



# Giving 2 Kids – 5: Supportive communities

Communities and community-based organisations can be very responsive to local needs providing effective support to families most in need. Children living in the poorest communities are less likely to be able to access social infrastructure such as sports clubs, kohanga reo, or community centres because of limited resources in the community. Advocating for such infrastructure and investing in communities helps children to have better opportunities.

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target Age
4.1	<p><b>Help existing services to reach more families</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support local community organisations already providing services to vulnerable children and families, so they can extend their reach and/or sustain services for longer.</li> <li>Examples are: play groups, new parent support, toy libraries; school food programmes; youth groups; parenting, budgeting and life skills programmes.</li> </ul>	<p>Organisations that are already creating successful outcomes can do even more and ‘scale up’ if given extra funding. This funding can be a very effective investment, because it relies on established organisations, reduces duplication of services, confusion and competition, and expands the reach of volunteer organisations.</p> <p>Scaling up funding has the benefits of increasing the range and volume of services and ensuring continuity of services to clients.</p>	pregnancy - 18 yrs
4.2	<p><b>Support traditional cultural and spiritual activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support minority ethnic groups to maintain traditional practices where they help children’s self-esteem.</li> <li>Run after school clubs for minority ethnic groups or religious groups that draw from their strengths and support their families’ cultural and spiritual connections.</li> </ul>	<p>Minority ethnic groups can feel marginalised by the dominance of one culture. In addition, racism, intolerance and bullying at school persist in some places. Supporting children to embrace their uniqueness can help their self-esteem and strength in dealing with the attitudes of others.</p> <p>A sense of belonging is a key strand of Te Whaariki the Early Childhood Education curriculum. Being connected to their family’s cultural and spiritual roots is important for children, to develop a sense of belonging.</p>	5 to 12 years
4.3	<p><b>Support Māori and Pasifika cultural activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support cultural activities that celebrate the status of Māori as the first peoples of Aotearoa, and help Māori children to access their cultural roots e.g. language, marae and whakapapa.</li> <li>Support cultural activities that celebrate the diversity of Pasifika peoples including their cultural and religious practices and help children’s participation in these activities where it raises their self-esteem.</li> </ul>	<p>Māori and Pasifika children suffer the greatest rates of poverty and are often stigmatised or discriminated against due to their colour or cultural practices.</p> <p>However, we know that cultural connectivity is a resilience factor among New Zealand children. For example, there is strong evidence that Māori children benefit from learning te reo Māori, engaging in kapa haka groups or playing traditional Māori games, because a sense of belonging to an iwi develops pride and can support self-esteem and learning. It is also thought that educational attainment of Pasifika children is improved when they have a positive sense of their cultural identity(ies).</p>	0 to 18 years

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target Age
4.4	<p><b>Fund pre-school recreation in communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support community-run programmes that encourage play, exercise, and physical and social development for young children e.g. Push-Play activities, or well-designed playgrounds.</li> <li>• Support play groups involving parents.</li> <li>• Provide quality recreation equipment and facilities in low decile areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Childhood obesity rates have increased by a third in the past six years. Poverty is a key risk for increased obesity alongside: increasingly inactive lifestyles and high calorie foods marketed to children.</p> <p>Pre-school activities are important for childhood physical development and coordination. It also sets up good habits and helps parents understand the importance of outdoor play with their children e.g. simply kicking a ball around.</p> <p>All children need play, recreation, and sport opportunities to support active lifestyles. Good quality facilities in low-income areas are particularly important to promote safe play opportunities and encourage families to use the facilities.</p>	2 to 4 years
4.5	<p><b>Deliver holiday programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with low decile schools or local community organisations to deliver school holiday programmes with subsidised or free places for children in poverty.</li> <li>• Set up affordable services where none exist that provide experiences and challenges for children in poverty.</li> </ul>	<p>Children in poverty cannot afford commercial holiday programmes. Their learning goes backwards during holiday periods faster than children in higher socioeconomic groups. This is because, during school breaks, children in poverty miss out on learning and play opportunities that cost time and money.</p> <p>While there is some government support available for very low income working families to access out-of-school care and holiday programmes, only a small number of struggling families can access the subsidy due to tight criteria e.g. low income thresholds.</p>	5 to 12 years
4.6	<p><b>Provide before and after-school care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with low decile schools or local community organisations to deliver before and after-school programmes with subsidised or free places for children in poverty who cannot access government subsidies.</li> <li>• Set up affordable services where none exist that provide experiences and challenges for children in poverty that reinforce and strengthen the school curriculum.</li> </ul>	<p>Before and after-school care targeted to lower decile schools can help parents in poorer areas stay in jobs that don't have flexible hours. Programmes that include some free-play as well as some learning play delivered by qualified instructors can also reinforce children's formal education.</p>	5 to 12 years

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target Age
4.7	<b>Transport to services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fund transport options to help children and families get to vital services and programmes</li> </ul>	<p>Sometimes the most needy families miss out on vital services or appointments because they have transport issues. Some parents have no car or can only transport their children in a car after work hours (when most services are closed).</p> <p>Some families have limited or no public transport options and some find the costs too high. This is a particular problem in rural areas.</p>	pregnancy - 18 yrs
4.8	<b>Fund or advocate for access to recreation facilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with local government to subsidise or fund access to pools, swimming lessons, recreation centres and sports clubs for children in poverty to enable them to participate in sports that other children do, promote exercise, healthy play and development.</li> </ul>	<p>Many sport and recreation opportunities are too expensive for children living in poverty because of transport costs, uniforms, or entry fees. Advocating or paying for access by these children will open up more equal chances for them to learn sport and be active.</p>	2 to 4 years
4.9	<b>Provide courses on relationship skills for teens</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with community groups (e.g. sports clubs, youth groups, faith-based organisations) and schools to run relationship skills programmes for teens that aim to reduce future dating or partner violence.</li> </ul>	<p>Children exposed to violence at home are at risk of becoming violent themselves. Education programmes in schools that encourage respectful relationships reduce the chances of this in the next generation. The programmes that work best are sustained courses rather than one-off seminars.</p>	13 to 18 years
4.10	<b>Mentoring graduated driver licensing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support appropriate mentors who can offer supervised driving practise to young people whose parents can't.</li> </ul>	<p>Young people in poverty face barriers to getting full driver licenses, e.g. cost of official identification and having a vehicle, fuel and adult available for the 120 hour supervised driving requirement. Some young people drive outside the restrictions of their learner license because they need to help their families, or due to peer pressure, or simply because they seek independence.</p> <p>Fines are high for learner drivers, and some young people let fines add up until they can go to court, and get them commuted to community service (not realising that the criminal record will be a barrier to employment, insurance and overseas travel). The escalation of traffic offenses to criminality has negative consequences for young people including higher risk of unemployment and incarceration.</p>	Young adults 16-24 years

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target Age
4.11	<p><b>Support young people to achieve sustained employment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support a range of mentoring/role models/counselling programmes that help young people develop a work ethic and appropriate behaviour for the work place.</li> </ul>	<p>Poverty can create welfare dependency that has potential to be passed down the generations. Working is a key way to break the cycle. However, young people without working adult role models may need extra help to develop the skills required to get and hold down a job. This includes getting to work on time, having positive peer relationships at work, and developing aspirations for a future career.</p> <p>Mentoring that includes long-term, stable, commitment is a known way to successfully support young people, and helps them to achieve psychological wellbeing and meaningful employment.</p>	Young adults 16-24 years
4.12	<p><b>Fund advocacy groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support organisations who are advocating for better services/supports for children, particularly for children living in poverty.</li> <li>Some organisations advocate for improved incomes for families, e.g. businesses to pay fairer wages and commit to regular hours, or government to improve tax credits or benefits for families with children.</li> </ul>	<p>Organisations with credibility and influence can have substantial impacts on outcomes for children.</p> <p>This can be through political influence, government policy and legislation advice, or ensuring organisations focus on children when designing services and business strategies.</p>	pregnancy - 18 yrs
4.13	<p><b>Improve human capabilities in NGOs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support providers of youth services to use positive youth development practices and to work constructively with each other to ensure that their interventions are consistently respectful and empowering</li> <li>Fund training programmes for local organisations so they can deal better with vulnerable families.</li> <li>The training will help workers to better protect children, deal empathetically with parents, carers and other people, and take the right steps to help people.</li> </ul>	<p>The Glenn Inquiry found that people who had positive impacts on reducing family violence had particular skills and responses. Local organisations are often financially stressed and not able to invest adequately in staff and volunteer training.</p> <p>Young people who face high risks and challenges require services to be provided in consistently respectful and empowering ways, if they are to have enduring beneficial impacts. <i>All</i> NGOs working with such people need to be: respectful, tuned well to youth circumstances, and <i>empowering</i>, e.g. by providing opportunities for youth to be involved in resolving the issues they confront.</p>	pregnancy - 18 yrs

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target Age
4.14	<p><b>Improve systems capabilities in NGOs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help fund NGOs to improve systems for their staff or volunteers, particularly communications and safe information sharing systems, as these aspects are sometimes not covered by other grants or funding (such as government contracts).</li> </ul>	<p>Professional development, inter-agency communication, and agreement on how providers will support an individual's needs are more likely to achieve greater resilience and development for the young person, and improve wellbeing. In contrast, a single service that is provided in a negative way can undo the trust and benefits of other positive services.</p> <p>Sharing information between agencies and agreeing how to coordinate services is an important facet of delivering what families need. However, there must be safeguards around information sharing, which requires robust governance and information systems.</p>	5 to 18 Years
4.15	<p><b>Fund or develop collective impact initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the backbone of a collective impact initiative across multiple players who agree to address a specific social issue.</li> <li>• Coordinate development of a shared vision, agreed strategy to achieve it, and then communicate this strategy among the members of the collective.</li> </ul>	<p>Local groups can work together to collectively achieve better outcomes for the children and young people in a region.</p> <p>Improved outcomes are achieved through long-term commitments by several key actors from different sectors, using an agreed agenda to achieve solutions to a specific, complex social problem.</p> <p>Success is supported by a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities and ongoing communication. <u>Collective impact initiatives</u> are described in more detail under '<u>How to work together</u>' in the Giving 2 Kids area of the website of the Office of the Children's Commissioner.</p>	All