

KOHA KAI EVALUATION

Koha Kai has been active in the Southland community since March 2014. It provides opportunities for vulnerable adults, particularly (but not exclusively) those living with physical or intellectual disabilities to learn, grow, and engage in meaningful work, empowering people through removing barriers and allowing community integration. Since inception, 63 trainees and 31 volunteers have been involved with Koha Kai.

WORK STREAMS

1. Lunches in Schools - where trainees cook and serve healthy kai in schools at \$2 per lunch. Koha Kai currently provide lunches for 8 schools across Southland, three times a week in each school.
2. Horticulture - including a large community garden (maara kai) and gardens within schools.
3. Hospitality - through their community meals, catering and food truck.
4. Innovation - where other programmes, such as the school holiday programme are delivered.

EVALUATION

1. What are the outcomes of Koha Kai?
2. How can the sustainability of Koha Kai be enhanced?

METHODOLOGY

- Data collection
 - online and face to face surveys
 - semi-structured interviews.
- Participants
 - 18 trainees
 - 11 whānau
 - 16 stakeholders & associates
 - 33 online community

KOHA KAI PRODUCED IN 2019



COMMUNITY MEALS



TRAINEE LUNCHES



TRAINEE HOME MEALS



LUNCHES IN SCHOOLS

FINDINGS

Overall findings show the outcomes of Koha Kai are both immense and far-reaching with its benefits being holistic and multidimensional. Strongly significant relationships were uncovered showing it is very unlikely that the changes could have happened due to chance. There is robust evidence that Koha Kai is having a major positive impact on the lives of trainees and their whānau.

The four different participant groups were consistently positive about Koha Kai outcomes for trainees. Stakeholders were the most positive about trainee outcomes, followed by trainees themselves and then whānau. The online community, whilst still mostly positive, were the least positive participant group.



Trainees

THROUGH KOHA KAI TRAINEES:

- have learnt new skills
- grown in independence
- improved physical and mental health
- gained work experience
- grown their social skills
- made new friends and are less lonely both inside and outside Koha Kai

47% OF TRAINEES WHO EXITED KOHA KAI SECURED EXTERNAL EMPLOYMENT

LIFE SATISFACTION

Trainees rated how satisfied they were with their life before Koha Kai and how satisfied they were with their life now.
(1 being completely dissatisfied, 10 being completely satisfied)

4.65 BEFORE **8.88** AFTER

MENTAL HEALTH

Trainees rated their mental health prior to Koha Kai and since they had taken part.
(1 being poor, 5 being excellent)

2.35 BEFORE **4.35** AFTER

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Trainees rated their physical health before and after Koha Kai.
(1 being poor, 5 being excellent)

2.24 BEFORE **3.55** AFTER

SOCIAL CONNECTION

Trainees rated how lonely they were before and after taking part in Koha Kai.
(1 being all the time, 5 being none of the time)

2.88 BEFORE **4.24** AFTER

OUTCOMES

Trainee Outcomes Whānau Outcomes Community Outcomes

"Koha Kai is more than just a word. It was like a life saving place. It gave me something to do from 9 to 2.30"

"It has given her independence and her ability to be able to do something. She began to say things like 'I can actually do this'."

100% agreed that trainees are more satisfied with life

83% agreed that Koha Kai had led to an improvement in their own mental health

84% of whānau had experience improved physical health

83% say Koha Kai has given them the opportunity to work more through freed up time and energy

Whānau



POSITIVE BENEFITS FOR WHĀNAU:

- learnt about their child's/young persons capabilities
- an improvement in mental health
- reduction in stress
- improvement in physical health
- increased access to healthy food
- more time to undertake activities unrelated to caring for their child

"Koha Kai changed my world. I am no longer just a care-giver. I am a mother."

"The big thing is having the weight lifted off. It is huge. The stress levels in the house have dropped substantially."

Additional Outcomes

KOHA KAI CONTRIBUTES TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH VOLUNTEER WORK AND UPSKILLING ITS VOLUNTEERS:

- 64% of volunteers exited onto external employment
- 8% of people who were previously volunteers were employed by Koha Kai in team leader roles

KOHA KAI REDUCES THE NEED FOR PUBLIC SERVICES:

- reduced demand for mental health services
- reduced demand on physical health services
- reduced demand for in-home professional care

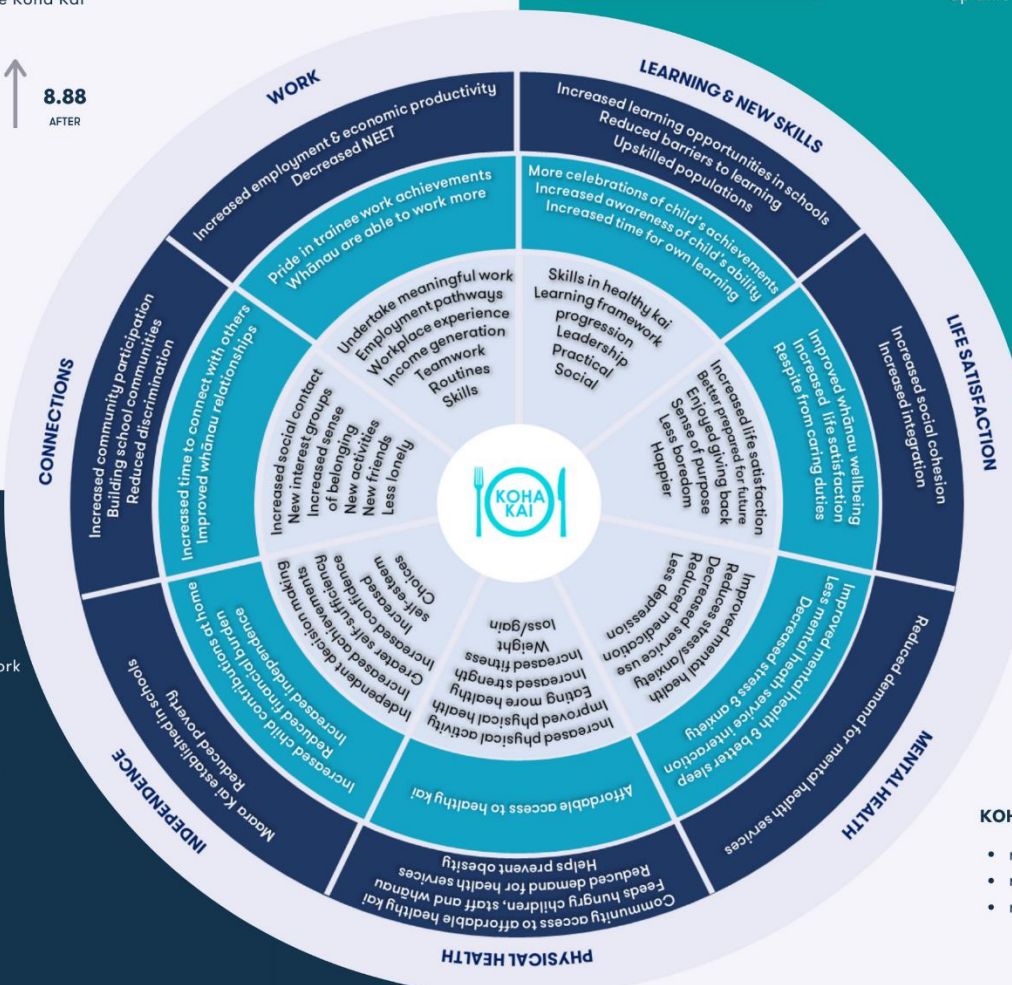
"My son no longer has weekly professional care. He used to have a team of people he saw weekly. He doesn't need any of the people anymore."

"Principals were emphatic about the positive difference Koha Kai was making towards the health of their school children"

POSITIVE DIFFERENCES FOR SCHOOL COMMUNITIES:

- children no longer going hungry and more able to learn
- children are making more healthy food choices
- ensures all children have access to a healthy lunch
- voucher system reduces stigma for those unable to pay for meals
- opportunities for school children and the trainees to work together
- social interaction and the recognition that people living with disabilities have skills and knowledge to offer
- teaching tamariki about planting, sowing and harvesting of healthy kai, as well as environmental sustainability

"Previously they felt invisible and now they don't; that is such a big breakthrough. They were always on the side-lines looking in on life and now, what a huge change in their life they are in here now and looking out."



Stakeholders

- 100%** agree that Koha Kai enables trainees to undertake meaningful work
- 100%** strongly agreed that Koha Kai had positive outcomes on the Invercargill community
- 100%** agreed Koha Kai gives tamariki and those living with disability opportunities to work together
- 100%** agreed Koha Kai helps contribute to community cohesion
- 88%** agreed Koha Kai helps reduce discrimination



Online Community

- 88%** agree that Koha Kai gives trainees a sense of meaning & purpose
- 85%** agreed that Koha Kai improved trainee physical health
- 69%** agreed Trainees have the opportunities to gain formal qualifications through Koha Kai

THERE WAS A STRONG MESSAGE FROM THE ONLINE COMMUNITY THAT TRAINEES SHOULD BE PAID.

KOHA KAI SUSTAINABILITY

ATTRIBUTABLE CHANGE

Robust evidence that outcomes can be attributed to Koha Kai includes:

- Statically significant differences
- Triangulation of feedback from multiple participant groups

Whānau said "He's a totally different person altogether since coming to Koha Kai because he's got a team, a family and a purpose"
Trainees said "Koha Kai influenced my life big-time. It was a life changer"

ENABLING FACTORS

Factors enabling Koha Kai to achieve positive outcomes for trainees, their whānau and the community:

- a strengths-based approach that focuses on ability rather than disability
- supportive expectations that are high but achievable
- flexible environments that are adapted to consider the nature of trainee disabilities
- the van, which provides essential transport to enable trainees to take part, and opportunities for trainees to mix and socialise
- activities that provide a sense of meaning, purpose, and something to focus on
- the approach of staff, which was described as genuine, generous, kind and compassionate
- integrating people with disabilities and people without disabilities as they work together
- building partnerships within the community around common purposes and focus
- whānau see Koha Kai as a safe place for their children to go

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Securing suitable funding to ensure ongoing sustainability
- Funding permitting, explore the possibility of paying all trainees
- Leveraging off the existing app technology

"This has to be good for economics.. it might lead to employment, and taking people off benefits. Even if it's just subsidised. It is better than sitting at home. They are contributing to something, they have a purpose and a smile on their faces"

"Koha Kai is described as life-changing by both trainees and whānau."

While Koha Kai is innovative ¼ of stakeholders noted Koha Kai needed to be careful not to try and grow too much, but to stick to their core model and to be selective about the opportunities it takes up, to ensure the continuation of the commitment to the core vision.

Whānau, trainees and stakeholders all want Koha Kai to be sustainable, and they despair at the thought of losing Koha Kai.