

Mana Ake – Stronger for Tomorrow: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for schools and educators

Q: What is Mana Ake?

A: Mana Ake – Stronger for Tomorrow initiative (formerly known as the Mental Health Support in School's Initiative) was established in March 2018 to support the wellbeing of children in school years 1-8 living with the legacy of earthquakes across Canterbury and Kaikōura.

The initiative aims to work with and through school communities to support teachers, families and whānau when children are experiencing ongoing mild to moderate mental health concerns that are impacting their wellbeing. The service can support individual children and groups of children and provide information and workshops for teachers and parents.

Q: What is Mana Ake trying to achieve?

A: Mana Ake aims to complement and enhance support for children in years 1-8 at school and to increase the capacity and responsiveness of services by ensuring the right children access the right support at the right time.

The Mana Ake workers will enhance system capacity and provide early intervention to help address mild to moderate mental health concerns for our children.

Mana Ake will build on the good things already in place and enhance them by:

- strengthening collaboration across the support network;
- working together to understand where the need is and how best to use the resources we have to address it;
- being clear about available support pathways and when to use them, so that we minimise wait times;
- providing additional mental health workers to support children and families early, when mental health concerns arise;
- learning where there are gaps in the system and highlighting these so that they can be addressed;
- working together across health, education and social services.

Q: How will Mana Ake be delivered?

A: Mana Ake is designed to be a collective response to improving the wellbeing for our children.

Schools will have Mana Ake liaison workers identified who will get to know their community and have regular times when they are available to teachers, parents and children.

The Mana Ake workers will have a range of skills to support whānau and children with mental health concerns. They will work directly with groups of students or individuals and their family/ whānau but may also be involved in running parent training or providing advice to whānau and teachers.

The cluster of schools in consultation with Mana Ake workers can decide how best to use the resource.

Q: Is Mana Ake just for schools in a Kāhui Ako?

A: No. Mana Ake is a resource for all children in years 1-8 across Canterbury and Kaikoura, regardless of whether the schools are a part of a Kāhui Ako, Community of Practice, Cluster, informal cluster or any other group.

We will work with individual schools who are not currently connected with a wider group to access the Mana Ake resource. As this resource will be delivered through clustering to ensure best impact, you might like to start thinking about other schools in your area you could create an informal cluster with for the purpose of accessing Mana Ake.

The first workers started supporting children in years 1-8 of the Tamai (east Christchurch) and Uru Mānuka (Hornby) Kāhui Ako (Communities of Learning) in the first week of term 2 (30 April 2018). From term 3 (July 2018) Mana Ake will be progressively rolled out to all primary schools across Canterbury and Kaikōura in their current cluster arrangements.

Q: What will Mana Ake staff/ team do?

A: Mana Ake workers have a diverse range of skills and include, social workers, whānau ora kaimahi, counsellors and kaihaumanu. This means they can:

- assess for risk;
- engage families to address parenting challenges and build positive relationships between parents and children;
- provide interventions that address anxiety, low mood, lack of resilience;
- support families to access community support to enhance their wellbeing;
- support children of parents with mental illness;
- work with your community to understand trends and opportunities for support;

- offer a range of information for parents and teachers, through advice and guidance, training or group work;
- work with groups of children or individual children and their whanau;
- support whānau to implement changes that promote wellbeing for their tamariki.

Q: When will my school be involved?

A: At the beginning of Term 2, the Ministry of Education invited all Christchurch and Kaikoura schools to take part in a Mana Ake online survey. This survey was designed to help decide on what sources of data should be used to identify the order that schools would be invited to take part in Mana Ake. Based on the survey results, a schedule will be developed (by mid-June) detailing the dates that Kāhui Ako/clusters/Communities of Practices will be invited to take part in Mana Ake. You will be informed as soon as possible after that date.

Q: Is there anything schools can do to prepare for Mana Ake?

A: Schools/ clusters will be asked to do some preparation before Mana Ake is launched at your school. This could include:

- having pastoral support/SENCOs from across the cluster meet to understand trends, what resources are available across the community, including resources, services, skills and knowledge
- using the Wellbeing at School tool to understand how the schools across the cluster are doing and how the Mana Ake and/or pastoral support network can support you. We are working with the council on how to best use this tool for a cluster.
- bringing your leadership teams and pastoral support leads together – with RTLB, MoE – LS, Public Health Nurse, SWiS etc and start to think about how the Mana Ake team might fit into the network, what their priorities might be.

You don't need to wait for the Mana Ake team to contact you to start this work – simply contact Clare Shepherd (project manager) to discuss next steps. Contact details are available on the [CCN website](#).

Q: I've heard about Leading Lights? What is it?

A: As part of the initiative we're developing a website, called Leading Lights, designed to be used by teachers and education professionals to identify children with specific health, learning, wellbeing or mental health needs.

It will provide ideas and strategies of about how these children are best supported within schools. It will also help you to navigate to appropriate health services and provides information on when these services are best engaged. This will be a live site so when a service changes, the site will be updated to reflect that.

If parents would like more information, we encourage them to use the [HealthInfo](#) website (www.healthinfo.org.nz) which has a mix of health information including factsheets and descriptions of local health services and supports. Information on this site is written and approved by local doctors, practice nurses, hospital clinicians and other healthcare professionals.

Q: How can I find out more about Mana Ake?

A: You'll be able to use the [CCN website](#) to find out about the latest Mana Ake developments and even sign up for a mailing list to be kept up to date.

Messages from each meeting, as well as significant developments and milestones, will be shared via existing communications channels including the Ministry of Education's fortnightly School Bulletin and via the appropriate Primary Principal's Associations' email trees during school holidays.

Q: I have a question which isn't answered here, or I've been told there isn't an answer for my question yet. How will I get an answer?

A: If you have a question which isn't answered in this, or the general frequently asked questions (available on the CCN website), please email info@ccn.health.nz

Please bear with us – this initiative is very new and we don't have all the answers yet. Much is being developed as we go based on advice and feedback from schools, teachers, the new Mana Ake workers and other key stakeholders. As the initiative develops we'll do our best to answer your questions, providing as much detail as possible.