



"WHEN WOMEN SUPPORT EACH OTHER, INCREDIBLE THINGS HAPPEN"

Hei Māreikura Hei Mauriora

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME- RUN BY WOMEN, FOR WOMEN



Evaluation Report

2017-2019



February 2020

Introduction

Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora empowers women who are in positions of vulnerability, so they can make positive choices for themselves and their families.

The programme, which ran from 2017-2019, used a mixture of workshops and coaching to give women in the McLaren Park Henderson South (MPHS) community the confidence, skills and knowledge to pursue their dreams, hopes and career and study goals.

The long-term vision of the programme was to disrupt intergenerational negative cycles by empowering women in the community to have choices and a voice in their future.

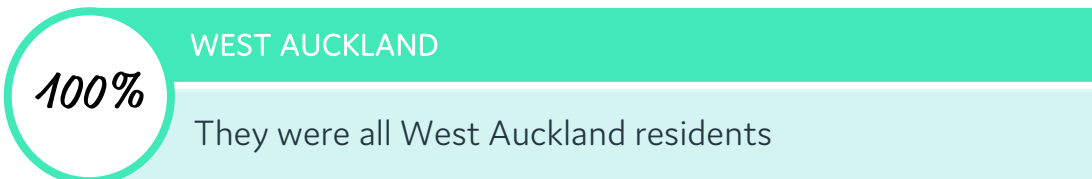
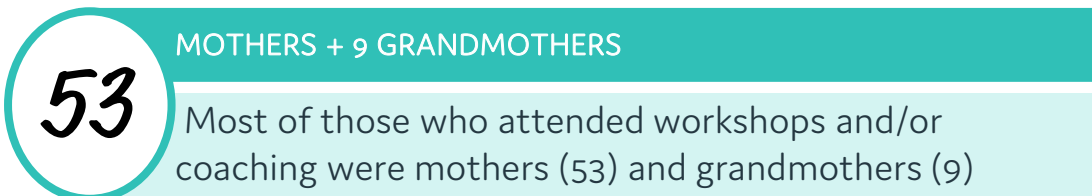
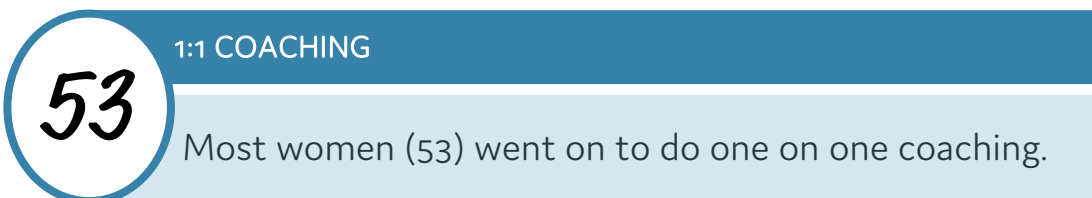
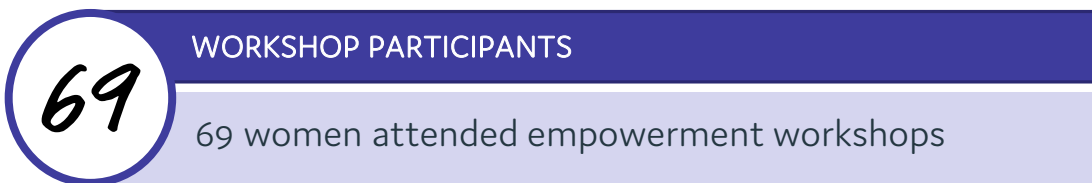
The programme consisted of a mixture of workshops (focussed on wellbeing, self esteem, goal setting, self care, self reflection) and one on one coaching. There was ongoing peer support available for those who wished to access it.

EVALUATION

From 2017 – 2019 the Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora team worked alongside evaluators from Point to support the development of the programme in order to establish best practice, track participant outcomes and ensure a constant reflection-action cycle. The evaluation involved working with the team on a theory of change and reflection-action workshops, as well as tracking outcomes using pre- and post-outcome assessments, focus groups and interviews.

This report is a summary of what was learned during the evaluation period.

Key Figures 2017-2019



Adaptation 2017-2019

One of the greatest strengths of Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora was the flexibility to adapt and change (e.g. timing, venue), whilst still retaining the core programme of empowerment workshops and one-on-one coaching.

This enabled the programme to be responsive to the needs of the participants, whilst still holding tight to the parts of the programme that were contributing to positive participant outcomes.

Whilst each cohort ran differently in terms of timing, structure and venue, they all had the core elements of workshops and one-on-one coaching.

WORKSHOPS

An average of four introductory group workshops were held per cohort. Depending on the needs of the group, these were either held weekly during days or evenings, or over a weekend. The workshops covered:

- Intro/Self Esteem
- Wellbeing
- Identifying strengths
- A vision for myself / Where to from here?

The workshops enabled participants to establish connections and friendships with each other, many of which were sustained long after the programme had finished.

COACHING

After completing the workshops, the women worked individually with a coach over 10-16 coaching sessions. The most common coaching topics that covered were goal setting, boundaries, self-care self-esteem, and listening to my own voice. Common goals included engaging with local activities and services, business development, enrolling in study and gaining employment.

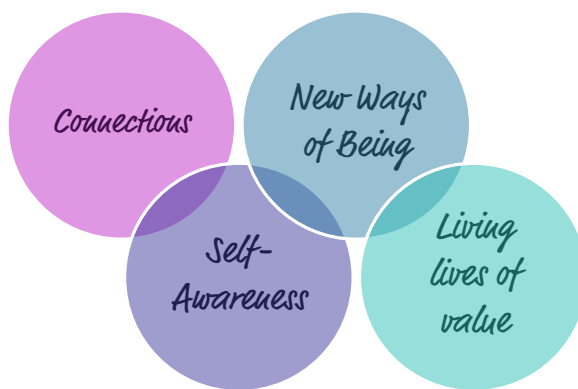
PEER SUPPORT

Some groups chose to continue on with a peer-support component, which they ran and facilitated themselves (with the support of the coaches).

Theory of Change

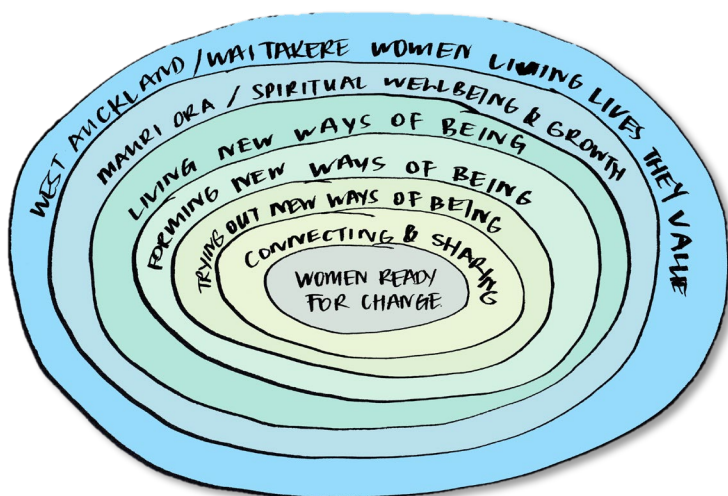
Evaluation and the 4 pou

The programme is built around four pou: connections, self-awareness, new ways of being and living lives of value. The Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora evaluation is focussed on understanding change in each of these 4 pou .



Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora is guided by a theory of change, which enables the programme to stay on track towards it's strategic goals and outcomes, whilst allowing some adaptability in the way the programme is organised.

Over the three years, the evaluation has used a 'check, reflect, adapt' methodology to assist with ongoing process evaluation, alongside focus group, interviews and periodic 'flourishing scale'* surveys to understand outcomes of participation.



*Developed in 2010, the flourishing scale is a brief summary measure of psychological functioning, using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). A high score on the scale indicates respondents have a positive self-image in important areas of functioning, and many psychological resources and strengths (Diener et al., 2010). New Zealand researchers (Hone et al, 2013) have tested the psychometric properties of the Flourishing Scale, and found it to be a valid measure of psychological functioning, suited for use with a wide range of age groups and applications. Using a representative sample of adult New Zealanders to assess national flourishing, the same researchers also report mean FS scores of 43.82.

Connections

Participants in Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora built supportive and rewarding relationships and connections with whānau and family, social networks and community providers.

OUTCOME: Participants built sustainable connections to their community

One of the strengths of Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora was the opportunity for participants to forge connections that continue to be sustained long after the coaching has finished.

Focus group participants told us that becoming part of a community of women and building and sustaining that community was important.

Through their involvement in Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora, many of the women have ongoing connections to HubWest at MPHS, participating in fitness classes or social gatherings, or volunteering for HubWest programmes and events.

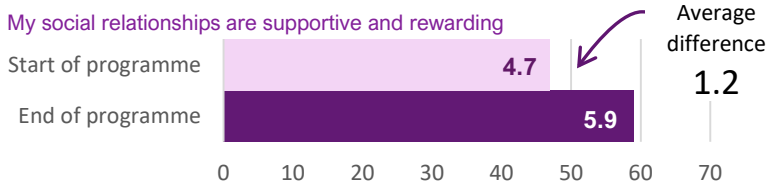
Coaches also connected women to other community providers, such as counselling, community law or budget services.

For many women, the primary connection was to their coaches, who they said were responsive, reliable and excellent listeners.

Strong community relationships and connections can create a range of significant benefits to people's lives. These include dramatic increases to wellbeing, more active citizenship and economic advantages.

INDICATOR: Positive relationships

After completing Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora, participants ratings of their social relationships moved from not flourishing (4.7), to flourishing (5.9).



"Never being let down by my coach made it feel like someone cared about me"

Connections

OUTCOME: Participants built stronger whānau and family relationships

Women who participated in Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora told us that their gain in confidence and self-worth positively impacted their family dynamics.

We heard several stories of stronger family and whānau relationships that had occurred due to:

- o New ways of communicating and relating
- o Participants taking the lead towards family healing and reconnection
- o Family members responding positively to the women's growth and new sense of self.

"Now I can tell my boys what I need."

OUTCOME: Participants connected with each other. Many of these connections and friendships are ongoing and sustained.

"It just seemed that we all clicked. Everybody just looked out for each other."

Some participants told us they made genuine, trusted friendships through their participation in Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora. A number of these friendships, which have continued well after the formal coaching had finished, span cultural, socio-economic and age differences.

Jessie's story

Jessie joined the very first cohort of the Hei Mareikura Hei Mauriora programme, where she found a safe space to connect with others and made genuine, trusted friendships with women from many different walks of life.

Jessie and her husband are business owners, and the Hei Mareikura Hei Mauriora network is now the first place they turn when they need to recruit.

"They are fantastic workers, and they'll do anything for you."

For Jessie, making new friends in her new community has been transformational.

"It was the best thing that could have happened. Otherwise I'd still be sitting at home in my little house. It's been good having people around me who care for me. It's made me open my door. It's brought back the person that I was, not the person that I became when I moved here."

Self awareness

A strong sense of self-awareness helps individuals participate in effective and constructive ways in their working, family and social lives. Self-awareness is particularly important for conflict resolution.

Understanding their strengths, identifying their needs, creating a strong cultural identity and identifying their values are different ways that women on Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora have built their self-awareness.

OUTCOME: Participants are more aware of their strengths, competencies and capabilities.

An important part of the coaching journey for participants was identifying what they were good at, what they were capable of, and where they might need further help or support.

For some of the women, particularly those who wanted to re-enter the workforce, this process helped them identify what they were good at, and how they might use these strengths to gain a job or set up self-employment.

Several women told us that becoming more aware of anxiety triggers, and understanding what self-soothing or self-care behaviours to use when this happened was transformational to their relationships and interactions with others.

"I feel like I can look after myself, resolve my own issues with courage and bravery"

INDICATOR: Competence

By the end of the programme most participants felt that they had grown in competence and capability in the activities that were important to them.

I am competent and capable in activities important to me

Start of programme

5.1

End of programme

6.0

Average difference
 0.9

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70



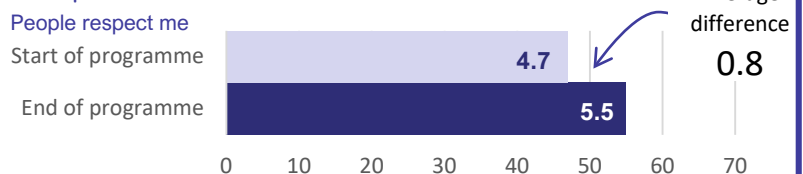
OUTCOME: Participants are more assertive and more capable at communicating needs and wants.

By the end of the Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora programme, participants were more likely to say, "people respect me", and felt they were far more involved in actively contributing to the wellbeing and happiness of others.

"I am more assertive and positive with my goals and my being."

INDICATOR: Social relationships

On average, participants ratings of their social relationships moved from not flourishing (4.7) to flourishing (5.5).



INDICATOR: Social contribution

Ratings of this indicator increased by 0.6 points



Kayla's story

For Kayla, who ran a thriving fitness business, the boundaries between "private life" and "working life" were getting blurred to the point where it was hard for her to separate the two. Time was a particular issue, as her clients often needed her out of normal business hours, and she was finding it difficult to make time and space for herself.

Knowing it was time to make some changes, Kayla signed up to Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora through the facebook page. She found the eight weeks of workshops invaluable for helping her reflect on her self development, personal values and goals.

As a result of the workshops and coaching, Kayla became far more self aware of what she needed in both her business and personal life. She sold her business, and found two new jobs related to her interests of both fitness and coaching. She also considered carefully her role in her whānau and made some key changes around her relationships and responsibilities.

New ways of being

Being able to step back and disengage from unhelpful ways of thinking and being, as well as understanding what behaviours are helpful is critical to problem solving or moving past long-term conflict .

Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora supports participants to set new goals and pathways, confidently interact with family, friends, community and community services, and change or modify unhelpful behaviours..

OUTCOME: Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora unleashed the latent potential of local women.

Goal-setting, which is a crucial part of the coaching process, has enabled Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora participants to not only identify goal pathways, but has also helped them achieve them. Interestingly, the stories we heard from women in the focus group and interviews suggests that it was the process of planning and achieving the goal that was most important, not necessarily the goal itself.

As a result of their participation in Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora, participants had set up businesses, found work, confronted historic family traumas, had long-awaited tough conversations, started on a pathway of dealing with substance addiction and reset negative family dynamics.

INDICATOR: Self-respect

On the whole, Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora participants rated this 0.7 points higher at the end of the programme.

I am a good person and live a good life

Start of programme

5.2

End of programme

5.9

Average difference
0.7

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70

"I used to over-analyse a lot and spend a lot of time worrying, I don't do that anymore."

Living lives of value

Those who live a life that they feel has value and purpose are more likely to have greater levels of mental and physical wellbeing, express greater life satisfaction, be more emotionally resilient and be better equipped to work through stressful life events.

The Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora programme aims to impact mental wellbeing by supporting women to find their purpose, become more engaged in their daily activities, create contribution pathways, nurture optimism and become confident and competent in their chosen activities. The programme aims to support sustained change over time by helping the women put these skills and strategies into daily practice.

OUTCOME: Participants leave Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora feeling more optimistic about their future.

Research shows there is a significant correlation between optimism, good mental health and higher quality of life. Overall, a sense of optimism for the future was the highest rating flourishing indicator that we tracked across the programme (6.3/7), which was supported by interviews and focus groups which suggested participants were optimistically facing the future with a renewed sense of meaning and purpose.

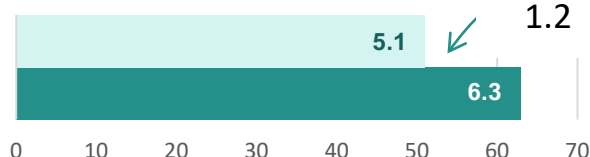
"Now I have the courage to back myself to achieve things. I became my own cheerleader, like 'YES! I can do this!'"

INDICATOR: Optimism

Participation in HMHM was marked by a growth in optimism for most of the participants, which grew overall from 5.1 to 6.3, a growth of 1.2 points.

I am optimistic about my future

Start of programme
End of programme



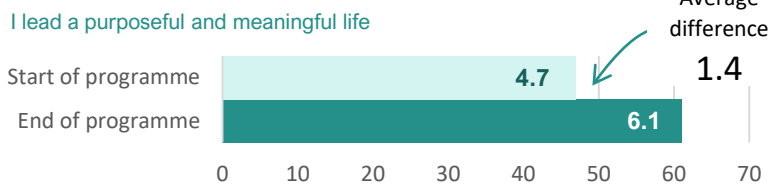
OUTCOME: Life purpose, meaning and engagement has increased for all participants.

Having a strong sense of purpose can help provide a psychological buffer against obstacles – in other words a person with a strong sense of purpose remains satisfied with their life even whilst having a difficult day. **The two biggest indicator shifts across the programme occurred in meaning and purpose (1.4) and engagement in daily activities (1.6).**

Not surprisingly, many of the practices covered by the workshops and coaching, such as reflection and journaling, are aimed at supporting everyday engagement and forging a new sense of meaning and purpose. We heard that these practices were extremely effective in helping participants live more purposefully and intentionally.

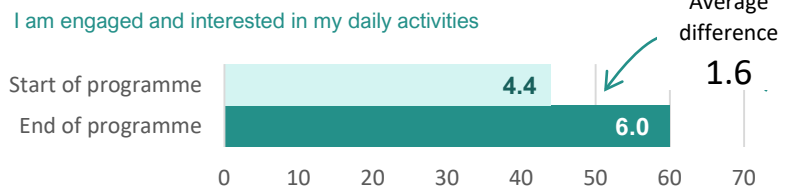
INDICATOR: Purpose & meaning

At the completion of the programme participants strongly agreed they led a life with purpose and meaning.



INDICATOR: Engagement

Participants were far more likely to say they were engaged and interested in their daily activities by the end of the programme.



Olivia's story

Olivia migrated to New Zealand with her husband in the early 2000's, and they moved to the MPHS area five years ago. A busy mum of three kids, Olivia came to Hei Māreikura, Hei Mauriora to "get out of the house" and meet other local women.

"Sometimes I feel down, depressed, and then you have people around you, supporting you and friends from here that you can ring and talk to them."

As she had hoped, Olivia made new friends who she could turn to for support and reassurance. Unexpectedly, however, she also discovered her passion – massage.

Following her participation on the programme, Olivia set up her own small massage business, which is flexible enough to work in school hours, and have time off for school holidays or if children are sick.

"It feels very good", she says. "Now I have something in my life like, wow! That's it!"