



**Child Rich**  
COMMUNITIES

KIA WHĀNGAIA TE RITO,  
KA PUĀWAITIA TE HARAKEKE

THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN, WHĀNAU AND COMMUNITIES ARE CLOSELY INTERCONNECTED

# Uplifting the Mana

Tāmaki Makaurau

Child Rich Community Hui Report  
November 2022

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## Tāmaki Makaurau Child Rich Community Hui Report, November 2022

Over 70 people from a wide range of sectors, agencies and communities came together in November 2022 for the Tāmaki Makaurau Child Rich Communities hui. The common calling was an interest in the power of community-led development to effect positive change, and the understanding that community-led development, focused on the wellbeing of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau increases wellbeing, not just for those whānau, but for the community as a whole.

The aim of the hui was to:

- create an opportunity for people to come together face-to-face and to network, share ideas and be uplifted by stories of community-led, child and youth focused development
- create opportunity to explore Child Rich Community (CRC) practices and showcase the incredible change that can happen across a variety of wellbeing indicators, by approaching community development in child rich ways.
- learn more about what else was happening across Tāmaki Makaurau in the child wellbeing, community-led development space and explore 'what next' to strengthen these approaches

The day begin with an introduction of the core group involved in planning the day- Jill Rice- Play Aotearoa, Deb Humphries- North Shore Family Violence Prevention, Amiria Fletcher- WAVES, Vinetta Plummer- Inspiring Communities, and Louise Petzold- Child Rich Communities.

After a karakia and welcome, Louise introduced the [Child Rich Communities project](#), the [CRC practices](#) and ways of working within community. We heard from three speakers showcasing child, youth or whānau-led community projects and learnt about projects that were youth-led, whānau-led and culturally specific. Throughout the day there were opportunities to reflect on local stories and learning and more deeply dive into how people were using CRC practices and community-led development in their work.

A core message that emerged from the day was how vital it is to engage in community-led development in child rich ways - that when we put the wellbeing of children and youth at the heart of our community development, it cuts across fragmented and siloed ways of working and benefit occurs for all.

Participants were uplifted by hearing each other's stories of engagement and change, and had the opportunity to spend time building relationships and increase their understanding of what was happening more broadly across Tāmaki Makaurau.

*“I found it useful to hear the kaupapa and success stories from organisations as it's inspiring to take back to my community to re-create or try out. To also hear about how we are all on the same path is so refreshing and uplifting”.*

*CRC Hui Attendee*

Importantly, participants heard and learnt, through kōrero with each other, and sharing stories, about HOW to do community-led development in child focused ways. At a time when we hear so often the phrase “locally-led, centrally enabled”, this hui gave people information about what that might look like, as far as resourcing possibilities, ways of engagement and collaborative possibilities. It gave participants grounded, proven ways of supporting the empowerment of children and whānau which strengthens them and their place of community.

Many participants expressed a wish to have further opportunities to meet, learn and talk together, and to build on the outcomes of the day by having similar hui in different parts of Tāmaki Makaurau. They were also keen to see a new mechanism created to enable knowledge of what communities were doing across the rohe to be more proactively shared in ongoing ways. Many expressed the importance of a strengths-based focus like Child Rich Communities to anchor conversations rather than deficit/problem focused kaupapa.

Given it is our rangatahi and tamariki who face the greatest uncertainties in the decades to come, Child Rich Community practices and community-led development principles equip communities to be responsive, collaborative and strong as we heard in the stories below.

## **Tāfesilafa’i: Reclaiming wellbeing through Samoan indigenous practices in Aoga Amata**

Repeka George-Koteka and Cathie Powell from Healthy Families Waitakere spoke about the journey of re-culturalisation within Aoga Amata (Samoan ECE’s) which grew a community of care to come together, connect, share and grow confidence in weaving Samoan cultural values, practices and beliefs into educational practice.

The project was initiated in 2020 and has operated with the support of the Healthy Families Waitākere since its inception. Tāfesilafa’i has been effective in revitalising culturally centric values and practices for faiaoga (teachers) and aiga (families) whilst also aligning with the Action Plan for Pacific Education (APPE) focus areas for change.



## What we learnt

- A clear shared vision is important
- Samoan-centric practices were essential and could not be compromised
- Cross-sector partners were needed within education, health and the community
- The importance of addressing power imbalances – elevating faiaoga voices
- The importance of flexible funding models (in this case the Ministry of Education Innovation funding) to support the creation of outcomes specific to a Samoan led initiative
- How supporting the voices of those who work alongside children, increased connection to culture for those children, their whānau and the whole Aoga Amata community.

## Bays in Action Think Tank

Bays in Action spoke to us about their incredible journey to increase youth wellbeing by gathering and actioning youth voice within their communities.

Bays in Action is a community-owned collective that is run and supported by a large and diverse group of community members, young people, schools, practitioners, local organisations and local businesses. They come together to:

- Increase youth voice in decisions that impact on young people
- Increase youth wellbeing
- Address issues impacting youth safety and wellbeing
- Support shared decision making in the Bays for positive youth outcomes
- Increase opportunities for youth development including youth leadership development.

We heard about how young people have led initiatives within the community that have attracted more young people to engage and feel a part of their community. They shared how enabling flexible resourcing was key to getting these projects off the ground.

## How Tāfesilafa'i embedded Chid Rich Community Practices

The wellbeing of aiga and the children within them was a central focus for Tāfesilafa'i and was identified as a focus area by Healthy Families through surveys of all ECE's. Their project looked into what the children's faiaoga in early childhood needed to stand firmly in Samoan-centric practices within Aoga Amata, and what might be needed to support their wellbeing. An increase in the wellbeing of faiaoga meant an increase the wellbeing of their children and families they supported!

Faiaoga identified they needed practical resources such as access to computers, and that they needed more ability to create and share Samoan educational resources. Coming together to identify their needs strengthened their confidence and ability to ask for specific resourcing from the education sector and other organisations, and created pathways for ongoing advocacy and communication.

As their Samoan practices deepened in every aspect of Aoga Amata, the Community of Care-Tāfesilafa'i also thrived.





## How Bays In Action embedded Child Rich Community Practices:

A diverse collaborative community group came together to make sure that youth were at the heart of all community initiatives. Youth were involved from the beginning, they were consulted for ideas and asked to step into leadership roles to begin to lift off their projects. Resources from organisations and community businesses were then sourced by the core group.

One of the first projects to be resourced was Wheels and Wellbeing day- bringing tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau together to learn bike safety and skills, build value and confidence, and to bring the community together to develop an area as a skate and bike park. Tamariki learnt heaps about what is possible for themselves, how they can dream big and were mentored by awesome rangatahi. One seed grows another and this event has led onto more youth and their whānau being involved in collaborative community projects, businesses funding bikes for tamariki, school participation and the community as a whole feeling connected to the skatepark and community events.

## What we learnt

- We grow by developing and having shared local visions and plans
- Build projects using each other's strengths within community
- Work with diverse people and sectors
- Nothing about youth without youth
- Grow local collaborative leadership
- Learning by doing
- Collective action funding is essential

## Communities Feeding Communities

Grace Mua from Presbyterian Support Northern shared the child rich community ways they have engaged their local community around Communities Feeding Communities (CFC). The project grew from listening to local needs and providing leadership opportunities for local people in solution making and taking.

This project has created opportunities for children, youth and families to understand the value of community, and the positive effects it has. Children and youth designed spaces are an intrinsic part of the evolution of the project. As they engage, so too do the rest of their whānau, bringing the community together in a shared vision and space. What started from a kai project, has developed into children designing their own playground, links to local kindergartens and schools, and a youth engagement and drop in space.





## What we learnt

- How you engage with community is crucial
- Make time to go to the places where children and young people are - preschools, schools and other “bumping spaces”
- Gather children and youth voices in a variety of ways - CFC used surveys, drop in times and informal meetings
- Action community needs with whole of community involvement
- Relationships and community-led development take time
- Keep on listening to, involving and responding to community voice and need
- Learn by doing
- Flexible resourcing and funding is essential in community-led development.

### How Communities Feeding Communities embedded Child Rich Community Practices:

As a Project led by an organisation, PSN knew they needed to engage the community and ensure children and rangatahi were leading the way. Instead of waiting for tamariki just to show up, PSN went into local pre-schools and schools each week to tell stories of community, and to kōrero about what being part of a community meant, and how this could happen. Kai was taken and connections made.

Tamariki then came to visit the Community Centre regularly, to help with tasks, and to give ideas about what they would like to have in their playground. Their drawings and ideas have formed the basis of the design of the playground which is taking shape in 2023!

## What next to enable Child Rich Communities in Tāmaki Makaurau?

To support networking and an increased understanding of Child Rich practices and concepts, we spent significant time in breakout groups, with groups changing regularly to consider different questions, such as:

- What are the key considerations of how do we do Child Rich Communities well?
- What else can we do within our organisations?
- What support might we need from others?
- What is needed next to uplift the mana of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau?
- What can we do in our different parts of Tāmaki Makaurau?



Tāmaki Makaurau has been tested with challenging events in the last few years, with the strength of collaborative community response clear, positive and productive. So how best to continue to support this movement of community-led development whilst ensuring the children, youth and whānau are clear leaders in the midst of ongoing changes? Here’s what hui participants had to say:

<b><i>What's Needed to Strengthen a Child Rich Communities approach in Tāmaki Makaurau</i></b>	<b><i>What we'd like to see next</i></b>	<b><i>Some Potential Next Steps For Discussion</i></b>
To come together face-to-face, to learn from each other, network, collaborate and hear stories of child rich, community-led change. Ongoing and continued connection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up a network - keep the conversation between all these groups going and others at the grassroots</li> <li>• More collaboration, sharing of information, resources etc</li> <li>• Advocacy for community voice</li> <li>• Strengthening relationships</li> <li>• Listening, sharing, empowering communities, enabling them to be the best they can be</li> <li>• More conversation about the language we use as part of our collective action e.g., uplift, child-centred, child-led</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look to co-host further CRC hui kanohi ki te kanohi over 2023 in different parts of Tāmaki Makaurau to grow a greater understanding of CRC and grow supportive grassroots networks</li> <li>• One central CRC hui at the end of this time to bring together the CRC movement in Tāmaki and allow time for more detailed enquiry and kōrero about what is needed in the CRC space.</li> </ul>
Online connections and resource sharing - to know what others are doing in the rohe and who and how to network and connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share info about networks &amp; services, initiatives happening in Tāmaki Makaurau for youth</li> <li>• Stakeholder mapping</li> <li>• Promote services to avoid duplication and competition</li> <li>• Engagement with youth</li> <li>• Build more cross-community connections as the different communities in Tāmaki Makaurau are very different.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Tāmaki Makaurau lunchtime kōrero sessions that could profile 1 CRC project each month and general networking and shared learning time</li> <li>• An online social media platform where information sharing and messaging (connecting) can occur</li> </ul>
Validate community based ideas, initiatives and programmes- (grassroots knowledge) as a keyway that lasting change will be made for children and whānau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring more innovation when working with young people</li> <li>• Putting youth/children at the forefront of our mahi</li> <li>• Remove barriers that disadvantage rangatahi/ whānau</li> <li>• Going beyond social service delivery.</li> <li>• Working collectively across Auckland communities.</li> <li>• Building relationships, trust and taking time for young people - meeting them where they are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a smaller strategic stakeholder rōpū in Tāmaki Makaurau who are connected both to grassroots knowledge and broader government influencing to both advocate for community-led development and adequate resourcing</li> </ul>
Additional resource so that local knowledge of what is needed can be harnessed for the better of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau and ultimately the community as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letting the people speak and then acting on that</li> <li>• Hearing the voice of our tamariki, breaking down systems barriers</li> <li>• Collaboratively working together child-led more than child-centred</li> <li>• Longer term contracts that allow for collaboration, innovation and are not too prescriptive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above</li> </ul>

<p>Understand how to engage and work in a focused community-led development way that is specific in the detail and to their community, but generic in practice and principles so time is not wasted reinventing already proven successes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being brave and inspirational in this space</li> <li>• Empower solutions for specific cultural groups, whilst also sharing what great CRC practice looks like.</li> <li>• Relationship building/removing barriers to connection – are practices</li> <li>• The word youth is interchangeable with any group you're working with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop CLD/CRC facilitation and training</li> <li>• CRC to continue to offer opportunities through national work e.g., online kōrero, lunchtime drop-in sessions, growing a national exchange of information and community know-how.</li> </ul>
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### Some final thoughts from Child Rich Communities Project Lead Louise Petzold

A Child Rich Community at a grassroots level, is one where community development and change not only considers children, youth and their whānau, but development is led by them. Where whānau and mokopuna are seen as the taonga they are within community. Where projects and initiatives enable children to feel valued members of a community who are connected to their place, have voice, are responded to, and understood.

Child Rich Communities also includes all those people working throughout Aotearoa - resourcing, delivering social services, making policy and strategy, who understand the importance of community-led development and have the wellbeing of children and rangatahi at the heart of their mahi.

Working in a Child Rich Way involves some generic practices that we have seen reflected in all effective community engagement which has created positive change for whānau. Both service and development approaches are core to a CRC approach. Working relationally and in ways that nurture local voices, participation and leadership is key.

What we have seen from facilitating hui in Aotearoa, both online and in person during 2022 is that Child Rich Communities provides a mechanism to enable collaboration, deepen understanding of community-led development, share knowledge and journeys, and create an uplifting and inspiring platform that both validates and further catalyses working in positive child wellbeing ways.

We look forward to working collaboratively with others in Tāmaki Makaurau to further grow the potential of these approaches.

For more information about Child Rich Communities or any of our mahi please contact [kiaora@childrichcommunities.org.nz](mailto:kiaora@childrichcommunities.org.nz)



**Thanks to our hui supporters:**

