

A BETTER
START

E Tipu e Rea

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

A Better Start – E Tipu e Rea
National Science Challenge

Improving the potential for all young
New Zealanders to lead healthy and
successful lives





\$4M

JOINT FUNDING ROUND

Joined forces with Cure Kids for a second time to create a \$4M contestable fund, seeking proposals for high quality translational research to improve child health & wellbeing and early literacy.



NATIONAL TRIAL IN SCHOOLS

Findings from our Successful Learning theme's earlier research were extended to a national trial with the Ministry of Education, focused on a new entrant programme to assess and monitor early development in areas critical for reading and writing success.



CHILD WELLBEING WORKSHOP

Brought together scientists, renowned health experts, Ministry officials, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Social Wellbeing Agency to better understand measures of child wellbeing in New Zealand.



MĀORI AND PASIFIKA INVESTMENT

Began funding a \$1M Māori-led strategic research project using kaupapa methodologies, and committed \$1M funding for a Pasifika-led research project in 2021.



PARTNERSHIPS

Established projects in collaboration with multiple industry partners, including Kidsfirst ECEs, low decile South Auckland high schools, Cure Kids, Plunket, government agencies, Māori health providers, iwi, marae and communities.



PUBLICATIONS

Our researchers published more than 300 publications, focused on our 3 priority research themes – healthy weight, mental resilience and early learning and literacy.



LIFECOURSE PROJECT

Collaborating with two other National Science Challenges – Healthier Lives and Ageing Well – to fund the Lifecourse project, a \$1.5M investment looking at the lifelong impact of chronic diseases on NZ families.



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MAJOR PROJECTS

Currently funding 6 major research projects including:



Māori maternal health



Sleep and wellbeing for Maori families and their pepi



Teen mental health and resilience



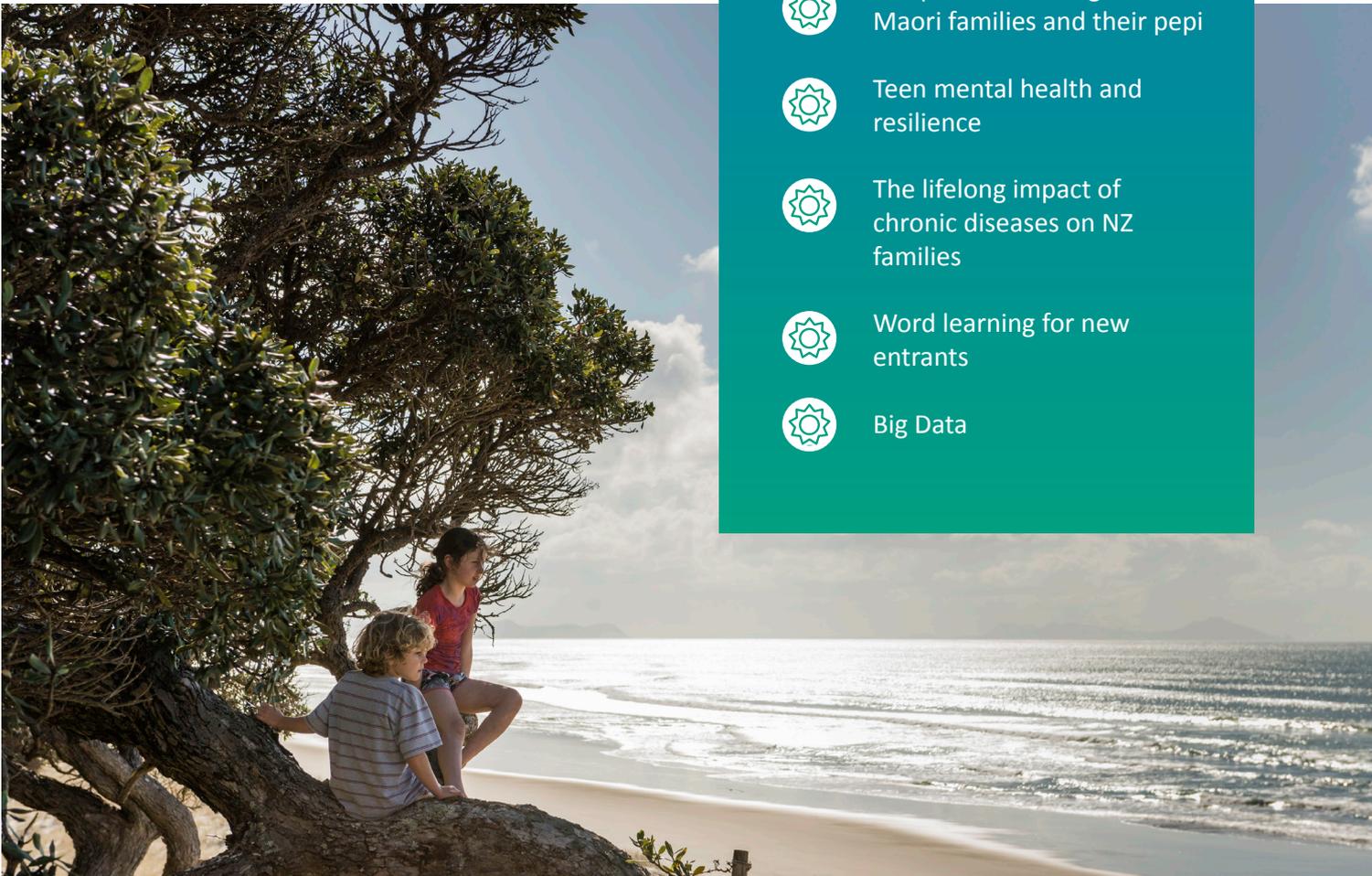
The lifelong impact of chronic diseases on NZ families



Word learning for new entrants



Big Data





WEBINARS

Introduced a popular series of webinars to share our research with a wider audience, including the research community and key stakeholders. Partnered with Cure Kids and the Paediatric Society of NZ for a series of three webinars focused on child health, including the impact on our young people of Covid-19, and digital technology. Two more webinars were focused on our own internal research projects, in order to share knowledge and progress with researchers and the people our work directly impacts.



WELL CHILD REVIEWS

Commissioned by the Ministry of Health to undertake 11 evidence reviews to inform the Well Child Tamariki Ora (WCTO) Review. The reviews were completed by more than 50 content experts, post-doctoral writers and external reviewers, including Māori and Pasifika experts. We remain involved in the next stage of the WCTO review with representation on the Ministry's strategy group. The 11 evidence reviews have now been published on the Ministry website.



LARGE NETWORKS

We have a multi-institutional, nationwide network of 160 researchers across a broad range of child wellbeing domains, as well as a wide network of international science advisors based in the US, Germany and the UK.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Developed an innovative chatbot, Aroha, to support young people manage stress during lockdown and beyond. Almost 400 users signed up in the first few days; the majority non-European. The Ministry of Health included Aroha as a recommended digital tool for youth mental health.

