

# Getting Creative with Nourishing Kai

With support from **Healthy Active Learning and Heart Foundation**

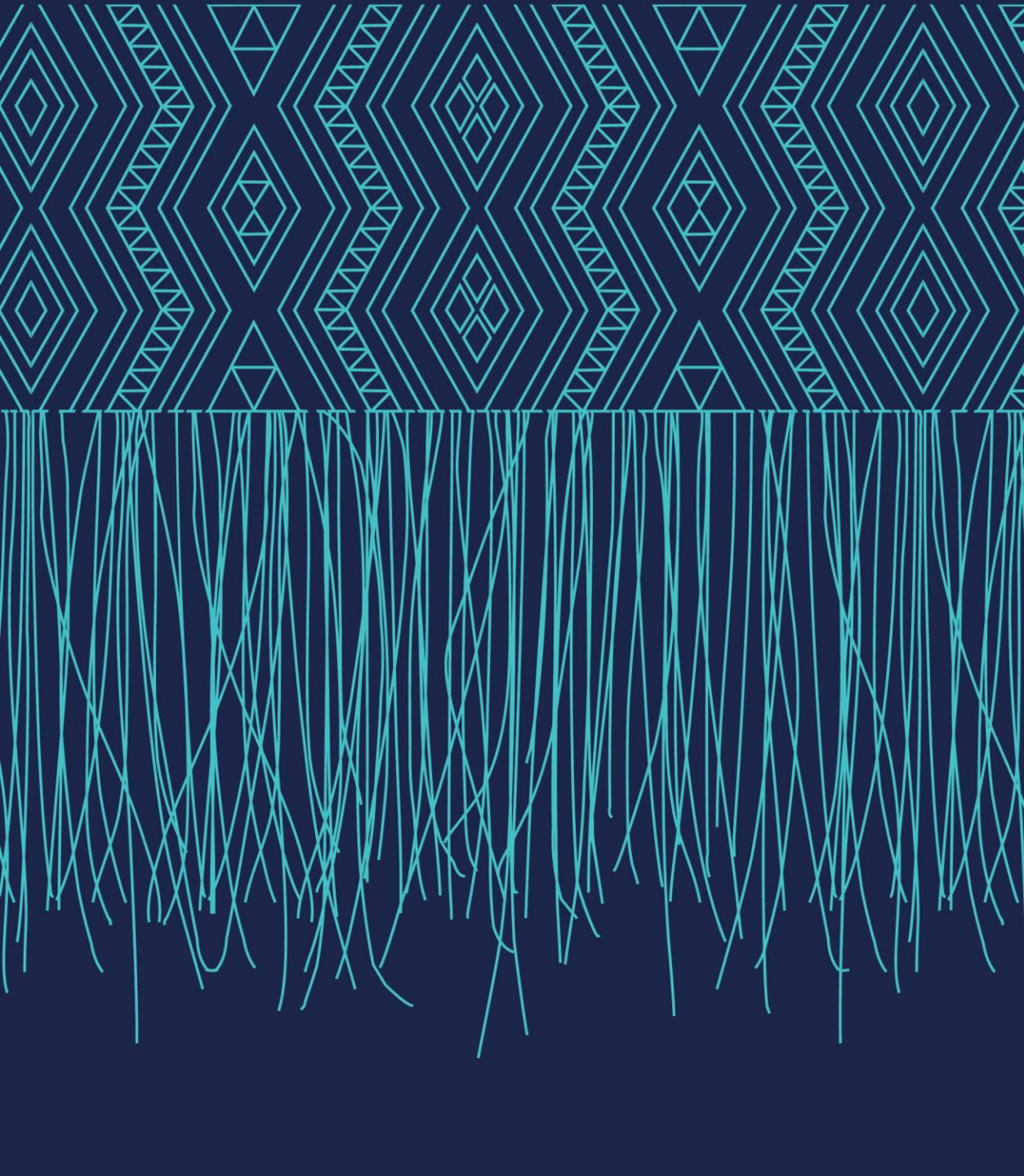
Josephine Nathan  
Danni Maclean  
Abi Alger

Ngā Tai Ora | Public Health Northland  
Auckland Regional Public Health Service | Rātonga Hauora-a-Iwi o Tāmaki Makaurau



**He oranga ngākau,  
he pikinga waiora**

**Positive feelings within you enhances wellbeing**



**How do we  
celebrate in  
our centres  
and  
communities?**

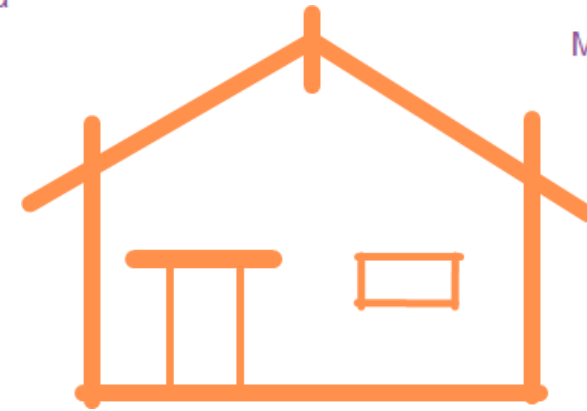
# Exploring kai and wai with Te Whare Tapa Wha

Te Taha Wairua  
Spiritual

Te Taha Hinengaro  
Mental and Emotional

Te Taha Tinana  
Physical

Te Taha Whanau  
Family and Social



Whenua  
Land, roots

Consider how all dimensions of hauora are enhanced from eating nutritious kai and drinking wai

## Te Taha Wairua Spiritual

E.g. Eating kai special to us or our Tūpuna keeps our wairua strong



## Te Taha Tinana Physical

E.g. Eating nutritious kai gives us fuel to grow, play and learn



## Whenua Land, roots

E.g. Eating kai grown from the whenua helps us to connect with te taio and the atua



## Te Taha Hinengaro Mental and Emotional

E.g. Eating kai makes fun memories like eating ice cream on a hot summer's day at the beach!



## Te Taha Whānau Family and Social

E.g. Eating kai with whānau or friends brings us together



# STRENGTHENING TE WHARE TAPA WHA BY USING KAI



## TE TAHA TINANA PHYSICAL

- Nutritious kai helps us to stay healthy and avoid sickness
- Healthy kai gives us energy to grow, play, and do well in school
- The food groups all play different roles in our body: protein, carbohydrates, fats, fruit and vege
- Vitamins and minerals do amazing things for our body. Like how milk has calcium with keeps our bones and teeth healthy and strong



## TE TAHA HINENGARO MENTAL & EMOTIONAL

- Even though we know some kai is less nutritious, sometimes we eat it just because it tastes good, or it brings us joy and happiness
- Kai can create happy memories, such as having ice cream on a hot day
- Nutritious kai can help our brain feel better, have better concentration and improve memory



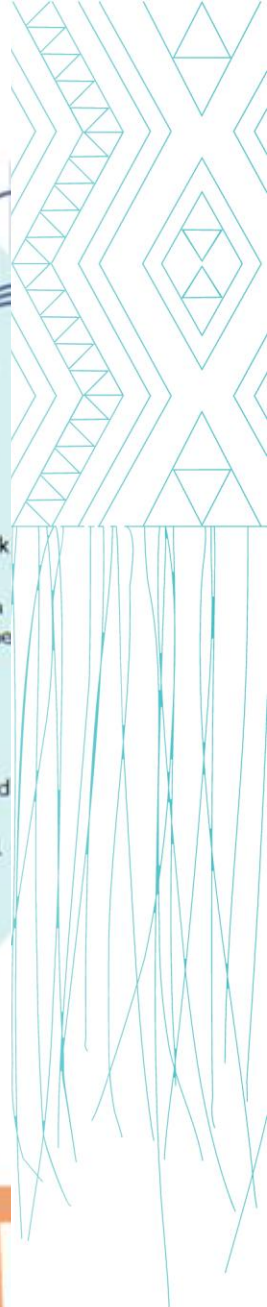
- Collecting and growing kai in our backyard helps keep our wairua strong. For example hunting allows you to be outdoors and in nature
- Kai is a big part of who we are as a person - our likes, dislikes, and preferences

## TE TAHA WAIRUA SPIRITUAL



## TE TAHA WHANAU FAMILY & SOCIAL

- Kai brings whanau and friends together
- Hangi served at the marae is a tradition for a lot of whanau
- Food is served at special occasions like birthdays or celebrations, and sad events like tangi
- Eating at the dinner table with family and friends is a nice time to chat and enjoy each others company
- Most whanau usually have someone that has a 'secret' or well loved recipe that is passed down generations e.g. Mum's chocolate eclairs, or Nan's boil up



# Kai and hauora for our under 5s

The senses our little ones' experience, including taste, lay the foundation for their life course. Their brains are developing faster than at any other time of their life

Healthy food supports growth, physical and cognitive development, improved food, mental health and wellbeing in children and young people.

A child that eats well in early childhood is less likely to experience chronic disease in adulthood, such as heart disease, asthma, some cancers, and type 2 diabetes

Early childhood is suggested to be the ideal time to develop behaviours that assist with lifelong positive eating patterns

ELS teachers that role model positive, healthy eating behaviours have been shown to positively influence preschoolers' eating behaviours

# What resources are there that support Kai and Wai in our centres?

Te Whariki	Competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society.	Te Whare Tapa Wha
Heart Foundation	Celebrations are valued as an opportunity to bring together tamariki, whanau and the wider community. They are a chance to share each other's milestones, culture and support whakawhanaungatanga – building relationships with others.	Healthy Celebrations – ideas and recipes for Early Learning Services
Te Manatu Hauora Healthy Active Learning	Good nutrition is essential for the healthy growth and development of children. Children may eat much of their food each weekday in early learning services. When children eat a nutritious diet, they find it easier to learn.	Healthy Food and Drink Guidance for Early Learning Services



# Some facts about Northland under 5-year-olds

**Te Tai Tokerau total \*population is 187,000.**

**12,677 (7%) are aged 0-4 years old.**

**11,000 (86%) identify as Maori or Pasifika.**

**Approximately 49% of all Tai Tokerau tamariki aged 0-4 attend an ELS.**

**There are 220 ELS in Te Tai Tokerau and tamariki who attend an ELS eat much of their food there.**

\*Population based on PHO enrolments (Nga Tai Ora, 2022)

Data Source: PHO Enrolment, Ministry of Health; Health Service User (HSU) data, Ministry of Health, Education Counts 2022, Ministry of Health 2019..



**Te Whatu Ora**  
Health New Zealand

**Ngā mihi nui**

# Early Learning Settings (ELS)

- **>95% of 3-and 4-year-old children enrolled in early learning services, attending 6/hrs daily, 3-4 days a week**
- **Many have written food, nutrition, or wellness policies**
- **Policies are not comprehensive, strong, or easy to action**
- **Food menus largely fail to meet national nutrition guidelines**
- **Fundraisers and celebrations predominantly nutrient poor**
- **The support landscape often excludes ELS**

Gerritson, S., Wall, C., & Morton, S. (2015). Child-care nutrition environments: results from a survey of policy and practice in New Zealand early childhood education services. *Public Health Nutrition*, 1 (9), 1-12. doi:10.1017/S1368980015002955

Gerritson, S., Dean, B., Morton, S., & Wall, C. (2017). Do childcare menus meet nutrition guidelines? Quantity, variety and quality of food provided in New Zealand Early Childhood Education services. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 41 (4), p345-351.