

Strengthening Families Whakapiripiri Nga Whānau

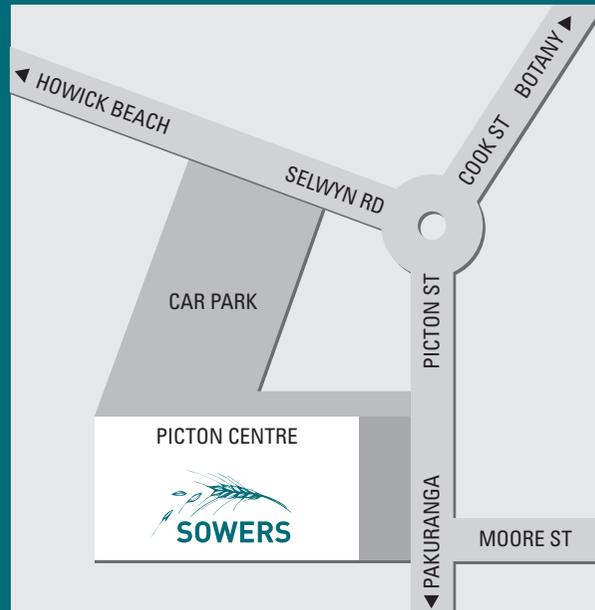
www.strengtheningfamilies.govt.nz

How it works

Strengthening Families pulls together support for families/whānau. The people helping family/whānau may be a budget advisor, truancy officer, social worker, medical specialist, counsellor, teacher or other support worker.

We work together to identify what supports are needed and what each service is going to do. It is set up so families/whānau tell their story once to everyone at the same time. Then everyone agrees on an action plan.

Strengthening Families is free and
100% voluntary.



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Strengthening Families



Key features of Strengthening Families

The process:

- Is voluntary.
- Is flexible to meet the needs of each family/whānau. This may include following tikanga Māori, choosing a neutral venue to meet.
- Ensures that the family's voice is heard and respected. It is about getting the most from everyone already helping a family.

Why use the process

Strengthening Families keeps the family/whānau at the heart of every conversation and decision. It is not about involving another professional in a family's life, but getting those who are already involved working together more effectively.

Roles of everyone involved in helping families

Strengthening Families Co-ordinator

- Strengthening Families Co-ordinators are responsible for the overall smooth running of the process. They help families and the agencies who can help them to get involved.
- Most Strengthening Families Co-ordinators are employed in community organisations. There are about 60 co-ordinators throughout New Zealand.
- They set up and run meetings, draft and circulate an Action Plan. After the first meeting, they check to see whether the things agreed to by everyone are being done.

Lead or link person

Every family/whānau is assigned a main contact person.

A lead agency worker could be a budget advisor, social worker, school principal or other professional.

- As well as providing the required support to the family/whānau to achieve their actions in the Action Plan, the lead or link person may modify the plan if there is a change of circumstances.
- The Strengthening Families co-ordinator needs to be kept up-to-date of progress and changes (if any), and to supply a final report.
- A lead agency may be sorted out as soon as families are involved with Strengthening Families, or it might be sorted out at the first meeting.

Community and government agencies

People working in community and government agencies provide services and support to families.

These may be social workers, truancy officers, case managers, budget advisors, etc. People working in these and other roles will attend Strengthening Families meetings.

Typical meeting structure

Before the first meeting a lot of homework is done. The family/whānau look at strengths, concerns, priorities and dreams. What is covered, who participates, the timing and venue are all agreed to by the family/whānau. Then all the agencies involved with a family are invited to attend.

Typically, the first meeting will cover:

- Welcome and introductions.
- Brainstorming any concerns and family/whānau goals.
- Creating a plan – deciding what each agency and the family will contribute, then record this in a plan.
- Setting a review time.

Contact information:

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