

# Prioritising people: From skills to wellbeing

ACAL Conference, Melbourne, Australia  
13-14 September 2018

Judy Hunter and Jane Furness, University of Waikato  
Bronwyn Yates and Katrina Taupo, Literacy Aotearoa

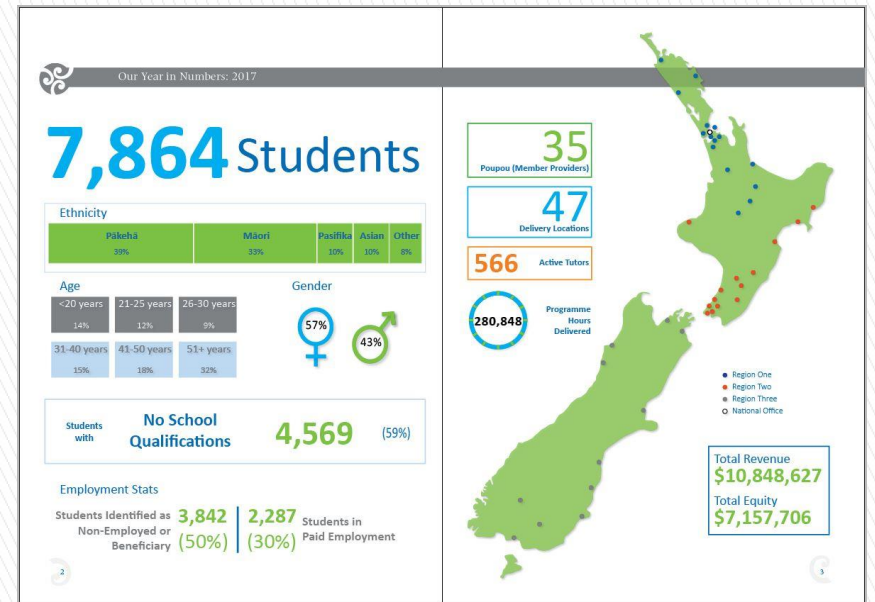


# Presentation overview

- ▶ **Introduction to the TLRI research project**
  - Our partnership
  - Broad context of Adult Literacy and Numeracy (L+N) in Aotearoa – TLRI
- ▶ **Prioritising people and understanding:**
  - What learners gain – He Whānau Mātau, He Whānau Ora
  - Wellbeing for Māori learners – Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga – Literacy Aotearoa
- ▶ **Wellbeing for diverse learners – the TLRI research project**
  - Findings to date – the 18 month mark

**»» Introduction to the  
TLRI research project**

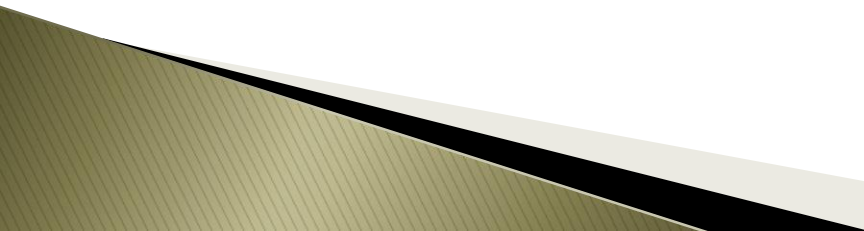
# Our Partnership



University of Waikato

Literacy Aotearoa

# Our TLRI context of adult L+N in Aotearoa

- ▶ An environment where a skills focus has predominated in adult L+N education and public discourse but is now changing
  - ▶ Recognition of adult L+N as important to support individual growth and family independence, business and innovation
  - ▶ Standardised assessment of L+N skills pre and post programme may be moving beyond LNAAT
  - ▶ Wider benefits are understood to occur and are being researched
- 

# Underpinning theory and research – the TLRI project

## Literacy

- ▶ L+N is social and cultural practice
- ▶ Learners can and do focus on L+N for their own purposes
- ▶ Decontextualized generic skills mastery is inadequate for meaningful use in learners' lives
- ▶ L+N enables people to realise their full social, cultural and economic potential

## Wellbeing

- ▶ A holistic, integrative concept; people as interconnected beings
- ▶ Values –
  - collectivism and individualism
  - interdependence and independence
  - social justice
- ▶ Local research evidence

# Ways of thinking about wellbeing

*Wellbeing is the "confidence to do" and raise one's horizons. This is then related to engagement in learning and personal development that is often referred to as self worth. It is also related to relationships with others - feeling able to participate constructively with others in family, whānau, communities etc, then there is the sense of acceptance and engagement at work or attaining work and the ability to participate in work activities and meetings etc (Peter Isaacs, ONZM).*

*... effects of the programme that contribute to enhancing people's quality of life; related to aspects of their lives that are important to them which may include, for example, managing daily life responsibilities, supporting whānau, participating and contributing in the community... (TLRI research project)*



»» **Prioritising people &  
understanding what  
they gain as learners**

# Some considerations for New Zealand

*The progress we have made is a real tribute to the adult educators and all those involved in improving L+N in New Zealand.*

- Fourth in the OECD
- 45% moderate to high problem solving skills
- Literacy and problem solving skills among the highest
- Numeracy skills on average higher
- Literacy and numeracy skills have been rising faster among Māori and Pasifika than in the total New Zealand population
- There still remains a significant lag to address in equity for Māori and Pasifika.

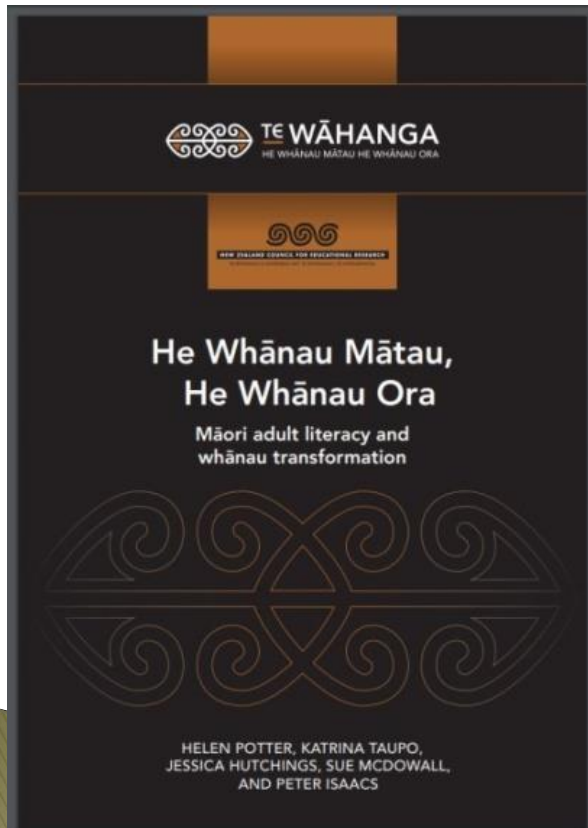
OECD's Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies survey (PIAAC). <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/research/survey-of-adult-skills>

New Zealand Adult Literacy  
and Numeracy Results (PIAAC)

# He Whānau Mātau, He Whānau Ora: Māori adult literacy and whānau transformation (2011)



Literacy Aotearoa  
Choice Change Freedom



<http://www.nzcer./publications/he-whanau-matau-he-whanau-ora-maori-adult-literacy-and-whanau-transformation>

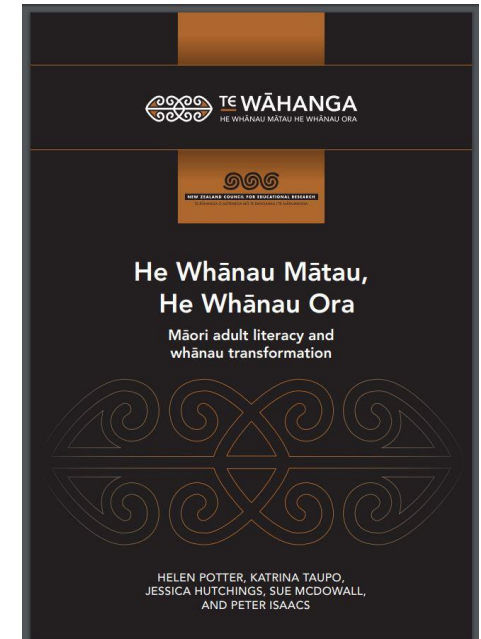
What is the impact on children's education when a parent or caregiver engages in a L+N programme?



Literacy Aotearoa  
Choice Change Freedom

## For the learners and their whānau, benefits included:

- ▶ Parents and caregivers read to their children and assisted their children with their homework
- ▶ There were more books in their home
- ▶ Children were taken and enrolled in the library
- ▶ There were more discussions at home
- ▶ Parents and caregivers attended parent teacher events
- ▶ Increased involvement with and family activities and aspirations



## For the learners, other benefits included:

- Confidence and ability to apply for employment and promotion
  - Involvement in community activities
  - Enrolment in further education



Literacy Aotearoa  
Choice Change Freedom

# Practices

Learners reported improvements in skills and understanding:

90% ↑ LLN skills and knowledge

88% ↑ understanding of how to support children before they started school

83% ↑ confidence to help children learn at home

74% ↑ involvement in children's learning at home

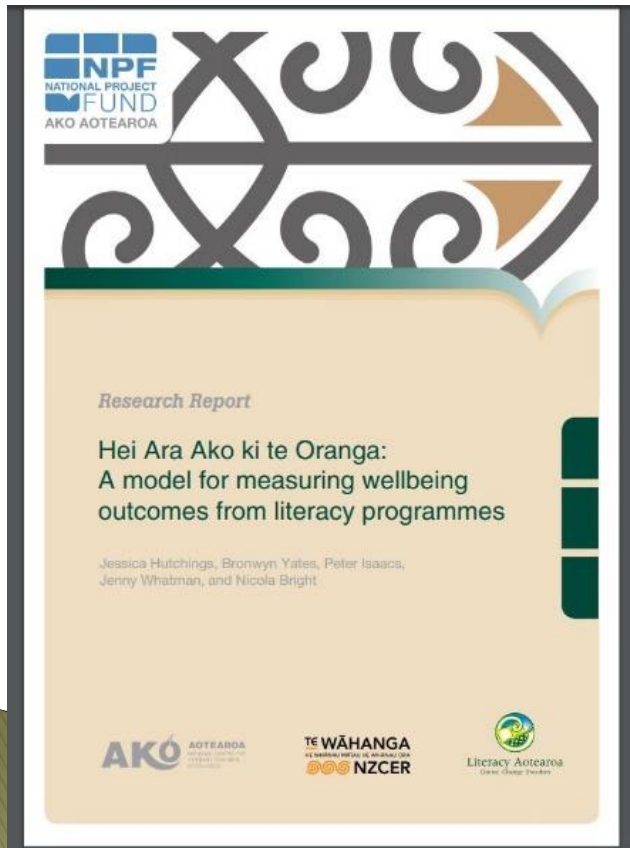
88% know what their child needs when reading, exploring or discovering

100% felt the programme helped them and their family to be more positive about learning



»» **Prioritising people &  
understanding  
wellbeing for Māori**

# Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga: A model for measuring wellbeing outcomes from literacy programmes



*Literacy Aotearoa with Te Wāhanga, NZCER*

<https://akoaotearoa.ac.nz/download/ng/file/group-5327/the-kaupapa-maori-wellbeing-assessment-model--hei-ara-ako-ki-te-oranga.pdf>



Literacy Aotearoa  
Choice Change Freedom

# Components of Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga

## Key ideas that foregrounded the development of the Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga model

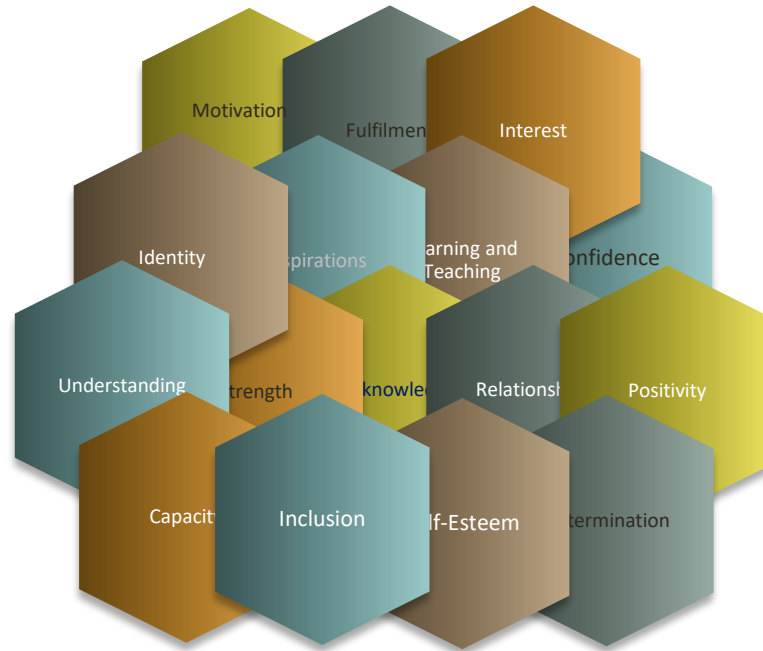
- Confidence and wellbeing are important for learners and their whānau
- Individual and whānau wellbeing are interrelated
- Policy makers need to find ways to legitimise and validate improved wellbeing for Māori
- Drew on existing Māori frameworks of wellbeing
- Developed processes to assess and validate improved wellbeing as identified by Māori adult literacy learners
- Disseminated the Māori adult literacy and wellbeing assessment model to some Māori adult literacy providers to generate support for the concept
- We are now seeing how the model can be of value to learners of other ethnicity.





# Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga Indicators

Motivation  
Fulfilment  
Interest  
Identity  
Aspirations  
Learning and teaching  
Confidence  
Understanding  
Strength  
Self-knowledge  
Relationships  
Positivity  
Capacity  
Inclusion  
Self Esteem  
Determination



Indicators

# Capturing contributions to wellbeing

Activities developed with learners	Literacy and Numeracy strands (Learning progressions)	Student's comment	Wellbeing Outcomes
Low-cost cooking classes provided opportunities for students to develop strategies for setting a budget for healthy meals	Gaining a step in the starting points assessment through reading	“I really liked the low-cost cooking classes...it made us look at how much money we were spending and it made us discuss and compare healthy food options for school lunches”	Increased ability to fulfil roles and responsibilities in the whānau.



# Outcomes



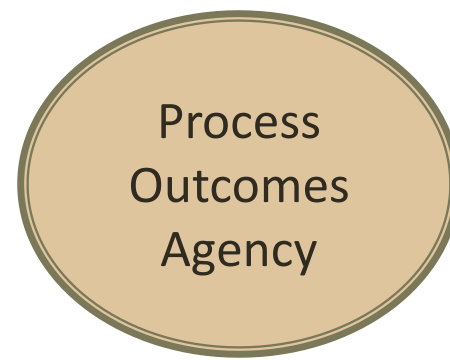
Literacy Aotearoa  
Choice Change Freedom

- Parents learn how to support their children in their learning
- Communication between parents and school is improved
- Parents become motivated and have more choices; further study or enter workforce
- Break cycle of benefit reliance
- Raise foundation skills
- Strengthen social cohesion
- Encourage life-long learning

## »» **Prioritising people – the TLRI research project**

*Using a wellbeing framework to recognise, value and enhance the broad range of outcomes for learners in adult literacy and numeracy programmes*

# Research questions



1. How can a wellbeing framework be further developed for incorporation into a programme in ways that engage tutors and learners in the outcomes and that are meaningful and manageable for them?
2. What broad wellbeing outcomes can adult learners identify as a result of their engagement in literacy and numeracy learning?
3. How does the use of a wellbeing framework help learners assume ownership of their continuing learning?

**What is important to you in your life?**

# Data collection

## Participants

- ▶ Year One 2017
  - 3 programmes
  - 3 tutors
  - 12 learners
  
- ▶ Year Two 2018
  - 4 programmes
  - 4 tutors
  - Up to 20 learners

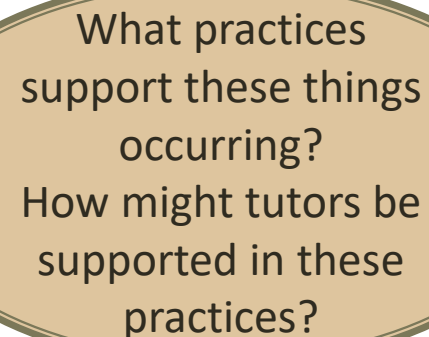
## Data collection

- ▶ Classroom observations
- ▶ Tutor interviews
- ▶ Learner focus groups
- ▶ Document review

**»» TLRI findings to date  
– 18 month mark**

# What we asked tutors and learners to do

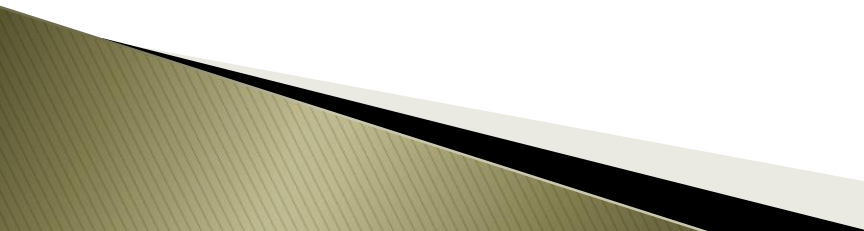
- ▶ Create a classroom atmosphere of valuing what is important to the learners in their everyday lives
- ▶ Provide regular opportunities for conversation and reflection on how L+N is useful to them in their everyday lives
- ▶ Regular recording of reflections and examples of broad wellbeing outcomes and links to L+N learning



What practices support these things occurring?  
How might tutors be supported in these practices?



# Findings about process: **What seemed helpful on the part of tutors**

- ▶ Valuing of what learners value
  - ▶ Regular opportunity and conscious reflection
  - ▶ Regular, systemitised opportunities to reflect
  - ▶ Responding to students' preferences
  - ▶ Reflecting and recording in ways that best fit their programmes and learners
  - ▶ Whole group conversations and personal journaling
- 

# Findings about process: Tutors managing the process

- ❖ ...we're more worried about getting on Facebook than anything. [He's] really nervous about it I don't think it was the technology, I think it's just very well aware of the security of his wife's work
- ❖ ... there's two that don't want to go on Facebook (Year 1)
- ❖ We discuss it every week. So I've made it kind of a, a regular slot on a Monday morning, just to talk about what's, what has happened over the week for them, and ask them to write their journal entries ... (Year 2)
- ❖ I said, 'Look somehow we've got to ... write down and record. These are different ways we can do it.' And as I said to you earlier, they all want to do it as a group. So that they could actually hear what the others were saying and think, 'Oh they feel like that too?' (Year 2)

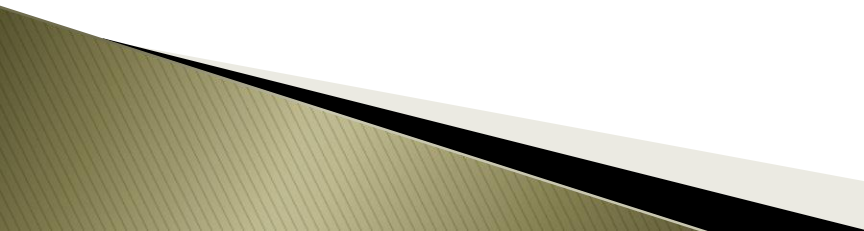
# Students' wellbeing outcomes: Confidence

- ❖ It's more confidence in the reading, and the Maths – numeracy. It's more... It's given me more confidence in myself too ... I have gained, you know, I sort of try it once, and if it doesn't work I go... I ring up someone now. Yeah, but whereas before it would be, 'I'll just keep doing it until I get frustrated with myself!

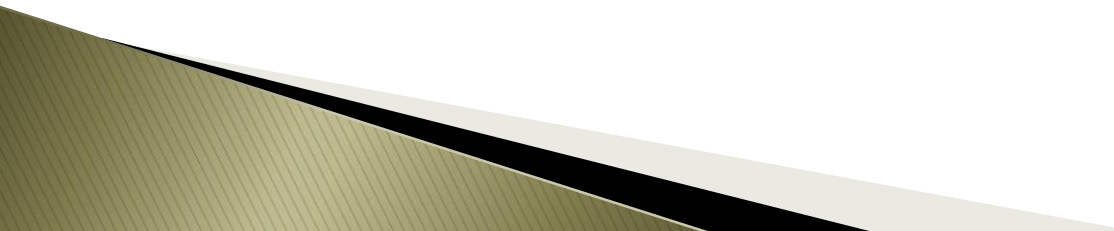
# Students' wellbeing outcomes: **Family/whānau**

- ❖ Since I've been here my son – he's 17, he said, 'You know, since you've been coming here, you have not bitten my head off.' And I've had less panic attacks.
- ❖ Describing a game trying out word of the week at home: That was so funny. 'Cause I said, 'can you *illuminate* the house?' And I'm going ... 'Is his brain going to start working?' And he just goes up and turns the lights on. ... I got one for him when he comes back ... So see what he does on that one.
- ❖ He wants to go to [polytech] next year. 'Cause he's seen me learning. And I thought, 'Well he's – he's inspired off me for going to [polytech].' ... Well he's inspired me in a way to get my license. Because he's got his Learners.

# Challenges: Optimal frequency of reflection for identification of wellbeing outcomes

- ▶ Highly frequent > tick-boxing, indiscernible change
  - ▶ Infrequent > easily forgettable
  - ▶ Regular reflection > maintaining awareness to inform retrospectives
- 

# Challenges: Learner hesitancy and resistance in sharing wellbeing outcomes

- ▶ Various reasons
  - ▶ Mitigated by trusting relationships
  - ▶ Careful balancing of the tutor's role
- 

# Challenges: Learners' deep reflection

What seems helpful:

- Trust-based relationships
- Tutor's holistic, integrative understanding of wellbeing
- Tutor attunement to learners' lives
- Regular linking of L+N learning to what matters to the learners in their lives
- Regular invitations to reflect
- Follow up about what learners share

# Support for tutors to attend to wellbeing outcomes

- ▶ Opportunities for tutors to talk about wellbeing
- ▶ Having a sense of space and time in the programme for attention to wellbeing outcomes



# Focus for the next 6 months

- ▶ Research question 1 (process)
  - Fine-tuning for meaningfulness and manageability
- ▶ Research question 2 (outcomes)
  - The nature of the identified wellbeing outcomes
  - Link to Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga
- ▶ Research question 3 (agency)
  - Focus in the final rounds of data collection

We thank the tutors and students in the study programmes for their willingness to try new things and share their experiences.

We further acknowledge our funder, the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative, New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

To contact us:

[judy.hunter@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:judy.hunter@waikato.ac.nz)

[jane.furness@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:jane.furness@waikato.ac.nz)

[by@literacy.org.nz](mailto:by@literacy.org.nz)

# References

Furness, J. (2013). Principles and practices in four family focused adult literacy programs: Towards wellbeing in diverse communities. *Literacy and Numeracy Studies*, 21(1), 33-57.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5130/Ins.v21i1.3329>

Hutchings, J., Yates, B., Isaacs, P., Whatman, J., & Bright, N. (2013). *Hei ara ako ki te oranga: A model for measuring wellbeing outcomes from literacy programmes*. Wellington, New Zealand: AKO Aotearoa.

Ministry of Education and Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. (2016). *Skills and Education: Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC)*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education and Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. Available at:

[https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/173516/Skills-and-Education-Aug-2018.pdf](https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/173516/Skills-and-Education-Aug-2018.pdf)

Potter, H., Taupo, K., Hutchings, J., McDowell, S., & Isaacs, P. (2011). *He whanau matau, he whanau ora: Maori literacy and whanau transformation*. Wellington, New Zealand: NZCER with Literacy Aotearoa. Available at:

<https://www.nzcer.org.nz/research/publications/he-whanau-matau-he-whanau-ora-maori-adult-literacy-and-whanau-transformation>

<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/research/survey-of-adult-skills>

<http://www.tlri.org.nz/tlri-research/research-progress/post-school-sector/using-wellbeing-framework-recognise-value-and>

[https://www.waikato.ac.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/399725/Furness-Hunter-wellbeing-frameworks1.pdf](https://www.waikato.ac.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/399725/Furness-Hunter-wellbeing-frameworks1.pdf)