



SAMOAN PARTICIPATION

PROFILE

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INTRODUCTION

In Aotearoa New Zealand Samoan people are the largest Pacific population as well as the fastest growing. Both Samoan adults and young people enjoy and are passionate about play, active recreation and sport. However, Samoan adults have lower rates of participation than the general population.

In order to offer quality support, experiences and opportunities that help with the development of skills and confidence necessary to contribute to a life-long love of being active, it is essential that the motivations and needs of Samoan adults and young people are understood.

The information in this resource is based on national and international evidence and is intended to support organisations to better understand the evidence available regarding the experiences and needs of Samoan people in New Zealand.

We recognise that the category of “Samoan” is extremely dynamic and includes many diverse individuals with different and evolving needs; shaped by life experiences, family, community and context. Therefore, the high-level themes identified in this resource won't be true for all Samoan individuals in New Zealand at all times.

An important factor to note is that due to small sample sizes and limited qualitative research specifically related to Samoan adults and young people participation, in some instances we have considered evidence looking at wider Pacific communities.

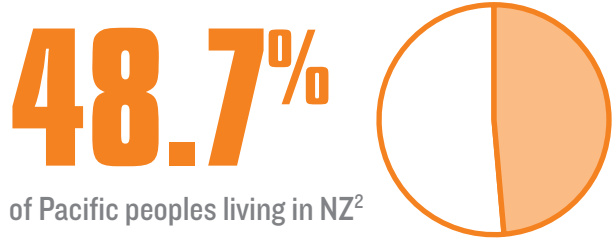
We encourage organisations to build on the knowledge in this resource within their own context, to better understand the specifics of the participants they are seeking to engage.



SAMOAN PEOPLE IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Samoan people are the largest and faster growing Pacific community in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In 2013, Samoan people made up



By 2038 Samoan people are projected to make up 5.1% of New Zealand's population³

Samoan people are relatively youthful compared to the New Zealand population

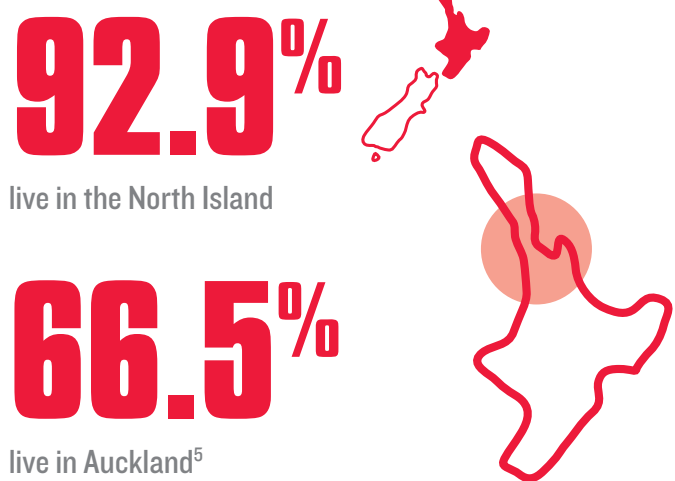
Median age in 2013:



- Samoan living in New Zealand
- Total New Zealand population⁴

Samoan people primarily live in the North Island in particular, Auckland

In 2013



Those identifying as Samoan have diverse backgrounds in terms of ethnicity and birthplace

In 2013



62.7% were born in New Zealand¹



23.9% said they belonged to two ethnic groups⁴



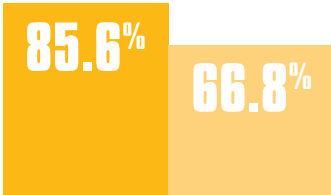
14.2% said they belonged to three or more ethnic groups⁴



Pacific people can experience higher rates of negative long-term health conditions

■ Pacific adult population
■ Total adult population

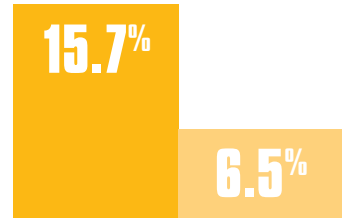
The 2017/18 National Health Survey found that of the Pacific adult population:



85.6% are overweight or obese – compared to 66.8% of the total adult population



11% experience psychological distress – compared to 8.6% of the total adult population



15.7% have type 2 diabetes – compared to 6.5% of the total adult population⁶

Play, Active Recreation and Sport Participation



SAMOAN YOUNG PEOPLE*



SAMOAN ADULTS*



93% are physically active in any given week – compared to 94% of all young people



67% are physically active in any given week - this is significantly less than the total population 73%



68% want to do more – compared to 63% for all young people



82% want to do more – this is significantly higher than total population 74%



10.8 hours per week – compared to 11.0 hours for all young people⁷



4.2 hours per week – this is significantly less than the total population 5.2⁷

■ Samoan young people (5-17 years)* ■ All young people

■ Samoan adults* ■ All adults

* This report refers to young people being aged 5 to 17 years and adults aged 18 plus.

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

As highlighted earlier “Samoan” represents a diverse and dynamic group. Despite these differences, a number of commonalities emerge when looking at a range of qualitative and quantitative sources relating to Samoan and more widely Pacific populations motivators, influencers and barriers to participation in play, active recreation and sport.

These themes are discussed in the sections that follow and can be used as a starting point for understanding what quality opportunities, support and experiences might look like through the eyes of Samoan adults and young people in Aotearoa New Zealand.



FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

FONOFALE: A PACIFIC MODEL OF WELLBEING

The Foundation or the Floor of the Fale (Aiga or Family):

The foundation represents the family (nuclear and extended) including history or genealogy, which is the foundation for all Pacific Island cultures.

The Roof (Culture):

The roof represents cultural values and beliefs that is the shelter for all other elements important to Pacific peoples. Culture is constantly evolving and adapting. In Aotearoa New Zealand, culture may live on a continuum from a traditional Pacific cultural orientation to a New Zealand European cultural orientation.

Understanding the key philosophies that underpin Samoan culture and guide daily interactions is an essential starting point when considering how you might engage with Samoan adults and young people. The Fonofale model on page 5 uses the concept of a Samoan fale, or house, to depict what is important to Samoan people and to promote the philosophy of health and wellbeing, being a holistic concept^{8,9}.

Pou:

The pou or posts sustain the link between family and culture and also interact with each other. The pou are:

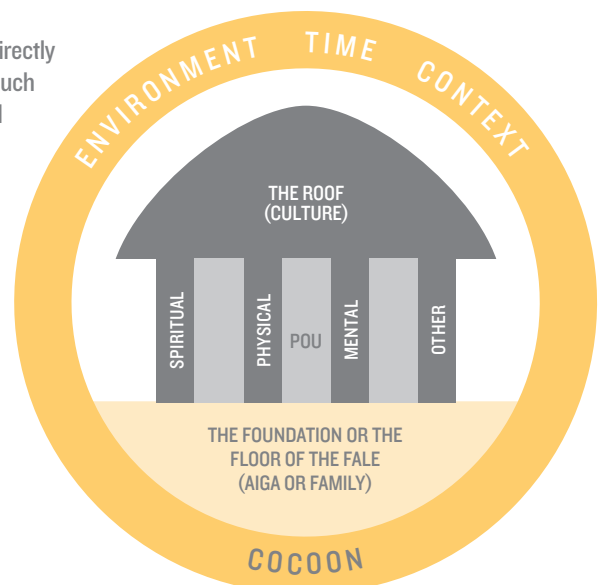
- **Spiritual:** The sense of wellbeing which stems from an individuals belief system that includes either Christianity or traditional spirituality relating to nature, spirits, beliefs, and ancestors or a combination of both.
- **Physical:** The anatomy and physiology of the body and its relationship with other substances such as food, water, air and medications that can impact physical wellbeing.
- **Mental:** The wellbeing or the health of the mind which involves thinking, emotions and behaviours.
- **Other:** Variables that can directly or indirectly affect health such as gender, sexuality/sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status and education.

Cocoon:

The Fonofale is encapsulated in a cocoon that contains dimensions that have direct or indirect influence on one another.

These are:

- **Environment:** The relationships of Pacific people to their physical environment.
- **Time:** Relates to the specific time in history that impacts on Pacific people.
- **Context:** Relates to the where/how/what. The context can include country of birth, residence, legal, politics and socioeconomics.



*Content adapted from Central PHO Pacific Cultural Guidelines (pg3)⁸

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

When engaging with Samoan people it is important to understand all aspects of Fonofale. They contribute to the overall holistic health and wellbeing of Samoan adults and young people.

Questions to guide practice:

- How can you use this model to meet the holistic needs and understand key philosophies which are essential to Samoan culture?
-



FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

COST, EQUIPMENT AND TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS LIMIT MY OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

The accessibility of play, active recreation and sport opportunities have been found to be a significant barrier to participation for Samoan people^{7,10}.

The costs involved with organised sport such as fees, equipment, uniforms and transport are consistently mentioned as barriers to participation for Pacific peoples, particularly females. Associated with cost, access to equipment was significantly more likely to be identified as a barrier by both Samoan adults and young people in the Active NZ 2017/2018 survey. For adults, transport to get to sport and recreation activities was also identified as a significant barrier⁷.

A study by Innovate Change found that many Samoan people took part in fitness activities like Crossfit, boxing and Zumba, with family and friends at home, rather than joining a gym to overcome accessibility barriers¹⁰. Samoan people have also been found to be more likely to participate at school or within the school grounds or at a community hall, school hall, or church; places where groups already congregate⁷.

Active NZ found that⁷:

- Young Pacific (aged 5-17 years old) are significantly more likely than all young people to identify “I don’t have the equipment I need” and “my family can’t afford it” and “it’s too hard to get to training and games” as barriers to participating
- Young Samoan females (aged 5-17 years old) are significantly more likely to disagree with the statement “I have the chance to do the physical activities I want” (6% cf. 17%) compared to all young females.
- Compared to all adults, Samoan adults are significantly more likely to identify the barriers:
 - “I have no transport to get places” (10% cf. 4%)
 - “I don’t have the equipment I need” (18% cf. 7%)
 - “the activity of my choice is too expensive” (18% cf. 11%), particularly females (25% cf. 11%)⁷

*cf. means a comparison

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

“

I stopped playing in the fifth form because we couldn't afford to keep paying the team fees, couldn't buy shoes and all that stuff ...that's kind of shaped perhaps why I don't play many other sports because growing up we couldn't afford it.”⁹

“

The training for the girls Basketball team at school is at 6.30pm for an hour. It's too late and my Mum can't drop me off then.”¹²

The Sport NZ Voice of Participant Survey found that sports club members from Pacific populations are significantly less likely to agree that “the opportunities, services and benefits they receive from their club make it well worth the money they pay”¹¹

Questions to guide practice:

- How can you leverage places or people and facilitate community connections to reduce the barriers of cost, access to equipment and transport?
- Have you considered how you could change the structure or expectations of your opportunity to reduce barriers e.g. provide access to sports equipment, remove uniform requirements?

Activity Snapshot – Equip'd: Recognising the barriers of accessibility for young Samoan women, particularly cost and getting to and from activities, the Equip'd programme works with local schools to provide free activities on school grounds at either lunch time or after school. The programmes are co-designed with participants and facilitated by Pacific women. You can read more about the Equip'd programme here: <https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Case-Study-Equipd.pdf>



* This report uses data collected over two years through the Active NZ survey between 5 January 2017 and 4 January 2019 from 11,599 young people (aged 5-17 years old) and 52,188 adults (aged 18-plus)⁷

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

THE PHYSICAL CHALLENGE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF MY PARTICIPATION



The reason why we participate in a lot of physical sports is inherent in the Samoan culture. If someone calls you a hard worker, we wear that as a medal of honour.”⁹

The importance of physical challenge and working hard has been found to be a fundamental aspect of participation in sport for Samoan people.

The Active NZ participation survey found Samoan adults were more likely to participate in competition or organised training, and to identify “I love challenging myself and trying to win” and “I enjoy tough physical activity” as motivations for participation, particularly Samoan males⁷. Samoan adults have also been found to be significantly more likely to identify development of physical skills as important^{7,11}.

Young Pacific were found to spend more time in weekly participation via competition compared to all young people and are significantly more likely to participate because “I am good at it” (16% cf. 12%)⁷.

Focusing on physical challenge was also reflected in a study of sport and recreation in New Zealand. Pacific people often mentioned working hard, sweating and physical exertion and the joy of winning as motivation and enjoyment to participate⁹. Additionally, success in sport was highlighted as being linked to being held in high regard⁹.

Active NZ found:

- Samoan adults are significantly more likely to participate in competitive sports and activities (17% cf. 12%)
- Samoan young people (aged 5-17yrs) are significantly more likely to say the main reason for participating is because I'm good at it (21% cf. 13% for all) and Samoan adults are significantly more likely to agree with the statement “I am good at lots of different physical activities”
- Samoan adults, particularly females, are significantly more likely than all adults to agree with the statements
 - I love challenging myself or trying to win (66% cf. 49%)
 - Working hard to improve my skills is important to me (68% cf. 52%)
 - I enjoy tough physical activity (57% cf. 46%)⁷

Sport NZ Voice of Participant Survey found that Pacific populations are significantly more likely to belong to a club to learn/improve skills (31% cf. 22%)¹¹.

Questions to guide practice:

- How might you provide opportunities for participants at different skill levels to work hard and be challenged?
- How might you use the Fonofale model of wellbeing to physically challenge participants while emphasising holistic wellbeing?

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

MY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INFLUENCE HOW I PARTICIPATE

“

Family reunions are a big part of our upbringing. When we get together sport is really huge and our mums, dads and grandparents (even when they can hardly walk) play kilikiti.”⁹

“

For the boys she's like 'Just go anywhere, play your sport and be back whenever' but when it comes to the girls it's like 'you can't play, the girls job is to clean the house, do the washing, do the food, look after the little ones...'”¹²

As depicted in the Fonofale model, family is hugely important in defining Samoan identity. The importance and influence that family has on all areas of life means family has a strong role to play in either motivating or discouraging participation in play, active recreation and sport.

Coming together and strengthening connections with family and the wider community are often highlighted by Pacific people as valuable outcomes of participation in sport and recreation^{9,13}. Additionally involvement and support from family has often been found to be integral for ongoing participation^{9,10,13,14}.

Samoan culture is family and community orientated. Therefore, factors such as family, church, community and other family centred commitments are considered before making the decision to participate⁹.

For example, expectations to spend time with children and maintain the family home have been identified by many Pacific females as barriers to participation from the teenage years onwards⁹. Parents' educational aspirations for their children has also been found to be a strong influencer in terms of young peoples' decision to participate. For some, participation in sport is seen as a distraction from the pursuit of education and therefore a barrier to involvement^{9,7}.

Active NZ found:

- Samoan adults are significantly more likely to participate to “spend time with family and friends (33% cf. 26%)
- Of those Samoan adults who identify they “prefer doing other things” as a barrier to participating, 79% say it's spending time with family and friends
- Samoan adults are significantly more likely to agree to “I prefer to be physically active with others” (59% cf. 45%)
- Samoan aged 5-17 years old are significantly more likely to agree to the statement “I like my parents/family involved in my sport and physical activities” (73% cf. 61%)⁷

Questions to guide practice:

- How can you structure your initiative to cater for multiple generations and foster family and community connections? e.g. children, parents, grandparents
- How can you leverage the positive influence of existing social connections to increase play, active recreation and sport participation among Samoan people?

Activity Snapshot - Tamaki Touched: Tamaki Touch offered a touch competition alongside other physical activity opportunities, programmes for children, free food and music meaning something was available for the whole family. You can read more about the Tamaki Touched initiative here: <https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Case-Study-Tamaki-Touched.pdf>

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

I WANT TO FEEL CULTURALLY COMFORTABLE

“

Those types of sports have a culture that we're not comfortable with. The rules are different and the approach they're asking us to take is not suited to us.”⁹

“

Our tutor understands how we feel and where we're coming from being Pacific Islander as well.”¹²

In line with the strong role of culture depicted in the Fonofale model, evidence suggests that consideration and inclusion of key cultural components that foster cultural identity is integral to engaging Samoan adults and young people in play, active recreation and sport^{9,14}. Conversely, concerns of feeling culturally comfortable can restrict Samoan people's involvement.

Examples of how other initiatives have been successful in engaging Samoan people include using traditional tools of Samoan music and dance and other sport and recreation activities that carry cultural significance, such as Kilikiti, linking activities with existing social structures such as church and creating community and family-oriented opportunities^{9,10,15}.

Having visible Pacific involvement in the programmes, and in particular Pacific leadership has been found to further support the integration of cultural components within an initiative^{9,15}.

Some evidence suggests that Samoan people do not necessarily see themselves in formal leadership positions. Therefore, a different approach may be required to get them involved. For example, individuals may be more inclined to take on these positions if they were directly asked, rather than putting themselves forward¹⁶.

An important factor to note when considering integration of cultural aspects in initiatives is the diversity of the Samoan population. Some evidence suggests significant differences in the importance individuals place on their Pacific identity between those who were born and raised in New Zealand and those who were born overseas. As such not all individuals will place the same value on integration of cultural aspects in play, active recreation and sport opportunities¹⁷.

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

Therefore, it is important to consider holistic needs as expressing values and beliefs is essential to a individual's sense of belonging and feeling culturally accepted.

Questions to guide practice:

- How can you take a strengths-based approach of utilising Samoan culture as the foundation of the programme?
- Have you considered how you might identify opportunities to co-design with Samoan communities to ensure initiatives are culturally aligned and foster cultural identity?
- How can your opportunity encourage and empower Samoan individuals or communities to take the lead?
- How might you use the Fonofale model of wellbeing to create an environment where Samoan people feel culturally comfortable?

Activity Snapshot: Walking Samoans – The Walking Samoans is an initiative that was started by the Samoan community to encourage healthy living through walking. The initiative is built on Samoan culture integrating aspects to language, prayer, cultural dance, family and the community. A key reason for the success of this initiative is that it is owned by the community – “Samoan people helping themselves in a Samoan way”¹⁸. View a short video about this initiative here: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10155215795680844>



FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

SPIRITUALITY AND CHURCH ARE AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF MY LIFE



God comes first, but hugely, right behind God, is sport, in whatever form it takes. You've got your youth groups, and how do you get your youths into church, how do you get your youth motivated? It's through some form of sports activity."⁹



In New Zealand Sunday is like a normal day of the week... but it's not for Pacific peoples. A lot of sports are played on Sundays and we can't take part because in our culture we go to church."⁹

The Fonofale model highlights the central role that spirituality and church plays in Samoan people's wellbeing. This is evident within a play, active recreation and sport context where the strong influence of spirituality and church on participation is often mentioned by participants.

For example, sport and active recreation activities are often seen as strongly linked to church gatherings. Furthermore, provision of these activities in conjunction with church activities were seen to motivate individuals to engage, particularly young people^{9,14}.

The influence of spirituality, attending church and associated commitments were also identified by some as a factor that could limit involvement. For example, one study highlighted that church commitments prevented some individuals from participating in sport and active recreation activities on a Sunday⁹.

When looking to engage Samoan people it is important to consider ways to integrate aspects of spirituality within practice. The inclusion of prayer at the beginning and/or end of sessions and provision of activities in conjunction with existing church gatherings have been shown to be effective ways in which to integrate spirituality within an activity^{10,14}.

A paper released by The New Zealand Treasury in 2018 suggests that there has been some evolution from first generation to second and third generation Pacific New Zealanders away from church as their main collective institution to other support systems. The impact of spirituality and attending church on sport and active recreation opportunities will therefore vary from one individual to the next⁷.

- 83.4% of Samoan people identified themselves as having at least one religion in the 2013 census
- Samoan adults are significantly more likely to participate in a community hall, school hall, marae or church (9% cf. 5%)⁷

Questions to guide practice:

- How might you work with local church groups to increase sport and recreation participation among Samoan communities?
- How might you take time to include protocols that respect spirituality and religion for new and existing initiatives?
- How might you use the Fonofale model of wellbeing to ensure a safe and accepting environment where Samoan people can express their spirituality, values and beliefs?

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

SOMETIMES I LACK MOTIVATION OR CONFIDENCE TO PARTICIPATE

While confidence to participate and an enjoyment of physical challenge is fundamental to sport and recreation activities for Samoan people, many also report a lack of confidence and motivation to be involved.

The Active NZ 2017/2018 survey found that Samoan adults are significantly more likely to identify barriers relating to confidence including not feeling they have adequate skills or fitness, not wanting to fail and difficulty finding motivation as barriers to participation. Samoan females were significantly less likely to agree they feel confident to take part in lots of different activities⁷.

Some research has shown that while physical challenge and working hard is generally seen in a positive light, for some an over emphasis of this can discourage participation. This could potentially impact confidence to be involved and perceptions of what's required to be involved⁹.

The influence of the expectations on Samoan females with regards to family and commitments within the household are likely to have a flow on effect in terms of their motivation to participate⁹.

Active NZ found:

- Samoan adults are significantly more likely to identify the following as barriers to participation
 - "I'm not confident enough" (10% cf. 5%)
 - "I haven't got the skills/don't know how" (5% cf. 2%)
 - "I don't want to fail" (4% cf. 2%)
 - "I struggle to motivate myself" (33% cf. 23%)
 - "I'm too tired/don't have the energy" (31% cf. 24%)
 - "I'm not fit enough" (18% cf. 12%)
- Samoan females 18 years and older are significantly more likely to identify "I'm too tired/don't have the energy", "I struggle to motivate myself" and "I'm not fit enough" as barriers
- Samoan females 18 years and older are significantly less likely to agree with the statement "I feel confident to take part in lots of different activities" (66% cf. 51%)⁷

Questions to guide practice:

- How might you use imagery or role models to create different perceptions about what being active looks like?
- How might you offer female adults the opportunity to participate in non-competitive sports and activities; with others and in 'safe' environments?
- How might you offer opportunities for individuals to improve and increase their skills and fitness?

EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH PACIFIC PEOPLES

Effective engagement with Pacific people involves creating strong and sustainable relationships. The Yavu Framework was developed by the Ministry of Pacific Peoples and provides some broad principles, cultural practices and protocols to support engagement with Pacific people. The content below has been adapted from the Ministry of Pacific Peoples **Yavu Foundations of Pacific Engagement** document and is intended to give you a basic introduction²⁰.

Understanding context	Understanding environments	Understanding responsibility	Teu le va
Know who we are	Make time to connect	Recognise our contribution	Build, nurture and strengthen relationships
Understanding the unique Pacific cultural capital of who we are, where we come from, how we think and work and ensuring it is recognised and valued throughout the engagement process.	Taking time to connect to establish a safe environment where experiences and aspirations can be shared.	Ensuring that the groups contribution, right to be here and sense of place is recognised and has influence in Aotearoa New Zealand.	Creating the place for meaningful engagement with Pacific peoples and ensuring the relationship is sustained throughout the engagement process and is not a one-off transaction.
<p>Principles in Practice:</p> <p>Taking time to have Talanoa (dialogue) to understand what's important and not to make assumptions.</p> <p>Consider engaging with agencies, groups or young professionals who are skilled, knowledgeable and have learnt to navigate between both western and cultural frameworks.</p> <p>Use Pacific visuals in presentations but ensure they are used correctly.</p>	<p>Principles in Practice:</p> <p>Learn to pronounce basic Pacific words and names correctly and integrate these into your Talanoa. A basic guide to Samoan pronunciation and phrases can be found here http://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/MPP-LanguageWeekCards-Final.pdf</p> <p>Find out what titles people should be addressed by. Ask for the family name or name they wish to be called by.</p> <p>Meet people in person and in their own environment community.</p> <p>Find out personal preferences for engagement and suitable timing. Your priorities and timelines may not be the same as theirs.</p>	<p>Principles in Practice:</p> <p>Recognising the diversity within and the multiple layers of Pacific communities and providing opportunities to capture their voices i.e. young people, gender, disability.</p> <p>Acknowledging the specific characteristics, needs and diversity of different groups and communities.</p> <p>Providing culturally appropriate channels for Pacific communities to have a voice – seek advice from Pacific experts and advisors to support you.</p>	<p>Principles in Practice:</p> <p>If you are addressing a group, let them know about you as well as learning about them by sharing your own story first.</p> <p>In a small group setting, ask people to introduce themselves their name, family and role to help build connections.</p> <p>Food is a symbol of hospitality and used to build relationships - give thanks for the food before inviting participants to eat.</p> <p>Build sustainability in your engagement by managing expectations and keeping participants informed throughout the engagement process.</p>

APPLYING THESE INSIGHTS LOCALLY

While the themes outlined in this resource presents a snap-shot of what influences Samoan people's engagement in play, active recreation and sport experiences, it's not a one-size-fits-all scenario.

An individuals participation is based on a range of personal, social and environmental factors that differ for each individual and can change from one week to the next. As such, the themes outlined in this resource will not be relevant for all people identifying as Samoan all of the time. However, meeting holistic needs increases motivation, confidence and competence to ensure life long participation for overall health and wellbeing.

Our Three Approaches (Insights, Locally Led and Physical Literacy) provide guidance on how to develop a deeper understanding of different communities needs and the environment in which they live and, therefore, help guide development of truly participant-centred initiatives. You can find more about the Three Approaches, how they work together and how to use them in this guide, sportnz.org.nz/three-approaches



CASE STUDIES

You can find case studies here:

sportnz.org.nz/casestudies

Several New Zealand organisations use the three approaches to develop and offer relevant and quality opportunities and experiences that encourage Samoan and Pacific communities into play, active recreation and sport. We're sharing these organisations' stories through case studies that provide detailed information about the creation and implementation of these initiatives and the main factors that led to their success.



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