



16 September 2021

Annual Report

Tēnā tātou Katoa

After three years of preparation and planning 2020 saw the launch of Horses Helping Humans, Hōiho Hāpai Hapori, and from a standing start we are now well out of the gate.

There is no mystery that whilst we are all blessed to live in beautiful Aotearoa, this country continues to be plagued with an overwhelming volume of mental health disorders, which need is not being answered through the resources of our health system. There continues to be many who are affected by mental health issues but none more so than our young people whose lives can be so irrevocably determined by vulnerable mental health and poor decision making leading to lifelong consequences. Horses Helping Humans programme objective is to improve the mental and emotional well-being of vulnerable youth in our community. The program is targeted to “at risk” young people.

We successfully negotiated a licence with Sue Spence of Australia to bring her award-winning programme to Taranaki. Our license ensures we have exclusivity to run this unique and life changing programme focused on securing and upholding mental well-being of our young people in our region. Further we have been able to incorporate elements of Te Ao Māori, so it is more relevant to Aotearoa’s taiohi. The program aligns well with Te Ara Whakamana Youth Work Model, incorporating the Māori Atua and tikanga into the workshops.

I want to first give huge thanks to all the people who have supported our journey thus far and continue to be actively part of our charity. You are the people who have had the energy and vision to enable Horses Helping Humans to become a reality for the taiohi of Taranaki. We remain hugely positive and optimistic about the potential this unique programme has to impact our community’s “at risk” young people.

We ran successful pilots in March, May, June and July 2020 with START Taranaki (Youth Justice) Taiohi and staff, before committing to the licensing agreement with Sue Spence at the end of July 2020. We are now an incorporated charitable trust and have a governance structure in place with a trust deed and a licensing agreement as to our rules and requirements. There are six trustees including the chairperson, secretary, and treasurer.

Our first clients, in early September 2020, were START Taranaki clients and they have continued their support throughout the past year, all of their clients utilizing both the HHH programme and the Te Ara Whakamana Youth work model. From September 2020 to the end of March 2021, 31 taiohi and 9 youth workers completed the HHH programme.

What has been most inspiring, and encouraging has been the feedback from our youth participants evidencing key learning insights gained from their attendance on the programme and interaction with our beautiful horses and ponies and our extremely passionate and amazing lead facilitator: Laura Menzies. This feedback gives us confidence “first hand” this programme is working and is able to change lives and drives us forward.

I must acknowledge Laura Menzies unequivocal support, experience, knowledge, enthusiasm, positivity and passionate belief in our programme which has literally "given us wings" from a standing start to lift off. Without Laura we would most certainly have floundered. Special thanks must therefore go to Laura for her vision, determination, and constancy throughout the past year.

The end of the financial year has seen us with a surplus of \$62,980 received from fundraising and grants which will enable us to secure some key capital assets and continue to run the programme in the year ahead. There is still much work to be done however and we remain a grassroots organization dependent upon outside funding until such time as our programme becomes established and self-funded.

Horses Helping Humans depends also upon a high level of support from our trustees. We are very fortunate to have a wonderful group of people on our board who are all advocates for youth in their respective fields and bring to the board level of competency, expertise and leadership that will enable our charity to "grow legs" and become established in our community with efficacy, authenticity, permanency and we would hope, mana. Thanks also must go to our patron, Judge Lynne Harrison.

We are all passionate advocates of the programme and continue to be strongly encouraged by the growing interest in HHH and the overwhelmingly positive community response from participants to date.



Bridget Burke
Chairperson

