

Government wants to partner with parents, whānau, service providers and professionals to realise an effective support system for whānau parenting young children with disabilities.

The Ministry of Education led a collaborative, cross-government project called A Good Start in Life.

A Good Start in Life aims to develop policy options to improve government supports for parents, family and whānau with disabled children aged 0-8 years. This project is one of three commissioned under action 4b of the Disability Action Plan.

What is the group comes up with the first to the first to



HOW

### 'My Working World' Action Research Project Key Aims:

- Explore, acknowledge, enhance and extend practices, processes and principles inherent and explicit in current practice across a range of teams and disciplines.
- Actively connect up different services, types of teams who are broadly speaking working with similar types of families i.e. accessing disability services to share best practice and 'street level' innovations on a platform of 'evidence based' practice.
- Identify key enablers and barriers to partnership working.



"It was like being a CEO of a big company, not really knowing what everyone does but hoping it's alright. It was a full time job co-ordinating all the appointments and making sure we were home or in the right place.... sometimes I would pretend I knew who they were, it was awful, they were all really nice...but I never really knew if it was all any good for Jack."

Pip, PARENT

## WHAT

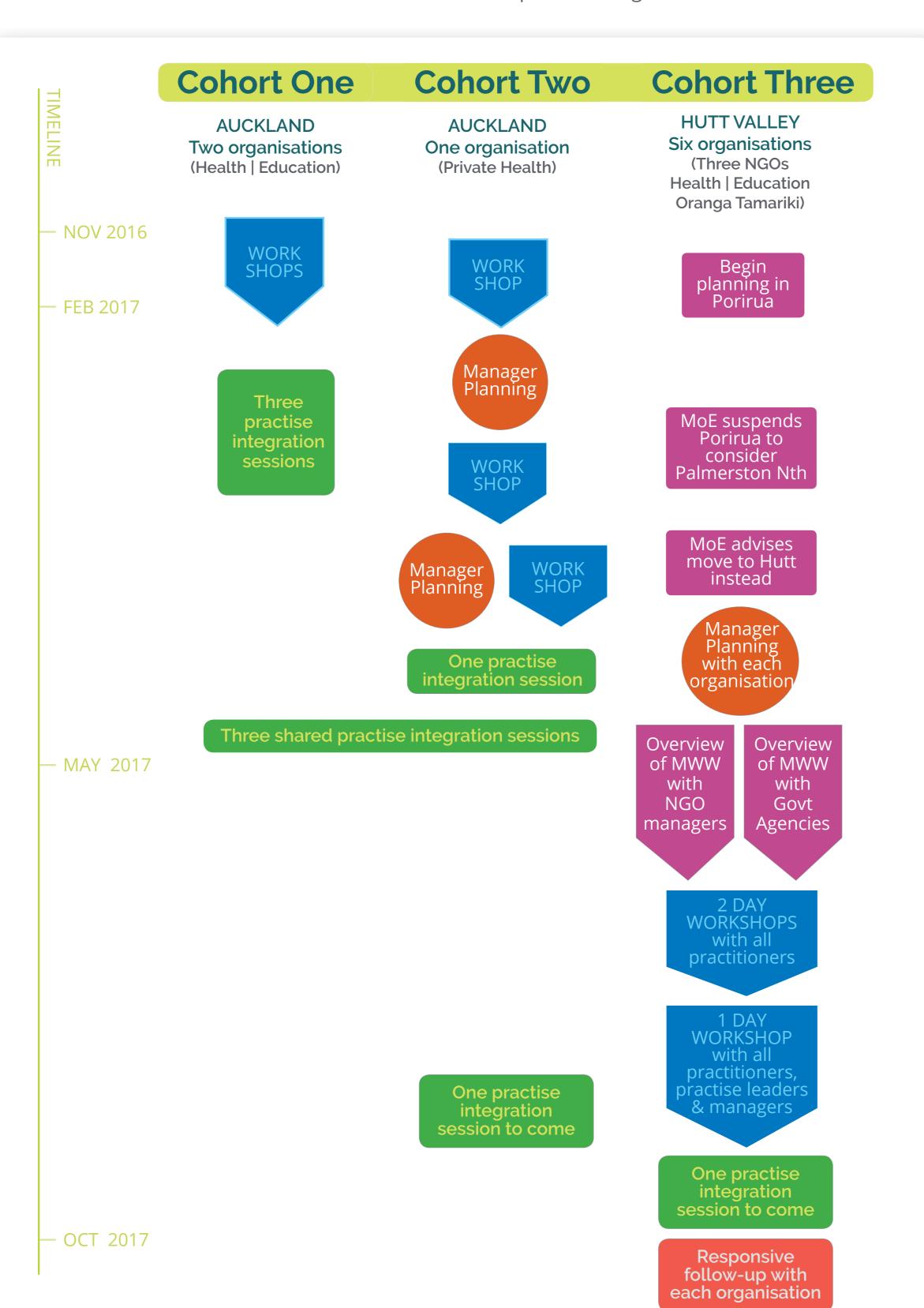
Workshops were designed to facilitate an understanding of the My Working World framework in the context of the participants' working ecology.

#### **Each workshop:**

- used socratic seminars and participatory exercises to increase reflection through meta-analysis
- practiced and demonstrated the core qualities and skills using the partnership compass
- explored the theory of partnership in relation to practice
- supported the group to develop partnerships with us and each other as a parallel process

During workshops and practice integration, practitioners were given different types of resources to increase their knowledge, and develop tools to implement practice change. We collected data about current partnership practices, analysed and integrated this,

maintaining a constant cycle of research & reflection; analysis & education; action and practice integration.



LEARNED

A shared relational framework - provides constructs and language that consciously and actively support partnership practices across a system

Empathy as true north - for self (practitioner), with whānau, in teams, across organisations and networks

Relationships need to be purposeful

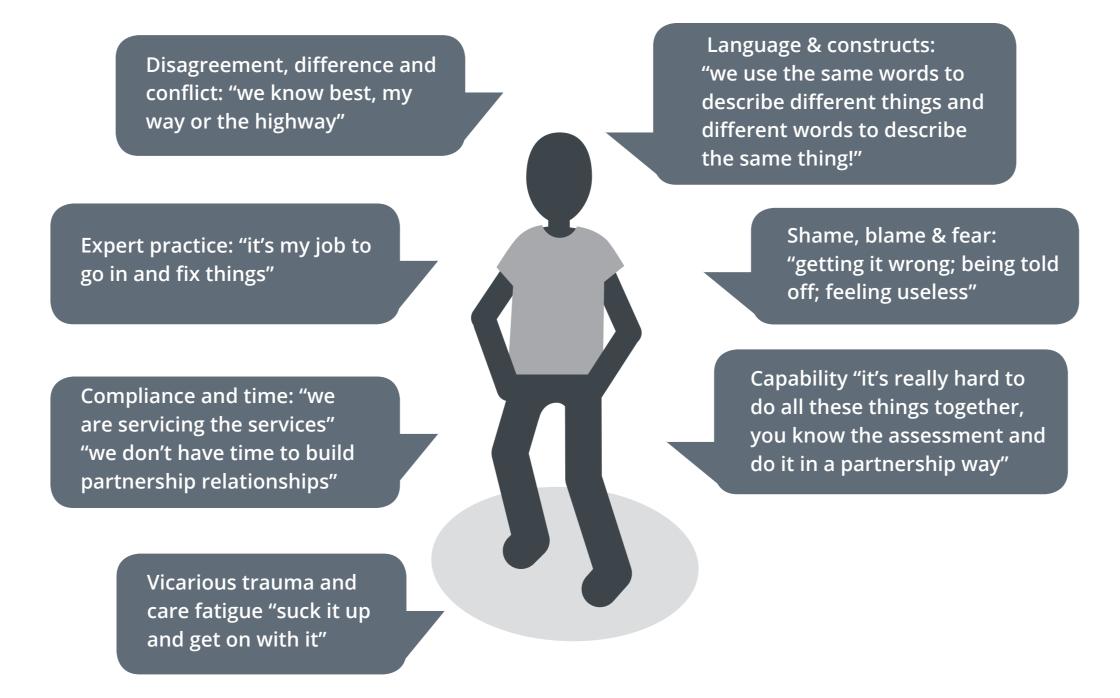
Whakawhanaungatanga is central to partnership working across the system

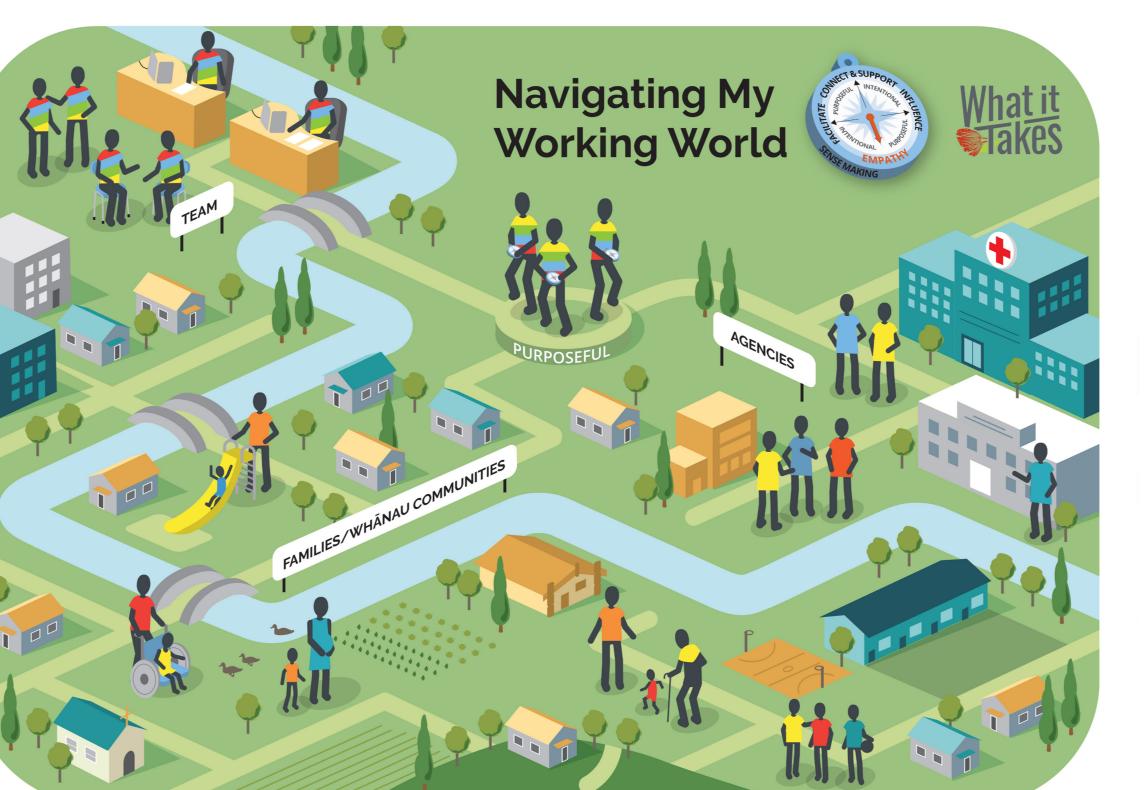
Tools that shape partnership behaviours are most helpful

Partnering across the system integrates services

**Enablers to Partnership working** 

#### **Barriers to Partnership working**





#### WHAT NOW

# Recommendations: Strengthening whānau-led practice across the disability sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand

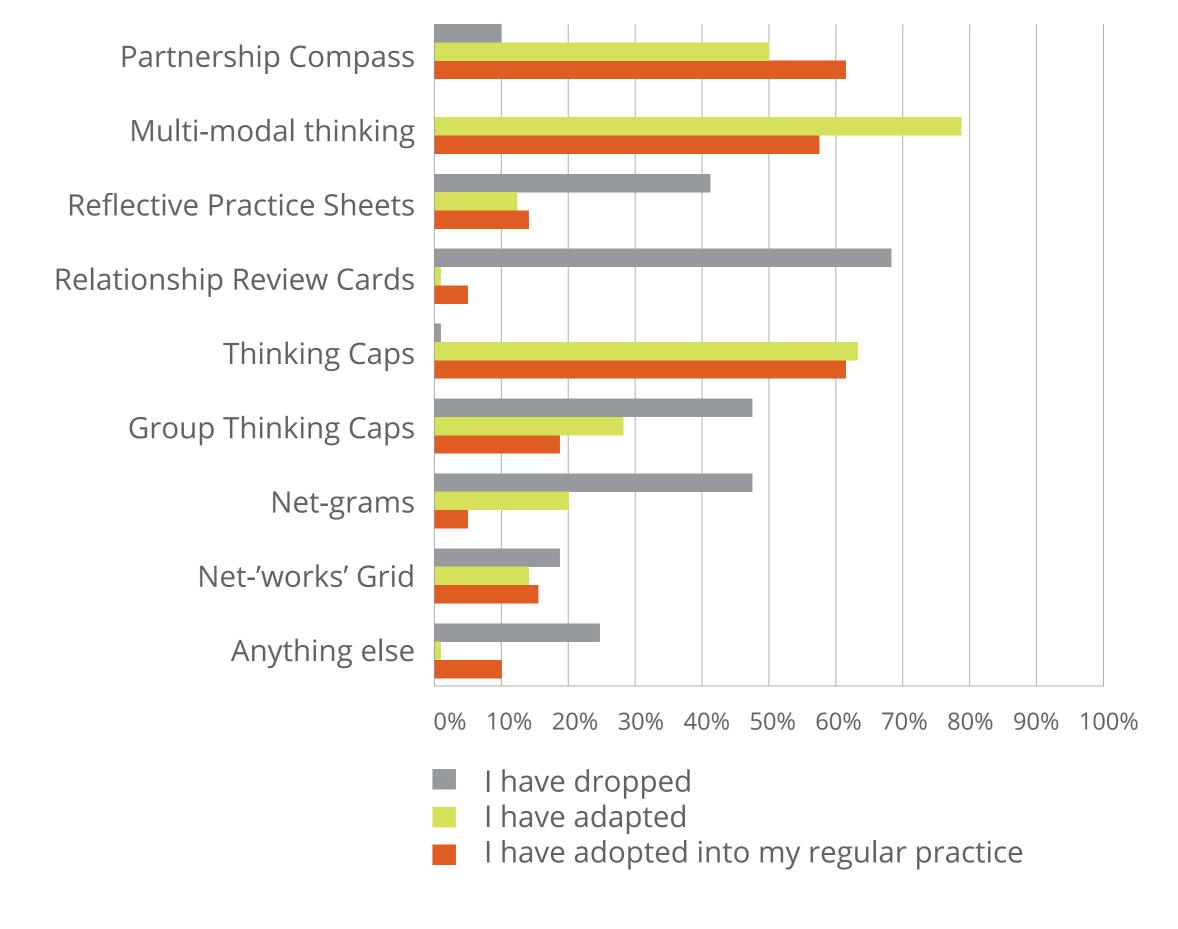
- An understanding that partnering is an integral part of the work we do, and we need to work consciously at it. The quality of the relationship is directly linked to good outcomes for whānau because it enables the right expertise to be applied at the right time.
- An understanding that partnering can be learned. It involves a set of skills and personal characteristics, with a particular understanding of partnership and the process of empathy.
- A shared evidence based relationship framework based on partnership and empathy, that is shared among people in the system, so it can be practiced, reinforced, encouraged.
- An understanding that people have a working ecology they are part of a system. This means:
- people are aware of other professionals in the system, as well as their own place within that system (the working ecology)
- people know how to approach that system through partnership
- how partnership is demonstrated throughout the practitioner's ecology influences the type of relationship that is developed with whānau
- An understanding that learning in partnership is part of a journey of change and it needs to be practiced at all levels of the system over the long term. It cannot be achieved, and then sustained, with a one-off training blast.

# When working to create change toward a partnership paradigm, its important to:

- Be intentional in co-creating a partnership framework taking a systematic approach that synthesises best-evidence and local best practice
- Include a range of people across organisational hierarchies and from different organisations to build a shared language and understanding of partnership, and tools to support practice
- Use facilitation methods that model and coach partnership providing opportunities to develop a shared understanding of concepts, how they relate to practice and encouraging those practices
- Providing opportunities to practice relationship skills in the real world and come back to reflect on what works, what needs adapted and what's challenging
- Create opportunities within learning sessions for participants to 'experience' partnering – making it more than a theoretical exercise.
- Provide tools that are well-designed and appealing for people.

#### EMERGENT SUSTAINABILITY





Cohort One continued using the **Partnership Compass** and **My Working World** concepts and principles in some way. They used **Thinking Caps** (one to one and groups) to structure helpful conversations with colleagues and their team – extending partnering across their working ecology.

There was some support for using the **Net-'works' grid** and **Net-grams** to explore, understand and coordinate the wider network around whānau.

There was low uptake of the **Relationship Review** cards. However, there was increased adoption and adaption with iterations introduced to Cohort Two and Three. Though there were more prototype adjustments to the **Reflective Practice** tool than any other, the uptake remained low. Latterly, we hypothesised that if we made the tool – **Reflective Prompt cards** to guide a facilitated conversation it may have been more acceptable, this was untested.

#### **Exploring for Partnering Sustainability**



What do you see in the team?

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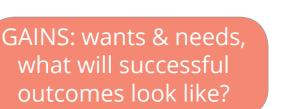
YOUR

ORGANISATION

Good partnership practices in your team, processes and team protocols, rituals, practices & pathways?
What barriers & enablers do you see? What do you see MWW offering?



communication protocols?



PAIN: fears? frustrations? obstacles?