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# **ANNUAL REPORT** 2023

*Inspired Learning. Inspiring Lives.*

# CONTENTS

CLICK ON SECTION HEADING TO GO DIRECTLY TO PAGE

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Chair and CE Report	<b>3 - 4</b>
2023 Highlights	<b>5 - 6</b>
About Us	<b>7</b>
Our Purpose	<b>8</b>
History	<b>9 - 10</b>
Today's Challenges	<b>11 - 12</b>
Our Programmes	<b>13</b>
Impact	
Healthy Harold	<b>14 - 19</b>
Two Raw Sisters and a Giraffe	<b>20 - 22</b>
Teacher Professional Development	<b>23 - 26</b>
SMASHED	<b>27 - 29</b>
Behind the Scenes	<b>30 - 31</b>
SMART\$	<b>32 - 34</b>
Partners	<b>35 - 36</b>
People	<b>37 - 38</b>

# CHAIR AND CE REPORT

ROB SIMCIC - CHAIR  
JOHN O'CONNELL - CE



Ko te pae tawhiti, whāia kia tata.  
Ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tina.

Seek out distant horizons, while cherishing those achievements at hand.

Our Founder Trevor Grice began the journey to establish Life Education in New Zealand 36 years ago in absence of health and wellbeing and substance education. Today the challenges for children continue to be complex, compounded for this generation by fallout from Covid lockdowns and the ubiquitous nature of targeted digital content. Anxiety and mental health issues are more common and declining education outcomes mean today's cohort will likely have a lesser education than their parents.

The philosophy Trevor established hasn't changed, but over the years our strategy has evolved to ensure we are relevant in today's environment.

The Board are committed to ensuring our resources are used to best effect for tamariki and rangatahi, picking up the wero (challenge) Judge Andrew Beecroft laid down to us during his time as Children's Commissioner. He asked if what we were doing was enough.

Our strategic plan has four pillars or areas of opportunity for us to do and deliver more. Within schools and beyond the classroom, in the community and through advocacy. From these pillars the Board set their annual work plan, which has five work streams:

- Ready for tomorrow
- Measure our impact
- Beyond the classroom
- Capable trusts
- Strengthening our school relationships

**Ready for tomorrow** included launching Whanake, our Cultural Capability Plan and developing a hybrid approach to our Healthy Harold programme. We've taken the hybrid learnings from the Covid period to develop digital capability, ensuring our mobile classrooms are truly mobile and that children don't miss out when a classroom cannot physically be on site. It's also a great opportunity to extend learning with live online lessons from the mobile classroom after a physical visit, for improved education outcomes and support for tamariki.

**Measure our impact.** We are directly accountable for the reach of our network and the impact of our work. We have a continuous evaluation process for our programmes which the Board actively tracks and we engage in expert independent reviews to ensure we remain accountable and responsive to emerging trends.

**Beyond the classroom** we continue to look for ways to extend the education

opportunities beyond our traditional mobile classroom engagement, developing new programmes and audiences. This year, our teacher professional development offering grew with two new programmes. We launched SMART\$ Online, self-directed financial literacy learning for students to support our SMART\$ live theatre-in-education programme. In partnership with Barnardos, Life Education raised awareness of the counselling support offered through their helpline 0800 WhatsUp.

**Capable trusts** are paramount, and our foundations are built on a community ownership model. We continue to see new initiatives developed locally, furthering our reach beyond the classroom. We are proud our Educator salaries have collectively increased 35% over the last 48 months to ensure we attract, retain and importantly value our people.

**Strengthen school relationships.** Recognising how we can best support schools and add value is an ongoing commitment. Our net Trust score of 79%, which continues to increase each year, reinforces our strong proposition and the partnerships we nurture.

Across New Zealand, there are community organisations and charities doing extraordinary mahi and we're proud of the many organisations we collaborate

with. Over the years, Life Education has developed incredible reach and expertise teaching health and our educators collectively have over 450 years classroom experience. We work with experts such as the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation to develop vaping education content, Anxiety NZ validate our teaching and learning resources, and have successfully collaborated on campaigns with Barnardos to Save the Children and Women's Refuge to name a few.

Long term supporters Mainfreight, The Warehouse Group, NZ Lottery Grants Board, Baker Tilly Staples Rodway, PMG Charitable Trust, 5 + A Day Charitable Trust and our valuable community partners Pub Charity, Lion Foundation, Aotearoa Gaming Trust, Four Winds and others make our work possible. And to our individual donors, such as our Harold Club members, thank you.

People who give up their time remain our greatest asset. Sadly, David Wale (CBE) our Patron and long-term friend of Trevor Grice passed away this year. David met Trevor near the beginning of the Life Ed journey and without his support and vision Life Ed may never have risen beyond a dream. To Annette and family our thoughts are with you.

#### **Rob and John**

**Beyond the classroom we continue to look for ways to extend the education opportunities beyond our traditional mobile classroom engagement, developing new programmes and audiences.**



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Simcic'.

ROB SIMCIC  
CHAIR



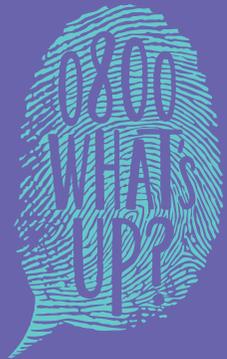
A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John O'Connell'.

JOHN O'CONNELL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

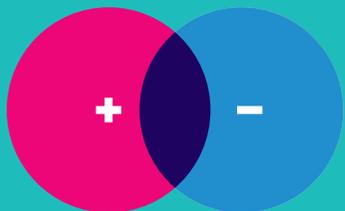
# KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023 AT A GLANCE



209,326 tamariki received health and wellbeing education through our Healthy Harold programme at primary schools.



In partnership with Barnados, we developed new resources for tamariki to learn about counselling services as part of the Healthy Harold programme. A mental health video resource for use in the mobile classroom features our mascot Harold the giraffe as a news reporter. Students participating in relevant lessons also receive their own card with the 0800 Whats Up helpline details.



We added two new workshops to the Nurturing Healthy Minds series of online teacher professional development workshops: Neurodiversity and Digital Wellbeing. The series also includes workshops on Anxiety. More than 850 kaiako and support staff participated in 2023.



Teachers from 49 Waikato schools were involved in our Nourishing Young Minds nutrition professional development programme, delivered in partnership with Te Whatu Ora and Sport Waikato.



With our partners PMG Charitable Trust, we created an interactive online learning tool to improve teenager's financial literacy. The tool contains videos and quiz content covering essential money topics like debt, savings, deferred payments and KiwiSaver.



Pilot research showed the relatability of the content played an important role in students understanding and embracing the core financial concepts. The tool is provided free to secondary schools and youth organisations.



More than 14,000 students participated in our theatre-in-education programme to enhance financial literacy skills.

*two raw sisters*  
and a giraffe



We extended the reach of our Two Raw Sisters and a Giraffe nutrition and food programme, offering video workshops and classroom activities to any schools with Year 7 and 8 students, along with live workshops in 24 schools.



**SMASHED**

EQUIPPING OUR RANGATAHI  
TO MAKE SAFE DECISIONS  
AROUND ALCOHOL



More than 21,000 students participated in our alcohol education programme, SMASHED, equipping rangatahi with strategies to manage peer pressure and knowledge to make informed decisions.



Vaping and social media influences



Demand for our theatre-in-education programme about vaping and social media influences grew by more than 40%. More than 20,000 students participated in Behind the Scenes.



# ABOUT US

Life Education Trust New Zealand was founded by Trevor Grice, who worked for over 30 years in education and had helped many young people overcome addiction.

Trevor noticed most youngsters in trouble believed they were worth nothing, their low self-esteem seeded in early life. He recognised the importance of providing children with knowledge and skills so they could make informed choices about their health and wellbeing.

From our inception with two classrooms in 1988, Life Education Trust has grown to deliver health education to primary and secondary school students across the country and is growing its support for teachers and whānau.



OUR PURPOSE

**Inspire tamariki and  
rangatahi to make  
positive choices**

OUR VISION

**All tamariki, rangatahi  
and their communities  
have the life education  
they deserve**

OUR MISSION

**Enhance the experience  
and deepen the  
knowledge**

# HISTORY

Looking back to celebrate what we have achieved

**1987**

Founder Trevor Grice gained permission from Life Education Australia to start Life Education in New Zealand.

**1991**

A national office was established in Wellington to support the regional trusts forming across the country.

**1994**

18 classrooms were in operation.



**2009**

Harold the giraffe visited space in a space shuttle.

**1988**

Teaching began from the first two mobile classrooms, based in Auckland and Christchurch.

**1990**

Sir Howard Morrison's Ride for Life raised \$1.2 million for the Trust and boosted awareness.

**1996**

The 25th classroom opened in Otago. Student numbers reached over 180,000.

**1997**

Take-home student workbooks were launched.





**2015**

A co-planning approach was introduced, enabling Healthy Harold lessons to be customised to schools' needs.



**2021**

Our first professional development programme was offered to teachers, in response to school leaders' concerns around student anxiety.



**2023**

SMART\$ Online, an interactive financial literacy tool was trialled in secondary schools.



**2019**

SMASHED, the first of our theatre-in-education programmes for rangatahi in secondary schools, was launched.



**2020**

SMART\$ financial literacy programme was launched.



**2022**

A theatre-in education programme addressing the youth vaping epidemic was launched and substance content boosted for primary and intermediate schools.



**2023**

The Healthy Harold programme is being delivered to tamariki across New Zealand, from 45 mobile classrooms managed by 32 regional trusts. Professional development for teachers is now offered on four health-related topics and our secondary school programmes account for 25% of students we engage with.





# TODAY'S CHALLENGES

Young people in New Zealand face many significant health issues. Life Education provide tamariki and rangatahi with knowledge and strategies to help them make positive choices for their health and wellbeing. Along with our mobile classroom lessons and theatre programmes in schools, we provide professional development to teachers to support tamariki and their whānau.

1. Ministry of Health New Zealand Health Survey 2020/ 2021
2. The Youth 19 Rangatahi Smart Survey
3. Long-term trends in adolescent alcohol, tobacco and cannabis use and emerging substance use issues in Aotearoa New Zealand 2022
4. The ARFNZ/ SPANZ vaping in NZ youth survey 2021
5. Life Education's Research New Zealand Independent Survey 2023
6. NZ Classification Office 2018
7. Life Education Children's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2018
8. Education Counts, PISA NZ Students Wellbeing 2018
9. Mixed progress in adolescent health and wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand 2001-2019: a population overview from the Youth2000 survey series 2021



## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

88% of primary school leaders see anxiety as an issue for their tamariki and of those, 36% see it as a significant issue. <sup>5</sup>

Nearly one in four (24%) young people aged 15-24 years experience high or very high levels of psychological distress. <sup>1</sup>

One in four young people have seen porn by the age of 12. <sup>6</sup>

New Zealand has the second highest adolescent suicide rate of OECD countries. <sup>9</sup>

### We teach about relationships and communities

We focus on connecting and relating to others, with lessons looking at friendships and relationships as well as the need to show respect and consideration for others. Children learn about leadership and teamwork, coping with change, pressure and conflict, and digital citizenship. Bullying and cyber safety are often subjects schools request our expertise and support with.



## BULLYING

60% of primary school leaders see online bullying as an issue for their tamariki and of those, 23% see it as a significant issue. <sup>5</sup>

Six in ten tamariki aged nine to twelve say they have been bullied. <sup>7</sup>

Only 33% of 15-year-old students never or almost never experienced any bullying behaviours in the past 12 months. <sup>8</sup>

### We teach about identity and resilience

Confidence in their own identity and where and how they fit in are challenges that come with growing up. Children learn about feelings and emotions, and that they are special and unique and it is okay to be different. Value is placed on the idea that each individual's personality makes them unique and it shapes how they make decisions and respond to situations.



## SUBSTANCE USE

**"Substance use is a major cause of health and social harm in adolescents (13-19 years) and is linked to the two leading causes of death in this age group: road crashes and suicide. As well as having immediate risks, substance use at an early age is a predictor of long-term health and social problems including addiction issues, mental health problems and financial problems in adulthood."** <sup>2</sup>

**22% of secondary school students reported having five or more drinks in a session (binge drinking) within the last month.** <sup>3</sup>

**More than one in four NZ secondary school students vape at least once a week. Of the nearly 20% vaping daily, 86% feel they are addicted. Those vaping several times a day are using high doses of nicotine.** <sup>4</sup>

### We teach about substances

We focus on the effects of alcohol, nicotine and other drugs. Young people learn how to identify the difference between helpful and harmful substances, how substances can change the way the mind and body works, and how they can impact brain development. We teach about the consequences that substances can have on people's lives and explore different situations that young people may get into when taking them. Young people explore the power of advertising, peer pressure and social influences.

We want to provide young people with knowledge so they are empowered to make positive choices as they enter their teenage years. Our reach is wide in this teaching strand as we educate through our Healthy Harold programme in primary and intermediate schools, SMASHED and Behind the Scenes in secondary schools, and through our website [www.gbr.org.nz](http://www.gbr.org.nz) which provides online support for young people.



## OBESITY

**"13% of children (aged 2 to 14 years) are obese and a further 26% of children are overweight. 18% of Māori and 35% of Pacific children are obese."** <sup>1</sup>

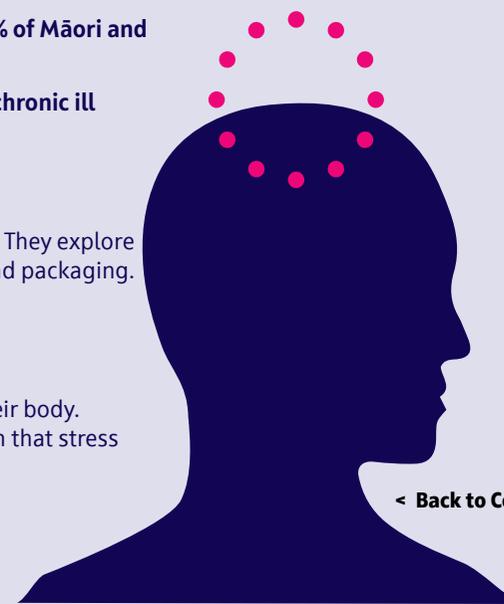
**The effects of being overweight for a child include low self-esteem, bullying, eating disorders, chronic ill health and even suicide.**

### We teach food and nutrition

Children learn how food gives them energy, how it helps them grow and how their body digests it. They explore the variety of nutrient-rich foods needed every day, what a balanced diet looks like and how to read packaging. Lessons may include science and human biology.

### We teach human biology

Children learn about body systems and how they work to carry food, water and oxygen around their body. Children explore their brain and the nervous system as the control centre for their body. They learn that stress affects people in a variety of ways.



# OUR PROGRAMMES

Brands

Programmes



Programmes for primary and intermediate school students



Vaping and social media influences





Healthy Harold



# OUR HEALTHY HAROLD PROGRAMME



**Our flagship programme has become an iconic part of primary school education in New Zealand. Each year, our 45 specialist educators visit schools across the country in our fleet of mobile classrooms.**

Along with our mascot, Harold the giraffe, they teach students about their bodies, relationships and communities, food and nutrition and helpful and harmful substances. Tamariki have fun and memorable experiences in the mobile classroom, which is equipped with engaging technology.

An independent review<sup>1</sup> of the Healthy Harold programme found that the co-design process used by Life Education Trust to plan lessons provided flexibility and tailored lessons for

schools, so the mobile classroom lessons were effectively incorporated into classroom learning. The programme aligns with the values and actions of the New Zealand Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, and the New Zealand Curriculum.

Ministry of Education research<sup>2</sup> found health is a subject teachers have less confidence teaching and identified 86% of schools use the Healthy Harold programme to support their teaching.

- 
1. Looking to the future for Life Education, NZCER 2021
  2. National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement, Ministry of Education 2022 (teacher confidence) and 2017 (use of Life Education Trust)
  3. Life Education Trust Independent Research, 2023

**KAIAKO**



# FEEDBACK



Through an independent evaluation process, we continually gather feedback from schools participating in the Healthy Harold programme to evaluate the quality of our teaching and service.

In 2023, our teacher feedback<sup>3</sup> showed:

**98%**

of teachers said the educator created and delivered lessons that met the needs of students in their class.

**98%**

of teachers said Life Education provided children in their school the information they needed to make positive decisions.

**80%**

had seen or heard about positive attitude or behavioural changes in the children at the school as a result of Life Education.

**SCHOOLS  
VALUE OUR WORK**

**96%**

of schools had full trust and confidence in Life Education.





**"Unique experience with the mobile classroom, and educators who are wonderfully engaging, inclusive and professional and covered great content clearly and memorably. We were so impressed. I wish we could have your educator come and spend a lot more time with our learners!"** Counties Manukau

**"Life Ed cover a variety of issues that are relevant to the struggles that today's students face. They provide a safe environment for questions and give students tools and resources to face obstacles head on."** Waipā King Country

**"Life Education is essential. We are a small, isolated school where the children do not experience different teachers/experts often. They need to have contact with different people and ways of teaching and learning."** West Coast

**"Life Education is an integral part of being a Kiwi kid. As a 29 year old teacher, my memories of Harold visits when I was in primary are still relatively fresh. The fact it is still happening these days is special not only for the generations that are young now, but those of us who were there for it when we were young."** Central Plateau

**"Our educator listens to our student voice, making links and connections to our local area and people."** Heartland Otago/Southland

**"My kids are more aware of their presence online. They are also interacting more positively with each other."** Far North

**"Your educators are always considerate of our school's special character and are very respectful with our staff and students. Thank you."** Hutt Valley

**"The lessons become part of our classroom language."** Eastern Bay of Plenty



# HEALTHY HAROLD IMPACT & ACTIVITY

## IN 2023...

We visited

**1,203**

schools

We taught

**21,298**

lessons

Educating

**209,326**

tamariki



**LIFE EDUCATION TRUST NZ**

*Inspired Learning. Inspiring Lives.*

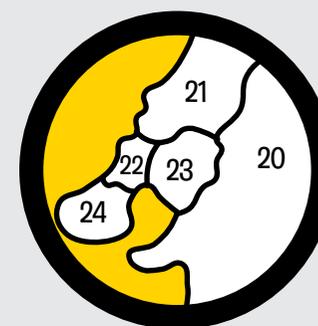
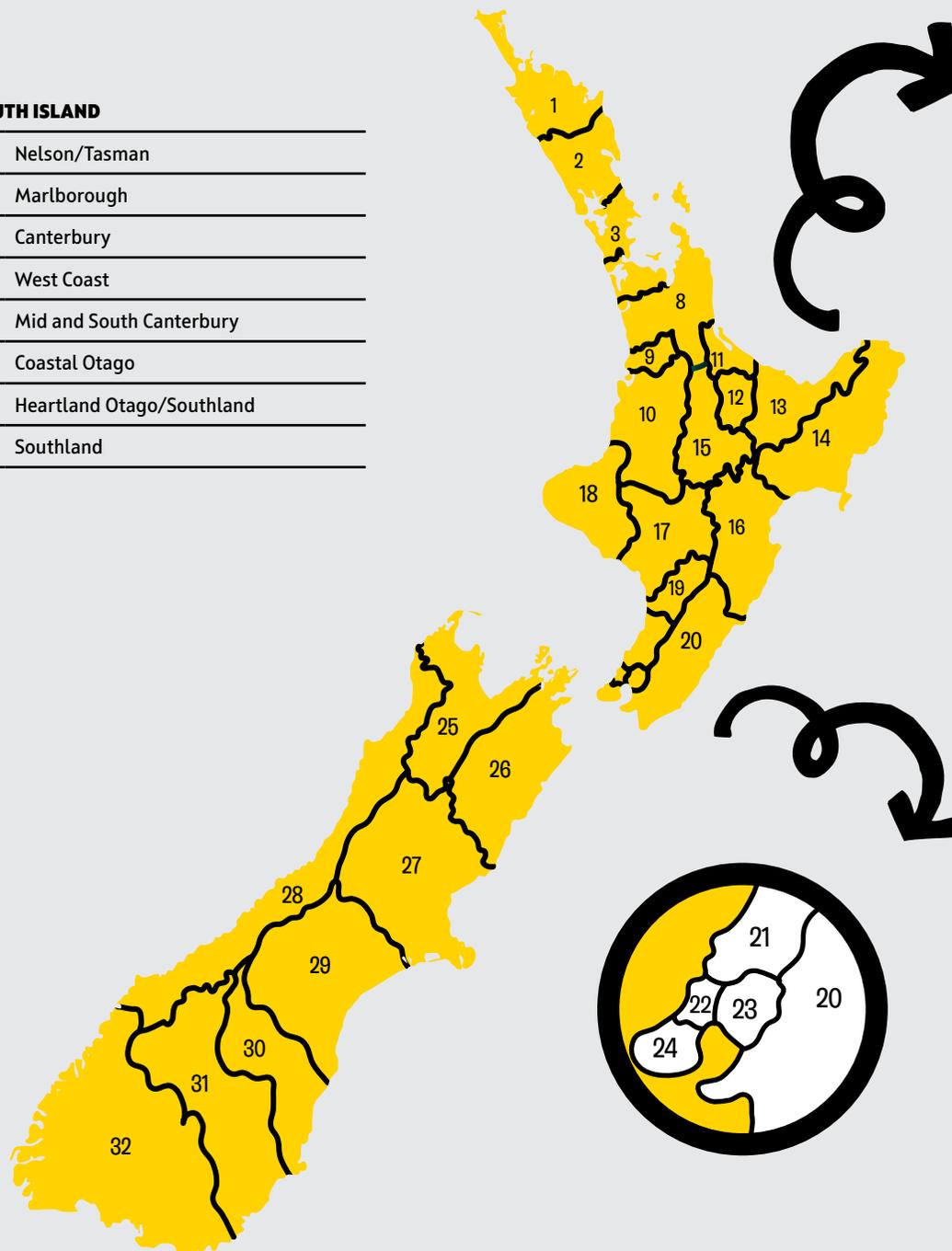
TRUST	SCHOOLS VISITED	LESSONS TAUGHT	TAMARIKI TAUGHT
Auckland Central	25	812	8,019
Auckland West	54	818	9,501
Canterbury	97	1,737	18,138
Central Plateau	43	479	5,026
Coastal Otago	36	510	3,588
Counties Manukau	102	2,618	26,248
Eastern Bay of Plenty	31	339	3,520
Far North	43	384	4,110
Gisborne East Coast and Wairoa	38	469	3610
Hamilton	22	588	5,699
Hawke's Bay	10	153	1,114
Heartland Otago/Southland	45	1,047	7,506
Hutt Valley	13	267	2,408
Kāpiti Horowhenua	20	412	4,258
Manawatu	41	680	7,022
Marlborough	3	23	184
Mid and South Canterbury	56	726	7,768
Nelson/Tasman	29	495	4,991
North Shore	26	1,056	10,453
North Wellington	21	517	5,372
Rodney	17	415	4,724
Rotorua Area	26	444	4,701
Southland	62	817	7,943
Taranaki	53	876	10,208
Waikato East	47	535	4,969
Waipā/King Country	51	951	8,892
Wairarapa Tararua & Central Hawke's Bay	38	425	5,211
Wellington City	22	445	4,878
West Coast	34	477	3,235
Western Bay of Plenty	26	550	5,691
Whanganui	44	766	5,246
Whangarei	28	467	5,093
	<b>1,203</b>	<b>21,298</b>	<b>209,326</b>

**NORTH ISLAND**

- 1** Far North
- 2** Whangarei
- 3** Rodney
- 4** North Shore
- 5** Auckland West
- 6** Auckland Central
- 7** Counties Manukau
- 8** Waikato East
- 9** Hamilton
- 10** Waipā/King Country
- 11** Western Bay of Plenty
- 12** Rotorua Area
- 13** Eastern Bay of Plenty
- 14** Gisborne East Coast and Wairoa
- 15** Central Plateau
- 16** Hawke's Bay
- 17** Whanganui and Districts
- 18** Taranaki
- 19** Manawatu
- 20** Wairarapa Tararua/Central Hawke's Bay
- 21** Kāpiti/Horowhenua
- 22** North Wellington
- 23** Hutt Valley
- 24** Wellington City

**SOUTH ISLAND**

- 25** Nelson/Tasman
- 26** Marlborough
- 27** Canterbury
- 28** West Coast
- 29** Mid and South Canterbury
- 30** Coastal Otago
- 31** Heartland Otago/Southland
- 32** Southland



*two ran sisters*  
and a giraffe



*two raw sisters*  
**and a giraffe**

# TWO RAW SISTERS AND A GIRAFFE

**In partnership with the 5 + A Day Charitable Trust, we continued our Two Raw Sisters and a Giraffe programme for schools. The programme builds on the food and nutrition elements of the Healthy Harold programme and aims to inspire, motivate, and educate tamariki about the importance of incorporating fruit and vegetables into their diets.**

The Two Raw Sisters, Margo and Rosa Flanagan, are well-known cooks, bestselling authors and app creators who like to make nutritious food fun. For Two Raw Sisters and a Giraffe, Margo and Rosa visited schools around the country, hosting free workshops. They also produced video workshops that were shared with schools participating in the Healthy Harold programme. In each workshop, they shared their practical approach to food and nutrition, focusing on easy and delicious recipes that were packed full of fruit, vegetables and other whole foods. Each student was provided with a take home learning resource which included the two recipes cooked

in the session, a bonus lunch box recipe, along with additional learning activities. Teachers received a lesson guide with curriculum links and activities to help them extend learning in the school classroom.

In total, 2,807 students attended a Two Raw Sisters and a Giraffe workshop and received the recipes in the take-home booklet. More than 3,500 students are likely to have participated in online lessons.\*

The programme was profiled in newspapers and a weekly magazine and elicited thousands of views and positive reactions across social media.

The  
**5+ADay** Est. 2007  
Charitable Trust



\*Estimate based on video downloads being shared with classes of 25 students.



# FEEDBACK

## TEACHERS REPORTED:

**96%**

felt students increased their knowledge about the importance of including fruit and vegetables in their diet.



"The sisters were confident and engaged with the audience. The children were keen and asking for the recipes at the end of the lesson. Several children told us that they used the recipes in the weekend. Thanks very much - it was a good introduction for our speech topic on Health."

**Waikanae Teacher**



**88%**

would recommend the workshop to other schools.



"Thank you for coming to our school. I have had students cooking the recipes at home and parents have commented on how much their children enjoyed the session."

**Christchurch Teacher**



**92%**

felt students learnt valuable cooking techniques and skills in the workshop.



"I just wanted to reach out and say how wonderful it was to have Rosa and Margo in school today. They did a superb job and the feedback from students and staff was so positive. Please pass on my thanks to both girls."

**Auckland Principal**





# Teacher Professional Development



"Thoroughly enjoyed the session, and am so thrilled this will be offered to schools throughout Aotearoa to upskill and share knowledge in terms of supporting ND ākonga."

"Thanks for this webinar it was very insightful and explained things in a way that was easy to understand."

IN 2023, WE INTRODUCED TWO NEW WORKSHOPS, NEURODIVERSITY AND DIGITAL WELLBEING, TO THE PROGRAMME.

# NURTURING HEALTHY MINDS



**Teachers and learning support staff play an important role in supporting the health and wellbeing of our tamariki and rangatahi, and in shaping their attitudes. Life Education's targeted professional development equips teachers with knowledge and skills to support their learners.**

In 2023, we introduced two new workshops, Neurodiversity and Digital Wellbeing, to the programme.

Teachers and educators had expressed an interest in practical strategies for supporting neurodiverse learners, including those with ADHD, autism and dyslexia. We developed the workshop content with neuroscience trainer Kathryn Berkett, who looks at how the brain develops and influences behaviour and decision-making.

**"Teachers are well positioned to meet kids' needs if they are neurodiverse, as they often know them well and have already built a relationship. They just need to have the support, confidence and strategies to do this," says Kathryn.**

In the evaluation, 100% of participants said the content of this workshop was relevant to their role.

The Digital Safety and Wellbeing workshops were developed with Anjie Webster, of Generation Online, and the team at Digital Waitaha, an organisation that works with Canterbury schools.

The Anxiety workshops developed in partnership with Anxiety New Zealand and Autism New Zealand were still in high demand, with many participants attending after a referral from a colleague or friend. Life Education Trust's monthly feedback continues to highlight anxiety as a concern for teachers and school leaders.

More than 850 teachers and learning support staff attended a Nurturing Healthy Minds workshop.

We continued to improve our model of online workshops with live facilitation, streamlining the processing and payment functionality to make the professional development accessible and convenient for teachers.



## Teacher Professional Development



**"We're having positive conversations with students around nutrition and how food affects us/our ability to function properly. Making good decisions and using moderation when choosing what we eat."**

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OUR FOOD AND NUTRITION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WAS DELIVERED TO 98 TEACHERS FROM 49 SCHOOLS.

# NOURISHING YOUNG MINDS

**Following a successful pilot in 2022, our food and nutrition professional development programme was delivered to 98 teachers from 49 schools in 2023.**

Developed and delivered in partnership with Te Whatu Ora Waikato and Sport Waikato, the programme aims to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of food and nutrition and equip them to create meaningful school policies and practices around kai.

It is based on the latest health and education guidelines and provides up to date context, a framework for cross-school collaboration and practical activity ideas. The programme is designed to meet goals set out in the Government's Healthy Active Learning Strategy.



"We have had open discussions about really thinking in-depth about how/what we are eating. Being more aware of what we need."

"I had some very cool convos with my kids (students) around body image, a healthy body."



# SMASHED

EQUIPPING OUR RANGATAHI  
TO MAKE SAFE DECISIONS  
AROUND ALCOHOL

## IMPACT

In 2023  
**21,393**  
students  
from  
**96 schools**  
participated in  
SMASHED

2019 - 2023  
**87,620**  
students

SMASHED

# CHANGING ATTITUDES TO ALCOHOL

**SMASHED** theatre-in-education programme uses powerful live theatre and interactive workshops to engage secondary school students in learning about peer pressure, relationships and the dangers of consuming alcohol.

Young audiences follow three characters and witness how they become involved with alcohol and how it affects their lives. Interactive workshops enable students to understand the vulnerability of the adolescent brain to substances such as alcohol, discuss strategies for managing peer pressure and making positive choices. For many rangatahi participating, SMASHED builds on the substance education they received in Years 7 and 8 through Life Education Trust's Healthy Harold programme.

A NZCER review of the programme released in 2022 found that the programme was highly valued by schools and reinforced information and social competency strategies covered in the classroom.



"Drinking culture is very real in their families for some of our kids and so for them, to see a different perspective in a non-confrontational way, not from teachers, but from someone else... is actually really, really valuable. And actually showing them real-life scenarios that a lot of them get into."

(School leader)



## Teacher Feedback

**84%** strongly agreed or agreed the performance and workshop explored the issues and key concepts of underage drinking well.

**75%** strongly agreed or agreed the workshop was effective in bringing out the key learning concepts of the play.

**71%** thought that students' knowledge improved after the performance, and

**97%** thought it had improved after further classroom discussion.



## Why alcohol education is important in New Zealand

New Zealand is seeing positive trends in young people's attitudes to excessive alcohol consumption. The proportion of secondary students who have never drunk alcohol (more than a few sips) increased from 26% in 2007, to 39% in 2012, and 45% in 2019.<sup>1</sup>

However, our binge drinking rates remain high compared to other countries and binge drinking is a key contributor to health and social harm in adolescents. 22% of secondary school students reported having five or more drinks in a session (binge drinking) within the last month.<sup>2</sup>

"Substance use is a major cause of health and social harm in adolescents (13-19 years) and is linked to the two leading causes of death in this age group: road crashes and suicide. As well as having immediate risks, substance use at an early age is a predictor of long term health and social problems including addiction issues, mental health problems and financial problems in adulthood."<sup>1</sup>

### Students learned<sup>3</sup>:

"Every decision you make has consequences, some of which will affect you for your entire life. Especially ones that aren't a good idea."



"What underage drinking can do and that you should definitely wait till you're at least 18."

"That binge drinking can lead to serious problems physically and mentally."



"About how peer pressure can make you do things you might not want to do and that's when you need to put your foot down and tell your friends that you don't want to do it."



1. Youth 19 Rangatahi Smart Survey
2. Long-term trends in adolescent alcohol, tobacco and cannabis use and emerging substance use issues in Aotearoa New Zealand 2022
3. Life Education Trust Independent Research follow-up survey



**BEHIND  
THE SCENES**

Vaping and social media influences

# VAPING EDUCATION

**Vaping rates in rangatahi have increased dramatically since vape products were introduced to New Zealand as a smoking cessation device. While the long term impacts of vaping on health are still unknown, vape liquid contains hazardous chemicals and many vapes include highly addictive nicotine.**

Young people are especially at risk of potential health effects because their bodies are still developing. In response, Life Education Trust developed the Behind the Scenes theatre-in-education programme in 2022 to give students knowledge and skills to make informed choices about vaping and other nicotine products. The programme explores peer pressure and decision making, specifically around vaping, and how social media influences our thinking and behaviour.

Developed with input from students and reviewed by the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation, the performance follows a social media influencer and her friend as they explore the rights and wrongs of paid promotion and the health risks of vaping. During the performance, the actors interact with students through workshop components, exploring the key learnings and encouraging deeper thought and discussion.

## Daily vaping rates 15-17 year olds

NZ Health Survey



## Youth vaping rates Year 10 students

ASH Year 10 Snapshot Survey 2023



**16.4%**  
of Year 10 students  
vape regularly

## IMPACT

IN 2023

**20,811  
STUDENTS**

AT

**80 SCHOOLS**

**PARTICIPATED**

SINCE 2022

**33,807  
STUDENTS**

**HAVE PARTICIPATED**

# FEEDBACK

**83%**  
of teachers reported students' knowledge of the topic improved as a result of the programme.

**100%**  
of teachers believe it is important that students learn more about vaping and social media influences.



**"Lots of food for thought that we can build on. Feedback from students is that they had lots of questions in class for their teachers afterwards and that to me is a success criteria ticked!"**  
DP, Tokoroa High School



## BEHIND THE SCENES

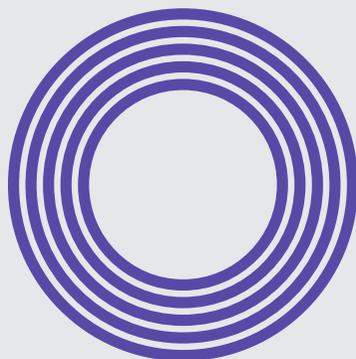
**"That when people start vaping you can get addicted to it easily and it will be hard to stop." - student**



**"I think the fact that no one knows the damage it does yet because we are the generation that will find out." - student**

**"To stand up for myself and not let peer pressure get to me." - student**





# Money Mojo

**At Life Education, we believe financial literacy is a core life skill that is important for all young people to learn.**

By teaching students about money and making financial decisions we can prepare students to contribute to our society and our economy in a meaningful way and improve their chances of a better quality of life. Research from the Commission for Financial Capability\* shows that financial literacy learning at secondary schools is variable and often confined to subjects such as Business Studies or Accounting. Life Education Trust developed the SMART\$ financial literacy programme with an emphasis on entertaining and informative content for 14 - 15 year olds. In partnership with PMG Charitable Trust, Life Education has offered the SMART\$ financial literacy programme to secondary schools since 2020 and continues to widen accessibility with free online components.

\*School leavers survey 2018, Commission for Financial Capability



BUILDING BETTER FINANCIAL FUTURES



# ENHANCING FINANCIAL LITERACY

**SMART\$ is a Theatre-in-Education performance designed to provoke thinking and conversation around everyday financial decisions and opportunities impacting young people.**

Designed specifically for New Zealand rangatahi, it is usually performed to whole year groups of students in Years 9 or 10. The audience follows three characters as they reflect on financial decisions they made as young people and the subsequent impact. Concepts covered include saving, deferred payment schemes, credit cards and KiwiSaver.

## TEACHER FEEDBACK\*

**100%** strongly agreed or agreed SMART\$ explored the issues and key concepts of everyday financial decisions well.

**88%** strongly agreed or agreed students' knowledge improved after participating in SMART\$.

**100%** strongly agreed or agreed it was important for students to learn more about everyday financial decisions.

## STUDENTS SHARED\*



"A lot of it was new information and think it will be helpful for my future."

"I learnt about the benefits of having a Kiwisaver account which has inspired me to start my own."

"Don't get into debt because it gets you into a lot of sticky situations."



## IMPACT

IN 2023

**14,001 STUDENTS**

AT

**67 SCHOOLS**

**PARTICIPATED**

SINCE 2020

**33,386 STUDENTS**

**HAVE PARTICIPATED**

\*Life Education Trust Independent Research.



# SMARTSONLINE.ORG.NZ

## Life Education Trust and PMG Charitable Trust launched SMART\$ Online in 2023.

This interactive, online financial literacy tool was designed for teachers to use during mentor, health, form time or within subject lessons and can also be used by young people at home, in holiday programmes or work-readiness sessions. The free tool consists of four modules, covering essential topics Debt, Savings, Deferred Payment, and KiwiSaver. Each module features a short, entertaining video performed by actors, followed up with quiz questions based on the money topic and story, encouraging rangatahi to test their understanding and knowledge.

### RESULTS

- 86%** knew the difference between good and bad debt.
- 69%** knew and understood the benefits of compound interest.
- 70%** said they would join KiwiSaver as soon as they got their first job.
- 83%** said they would like to learn more about KiwiSaver, savings and money matters.

### STUDENTS LEARNED



- "(Deferred payment) Schemes can actually cost more than the actual price itself."
- "I need to open a KiwiSaver asap."
- "Saving no matter how little is always good."
- "Your financial decisions can affect if you get a credit card."
- "Going into credit debt is bad, but debt like mortgage is good."



## IMPACT

IN 2023

**1,780**  
**MODULES**

**WERE COMPLETED**

"I NEED TO

**OPEN A**  
**KIWISAVER**

**ASAP."**



# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



Thank you to Mainfreight, The Warehouse, Baker Tilly Staples Rodway, 5 + A Day Charitable Trust, Apparelmaster and Herbalife Foundation for their continued support. The PMG Charitable Trust support our SMART\$ financial literacy programme, The Tomorrow Project support our alcohol education programme SMASHED and 5 + A Day support the Two Raw Sisters and A Giraffe programme.



Charity Gaming partners, including NZ Lottery Grants Board, Pub Charity, The Lion Foundation, Aotearoa Gaming Trust, Four Winds Foundation and many smaller trusts support us nationwide are an integral part of supporting communities and volunteers.



Thanks to the many individual donors who make up our Harold Club and continue their generous support.



# HEALTH & WELLBEING PARTNERSHIPS



Our partnership focuses on supporting the mental wellbeing of tamariki. Life Education have raised awareness of the 0800 WhatsUp free counselling helpline through our primary and secondary school programmes.



In partnership with 5 + A Day Charitable Trust, we developed the Two Raw Sisters and a Giraffe nutrition and cooking programme.



Life Education Trust and the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation work together to tackle youth vaping through education programmes for students, teachers and whānau.



Anxiety New Zealand provide expert guidance for our mental wellbeing resources and have helped us develop professional development for teachers and school staff to support students suffering from anxiety.



Our Healthy Harold educators use Feel Brave material in their teaching to help tamariki understand anxiety and other big feelings.



Life Education developed My Best Life for Idea Services, a programme to empower adults with intellectual disabilities with knowledge and skills for wellbeing.



Save the Children provide classroom resources around children's rights and financial support to enable tamariki in the Far North to access Life Education lessons.



Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa (formerly Family Planning) provide education programmes for rangatahi about sexuality and relationships that complement the Healthy Harold programme.



# OUR PEOPLE VOLUNTEERS

More than 300 volunteers gave 23,000 hours as trustees to ensure tamariki across Aotearoa experienced Life Education Trust programmes. Many truck drivers and transport companies also gave their time and fuel to move the mobile classrooms around the regions.



## LIFE MEMBERS

Life Education is proud to have the following Life Members

### 2011

Val Whyte\*  
Ian Holyoake  
John Spring  
Stephen Burnett

### 2012

Joslyn Tjeerd  
Lance Hutchison, QSM  
John Beattie  
Bruce Darvill, QSM\*  
Rob Wilton

### 2013

Trevor King, QSM\*  
Robyn Paterson  
Margaret Radford  
Peter Cox  
Roy Savage\*

### 2014

Michael Cooney, QSM  
Pat Seymour, OBE  
Paul Cressey, ONZM\*  
Jeanette McIntyre

### 2015

Steve Graves  
Brian Shearer  
Steak (John) Goodin, QSM  
Graeme Pentecost

### 2016

Kay Crosby  
Astrid Martin  
Jo Coughlan  
Ian McBride

### 2017

Chris Kirk Burnnand, MNZM

### 2018

Allan Nichols  
Brian Kelsey  
Ian Emmerson  
Debbie Given  
Christine Goodin

### 2019

Ray King  
Grant Coward

Janet Lean  
Keith Trembath  
Roger Scammell

### 2021

Mark Biggs  
Dianne Henderson  
Alison Gilbert  
Mike Collins  
Sheila Ellis  
Ken Miller

### 2022

Joanne Wansbone  
Kay Moir  
Jeff Paul  
Tony Sullivan

### 2023

Michelle Fitzgerald  
Malcolm Leeming  
Mandy Rasmussen

## BOARD

**Chair,** Rob Simcic

**Deputy Chair,** John Spring

Cameron Bagrie

Dee Lambie

Graham Lawrence

Christine Goodin

Jacqueline Taylor

Jeff Hart

Dr Geoff Kira

Ross Taylor CNZM

**IN 2023**

**300  
VOLUNTEER**

**TRUSTEES GAVE**

**23,000**

**HOURS**

[See over for profiles on our newest life members](#)



# OUR NEWEST LIFE MEMBERS

In 2023, three trustees were awarded Life Membership.



## **Mandy Rasmussen**

### **Waipā King Country Trust**

Mandy has been Secretary of the Waipā King Country Trust for 18 years. A practising lawyer, she handles the trust's sponsor agreements, employment documentation, and a myriad of other correspondence and record keeping. Mandy is an active participant in all trust events and activities and was integral in the decision to add a second mobile classroom to the region.

**"Mandy has a calm and peaceful presence on the Trust. Her exemplary record keeping means we all stay on task, and nothing is forgotten. She is a great supporter of both educators, as well as the Life Education message,"** - Joanne Wansbone Trust Chair.

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## **Michelle Fitzgerald**

### **Nelson Tasman Trust**

Michelle has supported the Nelson Tasman trust since it was established in 2003, as a financial sponsor and from 2005 as a trustee. She was Trust Chair for six years and continues to support the current chair. Michelle believes wholeheartedly in Life Education continuing in the region and works tirelessly and actively to seek sponsorship, grow the awareness of the trust and of the work of Life Education. She believes all children deserve this learning and works hard to ensure the local team can deliver it.

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## **Malcolm Leeming**

### **Kāpiti Horowhenua Trust**

Malcolm joined the Kāpiti Horowhenua Trust in 1998 and has created a network of donors and several annual fundraising events. He chaired the trust for 21 years and has been described as the driving force since its inception.

## **LIFE EDUCATION TRUST** NZ

*Inspired Learning. Inspiring Lives.*

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    @lifeeducationtrust

enquiries@lifeeducation.org.nz

You can find more information and contact details for Life Education Trust (NZ) at  
**lifeeducation.org.nz**

