

## What does Atareira do?

Family and whanau need access to services that support and enhance their wellbeing. Our service can recognise and build on the resilience of the family/whanau, understand and affirm their experience of supporting someone with a mental illness or addiction, and provide information, advocacy and support. We also provide cultural services for Maori and Pasifika.

### Our free service provides:

- Face to face and telephone support
- Information about mental illness, addictions, and treatment options
- Support with communications and understanding family dynamics
- Encouragement and support to develop coping and self-care strategies
- Liaison with Mental Health and Community Services
- Advocacy with all services and agencies
- Specialist support for children
- Family/whānau support groups



***For more information  
contact:***

***Family/whānau Co-ordinator  
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***Ph: (04) 499 1049***



**Atareira** | Mental Health Support for family/whānau

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# CHILDREN UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH



*A free program for  
children aged 8 to 12  
who have a member of  
their whānau  
experiencing mental  
health challenges.*

**[www.atareira.org.nz](http://www.atareira.org.nz)**

## What do kids want?

We know that when children don't get enough information to make sense of their world they will often make a 'best guess' to explain a difficult situation.

*We know that children living in the presence of mental health challenges want to:*

**Be informed**

**Be listened to**

**Have someone to talk to**

**Be equipped to cope with difficult times**

## Children Understanding Mental Health is...

**An activity-based learning program that aims to:**

1. Promote knowledge and understanding of mental health challenges, teach coping skills, enhance the child's own wellbeing and provide language and information that matches their age and developmental needs.
2. Provide a safe space for children to share their experiences and meet others with similar experiences.



Our 8 week program covers:

**Getting to know each other /why we are here**

**Talking about mental health**

**Learning about feelings**

**Looking at anger**

**Managing worries, stress and grief**

**Mindfulness / coping strategies**

**Safety plan and celebration preparation**

**Celebration and evaluation**

The children's program is facilitated by two trained staff.

**The focus of this program is to:**

- ◆ Help children get the answers they need to make sense of their world.
- ◆ Discuss and deal with feelings related to living with mental health challenges in the family/whānau.
- ◆ Teach children how to get support for themselves and their family/whānau.
- ◆ Understand key messages like 'I am not alone, it is not my fault, I didn't make it happen, I can't catch it, and it's not my job to fix it'.
- ◆ Know that all feelings are okay and to teach strategies to help manage difficult emotions.
- ◆ Help build children's resilience and ability to live well.

### **Enrolment / Referral Information:**

Once we receive your referral, a time will be made to meet parents/caregivers to talk about the needs of each child. We will collect any relevant family information and welcome lots of questions.

Parents and caregivers are invited to attend the last session, which is a celebration of the children's time and learning in the program.

Weekly contact is maintained with family/whānau either by phone or face to face.