

COMET



MAKING EDUCATION WORK FOR MANUKAU

A TAPESTRY OF UNDERSTANDING: INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY LEARNING

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A DISCUSSION PAPER



HE WHAKATAUKI

*E kore e taea e te whenu kotahi
ki te raranga i te whāriki
kia mōhio tātou ki ā tātou.
Mā te mahi tahi o ngā whenu,
mā te mahi tahi o ngā kairaranga,
ka oti tēnei whāriki.
I te otinga
me titiro tātou ki ngā mea pai ka puta mai.
Ā tana wā,
me titiro hoki
ki ngā raranga i makere
nā te mea, he kōrero ano kei reira.*

A PROVERB

The tapestry of understanding
can not be woven
by one strand alone.
Only by the working together of strands
and the working together of weavers
will such a tapestry be completed.
With its completion
let us look at the good that comes from it
and, in time
we should also look
at those stitches which have been dropped,
because they also have a message.

Kūkupa Tirikatene

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Private Bag 94006, Manukau City.
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COMET is registered as a charitable trust. The trust was established by Manukau City Council in 1999 to provide leadership, advocacy, co-ordination and monitoring services in education in the city.

August 2006

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A MESSAGE FROM MANUKAU

MIHI

**E ngā iwi, e ngā reo, e ngā karanga maha o ngā hau e whā
Tēnei te mihi atu ki a koutou katoa.**

Kō tēnei te mihi ki a koutou mo tēnei kaupapa.

Tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna tātou katoa.

Intergenerational family learning can support the well-being of families and communities. The evidence exists that it can transform the lives of individuals, and can contribute to the social, economic and cultural vitality of families and whānau.

This discussion document advocates for high quality community-focussed intergenerational family learning provision. It should become the dominant family learning model for early childhood centres, schools, and those who work *in communities where strengthened educational outcomes are required*.

Intergenerational family learning is relevant to a number of overlapping social policy agendas. It attends to the very urgent economic development aspirations of Māori expressed in the Hui Taumata 2005; and to the “desired community outcomes” in city and community visions. Intergenerational family learning supports the Schooling Strategy (family and community engagement in learning), and the New Zealand Adult Literacy Strategy (Learning for Living). It supports emerging Pasifika strategies for education. It addresses all three national priorities for government: economic transformation; families, young and old; and national identity.

This discussion paper considers the evidence that intergenerational family learning not only benefits children, but can also make a significant contribution to the lives of adults. It supports literacy, language and numeracy skills, self-actualisation, and confident parenting. Together, these address educational inequality, poverty, and social exclusion.

In constructing a proposal for policy development to include intergenerational learning, a Māori perspective is specifically considered. Intergenerational family learning programmes implemented in Manukau and elsewhere, have demonstrated positive family learning outcomes for Māori. Those outcomes can also be applicable for Pasifika communities.

Since the first Manukau Literacy Summit in 2001, COMET has been engaged in creating working partnerships and collaborations around intergenerational family learning. This document is accompanied by another publication,

Manukau Family Literacy Programmes: Weaving Intergenerational Family Learning in Practice, which reflects our work with Māori and Pasifika families in urban mainstream education settings. Backed by a programme of formative and summative research, the Manukau Family Literacy Programme is one model of intergenerational family learning that has proven its effectiveness.

COMET’s work is connected to *Tomorrow’s Manukau: Manukau Apōpo* – the Manukau community vision document for the next ten years. Community consultations show a desire for an effective education system that produces confident, innovative and skilled people, with access to life-long quality education pathways that strengthen social, economic and cultural well-being.

Manukau needs high-quality intergenerational family learning programmes in schools and early childhood institutions throughout the city to support that vision.

COMET is an advocate for policy implementation that supports more intergenerational family learning programmes in Manukau City – but our role is not to deliver programmes. COMET’s strategic intention is to *co-ordinate partnerships* among schools, early childhood centres and tertiary providers; and facilitate outcomes that meet community needs. Current policy has only an ‘adult literacy’ focus, and under-emphasises the importance of engaging schools and early childhood centres in initiating and supporting intergenerational learning.

This is a discussion document which we hope will create wider community understanding of the transformational potential of intergenerational family learning, and will engage policy-makers and providers in the task of programme development which supports community aspirations.



Bernardine Vester
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
CITY OF MANUKAU EDUCATION TRUST

THE CHALLENGE

All adults across the socio-economic spectrum can participate in programmes that offer family benefits. Churches, adult and community education providers, and parent centres all run “courses” (such as Tough Love; or Drugs and Your Child) which a wide spectrum of parents may access. Schools may run “helping your child” programmes for parents. These programmes frequently are defined as family learning. They are valuable for improving children’s social or cultural development, or for supporting children’s achievement in school.

However, the most significant community challenge is encouraging ‘non-traditional’ parent or adult learner groups to re-engage in the education mainstream.

This is a discussion document arising out of our experience in exploring learning opportunities for Māori and Pacific Island families in Manukau City through Intergenerational Family Learning.

We began by addressing the question: what resources do we already have to improve education and social outcomes for our Māori, Pasifika, and immigrant communities through literacy learning? How can we use those resources better to get stronger engagement in learning?

This discussion document advocates for innovative approaches to adult learning policy and programmes so that adults can learn alongside their children in schools and early childhood centres.

WHAT IS INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY LEARNING?

Ka tupu te Pā harakeke

Our family flourishes and grows

Intergenerational Family Learning empowers adults through adult learning that takes place simultaneously alongside their children in the school or early childhood centre.

Intergenerational Family Learning (IFL) integrates learning to include shared outcomes for adults and children.

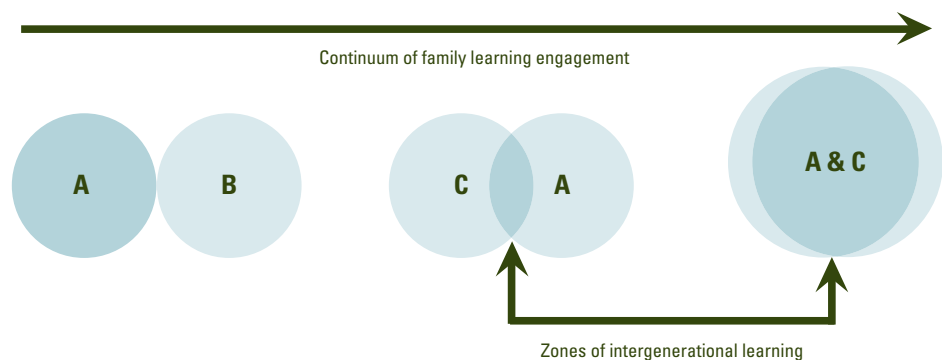
IFL is relationship based. At the heart of intergenerational family learning practice is kinship and shared learning – especially in literacy or numeracy. Intergenerational family learning will reflect *ako*, the concept of reciprocal learning and teaching, where each member of the family will have responsibility and obligations for the learning and teaching of other family members. The term “Intergenerational Family Learning” reflects the broad understanding of *whānau/hapu/iwi* as constituting “family”.

IFL is outcomes focused. A quality intergenerational programme should be able to simultaneously provide evidence of learning for both the adult and the child, and evidence of contribution to personal, family, and community well-being as a result of participation. It must deliver economic, cultural, and social benefits.

Intergenerational Family Learning ideally takes place in schools and early childhood settings, with mainstream institutional collaborators who can offer *adults* pathways to new futures.

Family learning programmes and events may differ in the degree of engagement of the adult. We call this a **continuum of engagement**. While many ‘family-oriented’ school programmes involve parents as teacher-helpers, for example in supervising homework or classroom programmes, this is surface engagement. A deeper degree of engagement can involve adults and children learning together – for example, adults completing a Playcentre certificate while supporting the learning of their child in the centre. We argue for **another dimension to this continuum**. When both the learning of the child and/or the learning of the adult are formal and structured elements of a single programme, family learning becomes intergenerational family learning. The programme will sit in a “**zone of intergenerational learning**” that fits at the deeper engagement end of the continuum.

DIAGRAM ONE: ZONES OF INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY LEARNING

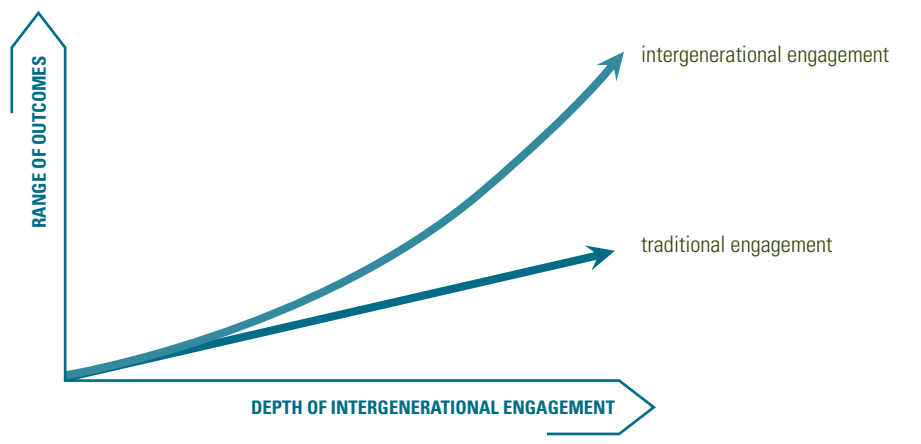


Ako is the Māori concept of reciprocal learning and teaching. Intergenerational family learning programmes will reflect the communal and aspirational elements of *Ako*.

The **zone of Intergenerational learning** captures the extent to which both the learning needs of adult and the learning needs of the children are included in the programme.

All zones have value in supporting parents to participate in the learning or well-being of their child. However, the greater the intensity and integration of the adult programme with the child programme, **the greater the range of outcomes from the learning programme** (see diagram 2).

DIAGRAM TWO: INTERGENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND OUTCOMES



The challenge is to create connections between existing foundation learning programmes for adults and the programmes for their children, which will result in multiple outcomes that are rich, complex, and long-lasting.

Evidence of the importance of learning in the family context

Extensive research has been commissioned on family learning as a means of transmitting educational aspiration, motivation, and success. For example, the Ministry of Education commissioned a Best Evidence Synthesis on what community and family influences make an impact on children's achievement in New Zealand¹ (*Biddulph report*). The report, published in 2003, identifies **four categories** of influencing factors. These categories can be considered by education policy:

Key **characteristics of the family** (such as ethnicity or parental or household income) are easily transferable into policies that create "criteria" for targeting funding for services.

Literacy and other learning experiences in the home support student achievement. "**What happens inside families**" as an influencing factor for children's learning is addressed in policy terms by school and early childhood centre connections to families. The deeper the engagement, the more profound the influence on family practice.

The **connections that families have to social community networks** matter. Parents who can connect to church, sporting, or other adult networks will have better strategies to meet social challenges. Social policy, rather than education policy, directs attention to these factors.

Finally, the Biddulph report highlights **the quality of home/school and community partnerships** as a predictor of student success. Integrated and comprehensive programmes, especially in the early years, help to support child learning. School-like activities in the home, or home-like activities in the school, support learning. Books and other resources in homes support student achievement. School-home relationships that support the dignity and value of families help children learn. Programmes that offer structured, specific guidance rather than general advice help children learn.

This Best Evidence Synthesis is backed up by other studies. A similar UK literature review² found that in the primary years, **the impact of parental involvement is so significant that it overshadows all other differences associated with the quality of schools themselves**. When a family experiences stress, poor

health or housing or other factors associated with poverty or social deprivation, a family's capacity to respond to children's need for support for their learning is diminished. Child poverty is invariably a reflection of the economic status of the adult or adults in the family³.

The *Competent Children, Competent Learners*⁴ study tells us that **the educational achievement level of the mother will be reflected in the educational achievement of the children within the family.**

The inter-relationship of children's educational achievement and adult under-achievement suggests that intergenerational learning should receive close policy attention.

The Ministry of Education commissioned the Church Report to assess evidence about the kind of social investment needed for children and youth with severe behavioural difficulties. The Church Report⁵ takes the holistic view: problem behaviours have to be addressed by **simultaneously tackling the school, the home, and the peer contexts.** Early interventions are most effective, and they need to be highly structured and intensive using trained professionals. Church warns that it is "extremely unlikely...that antisocial development can be halted and pro-social development accelerated using just a school-based intervention on its own." Yet the temptation is *to focus resources on the child at the school rather than simultaneously on the parent in the home*, because the school-based intervention process is most 'controllable'; and to consequently prioritise resources on severe learning or behaviour difficulties, rather than on emergent problems.

The policy gap

Many schools, early childhood centres and even tertiary institutions have in place their own localised policies and programmes that support family learning. However, to deliver on the fullest potential of these initiatives, **we present a case for reviewing existing policy frameworks so that intergenerational family learning can take place with early childhood centres and schools.**

The policy framework must **intensify** existing programmes in parenting and adult literacy, and **integrate** them with children's learning.

The programmes must **be accessible** to families in low-income, low-literacy communities, and use **high-quality** staff with professional **support services** to deliver multiple outcomes.

Policy implementation will result in programmes that contribute to raised community literacy levels, effective parenting, to life skills, to addressing poverty and social exclusion, and cultural and social well-being.

Intergenerational family learning policy will recognise and include:

- Schools and early childhood centres as the hub of community learning;
- The importance of the foundation skills of literacy, language, numeracy, and technological literacy *in adults*;
- The needs of adult learners for whom English is a Second Language;
- Cultural inclusion, which validates fluency and literacy in te reo or ethnic languages;
- Connecting adult learning to child learning, including child development studies;
- Effective parenting;
- Health and nutrition;
- Establishing meaningful links between home and early childhood or school settings;
- Practical skills for families in financial literacy; employment and career development; and in connecting to social services;
- Opportunities for early childhood centres, schools and tertiary institutions to work together.

Intergenerational family learning programmes will challenge the current insular nature of the adult learning and child learning contexts.

- Education policy is currently carefully segregated into age-stratified early childhood learning, school learning, and adult learning sectors. All three have very different heritages. It is therefore a challenge for these sectors to work together to cater for needs of all family members with an integrated approach to learning.

Our education is geared around the exclusive needs of pre-schoolers, school-children, or adults. Intergenerational learning challenges 'sector' thinking.

Intergenerational family learning policy must focus on communities of need, not individuals of need.

Policy problems are often addressed by de-constructing issues into constituent parts, both within and across government ministries. Current education programmes and courses are carefully geared to outcomes prescribed by different agencies, each of whom target resources tightly. When cross-sector collaboration is required (for intergenerational learning), programme providers face boundary issues and barriers to partnership. Intergenerational family learning programmes require a different policy approach: a holistic one that focuses not on individuals, not even on families, but on *communities* of need. This is a significant policy adjustment. While the *community* of need can be geographical (most frequent), it may also be culturally determined, or shaped as a 'community of interest'.

It is clearly difficult in mainstream urban school or early childhood settings to separate out communities of interest to deliver programmes that are exclusively Māori or Pasifika, for example. Nevertheless, economic, social, and physical well-being can be nurtured within a Māori paradigm.⁶ Key elements include – *whakapapa, whanaungatanga, mahi tahi, tāonga tuku iho, ako, te ao hurihuri, te ao whanui and manākitanga*. We explain these further in the document *Manukau Family Literacy Programmes: Weaving Intergenerational Family Learning Practice*.

The assumption in this document is that intergenerational family learning programmes should be offered to **communities in which a high proportion of the families fit a high-need socio-economic profile**. We do not argue for programmes in our communities on the basis that they will somehow address a "deficit" in individual adults within families. We argue for them because we believe that they provide a means for addressing family and community aspirations. This community focus is particularly relevant to Māori and Pasifika social patterns. Because individuals and families are context-dependent, it should not be individuals or families that are targeted, but communities where the interests of the constituent families are of paramount concern.

Intergenerational family learning programmes are not just for families; they meet community aspirations. Programme policy should not be focused on individuals, but on families and communities.

Benefits

Benefits are often described for individuals, since programmes are often evaluated using quantitative measures: for example, individual literacy gains. However, benefits for IFL are multi-layered. The National Institute of Adult and Community Education (NIACE) in the UK has proposed a Benefits of Family Learning Model⁷ (see box).

Core benefits are affective – that is, IFL delivers enhanced personal confidence and greater self-esteem. Knowing where you belong and who you are and how you function within your family unit is as important as knowing about the world around you; it helps you to both live in the world and learn to shape it. We see it as encompassing knowledge of *whakapapa* / genealogy, understanding *wairua* / spirituality or self-awareness, addressing your past (*tāonga tuku iho*) and planning for the future (*te ao hurihuri*).

Linked benefits are related to outcomes derived from participation in IFL programmes: improved attitudes and behaviours and improved student achievement for children; improved parenting skills, improved basic skills (literacy and numeracy) and an increased understanding of the child's learning needs and the education system.

Family benefits are improved family relationships / *whanaungatanga*, and better use of social services.

Extended adult benefits include employment, and participation in volunteer activities, such as serving on school Boards of Trustees or sports or church or other social committees. In addition, adults are encouraged to staircase into further learning.

Community benefits include democratic participation and civic engagement, as well as family contributions to the economic and cultural well-being of the community.

Benefits to schools / early childhood centres go beyond parental/*whānau* engagement in children's learning to participation in the wider life of the centre or school community – standing for the Board of Trustees, or contributing to school or centre goals through fundraising or participation in Parent-Teacher events.

Benefits for tertiary institutions include higher participation of Māori and Pasifika learners, greater retention, and creating pathways into higher-level programmes.

Community benefits deserve more attention in policy development. There are identifiable *communities* where adults do not have the confidence to engage in mainstream learning. These adults will often have few or no qualifications, may not have completed schooling, may be immigrant and/or speakers of English as a second language, or have engaged unsuccessfully with tertiary education in the past. They may be in receipt of benefits, or may be in beneficiary households. Parents with low levels of education lack the skills to obtain and keep a job, to move on to more skilled occupations, and lack the resources to participate in early childhood education, or support their children's literacy development. What begins as an educational challenge for individual adults can become a financial problem for the entire family – unemployment or welfare dependency binds children into the poverty trap of their parents.

However, intergenerational programmes are complex to establish, manage and implement. They are also costly in terms of time and effort and money, and they require a whole community (a neighbourhood, a learning community or group of education institutions, a church community, a hapu) to shift its energy and resources to focus on the needs of the families that belong to it. **The well-being of the whole community is intimately bound up in the well-being of its families.**

Intergenerational Family Learning supports community visions as well as individual aspirations.

Intergenerational family learning programmes should be offered in high-needs communities. Many Manukau communities fit the profile of 'best value' for intergenerational family learning programmes.

WHY POLICY FOR INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY LEARNING IS NEEDED

Nau te rourou, naku to rourou,

Ka ai te manuhiri

With your food basket, and my food basket,
The wellbeing of the people will be assured.

Literacy is, at its very heart, a pivotal component of nation building. Fully realised, it enables people to take part in the fullness of the society that they live in. – Te Kawai Ora⁸.

To meet Māori aspirations

Results of the International Adult Literacy Survey found that the level of literacy among a high proportion of Māori people (70 percent) was deemed to be insufficient for active participation in a knowledge society. Māori women had lower levels of literacy at competent levels than Māori men, with only 26 percent of Māori women at the higher levels of literacy in the survey, compared to 36 percent of Māori men⁹.

At the *Hui Taumata* in 2005 participants were asked to consider that if transformational experiences were needed to take Māori into the future, then the focus needed to be on high achievement and quality outcomes, enhanced whānau capacities, collaboration, governance and leadership, and Māori workforce capacity.

It was envisioned that 2005 would be regarded as a turning point in the way that Māori viewed their identity and that their contribution would be integral to the growth of the New Zealand economy and national prosperity, and to their own prosperity.

A key strategy was to make skill development and lifelong learning a whānau priority, including ensuring its accessibility and affordability. It was accepted that for Māori employment and outcomes to improve, literacy and numeracy skills were essential, with computing skills regarded highly across all sectors.

Māori need to be proactive in seeking an education which sees them confident, qualified and equipped with transferable skills. Alongside these skills, the challenge was given to remember and place the core values and concepts of *tikanga*, *kaitiakitanga* and *rangatiratanga*. The challenge would be for education to merge the two concepts so that “Māori might live as Māori and as citizens of the world”.

The summary report¹⁰ noted the aspirations for whānau development (page 15):

Focusing on the whānau: healing the whānau; investing in mana tane to achieve mana whānau; ensuring educational reinforcement from parents / whānau; providing balance between education and other competing interests; providing mentoring / whakawhanaungatanga and positive role models; building on critical analysis of whānau who have had successful educational outcomes both in traditional and western ideology.

Māori aspirations can be delivered through intergenerational family learning programmes.

To build the capacity of Pacific People

The IALS¹¹ findings suggest a high need for foundation skills development among Pacific people. Apart from workplace-based programmes, Pasifika adults are under-represented in foundation learning programmes. Intergenerational family learning programme pilots in Manukau City (Manukau Family Literacy Programmes)

have illustrated the importance of relationship-based learning to successful achievement of outcomes for Pasifika adults. The aspirations of this community are reflected in the newly-released Pacific Education Plan (page 17).

To change existing silos of practice

Existing policy frameworks provide no incentives or direct pathways for institutions to engage in intergenerational family learning.

Schools and early childhood centres that might offer IFL programmes need logistical support and funding to engage in learning for adults (which is outside their core business, and therefore, funding streams).

Tertiary institutions require community partnerships, funding and support to engage in learning which includes learning outcomes for children and communities (which is also outside their core business).

Community organisations require capital investments and professional expertise to engage in high-quality learning programmes (the capability for managing complex partnerships is important to programme success).

Intergenerational family learning policy will, however, produce measurable outcomes for early childhood, school, tertiary, and community partners.

Funding must be distributed in a way that would enable integrated, sustainable practice. This strategy would connect goals to create a whole that is greater than the sum of the parts.

The policy adjustment required would be this: both adult education providers, and school and early childhood centres, should be able to access funding focused on delivering intergenerational learning – establishing new cross-sector collaborations, or building on existing partnerships and relationships.

To find ownership and leadership for integrated outcomes

Where should intergenerational family learning policy and implementation sit? In the Ministry of Education (early childhood or schools division)? Or with the Tertiary Education Commission? Or within the Ministry of Social Development and the social services sector? Or within local government and community services? Currently, no-one 'owns' responsibility for developing intergenerational family learning policy, and it remains an important gap in the government policy framework. This is despite the fact that there are government policy rewards to be gained from intergenerational programmes. Government needs to 'own' and to take the lead in developing intergenerational family learning policy. Communities need to 'own' and take the lead in implementing intergenerational family learning practice.

To reach economic and social development goals

It is an economic development as well as a social imperative that we achieve life-changing outcomes for communities and families. Transformational programmes require transformational policy. The **value added** of intergenerational learning includes

- **Increased intensity** of adult literacy learning
- **qualifications** for adults that lead to better fit to labour market demand
- **reduced dependence** on the welfare systems of the state, including the services of Child, Youth and Family.

To develop sustainable and integrated partnerships

The Tertiary Education Commission has established a Foundation Learning Pool of funding that is targeted to implementation of the Adult Literacy Strategy, but which is also open to programmes that offer an “intergenerational” component. This language refers to adult learning programmes (including adult literacy programmes) that have a deliberately constructed **add-on component** which is inclusive of other family members. This is family learning that is built from a core of adult learning. **The key measure for the success of programmes funded out of this pool is the literacy gain of the adult.**

This is similar to a school offering an add-on Parent Education component: perhaps a Maths series that builds Maths skills for parents so that they can help with children’s homework; or a Helping Your Child to Read session that builds skills for parents so that they can add to children’s learning. **The key measure for the success of this type of programme is the literacy gain of the child.**

Intergenerational family learning policy would bring these two together, weaving in social and economic development goals.

Existing policy focuses on **add-on components** to mainstream programmes in the tertiary or schools sector.

To meet local government aspirations

Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs) and City Vision documents illustrate the aspirations of communities.

Cities want to increase democratic and community participation, and the adult skill levels of the population. Increasingly, their labour markets require more highly skilled adults. Economic development is built on an educated and knowledgeable people. Cities also want to improve the overall qualifications of school-leavers.

Cities such as Manukau want to increase participation of Māori and Pacific Island families in engagement with their children’s learning.

In keeping with these goals, the City of Manukau Education Trust (COMET) has since 2002 piloted a highly successful model of Intergenerational Family Learning, called the Manukau Family Literacy Programmes.

MFLP has delivered new economic and educational pathways for adults, offered the schools and early childhood centres involved new opportunities to engage with each other and their families, and offered the community new insights into how families and education institutions can work together.

Cities want to support improvements in educational outcomes for both children and adults by creating networks of stakeholders that share resources and expertise.

These outcomes will be more successfully achieved by supporting families to build aspirations for their children, and enabling stakeholders to share resources and expertise. All of these aspirations are reflected in *Tomorrow’s Manukau: Manukau Apōpo*, the vision document for Manukau City.

Similar aspirations are found in communities all around New Zealand. The communities that exist within cities and regions have an appreciation of the importance of families and learning to their overall well-being.

In summary, intergenerational family learning policy grows the community’s capacity to meet aspirations for new ways of learning.

HOW A POLICY FOR INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY LEARNING ALIGNS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Kia ānga whakamua me hoki whakamuri

Where have we come from as we move forward

The strength of an Intergenerational Family Learning Policy is that it offers vision and opportunity directly aligned with other key government strategies and priorities.

The Agenda for Children

The **Agenda for Children** takes a ‘whole child’ approach to children’s well-being. It is closely related to the **Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa**, which looks at the ‘connectedness’ of young people to families, peers, education services, and the wider community. There is a Work Programme managed by the Ministry of Social Development called *Action for Child and Youth Development*. The Agenda for Children’s takes a ‘whole child’ approach and considers the big picture context of children’s circumstances, not just isolated issues or problems.

The Early Childhood Strategic Plan

The **Early Childhood Strategic Plan** has three key goals: to strengthen participation in Early Childhood Education in targeted communities (especially Māori and Pasifika), to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and to improve the connectedness of early childhood education and the learning of children to communities. The early childhood education curriculum, Te Whāriki, recognises the importance of Ngā Hononga – connections – to child well-being. Intergenerational family learning programmes in early childhood education settings will meet the plan’s strategic purpose.

Schooling Strategy

The Ministry of Education’s **Schooling Strategy** identifies Family and Community Engagement as one of three areas of strategic focus.

The Ministry notes that research evidence consistently recognises the vital role families and whānau play in their children’s learning. A major Ministry initiative has been developed – a \$15.9 million information campaign (**Team Up**) focused on the role of parents as supporters of their children’s learning. We argue that the long-term sustainable impact of a successful intergenerational family learning programme can more powerfully transform the individual, the family and community.

For many, children represent almost the whole point of our education system. Indeed, for the **Education Review Office**, “the child is the heart of the matter”. While this emphasis on child achievement – and measuring that achievement – is important, much of the debate around what has been happening in education has ignored the importance of learning for the main actors in children’s lives.

Foundation Learning Policy

At the same time, the government’s tertiary education strategy, delivered through the **Tertiary Education Commission**, emphasises the importance of lifting overall educational achievement among all New Zealanders for the nation’s future economic well-being. The Tertiary Education Strategy (TES) and the Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities (STEP) both explicitly identify the importance of foundation learning.

In July 2005 a **Learning for Living** package was announced to boost adult literacy and numeracy, including funding for family literacy programmes. This package is related to the Adult Literacy Strategy, launched in 2001 as **More Than Words: The New Zealand Adult Literacy Strategy**.

Māori aspirations for economic development

The **Hui Taumata 2005**, the national economic development hui referred to on page 13, focused on accelerating Māori aspirations for economic independence. The Hui Taumata was about securing outcomes for Māori that would enable them to participate and drive growth in the New Zealand economy, through entrepreneurial and social behaviours that recognised and maintained cultural identity. The contribution of families to economic development was strongly recognised.

Pasifika Strategies

Research by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (MPIA) suggests that if the education and training levels of the current generation of Pacific children can be accelerated to match current levels attained by non-Pacific children, then by 2021 New Zealand's economy would benefit by \$4-5 billion¹². Pasifika Fono consistently report the importance of 'learning relationships' in education success¹³. The **Pasifika Education Plan** has just been launched. This includes developing models of effective practice. Specific targets include increasing participation in early childhood education, increasing the number of registered Pasifika teachers in the workforce, and increasing participation rates in tertiary education at higher levels. Intergenerational family learning programmes piloted in Manukau already demonstrate how these targets could be achieved.

The Human Capability Framework

Department of Labour policies include the **Human Capability Framework**. It identifies a formula for building skills and creating opportunities for people so that the community better prepared to meet future workforce requirements. There are three elements in the framework. **Capacity** refers to people's skills, knowledge and attitudes, acquired through the education system, and influenced by community and family/whānau. **Opportunity** refers to where and how people use those skills to gain an income through paid work or obtain other rewards (for example, from volunteer service). The last element is about the **Process** by which capacity and opportunity are matched to deliver human capability. Intergenerational family learning policy fits inside that framework by building family capacity to meet labour market needs.

Social Policy

As well as having responsibility for the *Agenda for Children* and the *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*, the **Ministry of Social Development (MSD)** also has responsibility for family and community services – including **Strengthening Families**, a cross-sectoral initiative that aims to engage agencies in working together to support families with children under 17, **Te Rito Family Violence Prevention Strategy**, the **Families Commission**, and more recently, the services offered by **Child, Youth and Family (CYF)**. Priority issues for social policy include improving educational achievement among low socio-economic groups. Progress on such a critical social issue "requires extensive effort from many government agencies". This priority is important because

- *"It will improve outcomes throughout people's lives*
- *Low educational achievement contributes to long-term benefit receipt*
- *The tail of poor performance makes [NZ] less competitive internationally."*

Using the Ministry of Education's analysis for child educational achievement, the Ministry of Social Policy's advice is that key strategies for addressing the priority of educational underachievement include schools providing better and more accessible information to parents on how children are faring at school; and parental participation in their children's education.

Social policies – including the **Te Rito Family Violence Prevention Strategy** – emphasise the need to take a holistic, long-term approach to good parenting practice and changing dysfunctional family behaviours.

Education policy and social policy are cross-referenced in briefing papers to Ministers.

However, policies for adult learning and child learning are not connected.

Statements about opportunities for government action for social development in the Ministry of Social Policy's document focus on spending in education to get better measures of student performance; on the quality of the information parents have; and on providing access to quality early childhood education. **This analysis does not draw a connection between the educational achievements of the adults in a family and the educational achievement of children.**

Early Interventions and family learning

Health strategies may cite early intervention as a harm minimisation goal. As an example, obesity in early childhood can result in diabetes twenty years later and renal failure forty years later. The **Youth Offending Strategy** is also an example of policy that seeks to address emerging problems. *Intergenerational* family learning programmes can be seen as an early intervention approach because they can provide support to adults in addressing child behaviour management and children's health issues. While this needs to be specifically targeted in the family learning programme to be a direct outcome, nevertheless family learning offers the potential for realising policy goals associated with health and youth justice strategies.

Regional initiatives

The importance of having a skilled workforce is being addressed through emerging local government initiatives to tackle labour market needs. For example, the **Manukau Skills Council** project and the **Auckland Metro Project** have highlighted the importance of the social infrastructure to the region's economic well-being. For the whole Auckland region to become an 'international city' oriented towards a leadership role in the Pacific, it needs to address the skills of its population not just at the level of individuals, but among families and within communities.

Connecting for Outcomes

Government strategies remain in the ministerial or departmental boxes in which they were developed. Tertiary education policy is largely disconnected from schooling and early childhood education; and from community aspirations for an integrated approach to the educational needs of the whole family. Community aspirations (such as those described in local government vision documents for "educated and knowledgeable people", or by Māori through Hui Taumata Mātauranga, or iwi through their authorities and organisations, or at Pasifika fono), are often expressed in more holistic ways than education and social sector policy settings are able to deliver on. In essence, the economic and social policy agendas need to capitalise on the resources within the education system to support and sustain learning within families which will benefit the entire community.

Policy focused on partnerships and collaborations to deliver intergenerational family learning opportunities in local communities offers a 'circuit-breaker' to poverty and disadvantage, and links all of the above strategies together.

Intergenerational family learning encompasses parenting skills, adult literacy support to address population skill levels for economic development purposes, family use of services, family relationships, attainment levels at school for children, attitude or behaviour issues, health, democratic participation, and increasing understanding of the education system and children's learning needs. While this may seem a heavy burden for one policy purchase, there is consistently strong research evidence that points to the conclusion that intergenerational family learning 'works' to support all of these policy agendas and goals.

EFFECTIVE INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY LEARNING PROGRAMMES

Kei tēna, kei tēna ano

Tōna ake ahua

Tōna ake mauri

Tōna ake mana

That person, each and every person

Has their own identity and uniqueness

Their own inner life essence

Their own dignity and integrity

Programme factors for success

Evidence from the Ministry of Education’s Learning for Living project show that foundation skills programmes that engage adults to positive effect are most likely to be *intensive, integrated, of sufficient duration* to make a difference, delivered in *highly structured* ways with *qualified staff or leaders*, and *targeted to multiple outcomes*¹⁴.

Intensity refers to the number of hours of learning per week. A family learning programme may be a few hours a week; or a full-time programme of learning of 20 hours of instruction or more per week. Integration refers to the connectedness of the learning of the adult with the learning of the child/children in the family. **Duration** refers to how long the programme runs: for example, for duration for six months or a full year. **Structure** relates to the ‘deliberateness’ of the curriculum and the learning targets. This does not mean compromising flexibility or removal of a learner-focused curriculum, but does imply being careful about shaping and measuring outcomes and offering clear value (both to the funder and to the learners). Research points to the need for experienced, highly qualified **staff** as a predictor for success. **Targeting to multiple outcomes** implies a **collaborative** and community-focused approach, because including children in the adult programme – or adults in learning alongside children – requires the interaction of education institutions across sector boundaries.

Important systems settings

There are other longer-term conditions for programme effectiveness. These relate to the “systems” under which family learning programmes operate. Like the experiences in the UK and the USA, the problem with many ‘family learning programmes’ in New Zealand has been that they have been impermanent ‘pilot projects’ tacked onto the back of other core tasks that the organisation (the school, training provider, community organisation) delivers; and have minimal engagement for the adult as a learner. But intergenerational family learning is complex, and requires a systemic approach. Firstly, programmes must be **written into the strategic plans** of the organisations that run them. **Goals** for the programme must align with resources available and the quality assurance systems that are in place. Intergenerational family learning programmes must be clear about the **target audience**, and the **recruitment systems** and **quality management systems** must specifically consider the place of the programme within the overall organisation. The organisation will consider the support service requirements (teacher aide, cleaning and caretaking, budgeting, the food services, transport) that create a successful programme. And finally, the **human resources capacity** of the organisations to deliver the programme should be supported by full-time positions and benefits that provide security and stability to the staff¹⁵.

There is already plenty of evidence about what makes an effective programme.

The programmes must be:

Intense – requiring regular and frequent attendance.

Integrated

Long enough to make a difference

Have a **structured curriculum**

Delivered by **qualified staff** working in a **collaborative** manner.

Targeted to **multiple outcomes**.

The systems settings for programmes to become sustainable in the long term will require:

strategic planning with long term goals, supported by **high quality management, recruitment systems and human resources systems**.

Indicators of good practice are:

- **Inclusive pastoral care**
- **Planned, outcomes-focused curriculum**
- **Curriculum delivery connected to the learning of other family members**
- **Curriculum linked to qualifications**
- **Delivered by trained and qualified professionals**
- **Qualifications that create pathways to lifelong learning**
- **Quality assurance measures**
- **Programmes connected to the community**

Indicators of Good Practice

There isn't a single "right way" to deliver an intergenerational family learning programme. The following are good practice indicators for intergenerational family learning programmes and provide baselines for providers and/or partners.

- **Pastoral care systems** that are focused on the needs of the family, not just the learner (thereby supporting adult student retention and graduation);
- An **inclusive** curriculum that is **structured, benchmarked** and **quality assured** – ideally, designed specifically for family learning;
- Curriculum that is **linked to qualifications and/or pathways** for adults into higher learning or skills; or employment.
- Teachers / lecturers / programme leaders that are **trained and qualified**;
- Assessment systems that are **relevant** to the needs of the learners as well as to the needs of the institution to provide quality assurance.
- Initiating and co-ordinating mechanisms that are **community owned or driven**.
- An ongoing commitment to **evaluation and research**.

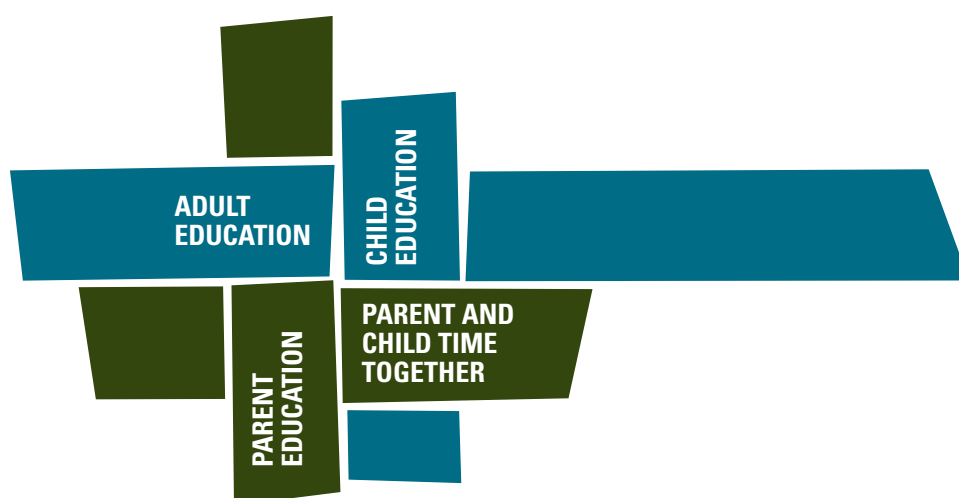


WEAVING INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY LEARNING PRACTICE: MANUKAU FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMMES.

Me haere ngātahi tātou

Let us value inclusion as we move forward together

The COMET publication, **Manukau Family Literacy Programmes: Weaving Intergenerational Family Learning Practice**, describes an initiative based on a four component model¹ (diagram below).



Programme design for this model is based on research evidence for programme factors for success (page 19), and meets indicators and measures of good practice (page 20). Adults learn in a classroom at the school or early childhood centre, with their own lecturer; and the adult learner's child/children is enrolled at the school or early childhood centre.

- The Adult Education component includes:
 - Communication skills, numeracy skills and financial literacy, computer skills, tikanga Māori, child development, health and careers planning;
 - The 'courses' together deliver a qualification or credits linked to the National Qualification Framework;
- The Parent Education component is 'woven' into the other components. It includes:
 - Child development; health and well-being; understanding the education system;
- The Child Education component is the regular teaching programme of the school or the early childhood centre.
- The Parent and Child Time Together (PACTT) component is a facilitated literacy-focused interaction that takes place daily in the classroom or at the early childhood centre. Regular planned opportunities for whānau to participate are also part of the programme.

For more details about this model, refer to the accompanying booklet to this discussion document: *Manukau Family Literacy Programmes: Weaving Intergenerational Family Learning in Practice*, published by COMET (2006). The Ministry of Education has also published *I'm a Different Person Now* (Benseman, 2004), a summary of the evaluation of the early implementation of MFLP.

¹ Based on the Kenan family literacy model.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS FOR INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY LEARNING

Ko koe ki tēna

Ko au ki tēnei

Kīwai o te kete

You hold that handle of the kete

I'll hold this handle

And we'll carry the load together.

At the centre of intergenerational learning is the family and the community; the institutions and programme providers must wrap their services around them. This requires collaborative and meaningful practice.

Partnerships are challenging. They are time-consuming, and run the risk of being consumed by process¹⁶.

Partners and collaborators require a mechanism for co-ordinating and facilitating their work.

The co-ordination work in intergenerational family learning programmes can be located centrally (for example, in a co-ordinating agency), or more appropriately within the community in which the programmes operate. Wherever it is located, the mechanism needs to be well-resourced to reflect the complexities of delivering programmes with partners, in communities that are under-resourced. The resourcing needs to be offered in a way which enables schools, early childhood centres, and tertiary partners to initiate, own, and manage intergenerational family learning programmes according to their needs and the needs of their community.

What is the co-ordinating function about?

- Taking responsibility for monitoring and evaluating integrated outcomes;
- Ensuring that the needs of partners are met, no matter their size and power (this is especially important when large institutions – such as tertiary providers – and community-based organisations such as early childhood centres are among the collaborators);
- Establishing links into the community and engaging the community in supporting families;
- Supporting the workforce development among intergenerational programme providers and partners (professional development).

Measuring Good Practice

The success of an intergenerational family learning programme must be measured from the perspective of a number of policy areas woven together:

- Literacy and/or numeracy gains; and/or qualifications achievements for adults;
- Pathways towards employment and higher-level skills development;
- Literacy and/or numeracy gains and other learning outcomes for children; social development outcomes (see the Social Policy Outcomes Report¹⁷), including desired outcomes for Social Connectedness and Cultural Identity;
- Community development outcomes (refer to local authority LTCCPs).

'Knowing what works' is important. Outcomes measurement is a key pre-requisite for funding support. Currently expected measures for intergenerational learning fail to reflect the totality of impacts being achieved. Opportunities to report the wider social, economic, cultural and community outcomes are limited and are a reflection of the existing policy gap.

Outcomes measures that are both qualitative and quantitative are essential to provide a rich picture of the reality of what is being achieved. Drawing from the following measures would provide a broader picture:

- [English] literacy gain for adults [based on testing or on exemplars of literacy practice];
- [English] literacy gain for children, based on measures already being used in early childhood centres and classrooms;
- Cultural awareness and understanding / te reo or first language development;
- Measures of confidence and self-esteem;
- Qualifications credits, to measure progress on a pathway to higher-level learning for adults [and their children, where older children are involved];
- Child enrolment in early childhood education;
- Adult participation in early childhood education or school activities;
- Family participation in community activities and/or democratic processes;
- Measures of dependence on social services;
- Long-term measures of employment or real income change (the Social Report measures Real Median Hourly Earnings).

CONCLUSION

Our recommendations for government Intergenerational Family Learning policy are:

Integrated programmes

1. THAT policy is inclusive of adult literacy, good parenting, child literacy, and functional family relationships, resulting in holistic intergenerational programmes.

Intergenerational family learning inside schools and early childhood centres

2. THAT policy and funding should allow schools and early childhood centres in high-needs communities to support intergenerational family learning.

Prioritise high intensity programmes

3. THAT policy should support intensive programmes that allow adults to learn alongside their children.

Aspirations of Māori and Pasifika communities

4. THAT Māori education planning within the Ministry of Education includes provision for intensive intergenerational family learning in mainstream, immersion or bilingual settings.
5. THAT the Pasifika Education Plan include provision for intensive intergenerational family learning in its implementation.

Target multiple outcomes

6. THAT government policy rewards multiple outcomes.

If only one outcome (eg adult literacy gain) is the measure for success, then the potential multiple outcomes from intergenerational family learning will not be realised.

Collaborative practice

7. THAT incentives for collaborative institutional practice are included within policy frameworks.

This means that funding frameworks should (a) not add cost burdens to tertiary institutions, schools, or early childhood centres, or distract them from their core business; (b) offer co-ordination support; (c) reflect the outcomes required for each partner.

Communities

8. THAT policies focus on communities of need, rather than individual needs.

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END-NOTES

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- 4 A series of reports make up the Competent Children, Competent Learners study. These may be found on a Ministry of Education website: <http://educationcounts.edcentre.govt.nz/publications/schooling/cc-at-6.html>
- 5 The Church Report was prepared by the Department of Education at the University of Canterbury (see Bibliography).
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