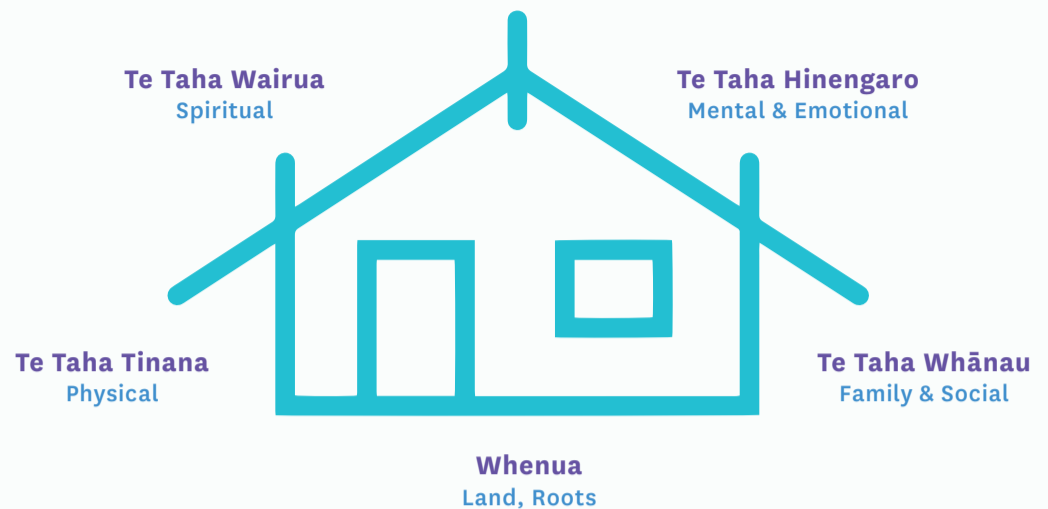


# ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARTS CONTRIBUTES TO THE WELLBEING OF NEW ZEALANDERS

This summary is designed to support arts advocates to talk about the wellbeing impacts of engaging in arts, culture and creativity.

To show how the arts contribute to our wellbeing, we've used the Te Whare Tapa Whā model. Developed by leading Māori health advocate Sir Mason Durie, it provides a holistic framework for thinking about wellbeing. When all aspects are in balance, people and communities can thrive.

We encourage you to use this evidence in your messaging to help make the case for the valuable ways that arts and cultural activity contribute to our wellbeing.



## Taha Hinengaro Mental wellbeing

Taha hinengaro is about your mind, heart, thoughts and feelings. It's about how we think, communicate and feel, and how we refresh our minds to cope with the ups and downs of life.

Being deeply engaged in art-based practices enabled people to develop new mind-sets, learn new skills, and have pride in accomplishing something different and challenging. *(Ihi Research, 2017)*

Older people who took part in creative activities experienced a range of psychological benefits including increased confidence, self-efficacy, social contact and self-worth, and decreased depression and loneliness. *(Pegasus Health, 2014)*

Seventy nine percent of young New Zealanders say that doing creative things makes them feel excellent or good, and 70% say it makes them feel more confident. *(Creative New Zealand, 2020)*

Creative art processes support the development of interpersonal communication, problem-solving, decision-making and assertiveness skills. *(Mental Health Foundation, 2000)*

## Taha Tinana Physical wellbeing

Taha tinana is about how you care for your body, how it moves and feels. Feeling physically well helps us to feel mentally well.

Participation in arts activities has been found to help maintain cardiac function, fitness and brain health. *(University of Auckland, 2019)*

Older people who took part in creative activities reported physical benefits including better sleep, increased physical activity, more energy, fewer health visits and less use of medication. *(Pegasus Health, 2014)*

Arts can support the recovery from illness and the management of long-term condition. For example, improvised dance diminishes acute pain, accelerates rehabilitation from brain damage, and helps to regulate chronic conditions. *(Arts Council England, 2018)*

## Whenua Connect to the land

Whenua is about our connection to the land, through which we're connected to our tipuna/ancestors. Whenua is a place of belonging.

Artworks and art making activities reconnected participants to their whakapapa (family blood ties), tipuna (ancestors), maunga (mountains) and awa (river), which aided in wellbeing and a deep sense of belonging. *(Ihi research, 2017)*

Sixty nine percent of Māori agree that ngā toi Māori is an important way of connecting to their culture/identity, and 77% of Pacific respondents agree that Pacific arts is an important way of connecting with their culture/identity. *(New Zealanders and the Arts, 2020)*

## Taha Wairua Spiritual wellbeing

Taha wairua is about our life force, the mauri. It's about who you are, where you have come from and where you are going. For some, wairua is about faith, belief in a higher power, or a connection to the universe.

Benefits of arts participation include enhanced confidence, knowledge, sense of identity, empowerment, and quality of life, as well as a greater sense of control (efficacy and mastery). *(University of Auckland, 2019)*

In young people, arts engagement has been linked with improved self-esteem, confidence, resilience, skill building, connection to peers and positive role-models. *(Vic Health, 2020)*

People who participated in a music programme hosted at a corrections facility reported an increased ability and confidence to deal with new and difficult situations, as well as fostering hope and increasing achievement, motivation and confidence. *(Ihi Research, 2019)*

## Taha Whānau Family and social wellbeing

Taha whānau is about the people who we share our lives with, who we care about and who help us feel like we belong. It's not just our immediate relatives but also our friends, colleagues, iwi and community.

The arts provide opportunities for engagement that reduce social isolation, encourages community cohesion, mutual support, improved intergenerational relationships and connection to family and friends. *(Vic Health, 2020)*

Aiga and whānau experienced substantial shifts in family relationships and dynamics as a result of their children being involved in music programmes. They reported spending more time together, less fighting, greater strength and resilience, and older siblings helping and mentoring younger siblings. *(Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, 2015)*

Sixty one percent of New Zealanders agree that the arts make an important contribution to community resilience and wellbeing. *(New Zealanders and the arts, 2020)*

## 5 ways to wellbeing

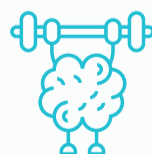
These are actions we can take to support our wellbeing. Arts and culture activities often mix more than one – providing an extra boost for our wellbeing.

Find out more at the [Mental Health Foundation's website](https://www.mentalhealthfoundation.org.nz/)



**Connect**  
me whakawhānaunga  
tātou i a tātou

Talk and listen,  
be there, feel connected



**Keep learning**  
me ako tonu

Embrace new experiences,  
see opportunities,  
surprise yourself



**Give**  
tukua

Give your time, your  
words and your presence



**Be active**  
me kori tonu

Do what you can, enjoy  
what you do, move  
your mood



**Take notice**  
me aro tonu

Remember the simple  
things that give you joy