisational change and policies that place importance on children.
- Formal evaluations and university-based evaluations.

“I will be more careful about
how I raise my son e.g. they learn
more from myself than YouTube.”

— Parent in a Teen Parent Unit

Four Strategies for success:



Sustainable Funding

Ensuring sufficient funding is generated from donors, philanthropic organisations and Brainwave programmes and events, as well as other sources.



People

Ensuring we have people with the skills and knowledge to deliver the strategic direction. Nurturing and supporting our people in such a way that they feel valued and able to contribute to the success of Brainwave.



Programmes

Ensuring our programmes stay relevant, evidence-based, engaging and meaningful for audiences.



Partnerships and collaborations

with other organisations that are experts in their field, empowering them with the knowledge we have.

What does our Strategic Direction mean for our people in this period?



Trustees

We will think about succession and training. As a Board we will exemplify the values of our organisation and remain committed to Te Tiriti. We will keep our scientific credibility.

Operational Team

We value our highly skilled team. Trustees will strive to communicate clearly and to set priorities and 'focus' for the team in order to be most efficient in achieving the objectives of the Trust. In all on-going recruitment and training the four key audiences will be central.

Kaiako

We value our kaiako highly. In all recruitment and on-going training, the four key audiences should be prioritised. Otherwise, business as usual.

Appendix One

Four Key Audiences – Why?

1 Māori

Nā tō rourou, nā tāku rourou, ka ora ai te iwi. With your food basket and my food basket the people will thrive. There is a complex history of colonisation which has had an inter-generational impact on the wellbeing of tamariki Māori. Brainwave will strive to support whānau, hapū and iwi by working alongside, and adding value to, the work of leaders and champions. Brainwave Trust will take a “working with”, community-led approach. We will take time to establish trust and good relationships at the start.

2 Pacific peoples

E fofo le alamea le alamea. Legend has it that when you step on the alamea (poisonous sea urchin), you must quickly turn the alamea over and step on it again. The alamea will then absorb the poison from your foot. People will provide their own solutions for issues affecting them.

There is a rich diversity of cultures loosely grouped under the “Pacific peoples” label. Brainwave acknowledges the complex history of these communities as a result of migration. Brainwave aims to work alongside, and add value to, the work of leaders who have already-established ways of working. Some examples include church leaders, the Matua council and elder groups. The work will be strength-based. We will focus on those communities where we have established links. We will take time to establish trust and good relationships from the outset.

3 Professionals

People who work supporting vulnerable families are under-resourced and seeking learning. Brainwave information will contribute to their knowledge and help them see where they can best make a difference. These professionals are likely to be working through a range of organisations such as Corrections, community groups, Oranga Tamariki and the wider Ministry of Social Development, in the health system, in the education system, NGO's and Family Start.

4 Politicians and policy makers

Aotearoa New Zealand has unacceptably high rates of child abuse and neglect. It is not well understood just how critical the early years are.

The lifelong emotional risks of a poor start are often obvious to most people i.e. a greater risk of suicide, depression, addictions and much more. But physical health for life (heart health, lung health and much else) can also be critically impacted by early stressors.

The economic cost to the Aotearoa New Zealand economy of poor child outcomes was estimated by Infometrics in 2011 to be around 3 percent of GDP (approximately \$6 billion in 2011). [Grimmond, Infometrics, 2011].

This includes increased health, welfare, remedial education, crime and justice expenditure and lower productivity. That's

- almost \$1300 per year for every man, woman and child in NZ.
- \$500 million per month.
- \$16.5 million per day.

Professor James Heckman, Nobel prize winning American economist looks at the return on investment for funding/interventions at different life stages. The results are very clear, and exactly opposite to the way in which we invest in people at present.

There is a strong economic, as well as a compassionate argument for investing early.



Appendix Two

Māori Focus: What does it mean?

When developing programmes to share with whānau, we need to ensure that the right messages are communicated in the right way. It is important to include and build cultural narratives into programme design to ensure messages are aligned with mātauranga Māori so that they are more relevant, accessible and relatable to whānau Māori.

Brain science is a narrative, which when integrated with Māori perspectives and stories provides an opportunity to explain the science in a way that doesn't compromise either the science, or mātauranga Māori. When we value and appreciate the place of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in all of our work, we are supporting whānau to engage with and embrace the science in a more meaningful way.

Not everything will align, in which case we should tell the science as it is, in an appropriate comprehensible way. We need to enable our expert kaiako to personalise the information and give them the opportunity to use their strengths and stories to connect with whānau Māori.

In summary, we need to make our information relatable and understandable in a way that aligns with and supports mātauranga Māori.

Exposure to different world views can ignite learning and open people's minds. The way in which we value bicultural competence and confidence will show in how empowered our kaiako are to reframe information and present it, appropriately in a way that is relatable to their audiences.



Appendix Three

A focus on Pacific communities: What does it mean?

2019 begins a new journey for Brainwave with a targeted approach to include Pacific communities as a high priority audience. This means that the development of new programmes, resources, recruiting and training kaiako will incorporate Pacific peoples' worldviews, epistemology and practice with the values, knowledge, and vision of Brainwave.

But why Pacific peoples? Pacific peoples are the fourth largest population in Aotearoa and have the highest proportion of children and youth when compared with other major ethnic groups. This suggests that the health and wellbeing of Pacific children and youth will have an impact on the future of Aotearoa given that it is a diverse and dynamic population.

However, the Pacific community disproportionately suffer inequities resulting in over-representation in poor health, education, welfare and justice statistics. These inequities often obscure a wealth of knowledge, strength and expertise in the very things that Brainwave promotes, particularly relating to the power of connectivity and relationship. Therefore, a specifically targeted approach is needed to draw on Pacific worldviews and practice to share the message of Brainwave in a way that it can be genuinely understood by, and be useful for, Pacific communities.

It is not about changing the message of Brainwave; rather it is about adapting the way in which we deliver and share this valuable information.

Pacific communities have a collective worldview that draws on many values-based principles that include respect, love and humility. Relationships are an integral part of Pacific communities because the Pacific sense of identity is based on the relationships held with other people, family, land, sea and spirituality, including the cosmos. The importance of the role of Brainwave kaiako will not only be based on the message delivered. It will also be about their ability to connect and relate to their audience drawing on these principles that include respect, love and humility.

But how do you do this? Firstly, language, art, music and drawing on Pacific stories can be used as examples to explain the wonderful science that Brainwave delivers. Secondly, given that Pacific peoples are relational beings, the ability to provide opportunities to share personal stories as a platform for delivering the message of Brainwave is likely to create a positive learning environment for the audience. Thirdly, implementing Pacific protocols and practices in work with Pacific peoples will increase the opportunity for genuine engagement and participation. Lastly, drawing on the knowledge and skills of the community to work in partnership with Brainwave and sharing the importance of the first thousand days of life will maximise outcomes for Pacific children in Aotearoa.

*If the flower does not grow,
change the environment
in which it grows.*

*Nurture the seed among Pacific
communities so that it blossoms.*



Appendix Four

Professionals working with vulnerable communities: What does this mean?

New Zealand is now experiencing the impact of inter-generational poverty. Child poverty and the multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) linked to this means that we have a generation of parents who are struggling to parent, are vulnerable and are in need of valuing and support. Data suggests that around 25% of our children have been living in poverty since the early 1990's and estimates suggest that at least 20% of our pregnancies need substantial additional support.

There are times when the only professional that a "needing to be valued" mother meets is a midwife. Engagement with "the system" is complicated and provision of care very difficult.

A positive "First 1000 days" (starting from conception) includes a healthy pregnancy, unadulterated by toxins and supported by good nutrition.

Reducing the stressors in all of their lives, enabling a family to attach to and dream for their baby and then, after the birth, grow their baby/infant with love and time is critical to the child, the family and to New Zealand.

There are a range of professionals with the sensitivities and skills to engage with, and support, all families. They can facilitate significant development for the whānau and a successful first one thousand days for the children. These include social workers (or the equivalent), midwives, well-child workers, whānau ora providers and kaitiaki.

For every child to receive the benefits of a positive first one thousand days we need to empower with knowledge an entire cohort of professionals who understand how important this is and what it means. All who work with families and young children will benefit from this education.



Appendix Five

Politicians and policy makers: What does this mean?

Kei te tautoko mātou i ngā tamariki.

It is essential that people across every community and decision-making group in Aotearoa New Zealand understand the critical importance of pregnancy and the first years of life in shaping a child's future, in order that:

- governments, communities and individuals will invest heavily and effectively in the early years.
- the person or people involved in the care of any infants will know how to provide their babies a good start. They will have access to the resources and support that enable them to do so.
- toxic stressors that may hinder development will be identified and ameliorated by families, communities and/or government wherever possible.

The most effective government strategies for tamariki will start very early. At conception, or even before. Such strategies will also be the most cost-effective. A brave and thoughtful policy strategy would prioritise these early years above all others, for all whānau.

Government policies would be based on the evidence of what works for children. This would include:

- ensuring women have a healthy pregnancy, free from toxic stressors.
- enabling parents to be good parents and giving them good choices as to how this happens.
- appropriate long-term support for whānau that need it.
- ensuring parenting is valued, reinforcing the simple message that parents and caregivers have the most profound effect on the development of children.
- workplaces and career structures that recognise the critical value of child-rearing, meaning parents are not forced to 'juggle' or 'choose' between productive working lives and parenting well.
- addressing the large numbers of children currently experiencing adversity through exposure to poverty, by supporting their whānau out of poverty.



Appendix Five continued..

Politicians and policy makers: What does this mean?

Some issues that need addressing:

- Parenting is widely under-valued and taken for granted.
- Parents do not have realistic choices when it comes to the care of very young children. Strategies such as increasing paid parental leave, providing other financial support for parents and perhaps moving from a largely profit-driven Early Childhood Education sector back to a government and community-led model would all help improve caregivers' choices.
- The welfare of very young children needs to be at the centre of decision-making and debate about issues such as childcare, housing, careers etc. Currently other agendas and viewpoints tend to dominate.
- Policies have been put in place that can affect parental decisions in a way that is not helpful. One example is the 20 hours subsidised care in early childhood education which, while well-intentioned, has actually reduced access to early childhood education centres on a more part-time basis i.e. less than 20 hours. Another example is the situation where a person is on Sole Parent benefit and may be forced to seek work and place their child in external care at the age of 12 months.
- The system of support for families is fractured, with many providers from different sectors including health, education and social services, with support provided in a non-systematic, variable manner. There needs to be a seamless pathway of support for parents and whānau. Money spent early saves money later.
- Poverty puts enormous stress on families and can severely inhibit their ability to raise healthy happy children. Research indicates that increasing income to families in poverty is associated with improved outcomes for their children. Other supports can also be beneficial, but children benefit when their family's income lifts.





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