

The *Shift* Foundation



Strategy
2022-2025

Creating a future where all
young women flourish in Aotearoa

WHO WE ARE

The Shift Foundation is a youth-development organisation that supports young women to lead their best lives.

Our vision

Young women flourishing in Aotearoa.



Our mission

After five years, our mission remains to improve the wellbeing of young women.

This is because we know that young women still experience inequitable outcomes¹, particularly for mental health², with loneliness being a key contributor. COVID-19 also continues to exacerbate and compound inequalities^{3,4}.

For young women to thrive, we need to continue investing in the social infrastructure and support around them. We also need to continue working with those sectors which have an influence on young women's lives (e.g. education, health, active recreation, media) to change how future generations of young women experience the world.

OUR APPROACH

We keep young women at the centre, always! This means their wants, needs, and wellbeing are the starting point and remain the focus. We recognise and enhance their mana to support all areas of their wellbeing so they can thrive.

Build whanaungatanga

We build relationships and connections first to develop trust with those we work with.

Create inclusive, fun experiences

We create environments where young women feel a sense of belonging and can enjoy themselves.

Co-design and collaborate

We do 'with young women', (not 'to') and increase our impact by partnering with others.

See the whole-picture

We focus on all parts of young women's wellbeing, and create change at both an individual and at a system-level.

Empower the next leaders

We share our knowledge and help others to lead the change we want to see.



HOW WE CREATE CHANGE

We improve young women's relationships and sense of belonging as a foundation to wellbeing. We also shift the systems that influence young women's wellbeing.

We support young women to be more:



Confident

Improving their relationship with self

Increasing young women's sense of self-worth and holistic well-being.



Connected

Improving their relationship with others

Increasing young women's sense of connectedness with peers, positive role models, and wider community.



Empowered

Improving their relationship with their environment

Increasing young women's sense of agency in their lives and influence over the issues that matter to them.

We also support people who influence young women's lives to be more:



Informed

Improving their access to evidence about what works for young women

Increasing the quality of up to date and accessible knowledge about young women's wellbeing.



Capable

Improving their ability to meet young women's needs through their practice

Increasing understanding, capability, and practice of those working with young women.



Inclusive

Increasing leadership opportunities

Increasing opportunities for young women to be included in decision-making processes.

OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

To continue supporting young women into the next three years, we need to respond to the growing influences in their lives and empower them to become the next generation of leaders.



Mental wellbeing

Increase the number of young women who understand how to build and maintain mental resilience and wellbeing.

We see a growing need for a more intentional focus on supporting young women's mental wellbeing as part of our holistic approach to wellbeing.

Over the next 3 years, we will:

- support young women to navigate the future opportunities and pressures in their lives (e.g. climate change, career paths, gender equity at work)
- up-skill our team to more intentionally enhance young women's mental wellbeing (including cultural competency, inclusivity for marginalized communities, and external supervision)
- build the capability of those with an influence over young women's lives to enhance young women's mental wellbeing

Leadership

More young women in leadership positions or leading change in their communities, school or work.

Young women are passionate about creating a more sustainable, equitable and inclusive future. We are committed to helping them lead the change they want to see at a local, regional and national level.

Over the next 3 years we will:

- support young women to build their self-confidence and strengthen their self-identity as mana kōhine
- provide leadership opportunities and platforms for young women to be heard on the issues that matter to them
- support those with an influence over young women's lives to include young women in their decision-making processes

Be great role models

Ensure our organisation continues meeting the needs of young women and our team into the future, and being the best we can be.

Young women's needs and expectations are changing. To remain positive role models in their lives, we need to continue to adapt with them.

Over the next 3 years, we will:

- advance our journey to honor Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- positively contribute to climate action
- increase the diversity of our staff and governance
- lead as an exemplar of being a great employer



WHAT YOUNG WOMEN CARE ABOUT

Although we know 'change is the only constant', the 2020s continue to create significant social, economic, political and environmental opportunities and challenges.

These changes have already had a strong influence on young women's experiences and wellbeing, and their expectations of organisations like Shift.

As we look to the next three years, we explored the potential implications of seven global and local trends, and then asked 51 young women what issues they care about. Below are the top two trends that young women told us they care about most. Other issues included mental health, addressing poverty and animal rights. These insights directly informed our strategic direction for the next three years.

Equity for all

Addressing sexism, racism, Islamophobia, homophobia and ableism. Recognising and honoring Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Implications for young women:

- Increasing numbers of young people are identifying as non-binary or gender-fluid and trans.
- Although the focus on diversity and inclusion continues to grow, young women from marginalised or minority populations still experience racism and homophobia.
- Te reo Māori, Māori history and mātauranga Māori are being increasingly emphasised in schools, universities, and workplaces
- Young women are aware of the sexism and pay gap they may experience in the workforce, and are passionate about equal opportunities and rights for women

"Being a minority is still a huge issue and I would do anything to change it."

Climate action

Reducing carbon emissions, creating equitable climate solutions, conservation and increasing connection to the environment.

Implications for young women:

- Increasing levels of anxiety about the future.
- Heightened consciousness and expectations re: sustainable practices.
- Inequitable impacts on those with whakapapa to climate-unstable areas (eg. Pacific Islands)
- Young women are leaders of change (e.g. climate strikes, protests, reducing carbon emissions through active transport and plant-based diets).

"Climate change [is] the biggest threat to our current way of life...It all comes down to no earth = no life."

Young women

We work with anyone aged 12-25 who identifies as a woman.

Shift is a safe space for queer/rainbow folk, and when we say 'women', that always includes trans women. Non-binary and gender-fluid people who partially or sometimes identify as women and feel they would benefit from women-centred spaces are always welcome. Whatever words you use to describe your journey to womanhood - you are awesome and you are welcome.

Mana

We use the Mana Taiohi youth development framework⁵ when working with young women.

This is a strengths-based bi-cultural approach focused on enhancing the mana of young people. This means recognising what they bring through their: Mauri (life spark, identities, and passions), Whakapapa (their ancestry and histories), Hononga (positive connections), and Te Ao (the world that they live in), and building on these through whanaungatanga (quality relationships), manaakitanga (nourishing collective wellbeing), whai wāhitanga (providing opportunities for contribution and participation), and mātauranga (providing robust but diverse sources of knowledge).

Wellbeing

We use the 'Te Whare Tapa Whā' hauora framework to define holistic wellbeing, including spiritual, mental + emotional, social, physical and land/roots.

References

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