

12 Destruction to regeneration

How community trauma and disruption can precipitate collective transformation

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic may be one of the most significant disruptions to education globally since the Second World War; however, it is not the only or most significant challenge experienced in Aotearoa New Zealand in recent years. In this chapter, we present a case study of three co-designed multi-agency collaborations operating in the complex context of public sector education that occurred as a result of the 2010–2012 Canterbury earthquakes and have supported the region's schools to cope with subsequent traumas, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Our purpose is to describe the development, implementation and iteration of three regional education initiatives created to promote and protect wellbeing and to share insights with government agencies, funders, providers, communities and the education sector on collaborative approaches to build wellbeing capacity. The three initiatives are the Grow Waitaha Wellbeing Communities of Practice and Networks, Sparklers' resources for promoting wellbeing in primary school classrooms and Mana Ake's universal and early intervention mental health and wellbeing support for primary schools.

We reflect on what has been learned in the post-quake environment; argue that these three, entirely new collaborations represent evidence of the emergence of a collective impact approach (Hanleybrown et al., 2012) in the Canterbury region's education sector; and analyse how each contributes to wellbeing and resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also suggest that it may prove useful to examine the Canterbury region as an example of posttraumatic growth (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004) at the systems level. In exploring the impact of traumatic experiences on the Canterbury education sector, we suggest that, for other geographical regions both within Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond, the COVID-19 pandemic may provide the impetus for transformational change. It does so both by precipitating a greater awareness of the importance of wellbeing and resilience for education and an enhanced understanding of the constructive role a collective impact approach can provide.

Background

Grow Waitaha

Grow Waitaha is a multi-year project designed to support schools in post-earthquake Greater Christchurch through city-wide educational transformation. At its outset, the project recognised that alongside the physical rebuild of the city of Christchurch, there was an equally pressing need to attend to a more intangible rebuild – of people and the systems supporting them. The project evolved from an initial request for proposals by the Ministry of Education and its foundational partner Mātauraka Mahaanui (the group mandated by the local indigenous peoples, Ngāi Tahu, to guide education renewal in Greater Christchurch) from independent providers to support schools to expand their thinking around the future of education, establish school visions, collaboration and community engagement. The project evolved to include a collaborative panel of four providers – Core Education, Evaluation Associates, Leadership Lab and Massey University's School of Design – each agreeing to contribute their strengths and expertise to co-design the project (Wall & Jansen, 2018).

The project's initial vision was to provide all students with 'innovative, connected and responsive teaching, learning experiences, pathways and environments', which would enable 'Māori to achieve success as Māori' and all students to 'thrive as learners and as citizens locally, nationally and globally, now and in the future' (Wall & Jansen, 2018, p. ii).

It initially had four workstreams: individual support for schools rebuilding after the earthquakes (the Navigation workstream), opportunities to collaborate between schools (the Grow workstream), the collection and sharing of experiences (the Curate workstream) and on-going evaluation of multiple data and evidence sources (the Evaluate workstream).

Six characteristics are foundational to the project: a culturally responsive approach, capacity building and collaboration between schools, collaboration of diverse partners within one city-wide strategy, authentic engagement processes, co-design approach and a transformational role played by the Ministry of Education (Wall & Jansen, 2018, p. 18). From the outset, it was hoped that when actioned together, these would produce a greater level of impact than their individual parts. Additionally, the design team sought to further enhance the programme's scale and quality by developing a compelling purpose and shared vision, creating a user-centred design and delivery, adopting a collaborative structure, maintaining flexible business arrangements and ensuring systems were agile and responsive (Wall & Jansen, 2018, p. 30).

The collaboration, involving such a wide range of stakeholders and experienced leaders from schools, as well as four potentially competitive providers of professional learning and development to educators, marked a regional first at this scale. Between 2016 and 2020, Grow Waitaha supported over 150 schools

and more than 1,500 individual teachers and leaders, providing 10,000 hours of interaction and creating over 100 video stories and other digital resources shared through online spaces (see Appendix A).

From this first phase of work, the need for wellbeing and resilience support in schools emerged. In 2017, principals shared concerns with Grow Waitaha around the urgent mental health needs of the region's young people, as well as that of their staff. The issues facing young people and educators across schools were broader than any single school's concerns, prompting a growing recognition among school principals and providers that these issues could only be addressed by collaborations extending beyond the school gates. Principals expressed a keen interest in creating a community of practice (COP) specifically designed to support wellbeing education across the region's schools (Cooper & Jansen, 2017).

In response, Grow Waitaha approached the New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience (as part of the Leadership Lab collective) regarding collaboration in the co-creation, development and implementation of a wellbeing COP. This gave rise to a variety of collective and co-creating wellbeing communities involving the region's early childhood centres and primary and secondary schools over the next three years. These are described later.

The first wellbeing COP, run throughout the four school terms of 2018, was open to all secondary schools in the Greater Christchurch region. Initial concerns that traditional rivalries among some of the city's long-established schools would make such a project unfeasible proved unfounded. All of the region's 33 secondary schools elected to commit a team of four leaders from each school to participate in the wellbeing COP. The programme design and facilitation was developed in partnership with Mātauraka Mahaanui. Participation involved termly hui (professional learning and development days), webinars and mentoring sessions with each school-based team. Each school developed its own wellbeing focus project addressing both staff and student wellbeing at a school-wide level and, critically, is aligned to their own unique culture and context. One participant described the benefits in the following way:

It provides time to focus on wellbeing that is not always possible in the usual school day and we are encouraged to discuss vital issues and concepts, and then discussion with others allows us to learn about other approaches/shared approaches.

(Cooper & Jansen, 2018)

This first wellbeing COP included both private and state sectors, special character and faith-based schools. With 162 leaders involved, this unprecedented, unanimous engagement of every secondary school in Greater Christchurch allowed the wellbeing COP to play an important role in breaking down established walls between schools, fostering trust and encouraging cooperation and sharing. Evaluation reports noted that 95.2% of participants rated the wellbeing COP as being of 'significant value' (a score of 5–7 on a 1–7 Likert scale) and 95% rated the opportunity to share with other schools as 'very useful' (a score of 5–7 on a 1–7

Likert scale). Finally, 85.7% considered it ‘very useful to share ideas with staff and students from other schools’ (Cooper & Jansen, 2018).

Following the success of the wellbeing COP in 2018, and in response to feedback from educators, two different options were created to promote wellbeing and resilience across the region’s education sector for 2019. Firstly, the secondary wellbeing COP was expanded to include students as well as staff. In 2019, participants included 80 staff and 80 students. Secondly, termly ‘wellbeing activator’ events were established. These were designed to grow capacity and capability across the entire education sector by inviting participation from early childhood centres as well as primary and secondary schools of all descriptions. Both initiatives were co-designed and implemented. These wellbeing activators aimed to support schools and centres in Canterbury to continue to grow the wellbeing of their students and staff by developing systematic whole-school community approaches. They acted as a wellbeing ‘drive-throughs’. Unlike the COPs, attendance at each term’s event was not mandatory; instead, educators were encouraged to drop in when the topic theme interested them. Participants reported that wellbeing activators helped to activate and provide inspiration to schools and educators in their student and staff wellbeing focus, as well as creating an opportunity to share emerging practice between schools and centres (Cooper & Jansen, 2019).

In 2020, Grow Waitaha continued to collaborate with the New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience to offer three wellbeing in education options to the region’s education sector. These included opening up the year-long wellbeing COP to primary and secondary educators, continuing the termly wellbeing activator events (open to all), and creating a Secondary Wellbeing Leads Network holding termly meetings after school to support the work of each school’s wellbeing leads and their teams.

Sparklers

Sparklers is a free online wellbeing toolkit for primary schools. With more than 60 brief activities, Sparklers aims to help students (from new entrants to Year 8) learn about their wellbeing so they can manage emotions, connect with others and draw on their strengths and be ready for learning and life beyond primary school (Mental Health Foundation, 2017). Its ‘pick-and-mix’ approach is designed to allow teachers to choose the activities that best meet the needs of their students, goals and school culture.

Sparklers was developed in response to the impact of the Canterbury earthquakes on children and young people following ‘widespread reports of children’s emotional and behavioural issues at home and school, including children acting out, showing insecurities and worries, and not sleeping well’ (Sparklers, 2020). Conversations involving multiple partners about supporting children and young people’s mental wellbeing started late in 2014. The All Right? wellbeing promotion campaign, a partnership between Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand and the Canterbury District Health Board public health unit, Community

and Public Health, had already created resources for under-5s, and when from the Christchurch.

Earthquake Appeal Trust (CEAT) funded a Whānau Wellbeing Collaboration, the All Right? partnership received funding to develop a school-based resource. Sparklers was launched in 2017 with two principal aims. The first was to respond to the emerging mental health needs of Canterbury's primary school-aged students in the post-quake era. The second was to provide Canterbury educators with a suite of evidence-based materials and activities they could confidently incorporate into their daily classroom practice to promote and protect children's wellbeing. In the six weeks following the launch, there were over 10,000 Sparklers page views on the All Right? website with widespread interest from teachers.

The Sparklers development group was committed to working in a strengths- and evidence-based way at a population level. They regarded it as essential to create an accessible resource for all children, rather than just for more 'difficult' children. Research shows that all children can benefit from learning early about managing wellbeing, emotions and relationships. Intentionally created as a digital classroom resource, to maximise reach, responsiveness and accessibility, Sparklers is also aligned with New Zealand's education curriculum for Years 1–8 students. User comments are regularly integrated into the activities to improve their interface and usability. In September 2018, they began supporting teachers with monthly emails on topical themes and different wellbeing and resilience constructs. These went weekly in Term 3 of 2019.

Two eight-week-long qualitative case studies involving two Christchurch schools and a nationwide online survey completed by teachers, school leaders and school support staff ($n = 137$) evaluated the impact of Sparklers in 2020 (Ihi Research, 2020). Key findings include: 99% reported they believed Sparklers had reduced anti-social behaviours, including bullying; 93% said using Sparklers has helped create an emotionally supportive classroom; 90% agreed that Sparklers has made a positive difference for students; 88% said Sparklers helped to create an inclusive environment for learning; and 74% said Sparklers helped to regulate energy levels in the classroom. One of the reasons behind Sparklers' success reported in the research is that activities are inclusive, involving everyone in the classroom, rather than just those who have typically required more intensive, one-on-one interventions.

Mana Ake – stronger for tomorrow

Mana Ake – Stronger for Tomorrow is a school-based initiative providing wellbeing and mental health support to primary school-aged children and support for their whānau (families) and teachers. The initiative takes an evidence-informed, strengths-based, ecological and relational approach to enhance and empower the system (education, health and social sectors) by providing tiered support, advice and guidance to the adults who support tamariki (children) and individualised therapeutic and group interventions. In this way, the whole system (education, health and social sectors) is supported to better understand the benefit of

investing in wellbeing and promoting wellbeing for all; to recognise concerns early, when they arise; and to respond holistically, quickly and with least intrusion into the life of the school, whānau (families and family groups) and tamariki (children).

Mana Ake represents a hitherto unprecedented collaboration between government agencies (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Canterbury District Health Board, Ministry of Social Development, District Councils and the Police), community partners (such as Sport Canterbury and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren) and non-governmental organisation (NGO) partners (such as Barnados NZ, Christchurch Methodist Central Mission, Pasifika Futures and Family Help Trust). As such, it represents a platform for collaboration across key organisations and people that contribute to students, families and the wider community's mental health and wellbeing.

It came about due to the increased emotional needs identified in children throughout Canterbury and Kaikoura (the Canterbury District Health Board region) as a result of earthquakes and aftershocks in the region in 2010–2016, and a recognition that the people and organisations working with Canterbury students did not always have an awareness of, or access to, the services and people available to support students' mental health and wellbeing needs. Systems complexity, communication challenges and multiple layers of key relationships and organisations were also identified as potential barriers and challenges to be addressed.

Mana Ake works across the various stakeholders in a variety of ways. Trained, skilled kaimahi (workers with a social service, education, health or youth work background) work closely to build relationships with schools, co-design group or individual initiatives to build emotional regulation, social relationships and/or resilience in low-cost ways that suit the local context. They also connect students, teachers and families to partner organisations and support families via drop-in sessions, information evenings and social groups. Teachers are supported through workshops in schools, as well as termly professional development forums. Kai-arahi (team leaders) work at the school cluster level co-ordinating and mentoring kaimahi, as well as helping schools share and explore data to best support the provision of early intervention services.

Prior to New Zealand's COVID-19 national lockdown, Mana Ake worked with a total of 5,500 children across 26 school clusters over the period of April 2019–March 2020. Its kaimahi facilitators saw 1,728 children individually, 2,448 in groups and further supported 1,324 children in whole class groups (Impact Lab, 2020).

Contribution and impact of wellbeing initiatives to COVID-19 response

The primary aim of this chapter is to consider the contribution and impact of the three wellbeing initiatives described earlier in supporting wellbeing and resilience in education during New Zealand's COVID-19 national lockdown period.

A secondary aim, addressed in the discussion section, is to consider how these three initiatives can best be analysed and understood. We believe they sit clearly within a framework of collective impact and, potentially, also align with the concept of posttraumatic growth.

The global COVID-19 pandemic resulted in New Zealand closing its borders and introducing different levels of restrictions in response. This meant that at 11.59 pm on 25 March 2020, Aotearoa New Zealand went into Level 4 lockdown halting all face-to-face social activities and closing any non-essential businesses. Term 1 ended prematurely with early holidays from 30 March to 14 April, at which point Term 2 began.

Grow Waitaha

The following three examples demonstrate evidence of the positive impact of Grow Waitaha wellbeing initiatives in support of wellbeing and resilience in education during New Zealand's national COVID-19 lockdown.

Firstly, during the lockdown period, the Grow Waitaha wellbeing COP and the Secondary Wellbeing Leads Network continued to meet virtually, providing those in wellbeing leads roles in Christchurch schools with a community and opportunity to meet online, discuss needs, reflect on and share effective strategies and resources for supporting their school and wider communities' wellbeing needs. For example, a reflection activity 'After the rāhui' (see Appendix B) created by Grow Waitaha to support the move back to school post-national lockdown and a comprehensive online wellbeing resource created by one of the participants in the Secondary Wellbeing Leads Network (<https://liveuptoyou.org/>) were shared in online meetings so wellbeing leads could transfer this knowledge to classrooms and staffrooms across the region.

Secondly, a Students Leading Students Wellbeing Network emerged as a co-designed initiative developed and implemented by collaborating schools. This began with the students of one school organising a student conference. The organising students were resolute that it not be a traditional conference where students listen to experts speak. As head of wellbeing at St Andrew's College and former participant of the 2018 wellbeing COP Kerry Larby (2020) describes, 'Instead, they wanted to create a space where teenagers from different schools could talk and collaborate. It was to be all about student voice – a conversation'. Close to 50 students from over 20 schools in Canterbury registered for the event. When asked, 'what actions could we take in the future to make a difference for student wellbeing?', responses included 'change culture in schools so that it is okay not to be okay – normalise conversations about mental health' and 'develop cross-school connections by collaboration between well-being committees in Canterbury schools' (Larby, 2020). One of the student organisers described the conference as a safe platform to share ideas and learn from others by having 'open and honest conversations about youth wellbeing during and post covid [sic], in order to begin a network of student leaders with a unique focus on wellbeing' (M. Butler, personal communication, 24 September 2020). The genesis of this

student network came from a meeting of the Secondary Wellbeing Leads Network (educators) pre-COVID-19, which then played a key role in enabling and empowering students to take an active role and rapidly organise the student gathering only three weeks post-lockdown. Larby (2020) summarised the influence of the wellbeing COPs in generating the student-led initiatives in the following way:

For the past four years, I have valued participating in the Grow Waitaha initiatives. Having an environment where leaders have the space to collaborate, support one another, and plan has been invaluable in seeing a path forward for well-being at St Andrew's College. Experiencing the power of collective efficacy influenced our vision for organising a post-COVID conference with students. It also allowed the students to create a clear plan supported by the expertise and experience of Grow Waitaha.

Finally, an online Zoom meeting was organised at the beginning of the COVID-19 lockdown, during which 25 secondary principals from across the Upper South Island and Christchurch regions shared each of their schools' challenges and planned approaches to distance learning. This collaborative cross-pollination of ideas and support felt natural and comfortable at the time, reflecting the relational trust developed across the sector due to the efforts of Grow Waitaha and similar initiatives in the Upper South in the post-quake era. One Christchurch secondary principal reflected:

Today absolutely hit the mark. You created an inclusive atmosphere, you embodied our moral purpose, and you gave promise of sharing the little that we each have to offer, the total of which is much more than the sum of the parts . . . AND . . . you inspired a blog post which I have begun assembling material for . . . watch this space.

(R. Sutton, personal communication, 5 April 2020)

According to Garry Williams (personal communication, 11 September 2020), Manager Education at the Ministry of Education for Canterbury and the Chatham Islands, 80% of Canterbury schools reported feeling 'well prepared' to support distance learning without further Ministry of Education resourcing should there be a return to higher alert levels. Further, he pointed to evidence that the region's central agency and philanthropic partners, particularly, those involved in funding or making grants to community organisations, have not seen applications increased significantly since the COVID-19 lockdown:

This is testament to our experiences in the region over the last decade. We've had more practice than most in working collaboratively with others to solve problems, and we're better off because of it. It seems slightly ironic that challenging established practices and processes is easier in a setting where the very literal foundations have been broken beyond repair as a result of the earthquakes in 2010 and 2011. Transcending single organisations to

collaborate with diverse partners is not easy but perhaps easier when you're trying to work for the common purpose of the greater good of a shattered city. But, since the earthquakes and through other adverse events such as the Port Hills fire in 2017, extensive flooding in 2018 and the dreadful shootings of March 15, 2019, we have co-designed and implemented new initiatives, new practices, new systems, new environments and new thinking that is setting new standards for the rest of the country. Building relationships of trust, confidence and partnership underpins this approach, which has supported a transformational way of working with our partners, education services and whānau in the community.

Each of these events has forced us all to consider and nurture a broader range of partnerships and deliberately integrate activities and resources to provide more innovative support, which contributes to the place we've got to in Christchurch especially. Our focus around putting sector wellbeing and student welfare front and centre of the things we do as a result of the multitude of events in the region has meant that we've likely coped better with the disruption COVID has caused across a system that's been stable for a long time. It turns out a virus, rather than robots or AI, was the game-changer! And while we have to stabilise things, it's also a great opportunity to do more from what we've learned and rebuild a sustainable system focused on better outcomes.

Had COVID-19 happened a decade ago, we'd probably have just closed our schools with little thought given to the wellbeing of students or their continuing learning. The fact that we didn't is a great result in itself.

(G. Williams, personal communication, 11 September 2020)

Sparklers

In April 2020, during New Zealand's Level 4 lockdown, the Sparklers resource, initially developed as a regional wellbeing initiative for Canterbury schools, received national funding as part of the New Zealand Government's *Getting Through Together* campaign, with the specific intention of providing New Zealand families and caregivers with ways to cope with the stress of COVID-19. *Getting Through Together* is a national mental health and wellbeing collaboration between Community and Public Health (a division of the Canterbury District Health Board) and the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand and Te Hiranga Hauora (the Health Promotion Agency).

An adaptation of Sparklers, Sparklers at Home, was launched at this time to help parents 'talk with their primary school-aged children about their own mental health and wellbeing' during the lockdown period (New Zealand Government, 2020). As well as 23 activities that parents could do with their children 'in their living room or on their lawn', Sparklers at Home featured other child wellbeing information aimed at parents (Jackson, 2020). This followed concerns over the

mental health challenges presented by lockdown and recognition by government of the need to support wellbeing and resilience in education and to support student and family mental health while students were learning from home. Initial data showed 37% of evaluation respondents were aware of the *Getting Through Together* campaign, 61% of those recalling the campaign agreed they would do something about their wellbeing and 87% of respondents (and 96% of Māori respondents) believed the campaign was valuable for their community (Ipsos, 2020).

Anna Mowat, All Right? Team lead for Sparklers, believes the experience of supporting educators with wellbeing resources through the Canterbury earthquakes and the Christchurch mosque attacks increased their understanding of the sort of resources, educators and families need during times of uncertainty. She explained:

After the earthquakes, we were hearing from teachers and professionals working in schools increasing stories of kids and/or parents being worried or anxious and teachers not quite knowing how to talk about that. We are going to find the same thing after the COVID lockdown.

(Mowat, as cited in Education Gazette, 2020, p. 12)

However, they did not want to focus only on children who were displaying anxiety symptoms, ‘because wellbeing and mental health is important for everyone’ (Mowat, as cited in Education Gazette, 2020, p. 12).

In an evaluation of Sparklers at Home ($n = 85$) conducted in May 2020, 69% of respondents indicated they had used the activities. Of these, 8% of participants had used the activities once, 60% had used them 2–5 times, 25% had used them 6–10 times, 6% had used them over 10 times and 73% reported they had done the same activity more than once. Further, 52% said they found them ‘very useful’ and 48% found them ‘useful’ during the COVID-19 lockdown; 60% found them easy to engage with; and 48% reported they were ‘very fun’ and 52% ‘fun’. Of the total respondents, 46% believed the activities made a ‘big improvement to my child’s happiness’ and 52% believed ‘they felt a little better afterwards’ (D. Ryan, personal communication, 23 September 2020). Qualitative responses described the activities in the following ways:

They were fun activities. We felt like we were being reassured and talking to a friend when we had these conversations.

Thanks for providing a great resource at this time.

Am grateful for home activities.

I love having access to these. Even though we didn’t do heaps, we talked about several of them and sparked some interesting and valuable conversations.

Thank you for providing this platform for us to use as a whānau (family). It is good to be able to access activities that are free.

(D. Ryan, personal communication, 23 September 2020)

Qualitative feedback from teachers suggested that schools found both the Sparklers and Sparklers at Home resources were useful for them too:

The information is presented in such a way as to make activities fun and I think we should all be using the same things to avoid confusing children/young people and their families with conflicting advice and that the advice we are giving them in our service joins up with that from schools/the community. It also saves people endlessly re-inventing the wheel!

I just have to say I'm in awe of how responsive these are – timed to what's happening in our schools right now. FANTASTIC work you guys!!

As a classroom teacher I am loving the Sparklers website, the resources, print outs and lesson outlines are so accessible, and very appropriate for the period of perpetual change we find ourselves in.

Thank you for all the work that you put into Sparklers. I am fearful as I head back into the classroom. These resources will help each day as we transition back. I look forward to receiving the weekly emails.

Sparklers is like our lifeline as teachers, it takes all the hard work out for us and leaves us with only having to deliver and not even worry about the resources to back us up.

I just wanted to say thank you so much for your amazing resources especially the emotional roller coaster. I work with 6–8-year-olds and they love it. We regularly check in with each other throughout the day and we are so much more aware of how we are feeling ourselves and also others. This helps us to name our emotions and support each other better.

(D. Ryan, personal communication, 14 September 2020)

The campaign's aim of promoting wellbeing and using wellbeing science and responsive nature continued to be explicitly communicated in promotional emails and social media communications. For example, an email from *Getting Through Together* (15 September 2020) explained:

We're using our knowledge of wellbeing science and the expertise we've developed over many years to share the things we know are important to build and maintain mental health and wellbeing in the toughest of times. We're counting on you to keep in touch with us and share what you know. Together, we'll continue to learn what makes us feel good, what we're finding tough, and how we can connect, move our bodies and look after each other.

To date, almost 7,000 teachers from across Aotearoa New Zealand have subscribed to the Sparklers weekly emails (D. Ryan, personal communication, 14 September 2020).

Mana Ake

Since its launch in April 2018, Mana Ake has demonstrated how an early intervention, strength-based approach integrated into school and community systems

can draw together local needs and local solutions. This flexible, responsive and relational approach enabled system partners to respond quickly in 2019 during the aftermath of the Mosque attacks and again in 2020 to emerging wellbeing concerns during the COVID-19 lockdown. Its kaimahi and kaiarahi – coming from Mana Ake’s 13 partner NGOs and equipped with a diverse range of skills and experience – worked during the lockdown to build relationships with schools and their communities. Later, we briefly review the type of support Mana Ake shifted to providing to students, educators and families during the countrywide lockdown in more detail.

Despite no longer being physically present in schools, Mana Ake kaimahi were able to continue group and one-to-one interventions with students via video conferencing. Data from its client management system showed that just over 4,300 contacts were made with whānau regarding students already working with Mana Ake during the five-week lockdown (C. Purvis, personal communication, 24 September 2020). There were also new requests for support received where kaimahi worked alongside whānau assisting them to support their children. Kaimahi checked in using a variety of methods including phone calls or texts (2000+ incidences), emails (1000+ incidences) and video conferencing (approximately 250 incidences). An additional 924 contacts were reported as providing ‘advice and guidance’ to whānau for which the modality is not noted (but assumed to be one of the previously mentioned). Kaimahi also provided additional assistance in the form of food parcels to at least 15 families. Kaimahi reported that these different ways of offering interventions were highly effective during the lockdown, especially due to the increased input and involvement with whānau (C. Purvis, personal communication, 24 September 2020).

The following case study describes the support process and outcomes:

Child who had been struggling with school prior to lockdown – getting angry and not wanting to attend – predominant difficulties around emotional regulation. Kaimahi completed face-to-face sessions prior to lockdown, then further video conferencing with the child during the lockdown period. Interventions included Zones of Regulation, art and talking therapies to deal with his big worries and anxious feelings (some relating to previous events; i.e., the Christchurch mosque attacks 2019). The child was very open about his worries, and he had a tendency to escalate those thoughts. Kaimahi used strategies and worksheets to help calm those worries – which was successful in overcoming some of his anxieties and worries. During lockdown CBT was used to get him to sleep in his own room and with Mum’s support this exercise was also successful. Overall Mana Ake kaimahi supported Ben with his anxious feeling and worries, and was able to continue the support throughout lockdown. The kaimahi talked about the success of using CBT and using the ‘worry gremlin’ to deal with his big worries and anxious thoughts. With these sessions, alongside Mum’s continued support to shrink the worry gremlin instead of ‘feeding him’, the child slept in his bed himself, which he hadn’t done for over a year. The kaimahi was thrilled with the progress (‘I’m so happy with this piece of work!’) and reported that

the child's Mum is 'so so pleased and truly thankful as she has been able to sleep right too'.

(C. Purvis, personal communication, 24 September 2020)

The Canterbury District Health Board's Caralyn Purvis, the project's evaluation lead, said that having previously established relationships made it easier to support student and family wellbeing during the lockdown period via coaching (for both parents and students), regular check-ins and suggesting resources. She explained:

Kaimahi and whānau could then work collaboratively to discuss and modify these strategies and methods of support to be able to meet the needs of the tamariki and whānau at that given point in time. Where kaimahi had already been working with tamariki directly the kaimahi were able to reinforce strategies through one-to-one sessions with them directly. Tamariki were able to engage (virtually) in interactive activities that would keep them focused and able to continue working on their wellbeing. Most of the tools utilised centred around emotional regulation, and the multi-pronged approach working with tamariki and whānau resulted in some positive gains for the whānau as a whole. Kaimahi also encouraged whānau to order relevant books and read these with their tamariki, providing further tools and modalities of reinforcement. Whānau that were supporting children with autism or other specific behaviour needs were able to get increased support.

(C. Purvis, personal communication, 24 September 2020)

The leadership group for Mana Ake had already considered making its Leading Lights online resource for educators available to whānau, which also made its rapid launch in March 2020 possible. Designed to provide clear guidance and information to families seeking wellbeing support, the site was visited by more than 2,000 people during April 2020 with approximately 14,500 page views. Traffic to the website subsequently decreased and stabilised post-lockdown to approximately 1,000 unique visitors per month, and page views hover between 10,000 and 12,000 (May, July, and August) and 17,000 (June) (C. Purvis, personal communication, 14 September 2020).

Anticipating that the return to school and return to 'normal life' would be challenging for many tamariki, kaimahi developed activity booklets that supported the healthy reintegration of children back into the schooling system. This addressed specific anxiety issues identified by individuals and the community.

Discussion

This chapter has explored how a multi-year commitment to building wellbeing capacity and systems connections has been a protective factor for the Christchurch education sector during the current COVID-19 crisis. We will now reflect upon four key lessons learned from the development and implementation of the

three wellbeing in education initiatives, in the hope that the Canterbury region's experience can be used to inform future initiatives designed to promote wellbeing and resilience in global education sectors. We will also review evidence of collective impact and posttraumatic growth at the systems level.

Firstly, we want to emphasise the critical importance of collective action. All three of these initiatives encourage a collective approach to wellbeing and resilience promotion. In each instance, knowledge, experience and resources are shared across previously competing schools, in collaborations involving multiple professional learning providers, government partners and, in the case of Mana Ake, several community partners and NGO partners. Each initiative contributes to creating a city-wide vision for education that promotes and protects student wellbeing and has effectively broken down traditional operational silos.

Once educators and students move past the initial wary stage of coming together with previous rivals, they quickly recognise how much faster they can progress by learning from other schools' ideas and experiences. This eagerness to learn from each other was noted in the wellbeing COPs, via Mana Ake's termly information-sharing forums for school leaders, and the willingness demonstrated by secondary school principals to meet virtually post-lockdown and share experiences and ideas, as described earlier.

Secondly, all three initiatives demonstrate the power of connections to local cultural narratives, local communities and the use of locally derived content/resources. We will now explore each of these in turn.

The post-earthquake environment provided an opportunity for authentic relationships between the Ministry of Education, Mātauraka Mahaanui (education sector representatives of the Canterbury region's indigenous Māori tribe Ngāi Tahu) and the four consultancies involved in Grow Waitaha to emerge (Wall & Jansen, 2018). Team members from Grow Waitaha partnered with Mātauraka Mahaanui facilitators to build cultural capability across all participating organisations. They were also active partners in the co-creation of the wellbeing COPs. This relationship is critically important, in part, because of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) obligations but, more importantly, to ensure all initiatives meet the needs of Māori learners in a culturally responsive way, in alignment with New Zealand education policy. One wellbeing COP participant provided the following feedback (Cooper & Jansen, 2017):

I walked away feeling very grateful that our bicultural partnership was acknowledged and woven through everything we did. I also thought it was extremely positive to have the importance of culturally responsiveness reinforced throughout the day while also engaging in Te Ao Māori, Tihei Mauri Ora!

Mana Ake's approach is founded on the belief that those best placed to identify and respond to the wellbeing and mental health needs of children are the communities in which they are situated – their families and teachers, as well as the social services, health care providers and communities around them. Highlighting

the value of these relationships, creating shared resources and communication strategies, and working to build connections between schools and other agencies has allowed Mana Ake to help communities use their own skills and resources to create locally relevant, timely and evidence-based responses for primary school-aged students. Specifically, during the COVID-19 lockdown, Mana Ake sought to provide support to Christchurch's different geographical communities based on what was known about their populations, trends seen in the data prior to lockdown, and integrating learnings from the academic community. For instance, given family harm was identified as an increased risk during lockdown, kaimahi received specific support and training to address this (C. Purvis, personal communication, 14 September 2020).

Since its inception, Sparklers has prided itself on ensuring its resources and activities have a strongly localised feel, reflecting the local language and places. Sparklers' deliberate use of social media not only expands its reach; it enables the creators to respond quickly to feedback. This allows the activities to be regularly updated to respond to local needs and events. As Mowat (personal communication, 24 September 2020) explains:

It's clear that this local voice and feel has been important – we hope that Sparklers is uniting, trustworthy and likeable. Our engagement seems to indicate this. We've always taken the approach that we are 'with' teachers (and more recently parents), rather than perceived as 'experts'. That's actually who we are – locals that go through whatever is happening alongside everyone else (earthquakes, the mosque attacks, COVID-19 levels). We feel similar things, experience similar challenges, and are always happy to celebrate the successes united. Sparklers has always been about being in everything 'together'.

Generating localised content that aligns with New Zealand's unique bicultural identity, and simultaneously remaining theoretically sound and evidence-based, is a common theme to all three initiatives. Whereas schools in other countries have adopted Seligman's (2012) PERMA model of wellbeing, the three wellbeing initiatives described in this chapter have instead drawn from Mason Durie's (2004) Te Whare Tapa Wha hauora model. While the VIA's 24 character strengths sometimes feature in these initiatives, they do so alongside valued Māori strengths such as manaakitanga (care and hospitality), whanaungatanga (connections) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship/protection), which are familiar to New Zealand schools. This makes them relevant to our unique New Zealand culture and context and follows a deliberate intention by those involved to grow localised knowledge and culture capability, rather than rely on international frameworks and models.

Thirdly, we applaud that all three of these education initiatives aim to promote wellbeing and resilience at the population level, taking a universal, strengths-based, preventative approach, rather than focusing mental health resources purely in a targeted, reactive, interventionist manner. For example, the Sparklers toolkit

explicitly recognises the value of universal wellbeing promotion: ‘We know that over the course of our lives we all face obstacles, and the earlier we learn coping strategies, the better we are able to respond’ (Ihi Research, 2020). This concurs with Keyes’ (2007) and Huppert’s (2009) recommended a dual-process approach to mental health promotion involving wellbeing promotion at the population level as well as addressing mental illness. Further, it aligns with the New Zealand Government’s *Kia Kaha, Kia Māia, Kia Ora Aotearoa – COVID-19 psychosocial and mental wellbeing recovery plan*, which aims to ‘protect and enhance people’s mental wellbeing so that they can adapt and thrive after their lives have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic’ (Ministry of Health, 2020). As former Chief Science Advisor, Professor Sir Peter Gluckman (2011) explained in aftermath of the Christchurch earthquakes:

A comprehensive and effective psychosocial recovery programme needs to support the majority of the population who need some psychosocial support within the community (such as basic listening, information and community-led interventions) to allow their innate psychological resilience and coping mechanisms to come to the fore.

All three initiatives align with the universal and settings-based approach to wellbeing promotion outlined by the Ottawa Charter (World Health Organization, 1986) by creating supportive environments, developing personal skills and strengthening community action.

The initiatives also fit with two best-practice recommendations: firstly, that the education sector provides both a unique opportunity and a fitting context for universal wellbeing promotion (Hone, 2015), and, secondly, that it takes a systemic approach to build wellbeing and resilience across the whole-school system (Appelhoff, 2013; Education Review Office, 2015; Fitzpatrick et al., 2018; Quinlan & Hone, 2020; White & Kern, 2018). As Punukollu et al. (2019) report, school-based programmes aim to promote resilience and mental wellbeing by equipping students with healthy coping strategies and improved awareness of mental health through lessons integrated into the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. They also note that wellbeing promotion is ‘less intrusive’ and can remove the stigma of seeking support, which potentially increases equity of access (C. Purvis, personal communication, 24 September 2020).

Finally, it is noteworthy that all three projects report benefits from online delivery. Grow Waitaha was quickly able to transition its conferences to online meetings, thereby leveraging existing wellbeing networks to continue to deliver wellbeing and resilience support to Canterbury’s education sector during the lockdown. Sparklers had already identified the importance of web-based delivery for equity and responsiveness, so was able to scale up to national delivery. Mana Ake reports several benefits of virtual conferencing including increased attendance at its information-sharing forums for school leaders during lockdown (and from a wider range of schools) and augmented capability in serving families,

particularly those living in rural and remote locations. Purvis (personal communication, 24 September 2020) elaborates:

Many parents/caregivers and schools reported that they preferred the flexibility of times available and, particularly for parents/caregivers in rural locations, offering advice and guidance remotely increased the accessibility of support. Although it is acknowledged that access to resources and internet can be a barrier for some, there are clear positives in providing support remotely for others. For these reasons, the option to offer both in-person, and virtual support remains, with remote ways of working sustained post-lockdown.

The earlier evidence suggests that Christchurch is developing an ecosystem of collective impact initiatives on a city-wide scale. Hanleybrown et al. (2012) describe the five conditions of collective impact as (1) common agenda, (2) shared measurement, (3) mutually reinforcing activities, (4) continuous communication and (5) backbone support. All these factors were intentionally designed into the multi-stakeholder alliance that is Grow Waitaha from 2015 onwards (Wall & Jansen, 2018), and we believe the evidence reviewed in this chapter demonstrates that all three initiatives are achieving collective impact.

Taken together, these and other wellbeing initiatives appear to be coalescing into a collective impact ‘movement’ (Cabaj & Weaver, 2016). As Cabaj and Weaver (2016) describe in their seminal study *Collective Impact 3.0: An evolving framework for community change*, evidence is accruing that the Canterbury education sector is undergoing an evolution from management-focused conditions to five generative conditions that are more consistent with building a movement; that is, (1) community aspiration, (2) strategic learning, (3) high leverage activities, (4) inclusive community engagement and (5) containers for change. For example, Grow Waitaha is now intentionally transitioning towards embedding transformational change, whereby collaboration, collective impact and cultural partnership are considered the new ‘normal’.

While posttraumatic growth has hitherto been principally conceptualised and operationalised at the individual level, Tedeschi et al. (2018) acknowledge that both public and private organisations can be stronger as a result of crises too, potentially providing ‘more opportunities to improve the work environment, foster work engagement and build stronger relationships within community or other organizations’ (p. 176). We believe that posttraumatic growth has occurred at the systems level in the period since the 2010–2012 earthquakes. While a robust analysis of systems level posttraumatic growth is beyond the scope of the current chapter, we will briefly review how the region’s experience aligns with the criteria for posttraumatic growth. We propose that the Canterbury region can claim to have experienced posttraumatic growth in the following ways: a precipitating ‘seismic’ event disrupted its collective assumptive world; the education leaders involved in these three initiatives have participated in the cognitive task of rebuilding a meaningful and coherent view of their city, and the education

sector in particular; new relational patterns have been formed; there is evidence that the multiple stakeholders believe the system has changed for the better in a significant way; and positive change can be attributed to the precipitating event (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

Given the criteria for posttraumatic growth are operationalised at the individual level, it is impossible to evaluate the region empirically using existing criteria. However, we contend that this chapter points to sufficient evidence of posttraumatic growth in the Canterbury region, at the systems level, to merit further investigation. Certainly, the initiatives described here involve a movement beyond pre-trauma levels of adaptation and functioning and have produced a community of education leaders who are ‘more resistant to being shattered’ (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004, p. 5). Further, we posit that expanding the conceptualisation and operationalisation of posttraumatic growth beyond the individual to the systems level may be a particularly useful scientific endeavour in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Next steps would be to critically identify a set of criteria and indicators that can operationalise posttraumatic growth at a systems level, and we concur with Tedeschi and colleagues’ (2018) recommendation that these be aligned to cultural values and visions.

Significance

The earlier case study provides reflections and insights for consideration when collaborative forms of governance, funding and facilitation are being proposed and developed to promote and protect wellbeing in educational contexts. It was not our purpose to fully describe the impact of these programmes, as it is too early for this to be fully documented. Rather, we aimed to outline the transformative nature and potential of this kind of collaborative approach to wellbeing promotion, as well as draw attention to the opportunity that trauma, challenge, disruption and loss can bring for collective impact and posttraumatic growth.

Existence of these three wellbeing initiatives provided the systems in place to rapidly take action to support the mental health and wellbeing needs of the region’s education communities during the national lockdown period from 25 March to 8 June 2020, and in the case of Sparklers at Home, to support students and their families’ wellbeing nationally. Having these collective structures in place enabled educators, education leaders, students and professional learning providers to collaborate and share knowledge, experiences and resources during the pandemic, both among themselves and the wider communities they support. Wellbeing promotion was not a new concept when COVID-19 forced Canterbury schools to shut their doors. Many of the region’s schools already had wellbeing teams and knew whom to approach for the local resources they needed. These initiatives demonstrate what can be achieved when crisis sweeps a broom through business-as-usual structures and processes. As Canterbury schools adapt to what for some is their fourth ‘new normal’ since 2010, the regional education sector is showing some pride in its demonstrable ability to flex and shift both practices and thinking.

The Canterbury approach to wellbeing and resilience education has elevated the importance of wellbeing as a shared goal for effective school and societal functioning and highlighted the need for collective action to create this shared collective good. Advancing a collective impact movement, as Cabaj and Weaver (2016) describe, is likely to be high on the regional education agenda in the next five years. Further, there is evidence that the reach of these wellbeing initiatives is expanding beyond Canterbury. In 2020, Leadership Lab (one of the Grow Waitaha providers) partnered with the New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience and Ngati Wai iwi to create a newly formed wellbeing COP in the Northland region, north of Auckland. To date, this COP has utilised the same prototype created by the Christchurch experience, whereby all schools (primary and secondary) elect to commit teams of their leaders to collaborate on building region-wide wellbeing over a two-year period.

Stronger for tomorrow, Mana Ake's strapline not only encapsulates the focus of that particular project but can also be applied to the outcomes of these three initiatives. The Canterbury region faces the future literally stronger for tomorrow, due to the challenges they have faced and the collective approach they have adopted to address a decade's worth of disruption and challenge.

Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed the contribution of three wellbeing initiatives – Grow Waitaha, Mana Ake and Sparklers – which were established to support the mental health needs of Cantabrians as a result of the 2010–2012 Canterbury earthquakes. These initiatives accelerated and embedded a foundational understanding among the region's schools of the importance of wellbeing and resilience as part of education. All three provided creative and practical channels and resources to support collective and individual mental health and wellbeing during the period of disruption and crisis caused by the COVID-19 national lockdown.

We argue that collective impact and posttraumatic growth have occurred at a systems level in Canterbury and that this city-wide transformation has advanced the education sector's regional response to present and future disruption. We have shared key learnings from the wellbeing in education initiatives so other regions and countries can learn from our experience. Ultimately, we suggest that as well as reviewing the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the wellbeing and resilience of our young people and the wider education sector, it is vital to remain open to the possibility that trauma and disruption potentially act as an accelerant of transformational change. As Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) assert, 'out of loss there is gain' (p. 6). When no longer able to operate as business-as-usual, the Canterbury region found new ways of working together to make the region stronger for tomorrow.

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Appendix A

Grow Waitaha Secondary Community of Practice Wellbeing #1 video www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxqrMxSCCBw&t=1s

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Appendix B

After the Rāhui reflective process <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BB-LwLmmN2sf3ATFL1j2fw3R5d1zhyRXoP9738iE9u8/edit>

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