



# EXPLORE YOUR WAY TO WELLBEING

WHĀIA TE ARA HAUORA,  
WHITIORA

A GUIDE FOR  
SCHOOLS AND KURA

23 - 29  
SEPT

**Mental Health  
Awareness Week**

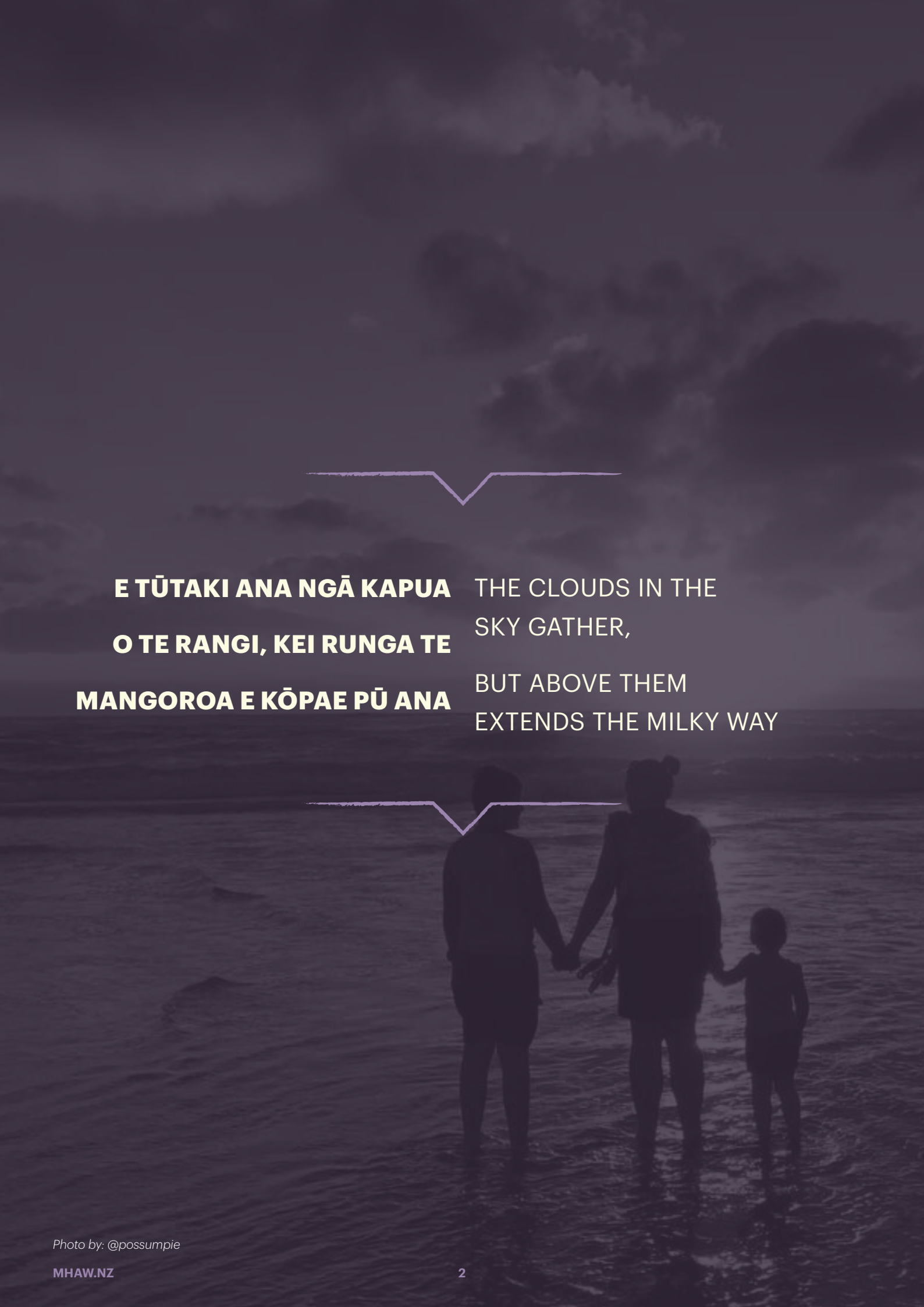
VISIT [MHAW.NZ](https://mhaw.nz)



**Mental Health Foundation**  
*mauri tū, mauri ora* OF NEW ZEALAND

#MHAWNZ





**E TŪTAKI ANA NGĀ KAPUA  
O TE RANGI, KEI RUNGA TE  
MANGOROA E KŌPAE PŪ ANA**

THE CLOUDS IN THE  
SKY GATHER,  
BUT ABOVE THEM  
EXTENDS THE MILKY WAY

# KIA ORA!

**Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW) is an opportunity for your school or kura community to nurture a culture of wellbeing where everyone feels safe, supported and valued.**

It is an opportunity for tamariki/children, tauira/students, kaiako/teachers and wider staff and whānau to explore what experiences, actions, relationships and surroundings make them feel good.

This guide is designed for early education communities through to secondary schools, and includes activity ideas and templates that we encourage you to adapt for different age groups, abilities and environments.

At the end of the week we invite you to create a wellbeing plan, for individual people, as a class or as a whole school. This plan will help you to boost wellbeing well beyond the week itself.

Everyone goes through hard times, and sometimes your mental health and wellbeing might not feel as good as you'd like it to. Knowing what can help during these times can make a big difference. Included in this pack is a short guide on the things you can do if you or someone within the school or kura community isn't feeling good and needs tautoko/support.

## Getting Started

Before starting to explore mental wellbeing for MHAW, it's good to think about what needs to be organised so you can celebrate the week. Having a MHAW champion, a passionate member of the school community who can get the ball rolling, can be a great place to start. Think about who within your school is best to lead the week. Is it kaiako, tauira, or a combination of both?

Could the wider school community (including whānau) be involved? A MHAW or wellbeing committee could be organised, deciding on the best way to implement activities or come up with ideas that best suit the culture and environment of your school or kura.

**Let's start exploring...**

# WELLBEING

## What is mental health and wellbeing?

We all have mental health! It's a taonga/treasure, something to look after so we can lead our best and most fulfilling lives at school/kura, work and with whānau and the wider community.

The World Health Organisation defines wellbeing as 'a state in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community'.

1 in 5 Kiwis experience a mental illness each year. Almost all of these people will recover or live well with the right tautoko/support.

This MHAW we're asking schools and kura across Aotearoa to make mental health and wellbeing a number one priority. Schools and kura have a key role in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our tamariki and taura through building positive and safe environments, teaching skills for wellbeing and making sure people who are experiencing distress are supported, included and not judged.



Photo by: @the.campbellclan



# TE WHARE TAPA WHĀ

## Exploring your wellbeing through Te Whare Tapa Whā

While it's important to have the freedom to find out what makes you feel good, Te Whare Tapa Whā is a great framework to explore different ways to wellbeing.

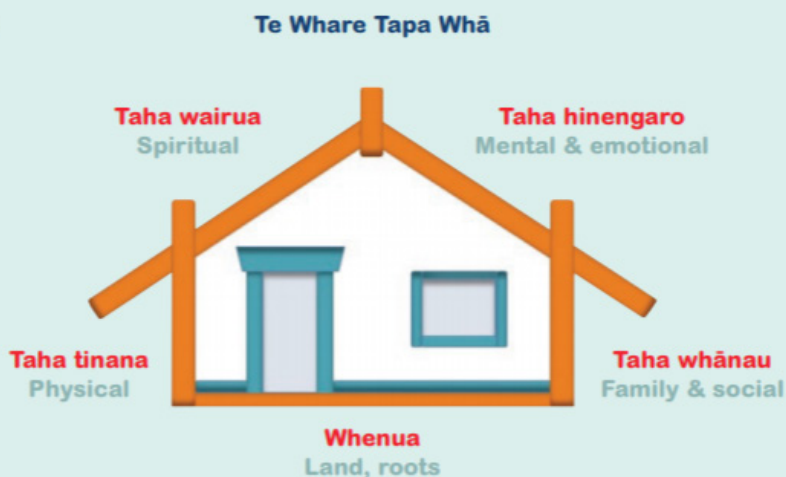
Te Whare Tapa Whā was developed by leading Māori health advocate and researcher Sir Mason Durie in 1984 to provide a Māori perspective on wellbeing.

Te Whare Tapa Whā is a model of health that helps us to identify where we need extra support. It describes health as a wharenui/meeting house with four walls.

These represent taha wairua/spiritual wellbeing, taha hinengaro/mental and emotional wellbeing, taha tinana/physical wellbeing and taha whānau/family and social wellbeing. Connection with the whenua/land and roots forms the foundation.

Over MHAW we'll help your school or kura community explore each part of the wharenui and give you practical ideas for how you can strengthen the walls, so everyone can thrive.

**The Māori health model, Te Whare Tapa Whā** (Durie, 1982, 1994), takes a holistic approach to health and wellbeing. This model recognises the importance of the balance of multiple dimensions of wellbeing. Each of these interconnects and contributes to the balance and strength of the whole.





# THE FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

## Activity inspiration

The activities on the following pages are inspired by both Te Whare Tapa Whā and the Five Ways to Wellbeing, which are simple strategies that are proven to boost wellbeing. For further information on The Five Ways to Wellbeing visit [www.mentalhealth.org.nz/wellbeing](http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/wellbeing). The activities are not just for rangatahi/young people – think about how you can adapt some of the ideas for kaiako and other school or kura staff too!

## FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING



Your time,  
your words,  
your presence



DO WHAT YOU CAN.  
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO.  
MOVE YOUR MOOD



EMBRACE NEW  
EXPERIENCES.  
SEE OPPORTUNITIES.  
SURPRISE YOURSELF



TALK & LISTEN,  
BE THERE,  
FEEL CONNECTED



REMEMBER  
THE SIMPLE  
THINGS THAT  
GIVE YOU JOY

INTRODUCE THESE SIMPLE STRATEGIES INTO YOUR LIFE AND YOU WILL FEEL THE BENEFITS.

 **Mental Health Foundation**  
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# CHECK IN

**Before you start exploring your way to wellbeing, it's a good idea to check in with yourself about how you're feeling right now.**

In the space below, write how you're currently feeling, what your hopes are for the week and ways you think you could boost your wellbeing right now. At the end of the week you can reflect on how you felt at the start and what helped to uplift you. Write or draw how you're feeling before MHAW! Use an emoji sticker too!

## KEI TE PĒHEA KOE? HOW ARE YOU?



### Explore whenua

#### Connection to the land and roots

##### What is whenua?

Whenua is the place where you stand. It is your connection to the land – a source of life, nourishment and wellbeing for everyone.

Whenua includes soil, rocks, plants, animals and the people inhabiting the land – tangata whenua. We are linked physically and spiritually to the land – it is the earth through which you are connected to your tūpuna/ancestors and all the generations that will come after you.

You can also think about whenua as your place of belonging – that means the spaces where you feel comfortable, safe and able to be yourself.

##### Why is whenua an important way to wellbeing at school or kura?

There may be many ways people are connected to their whenua, including multiple places where you feel a sense of belonging.

School and kura can be one of those places, and ideally will be a place where all of the school community can feel connected. The physical environment is important, but if your place of learning is not welcoming

and inclusive, it will also have an impact on the wellbeing of your whole school or kura community.

##### Exploring your way to wellbeing at school or kura through whenua

Please adapt these activity ideas to suit your needs.

- Ask tauira to explore what whenua means to them. Invite them to prepare a presentation, skit, video, waiata/song, poem or dance that represents what whenua means to them. They could do this individually or in small groups.
- Create an indoor garden in your classroom or staffroom and assign tamariki/tauira or kaiako to look after a plant.
- Have a lunchtime litter clean-up and talk to tamariki about the importance of being a tidy Kiwi. Challenge tauira and kaiako to bring in waste-free lunches.
- Ask tauira to pitch initiatives your school or kura could implement to become more environmentally friendly.
- Take tamariki/tauira on a nature walk – encourage them to be as quiet as possible and take notice of their environment.



### Explore whenua

#### Connection to the land and roots

- Point out the [native plants](#) and [animals](#) and get them to identify their names or draw them.
- Ask tauira to research the local area of the school or kura. Encourage them to discover the closest maunga/mountain, awa/river or moana/ocean and create a pepeha for the school or kura: <https://pepeha.nz>
- Teach your tamariki/tauira a morning karakia that acknowledges the whenua. (An example is provided on the following page).
- Head outdoors for a shared lunch and invite wider whānau. Encourage people to bring something from the whenua to contribute – the possibilities are endless!
- Hold a school-wide nature art competition. Invite tauira and kaiako alike to submit artwork/photography which showcases the ways people connect to the whenua and what it means to them. Hold an exhibition in your school or kura hall for the school community to visit.



Photo by: @the.mint.trip

For example:

**KORIHI TE MANU  
TĀKIRI MAI I TE ATA  
KA AO, KA AO, KA AWATEA  
TIHEI MAURI ORA**

THE BIRD SINGS  
THE MORNING HAS DAWNED  
THE DAY HAS BROKEN  
BEHOLD THERE IS LIFE.



### Explore taha hinengaro

#### Mental and emotional wellbeing

##### What is taha hinengaro?

Just like your physical health, your taha hinengaro/mental and emotional wellbeing needs to be taken care of. Taha hinengaro is your mind, heart, conscience, thoughts and feelings. It's about how you feel, as well as how you communicate and think.

Taking care of your hinengaro is important, whether or not you've experienced mental illness or distress. It means doing things that make you feel good, and being able to express your thoughts and feelings in an environment where you feel safe and supported.

##### Why is taha hinengaro an important way to wellbeing for your school or kura community?

Most people who experience mental distress will have their first experience before the age of 25. Schools and kura have a key role in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of tamariki and tauira through building positive and safe environments, teaching skills for wellbeing and making sure people who are going through distress are included and not judged.

Teaching and being part of a school or kura environment is a hugely important and challenging role. It's important that the school or kura environment also nurtures the wellbeing of kaiako and other staff.

##### Exploring your way to wellbeing through taha hinengaro

Please adapt these activity ideas to suit your needs.

- Start the day with a mindfulness-based breathing exercise or body-scan meditation. This can be done in the classroom or the staffroom! Mindfulness Education New Zealand is a great place to start for more information and activity ideas and guides. <https://mindfulnesseducation.nz/>
- Use our check-in resource included in this pack to encourage tamariki/tauira to express how they're feeling. If someone isn't feeling so great, ask them what might make things feel better.
- If tamariki or tauira are feeling restless or over-energised, head outside for five minutes and encourage them to take deep, slow breaths and listen to the sounds of nature.

### Explore taha hinengaro

#### Mental and emotional wellbeing

- Get tamariki to draw or write about the people, places and memories that are special to them. Display these around the classroom.
- Create a compliments jar and ask tauira to write compliments or notes of aroha to their classmates. Kaiako and other staff can do this too! It's a nice idea to read these aloud at the end of the day or week.
- Create a gratitude wall in your classroom or staffroom – invite people to bring in photos or write down the things they are grateful for in their lives right now. It's a nice visual reminder of the things that make us feel good, and it's cool to read what other people are grateful for too!
- Create a wellbeing space somewhere on the school or kura grounds – a place where anyone can go to relax. It could have beanbags, a weighted blanket, books, mindful colouring books and other sensory experiences.
- Read books that talk about feelings and emotions. Check out the good reads page at [www.mhaw.nz](http://www.mhaw.nz)

#### An important note

If someone in your school or kura community is experiencing mental distress or illness and needs some tautoko/support, there is help available. See our short guide on [page 20](#).



### Explore taha tinana

#### Physical wellbeing

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##### What is taha tinana?

Taha tinana is your physical wellbeing. It is about how your body grows, feels and moves and how you care for it.

Taha tinana is just one aspect of health and wellbeing and cannot be separated from all others.

##### Why is taha tinana an important way to wellbeing for your school or kura community?

Having a strong sense of physical wellbeing is important for your mental health and helps you better cope with the ups and downs of life. Learning to love your tinana/body, and accepting your own, and other's differences, is a big part of positive physical wellbeing.

Like our hinengaro/mental wellbeing, our tinana goes through ups and downs and that's okay. Injuries, stress, disability and body image can all affect how we view our tinana and how we look after it. The below activity ideas will help all people in your school or kura community uplift their taha tinana, no matter how they're feeling right now.

##### Exploring your way to wellbeing through taha tinana

- At the start of the day do a round robin and ask tamariki 'how does your tinana feel today?' Suggest things they can do if their energy levels are too high or too low such as star jumps, slow breathing exercises or stretches.
- Ask tauira to think about as many things as they can that make their tinana feel good or strong. It may be getting lots of sleep, stretching, playing a sport, or mindfully breathing.
- Look at how accessible your school or kura is for people who may be using wheelchairs or other mobility supports to get around. Visit [www.beaccessible.org.nz](http://www.beaccessible.org.nz) for more information on how you could improve accessibility. Ask tauira to think of ideas, too.
- Research different views of beauty across time periods and between cultures and discuss how physical beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

### Explore taha tinana

#### Physical wellbeing

- Lead tamariki/taura or hoamahi/colleagues through a body scan meditation, there are heaps on YouTube!
- Have a tinana day with lots of different activities for different fitness levels and abilities – you could do tai-chi, relay races, kaiako vs taura netball or basketball, or maybe even a dance-off – mix it up and keep it fun and relaxed. Invite whānau to join the fun, too.
- Ask taura to finish the following statement, “my tinana is amazing because ....”. It may be something as simple as “my heart keeps beating”, “it allows me to walk”, “it can run fast” or “it can hug people.”
- Get taura into groups and ask them to set some goals around their tinana – it could be joining a sports club at school or outside, getting more sleep, learning to make nutritious kai, doing breathing exercises when feeling stressed, appreciating their body more, or anything else that is important to them.
- Hold a kaiako steps competition using pedometers – see who can walk the most steps in a week and award a prize at staff hui.



Photo by: @the.mint.trip



### Explore taha whānau

#### Family and social wellbeing

##### What is taha whānau?

Taha whānau is about who makes you feel you belong, who you care about and who you share your life with.

Whānau is about extended relationships – not just our immediate relatives. It's your friends, classmates, hoamahi/colleagues, and the people you care about. Everyone has a unique place and a role to fulfil within their own whānau and whānau contribute to your wellbeing and identity.

##### Why is taha whānau an important way to wellbeing for your school or kura community?

Spending time with whānau and doing things for them gives you a feeling of purpose, connection and wellbeing. It benefits you and builds the strength of your whole whānau. As a core source of strength, support, security and identity, whānau play a central role in wellbeing individually and collectively.

The connections tauira have with their classmates and the people they choose to spend time with inside and outside of school and kura have

a huge impact on shaping how they view the world and themselves. When they are surrounded by classmates and friends who are caring and interact with aroha/love, their wellbeing will be stronger.

Similarly kaiako and other staff in the school community can see their hoamahi/colleagues as part of their whānau – they're the people they can turn to if they're having a hard day, or have a success to celebrate.

It's also important for wider whānau and caregivers to be involved in the school or kura environment so they can help reinforce what tamariki and tauira learn – they help to guide and encourage them on their learning and wellbeing journey.

##### Exploring your way to wellbeing through taha whānau

- As a class, brainstorm qualities or things that are special about your class/school whānau. From this, create your classroom whānau values – how do tauira look out for one another, uplift one another and challenge each other to be the best they can?

### Explore taha whānau

#### Family and social wellbeing

- Display your whānau values somewhere in the classroom and get everyone to sign it.
- Hold a competition for tauira to create an emblem or symbol for their class or house that encompasses the values of your school whānau.
- Have a whānau day – invite whānau or friends to come in and see what their tamariki/tauira are learning about. Put on an exhibition, class play or kapa haka performance for them and share some kai. Kaiako can bring their whānau too!
- Encourage tamariki/tauira to bring in photos of the people who are important to them and decorate the classroom walls so they see familiar faces and places around them.
- Ask tamariki/tauira to write about or draw all the people who are special to them. Encourage them to gift it to their whānau member.
- Have a shared breakfast before school or kura starts and invite tauira to bring someone special to them – it could be their koro, cousin, mum or best friend.
- Ask your tauira to sit with someone they don't usually hang out with.
- If someone in your school or kura community is going through a tough time, rally together to prepare kai, or offer any other tautoko/support needed.
- Organise lunchtime workshops – invite tauira and kaiako to share their knowledge and passion with each other.



Photo by: @chanteltheunissen



### Explore taha wairua

#### Spiritual wellbeing

##### What is taha wairua?

Taha wairua explores relationships with the environment, people and heritage in the past, present and future.

The spiritual essence of a person is their life force – their mauri. This defines us as individuals and as a collective, who and what we are, where we have come from and where we are going.

The way people view wairua can be very different. For some, wairua is the capacity for faith or religious beliefs or having a belief in a higher power. Others may describe wairua as an internal connection to the universe. There is no right or wrong way to think of or experience wairua, but it is an important part of our mental wellbeing.

As part of exploring your way to wellbeing we encourage your school or kura community to think about what wairua means to you and the things you can do to strengthen your wairua.

##### Why is taha wairua an important way to wellbeing for your school or kura community?

Feeling comfortable in your identity, values and beliefs helps you to feel secure in who you are and what you stand for. When you are content with yourself you are better able to cope with challenges, build strong whānau relationships and discover the things that uplift you.

At school and kura, taha wairua needs may be supported through creating a respectful environment, where mindfulness and kindness are encouraged, bullying is not accepted, and diversity is embraced.

##### Exploring your way to wellbeing through taha wairua

- Learn a classroom waiata and karakia that you can open and close the day with. Invite different tauira to share their own karakia if they have one. Carry this across to staff hui, too.
- Start and end the day with some mindful breathing. There are plenty of short exercises on YouTube. Teach tauira to use this in times of stress too.

### Explore taha wairua

#### Spiritual wellbeing

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- Celebrate the different cultures within your school community – during language weeks invite tauira and kaiako of that culture to share their food, stories, beliefs and rituals.
- Get tauira to research and explore the concept of wairua and spirituality and what it means in different cultures and/or communities.
- Take tamariki/tauira on a nature walk – ask them to be as quiet as possible and to listen to the sounds of the natural environment – the birds singing, leaves rustling, clouds moving.
- Have an exhibition where people contribute something that represents what wairua means for them. It may be something they create such as an artwork, a piece of music or just an object that symbolises wairua.
- Have a random acts of kindness week and encourage the whole school or kura community to look out for the people around them.
- As a class hold a reflection and goal setting session. Think about the things your class has collectively achieved, the things you're proud of, the challenges you've overcome and the things you hope to achieve in the short and long term. This is a great exercise for kaiako and other school staff to do too!
- Ask tauira to think about who they look up to and admire the most and why. What qualities do they like about that person and what can they learn from them? Kaiako might like to consider finding a mentor – someone you admire who can support, guide and encourage you through challenges and triumphs at mahi.



# SUPPORT

## Talking about mental health and wellbeing at school or kura

It's important that schools and kura create supportive environments where it's normal, safe and okay to talk about mental health.

If you notice someone within your school or kura community is struggling with their mental health, don't ignore it. It's good to remember that no special skills are required to talk about mental health. You just need to be empathetic, approachable and willing to listen. Don't worry if you don't quite know what to say. Just by being supportive and listening, you're helping to make a difference.

### Need tautoko/support?

If you're worried you or someone in your school or kura community is not coping or needs some tautoko, there's help available – no one should go through a tough time alone.

### How to tell if you or someone in your school or kura community needs tautoko

Even if you are close to someone, it can sometimes be hard to tell how much emotional pain they are in and whether they need help; and it can be equally as hard recognising in it yourself. Often, it's something small that can make you think something isn't quite right – and more often than not, that hunch will be right. You might see it in yourself or in someone else, or someone could see it in you.

### You might want to get extra tautoko/support if they (or you):

- Don't want to see their friends, or no longer enjoy spending time with their friends and whānau.
- Stop doing things they used to love or don't seem to be enjoying themselves.
- Can't remember things, concentrate, or pay attention.
- Feel bad about themselves – guilty, worthless or ashamed.
- Have a big change in eating patterns or appetite.

# SUPPORT

- Have extreme mood swings.
- Feel hopeless or sad, or cry a lot.
- Feel anxious, stressed, nervous or scared a lot and can't seem to relax.
- Are not happy unless they're using drugs or alcohol.
- Don't take care of their appearance or personal hygiene.
- Have physical signs of injury or that they are hurting themselves.
- Have panic attacks – rapid heartbeat, unable to breathe, feeling dizzy and extremely scared or anxious all at once.

for 5-18 year olds. Phone counselling is available Mon–Fri 12pm–11pm and Sat–Sun 3pm–11pm. Online chat is available 7pm–10pm daily.

**Kidsline** – 0800 54 37 54 (0800 KIDSLINE) for children up to 14 years of age. Available 24/7. Between 4–9pm calls are answered by specially trained Year 12 & 13 students.

**Samaritans** – 0800 726 666 for confidential support to anyone who is lonely or in emotional distress 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Suicide Crisis Helpline** – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO) for people in distress, and people who are worried about someone else.

## Where to turn for help

**Youthline** – 0800 37 66 33, free text 234 or email [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz) for young people, and their parents, whānau and friends.

**Need to talk?** Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor.

**Lifeline** – 0800 543 354, (09) 522 2999 or free text '4357' (HELP).

**What's Up** – 0800 942 8787 (0800 WHATSUP), [www.whatsup.co.nz](http://www.whatsup.co.nz)

# SUPPORT

## Get support online

[thelowdown.co.nz](http://thelowdown.co.nz) – visit the website or free text 5626. Support for young people experiencing depression or anxiety.

**Common Ground** – [www.commonground.org.nz](http://www.commonground.org.nz) for advice about supporting a friend or classmate.

**Netsafe** – [www.netsafe.org.nz](http://www.netsafe.org.nz) for advice on how to stay safe online or call 0508 638 723.

Remember it's okay to get support for yourself when you're supporting someone you care about. Supporting Families provides this throughout Aotearoa: [supportingfamilies.org.nz](http://supportingfamilies.org.nz)

## In crisis

If you or someone you care about are in immediate physical danger to themselves or others, call 111. For more information see [mentalhealth.org.nz/in-crisis](http://mentalhealth.org.nz/in-crisis)



# CHECK IN

Write or draw how you're feeling at the end of Mental Health Awareness Week. Use an emoji sticker too!

## KEI TE PĒHEA KOE? HOW ARE YOU?