



Creating Futures

For Pacific high school students





About KidsCoin

Our why

Creating futures for Māori and Pacific youth
whānau/ainga/families, and communities

Our work

- Education – financial, digital, tech
- Employment – internships, work experience, recruitment
- Mentoring – personal, cultural, professional

Our way

- Aroha – unconditional love
- Mahi tahi – working together
- Whakamana – enhancing mana

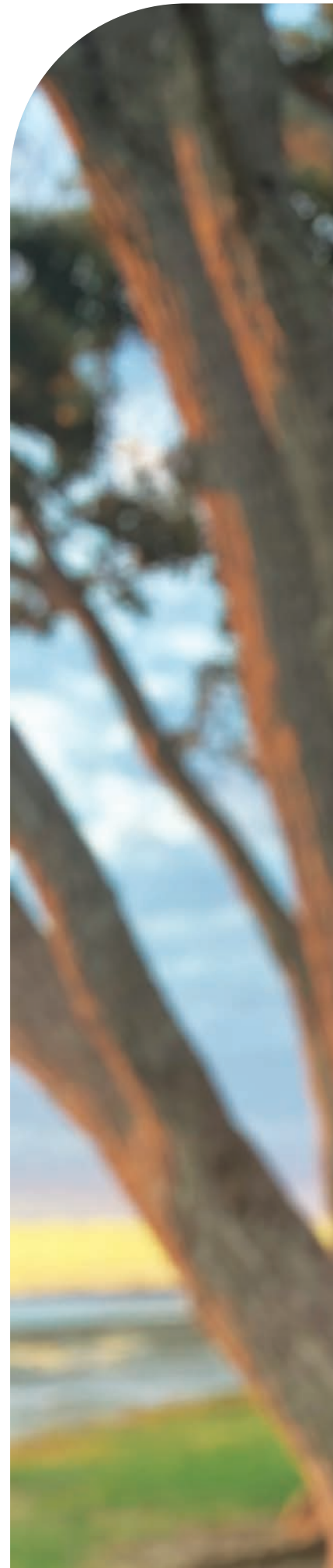
Our key partners include:

- Ministry of Pacific Peoples
- Ministry of Education
- The Southern Initiative, Auckland Council
- Foundation North
- Corporate partners such as Spark, Xero, Trade Me
- The South Advantage Collective
- A growing number of schools and communities



About Three Bags Full

Three Bags Full is a foundational tech readiness programme designed and delivered by Māori and Pacific staff, for Māori and Pacific youth. High school students learn in-demand digital tech and future-focussed skills that prepare them for further technical education. Whānau go on the journey with their student, building their knowledge of the digital world. Importantly, students earn as they learn. Pastorally supported, paid work experience enables students to begin to develop job skills, personal resources, a positive track record and a career path they choose.



Whakatauki

He pai te tirohanga ki ngā mahara mō ngā
rā pahemo engari ka puta te māramatanga
i runga i te titiro whakamua.

It's fine to have recollections of the past,
but wisdom comes from being able to
prepare opportunities for the future.





Introduction

Tēnā koutou, Talofa lava, Mālō e lelei, Kia orana, Malo ni, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Ni sa bula vinaka, Fakatalofa atu, Namaste, Kam na mauri, and warm Pacific greetings.

Established in 2016, KidsCoin creates learning opportunities that grow curiosity, passion, understanding and confidence in relation to financial literacy and digital technologies. This inspiring Māori and Pacific-led social enterprise delivers tangible social, cultural and economic benefits for Māori and Pacific youth, whānau/ ainga/families, and communities.

With the help of tech experts, KidsCoin started out developing an easy-to-use software tool to teach youth and their whānau about money, while increasing their digital literacy. Students and whānau relished the opportunity to learn together using a fun and interactive software tool. This tool is now used in classrooms across the country and in the social service sector.

Driven by the aspiration to create futures for Māori and Pacific youth, KidsCoin went on to design and deliver other training tools, programmes and workshops. It also developed strategic partnerships with community groups, businesses and schools to reach more children, families and communities.

In 2018 KidsCoin began developing a new tech readiness programme called '3 Bags Full' (3BF), which is the subject of this report. With so few Māori and Pacific role models in a tech career and the worrying over representation of Māori and Pacific Peoples among the unemployed, lower skilled workers and low-income earners, KidsCoin focussed its attention on the urgent need to work with and upskill Māori and Pacific students. Rigorous and flexible programme design enabled KidsCoin to customise various 3BF delivery options, while maintaining its substance.

KidsCoin developed a high-performing partnership with Auckland Council's The Southern Initiative (TSI) to support the delivery of 3BF. TSI stimulates, enables and champions social and community innovation across South and West Auckland. TSI funded a successful 10-week pilot of 3BF

at Papakura High school involving 10 students. Foundation North then funded a 42-week programme for 18 South Auckland students, with TSI funding an additional six students.

The TSI-KidsCoin partnership is nestled within The South Advantage Collective, a growing network of innovators forging a bold vision for South and West Auckland's digital future. With TSI support, the network is spearheading a community-led movement of change, building tech pathways that enable Pacific youth, rangatahi Māori, and their whānau to participate and thrive in the digital economy (Hancock, 2020).

In February 2021, the Ministry of Education (MoE/the Ministry) funded KidsCoin to deliver a 17-week customised version of 3BF to a cohort of Pacific high school students through its Pacific Innovation Fund. Thirty students, the majority of whom live in South Auckland, completed 3BF. They achieved impressive learning outcomes and expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the programme. Between 30-60 whānau members supported their students on their learning journey and also gained new knowledge.

This report completes MoE reporting requirements and introduces 3BF to other potential partners. It explains the need for tech readiness/pathway programmes like 3BF, how 3BF works, how well 3BF works, programme strengths and challenges, as well as future aspirations. Quantitative data is enriched by the stories and insights of 3BF participants, whānau and staff.

The future of 3BF looks promising. With minimal marketing, 100-plus South Auckland Pacific youth are waitlisted for the next cohort. With funding, KidsCoin could continue programme delivery and keep working with key partners to design desperately needed tech pathways to education and employment for Pacific and Māori youth.





The need for tech career pathways

Aotearoa-New Zealand needs to urgently future-proof the education, training and employment prospects of Māori and Pacific youth. They need pathways into resilient and higher skilled careers that will harness their talents and overcome factors severely limiting their options, wellbeing and futures.

The MoE cohort focussed on Pacific students. Pacific People are now the third largest ethnic group in Tāmaki Makaurau. Although comprising 16 percent of the Auckland population in 2018, they remain over represented among the unemployed, lower skilled workers and low-income earners. In South Auckland, 40 percent of youth identify as Pacific (Statistics NZ, 2018).

Pandemic disruptions have further exposed the vulnerable incomes of Māori and Pacific whānau living in South Auckland, with an extra 9,000 Māori and Pacific youth projected to become categorised as NEET - Not in Education, Employment or Training (Stakeholder Strategies, 2020). During COVID-19 Lockdowns, existing digital inequity amplified the social and economic isolation of under-resourced whānau and communities. In 2015, Pacific students reported substantially lower rates of internet access than students of other ethnicities (Grimes & White, 2019).

The tech industry offers diverse roles with ongoing industry-based learning and progression opportunities. Some entry-level positions do not require a university education. However, in 2016 only six percent of computer science and information technology students identified as Pacific (Digital Skills Forum, 2018) and less than two percent of all employed Pacific People work in tech careers (NZTech, 2021).

Research highlights various strategies to support pathways to tech careers. These include introducing the possibility of a career in digital technologies early, enhancing digital technologies education, increasing access to tech career pathways, and supporting the transition into digital roles (Digital Skills Forum, 2018).

A recent report by the independent Crown entity New Zealand Productivity Commission highlights an urgent need to address the performance of our education system in preparing New Zealanders for future work. Educational underachievement leaves some students (especially Māori and Pacific) ill-equipped to succeed. The Commission calls for more flexible and accessible training options, including shorter courses and increased financial support.

The Commission also stresses the need for the labour market to adapt to and adopt more technology, and be open to innovation and new technologies. While existing and new technologies may replace some jobs, they can also help to increase employment options, enhance the quality of work, drive productivity, raise incomes, lower household costs and reduce barriers to workforce participation. Such benefits can significantly improve the opportunities, lives, wellbeing, and futures of people/groups currently on the margins of the labour market.

The Ministry of Education now requires New Zealand schools to implement the new digital technologies curriculum, Hangarau Matihiko. It has also developed a rigorous Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-2030 (MoE, 2020) that identifies key systems shifts needed for Pacific students and families to achieve their educational aspirations and thrive. This plan encourages working together to support Pacific wellbeing and success. 3BF strongly aligns with the Ministry's new digital curriculum and Pacific Education Action Plan, and its smooth online engagement and digital platforms accommodated COVID disruptions.



How 3BF works – the approach

3BF activates a *by Māori and Pacific, for Māori and Pacific* approach. Successful digital and tech learning for Māori and Pacific students requires a culturally-grounded approach that upholds the integrity of whānau, cares about their wellbeing and is truly aspirational. Actively encouraging whānau to go on the journey with their student means the whole family benefits. It also places youth in the broader context of their lives – their whānau, community, place and educational journey. KidsCoin knows the future of learning is already upon us – it is ‘always on’, highly connected, participatory, and challenge-based. The 3BF programme weaves the excitement, pace and possibilities of digital learning and new technologies with Indigenous/Pacific ways of knowing, being and doing.

How 3BF works

- **Culturally-grounded** – holistic, strengths-based, whānau learning together
- **Pastoral care** – uplifting and sustaining wraparound support
- **Academic achievement** – building study skills and micro-credentials
- **Practical** – growing real-world knowledge/skills for a lifetime
- **Innovative** – earning income while doing self-directed, interest-based learning
- **Career-connected** – opening up pathways for tech and other careers
- **Community-supported** – partnering across sectors for change

The Team

KidsCoin has a team of 16, most of whom identify as Pacific and Māori. The Founder/Managing Director is responsible for strategy, development and contract oversight. With decades of experience in the New Zealand education system, the Curriculum Designer contributes to programme evaluation, contract reporting and school engagement. A Programme Manager manages day-to-day programme delivery and staff. A Programme Coordinator does ‘backroom’ administration. Employment Support Coordinators work closely with students and whānau. Other team members focus on student recruitment, digital fluency and industry alignment, payroll administration, accounts and legal matters, communications, and supporting students to move into further training or careers. Language support for whānau is also available.

“3BF connects students back to themselves, helping them appreciate the strength and mana in being Pacific. We want to see more Māori and Pacific with the strength and mana to propel themselves into real places they can reach, with the ability to thrive. ... It takes a whole village supporting and believing in our youth for them to succeed. As Pacific peoples, navigation is in our roots. Students grasp the idea of going on a vaka journey. We say to them, ‘We will help you load up your vaka with the resources you need for your journey but only you can decide your destination.’ That way of thinking clicks for them and is something we all value.”

3BF Programme Manager

GET PAID

WORK FROM
ANYWHERE

LEARN AND EARN



3BF@kidscoin.co.nz





How 3BF works – the programme

Recruitment

Students are recruited through high schools, Pacific churches, professional networks, whānau and community connections. Interested students are encouraged to register their interest via email. Staff follow up with them via email or phone, and also approach their referees, to determine whether or not they fit the criteria. Successful candidates are invited to submit an employment application.

Onboarding

This step sets up students for employment. They create a bank account, apply for an IRD number and tax code, are introduced to the tax system, and learn how to complete timesheets. Students can access laptops and the internet through 3BF if required.

The curriculum

The programme spans foundational skills development, training and employment, project work focussed on the interests of students, and pastoral care that supports personal development. Students enrol in MOOCs or Massive Open Online Courses, which are delivered via internationally recognised, industry endorsed, online platforms. MOOCs offer a flexible way to learn specific skills, experience or knowledge, do project-related work, and progress career development. Students earn certificates and some have also gained credits for particular NCEA Unit Standards.

- **Core curriculum:** Students complete a suite of foundational courses delivered through Google Applied. They master basic digital tools and begin to develop employment-ready skills (see Chart p. 11).
- **Knowledge/skill development and project work:** On completing the core curriculum, students move across to Udemy where they further develop 'hard/technical' skills (such as graphic design or web development) and future-focused 'soft' skills (such as adaptability, self-discipline, time management, entrepreneurial thinking, communication and problem solving).

Students gain real-world experience doing live projects focussed on their passion and interests. They design and deliver projects, either as part of a self-selected course or connected to their world.

- **Mapping future pathways:** Employment Support Coordinators assist students to identify study and career pathways for further learning, work internships or work apprenticeships with KidsCoin partners, while also supporting them to make improvements that will help open the next door.

Support systems and whānau knowledge-sharing

- **Pastoral care:** Wraparound pastoral care ensures students feel welcome, valued, understood and well-supported. Initially, Employment Support Coordinators meet weekly, one-to-one, with students. Guided by Indigenous models (Te Whare Tapa Whā and Fonofale), they support students to set personal, educational and life goals and self-paced timelines. When students feel more confident, they join others in small groups and meet with a Coordinator twice a month via zoom to discuss their progress, learning strategies to stay on track. Some need more 'hands-on, high-touch' support, such as increased one-one engagement or whānau 'get-togethers' with a 3BF team member.
- **Whānau engagement and learning:** Whānau members act as crucial support pillars. They participate in a weekly, one-hour 'whānau share time' with their student and attend 3BF gatherings. They develop new digital skills, learn about the exciting world of technology and better understand career options and pathways. Students document their whānau share time via a video, voice recording, image, text or another platform. Employment Support Coordinators give feedback and answer questions to support student learning. 3BF ends with a 'wrap-up' event at which proud whānau witness their students receive certificates and everyone shares experiences of 3BF and its benefits.

Examples of core curriculum micro-credentials

Subject Area	Tools / Approach	Digital skills acquired
Communicating efficiently	Emails, internet search and digital documents	Account creation, effective communication and Gmail features
Learning to make good financial decisions	Researching, comparing costs and spending via spreadsheets, and how to use maps, search functions and Google Sheets	Conditional formulas, data analysis and organising data
Learning online G Suite	How to work collaboratively and productively in a professional environment and how to demonstrate effective communication with an online meeting solution called Google Hangouts	Digital collaboration, effective communication, Gmail features, project management, video conferencing, digital publishing, and file organisation and sharing
Event planning and management	Creating to-do lists and assigning tasks to others	Digital publishing, document formatting and effective communication
Create an organised digital address book using spreadsheets	Understanding spreadsheet and data management	Data representation and visualization, organising data, sorting and filtering, and spreadsheet design and organisation
Project management using digital tools	Planning a team project, track its progress and costs, and prepare a summary report using digital tools	File organisation, project management and spreadsheet design
Use Google to get a Job	Conducting a successful job search using digital tools	Document formatting, resume writing and spreadsheet organisation
Build your own business	Creating, promoting, and managing an online business using digital tools	Collecting feedback, digital publishing, document formatting, internet searching and spreadsheet organisation



How well 3BF works

The partnership with MoE provides a snapshot of how well 3BF works. KidsCoin customised a 17-week, *by Pacific, for Pacific* 3BF prototype from their existing 34-week programme. Programme delivery ran from 12 April to 27 August 2021. Students were offered paid employment for up to 10 hours each week or 20 hours fortnightly, earning \$18 per hour. Online delivery ran smoothly, despite the disruptions of a nationwide, COVID-19 Level Four lockdown in the final two weeks.

“The thing I like about the programme is how you can do it in your own time, when you’re free. There are no set times and I have rugby training and all that. ... Also, looking at life in a different way and thinking about the next steps for work and for study. I’m just really interested to see what the future holds.”

Student (1)

Four South Auckland schools became learning hubs: Manurewa High School in Manurewa, De La Salle College in Māngere, and Tangaroa College and Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate in Ōtara. The team engaged with school principals, career advisors and IT teachers to spark interest, gain commitment, and identify potential students for the programme.

Programme flexibility supported student engagement and the 3BF team hosted online hui for whānau members who couldn’t attend face-to-face gatherings. Different whānau members (a parent or sibling, for example) attended the weekly whānau share time.

MoE student cohort

A total of 38 Pacific students were recruited and 30 completed the programme. The main reasons for students withdrawing from the programme were personal, family, church, or cultural commitments. When students withdrew, others were recruited to take their place. Of those completing, 10 identified as Cook Island Māori, eight as Samoan, six as Tongan, four as Cook Island Māori/Māori, two as Niuean/Cook Island and one identified as Tuvaluan/Māori/Samoan.

Most students accessed devices through school and three used 3BF laptops. All students had existing internet access at home. Two KidsCoin laptops were damaged (one repairable, the other not) and more work is needed to cultivate greater student responsibility for loaned devices.

Students accessed or developed resources to facilitate entry into paid work. While the majority (25 students) did not have a C.V. when they began 3BF and five did not have a bank account, the majority did have a bank account, knew their IRD number and tax code, and were enrolled in KiwiSaver. Typically, they were older students who had had part-time or casual jobs. Coordinators assisted two students to apply for their IRD number and tax code, and whānau helped five students to set up a bank account. A small number chose not to join KiwiSaver at this stage, following discussions with their whānau. On completion of the programme, all students had a current C.V., knew their IRD number and tax code, and had a bank account.

MoE student cohort

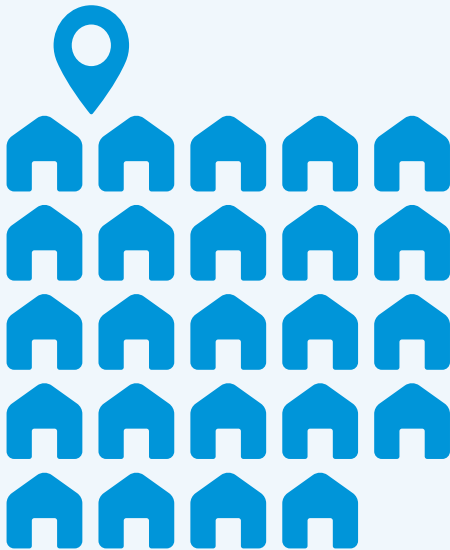
30

Pacific students aged 14-18 years completed the programme



24

Live in South Auckland



23

Attend decile 1-3 schools



19

Were females



30-60

Whānau participants

MoE student cohort

74%



Average number of users
online at once

100%



Students completed the Udemy
courses they enrolled in



\$2314

Average income per
student (\$136 per week)

116



Average hours worked per
student (7 hours per week)

89%



Access activity on Udemy
two weeks after students
completed 3BF

11



Students gained
other part-time
employment

1



Student entered fulltime
employment

17



Students are now considering a tech
career or enrolling in tech courses

3BF outcomes for the MoE cohort

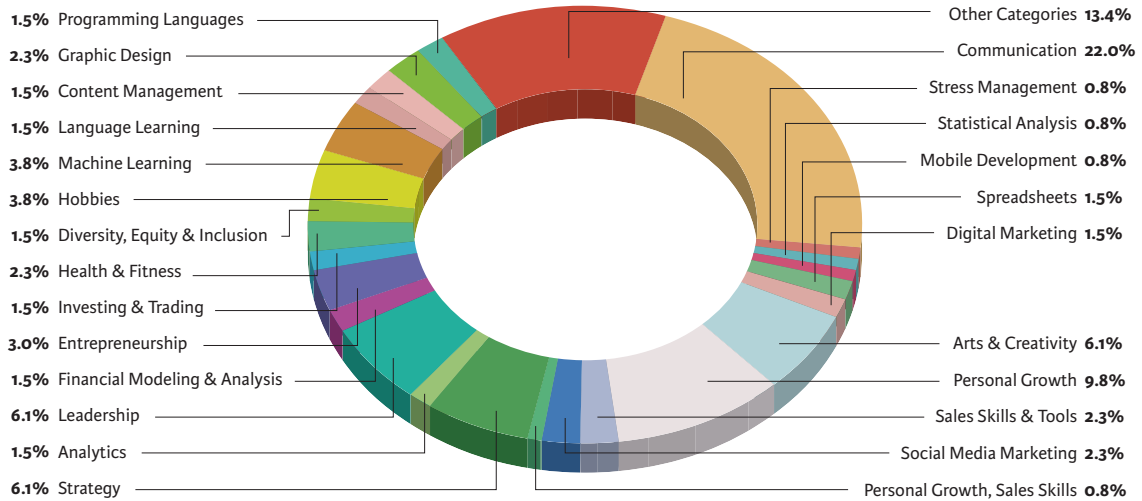
Improved access to the digital world and confidence in working online

Students and staff reported significant positive change in student access to the digital world and increased confidence in working online.

“...learning to adapt [to] the online learning platform has been a procedure I had to get used to and I’m glad I did. Yes, I’m confident on learning online ... it has benefitted me to ... adapt to learning independently and ... gain information and knowledge on certain areas which are relevant to me and will be of good use.” Student (2)

“The change is evident after the first few foundation courses they complete. When they come in, they send us emails that have no structure and ... use text messaging language and formats. After they do the foundation courses, their email communication is noticeably different; it’s more formal, clear and concise. It’s just beautiful to see them developing skills that will be valuable in the future.” Employment Support Coordinator

Diagram 1: Udemy courses reflecting student interests



Improved digital and financial skills

Students learned a range of digital and financial skills. They reported a significant leap in understanding, especially those who began 3BF with limited or no knowledge. Applying their new skills helped to create an optimal learning experience.

“I also had no digital skills before doing these lessons, but ... I’m happy to say that I now have a lot of knowledge around digital skills and online communication through emails, docs, and etc.” Student (3)

“Through the lesson ‘Create A Budget in Google Sheets, I learnt so much! From learning the meaning of income, to expenses and balances, I am now aware of these words ... I’m also a lot more confident with knowing how loans work... I have also gained a lot of knowledge around google sheets itself.” Student (4)

Improved qualifications

All 30 students fulfilled their onboarding and foundational course requirements on the Google platform as well as earning a range of self-selected micro-credentials through Udemy (see diagram 1 on previous page). Different micro-credentials have different course requirements and standards, and some involve more work than others. Twenty-two students earned ten or more micro credentials. Staff reported that student achievement is important for whānau and builds a positive track record that nourishes pride, self-belief, resilience and aspirations for the future. Students also reported being able to apply their 3BF learning to their school work.

“When the students complete something, they are given a certificate, and that means a lot to the whānau, to see their kids succeed. ... It can take a long time for students to really believe in themselves and believe they are worthy of having the future they choose ... Learning basic skills means they can then start thinking about and fulfilling their big dreams.”

Programme Coordinator

“The feeling of success and pride that comes with competing the programme is a significant outcome. ... we also see their resilience ... especially when they enjoy the learning and feel like it’s taking them somewhere.” Employment Support Coordinator

“Heaps of other positives came out of it. It helped with my school work, especially all the photography work I did and all of the apps I learnt through the Udemy courses.” Student (5)



Increased personal growth

Students demonstrated personal growth and self-development including increased leadership skills, motivation, work ethic, excitement, pride, confidence, as well as awareness of and hope for the future.

“I also learnt how to face the fear of failure and new tools designed to help individuals soar.”
Student (6)

“... my friends and extensive family members ... [said] my motivation and work ethic with school had definitely improved ... [and 3BF] helped me a lot with ... self-development as well.”
Student (7)

“We don’t really know what’s out there, so this programme has been a huge help ... It’s helping us to figure out who we are and what we want to do and be for the rest of our lives.”
Student (5)

“3BF grows awareness and confidence; [students] become engaged with their future and more conscious that the decisions they make today will affect the lives they live tomorrow. When kids start to learn new skills, they start to see possibilities and hope in themselves for their future that they weren’t able to see before.” 3BF Employment Support Coordinator

Improved employability

Students worked on a range of live projects, building valuable work experience. Instead of industry partners determining projects however, 3BF Coordinators supported students to create a new space for their interests and encouraged them to learn knowledge/skills to take back to their communities. Students developed projects related to their world (family, church, community, cultural groups) and their passions/interests (music, fashion, sports). One student developed a social media platform for his dad’s basketball team and another developed a website for her mum’s business. Another worked on a MOOC-related project, exploring how to use digital technologies to help launch their music career. Students and whānau valued the opportunity to experience paid employment and gain basic/essential work-ready skills.

“3BF was a great way to experience having a job as well as learning new skills for me to complete my work.” Student (8)

“I have also learnt personal development skills which allows me to become a better person every day and leadership skills which I can use in team environments. Time management was a massive gain from this programme as I found that I valued my time way more when I had many tasks to complete. This allowed me to be more productive during the day and minimise distractions or things that aren’t helping me to achieve my goals.” Student (9)

“It takes your first job to learn all the bits and pieces ... and every task is preparing you for the next phase or challenge. So, it’s awesome knowing my brother has learnt all that and to hear him say he’s learnt self-development and is looking forward to the next steps.” Whānau member (1)

Improved support system encourages student aspirations

Students reported feeling well supported during the programme. Highly effective pastoral care and a whānau-centred approach enabled transformative conversations with students. They developed a clearer sense of their purpose, passion, interests and future, essential for increasing their career choices.

“[My brother] has appreciated all the mentorship. I have appreciated him having the opportunity to experience the awahi and manaakitanga of other people. I hope the programme continues for other rangatahi.” Whānau member (1)

“In a whānau share time, [a student] talked about the way 3BF has changed his thinking about his future. The programme challenged the stereotype that Māori and Pacific can only apply for warehouse jobs. He now has a different mindset and wants to be an inspiration for his whānau and the youth coming after him.” 3BF Programme Manager

“With the knowledge I gained from these courses I am more equipped to know what is needed when properly using social media marketing. I then shared to my mum that I think these skills can take me far as a lot of jobs could be looking for people with these skills and knowledge and I really would enjoy doing this.” Student (10)

Enhanced whānau wellbeing and digital empowerment

Increased income was a significant outcome for all students and especially for whānau struggling to make ends meet. Family members reported a sense of improved wellbeing and empowerment through exposure to 3BF digital platforms in whānau share time.

“It’s been good and hard at the same time. But thankfully my aunty and my mum pushed me along to send in my time sheets. The money has helped a lot with family and church necessities, and with school and camps as well. It’s helped me to learn how to budget. It’s been a blessing.” Student (11)

“During whānau share time... I sat with [my sister] with some of my work opened up on the laptop to show her what ... I learned about how to use google to get a new job. ... I told her that I’d never written a resume before but through the applied digital skills programme I was able to write one myself. She asked if I could show her how I did that, and she was surprised to see that there was a resume template already in google docs. She said that this would be very helpful for her.” Student (12)

“[My daughter] got excited and asked to look through the Udemy platform. She found it cool that we’re being provided with such a big help into our future and what we want. Overall, she felt really positive about the whole platform’s purpose in helping us.” Whānau member (2)



Our stories

“What a journey it’s been. I’m truly thankful... to have a taste of what it’s like to be an official employee or student of 3BF. This opportunity became a chance for us youth to find our purpose or true passion. ... We had the opportunity to innovate and create ideas that would help our Māori and Pacific communities to take further notice of jobs that include technological skills. ... Personally, I had great relationships with the mentors who helped my learning and guided me on my journey. I highly recommended this experience to every Māori and Pacific person out there wanting to make changes.” Student (13)

“This kid started realising that doing 3BF could change his future. We started having more hui and inspirational conversations, [and] I directed him to the kinds of material I had tuned into as a young Samoan boy. Now he's looking at e-commerce and building an online shop. He's studying how to work algorithms and use social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook as marketing tools to promote and sell products. He's on our Udemy platform and we can see through the courses he's taking that he's actively developing a learning pathway for himself. He's choosing courses that will help him to develop self-confidence and skills around how to deal with people and speak in public. He can see their value now he has more of a business mindset. It's so beautiful to see and I'm really proud of his progress.” Employment Support Coordinator

“We had previously offered 3BF to Papakura High students and were invited to their Careers Expo. Students from the MoE cohort helped to run our stand and tell other students about 3BF. I was told our stand was among the busiest. My jaw dropped when I heard we registered 150 students for the next cohort. I didn't expect the interest to be that high – it shows the need and the demand. If our programme can engage one high school in that way, imagine the potential? The students who've done it, believe in it. Our stories show the importance of this type of intervention for our Pacific people – when it's designed by us, for us the impact will be there.” 3BF Founder

“My 16-year-old brother is in the programme and I've watched him really grow over his time of being involved. Life has been a lot harder for him than it was for me growing up, so this programme has been awesome for him. He was always very driven but since he started 3BF I've seen his confidence come out more. I've watched him consistently do the hours and complete the work. He is motivated by money, of course, but obviously there's something else there. He wants to do the work because he's enjoying the learning. Through 3BF, he's managed to find out that he can really engage in the things he wants to learn. He's just really clicked with it, and now has more confidence and new knowledge.

Every week there's new stories about what he's learning. He was able to do courses through 3BF that linked with his mechanic course at school. Also, the Coordinators were constantly suggesting other courses that he could do next. He's the one who always wanted more paid hours. At sixteen, he is now determined to understand his vision and what he wants for his life, so he can go for it. He wants to be a mechanic and now he's planning to open his own business. Learning about business has given him the confidence to think he can own his own business.

Recently he told me he got two friends involved in 3BF as well, and the three of them make the hours every week. ... Now he's keen to be involved in coaching the kids or getting them involved in 3BF. The kids are something like our brick-and-mortar voices when it comes to engaging other youth.” Whānau member (3)



An independent view

The 3BF team hosted a 90-minute wrap-up event via zoom for the MoE cohort around dinner-time on 1st September 2021. Eighteen students and a small number of whānau members attended, as well as the TSI Lead and the author of this report. The KidsCoin Founder shared inspirational reflections echoed by the 3BF team. Each student spoke authentically, from the heart, when sharing their learning journey. Diverse voices communicated highly consistent messages. Students reported feeling “grateful”, “blessed” and “thankful” for the opportunity to participate in 3BF. A student received strong support when he said, “I highly recommend this experience to Māori and Pacific youth”. Students expressed “aroha for the 3BF team and my whānau” and gratitude for the mentoring and support they had received.

Students highlighted outcomes important to them including: **academic benefits** (“It helped a lot with my school work”), **“life/job skills”** (learning how to use “digital and tech platforms”, “how to make a budget and keep to it”, “developing a savings strategy”, “how to manage my time”, “how to create a CV”), **paid work experience** (“the opportunity got me a job”, “real world experience of what it’s like to work”), **personal growth** (“feeling more confident”, “personal development”), **opening up a future** (“the opportunity gave me inspirations”, it was “a head start in what comes next in our future”) and **whānau economic benefits** (“earning money” for their family and for personal expenses”).

Student reflections conveyed a very high level of satisfaction with their experiences of 3BF (“This programme was very, very good for me”).
A whānau member expressed equally strong satisfaction with programme delivery and gratitude for her younger brother’s achievements, adding “I hope the programme continues for other rangatahi.”

Having this important milestone event during the third week of a Level Four COVID-19 Lockdown via zoom did not dampen the joy and pride expressed when all the students were acknowledged and awarded a certificate for successfully completing the programme. As a measure of success this event provided a snapshot in time that powerfully witnessed the value and benefits of 3BF.





Strengths

A whānau-centred approach is key. Family members support their student to successfully progress through the programme. Coordinators stay closely connected to ensure that whānau develop an understanding of the learning process, what it means for them, and how they can contribute and benefit. The whānau journey is transparent, engaging and open for discussion.

Coordinators relate well to Pacific students and know the core curriculum. Coordinators come from similar backgrounds and offer relatable advice. Their support builds confidence and encourages students to express themselves and raise questions or concerns. Students learn how to navigate personal challenges and overcome self-doubt that could otherwise hinder their progress. Having administrative access to all courses means Coordinators can quickly pinpoint and address course-related concerns, helping students to successfully navigate their course choices, self-directed learning and educational pathway. Coordinators also ensure students develop the necessary knowledge/skills to achieve their goals, through relevant course selection.

Pastorally supported, paid work experience distinguishes 3BF. Earning money motivates students to complete their course work and projects, and learn how to work efficiently and manage their time/commitments. Earning money activates an economic prosperity model in which students contribute to the economy of their whānau, community and country. On completion, students are able to show potential employers their project work, certificates and a reference.

3BF builds the integrity of mana. Students become aware of and appreciate the whole value of who they are and what they offer. A digital career will excite some and not others, but 21st century living/working requires digital engagement, so everyone benefits and “we won’t get left behind”. Armed with new skills, students who realise a tech career isn’t for them can begin to explore other career pathways. Coordinators help guide student choices for tertiary study or another next step towards their career.

3BF supports aspirational progress. Students identify *their* aspirations for *their* future. Mapping and navigating the personal journey of each student enables them to develop a clear focus and attainable goals. Supported through pastoral care touchpoints, they learn how to maximise the economic and educational opportunities within the programme. Students reimagine their relationship with learning; it becomes something they enjoy doing, leads to qualifications and creates a pathway to paid work.

KidsCoin is working hard on data collection. Funding from Internet New Zealand enabled the team to work with an evaluation specialist to learn more about evaluation, develop an outcomes framework, redesign survey tools and refine data collection processes. This work is ongoing. The aim is to produce a credible standard of proof that shows key stakeholders that “we’re serving our students well” and “measuring what matters”. The team also recognises that “we need good data to make programme improvements”.

Challenges

Tight timeframes impact delivery. A short lead-in time for the MoE cohort meant a shorter period of engagement with youth and their whānau upfront. The onboarding process also took longer than expected as some students loaded incorrect details, didn't know how to apply for their IRD details, or returned forms late. While the 17-week customised programme produced good outcomes, a longer time frame would support increased engagement. A 26-week programme would allow more opportunity for whānau participation and enable students to explore more core technical skills and consolidate their future pathways.

Limited financial literacy can become a barrier to engagement. Initially, some parents did not want their student to create a bank account. Parents were concerned about their financial obligations and exposure to risk, or felt anxious about their student having their own money, or wanted the income deposited in their (the parent's) bank account. Addressing these concerns was time-consuming and shows the need for whānau financial capability building. Some students were reluctant to put in timesheets; they needed help as well as reassurance they deserved to be paid.

Competing priorities affect student engagement. Wrestling with other responsibilities, time management or procrastination caused some students in the MoE cohort to fall behind schedule or withdraw. Coordinators observed that Pacific students routinely juggle multiple commitments – family, friends, sports, church, school, community – and inevitably responsibilities crop up and divert their attention. Students in the MoE cohort who completed the programme valued the time management strategies they learnt through 3BF.

Students have different needs. They come with different identities, life experiences, work ethics, economic realities, and aspirations. 3BF reduces barriers to entry, enrolling youth who are barely achieving at school. To become work ready, some need intensive pastoral support to develop basic skills (such as planning and goal-setting) and personal attributes (such as perseverance to achieve goals, confidence to ask for help, and self-discipline to restrain impulsivity or overcome procrastination). Others exceed expectations and the challenge is not to limit their progress. Flexible contracting would accommodate diverse needs.

Programme development is ongoing but requires further investment. Possible enhancements include: new ways to grow cognitive functions, adaptive skills and personal attributes for employment; a new key competency/soft skills matrix to appraise student work experience coupled with an incentives strategy to reward performance; a new digital preparedness matrix for the student and the school; new pastoral care systems; new ways to use industry knowledge to inform course selection and match students with tertiary pathways or industry-based opportunities. Such developments come at a cost but will ensure an agile, responsive, outcome-focussed approach.

More work with schools is needed. Schools offer different NCEA Unit Standards and teachers continue to explore ways to implement the new digital curriculum. Potential exists to maximise academic outcomes for 3BF students by enabling them to gain NCEA Unit Standards, but this requires more work. Investment is needed for planning, systems development and school engagement.





Where to from here

By creating the conditions for success, 3BF enables Māori and Pacific youth to uncover their passion, find their path, gain qualifications, earn income and learn future-focussed skills that will help them to achieve in a highly technological, COVID-19 challenged, constantly changing world. Sustainable funding for programme delivery will ensure more youth and their whānau can benefit. An investment in capability-building will help to enhance and expand 3BF. Partnering is key to opening up existing and new opportunities. Having more eyes on real-world programme outcomes will support accountability and an agile response to changing conditions. Weaving together the insights and aspirations of different partners will progress multiple interests.

What's needed?

A strategic approach

- Respond to the significant demand for 3BF, including a current wait list of more than 100 South Auckland Pacific students
- Deliver 3BF to more Pacific and Māori students across Auckland
- Ensure participating whānau and schools keep pace with 3BF and their students
- Continue to improve or innovate the curriculum, systems and processes
- Develop and begin to action a plan to expand delivery to Pacific students across the country

Ongoing government funding for programme delivery

- A contract for another cohort of Pacific students in the current financial year (ending 30 June 2021) and, thereafter, to support sustainability and planning, a three-year contract for three cohorts per year beginning in the next financial year (beginning 1 July 2022).
- Each cohort would enable 40 Pacific students to complete the programme and run for 26 weeks – with increased flexibility, so students have the option to complete 3BF in a shorter time frame.
- Cohorts would focus mainly on Auckland schools, but allow some enrolments from other places (to build readiness for scaling up).

A government investment in capability-building

- Programme improvements, to enhance the experience of future cohorts, including a programme to build whānau financial capabilities (so parents and siblings keep pace with their student's learning) and a tuākana-teina model (where 3BF graduates help to recruit, guide and support new students)
- Increased engagement with schools, to:
 - Recruit eligible students for the programme
 - Develop shared knowledge and systems so students can align their micro-credentials to NCEA Unit Standards
- Ongoing work with partners, to build new pathways to education, training, and employment for Māori and Pacific youth, especially careers in the tech sector.

How can industry and philanthropic partners help?

- Sponsor students to participate in the programme
- Donate devices for students to use
- Help open up new pathways to a tech career
- Encourage an industry commitment to a cultural shift supporting diversity and inclusion
- Support capability-building



He Mihi Aroha

The author gratefully acknowledges the contributors to this report. KidsCoin supplied the photography, with design and layout by Creative Sauce Ltd.

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Disclaimer

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