

The 1000 Days Trust Engagement Model: Promoting positive relational health for families/whānau in Southland, New Zealand

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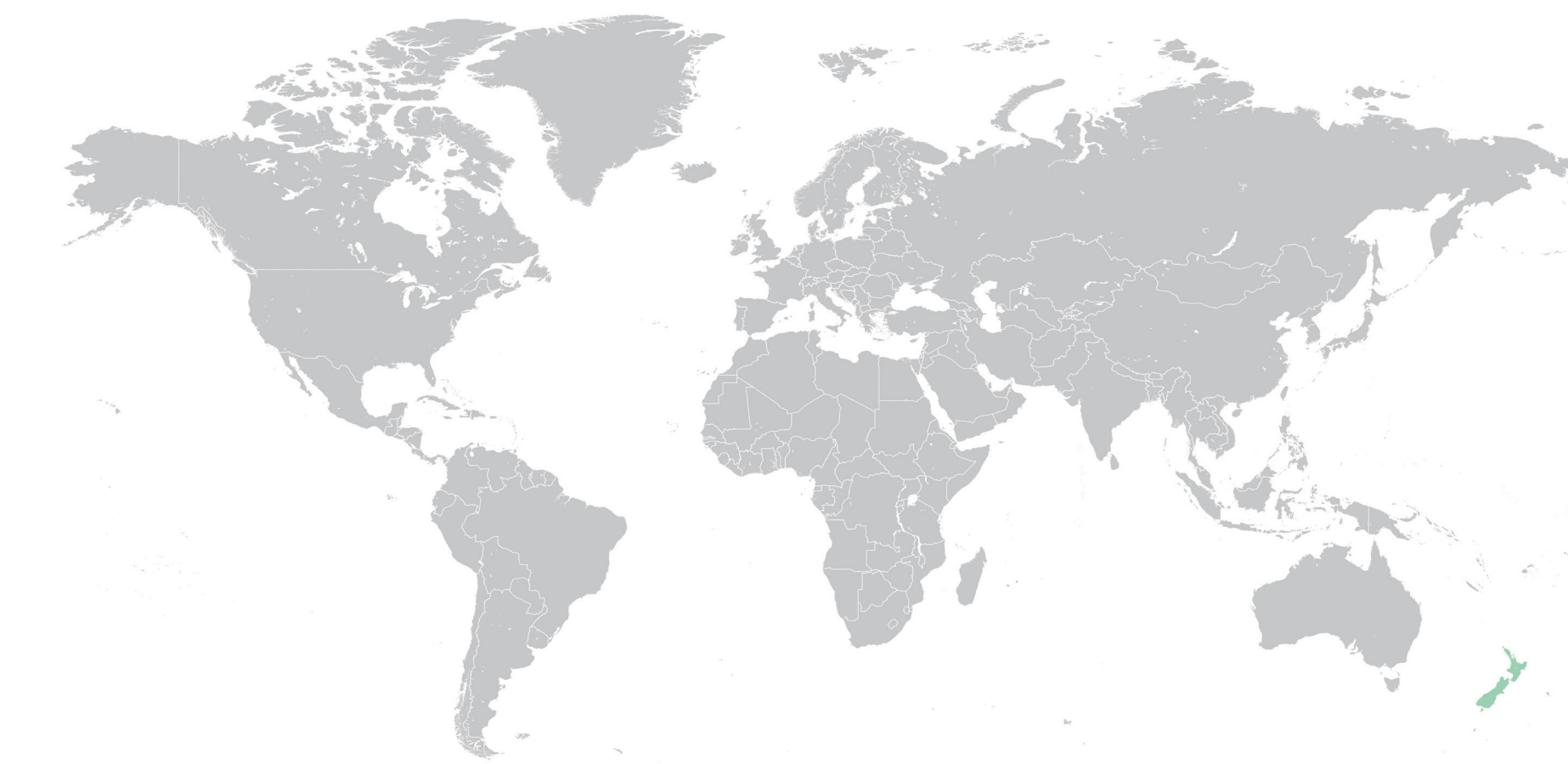
Background

- Conventional service delivery models make it difficult for the most in need to access services and meaningfully engage with them.
- These models are often disease and single-issue focused and imply expert-driven approaches, with limited space for participation from patients and families, leading to fragmented and poorly integrated healthcare services that do not facilitate access and do not necessarily correspond to the needs of the population they aim to serve.
- Evidence suggests that placing patients/families at the centre of service design and delivery is empowering for them and has a better chance of addressing their needs. However, this demands greater accessibility, integration and coordination of services.

Family-centred services in New Zealand

- Whānau Ora is an inclusive interagency approach to providing health, education and social services for New Zealand families/whānau in need. It places families' needs and aspirations at the centre of service design and delivery.
- Whānau Ora is founded on a holistic vision of health and wellbeing that considers families/whānau as a whole rather than focusing separately on individual family members and the challenges they face in isolation. It is strongly based on Maori cultural knowledge, beliefs and values.
- Findings from ongoing research suggest positive gains for families involved with Whānau Ora services. The New Zealand Government recently invested considerable additional funding to further strengthen this approach across the country.
- However, family-centred approaches still remain poorly translated into current practice and require further integration at the community-level, and meaningful ways of engaging with families/whānau often lack empirical grounds.

World Map New Zealand



Southland region



1000 Days Trust

- The 1000 Days Trust is a community-driven initiative offering a residential and outreach support programme underpinned by strong community collaboration, with the collective vision of promoting positive relational health and wellbeing for vulnerable families/whānau in Southland, New Zealand.
- The service is family/whānau-led, therefore centred around the needs and aspirations of families. It also relies on principles of early intervention, with a focus that extends from conception to the first 1000 days of life to provide babies and their families/whānau with a healthy start.
- The 1000 Days team is built on local expertise and knowledge as well as a strong cultural tradition of caring for families/whānau. It is comprised of professional navigators and a multidisciplinary advisory group providing guidance to offer the best care possible for families/whānau.



The 1000 Days Residence

Objective

- We aim to present preliminary outputs from the engagement phase of a community-based participatory research (CBPR) programme undertaken with the 1000 Days Trust.
- Particular focus on the development of an engagement model underpinning 1000 Days relational practice with families/whānau and community partners.

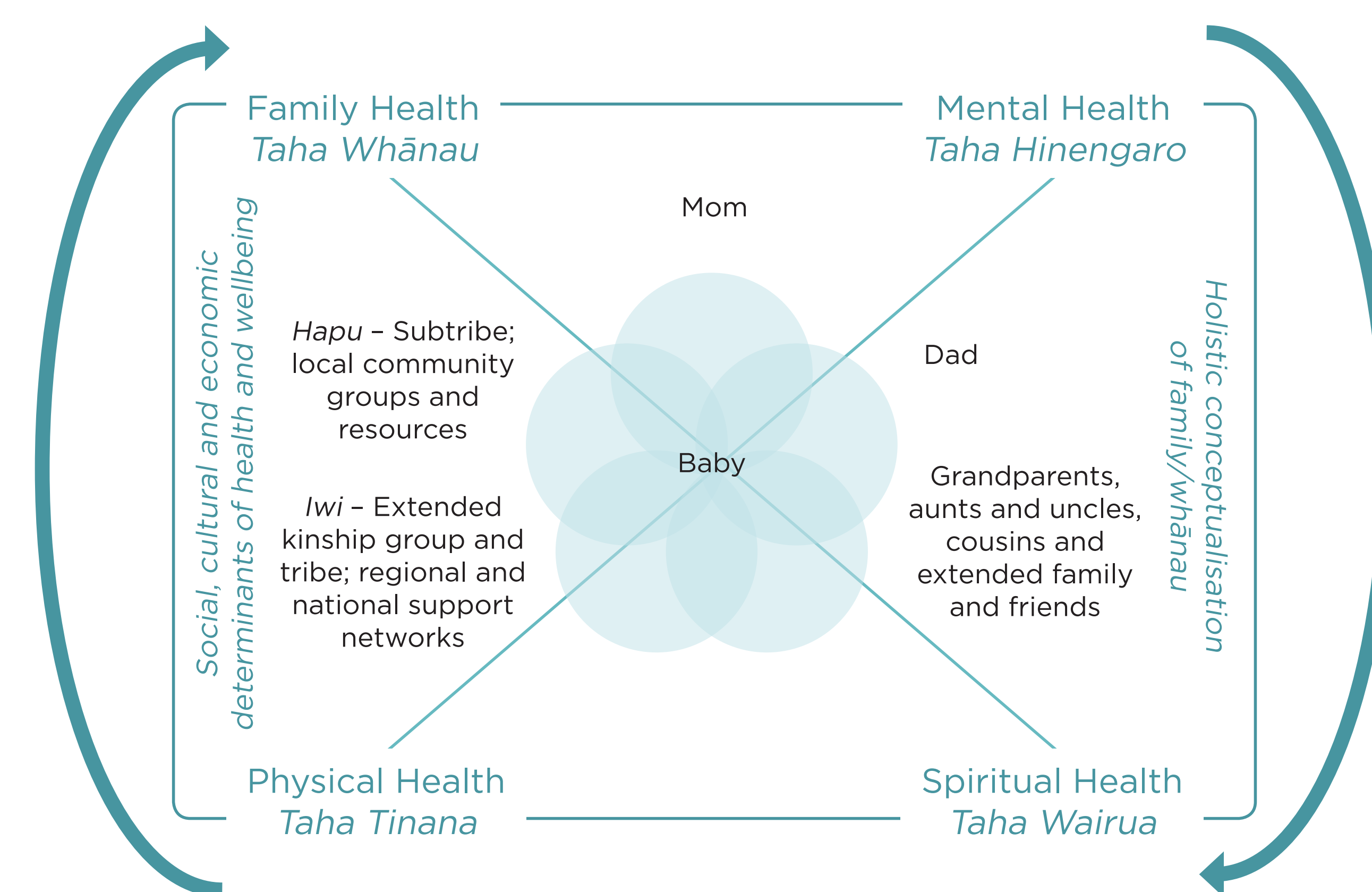
Developing the model

- How we planned the work
 - Working group providing critical guidance and input for the development of the 1000 Days engagement model.
- Who was involved
 - Group composition: 7 people involved; mix of professional staff and project management representatives; recruitment of participants by 1000 Days.
- How participants were invited to contribute
 - Focus group format:
 - 3 x 2-hour meetings;
 - Meeting #1: Developing the content;
 - Meeting #2: Working on the form of the model;
 - Meeting #3: Reviewing draft and providing feedback to refine the model.
- What we talked about
 - Open discussions about the meaning of family/whānau, health and wellbeing, and engagement to build a common understanding for the work;
 - Identification of the foundational values and principles underpinning engagement within 1000 Days;
 - Development of a visual representation of engagement (model): What shape and symbols? What colours? What meaning?

Methods

- This community-based participatory research (CBPR) is articulated around 5 interconnected phases: 1) engagement, 2) planning, 3) implementation, 4) action, and 5) reflection.
- Aims of the engagement phase
 - Build connections and trust between the researcher and 1000 Days;
 - Define the working relationship;
 - Develop a common understanding of the needs of families and the community, the 1000 Days intervention and the envisioned programme of research.
- Milestones
 - Co-design the 1000 Days engagement model (completed);
 - Co-create and sign a Terms of engagement contract (ongoing);
 - Identify key partners for the research in preparation for the establishment of a research steering committee (ongoing).

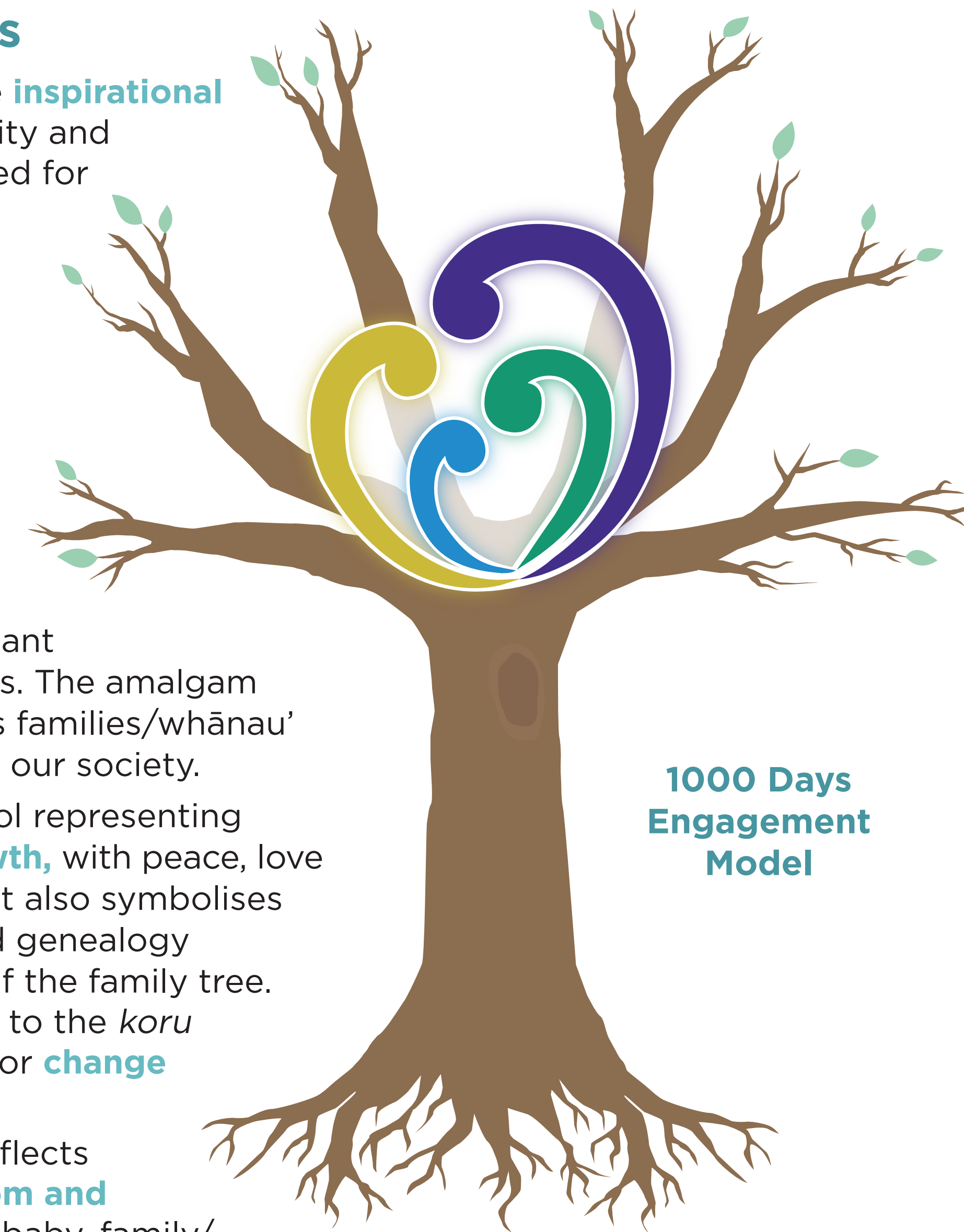
1000 Days holistic vision of family/whānau health and wellbeing



Inspired by Te Whare Tapa Wha - Maori model of health and wellbeing and reflective of the multidisciplinary perspective of 1000 Days, the systemic models of family health and the contemporary health promotion literature.

Model explanations

- The model is meant to be **inspirational** and reflecting the creativity and sensibility that are required for relational engagement.
- The **organic** nature of the model represents engagement as an **active and evolving process**: a way of being, living and connecting with others.
- The **colours** refer to the multicoloured *paua* shells that are unique to New Zealand, with dominant waves of blues and greens. The amalgam of colours also represents families/whānau' **diversity as a strength** to our society.
- The *koru* is a Maori symbol representing **new beginnings and growth**, with peace, love and harmony at its core. It also symbolises parenthood, ancestry and genealogy which are integral parts of the family tree. The spiral that is inherent to the *koru* represents the potential for **change and transformation**.
- The *koru*-shaped heart reflects the **power of learning from and supporting one another**: baby, family/whānau, community and wider support network are represented by each of the interlaced *koru*.
- The baby is central to the model and every action taken as part of the 1000 Days programme: *"It takes a whole community to raise a child"*.
- Family tree: The roots correspond to the **foundational values** upon which 1000 Days was built and engagement is driven. The trunk represents who you are, where you're from and where you're heading - **life pathways and trajectories**. The branches symbolise the different **principles of engagement**. The leaves reflect families/whānau' potential to grow and embark on a journey towards a better future.



Foundational values of engagement

- Profound respect and love for human beings - interactions come from a place of good intent, building on the needs and aspirations of families/whānau in the present moment.
- Social justice and equity - everyone has the right to be involved in shaping its future.
- Self-determination - promoting autonomy with regards to one's own abilities, strengths and resources.
- Traditional wisdom - honoring the connections to our past, present and future.
- Altruism - centring our efforts on supporting families/whānau in achieving a healthier future for themselves and their baby, with a profound sense of gratitude.
- Celebrating individuality, unicity and dignity, and valuing difference to foster meaningful human connections.

Engagement principles

- Honoring the Treaty of Waitangi:
 - Partnership* - working with families;
 - Participation* - pathways of access enabling families to participate in shaping their future;
 - Protection* - respecting families' rights as human beings and celebrating Maori cultural beliefs, values and practices.
- Participate in making the 1000 Days residence a welcoming, safe and nurturing environment for families/whānau.
- Placing needs and aspirations of families/whānau at the centre of the service to help them in achieving their goals (empowerment).
- Supporting families/whānau in connecting with appropriate services.
- Building connections with families/whānau founded on a positive vision of health that focuses on their strengths and resources and takes into consideration their cultural knowledge, beliefs and values.
- Celebrating the good things, inspiring success, bringing a sense of pride as parents.
- Avoid using a deficit approach, take off the "expert hat".
- Relational ways of being: walking alongside families/whānau; guiding without judgment; being empathetic and understanding; listening to their stories and remembering them for a lifetime; accepting to be vulnerable ourselves as carers: sharing a little bit of yourself, receiving a lot in return.
- Provide support to staff at the residence based on a "tag team" approach: supporting each other in our experiences of caring for vulnerable families/whānau.
- Strengthen existing relationships between community organisations and 1000 Days to build networks of accessible services for families/whānau.
- Ensure a presence in the community to build trust, raise collective awareness about families/whānau' needs and promote shared responsibility for achieving healthy future and community transformation.

Conclusions

- The engagement phase of this CBPR was critical to build strong relationships with the 1000 Days Trust.
- The development of the model has been a unifying exercise for the team and a catalyst for discussions about knowledge, beliefs and values relating to health and wellbeing of families/whānau, supported by a Maori lens.
- Ultimately, the engagement phase provided the team with the sense of "shared accomplishment" which will act as a strong driver to undertake the upcoming phases of the research.
- This work emphasises key values and principles of a relational practice of engagement underpinned by local knowledge and expertise and strong cultural heritage as a foundation to promote positive relational health for families/whānau.
- The model resonates with relational approaches from different disciplines and professional practices in health and social sciences.
- Engaging with communities to conduct CBPR requires genuine commitment and cultural humility from the researcher whose role is dedicated to creating rich spaces of reciprocal dialogue to support others in transforming their lives, and inevitably, changing as well alongside them.

Funding bodies

