

Healthy Families NZ - Food Systems Theory of Change

This Theory of Change expresses the approach of Healthy Families NZ across Aotearoa in facilitating community-led transformation of the food system.

IF WE...

- Influence and advocate for policies that support resilient, sustainable, and equitable food systems, ensuring that local and central government strategies prioritise food sovereignty and food security for all communities in Aotearoa.
- Mobilise resources and partnerships with local, regional, and national stakeholders, fostering collaboration across diverse sectors to scale up community-led food initiatives and support innovative solutions that address food accessibility and affordability.
- Amplify indigenous knowledge and practices, honouring te ao Māori and Pacific traditions to regenerate food sovereignty, empower communities to take ownership of their food sources, and embed these values into food system operations.
- Promote sustainable food production and localism, encouraging communities to reduce reliance on supermarkets and industrial food systems while increasing local food production, distribution, and consumption to minimise environmental impacts.

BY...

- Supporting communities to co-design and lead initiatives that build food resilience, such as creating local food hubs, community gardens, and play-based food learning opportunities.
- Gathering and sharing evidence, stories, and lived experiences that highlight equity in practice and demonstrate the impact of culturally grounded food systems on health and wellbeing.
- Building coalitions and collaborative networks of individuals, organisations, and policymakers who are committed to driving systems change by investing in indigenous food knowledge, local food production, and sustainable practices.
- Mapping and connecting local food systems to strengthen food supply chains, support diverse distribution methods, and engage communities in kaitiakitanga of food resources and public spaces.



THIS SHOULD LEAD TO...

- Increased access to healthy, local, and culturally appropriate food for all communities, particularly in underserved areas, where food production and consumption are community driven.
- Greater community resilience and reduced food dependency, as local food systems become more self-sustaining and capable of adapting to environmental and economic challenges.
- Stronger recognition and integration of indigenous knowledge into food practices and policies, resulting in equitable outcomes for Māori, Pasifika, and all communities in Aotearoa.
- A unified approach to food sovereignty and food security that aligns local initiatives with regional and national strategies to create a collective impact on health and wellbeing.



RESULTING IN...

- Communities across Aotearoa will experience food security, where all people have the right to sufficient, safe, nutritious food that meets their cultural needs and preferences for an active, healthy life.
- Food sovereignty will be realised for Māori and all people, enabling them to define their own food systems and exercise control over food production, distribution, and consumption.
- Policies and practices will evolve to support sustainable, regenerative, and resilient food systems, reducing the environmental footprint of food production while enhancing local economies and community wellbeing.
- An equitable, thriving food environment where indigenous practices are valued, and everyone has the opportunity to live a healthy life with access to affordable, nourishing, locally sourced food.



AND FINALLY...

Communities across Aotearoa/New Zealand are confidently leading the transformation of our kai systems. Within this unified movement, whānau and communities are fully exercising their mana motuhake to actualise kai sovereignty, kai security, and bring to life their kai needs and aspirations.

Living within equitable, resilient and sustainable local kai systems, all people have access to nourishing, culturally appropriate kai. These systems are environmentally regenerative, culturally empowering, socially connecting, spiritually intact and mana-enhancing. Thriving local kai systems are health prevention systems that provide for holistic wellbeing across diverse communities.

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Healthy Families New Zealand

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