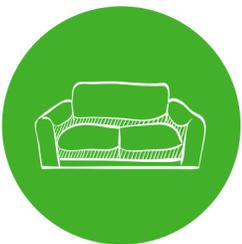

INSIGHTS RELATED TO THE FOOD ENVIRONMENT IN TAITA AND POMARE

These statements are a collation of what we heard and learnt after interviewing organisations that work closely with, and in, the Taita and Pomare community. Those interviewed included government agencies, those who work with local tamariki and rangatahi, a church minister and non-government organisations.



A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

The community help each other out and look out for one another. They enjoy coming together for free events, but some people find it hard to leave their homes and participate in social and economic activity. Additionally, there are some lonely, isolated people in the community. The good stories are not heard enough in the community.



WALTER NASH CENTRE

The Walter Nash Centre can be described as the community's extra lounge. People respect it and own it as theirs. It is warm and safe, which makes it a place people go when they have nowhere else to be and a big bumping space for the community. The staff at the Walter Nash Centre are appreciated by many. They care for and look after the community well. When big events are on at the Walter Nash Centre locals can feel pushed out, but there are also many activities that bring the locals in, particularly in the library.



DIVERSITY

There are a variety of cultures in the community, and people are generally open and accepting of these. The Taita Clubhouse is recognised for their diversity and openness about life experiences.



HOME LIFE

People are whānau orientated by doing what's best for their whānau rather than themselves individually. Whānau lead busy lives and therefore have little time for maintaining vegetable gardens of their own. These busy lives mean adults are not always the ones making food decisions for others in the household. Older siblings looking after younger members of the whānau is common.



PACE OF LIFE

People are busy earning a living, caring for their whānau and doing the best that they can each day. Busy and complex lives leave less time for exercise, growing home gardens and cooking at home. People choose quick and convenient foods because they are readily available and require little effort, at the end of a tiring day.



FOOD AVAILABILITY

Fast, convenient foods such as fish and chips are readily available in Taita town centre compared to fresh fruit and vegetables and meat/fish. Accessing a supermarket from Taita requires more travel than a 20-minute walk. For some people this travel isn't feasible, and this could be for many reasons including the difficulty of taking young children as well as shopping bags on the bus.



FOOD BEHAVIOURS AND FEELINGS

Food brings feelings of happiness and joy, especially when it is shared with others. It is comforting in times of stress. Food can also bring feelings of low self-esteem when it is scarce, and shame when someone doesn't know how to cook or has to ask for help to provide food for themselves or their whānau.

INSIGHTS RELATED TO THE FOOD ENVIRONMENT IN TAITA AND POMARE



FOOD KNOWLEDGE

Some people don't make the connection between their health and what they eat. This alongside not knowing what to do with some fruit and vegetables, means some people are eating a less varied, poor quality diet of convenient, but tasty, foods. There is some inter-generational loss of knowledge, which means people have lost skills related to cooking and preparing food.



INTERGENERATIONAL FOOD KNOWLEDGE

Life skills and practices in relation to food are conditioned by the environment people are born into. People that grew up in a rural environment lived off food that was home grown or hunted and gathered. The urban environment does not promote the development and passing on of these skills and knowledge, so they are sometimes lost.



FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Some people budget and manage their money, while for others this is extremely challenging. The food budget is the first thing that is dipped into when money is needed, because it's the thing that people have control over. For some the government benefit is a safety net that is hard to leave, especially when it provides more money than casual hours of work.



FOOD DONATIONS

There is no shortage of free kai, and plenty of fruit and vegetables are donated. There is concern over the low variety of the type of foods donated and what this means for people's wellbeing. Knowing where to get free kai from in the Hutt Valley is hard, as there is no master list.



ACCESS TO SERVICES

People sometimes find it hard to get support and their full entitlement to services such as health services or benefits. Some are under-served by health services, and sometimes people wait until the last minute to seek access to a service putting them in a more vulnerable position.



HOUSING

The high and increasing cost of housing means the community is particularly transient in nature due to people facing eviction, homelessness and in temporary housing situations. Fixed costs of housing and related amenities, such as power, can use up to 90% of a person or household's income.



ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

People use smoking (cigarettes and marijuana), vaping and alcohol to socialise with each other. Alcohol is readily available in the town centre of Taita. Addictions to alcohol and drugs are associated with the stress of not being able to afford basic life necessities and vice versa.

If you would like to know more about these statements or have any questions about this work please contact:
Emily Welch emily.welch@huttcity.govt.nz or **Barry Gall** barry.gall@huttcity.govt.nz
For more information go to our website www.healthyfamilieshuttvalley.org.nz