

Evaluation of Community-based Remand Homes

Prepared for Oranga Tamariki by F.E.M. (2006) Ltd & Associates

Kataraina Pipi, Kellie Spee, Louise Were, Laurie Porima, Kym Hamilton,
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Ki ngā reo tautoko ki te aromatawai nei - tēnā koutou katoa!

Our heartfelt thanks to the rangatahi, house parents and kaimahi, caregivers, mentors, team leaders, Oranga Tamariki and iwi leaders who contributed their feedback.

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Executive summary

Community-based remand homes intend to support the needs of rangatahi / young people remanded into youth justice custodial care by providing a safe, nurturing environment close to whānau and the community. These services are being revitalised under the New Builds programme initiative. This initiative aspires to help engage young people in education/training and culturally appropriate services that meet their needs in order to achieve longer-term goals of reducing the severity and frequency of re-offending, reducing Māori disparities, and improving wellbeing.

The first of the current suite of community-based remand homes opened its doors in 2017. During the 1 July 2021- 30 June 2022 (2022 financial) year there were 16 such homes operating across the motu, with operational data showing 551 admissions of rangatahi, who were cared for on remand (480), bail (60) or under Supervision with Activity (11) orders during those 12 months. The majority of young people placed in these homes for remand or bail purposes are aged 15-16 (73%), though ages range from 11 to 17 years old. There is a trend of the numbers of males far exceeding females in these homes, with males accounting for 90% of remand/bail entries in the 2022 financial year. Rangatahi Māori on remand/bail are over-represented in the homes, with 2022 figures showing that 75% identified as Māori, with NZ European the next largest ethnic group at 11%. While 53% of young people spent less than a week in a youth justice placement in such a home in the 2022 financial year, the average number of days per stay was 15, and a small proportion (8%) stayed for over 50 days.¹

The findings of this evaluation have been informed by case studies with four remand homes, which all have diverse approaches and offer unique opportunities and experiences for young people. The remand homes are:

- Mahuru Youth Services, Kaikohe – operated by Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services (NISS), delivers programmes, offers advice and support embedded in mātauranga-a-Ngāpuhi.
- Aufua le Taea, Auckland – operated by Emerge Aotearoa (EA), a national charitable trust with a long history of providing health and social services throughout Aotearoa.
- Will Street, Dunedin – initially established in 2017 and operated by Oranga Tamariki. Since 2017 it has gone through a few changes, including a recent reset of practices, policies, and staffing.
- Whare Tuhua, Tauranga – operated by Te Tuinga Whanau Support Services Trust, a kaupapa Māori-based organisation committed to weaving whānau and the wider community together.

The case studies for each of the four remand homes are included in Appendix One.

The key evaluation questions were:

- How well are community-based youth justice placements delivering services to meet the evolving needs of rangatahi, whānau and providers/community partners?
- What improvements, if any, are needed that will lead youth justice community-based remand homes to achieve desired outcomes?
- What are the opportunities for hapū, Iwi and Hāpori Māori in response to the future direction of Oranga Tamariki? (e.g., decentralisation of services, strengthened and resourced local partnerships).

Kaupapa Māori methodology guided the evaluation by drawing on ngā ura (values), tikanga (practices), te reo Māori and Māori practice models. Success case study was the primary method of data collection, with complementary document and administrative data review. Between September – December 2021 the evaluation team interviewed 41 people face-to-face or by Zoom.

- Six rangatahi
- Six remand home house parents and/or caregivers
- 16 remand home kaimahi, such as mentors, kaiako

¹ The figures in this paragraph are sourced from operational data and are not official agency statistics. There was a significant COVID-19 impact on the length of some placements in the 2022 financial year, due to fewer community-based options available for rangatahi to transition to, particularly after bail placements.

- Nine personnel from the provider organisations, such as team leaders
- Three Oranga Tamariki kaimahi
- One iwi leader

For analysis, each case study was written up separately and once confirmed by the remand homes, a thematic analysis across the four remand homes was completed. Synthesis was through two sense-making sessions, where preliminary findings were presented back to Oranga Tamariki and discussed.

Overall, all four sites are working well to meet the needs of rangatahi. There are consistent examples of positive support and outcomes for rangatahi, including reconnection to culture and self. Across the whare, the providers support individual and collective wellbeing within the whare. Further, providers practice in ways that support the development of reciprocal relationships, allegiance, and mutual respect between rangatahi and the adults involved in their care. This is significantly different from 'traditional' state care, where adults typically hold power over rangatahi. Evaluation findings suggest that as rangatahi engage in the whare, positive self-efficacy develops alongside stronger cultural connectedness. As providers role model positive social/cultural norms, rangatahi are building resilience.

Thematic analysis of the case studies identified successful practices within the remand homes that align with a tikanga Māori framework – Ngā Pou Tikanga. Ngā Pou Tikanga is Māori-centred and mana-enhancing. It echoes Te Toka Tūmoana, the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural principled wellbeing framework, and Whakamana te Tamaiti, the Practice policy to empower tamariki Māori. The pou tikanga used to frame evaluation findings are:

- Rangatiratanga – growing self-determination, leadership capability and capacity.
- Wairuatanga – instilling hope and positivity
- Kaitiakitanga (Aroha) – protecting and nurturing through aroha
- Whakapapa (Whanaungatanga) – affirming identity and connecting through whanaungatanga
- Manaakitanga – sharing aroha.

Evaluation findings suggest the following improvements that may enable Oranga Tamariki to better support the whare and rangatahi.

- Ensure that newly established whare and those still embedding Māori centred practices are supported by Oranga Tamariki.
- Prioritise whakapapa connections in the placement of rangatahi by Oranga Tamariki.
- Enhance provider autonomy to engage or invite expertise to support making whakapapa connections with and for rangatahi and whānau so the opportunity (re)connect is maximised.
- Improve interconnections between the whare, Oranga Tamariki local and national staff; the whare and the community; leverage relationships to strengthen whakapapa connections.
- Provide sufficient resources to support whare to engage in mātauranga Maori, connecting to whenua and whakapapa.
- Guide and advise whare on ways to meet the holistic educational needs of rangatahi, and help to establish relationships with relevant and culturally responsive educational partners.
- Develop a deeper understanding of the activities and services that will support goals and aspirations of rangatahi.
- Strengthen information sharing between Oranga Tamariki, providers and whānau to ensure that rangatahi experience is understood.
- Encourage more social worker engagement with rangatahi, whānau and the providers they work with by sharing timely communications and information.

This evaluation highlighted positive examples of remand homes being explicitly Māori, immersed in te ao Māori values and approaches. In these examples, rangatahi connection to self, whānau and community is strengthened, and tikanga-ā-iwi and mātauranga Māori drive support and service delivery. However, the degree that the remand homes are steeped in te ao Māori varies among the whare. This variability creates opportunities for Oranga Tamariki to engage with the aspirations of hapū, iwi and hāpori as part of their future direction. There are opportunities for remand homes to develop meaningful partnerships with hapū, iwi and hāpori Māori, shifting practice into a space

where Māori have more ownership over service delivery to meet their needs. To support hapū, iwi, and Māori to develop and lead culturally responsive, kaupapa Māori pathways within youth justice community-based remand home services, Oranga Tamariki can explore procurement, contracting and support processes to enable meaningful partnerships. It is also important to acknowledge Aufua le Taea as a Pasific-based and led service, and that the ongoing development of partnerships within and with Pasific communities would also be valuable.

Overall, remand homes are working well to meet the needs of rangatahi, encouraging rangatahi to look positively towards their future and pursue their dreams. Within warm, safe and caring, family-like environments, rangatahi are supported to consider their previous actions and make positive changes. Future improvements would further enhance the transformative experience for rangatahi and outcomes for the remand homes. These would involve strengthening funding, contracting and policy arrangements, and effective leadership from Oranga Tamariki, iwi, and providers to support rangatahi. As well as allocating sufficient resources to Māori, and where tikanga Māori is recognised as a central and legitimate practice framework. Developing culturally appropriate community-based youth justice placements that are therapeutic and enable local tikanga to be practised was seen as critical to reducing disparities and systemic barriers experienced by rangatahi and whānau. To support this shift from Crown control, collective Māori responsibility and authority must be strengthened and restored.

Background to the evaluation

Introduction

This section of the report outlines a brief history of the community-based remand homes sector, the recent developments and changes, and the purpose of the evaluation. The four community-based remand homes participating in the evaluation are also briefly outlined.

Background to Oranga Tamariki funding of community-based remand homes

In 2015 an Expert Advisory Panel responsible for modernising Child, Youth and Family Services was established to look at how young people were being held in custody throughout Aotearoa. The expert advisory panel recommended smaller community-based settings would better support rangatahi while they are on remand and awaiting charges to come before the courts. Following this, a small number of community-based remand homes were established in 2017 and 2018.²

In Budget 19, Treasury awarded funding for the New Builds programme initiative to establish community-based youth justice placements. The New Builds programme aspires to help young people build lasting connections to whānau, hapū and local community, as well as engage young people in education/training and culturally appropriate services that meet their needs to achieve longer-term goals of reducing the severity and frequency of re-offending, reducing Māori disparities, and improving wellbeing. As a long-term solution, it was proposed that community-based youth justice placements that are therapeutic and enable local tikanga to be practised are developed to meet the need for culturally appropriate services.

Since 1 July 2019, four community-based remand homes for rangatahi in the custody of Oranga Tamariki for youth justice have come into operation. At the time of writing, 14 community homes that are able to receive rangatahi detained in the custody of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki were operating within the community, with 176 rangatahi reported to have been admitted to these homes, up to 30 April 2020.³

Community-based remand homes (The Whare)

Youth justice remand homes are intended to meet the needs of young people remanded into youth justice custodial care without placing them in large residential institutions. The community remand home initiative is consistent with research that promotes small, local community-based care options as positive alternatives to placement in larger, secure detention residences, such as the four youth justice residences in New Zealand.

² Hereon referred to as the existing community-based remand homes

³ Data from: Key Informant Interview and Oranga Tamariki. (2021). Request for Proposals for Evaluation of Existing Youth Justice Community based Remand Homes

The purpose of these remand homes is to provide a safe, nurturing environment close to whānau and community for rangatahi detained in the Chief Executive's custody while remanded under s238(1)d of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. The remand homes provide care for up to five young people for an expected period of four to six weeks while their case is heard in the Youth Court. In general, the outcomes being sought from the community-based placements include:

- Provide high-quality day-to-day care in a supportive whānau/family environment to strengthen and maintain rangatahi connection to whānau and the community
- Place rangatahi in an environment that best meets their personal needs and characteristics and assesses their health and education needs
- Limit young people's exposure to the negative impacts of youth justice residences by spending minimal periods in police cells and Youth Justice residential facilities
- Coordinate an approach with partner agencies to ensure that plans are put in place to meet rangatahi needs.⁴

Evaluation purpose

Oranga Tamariki aims to continue its investment in community-based placements, including the investment in the New Builds project. An essential step in developing the New Builds is to understand how well the current community-based youth justice remand homes are working to achieve the outcomes, particularly for rangatahi Māori and their whānau. The New Builds reflect the intent of section 7AA (s7AA) within the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, to improve outcomes and reduce disparities for tamariki/rangatahi Māori and their whānau, and implement policies and practices that reflect te ao Māori, including mana tamaiti, whakapapa, and whanaungatanga responsibilities.

While various models of community-based placements are being run in Aotearoa, there is little information on how these models are being implemented. Although too early to assess the longer-term outcomes, the evaluation will describe the remand homes' practices.

Broadly, the evaluation aims to:

- provide learning to inform the development of the New Builds
- explore what is working well in the existing suite of community-based remand homes, including those operated by iwi and non-iwi community partners
- highlight opportunities for improvements for the remand homes to achieve desired outcomes and inform new investments to align with the Oranga Tamariki Youth Justice's future direction.

Community-based remand homes

Four community-based remand homes (the *whare*) were invited by the project commissioner (Manager, community homes, Youth Justice) to participate in this evaluation. The homes were selected by the project commissioner to represent the diverse approaches that are being used by service providers to meet the needs of rangatahi and their whānau.

The four remand homes selected and briefly outlined below include an iwi-based kaupapa Māori service, a non-government bi-cultural service, an Oranga Tamariki run service, and a non-government kaupapa Māori service.

Table 1 provides an overview of the four *whare*:

Table 1: Overview of the four participating community-based remand homes

Mahuru Youth Services, Kaikohe – operated by Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services (NISS) and established through their existing Youth Justice services. NISS delivers remand home services through specialist caregivers who provide one-to-one care and support within the caregiver's own homes. NISS support rangatahi through marae-based wananga to develop belonging and connection. Mahuru strives to:

- Strengthen and broaden connections to whānau, hapū, and iwi
- Reduce frequency and severity of offending

⁴ As noted in the programme documentation for Youth Justice Initiatives.

- Engage taitamariki in education, training, or employment
- Contribute to improved life outcomes.

Aufua le Taeao, Auckland – operated by Emerge Aotearoa (EA), a national charitable trust with a long history of providing health and social services throughout Aotearoa. EA is a Te Tiriti o Waitangi based organisation with a bi-cultural approach. To broaden EA services, they partnered with Oranga Tamariki to deliver community-based remand services. Aufua le Taeao (Aufua) was established in 2020 and offers a safe, stable, secure, homely environment for rangatahi. Aufua’s vision is to:

- Improve a young person’s future potential and long-term outcomes
- Reduce recidivism and support public safety
- Support change through strength-based, whakamana practice
- Seek community participation and inclusion.

Will Street, Dunedin – operated by Oranga Tamariki was initially established in 2017 and has since undergone a few changes, following reviews into community-based remand homes processes and practices. Will Street is a five-bedroom home run by house parents and up to 10 kaimahi. There is a partnership between Te Hau Ora Whānau Services (a community-based whānau driven kaupapa Māori provider, offering a range of services including, youth development, mentoring, whānau ora, and Te Awhi Mai Day Programme) and Adventure Development Ltd (a not-for-profit organisation that provides mentoring and counselling supporting young people to live fulfilling lives) to deliver educational and transition services. At the time of the evaluation, Will Street was implementing several changes after a reset to delivery. The goals of Will Street are to:

- Provide a typical whānau environment that is safe, supportive, and encouraging
- Operate a strengths-based approach supporting rangatahi towards positive and proactive life choices
- Customise support to needs and context of rangatahi
- Involve whānau and be inclusive of their needs and aspirations.

Whare Tuhua, Tauranga – operated by Tuinga Whānau, a kaupapa Māori-based organisation committed to *Me Mahi tahi tātou – mo te oranga o te katoa – We work together for the wellbeing of all*; weaving whānau and the wider community together. Whare Tuhua provides a tikanga based environment and supports rangatahi to connect to their whakapapa, culture, and whānau. House parents and up to eight kaimahi provide holistic care and hands-on education and activities. Whare Tuhua aims to:

- Work in a mana-enhancing way strengthening whakapapa
- Build genuine and trusting partnerships with other organisations, including Oranga Tamariki
- Apply a kaupapa Māori lens to help rangatahi (re)connect to self, whānau, and iwi
- Support rangatahi to return to their whānau or an appropriate alternative.

Overview of evaluation methodology

Oranga Tamariki engaged FEM Ltd in April 2021 to undertake an evaluation of the existing community-based youth justice remand homes to:

- Highlight opportunities for development and improvement to achieve desired outcomes, particularly for rangatahi Māori and their whānau.
- Provide learning to inform the design and development of new community-based youth justice remand homes and inform new investments to align with the Oranga Tamariki Youth Justice's future direction.

Throughout May and December 2021, the evaluation team engaged with the four community-based youth justice remand homes; Te Whare Tuhua, Mahuru, Aufua and Will Street.

Key evaluation questions

The following key questions guided the evaluation:

- How well are community-based youth justice placements delivering services to meet the evolving needs of rangatahi, whānau and providers/community partners?
- What improvements, if any, are needed that will lead youth justice community-based remand homes to achieve desired outcomes?
- What are the opportunities for hapū, iwi and Hāpori Māori in response to the future direction of Oranga Tamariki (e.g., decentralisation of services, strengthened and resourced local partnerships)?

Please see Appendix Two for a copy of the participant information sheets and consent forms, and Appendix Three for the sample hui/interview questions.

Evaluation design and delivery

In the planning and design phase, the evaluation team attended a one-day hui held for all community-based remand homes. This enabled whakawhanaungatanga and a Q&A session about the evaluation between community remand home workers and the evaluation team.

We also worked closely with Oranga Tamariki during this project. This was important to ensure openness and transparency throughout the evaluative process. It also served to provide access to relevant information, people to contact, and support more generally.

Interviews with identified Oranga Tamariki staff (Youth Justice team) supported a contextual understanding of the community remand homes. A Senior Analyst from the Evidence Centre worked with the evaluators throughout the evaluation implementation, including the evaluation sense-making wananga.

Evaluation methodology

Kaupapa Māori methodology guided the evaluation by drawing on ngā ura (values), tikanga (practices), te reo Māori and Māori practice models. Kaupapa Māori literally means a 'Māori way' of doing things and the concept of *kaupapa* implies a way of framing and structuring how we think about and do evaluation with Māori. Our practice is underpinned by:

- Whanaungatanga – building and maintaining respectful relationships
- Rangatiratanga – acting with authority and acknowledging leadership
- Manaakitanga – looking after those we interact with and taking care of ourselves
- Mana Motuhake – recognising rights, responsibilities and independence
- Kaitiakitanga – ensuring the protection and safety of people, information and the environment
- Kotahitanga – collaboration and working toward synergistic outcomes for all.

Kaupapa Māori in the context of evaluation is concerned with both methodology (a process of enquiry that determines the methods used) and method (the tools that can be used to produce and analyse data). In the context of this evaluation, this means ensuring both the appropriateness of methods for Māori and a critical analysis of the

findings with respect to Māori. This includes a respect for people (aroha ki te tangata), being a face that is known in the community (kanohi kitea), looking and listening before speaking (titiro, whakarongo, kōrero) and being humble (ngākau māhaki), being careful in our conduct (kia tūpatu) and ensuring we uphold the mana of all people (kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata) (Cram, 2009; Smith, 1999, 2005).

A narrative inquiry approach was utilised to meet the aim of the evaluation – to gather rangatahi and provider voices and experiences. Drawing on whanaungatanga, the evaluation team facilitated discussions with rangatahi, remand home house parents and kaimahi, provider management and Oranga Tamariki kaimahi. The evaluation team also utilised the Success, Evidence, Strategies (SES) critical reflection tool with each whare.⁵ SES is a strengths based approach to support reflection, affirmation and validation. It supported the participants to consciously reflect on what success is for them, how they measure it and what strategies they use for achieving success.

The ethics and values of the evaluation aligned to mātauranga Māori.

Participant information

Engagement with rangatahi and remand homes kaimahi, including provider organisation staff

We were privileged to speak to 41 participants during this evaluation, who generously shared their insight and experience. Data collection with participants occurred from September to December 2021 and specifically involved speaking with:

- Six rangatahi
- Six remand home house parents and/or caregivers
- 16 remand home kaimahi, such as mentors, kaiako
- Nine personnel from the provider organisations, such as team leaders
- Three Oranga Tamariki kaimahi
- One iwi leader

Oranga Tamariki provided us with provider contacts, while rangatahi contacts were provided by the remand homes house parents or provider organisations (with consent).

Remand home staff worked with the evaluators to organise interviews with rangatahi who were currently residing in the remand homes and wished to provide feedback about their experiences. House parents or remand home staff provided rangatahi the information sheet and consent form and socialised participation with them. Interviews were organised during the two to three-day case study visit or over Zoom if the rangatahi consented. Two evaluators visited each site, with one evaluator taking responsibility as the site lead, building and maintaining relationships with remand home and provider organisation staff.

Where possible, evaluators met with the rangatahi during whakawhanaungatanga day 1 of the site visit. They socialised the evaluation with rangatahi residing in the homes at the site visit. Interviews were then conducted at a time and place where the rangatahi felt comfortable and did not disrupt their schedules.

Remand home staff and management personnel from each of the four sites and management from the operating organisations participated in the evaluation. This included house parents, remand home kaimahi (kaiako, mentors) and provider staff (team leaders, administrators).

All interviews were voluntary, and an informed consent process was used with all participants at the start of every interview. Koha was offered to those with whom the evaluators engaged throughout this evaluation process.

Data collection and analysis details

A broad range of data collection tools and engagement strategies, and critical reflective practices were used for data collection. The tools were context-specific and determined in partnership with evaluation site leads and Oranga Tamariki.

⁵ Developed by Kataraina Pipi in (2005).

Document & administrative data review

A document review of the Office of the Children's Commissioner community remand home report and other documents associated with the remand homes (as advised by the evaluation commissioner) were reviewed to support contextual understanding of the evaluation, the evaluation analysis and report writing. Documents related to individual case study sites were used to inform case study analysis and sourced directly by the evaluators from the community remand home staff.

Administrative data about the community remand homes were made available to the evaluation team to inform their analysis, synthesis, and reporting.

SES (Strengths, Evidence, Strategies)⁶

SES was used throughout the interviews to support participants' critical reflection, affirmation, and validation. Throughout the evaluation engagements, participants were encouraged to examine what success is for them, how they measure it and what strategies they use for achieving success. Their reflections, based on cultural knowledge, wisdom, and experience, helped identify how the remand home approaches meet the needs of rangatahi and whānau.

Analysis, synthesis, and reporting

This report brings together the findings or thematic analysis of the whakaaro shared by rangatahi, remand home kaimahi, iwi representatives, and Oranga Tamariki personnel.

The findings for each remand home were brought together in a case study format. Each site received their case study to review. Once all four case studies were drafted, a thematic analysis across the four remand homes was undertaken. In two sense-making sessions, preliminary findings across the four sites were presented to Oranga Tamariki. This analysis and synthesis formed the evaluation report.

The information included in the final report, as well as any quotes used, are presented in a way that preserves the confidentiality of research participants, sites and site staff.

Limitations

Due to the impact of COVID-19, there were significant delays in the evaluation. This required flexibility and adjustments, impacting timeframes and fieldwork. At the time of evaluation, Aotearoa was in Alert Level 3, and remand homes made adjustments to kanohi-ki-te-kanohi, onsite contact as required. As a result, only three sites were visited in person, with video calls utilised to complete engagement and interviews with the remand homes.

The limited access to onsite visits impacted the ability to connect with rangatahi in a natural, whakawhanaungatanga process and meant we engaged fewer rangatahi than initially intended. As a result, the evaluators did not get to speak with whānau either.

⁶ A reflection tool developed by Kataraina Pipi that supports identifying factors, evidence and strategies that contribute to success.

Findings

Given that this evaluation primarily focuses on what works for rangatahi Māori, we have used a Māori framing as the lens by which we answer the key evaluation questions (KEQs) and present the findings. The findings are presented in the following way. Firstly we outline the tikanga Māori framework used, referred to as Nga Pou Tikanga; we then answer each of the KEQs using this framing.

Ngā Pou Tikanga

Our Pou Tikanga framing ...

To answer the KEQs and Oranga Tamariki aspiration's for Māori centred practice; we drew on several existing Oranga Tamariki Māori frameworks and documents identifying tikanga Māori approaches.

Our pou tikanga framing is Māori centred and mana-enhancing. As outlined in the Oranga Tamariki Community Remand Homes Operations manual, a Māori centred approach is consistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations, statutory functions, mana tamaiti objectives, and the values and outcomes Oranga Tamariki seek for tamariki and whānau Māori. Our pou tikanga also echoes Te Toka Tūmoana, the Tangata Whenua and Bicultural principled wellbeing framework, and Whakamana te Tamaiti, the Practice policy to empower tamariki Māori.

Acknowledges Te Toka Tūmoana...

Te Toka Tūmoana outlines three critical principles when working with Māori that include:

- Mana āhua ake o ngā mokopuna – the potentiality and absolute uniqueness (inherent and developed) of Māori children/young people within the whānau collective structure (Barlow, 1995; Pere, 1988).
- Tiaki Mokopuna – the roles, responsibilities and obligations to make safe, care for, support and protect our children/young people within their extended whakapapa structure; whānau, hapū, and iwi (Eruera, King & Ruwhiu, 2006).
- Te Ahureitanga – the distinctiveness of being Māori, reclaiming that Māori worldviews and practices are valid, legitimate and diverse (Mead, 2003; Paniora, 2008; Ruwhiu, 2009; Ruwhiu, 2013). Solutions must be founded on Māori worldviews of wellbeing that can be transformed into locally relevant, sustainable, and self-determining.

Is guided by Māori wellbeing principles and...

Eight guiding principles for Māori wellbeing inform, support and guide approaches; wairuatanga, te reo, whakapapa, rangatiratanga, tikanga, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, and whakamana. "These principles remind us not to trample on the mana of tamariki/mokopuna and their whānau Māori, not violate in any way their tapu by our actions, neither diminish their mauri, nor disconnect them from their whakapapa."⁷

Recognises Whakamana Te Tamaiti

Whakamana te Tamaiti is a practice approach that focuses on empowering tamariki Māori in their identity and culture. Like Te Toka Tūmoana, this means connecting them with whānau and whakapapa and to:

- identify tamaiti strengths, needs and attributes to enhance their mana and cultural identity
- advocate for tamaiti and ensure they receive support that is culturally responsive to their needs, language and identity as Māori
- support tamaiti to be proud of being Māori.⁸

Ngā Pou Tikanga

Pou tikanga provides a cohesive framework for the evaluation and can be seen in all the homes, albeit to varying degrees. Drawing from the values and practices of all four homes who contribute to this evaluation, and Oranga

⁷ <https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/practice/Te-toka-tumoana/te-toka-tumoana-cue-cards.pdf>

⁸ <https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/practice-approach/practice-standards/whakamana-te-tamaiti-practice-empowering-tamariki-maori/>

Tamariki, ngā pou tikanga emerged from the evaluation team analysis process. Ngā Pou Tikanga guide and inform the remand home processes and practices, setting the scene for the delivery of a Māori centred approach. Ngā Pou tikanga:

- embody Māori values and prescribe acceptable behaviour in the remand homes
- support practice of Māori customs and processes in the remand homes
- guide providers, kaimahi, house parents through the mahi with rangatahi, whānau, and community.

The evaluation team decided on five pou tikanga as most representative and essential to the mahi of the remand homes. The ngā pou tikanga framing of this evaluation is also applicable cross-culturally, and aligns well with Va'aifetū, Oranga Tamariki's practical approach for working with Pacific cultures.⁹ The ngā pou tikanga include:

Rangatiratanga: Rangatiratanga applies at an individual and collective level. It is about the right to participate in decision making and the right to exercise authority for rangatahi, whānau, kaimahi, house parents and provider organisations. Tino rangatiratanga is an expression of sovereignty and self-determination (Durie, 2003; Wihongi, 2010; Williams & Cram, 2012). Working in the remand home space, it is important to be aware and respectful of various levels of leadership and support agency and authority, rangatira ki te rangatahi.

Wairuatanga: Wairuatanga is often referred to as the intangible or unseen. It encompasses te ao Māori philosophies, values, and beliefs. Wairuatanga is frequently described as emotions or feelings, the āhua of a person or environment, the energy that one can sense (Dobbs & Eruera, 2010; Independent Māori Statutory Board, 2019). Creating a peaceful wairua that is warm, and comforting is essential in delivering remand home services.

Kaitiakitanga (Aroha): Kaitiakitanga is guardianship and stewardship, a collective role to ensure the care of the taiao, kainga and he tangata (Iwikau, 2011; Kawharau, 2000; Pohatu, 2005). Rangatahi, house parents, and kaimahi all play a role in caring for and protecting the tikanga and kawa of the remand homes, the existing relationships, and each person's mana.

Whakapapa (whanaungatanga): Whakapapa is the foundation of te ao Māori, connecting us to people, the environment, and the spiritual realm. Through whakapapa, Māori find identity, connection, and a sense of belonging (Durie, 1998; Hollis-English, 2012). Remand homes can focus on whakapapa to support the cultural identity of rangatahi and develop long-lasting relationships and connections.

Manaakitanga: Manaakitanga is an inclusive approach and duty of care that supports people in times of crisis, trauma, and personal change (Mead, 2003; Ruwhiu, 2009). Remand homes apply manaakitanga within the homes with rangatahi, whānau, staff and visitors. This manifests through taking good care of people, sharing food, encouraging rangatahi potential and protecting mana.

Each pou reflects not only what is occurring in each of the remand homes but also the aspirations of Oranga Tamariki, including the delivery of meaningful and sustainable improvements for tamariki Māori through the active involvement of whanau, hapū, and iwi.

Using the five pou, we can look across the remand homes and identify what is working, where barriers exist, and improvements for the future.

The pou are independent, helping to establish and elevate the remand homes. However, although separate, they are also symbiotic and mutually inclusive of each other. Ultimately, they help guide behaviour, policies, practices, and approaches.

⁹ <https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/practice-approach/working-with-pacific-peoples-va'aifetu/>

Ngā pou tikanga are supporting the community-based remand homes to deliver services that meet the needs of rangatahi, whānau, providers and community partners

KEQ 1: How well are community-based youth justice placements delivering services to meet the evolving needs of rangatahi, whānau and providers/community partners?

This section outlines how well community-based youth justice placements deliver services to meet the needs of rangatahi, whānau and provider/community partners. It describes how each remand home is practising and implementing ngā pou tikanga. The section also highlights the impacts of the remand services for rangatahi.

Overview

In general, the four sites are working well to meet the needs of rangatahi. There are consistent examples of positive support and outcomes for rangatahi, including reconnection to culture and self. Remand services achieve positive outcomes for providers, including house parents, whānau caregivers, kaimahi and community partners. Due to COVID-19, the evaluation could not engage directly with whānau; however, there were several accounts from house parents, whānau caregivers, and kaimahi of their engagement with whānau over the rangatahi placements.

Across the whare, the providers support individual and collective wellbeing within the whare. The house parents, whānau caregivers and kaimahi exercise ngā pou practices with principled action, that is, tika (doing things the right way), pono (being genuine and working with integrity), and aroha (working with empathy and compassion for others). This supports the development of reciprocal relationships, allegiance, and mutual respect between rangatahi and the adults involved in their care. This is significantly different from 'traditional' state care, where adults typically hold power over rangatahi.

Evidence across the whare also suggests that ngā pou may act as cultural protective factors as rangatahi connect with whakapapa and experience an improved sense of identity and belonging. As rangatahi engage in the whare positive self-efficacy develops alongside stronger cultural connectedness. As providers role model positive social/cultural norms, rangatahi are building resilience.

Ngā pou tikanga in practice

Rangatiratanga – growing self-determination, leadership capability and capacity.

“Ko te Rangatira, he kairanga I te tira; I te tira o te hapū, o te iwi, ki ngā ahere ki ngā mahi e pa ana ki te iwi- he kaiarahi!”

Rangatiratanga practices across the remand homes

Rangatiratanga practices across the whare involve encouraging rangatahi and ideally whānau to take a more active role in determining their wellbeing outcomes. All whare have processes in place to support whānau engagement, however, their participation is an area which could be enhanced. Whare understand by enabling rangatahi and whānau to participate fully in whare activities, rangatahi leadership is nurtured, developed and promoted. Remand home providers, house parents and kaimahi recognise that whānau members are experts on their rangatahi and can provide the support that affirms and builds identity and a sense of belonging. Part of the rangatahi journey can also involve helping rangatahi and whānau to rebuild healthy whānau relationships, or find a positive whānau connection.

Tino rangatiratanga is an expression of sovereignty and self-determination and is a recurring theme throughout the remand homes. Working in the remand home space, it is important to be aware and respectful of the various levels of leadership and authority of everyone involved. Remand care models can help rangatahi feel proud of who they are as Māori and their potential as leaders.

Within the whare/remand care models, rangatiratanga applies at an individual and collective level. It is about the right to participate in decision-making and exercise authority for rangatahi, whānau, kaimahi, house parents, whānau caregivers and provider organisations. Remand home services seek to achieve rangatiratanga by:

- building and strengthening the capacity and capability of rangatahi, whānau, iwi and community providers

- fostering inclusivity to ensure that rangatahi, whānau, kaimahi, whānau caregivers and house parents are involved in decision-making
- identifying whānau, hapū, iwi and community expertise and supporting their involvement in developing rangatahi
- upholding self-determination as a core tenet that supports the growth and development of rangatahi and whānau.

In line with Te Toka Tūmoana, house parents, whānau caregivers and kaimahi reflected on the need to ensure that the views of rangatahi are informing their response and that they identify rangatahi strengths and needs. All the whare build support around the rangatahi with the desire to enhance their mana.

Across the homes, there are clear examples of inclusivity building leadership. Rangatahi are treated as positive whānau members with strengths and potential. They are involved in decision-making and supported to set goals. There is an overall commitment to rangatahi rangatiratanga – self-determining rangatahi. Mahuru provides teina plans and is dedicated to rangatahi achieving cultural and employment goals when rangatahi are with them and beyond their placement. This information is often used to report to Family Group Conferences and Court appearances. Likewise, Whare Tuhua and Will Street explore realistic and meaningful goals with rangatahi, helping them identify rangatahi strengths and interests. This allows rangatahi to see their potential as leaders of their lives. Kaimahi and house parents empower rangatahi through connecting with and getting to know them, taking the time to build a trusting relationship.

Mahuru is an exemplar of an iwi partner delivering whānau and community-based care. Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services demonstrate care as a priority for them, connecting rangatahi to their tūrangawaewae and whakapapa and to local Māori services providing cultural growth and protective factors within an iwi context. This is rangatiratanga in action where Oranga Tamariki has recognised the status, expertise and ability of an iwi provider to determine how best to look after their rangatahi and whānau.

To give effect to tino rangatiratanga, the remand services treat rangatahi like rangatira, that is, as if they are chiefly beings and encourage rangatahi to pursue rangatiratanga, beginning with self-responsibility. Aufua are visibly focused on supporting rangatahi to make their own decisions, guiding the daily activities around their wants and needs, and assisting them in independent living. Mahuru uses PATH¹⁰ planning to support rangatahi to achieve their goals and gain a sense of achievement.

Across all remand homes and services, rangatahi are given clear guidance and encouraged to be self-determining in the following ways:

- Values and tikanga of the whare/fale are displayed on the walls
- Māori and Pasifika imagery is displayed
- Kaimahi encourage rangatahi through self-responsibility such as cleaning the whare/fale daily, helping with and learning to cook
- Kaimahi role model positive behaviours such as kindness, consistency, fairness and taking responsibility for actions and behaviour
- Kaimahi exhibit and express fair and reasonable behaviours when engaging with rangatahi, whānau and all other visitors to the whare
- Rangatahi and kaimahi plan and design day to day activities together
- Kaimahi engage in activities aligned to the wishes of rangatahi
- Kaimahi work from a strengths-based perspective encouraging and supporting rangatahi to see and reach their potential.

As in the Office of the Children’s Commissioner (OCC) thematic monitoring review (2020), remand services and homes set clear rules, expectations and routines in the homes. Rangatahi know what is expected of them, and through establishing responsibilities like chores around the house and in whānau placements, they are given opportunities to

¹⁰ PATH is an acronym for Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope and is an approach to planning that uses pictures and colour to map out dreams, goals, values and an action plan. See www.pathplanning.nz/

contribute and take some responsibility in caring for themselves. In Whare Tuhua, rangatahi are not forced to participate in activities; instead, they are given time to integrate into the whare, thereby maintaining control over their actions.

Aligning with Te Toka Tūmoana and the principle of Tiaki Mokopuna (nurturing our children), Mahuru and Whare Tuhua in particular are reconnecting rangatahi to whānau, hapū and iwi. Kaimahi and house parents see whakapapa as a protective factor for rangatahi, and critical to their identity and ability to manage with agency and authority. In these two services, activities are dedicated to researching whakapapa, connecting rangatahi to places of cultural significance, proactively working with the whānau of the rangatahi and promoting the value of mātauranga-ā-iwi (iwi knowledge).

House parents are rangatira of the whare and lead by example. They consistently apply aroha and fairness, successfully managing conflict. They have created an environment where rangatahi and kaimahi are expected to take responsibility. They have put in place boundaries that are respected by all. House parents exhibit and express fair and reasonable behaviours when engaging with rangatahi, their whānau and all other visitors to the homes.

Overall, the provider organisations are leading the remand homes well. Mahuru, is apparent in their intent, as is Whare Tuhua. They have a clear vision of providing a safe, home-like environment that positively supports rangatahi learning and engaging in their futures.

Kaimahi across the remand homes are given the scope to develop plans for rangatahi and then plan their daily activities to reflect rangatahi needs and aspirations. They are encouraged to use the skills they bring to the organisation and draw on their life experiences.

While a significant component of rangatiratanga is building and strengthening whānau capacity and capability, this appears to be outside the scope of the length of time rangatahi are placed in the remand homes. Despite the opportunities offered, there does not appear to be a lot of whānau engagement across the whare. Mostly, this is because rangatahi are often placed in remand homes outside of their rohe (area). Given the importance of whakapapa and connecting to whānau to build self-determination, it may be helpful to consider the placement of rangatahi based on hapū and iwi connections.

Wairuatanga – instilling hope and positivity

“He oranga ngākau, he hīkina wairua.”

Wairuatanga practice across the remand homes

Instilling hope and positivity contributes to a sense of spiritual wellbeing where one is uplifted.

Across the remand homes, there are examples of wairuatanga practices inspiring hope and positivity. Guided by tikanga Māori and tikanga-ā-iwi, providers act with tika (doing things the right way), pono (being genuine and working with integrity), and aroha (empathy and compassion for others), creating loving whānau environments that are warm and inviting. Mahuru acknowledges the centrality of wairuatanga to identity and belonging and how this can be enhanced through whakapapa and connection with whānau, hapū, iwi and community.

Wairuatanga is the distinctive identity or spirituality of people and places (Independent Māori Statutory Board, 2019). It encompasses Māori values, beliefs, theories, ideologies, paradigms, frameworks, perspectives, and worldviews to validate and authenticate Māori cultural wellbeing processes and practices. Where whare are firmly established in te ao Māori, it is understood that wairuatanga underpins cultural paradigms as an essential requirement of the identity and wellbeing of Māori. When the provider organisations are iwi and Kaupapa Māori-based, wairuatanga clearly informs and guides how they work across all their services and programmes.

Although wairua is often hard to define in practice settings, it may be described as giving expression to emotions or feelings, contributing to the āhua of a person or environment, the energy or feeling that one can sense. Wairuatanga practices inspire and affirm, and remand homes can empower/ whakamana rangatahi and support the manifestation of potential. Indeed, creating a peaceful wairua that is warm and comforting is vital in the delivery across all the remand homes. This creates a sense of belonging and helps the rangatahi to feel connected to the tikanga and people

of the whare. House parents of Whare Tuhua shared how they will “take every negative shot” directed at the rangatahi, protecting them from the hurt.

Like all the remand homes and services, Will Street offers a stable, healthy and drug-free environment supporting rangatahi to engage in more positive activities. Whare Tuhua and Aufua are mindful of the stress and chaos of rangatahi lives and create consistent and peaceful environments, and places of healing. House parents, whānau caregivers and kaimahi genuinely want the best for rangatahi. It is important that they are making a positive difference and adding value to the rangatahi and their whānau. The hauora/wellbeing of kaimahi and house parents are also considered, and relationships are treated with care.

Whare Tuhua has mauri rounds, where rangatahi, kaimahi and house parents come together in the morning to share goals, activities or any tasks that need to be completed during the day. They then come back together in the evening and discuss how their day has gone. Everyone uses this time to discuss any concerns or issues. This process helps the rangatahi clear and balance their wairua, making sure that they are feeling settled and not carrying around negativity in the whare. Rangatahi shared how much they enjoyed mauri rounds, recognising how they had become more confident to share kōrero.

Establishing a spiritual and physical connectedness with te ao Māori karakia is part of daily practice, with rangatahi, kaimahi and house parents participating. Karakia was utilised across the remand homes to give thanks and set a clear and positive start to the day. It was seen as a way to value te ao Māori values and beliefs. Mahuru and Whare Tuhua provided access to traditional activities such as fishing, hunting, and sharing kai with elders. Grounded in tikanga, rangatahi learnt about the whakapapa of their tūpuna whenua and hunting practices. These homes also offered opportunities to visit wāhi tapu and other tribal places of significance. Mahuru hold marae noho, celebrating and learning about Ngāpuhitanga and making connections with other rangatahi in their services.

Manaakitanga – sharing aroha, compassion, and empathy

“Nā tō rourou, nā tōku rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.”

Manaakitanga practices across the remand homes

Acts of manaakitanga, kindness and hospitality can be seen across all the whare. They implement an inclusive approach that supports rangatahi and whānau in times of crisis, trauma and personal change. House parents and kaimahi act with generosity, care, hospitality and protection to others. Manaakitanga is deeply engrained in the practices of the whare, reflecting te ao Māori views and culture. Within the whare, it is a critical mechanism supporting whakawhanaungatanga and healing. It requires physical manifestations of respect and attention, often through the sharing of food and mihimihi. Through manaakitanga, the whare set the scene for successful engagement and interactions. Relationships are reciprocal and built on acts of giving and receiving.

Through the processes of manaakitanga, remand home providers can actively promote culturally responsive practice. They learn about rangatahi and their whānau and find respectful ways to connect with them. Remand home services are delivered with aroha, with a high degree of care, love, compassion and empathy.

Working with aroha (mahi aroha) is described as part of Māori cultural identity and provides a sense of self-worth. In performing mahi aroha people are upholding the mana of others, and through their actions their own mana is enhanced (Edwards, 2010). The roles of house parents and kaimahi focused on their responsibilities to nurture and strengthen the sense of wellbeing or mana of rangatahi. House parents talked explicitly of the role of kai and the critical part it plays in manaakitanga; it shows respect to manuhiri and helps rangatahi feel loved. Whare Tuhua and Aufua expressed the role of kai in bringing rangatahi, kaimahi and house parents closer together as they prepare lunches and dinners together. They also spoke of kai as grounding manuhiri, rangatahi, whānau in the wairua of the home. Kaimahi and house parents show compassion and empathy, listening with genuine interest, and learning about the rangatahi. Often kaimahi have been through similar experiences as the rangatahi, and they will share those, offering advice and strategies.

There is genuine care for the holistic wellbeing of rangatahi. As with wairuatanga, manaakitanga recognises and nurtures the strengths of rangatahi and their whānau. In remand homes, manaakitanga is a way for providers to express how they care for rangatahi and their whānau. It is key to healthy and happy homes.

Rangatahi are not given much to deal with as they integrate into the home. The priority of all the homes is to make the rangatahi feel welcome, safe and comfortable. Manaakitanga includes aroha, and kaimahi and house parents have to enjoy what they do and genuinely care about and enjoy being with rangatahi. Whare Tuhua and Aufua reflected that rangatahi need support and guidance more than restriction. Therefore, by showing genuine compassion and care, rangatahi are unlikely to abscond. The approaches of kaimahi, across Mahuru and Will Street, are sincere and considerate.

Reciprocity and mutual respect as expressions of manaakitanga are embedded into the daily practices of the homes. Rangatahi contribute to the running of the homes through chores. Kaimahi and house parents share life skills, including hunting, building, tikanga and te reo. Some of the rangatahi across the homes shared how they felt respected when kaimahi did not make them participate in the daily activities or the activities were designed around rangatahi interests.

Supporting and facilitating rangatahi through the youth justice process with their mana upheld and strengthened is a crucial aspect of kaimahi and house parents' role. When house parents and kaimahi see rangatahi "messed around by the system", they feel upset and frustrated. There are also concerns when the youth justice system does not reflect the home or service kaupapa. Examples of this are kaimahi and house parents transporting rangatahi to court and FGCs (instead of the trackers), pressing social workers for FGC and court dates (when there are delays), and offering to keep rangatahi longer when appropriate alternative accommodation cannot be found.

Whakapapa – affirming identity and connecting through whanaungatanga

"He aha te mea nui o te ao – He tangata, he tangata, he tangata!"

Whakapapa practices in the remand homes

As described by participants, whakapapa is all about belonging and connecting and can act as a protective factor for rangatahi. Overall, remand home services recognise and value whakapapa, inspiring a sense of pride in rangatahi and whānau. They are committed to connecting people to their whakapapa, growing a strong sense of belonging and identity, particularly amongst rangatahi. Mahuru sees whakapapa as a core element of their mahi and brings to life pepeha by visiting maunga and swimming in the awa. Mahuru is first and foremost Ngāpuhi, and there is a determined intent to reconnect those believed to be disconnected from their Ngāpuhitanga. For those rangatahi who whakapapa outside the rohe, the principles stay the same and Mahuru support them to re-connect with their turangawaewae. Mahuru reflected on the value of supporting Ngāpuhi rangatahi to connect with their whakapapa, and how whakapapa could be a placement criterion across the motu going forward.

Whakapapa is about (re)connecting to whenua and feeling the strength and support from standing on tūrangawaewae – your place of belonging. A core assumption of both Mahuru and Whare Tuhua is that reconnecting to whakapapa changes how rangatahi see themselves. They act with more confidence and feel supported, knowing they are part of a broader collective. Several rangatahi across the homes spoke proudly of learning about their whakapapa and enjoyed researching where they come from. Generally, rangatahi based in Whare Tuhua were not from Tauranga Moana. Therefore, studying and exploring whakapapa in their wānanga sessions was essential to maintaining a connection to who they were and where they came from—as part of that, rangatahi learnt whakapapa of local rohe, visiting important cultural sites.

Across the whare, where Kaupapa Māori is deeply embedded, it is understood that whakapapa is the foundation of te ao Māori, connecting us to people, the environment, and the spiritual realm. Through whakapapa, Māori find identity, connection, and a sense of belonging. Albeit to varying degrees, the whare focuses on whakapapa to support the cultural identity of rangatahi and develop long-lasting relationships and connections. Whakapapa establishes individuals' identity and where they come from; their whānau, and whenua.

Considerable reflection on how the system can change and adapt to better support whanau-based remand care was shared in the iwi stakeholder interviews. Reimagining and responding to a future that supports justice responses, and strengthens whanau-based care beyond existing services that remove rangatahi and tamariki from their whānau was of the utmost importance, for the potentiality of whānau and rangatahi. This feedback is reflected more fully in the next section.

Across the whare, whakapapa–whanaungatanga is reflected as follows:

- Explicit and deliberate connection of rangatahi to their own whakapapa – whānau, hapū, iwi (Mahuru)
- Acknowledgement and recognition of the whakapapa connections of rangatahi to their iwi
- Kawa and tikanga are evident and practiced, for example:
 - Whakatau process for rangatahi when they first arrive at a whare
 - Poroporoaki to farewell rangatahi and celebrate their success
 - Kai times are taken together and rangatahi give karakia at meal times
 - Kaimahi become aware of the rangatahi whakapapa and learn te reo phrases to incorporate into their day
- Service leaders have excellent relationships with kaimahi and house parents and they support one another through communication and spending time at the whare
- Kaimahi connect with rangatahi through practical activities such as cooking together, playing board games and taking a genuine interest in their welfare and wellbeing
- Kaimahi support rangatahi to communicate with whānau and social workers and advocate for them when communication with whānau or social workers is stifled
- Kaimahi believe in the potential of rangatahi in their care and engage with passion, respect and genuine care
- Kaimahi reflect the ethnicity of rangatahi with most kaimahi and house parents being Māori or Pacific (exception being Will Street)

Whakapapa underpins whanaungatanga, the forming and maintenance of relationships. The whare play a vital role in supporting rangatahi development through facilitating positive, healthy relationships. As reported in the literature, rangatahi, whānau, kaimahi, house parents, and provider organisations come together and help to strengthen one another as responsibilities and rights are established (Deane, Dutton & Kerekere, 2019). Through hui (e.g., kanohi ki te kanohi, online hui), telephone communications and FGCs, relationships develop between rangatahi, whānau, kaimahi, house parents, and provider organisations.

Mahuru and Whare Tuhua have strong connections to whānau, hapū, iwi and other community providers. Aufua as a new provider of remand services reflected on the close working relationship with Oranga Tamariki staff and how they have been guided and supported to deliver services. Will Street partners with two other providers who offer education/activity-based services to rangatahi and transition support as they return to their whānau and the community. They acknowledge the importance of establishing whakapapa connections with mana whenua, hapū, and iwi providers. However, these relationships are in the development stages and are still emerging.

Given the importance of whakapapa and reconnecting rangatahi to whānau hapū and iwi, remand homes need high-quality information and support from Oranga Tamariki. Otherwise, they cannot do their very best for each young person. Iwi providers and Kaupapa Māori providers are well placed to ensure whakapapa and whanaungatanga links are made as these relationships are already established.

Kaitiakitanga – protecting and nurturing through aroha

Ekore au e ngaro he kakano I ruia mai I Rangiatea

Kaitiakitanga practices across remand homes

There are several expressions of kaitiakitanga across the remand homes and services. House parents, whānau caregivers and kaimahi work in ways that are holistic and restorative. Their role is about guardianship and stewardship, a collective role in ensuring the care of the te taiao, kainga and he tangata. In the literature, the role of kaitiakitanga is interpreted as “Kai – facilitate a pathway to understanding; Tiaki – nurturing, caretaker role, guardianship and Tanga – action, role modelling.” (Iwikau, 2011). Rangatahi, house parents and kaimahi all play a role as kaitiaki, caring for and protecting the tikanga and kawa of the remand homes; the relationships that exist and the mana of each person.

Through kaitiakitanga, whare nurture relationships creating strong bonds. Practising kaitiakitanga creates an environment that actively uses te ao Māori mātauranga and values. As kaitiaki, remand home providers relate to the world around them; te taio, he tangata and spiritual realms. Linked to kaitiakitanga, house parents and kaimahi reflect

on aroha; their ability to feel concerned, show compassion and empathise. It is critical to the whare environment and embracing rangatahi, making them feel welcomed and accepted.

Whare Tuhua and Aufua shared how the tikanga and kawa of the homes is consistently applied to look after the rangatahi and the whare. As guardians, house parents and kaimahi ensure rangatahi are protected through fair and transparent processes and familiar and comforting structures.

Kaitiakitanga practices across the remand homes and services have strengthened emotional, cultural, physical, and spiritual connections for rangatahi. As a result, while in the remand homes and services, rangatahi often feel safe and protected and report improved overall wellbeing. Although they miss their whānau, rangatahi feel “part of the whare whānau” and often refer to house parents as Mum and Dad. Kaitiakitanga is practiced in the guided support mentors, caregivers and kaimahi provide through rangatahi-led activities such as bike repairs, working through licensing, gaining skills and knowledge for education and employment in the goals they set for themselves.

There are clear expectations and rules across the services and homes, and when rangatahi “slip up”, this is seen as an opportunity for teaching and learning rather than discipline. As kaitiaki, house parents and kaimahi fiercely advocate for rangatahi, often speaking up for them at FGCs and court appearances. House parents and caregivers ensure rangatahi have a voice, in environments where they often feel powerless. As shared by the whare, rangatahi are often at the mercy of whānau who may not be able to accommodate them and/or professionals with whom they have no relationship deciding their futures. Rangatahi across the homes all shared that the kaimahi and house parents “have their backs” and stand up for them, challenging the system when it is detrimental to their wellbeing. In one case, the house parents demanded front door access to the courts, refusing to place a 14-year-old rangatahi in the cells to wait for their court appearance. House parents develop strong relationships with the rangatahi and, in many cases, have offered to have rangatahi longer to keep them safe. One rangatahi commented on how grateful they were for the protection of the house parents as there was nobody in their whānau who was in a position to offer appropriate accommodation.

Kaitiakitanga is expressed through the activities of Mahuru in relation to kōhi kai (gathering food). Rangatahi often participate in activities with whānau and mentors to gather and distribute food gathered through fishing, eeling and maara kai to kaumātua in the community. Mahuru also speak about how kaitiakitanga for their community of Kaikohe is an important factor in how they protect and support rangatahi when they are in care and when they are wanting to abscond. Kaitiakitanga of ngā tāonga tuku iho is also demonstrated through the learning and practice of karakia, pepeha, and emphasising tūrangawaewae for both rangatahi and kaimahi.

A range of improvements are suggested to support community-based remand homes to achieve the desired outcomes

KEQ 2: What improvements, if any, are needed that will lead youth justice community-based remand homes to achieve desired outcomes?

This section outlines the improvements identified by the participants in the case studies that they believe will support them to achieve the overarching outcomes of community-based remand homes. It describes the progress considering ngā pou tikanga that each remand home practices and implements.

Overview

As discussed, Youth Justice remand homes are intended to meet the needs of young people remanded into youth justice custodial care without placing them in large residential institutions. Consistent with research, each of the four sites offers positive placement alternatives to larger, secure detention residences. In general, the whare are helping to:

- limit young people's exposure to the negative impacts of youth justice residences
- strengthen rangatahi connection to whānau and community
- provide high-quality care to rangatahi in a supportive whānau/family-like environment
- assess young people's needs and ensure plans are put in place to meet their needs
- deliver a coordinated approach with partner agencies.

However, currently, the four remand homes are all at different stages on the continuum of delivery. Some are in a period of reset and early establishment, while some have existing delivery with a clear model of practice.

Based on these factors, we have developed mana-enhancing critiques which may enable enable Oranga Tamariki to better support the whare and rangatahi. Each of the suggestions closely align with the recommendations outlined in the Children's Commissioner report (2020). Grouped to reflect Ngā pou tikanga, these are:

- **Rangatiratanga** – ensure that all rangatahi on remand and their whānau can contribute to and understand their plans and are well informed by their social worker about processes such as FGCs and court hearings.
- **Rangatiratanga** – ensure educational and vocational opportunities are provided to all rangatahi placed in community remand homes, and whānau are well supported to engage with teachers and trainers to hear about the progress of their rangatahi and their ongoing education/training needs.
- **Rangatiratanga, Kaitiakitanga** – ensure that rangatahi get access to independently monitored complaints and restorative resolution processes, including that Whaia te Maramatanga (the residence grievance, feedback, and suggestions process) and whakamana tangata (the residence restorative practice approach), are adopted into all the community remand homes.
- **Wairuatanga, Manaakitanga** – ensure that all rangatahi placed in a remand home have appropriate support to address any mental health concerns, drug and alcohol or other addiction issues, including the impacts of being victims of abuse or potentially their risk of abusing others.
- **Wairuatanga, Whakapapa** – ensure rangatahi, and their whānau have support to access culturally appropriate services that can walk alongside them, to meet their individual and whānau ora goals.
- **Whakapapa, Kaitiakitanga** – ensure that rangatahi and their whānau receive timely support, information and resources from social workers, remand home staff and community agencies, and rangatahi are supported to transition successfully back to their whānau or a community placement and into education, vocational training, or employment.

In understanding areas for improvement, it is essential to acknowledge that all the remand homes operate on a broad continuum of Kaupapa Māori frameworks and are delivering varying degrees of Māori centred practices. Māori centred practice is “an approach that is culturally-grounded, holistic, focused on improving the wellbeing of whānau and addressing individual needs within the context of the whānau.” (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2015). In a nutshell, Māori centred

practices or approaches place Māori at the centre of all activity. It takes a whole-of-whānau approach, anchored in mātauranga Maori and tikanga Māori (Wehipeihana, et al., 2021).

The whare provide examples of Māori centred practices in the ways they affirm the capability of rangatahi to lead their development to achieve rangatiratanga. They place rangatahi at the centre and support them to access other services such as education and counselling, and set up and maintain effective relationships that benefit rangatahi and whānau. However, to give full effect to Māori centred practices it is critical that there is a culturally competent and skilled workforce who can adopt the holistic strength-based, kaupapa Maori frameworks to support rangatahi. Also required are supportive environments such as funding, contracting and policy arrangements and effective leadership from Oranga Tamariki, iwi, and providers to support rangatahi. Whare also identified a need to increase and improve resourcing, training, communication, and access to specialist services.

Oranga Tamariki personnel highlighted the need to support the agency and authority of hapū, iwi and hāpori Māori to build their capacity and capability. A systemic shift is needed whereby resources are sufficiently allocated to Māori, and where tikanga Māori is recognised as a central and legitimate practice framework. Oranga Tamariki see this as another move from institutionalisation of rangatahi. As shared by one interviewee “systems and policies and legislation aren’t fit for purpose and are grounded in a Western perspective”. This causes tension and inhibits the providers’ potential to practice kaupapa Māori and embed a te ao Māori perspective. This is explored further in the next section: ‘Opportunities for hapū, Iwi and hāpori Māori in response to the future direction of Oranga Tamariki’.

In addition, a review of the Oranga Tamariki Community Remand Homes Operations Manual is suggested. This review would help align the intention of Māori-centred practices more firmly within the whare, with appropriate guidance. As our analysis indicates, there is a need to strengthen delivery and consistency across the whare/services. An updated Operating Manual anchored in Māori-centred practices and associated discussions and resourcing would enable cultural development across the whare.

House parents, mentors and whānau caregivers identified the need to improve the collection, collation, and use of data, particularly when rangatahi arrive at the whare and on their transition back to whānau and the community. Typically, whare only received two to four hours’ notice for arrival of rangatahi. Relevant data can support whare to respond more effectively to the needs of the rangatahi, including welcoming the rangatahi into the whare, linking them with needed services in a timely manner, and supporting them in their future decisions. As shared by house parents insufficient or incorrect data puts them on the ‘back foot’ and does not provide a strong platform for building positive relationships with the rangatahi or assist them to provide rangatahi with needed support.

The table below further presents specific improvement considerations based on the feedback from provider organisations, house parents, kaimahi and rangatahi. In Appendix 1, case studies explore the challenges and future opportunities specific to each whare more deeply.

While remand homes and services may pick up the modifications or adaptations, they are also intended to inform Oranga Tamariki national and regional offices.

Table 2: Considerations for improvement

Considerations for Improvement or Adaption (Stop doing, Start doing, Do more of)

- Ensure that newly established whare and those still embedding Māori-centred practices are supported by Oranga Tamariki.
- Prioritise whakapapa connections in the placement of rangatahi by Oranga Tamariki.
- Enhance provider autonomy to engage or invite expertise to support making whakapapa connections with and for rangatahi and whanau, so the opportunity (re)connect is maximised.
- Improve interconnections between the whare, Oranga Tamariki local and national staff; the whare and the community; leverage relationships to strengthen whakapapa connections.
- Provide sufficient resources to support whare to engage in mātauranga Maori, connecting to whenua and whakapapa.
- Guide and advise whare on ways to meet the holistic educational needs of rangatahi, and help to establish relationships with relevant and culturally responsive educational partners.
- Develop a deeper understanding of the activities and services that will support goals and aspirations of rangatahi.
- Strengthen information sharing between Oranga Tamariki, providers and whānau to ensure that rangatahi experience is understood.
- Encourage more social worker engagement with rangatahi, whānau and the providers they work with sharing timely communications and information.
- Improve the quality and accessibility of rangatahi data and undertake more detailed analysis of rangatahi experiences within and across community-based remand homes.

To reflect the journey of each whare, as they lean towards a Māori-centred practice, we have also thought about improvements in the context of Te Puāwai to support identification of future success and effectiveness across the remand homes.

Te Puāwai would enable evaluative judgements to be made that consider the age and stage of each of the homes/services in relation to their journey towards a Māori-centred practice. Ngā pou tikanga would ensure that evaluative judgements are framed from a Māori worldview.

Performance criteria for the evaluative framework would be developed in partnership with the services and rangatahi and also align with the future aspirations of Oranga Tamariki, reflecting the move from provider-operated remand homes to mana whenua designed and delivered services. Undertaking these steps may help Oranga Tamariki better understand what is working well across the homes for rangatahi Māori, and any barriers the homes face in achieving their desired outcomes for Māori, and rangatahi more broadly.

Figure 1: Te Puāwai: An example of a Kaupapa Māori framing for determining progress and performance



There are key opportunities for Oranga Tamariki to partner with hapū, iwi and Hāpori Māori in response to their future direction

KEQ 3: What are the opportunities for hapū, iwi and Hāpori Māori in response to the future direction of Oranga Tamariki? (e.g., decentralisation of services, strengthened and resourced local partnerships).

Overview

There were positive examples of remand home services being explicitly Māori, immersed in te ao Māori values and approaches throughout the evaluation. In these cases, rangatahi connection to self, whānau, and community is strengthened, and tikanga-ā-iwi and mātauranga Māori drive and support service delivery. However, this varies considerably between the whare. There are greater opportunities for hapū, iwi, and hāpori Māori aspirations to engage and respond to the future directions of Oranga Tamariki.

In line with the current aspiration of Oranga Tamariki and remand home provider feedback, the Oranga Tamariki Ministerial Advisory Board Review (2021) highlights the need for a shift in Oranga Tamariki services from reduction to prevention. Although the review does not focus on Youth Justice, parallels exist. Remand homes and services are often aligned with care and protection services; manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga are critical to supporting rangatahi placements in the whare. Similarly to Care and Protection services, the Crown has assumed a lead role in supporting tamariki and whānau in Youth Justice services without a deep understanding of te ao Māori and tikanga (Ministerial Advisory Board Review, 2021).

To transfer the locus of control to Māori requires shifting resources to build the capacity and capability of whānau-hapū-iwi and Māori organisations and communities – moving from a provider to a whānau-hapū-iwi model of delivery. This is key to realising the goals of Oranga Tamariki to support the development of culturally appropriate community-based youth justice placements that are therapeutic and enable local tikanga to be practised and to meet the goals of whānau, hapū and iwi to care for their rangatahi.

As discussed by Workman (2014), the role of Māori in reintegration and restorative approaches is critical to developing a strength-based narrative and to “combat stigmatisation and negative imaging” (p. 44). Kaupapa Māori helps to fully engage whānau, the wider Māori community, Māori service providers and staff.

Whare Tuhua house parents have established whare tikanga based on their experience, knowledge, and skills. Creating an environment in te ao Māori supports a whānau-centred approach, improving access to culturally responsive services for rangatahi and whānau.

To further the development of culturally relevant services, there are opportunities for remand homes to develop meaningful partnerships with hapū, iwi and hāpori Māori. To support these partnerships, collective Māori responsibility and authority must be strengthened and restored, with the Crown’s role moving from directing the kaupapa to supporting it. It is critical to share control and resources equitably, with Oranga Tamariki acting as navigators, referring whānau to appropriate services (Oranga Tamariki Ministerial Advisory Board, 2021).

As we go forward, we are trying to achieve partnership – “we have an ambition, let’s design it together”. “We don’t go in with preconceived ideas about how people should work – they are designing it”. “We just provide an opportunity.” “It comes out of their dreams.” (Oranga Tamariki staff)

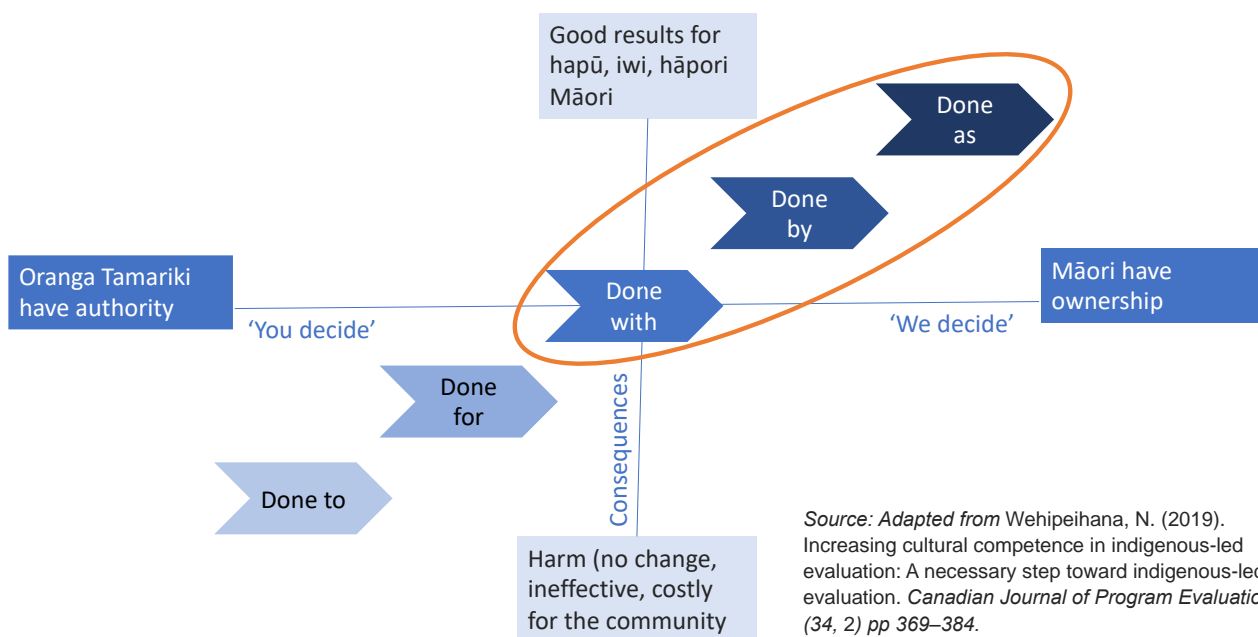
Aufua is building positive partnerships with a strong focus on connecting with mana whenua, Māori and Pacific communities. They encourage their Pacific staff to bring their culture to the fore in their practice and develop a deeper understanding and familiarity with kaupapa Māori approaches. Will St is also working with the rūnaka and local Māori providers to consider the transition of the service to iwi-led, enabling the whānau centred framework to be realised more effectively and deeply.

The Waitangi Tribunal’s urgent inquiry into Oranga Tamariki (2021) also highlighted several opportunities for hapū, iwi, and hāpori Māori in future service delivery models. Specifically, the need for ‘by Māori for Māori,’ tino rangatiratanga, working with agency and authority to build capacity and capability to design and deliver services.

Wehipeihana (2019) suggests five ways of working with Māori and Pacific that can range from helpful to harming, as illustrated in figure 2: Community-based remand home engagement with hapū, iwi and hapori Māori. The following principles inform her framing:

“The principle of Tino Rangatiratanga (chiefly leadership)...appears in ...[Te Tiriti o Waitangi] signed by the British Crown and rangatira (chiefs) in 1840. Tino Rangatiratanga has come to be understood as a translation for the term “self-determination” and refers to determination by Māori of issues that have an impact on Māori. Tino Rangatiratanga has been at the forefront of Māori aspirations since the signing of the treaty in 1840 and remains so today” (Wehipeihana, 2019, p. 372–373).

Figure 2: Community-based remand home engagement with hapū, iwi and hapori Māori



Tino Rangatiratanga is the right for Māori to exercise their authority and agency and provide culturally responsive and inclusive opportunities. In the ‘done as’ space, Māori providers (including hapū and iwi), rangatahi, whānau, and the community have ownership over the service delivery to meet their needs. Oranga Tamariki supports their ambitions and resources them adequately. This is an equity approach with Te Tiriti-based foundations. Wehipeihana (2019) suggests Māori and Pacific thrive most in this ‘done as’ space where:

Indigenous peoples have control, and Indigenous knowledge and science are the norms. The legitimacy and validity of Indigenous principles, values are taken for granted. It does not exclude Western methods but includes them only as far as they are seen to be useful. (Wehipeihana, 2019, p. 381).

In the ‘done with’ and ‘done by’ spaces, Oranga Tamariki, in partnership with Māori providers (including hapū and iwi), rangatahi, whānau and community, share power to find the best way forward together. This approach affirms Māori and Pacific aspirations. The ‘done to’ or ‘done for’ space recognises that Oranga Tamariki can cause unintended harm when engaging with Māori and Pacific, rangatahi, whānau and the community.

Mahuru is an excellent example of working in a ‘done as’ space. It is a by iwi for Māori operation. NISS, as an iwi organisation, has complete control over Mahuru. The whare practices and processes are grounded in Ngāpuhitanga. There are direct benefits for rangatahi and whānau as they connect to their whakapapa and cultural identity as Māori.

Therefore, devolving power to Māori will support the growth of te ao Māori-based services that recognise tamaiti as members of whānau, hapū, and iwi (not just as individuals). To support hapū, iwi, and Māori to develop and lead culturally responsive, kaupapa Māori pathways within youth justice community-based remand home services, Oranga Tamariki can explore procurement, contracting and support processes to enable meaningful partnerships. In a

nutshell, sufficient support and resources would ensure tikanga Māori approaches and whānau-centred, holistic practice.

Finally, concerning the future direction of Oranga Tamariki, specific opportunities were also identified throughout the evaluation for the whare, rangatahi, whānau, and kaimahi. They are outlined below in Table 3, and could be explored further through collaborative design and future evaluations.

Table 3: Opportunities in response to the future direction of Oranga Tamariki

Tikanga	Opportunities for consideration in response to future direction of Oranga Tamariki
Rangatiratanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Place an impetus on culturally meaningful activities that continue to value and affirm rangatahi and connect them as Māori to the whenua and te ao Māori. ● Grow (increased percent) kaimahi Māori who are connected to whānau, hapū, iwi and hāpori Māori. ● Support whare to embed te ao Māori and Whānau ora, strength-based practice as a ‘business as usual’ approach, where being Māori and tikanga are ‘normal’. ● Give effect to Te Tiriti through exploration of co-governance and a strategic and practical intent of revitalisation of ‘ā tātou tāonga’ (our language and customs). ● Build relationships with hapū, iwi, and hāpori Māori to develop procurement and contracting processes that reflect agency and authority for Māori.
Whakapapa/Whanaungatanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on healing whānau for reconnection with rangatahi, explicitly applying a whānau ora – whānau first kaupapa. ● Improve Oranga Tamariki information/assessments about the rangatahi and resourcing arrangements to support capability and capacity of kaimahi, to support rangatahi (their transitions/education/hauora). ● Develop whare, tikanga-led, partnerships with hapū, iwi, and hāpori Māori. ● Build a governance structure that represents iwi and hāpori Māori as responsible for leadership, accountability and decision-making, and strategic development ● Consider Oranga Tamariki legislation, regulation, policy, resourcing and how this supports restoration of whanau.

Wairuatanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create opportunities to express and practice tikanga (culture), kawa (traditions) and mātauranga Māori (traditional Māori knowledge) in contexts such as marae and in Māori networks and interest groups.¹¹ ● Support whare to create a place of hope and new beginnings for rangatahi rather than detainment or punishment as a focus. ● Whakamana kaimahi practice, supporting their self-care and the whare. ● Increase the flexibility of Oranga Tamariki resourcing, policies and procedures to enable services/whare to operate as they see fit to meet the outcomes.
Manaakitanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhance the opportunities for rangatahi to learn, manaaki, aroha, compassion, empathy, mana ake, and lead their own process within courts and FGC settings. ● Devolve services to iwi and community providers, reducing operating restrictions. ● Give iwi and hapū the ability to utilise tikanga for operations and (re)connect whakapapa.
Kaitiakitanga/ Aroha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a deeper understanding of rangatahi need and learn from remand homes how they support rangatahi in a non-blaming, compassionate way. ● Advocate and support rangatahi at court appearances and FGCs, including transportation. ● Recognise the benefits of community-based care in communities, and prepare and resource communities, providers, iwi and hapū for transition to devolution of services. ● Support iwi to select and create organisations and grow people for this mahi, ● Resource the co-design of models with hapū, iwi and hapori Māori, to provide opportunities that draw out the best in rangatahi and build a positive sense of self-worth.

¹¹ www.imsb.Māori.nz/Māori-wellbeing-in-tamaki-makaurau/wairuatanga/#:~:text=Wairuatanga%20is%20distinctive%20to%20M%C4%81ori,with%20which%20that%20individual%20identifies.

Closing summary

Overall, there is evidence of some great success in community-based youth justice placements delivering services to meet the evolving needs of rangatahi, whānau and providers/community partners. Essential to the work of the remand homes is the application of Māori-centred practices, grounded in tikanga Māori principles; rangatiratanga, wairuatanga, kaitiakitanga, whakapapa and manaakitanga. Remand homes are working well to meet the needs of rangatahi, encouraging rangatahi to look positively towards their future and pursue their dreams. Within warm, safe and caring, family-like environments, rangatahi are supported to consider their previous actions and make positive changes.

Although the remand homes are at different stages of delivery and operate on a broad continuum of Kaupapa Māori frameworks, they are generally helping to limit young people's exposure to the negative impacts of youth justice residences, working with partner agencies to strengthen rangatahi connection to whānau and community. Future improvements would further enhance the transformative experience for rangatahi and outcomes for the remand homes. These would involve strengthening funding, contracting and policy arrangements, and effective leadership from Oranga Tamariki, iwi, and providers to support rangatahi, as well as allocating sufficient resources to Māori, and where tikanga Māori is recognised as a central and legitimate practice framework.

In line with the Oranga Tamariki Ministerial Advisory Board Review (2021), evaluative feedback also highlighted the need to transfer the locus of control to Māori by shifting resources to build the capacity and capability of whānau-hapū-iwi and Māori organisations and communities. Developing culturally appropriate community-based youth justice placements that are therapeutic and enable local tikanga to be practised was seen as critical to reducing disparities and systemic barriers experienced by rangatahi and whānau. To support this shift from Crown control, collective Māori responsibility and authority must be strengthened and restored.

Appendix One: Remand home success case studies

Self-identified key success factors

The following table shares the key success factors that each remand home identified during the site visit. These success factors alongside other data collected through the site visits led to the creation of Ngā Pou Tikanga in the analysis and synthesis stage.

Table 4: Self-identified key success factors

Remand home	Key success factors
Mahuru Remand Services	<p>Ultimately success was defined by the mentors and caregivers as having the taitamariki safely returning home with education and/or employment options. They also want to know that they are making a difference and contributing to the reduction in the overall nature and frequency of offending for taitamariki who spend time in their service¹².</p> <p>Success is also reported as the ability to deinstitutionalise taitamariki from group homes and secure units by operating a caregiving model with “<i>well-functioning</i>” whānau who provide routine and structure for the young person (teina) together with day mentoring activities.</p> <p>The diversity and quality of the staff (mentors and caregivers) together with utilising a tuakana/teina mentoring approach ensured that engagement with the teina is seamless.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Teina plans • The importance of tinana • Whānau caregivers and role models
Aufua Le Taeao	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerge Aotearoa organisational values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whakamana – the KFC approach, being Kind, Firm and Consistent ○ Ako – continuously adapting and learning based on lessons learned ○ Manaaki – engaging with respect and embracing diversity ○ Whakawhanaungatanga – connecting with purpose to make a positive difference • Effective leadership and teamwork • Quality systems and processes • Creating a family environment • Positive engagement inspiring rangatahi to achieve their potential
Will Street	<p>Youth-led practice philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will Street is youth focused • Rangatahi are welcomed into Will Street • Rangatahi are engaged and informed • Rangatahi need and aspirations are considered • Routines and activities help rangatahi keep safe and secure • Getting to know the rangatahi is critical • Access to external expertise to support transition into the community

¹² The Mahuru manager noted that this data can be tracked longitudinally or cross-checked with taitamariki who may age out of OT, it may also require Ministry of Justice (MOJ) or Community Corrections data to help them know.

Whare Tuhua

There are four key enablers that support the ongoing success of Whare Tuhua, relating to the kawa and tikanga of Whare Tuhua, the role of house parents and Kaiako, and the rangatahi-centred approach.

- Rangatahi are the heart of Whare Tuhua
- Te Kawa me te Tikanga o Whare Tuhua
- He kaitiaki o tēnei whare – The G's (the house parents)
- Kaiako as Tuakana – mentoring and supporting the rangatahi

Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services: Mahuru Remand and Youth Services

“Kia tū tika ai Te Whare Tapu o Ngāpuhi”

The sacred house of Ngāpuhi stands strong

Whakapapa

Ngāpuhi is a confederation of hapū, whānau and marae located in Te Tai Tokerau. The ‘house’ of Ngāpuhi stands through the support and agreement of the marae, hapū and whānau. He Whakaputanga o te Tino Rangatiratanga o Niu Tīreni and Te Tiriti o Waitangi are of central importance to the iwi of Ngāpuhi. Ngāpuhi has a special and unique role as kaitiaki of these national taonga and constantly seeks to advance this role. Tino rangatiratanga is not merely about managing the affairs of Ngāpuhi, for Ngāpuhi benefits, but also for everyone else who lives within ‘te whare tapu o Ngāpuhi’. Ngāpuhi is inextricably connected to Ngāpuhi identity, moana, whenua and te reo Māori.

Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services (NISS) was established in 1988 to be a key service provider for Ngāpuhi, by Ngāpuhi, located in Kaikohe in Northland. The vision for NISS is ‘Kia tu tika ai te Whare Tapu o Ngāpuhi’” acknowledging ‘te mana o te whānau’, it exists as an ‘enabler’ to support whānau potential.

“Mā Ngāpuhi, me Ngāpuhi, mō Ngāpuhi.

By Ngāpuhi, with Ngāpuhi, for Ngāpuhi

In 1996, NISS became an independent, accredited Iwi Social Service under The Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 (s.396). A year later it was registered as a limited liability company. In 2006, NISS became a subsidiary of Te Rūnanga-a-Iwi-o-Ngāpuhi (TRAION). It is governed by a board of five directors, including the Deputy Chair of TRAION and is an accredited Oranga Tamariki service provider. NISS has an office in Kaikohe and arguably is the largest Accredited Iwi Social Service in Aotearoa. Access to their advice and services is free and confidential.

Values

The values of NISS are encapsulated in the following whakatauaiki (proverb):

Me ako ā tātou tamariki
He kawanata te Tiriti o Waitangi.
Ōna pūtaketake,
He rangatiratanga
He manaakitanga
He whānaungatanga
He tohungatanga
He ūkaipō
Ōtira, kei tua ko te aka matua,
Tōna ingoa ko te Kotahitanga

We must teach our children that the Treaty of Waitangi is a covenant whose roots are rangatiratanga, manaakitanga, whānaungatanga, tohungatanga, ūkaipō. However, beyond all of these is the parent vine, whose name is Kotahitanga.

Mission

The stated mission of NISS is to ensure that Ngāpuhi people:

- Enjoy an excellent standard of living
- Are employed and a significant number own businesses
- Are housed safely and enjoy warm, loving home environments
- Are healthy
- Enjoy excellent relationships within ‘Te Whare Tapu o Ngāpuhi’ and others
- Are politically united, are influential at local, regional and national levels

- Are a ‘force for good’
- Are realising their potential as a confederation of hapū, whānau and marae
- Are a modern indigenous people – dynamic, vital and alive in the world.

so that Ngāpuhi identity, language, knowledge and culture are no longer endangered.

NISS services

NISS Services include:

- Whānau Care
- General Social Work support
- Family Violence Prevention Services
- Marae Programmes
- Social Workers in Schools
- Youth Workers in Secondary Schools
- School Attendance Services
- Youth Services

Establishment of Mahuru Remand Services

Mahuru Remand Services (Mahuru) was established through their existing Youth Justice services. These included:

- Māori Youth at Risk of Offending
- Community Youth Programmes
- Court Supervised Camps
- Court-ordered mentoring
- Supported Bail
- Supervision with Activity.

NISS wanted to provide a better, more viable option to detaining young people on remand, whilst in the custody of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, s238(1)d. Rather than operate an Oranga Tamariki Remand Home in Whangarei under the Act, NISS’s intentions were to recruit and train six or seven sets of specialist caregivers who would provide one-to-one care and support for young people within the caregivers’ own homes. NISS were seeking to identify youth risk-factors early, believing that early intervention was the key to achieving the vision and mission for Ngāpuhi.

In 2017, around 40 young people in Te Tai Tokerau were denied bail and sent to a Youth Residence. More than 90 percent of those youth could whakapapa to Ngāpuhi, while almost half of them came from the mid-north in and around Kaikohe. Records indicate 80 percent of young people who offend have experienced some kind of family violence. In addition, 50 percent are not enrolled, have been excluded or suspended, or are just not attending education.

Mahuru can take up to three taitamariki (Section 238(1)(D) placements) at one time. For five days a week (Monday to Friday) for 40/50 hours two NISS mentors work with each taitamariki to achieve the goals set in their individual plans, immersing them in a tikanga based programme.

Mahuru is resourced through FTE’s rather than volumes to provide staff stability and resources available to support the service.

Mahuru design and intent

In the background to Mahuru, NISS proposed a marae-based wānanga to:

- Develop belonging and connection
- Discover, explore and consolidate the tai tamariki links with whānau and hapū
- Introduce Ngāpuhi history and whakapapa
- Gain skills and knowledge about Ngāpuhi marae protocols, basic reo and traditions
- Share skills and strategies to support taitamariki to make informed choices and set positive goals.

“When they [NISS] applied for the community remand programme, they (Oranga Tamariki) said it had to be A, B, C, D and the NISS Manager said to them, If you’re giving me the programme, we will design how it goes. And our first (condition) will be: We will not be locking them up in a house! She made a clear statement of that. We’d prefer that they go to whānau that are here that can model to them what a good whānau can look like.” (Former mentor)

Outcomes sought through the Mahuru practice model were:

- Strengthen and broaden connections to whānau, hapū and Iwi
- Reduce frequency and severity of offending
- Engage taitamariki in education, training or employment
- Contribute to improved life outcomes.

“And again, it was a Māori model of practice. Mahuru was to look at doing the teina/tuakana. You know one of them was 80% in the field 20% in the office. If we’re in the office too much, we’re not helping young people. We’re helping what the organisation wants, which is important. But the focus is the young person.” (Former mentor)

Upon a young person (teina)¹³ entering the home, Mahuru run a three-day wānanga (camp) with two mentors and the teina, in a remote location, establishing a strong connection and foundation with the mentors. The remote location also makes absconding from the mentors difficult.

The case study approach

This case study showcases Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services, community-based Mahuru Remand Services and their commitment to supporting taitamariki on their oranga journey.

Mahuru was one of four case study sites selected by the project commissioner for their decentralised commissioning framework (i.e., run by an iwi, not Oranga Tamariki).

The evaluation team visited Mahuru in November 2021. The evaluation team spoke with mentors, managers, Oranga Tamariki staff and caregivers, completing 11 interviews.

The Success Evidence Strategies (SES) framework¹⁴ underpinned the kōrero between evaluators and participants. This strength-based approach encouraged the participants to consciously reflect on what success is for them, how they measure it, and what strategies they use to achieve success. This approach worked well in unpacking the participants' inherent cultural knowledge, wisdom, and experience.

Data collection

In preparation for our visit to Mahuru, we held a 90-minute online session with managers and staff from NISS to understand the strategies, evidence and success factors (SES) associated with the practice model. Three strategies highlighted through this process were the three day wānanga, staffing, and the taitamariki-led planning and reporting.

Taitamariki engaged by Mahuru to date

A summary of taitamariki for the period to date sourced from Oranga Tamariki and amended by Mahuru: Teina – 238 (1) (d) summary 28/9/2020 – 17/8/2021 The total number of taitamariki is 14.

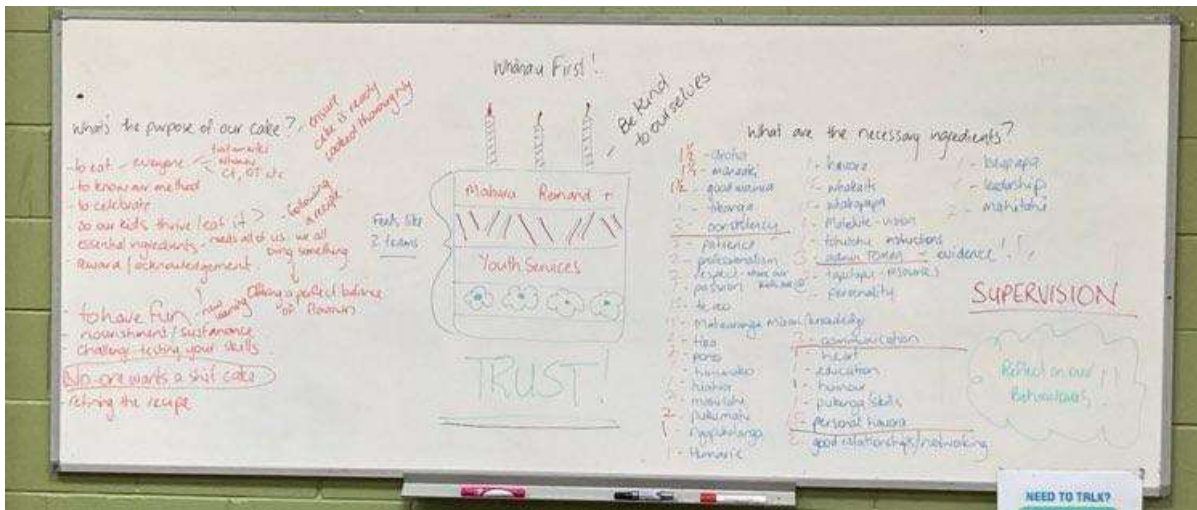
Tane - 13	92%	Wahine 1	8%
Maori - 14	100%	NZ European - 0	
Home region - Northland - 8	57%	Home region - Auckland - 6	43%
Ngāpuhi iwi - 13	92%	Other or not stated - Ngati Whatua - 1 (one with northland as home region)	8%

¹³ Mahuru utilise the kupu teina and taitamariki as opposed to rangatahi to refer to the young people they work with.

¹⁴ Developed by Kataraina Pipi (2005).

Key case study inputs included:

- Online SES workshop prior to visit
- Review of key documentation
 - Ngāpuhi remand and education plan
 - Ngāpuhi strategic plan
 - Remand data from Oranga Tamariki
 - Teina plans
 - Viewed PATH plans
 - Staff reflections based on the 'Mahuru Cake' image below.



On arrival and in accordance with NISS tikanga the evaluators were afforded a formal mihi whakatau, albeit socially distanced. Scanning and signing in and out was required during the visit. At the time of the visit, all the Northland Oranga Tamariki regional offices were closed to the public, despite Kaikohe and Whangarei being in Level 2 lockdown. A former Mahuru staff member who now works for Oranga Tamariki was part of the welcoming rōpū at the whakatau. He also took part in an evaluation focus group conducted shortly after the whakatau.

Taitamariki in Mahuru care were offered the chance to participate in the focus group but declined. We realised that there was a higher likelihood of engagement with caregivers and taitamariki online than in person, especially due to the recent news of COVID-19 cases in the region and the consequent Level 3 in the Far North and in Whangarei. We engaged with NISS who agreed we could come to the region for fieldwork during Level 2, subject to COVID-19 protocols being followed.

COVID-19 response

The evaluation visit occurred at a time when stress levels were high due to COVID-19 related restrictions. This was especially so for NISS given there were new COVID cases being recorded in Northland but with a lack of identification of locations of interest at the time – this was different for reporting in other regions such as Auckland. The Northland region had been operating with pop-up testing and increased vaccination efforts from regional health providers. NISS provided COVID-19 response services to the community (kai packs, petrol vouchers etc).

“When we were in Level 4, as an essential service, we remained open with a skeletal staff...There were three people in the office every day...one [from] management and an admin person...just really to mostly to respond to requests for kai and for other support from whānau and any walk-ins” (Manager)

All taitamariki referrals from Oranga Tamariki are required to return a negative COVID-19 test prior to their arrival at Mahuru.

The NISS Manager shared that a number of staff positions were being impacted by the vaccine mandate required for frontline staff. At the time of the evaluation visit, the deadline for full vaccination had not been reached. The Manager

reported the need for human resources, legal and business continuity advice and support that were largely being outsourced at additional cost in relation to the government vaccine mandate order.

Informal discussions with staff and managers noted that the vaccine mandate did not appear to extend across all the agency-funded OT roles, but that it may have been useful for the local office to be open in Kaikohe and for Oranga Tamariki social workers to support community providers who were likely to have short to medium term staffing gaps.

Evaluation interviews

We interviewed:

- NISS CEO
- Team leader, Mahuru Remand and Youth Services
- Four current remand mentors
- Two staff at NISS who have worked in remand or caregiving
- Former Mahuru mentor working at Oranga Tamariki
- Two caregivers

We interviewed kaimahi who worked across Section 238(1) D and C, as well as those who worked in supported bail.

Caregivers we interviewed spoke of reduced support available from NISS for taitamariki during COVID-19, levels 3 and 4. NISS Team meetings were daily on Zoom and mentoring was largely through weekly phone calls, rather than the weekday in person mentoring day programmes. Caregivers we spoke to felt that mentoring should have continued through lockdown as they felt that during Level 4 while there were additional payments, there was no in-person support.

“Well, we knew there was no support. So, we just did it. Yeah. And, and believe me, it wasn't easy. We had our moments with him. But it was just us taking a hard line as parents, I suppose. We had breakthrough moments. We had the frustration that got to many ended up breaking down and it was just something he needed. You know, something you needed. We got out and did things. I know we weren't supposed to get out there. But we went eeling down the creek down the road. And we didn't venture too far. But these things for them to do here. We actually went out and caught them was biggest tuna he's ever caught in his life. One night? Yeah. Plenty of jobs. Yeah, yeah, there is. No, they got because he got on with our boy anyway. So that's the advantage of having kids in similar ages. And a baby who is an icebreaker.” (Caregiver)

“Communication would have helped and we could have had face time with the social workers who are meant to make contact at least once a week. A mentor could have stood in the driveway – we need some consistency.” (Caregiver)

Caregivers noted the difference between teina from Auckland and those from Northland. Their view was that those who are from the region are more easily engaged in taiao and koha kai activities with whānau and mentors. They felt that taitamariki from Auckland tend to have more sedentary or technology-based interests and took more time to engage in whānau living.

Contributing to outcomes

Mahuru is contributing to a range of positive outcomes for taitamariki and the remand environment in general. They are held in high regard by many working across the justice system locally and nationally. They have strong relationships with agencies, the judiciary and their community supporting their practice and improved outcomes for taitamariki. Some of the key outcomes highlighted by interview participants are reflected in this section.

“But when it does work, that's a good change in a positive, long lasting so we made some very, very good outcomes and some fall backs like any other program. I'd say the success far outweighs the negatives.” (Mentor)

Whānau oranga - Creating and positive whānau environment

This is a significant departure in the use of a provider or Oranga Tamariki residence and provides opportunities for taitamariki to reside in a safe, supportive whānau environment and experience family-based activities and 'regular' family life. Whānau caregivers note that they incorporate the teina into their family life, rather than fundamentally

changing how their family functions. Taitamariki have their personal space (room) and are expected to contribute to the whānau chores, similar to other children in the family.

Whānaungatanga - Supportive and trusting relationships with Mahuru mentors

Where possible mentors are paired with taitamariki for the 'best fit', including interests and gender considerations. Mentors are passionate about their relationships, support and advocacy for the teina and gave numerous examples of how they apply tika, pono and aroha in the way they work. It is clear that they are committed to doing whatever they can to assist taitamariki to reach their potential and (re)connect to their whakapapa and whānau.

"And every single youth that I've had on my books. They've either, so they've gone home back to whānau, which they were not with. They haven't re-offended. They've got mahi, and they always message me, How's the tuna? So I've seen positive things." (Mentor)

Taitamariki Rangatiratanga

When taitamariki attend FGCs and go to court they are empowered to take responsibility to lead, provide reflection and reports of their progress and hopes for the future in video or to present their plans in their own words and voice. This has been powerful, authentic and useful to inform the next steps and more just outcomes with judges and whānau.

"I've got all the videos, like and one boy just had an FGC and even the judge said, oh you caught some big fish. Oh there's some pigs and oh you got some sausages out here." (Mentor on judge's engagement and feedback)

Rangatiratanga is core to the day to day practice with teina leading karakia, tikanga and determining tailored goals and outcomes in their plans. The plans recognise both need and potential. A key outcome for NISS is for taitamariki to be (re)engaged in education, employment or training.

"While they're on the camp they're already kind of having the conversations and doing the assessment and talking about what you know what the aspirations for these kids are. And starting, beginning to develop a plan. And when they come back to the office over the next week or so they consolidate that. The kids have to sign off on the plan. It has to show that ... if there's nothing there to do with education, training and employment, and there's nothing there to do with the solution, which is connectivity and identity. Those are the two streams that I think are compulsory – vocation and connectedness and identity those two streams...If the kids are still under 16 we try hard to get, get them reengaged in education. If they've got no desire to do that, and they're over 16, then we should be looking for training, employment and employment opportunities." (Manager)

Key to success

Ultimately success was defined by the mentors and caregivers as having the taitamariki safely returning home with education and/or employment options. They also want to know that they are making a difference and contributing to the reduction in the overall nature and frequency of offending for taitamariki who spend time in their service¹⁵.

Success is also reported as the ability to deinstitutionalise taitamariki from group homes and secure units by operating a caregiving model with "*well-functioning*" whānau who provide routine and structure for the young person (teina) together with day mentoring activities.

The diversity and quality of the staff (mentors and caregivers) together with utilising a tuakana/teina mentoring approach ensured that engagement with the teina is seamless.

¹⁵ The Mahuru manager noted that this data can be tracked longitudinally or cross-checked with taitamariki who may age out of OT, it may also require Ministry of Justice (MOJ) or Community Corrections data to help them know.

Developing teina plans

Mahuru developed 'teina plans' that are based on specific goals and needs of the teina; these are a key focus for the mentors and teina. The eight strands are: identity and connection, wellbeing, health, outdoor life skills, vocation, identification and documentation, drivers license and living skills.

There is a relatively short length of time (up to eight weeks) for taitamariki in the service, the teina plan provides the basis for goal setting and planning. Teina plans are developed with a core focus on three main areas:

1. education, training or employment,
2. culture and identity goals, and
3. something that will help address offending (apology letters, progress towards licenses etc).

The plans are useful in keeping the focus on ensuring the teina is progressing successfully towards their defined goals. In addition, when the teina appear in court or at a Family Group Conference (FGC) they are able to speak to or share their experiences and successes in video or graphic format. This was seen as both innovative and useful to help the court or the FGC make informed decisions.

Teina plans are supported by the Youth Services Planner, and signed off by the Mahuru team leader as well as the NISS Manager to ensure quality and cost and to allocate resourcing for the implementation of the plan. The service tries to ensure that taitamariki under the age of 16 are re-engaged in education, often with Te Kura (Correspondence School).

"While they're on the camp they're already kind of having the conversations and doing the assessment and talking about what you know what the aspirations for these kids are. And starting, beginning to develop a plan. And when they come back to the office over the next week or so they consolidate that. The kids have to sign off on the plan."
(Mentor)

Feedback from judges in the region is that the teina graphic planning and video reports have been powerful tools to enable the taitamariki to share their kōrero of progress and positive change. The teina plans, daily videos and photographs enable the service and taitamariki to track and monitor their journey and achievements.

"And now she's [teina] on the diving course. She's up every day. She has been. So when we first got her referral we were told that she's most likely to abscond. She's always stealing cars, she's going to go. She's been with me for about two months now. She's keen to come. Going to go pick her up after this. She's got, finally settled in at our caregiver's place. She, like mingles with them. She's got her a cabin out there." (Mentor)

The importance of tinana

Mentors frequently reported kai gathering (watercress, pipi, fishing), moana and river skills and knowledge that support teina and whānau activities. They also emphasised the importance of a-tinana; health and physical activities such as swimming, camping, going to the gym as having benefits for those in care. NISS were keen to understand how taitamariki progressed post-placement to understand outcomes that are created through their practice model.

Whānau caregivers as role models

Engaging good whānau caregiver placements were also key to success for Mahuru, particularly in respect to tāne role models. Teina were reported as having limited positive male or father figures in their lives, tāne caregivers were seen as a scarce and valuable resource for Mahuru.

Creating cultural connections, physically, for the teina, through visiting related iwi awa, marae maunga and moana and enabling the teina to make whakapapa connections had positive impact and meaning.

Mahuru currently has three sets of whanau-based caregivers, with a requirement for there to be pairs within the home. When asked what makes a good caregiver, staff had some views about what helps those teina and what attributes are required:

“We kinda want them to be upstanding citizens in the community, kind of proactive in the community or something close and they have it. Who might have some kids in the house to those uh, you know, positive influences in a positive atmosphere for them to hopefully thrive? I do I do have to admit that it doesn't work all the time. But when it does work, that's a good change. And in a positive way, long lasting. So we made some very, very good outcomes and also some fallbacks, but I would say our successes outweigh our negatives.”

Caregivers are managed by the Whānau Care team at NISS, rather than the Mahuru team. Caregivers provide a positive whānau environment for teina from 5pm to 8am Monday to Friday and over weekends. Mentors in pairs drop off and collect teina from caregivers.

“We get a book, mentors, get a book, caregivers get a book and we write down, caregivers write down, how they've [teina] been during the night you know any sort of alarming behaviours or anything and then the mentors or caregivers know and can be prepared.”

Mahuru reported some difficulty in recruiting and retaining quality caregivers:

“We don't have a lot of them ... and we thought it would be manageable ... You know, we need five sets of caregivers at any time for remand. And we're supposed to have three at any time, three kids on remand. I don't know. There was just a view that you're putting too much pressure.”

Concerns about the often high and complex needs of the teina is also a factor in assigning caregivers to ensure the safety of both parties:

“...they've come with more than we can handle. We've also been pushed back if we think that staff safety is at risk in especially caregivers who open up their homes freely to look after these young people.”

Responding to aspirations and needs of taitamariki and whānau. The initial wānanga/camp

The wānanga/camp activity takes place as soon as the taitamariki arrive at NISS. Camp activities include travelling by boat to a remote location, providing opportunities to de-escalate and settle the taitamariki who have often come directly from court in Auckland or Northland. Mentors focus on building relationships, discussing whakapapa, helping the teina understand the remand programme (“building connection before correction”), identifying key goals and aspirations prior to the teina returning to Kaikohe and meeting their caregiver. Engaging through activities such as kōhi (gather) kaimoana collecting/diving for seafood, fishing, swimming.

“That's how I run my camps with my team and I bring them through. That I'm tika with them and they're tika with me from the get go and I make that clear. And pono, that we're true to one another and we're true to the kaupapa, or to our tikanga. We take them out, we integrate them back into their whānau or their whakapapa. Take them back to their own awa, moana and all of that and we hikoi with them. We gather kai from there and return it to their people or them.” (Mentor)

The camp provides 'taitamariki/teina' induction and introduction into Mahuru in a structured way. It also provides an opportunity for a 'soft landing' for teina who often are dealing with stress and change. It allows tuakana/mentors to provide a safe environment for focus on building relationships with the teina over the first 72 hours and provides a lead-in to prepare mentors and caregivers for placement and support for the remand period. The camps allow teina to be settled and open to the service supports, and provided with focused opportunities build rapport and trust through land- and water-based activities. This provides the basis of the taitamariki determined goals and plans.

Future opportunities

Throughout our evaluation kaimahi, caregivers and managers were asked to reflect on opportunities or improvements they believe would provide better, more effective support for teina and the Mahuru model. Increased and improved resourcing, training, relationships, communication, and specialist services were the primary concerns for those we interviewed. It is usual for only two to four hours' notice for arrival of taitamariki to the Mahuru.

It was noted that NISS has a new service adaptation that is responding to whānau tautoko for taitamariki in their care namely Family Functioning Therapy (FFT) workers. This is a joint venture with Youth Horizons Trust with 2.0 FTEs providing family violence and addictions support to resolve issues to make it safe for taitamariki to return home. The FFT workers travel to Rāwene, Kaikohe, Moerewa and Whangarei working with whānau in their homes. While FFT is

not explicitly integrated into the Mahuru practice model, it has the potential to provide safe, sustainable whānau (re)connections for teina.

Mahuru-focused improvement opportunities include:

- Having specific Mahuru-based and youth focussed legal/legislative training for mentors to enable mentors to be more effective in supporting and advocating for teina with agencies, in AVLs, FGCs and court appearances and ensure they are operating within their legal mandate.
- Specific Mahuru site-based mental health training, with a focus on better supporting those with high and complex needs, and suicide prevention were identified to reduce the risk of harm to taitamariki, whānau caregivers and Mahuru kaimahi. Kaimahi document teina engagement, wairua and hinengaro information regularly to ensure records of health are recorded to monitor wellbeing and to provide a record assisting with reporting, taitamariki protection and organisational accountability.
- NISS would like more staff training on the organisational tools (i.e. TOMS reporting and teina plans). Given the staff attendance required for this, kaimahi release, or rolling arrangements (with multiple sessions) for training would enable this.
- Streamline timeframes and processes for caregiver approvals (it was noted that this takes up to six months) and increase the number of caregivers to ensure there are enough to support referrals and respite for existing caregivers to give teina a positive whānau experience.
- Caregivers would like opportunities to share in teina poroporoāki as part of the Mahuru team. They suggested that increased communication, briefing and debriefing with the whānau placement team would contribute to continuous improvements of care for taitamariki, kaimahi and whānau.

“I think those are the very areas that'd be valuable to actually introduce into the processes. Which I don't think that happens to any great extent at this time.” (NISS manager)

Oranga Tamariki-focused improvement opportunities include:

- Completing assessments (health, psychological, etc) of taitamariki prior to referral, and better information sharing between Oranga Tamariki and the provider could reduce risks and assist with service and caregiver preparedness. It will also inform ongoing support required for the teina when they leave Mahuru. Currently the main consistent information the provider receives is related to charges and non-associations.
- Oranga Tamariki to ensure that social workers, rather than 'trackers' provide handover of the teina, ensuring better information and transition to Mahuru. In particular Mahuru want to ensure that fuller information is provided when there is a risk of self-harm or known mental health concerns.
- For Oranga Tamariki to nominate a dedicated social worker for those referred to Mahuru would ensure a single point of contact within the service for social work-related matters and improve agency responsiveness and relationships.
- Currently there is a three-month waitlist for psychologists. Mahuru would like improved access to Māori psychologists for teina.
- NISS would like Oranga Tamariki to provide information about teina outcomes on release from Mahuru and on national trends, to help the service anticipate future needs, i.e. does the service need to build up its wahine kaimahi for remand?

Conclusion

Mahuru exemplifies a kaupapa Maori whānau-based model of care that provides culturally meaningful, positive experiences for taitamariki. They incorporate the broader skills and services of NISS and provide a positive whānau living environment with taitamariki-led planning to empower taitamariki beyond their 'remand' term. Mahuru integrates community, whānaungatanga, rangatiratanga and tikanga with a clear purpose and vision of the wellbeing of staff, whānau, taitamariki and community as Māori and Ngāpuhi. Mahuru provides a holistic kaupapa Maori experience for whānau in remand with placement, creating positive outcomes for those in care and providing care.

Aufua Le Taeao Community Remand Home

Whakapapa

Emerge Aotearoa, (EA) is a national charitable trust and has a long history of providing a wide range of health and social services throughout Aotearoa. Its current service provision includes health and social disability services (mental health, addiction, disability support, peer, employment, offender rehabilitation), housing services (social, transitional and emergency housing), peer-led mental health support and workplace wellbeing services. The organisation's vision is tautokohia te mana tangata, realising potential. Its purpose is to strengthen whānau together, so that communities thrive.

EA is a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-based organisation, with a bi-cultural approach recognised in the organisation's strategic pou and values. Their strategic directions is based on three pou; these are¹⁶:

- Māori succeeding as Māori
- Lived experience and diversity are privileged
- Thriving Pacific Peoples.

The three strategic outcomes EA aims for are:

- Healthy whānau,
- Thriving communities, and
- Greater equity.

The organisation's values/ngā mātāpono that guide their work and their decisions are summarised as:

- Whakamana (we do what we say) – acting with integrity, working in mana enhancing ways that uphold the mana of the people they work with
- Ako (Walk, Talk and Listen) – walking and learning together where everybody can teach them something. Learning opportunities are valued
- Manaaki (It's cool to care) – engaging with respect. They don't judge. Accept and understand. They embrace diversity
- Whakawhanaungatanga (We're here for you) – connecting with purpose, there to find ways to make a positive difference.

In 2019 EA looked to broaden their services into youth justice, a relatively new sector for the organisation. As EA has a large number of Pacific staff, in 2020 they entered into a partnership with Oranga Tamariki to deliver community-based remand services with a specific focus on Pacific rangatahi.

Establishment of Aufua Le Taeao

Aufua Le Taeao, was established by EA in 2020 and is based in Te Atatu Peninsula, West Auckland. It is now one of 14 Oranga Tamariki-contracted community remand homes in Aotearoa. The remand homes aim to provide safe, nurturing and stable care in a whanau-like environment for rangatahi placed in the custody of Oranga Tamariki pending court appearances or hearings. The homes are designed to support young people who have found themselves in the youth justice system and the intention is to reduce recidivism.¹⁷

¹⁶ Strategic Pou Summary – July 2020.

¹⁷ www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/first-up/audio/2018724607/could-more-remand-homes-be-the-answer-to-keep-nz-young-people-out-of-prison



Aufua Le Taeao Remand Home

Aufua supports rangatahi who have allegedly offended by providing a safe, stable, secure, homely environment in order to address identified needs in a culturally responsive way. The mission of Aufua is to improve a young person's future potential and long-term outcomes, to reduce recidivism and support public safety in a safe and nurturing environment through being part of a continuum of services.¹⁸ To achieve this, within the Aufua le Taeao is a purposeful programme for rangatahi, partnerships with whānau, Oranga Tamariki and other organisations as well as skilled and competent staff.

Rangatahi can stay anywhere from 24 hours up to eight weeks as they progress through Youth Court proceedings. There is no expectation and it is unlikely for all to stay as long as 4-6 weeks. The fale caters for young boys aged between 13-17 years of age, who have been detained into the custody of the Chief Executive (s238(1)b and d and s235 of the Oranga Tamariki Act).

The fale is large, consisting of seven bedrooms and two living areas. Two bedrooms are designated as an office space and a music room. One living area is a communal lounge the other is a recreation room and is also used for arts and crafts and education sessions. The exterior consists of a staff parking area, a garage, and a large green open backyard. There is a basketball half court, a trampoline and a newly designed garden area. It is envisaged that the harvest will provide garden produce for the fale and the surrounding community.

48 rangatahi have resided in the fale since 1 September 2020. The number of days in care ranged from one to 28 days (this does not include one rangatahi who has been with the fale for approximately three months). Despite having a Pacific focus, 64% were Māori, 21 % were Pacific, 13% European and Other 1%.

There are 11 FTE frontline positions for the contract which includes a Service Manager. The Service Manager is Pacific, 12 of the frontline staff are Pacific and two are Māori. The Service Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the fale as well as providing one-on-one support and oversight to kaimahi. The Service Manager takes a 'hands on' approach to the role, and for kaimahi this is critical to the success of the programme. In addition, the team is supported by district and regional managers. Kaimahi work in shifts to provide 24/7 support and oversight for rangatahi.

The fale can accommodate up to five rangatahi at a time. The ratio is one kaimahi to two rangatahi. At full capacity there are three staff. The Service Manager ensures that adequate staffing is in place. This ensures that kaimahi are able to engage with rangatahi through one-on-one conversations, to encourage and support them with their goals and aspirations.

¹⁸ Emerge Aotearoa Operating Protocol

As a new service provider, Oranga Tamariki provided the Fale Service Manager with regular and ongoing support, advice and guidance on day-to-day operations and understanding the statutory requirements for remand homes. Management engages with the Oranga Tamariki placement coordinator and social workers on a daily basis. Their focus is on the health and wellbeing of rangatahi.

The fale is working towards operating under both Māori and Pacific frameworks. The Māori framework Te Korowai is the service delivery framework used within Emerge Aotearoa. It has five key principles functioning to create a positive environment, support change, be strength based, whakamana all and seek community participation and inclusion.

The kawa of Aufua and their fale is simple and includes no drugs, alcohol, or phones. The fale engages in specific tikanga to ensure that rangatahi feel comfortable and a part of their environment:

- Whakatau: An informal welcome to new rangatahi. Expectations and kawa of the fale are explained
- Karakia: Each day starts and ends this way
- Huihui: Occurs each morning and evening/shift change over. All kaimahi and rangatahi come together to discuss plans for the day. In the evening they reflect on their day. This is also an opportunity to raise any concerns and find solutions together.
- Poroporoaki: Farewell rangatahi and a chance to celebrate their success while in Aufua.



The image above represents the voyaging waves of Peau Folau, a Pacific model under development. Peau Folau has been implemented in services within EA since 2020. It has not been fully implemented in Aufua Le Taeao.

Peau Folau Voyaging Waves was developed through consultation and fono with EA Pasifika staff. It is based on traditional navigation and measurement methods by Pasifika ancestors to predict the weather conditions and foretell the route direction of the winds. Stars guide sailing waka back home to the islands. The aim of Peau Folau is to be a measuring and evaluation tool to support and empower staff to develop cultural awareness, culturally responsive practice and be more culturally competent in their service delivery. It describes 14 Pasifika ways of working that are expected to be seen in services that support tagata Pasifika. Peau Folau draws on central elements of Pasifika culture common to all Pasifika ethnicities: *family, language, tapu (spirituality) and Va (relational space)*.

With the support of Oranga Tamariki staff, the fale is implementing and adapting to Oranga Tamariki's comprehensive Operating Protocol. This outlines all the necessary procedural routines, key responsibilities and processes. It identifies the range of desired outcomes expected to achieve and outlines the importance of trauma-informed practice.

The daily routine provides structure to the day and supports rangatahi to get into regular routines. The Aufua programme is focused on building confidence, establishing trust and preparing rangatahi for re-engagement with whanau and the community. Rangatahi are supported to connect and engage with respect. This is reinforced and encouraged through positive modelling by kaimahi.

Aufua was established as a Pacific service and is accepting of all cultural and belief systems with opportunities to learn about their culture beginning to be incorporated into the programme. An independent education provider is also available to assist with literacy and learning development for rangatahi.

The case study approach

This case study showcases Emerge Aotearoa's community-based remand home, Aufua Le Taeao as a new area of business for the organisation. Aufua Le Taeao was one of four case study sites to be selected by the project commissioner as an organisation offering a bi-cultural service, providing Māori and Pacific specific support to rangatahi.

The initial kōrero between evaluators, management and staff began in September 2021, with a session reflecting on the successes of Aufua using the Success, Evidence, Strategies (SES) critical reflection tool.¹⁹ SES is a strength-based approach to support reflection, affirmation and validation. It supported the participants to consciously reflect on what success is for them, how they measure it and what strategies they use for achieving success.

Planning for fieldwork was discussed and arrangements made. Our ability to engage earlier and to conduct face-to-face interviews was impacted by the COVID-19 lockdown in the middle of August 2021. A positive COVID case involving one of the Aufua staff resulted in the closure of the fale, but it later re-opened in October. The evaluation team spoke with 10 participants including Aufua management (3), frontline kaimahi (5), Oranga Tamariki Regional Placement (1). Only one rangatahi was resident in Aufua at the time. We were unable to interview any social workers during this time.

Interviews were carried out over a three-month period from October to December 2021 and conducted using the Zoom platform and phone. Each interview took up to one hour with informed consent processes in place. We also reviewed the Aufua spreadsheet data which included information about the range and types of rangatahi using the service, ethnicity, referral sources, average lengths of stay and reasons for leaving.

Contributing to outcomes

This section focuses on the outcomes for rangatahi within their fale that Aufua is contributing to, reflecting on the extent to which the mission and desired outcomes have been met, described in EA's Operating Protocol for the fale.

The protocol states that a placement in the fale should result in a number of positive outcomes for rangatahi who live there. It is expected they will focus on safety, prevention from offending, engage in meaningful activities and be connected with external support services to continue their education, training and learning and ensure their health and education needs are addressed. The rangatahi are to be surrounded by pro-social adult role models.

The key emerging outcomes highlighted by rangatahi, management, staff and Oranga Tamariki staff included engagement in programme activities, rangatahi setting and achieving goals and personal growth and development.

Engagement in programme activities

There is good engagement by rangatahi in activities as reported by staff. Planning for programme activities is shared across the remand home staff, and staff consider the interests and strengths of the rangatahi when planning programmes. Programme activities have included an education component, and kaimahi report that life skills is a core part of the programme of activities. The one rangatahi we spoke to gave feedback about the range of activities that there are to do.

"It's better here [compared to previous where experience] because there's more things to do like ping pong, basketball, play cards and we get to have a jam on the PS4." (Rangatahi)

Setting and achieving goals

For one rangatahi his All About Me Plan²⁰ indicated his aspirations included getting help needed to be safe and well, become a productive adult, stop huffing and abusing solvents and to keep out of trouble. His long term goal was no further offending. He identified that he needed good role modelling and mentoring, cultural support to develop his te ao Māori knowledge. He also desired to stay connected to his Mum and siblings.

¹⁹ Developed by Kataraina Pipi in 2005.

²⁰ All About Me Plan contains goals and plans for rangatahi.

The rangatahi ended up staying 15 weeks in the fale as he waited for court proceedings to be completed. During this time he has been supported to move toward his goal of independent living, (connected to the above goal of becoming a productive adult), which he is feeling very excited about.

“It’s sounding pretty good that I’m going to independent living. They’re trying to sort out an FGC and bail conditions. It’s just down the road from here with three others. I went and had lunch with both the flats just to see which one I’d like to go to. I felt more comfortable at the one I chose as there was a mix of boys and girls. I’m looking forward to learning how to live on my own.” (Rangatahi)

Kaimahi also commented on how for some rangatahi their circumstances are challenging and they get let down by people and events not going in their favour.

“One of our boys he stayed here for a few weeks. He kept getting bad news, he kept getting bailed, he managed to stick it out. From what we are hearing now, he’s found a job, he’s had a baby.” (Kaimahi)

Personal growth and development

Rangatahi, staff and Oranga Tamariki staff have reported personal growth and development such as rangatahi gaining an increase in confidence, ability to express emotions, improved coping skills, improved life skills such as cooking, daily routines, dishes, laundry, etc.

“Some of the small successes are good as well. Cleaning their beds, doing their own laundry, washing dishes. Those small successes go a long way for them and it may not be major or big.”

“We do see the confidence. When they come in they keep their head down, they don’t say much and by the time they leave they are able speak up about things they dislike.” (Kaimahi)

Kaimahi observations have included hearing rangatahi being more honest about their feelings, becoming more sociable and more outgoing.

“He’s naturally a quiet person. He’s more actions speak louder than words type of personality. But he’s become really sociable. He’s become really outgoing since he’s been here. We’ve taught him that it’s okay to speak his mind because he’s probably come from a place where you speak your mind there’s probably consequences for them, but over here, it’s safe. Like there’s nothing we can’t work around. He wakes up every morning. First thing he does is clean his bed and I don’t mean just tidy his bed, like his room was immaculate every day.” (Kaimahi)

Keys to success

Success for the Aufua pertains to applying EA’s organisational values. Alongside these we identified the following four key success factors from the fieldwork interviews – effective leadership and teamwork, quality systems, creating a family environment, and inspiring rangatahi to achieve their potential.

Organisational values are keys to success

The organisational values guide Aufua and their fale approach and are keys to successful delivery of the service. We provide the following examples which align to EA’s values:

Whakamana – the KFC approach, being Kind, Firm and Consistent

Whakamana is about acting with integrity and upholding mana. It is about the service and kaimahi doing what they say they will do and doing what feels right and mana enhancing. Kaimahi were asked about their approach and described ‘the KFC approach – being kind, firm and consistent’. This value affirms their strength-based holistic approach focusing on the strengths of the boys and the skills and knowledge that kaimahi bring to the mix. Many of the kaimahi have ‘lived experience’ which means they have ‘been there done that’ and can relate to the rangatahi journey. Modelling positive behaviour, exuding strong leadership and teamwork are all considered important in this context so that rangatahi know their wellbeing is paramount.

“Most of our kids, all they really need is a bit of love, a safe place and know that they are fine. I feel like I was one of those kids too. That’s why I feel like I can relate a lot to them. When you’re on the street, the only knowledge you get is the street knowledge and then it becomes habitual.” (Kaimahi)

Ako – continuously adapting and learning based on lessons learned

Ako is a value that resonates with teach and learn. Kaimahi gave examples of learning valuable lessons and insights from rangatahi and they from them. Management and kaimahi felt positive about this evaluation as an opportunity to learn about what is working well and where they can make improvements.

New to the youth justice sector, EA has used the establishment phase to learn and understand expectations and requirements needed to run a remand home well. Management and kaimahi consider they have done well, under trying circumstances. These include short term closure of the fale due to a positive COVID test result. The fale team remained positive and enthusiastic in their mahi and acknowledge there is much more to learn.

“I think that it takes a lot longer than just couple of years to try and get everybody to understand the vision, the model, how we are meant to operate and get used to what that looks like on a day-to-day basis. I think that there's a lot of work that would need to be done over the next few years to really see the full potential being realised.” (Management)

Manaaki – engaging with respect and embracing diversity

Kaimahi and management talked about their willingness to take any rangatahi. Often these rangatahi have absconded from other whare. Kaimahi shared they care about trying to do their best to provide support in order that rangatahi are well cared for.

“We take whoever is put in front of us, so long as the dynamic is present in the house. Boys have absconded from service, after service. We will still put our hands up even though there’s a 90% chance that that young person could abscond from our service too, so they’re not getting sent to one of the lock-up facilities. We are really willing to bring in anybody with the hope that they can get through their FGC and court date and move on.” (Kaimahi)

Rangatahi talked about how much they valued the practical support

“William’s a cool fulla! He’s usually always the one that sits in on my FGCs and when there’s court cases. It’s good having him there. It’s good support. I feel like he’s got my back and encourages me to speak. A couple of the staff do that as well. I get on with all the staff.” (Rangatahi)

Whakawhanaungatanga – connecting with purpose to make a positive difference.

Kaimahi spoke of their genuine intent to build relationships with rangatahi that are meaningful, trusting, caring and supportive. The Service Manager has role modelled a quality of care that is clearly focused on making a positive difference for rangatahi. EA provides a range of social and wellbeing services which rangatahi could benefit from accessing.

Effective leadership and teamwork

The Service Manager was recruited because of his skills and experience in working with rangatahi. He is highly respected by senior management and kaimahi. They all spoke confidently about his leadership.

“We feel like we are being looked after by him. For anything, he’s always there. Checking in to make sure we have everything we need. Because we are feeling supported we can support them [the boys]. He always makes time to answer any questions that we’ve got. He’s always right. He has so much experience but at the same time he also gives us the freedom to do things. There is trust and confidence in the team to decide what we need.” (Kaimahi)

Kaimahi and management describe a team culture and behaviour that is being modelled to rangatahi

“If the team are not strong then the boys can see that. We always make sure we have each other’s backs. The team is only strong if we are strong together, as the boys can see through that. We don’t want to mirror what might be in a boy’s whānau...I don’t decide on a consequence without discussing with the team.” (Kaimahi)

Quality systems and processes

Rangatahi were asked what they liked about the fale. They commented positively on their experience, highlighting the range of activities, the learning, and routines as follows.

“It’s good. It’s alright. Start getting into a routine, have a shower, do activities and then have lunch, do some more activities and then have a shower and then watch movies until bed.”

“I like everything. You learn how to cook and that. The staff are cool, they like doing stuff, getting out there and doing activities, they teach us how to cook. Every Sunday and Wednesday we spring-clean the whole house and then every other day we just do the normal chores.” (Rangatahi)

The approach to supporting rangatahi is tailored and focused to their individual needs. Rangatahi are invited to determine the programme of activities that best interests and suits them.

“Kaimahi have team meetings at shift change over and so they always bring the young person in to that hui and so it’s ‘what do you want to do with your afternoon? how have things been for you today?’, so it’s setting out the plan for the afternoon which is pretty cool: ‘what is it that you want to do and how can we help you achieve that?’ as opposed to this is what we are doing and you have to follow the rules.” (Oranga Tamariki staff)

Creating a family environment

Management and kaimahi have worked hard to establish the fale as a whānau environment where rangatahi feel welcomed and safe, are well cared for. Kaimahi use a strength-based approach and provide holistic care for rangatahi. A kaimahi described that in walking through the door one can see tapa cloth on the walls and said, ‘it feels like home, we cook, we eat, we clean’.

The Service Manager acknowledged that they are mindful of varying environments that rangatahi have come from. They seek to create a better environment for them while in the fale.

“One of EA’s principles is Create, so its supporting people to create an environment that helps them move forward...so when we get rangatahi in, we allow them to create that environment, and look at what environment they come from and help them to better that environment.” (Service Manager)

One kaimahi described the fale as a Pacific service where kaimahi feel like whānau and have respect for one another and for their culture.

“At the end of the day it is a Pacifica service. That’s what I meant by seeing the other staff as older brothers or sisters, as it goes from being this westernised meaning of work to a family environment and there is this different respect that comes with it. It makes me feel like work is more like a family. When I say family, I mean if we don’t have that respect for each other’s culture then how are we meant to make a family environment for the boys?” (Kaimahi)

OT staff commented with certainty on this aspect sharing:

“The approach in the house has always been to create like more of a family environment. So we don't have staff and then young people kind of sitting down here. They're all on the same level, are open, share and talk about issues, problems and any concerns. And that's always been pretty cool to see.” (Oranga Tamariki staff)

Positive engagement inspiring rangatahi to achieve their potential

Kaimahi actively engage with rangatahi through activities such as basketball, ping pong and card games. They like to make time in the whare fun for the rangatahi. Kaimahi reflect that this enables them to connect and establish trust. They acknowledged the importance of a ‘way of being’ with rangatahi that is enthusiastic and communication is friendly and calm.

“We flip that switch and make sure we are enthusiastic and calm. So much of what we do is a lot to do with our presence and how we talk, like our tone of voice and words and language we use is so important...Both of

us [kaimahi] are like big children essentially, we're competitive and sporty. We try and make it fun and try and engage them." (Kaimahi)

Sports, fun and play are all seen as opportunities to 'push' toward potential which rangatahi respond well to.

"We're teaching them to 'push', I mean they're never going to understand their potential unless someone pushes! So when playing sports, I think it's key for us to really play, so we push them to a place where they got to think and into a place where they can see their potential. A lot of our young people that come through, they love that." (Kaimahi)

Communication is key to positive engagement. Kaimahi are modelling good communication and rangatahi are encouraged to think about and practice saying 'please and thank-you!'

"Our role is to kind of teach them that there is a certain language. We try to encourage them to be mindful of how they speak. Using manners – saying please and thank you." (Kaimahi)

Where there is a good whānau connection and support this also helps rangatahi to stay motivated and move positively forward.

"For the 15-17 year olds – for a lot of them they have just had enough of what they are doing and that has kind of motivated them to stick at it. For the younger ones what keeps them here is their families encouraging them to complete the programme rather than running away. Family do play a big role in helping these boys see out their time." (Kaimahi)

Challenges and future opportunities

Aufua is new to providing remand home services under the auspices of Oranga Tamariki. As such Aufua kaimahi are adapting and learning in a complex context. This can create challenges in supporting rangatahi and kaimahi effectively. Based on fieldwork interviews we identified challenges in relation to being responsive to the diverse needs of rangatahi, including their cultural needs, managing challenging behaviours including supporting rangatahi to shift their mindset around where they are and where they want to be in the future.

Some of these challenges are based on external factors such as a perceived lack of information flow between kaimahi and Oranga Tamariki staff. Currently, information flow is meant to be through the Service Manager. Kaimahi reflect that rangatahi at times, can return from court or an FGC meeting unaccompanied and can be upset, angry or disengaged. Kaimahi are not briefed or provided with a 'warm handover' from Oranga Tamariki staff and instead can be confronted with challenging behaviours.

Another challenge has been the impact of two COVID-19 lockdowns. The more recent lockdown resulted in the closure of the fale. This had a flow-on effect to programme delivery including the education programme. The ability to engage rangatahi and deliver meaningful education and vocational programmes that are relatable and relevant to them has yet to be realised.

Across interviews it was evident that kaimahi work hard to engage with and keep rangatahi motivated during their time at the fale. Kaimahi have to be creative with resources. A lot talked about playing cards and the many benefits of this activity in getting to know rangatahi and helping them to set goals. Kaimahi would like to offer rangatahi a wider range of activities that are relevant to them such as more sporting and gym equipment.

To support the further development of Aufua le Taeao there are a number of opportunities identified by rangatahi, kaimahi, management and Oranga Tamariki staff, including:

1. Embed and implement cultural models of practice such as Peau Folau and Te Korowai. Support staff to be able to confidently articulate their cultural mode of practice and then gather evidence to demonstrate the application of the practice.
2. Given the high numbers of rangatahi Māori coming through the fale, there may be value in considering Māori capacity and capability and drawing on EA Māori leadership through the Mana Whakahaere to seek support to further develop the Māori-specific approaches to the fale and to utilise the Kia Rite Kia Mau Framework, which is being used in other parts of the organisation to support cultural competency in working with Māori.

3. The current education component is not working for rangatahi and requires review. It appears to be devoid of vocational support and training. There is value in looking at Māori- and Pacific-specific education and vocational providers to provide more appropriate support.
4. Better utilisation of EA range of social support services such as EaseUp for addiction support and Tiakina for mental health and wellbeing support²¹.
5. Consideration of a dedicated management support role. Kaimahi and Oranga Tamariki staff acknowledge a notable difference when the Service Manager is not around and in particular when issues arise.

Conclusion

Aufua le Taeaio has done well to establish itself as a new remand home under the umbrella of Emerge Aotearoa. Aufua management and kaimahi have managed to successfully establish a service, put in place the necessary processes and learn about what it takes to successfully run a remand home. Oranga Tamariki support of the establishment of the service as a Pacific service is acknowledged. Much more work is needed to enable EA to fully demonstrate the uniqueness and value of a Pacific-focused service.

²¹ See Emerge Aotearoa Trust Impact Report 2020.

Will Street Community-based Remand Service

Whakapapa

Will Street Family Home (Will Street) has had a presence in Ōtepoti for many years. First set up as a private doctor's clinic in the mid-1900s, it was later purchased by the state and became a care and protection facility. In 2015 the Expert Advisory Panel responsible for modernising Child, Youth and Family services was established, with a focus on looking at the way young people were being held in custody throughout the country. Based on recommendations from the panel, it was decided that setting up smaller community-based settings would be a better way to support rangatahi while they were on remand, and waiting for charges to come before the court.

In response, Child, Youth and Family Services (now known as Oranga Tamariki) approved 14 additional community-based beds in Whangarei, Palmerston North and Dunedin at an annual cost of \$3.6m, to be operational within 6 to 8 months. It was expected that implementing these homes would result in a number of positive outcomes for rangatahi, including less detainment in police cells.

In order to deliver on this new recommendation, in 2017 Oranga Tamariki, began to establish the new-look homes. They responded quickly by adding capacity to existing homes, and four new homes were initially set up, Will Street was one of these homes.

“Nowadays, we don't set up homes that Oranga Tamariki run. Our thinking and our practice has evolved. We partner or we seek to partner to the best extent possible with kaupapa or iwi-mandated or iwi-based social service providers. But with Will Street, we needed capacity and we needed to look at our existing assets, with a view to setting up things where we could actually have young people in the community as soon as possible. So things happened quite quickly.” (Oranga Tamariki staff)

The primary aim was to establish capacity for three-to-five placements for young people on remand at Will Street. Significant work was completed to ensure that the home was set up correctly. Oranga Tamariki worked collaboratively with key stakeholders to gain ownership and support the development of the home. A range of meetings was held with Te Hau Ora, Adventure Development Limited, NZ Police, Investing in Children, and Oranga Tamariki staff (Youth Justice team, Partnering for Outcomes, Care Services). Regular communication with the neighbours of the Will Street property was also an important part of setting up the remand home. A locally developed proposal was completed, to repurpose Will Street as a home to support teenagers with both youth justice and care and protection orders.

A core tenet of the new remand homes was to take a holistic assessment of rangatahi and whānau, exploring what they need to achieve safety, security, stability, wellness and development. Oranga Tamariki was also looking to provide:

- Safe care and stable accommodation for rangatahi, reducing their time spent in police cells
- Opportunities to engage in a range of activities to enhance their futures.

2017 - Will Street is established

After sitting vacant for three years Will Street was officially reopened in 2017. Given the need for change identified by the Expert Advisory Panel in 2015, a community-led process was considered the better option to engaging rangatahi and their whānau. It was established based on a partnership model between Oranga Tamariki, Te Hou Ora (THO)²² and Adventure Development Ltd (ADL).²³

THO and ADL were considered a good fit based on their experience, skills and track record of engaging young people and whānau in a sustained change process and working in community settings. ADL could offer a clinical model of case

²² A community-based whānau driven kaupapa Māori provider, offering a range of services including youth development, mentoring, whānau ora, and Te Awhi Mai Day Programme.

²³ A not-for-profit organisation that provides mentoring and counselling supporting young people to live fulfilling lives.

management and coordination and also transition support for when rangatahi left the home, while THO offered educational day programmes in the community.

The overarching goals for the new remand homes were to:

- keep young people in their communities where possible
- reduce the time they are in custody
- prevent escalation of young people within the youth justice system.

To further support implementation, the house parents who previously had run the home as a care and protection facility, were offered the position of remand home parents. Based in Australia for six years, they ventured back to take up the opportunity.



“So, Will Street's got these unique aspects. It was part of the first wave that was set up in partnership with externally contracted organisations. But we employ the staff who kind of primarily maintain attention and work in the home.” (Oranga Tamariki)

2019 - Changes occur at Will Street following Oranga Tamariki reviews

Throughout 2018, there were a number of reviews investigating the quality of support received by young people and their whānau, including remand homes processes and practices. In 2019, Oranga Tamariki published an updated version of the Community Remands Home Operations Manual internally which provided comprehensive guidelines for their remand homes in terms of the policies, procedures and rules to support practical day-to-day operations.

The new provisions had a significant impact at Will Street, as the home needed to initiate changes to implement the new guidelines and legal requirements of detaining young people. From 2019-2020 the following developments have occurred:

- the development of a draft Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between Oranga Tamariki, THO and ADL
- house parents are now Oranga Tamariki employees and paid as such
- an increase in staff to ensure a continuous line of sight, both at Will Street and the THO day programme
- weekly planning for rangatahi with their 'About Me' plans
- appointment of a new team leader
- increased support from Oranga Tamariki to implement changes successfully, and
- training and supervision of new staff.

Will Street Whare

Will Street caters to rangatahi aged 13-17 who have been detained into the custody of the Chief Executive under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (s238(1)b and d and s235). Although Will Street is an Oranga Tamariki home, a positive partnership has developed with THO and ADL to ensure connection to community opportunities and services.

Will Street is a five bedroom home in Te Waipounamu (the South Island), providing support for rangatahi from Nelson to Bluff. However, referrals can be received from across the country. Generally, rangatahi can stay between 4-6 weeks while they progress through Youth Court, however stays may be shorter, or longer depending on the needs of the rangatahi and their case.

The whare is staffed by residential house parents and up to ten kaimahi, including residential youth workers and night staff. House parents and kaimahi provide a continuous line of sight 24/7, as well as enable community engagement and activities. Kaimahi are rostered on in four-day shift rotations. House parents are able to take time off between the hours of 9am to 3pm, while the rangatahi attend the day programme with the Will Street and THO kaimahi.

Generally there is a 50/50 split between Māori and Pākehā rangatahi living at the whare. They have often been disconnected from their culture and community, and from the education system, for some time.

The goals of Will Street are to support rangatahi towards a more positive and proactive life trajectory that will result in better outcomes, including:

- Better relationships
- Enhanced wellbeing
- Enhanced cultural identity
- Better housing
- Increase engagement in education, employment and community and
- Better mental and physical health.

The Oranga Tamariki Maori-centred practice approach provides a guide for Will Street partners and kaimahi. There is a genuine intention to enhance the mana of rangatahi and inspire positive change. House parents and kaimahi strive to:

- involve whānau, and be inclusive of their needs and aspirations
- focus on positive future opportunities
- provide hope through listening to and valuing rangatahi voice
- customise support to the needs and context of each rangatahi
- operate a strengths-based approach, supporting rangatahi to identify achievable and realistic goals
- value diversity, respecting each rangatahi and their whānau.

As mentioned, Will Street is jointly delivered and supported by THO, ADL, and Oranga Tamariki. They are responsible for working together in a way that provides rangatahi with a cohesive and joined up service. As shared with us by the house parents, Will Street is about providing a typical family / whānau environment for rangatahi.

There is a commitment amongst all partners to adhere to principles of pono (working honestly and with integrity), tika (doing things in the right way), aroha (compassion and empathy), and whakawhanaungatanga (developing positive relationships). Staff from each partner organisation are responsible for ensuring day-to-day operations of the whare. They share in processes with rangatahi including karakia before, during and after heading out on activities, and eating together during the day programme.

The specific responsibilities for each partner include:

Oranga Tamariki / Will Street Residential kaimahi maintain the detention and supervision of remanded rangatahi, when they are at the day programme, are participating in off-site activities, when they are in transit to, or are sick or otherwise unable/unwilling to engage with the day programme. This continuous line of sight includes working in consultation with THO staff to maintain supervision. They are responsible for the overall behaviour management while rangatahi are participating in day programmes.

Communication with partners is key to ensuring all staff are aware of the rangatahi, their needs, aspirations, and progress while in the whare. Whare kaimahi act as advocates, informing rangatahi and their whānau about the support available to them and ensure they are connected with partners.

THO kaimahi provide Te Awhi Mai programmes, a te ao Māori-based, educational day programme for rangatahi. They create and share a record of rangatahi achievement with partners and may also provide transport to and from the location of the programme, if needed.

There is a joint focus on education and vocation through the day programme and activities, with a qualified teacher and residential youth workers taking the lead with the rangatahi.

ADL meet and engage with rangatahi at Will Street, getting to know them and supporting them to transition from the whare to whānau and community. ADL kaimahi also provide follow up community support services for rangatahi and their whānau, following their remand placement.

The case study approach

This case study showcases the Will Street community-based remand home and the commitment of Oranga Tamariki, THO and ADL to support rangatahi on their oranga journey.

Will Street was one of four case study sites to be selected by the project commissioner, for their Māori-centred social work practice framework (i.e., they are run by Oranga Tamariki, in partnership with community organisations).

The evaluation team engaged with Will Street management and staff and other key stakeholders over 10 days between 24 August – 30 Nov. This involved seven Zoom interviews, where it was not possible to meet kanohi ki te kanohi due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The evaluation team spoke with 11 participants, representing Will Street kaimahi (house parents and kaiako) Oranga Tamariki, iwi stakeholders, and two rangatahi. Evaluators used a thorough informed consent process with each participant, including rangatahi, at the start of every interview.

The evaluation team held with a session reflecting on the successes of Will Street using the Success, Evidence, Strategies (SES) critical reflection tool.²⁴ SES is a strength-based approach to support reflection, affirmation and validation. It supported the participants to consciously reflect on what success is for them, how they measure it and what strategies they use for achieving success.

Contributing to outcomes

Despite the challenges with the recent changes for Will Street, house parents, kaimahi and Oranga Tamariki staff were able to identify several positive outcomes for the whare, rangatahi, and whānau.

Overall, the whare is gaining traction after introducing new policies and procedures, and as shared by house parents, whare kaimahi and Oranga Tamariki there is a shared commitment to provide the best service for rangatahi and their whānau.

Key outcomes identified are explored below.

Positive changes to the whare to support rangatahi

Will Street house parents, kaimahi and Oranga Tamariki highlighted that over the past two years it has been challenging to reorientate Will Street to align with and reflect the updated Oranga Tamariki operational structures and processes. Making changes was difficult, particularly, when trying to operate ‘as per normal’, and with the uncertainty caused by COVID-19 (2020 lockdown and at the time of fieldwork, the Delta outbreak). Therefore to support the change process, service delivery was paused in 2021 to focus on implementing the needed changes, particularly building staff capacity.

“It’s really hard to reinvent a home and to re-orientate it when it’s underway. Rebuilding the plane, and re-modelling while it’s flying, it’s really challenging. It was good for us to pause the service delivery and train staff.” (Oranga Tamariki staff member)

Clearer structures and procedures in place

With support from Oranga Tamariki, the whare has been able to readjust to build in support for house parents and partners as changes were implemented. Oranga Tamariki staff shared the benefit of taking a retrospective look at services at Will Street, and learning as an organisation “how do we understand what’s happening and actually provide appropriate support”.

It was noted by Oranga Tamariki and whare kaimahi that introducing clear guidelines has supported the development of consistent processes and structures within the whare. It has been possible to unpack how the whare operates, and ‘drill down’ to put things in place to support rangatahi during their stay.

More support for house parents

Ultimately, the changes have helped to create a safer living environment for the house parents. Not only are there more staff to support them, they have moved from being volunteers to paid employees. They work 40 hours per week, with time off from 9am to 3pm while rangatahi are away at the day programme. Given they live at the whare full-time this can be challenging to manage, and has taken some getting used to by the house parents. However, the

²⁴ Developed by Kataraina Pipi in 2005.

terms and conditions of their role and responsibilities are clearer, acknowledging the ways in which they support and care for the rangatahi and whare.

Developing a diverse team

One of the most significant outcomes has been building a diverse, skilled kaimahi team. Since 2017 the whare has largely been run by the house parents with support from a few staff, including a team leader. Now the whare is staffed by 12 fulltime kaimahi, with around six casuals also on the roster.

The new cohort of kaimahi, who have been on board since September 2021, are a diverse group with a mix of positive experiences and skills to share, from social workers to forestry workers. They are all committed and passionate about working with rangatahi. The Will Street team leader reflected on how kaimahi are embracing what it means to work with rangatahi and are open to learning and taking on advice.

Listening to the kaimahi share their experiences of Will Street, it is apparent they are building a body of knowledge and committed to creating a positive culture within the whare. They have seen and shared in the growth and achievements of each other.

“Also just seeing the successes in staff to when they've achieved something, you know, that hasn't gone so right previously. Especially for us new guys. A lot of us are coming from different backgrounds as well. It's been really cool so far. Yeah. So far I've seen lots of successes come forward in just seeing the support as well. Like the success being supported by a great team here.” (Youth Worker)

Shifting to Māori-centred practice

There is a commitment by all Will Street kaimahi and partners to re-connect rangatahi Māori to culture and te ao Māori. This has meant supporting kaimahi to work in a kaupapa Māori way, and providing the right environment for learning to occur.

There has been some good reflection amongst Oranga Tamariki staff who support Will Street. Comments reflected the soul searching that had occurred concerning their role as a Crown agency to support Māori-centred practice in the whare, having asked themselves “as a Crown agency, can we be kaupapa Māori?” Realising that the answer was no, Oranga Tamariki staff developed a strategy to support Will Street to become Māori-centred. This has meant employing and inducting kaimahi with a focus on te ao Māori and the Oranga Tamariki Māori-centred framework.

“So, we're in the middle of a practice shift. A Māori-centred practice shift. Teams are being trained on a new model of practice and that includes what we're doing at Will Street. So, it's only just started to happen in the last couple of months.” (Oranga Tamariki staff)

As a result, house parents, kaimahi and Oranga Tamariki, shared how Māori-centred practices are growing in strength. As an example, karakia is seen as a way for everyone at Will Street to stay safe and well. It sets a positive, inclusive tone and is used to start and end each day at the whare, and to give thanks for the kai that is shared between house parents, kaimahi and rangatahi. The house parents and team leader shared how Māori-centred practice supports all rangatahi to engage within the whare. Kaimahi have been encouraged to learn and incorporate te reo Māori into their everyday practice with rangatahi.

“Even though he was Māori, he wouldn't engage. So obviously, we didn't push the fact but it was just like this is how we roll to start our day to make sure that we're all safe, and we're moving forward. And it wasn't until probably a week and a half after he had been in here that he actually asked to do karakia in the morning.” (Will Street Team Leader)

Working with the kaupapa Māori provider THO, also helps to encourage Māori-centred worldview and practices. Not only do THO provide a strong kaupapa Māori element, they have a local and responsive approach, and connect well with all rangatahi.

Iwi-led practice and service opportunities

We spoke with an iwi stakeholder who is part of a Ngai Tahu strategic partnership with OT about the role and place of iwi in rangatahi/community-based care. They shared concerns about the need for care and protection information to

be connected to youth justice data sharing (having one, shared record). They reflected on the need for whānau connections and support across the sector to assist with early intervention and keeping rangatahi out of state institutions. Iwi believe they are more able to adapt practices to meet the immediate needs of rangatahi than government.

“To do this is to do something different and we've just got to be kind if it doesn't work, and be really flexible. We're not, we're not government. We can change our approach, you know, in a 10 minute conversation. We just change it if it's not working.” (Iwi stakeholder)

Current iwi trials include the provision of 24 hour support (whānau first navigators) to whānau to enable rangatahi to remain at home. Another is to trial whole-of-whānau residential support with short-term accommodation provisions – recognising that trauma is often a common feature across the whole whānau and to support whānau reconnection following years of separation to safely enable whakapapa restoration.

“And when they have been separated, like up for 12 years of no contact with whānau. And now they're saying we want to send you home. The world isn't the same 12 years later.” (Iwi stakeholder)

The iwi/hapū are keen to look at Will Street as they are aware that their own work in this area carries huge risk. While there are opportunities to reconnect whakapapa, it takes time for rangatahi to trust and learn to care for themselves and others. Another critical factor for considering iwi provision of care was knowing the legislation, having regulated staff, expertise in care of rangatahi and excellent access to health and social services.

The model pulls together psychological, education, and GP services navigated by a social worker leader to create a 'proper picture' of the rangatahi, identifying any trauma for them and their whānau and what they need. Caregivers working with rangatahi are expected to complete the six month online youth worker training.

“It's not enough to just have a heart [for this work], you actually need to understand the business model, you need to understand that the context these kids come from, you need to understand that. If you ring the parents thinking, they'll be pleased. They might tell you to fuck off, but you don't give up on that. But it's just, you think, oh, I'll ring them at another time.” (Iwi stakeholder)

Iwi reported that doing something different and the whānau-first model provides an opportunity to ensure hapū don't become OT in the community and deliver better outcomes for children. The need for improved care standards and for educational assessment prior to the development of education plans is critical to assist rangatahi to meet their highest potential. They are worried about the focus on regulatory practice and administrative data rather than tailored flexible support that best meets the needs of the individual rangatahi and their whānau. They believe that remand placement and care can happen in the community.

Following on from aging out of care placements, the iwi has a focus on helping with transition (real life skills such as cooking, cleaning, paying rent, etc). They held a view that Te Pae Oranga could significantly reduce the numbers of rangatahi in remand and provide early intervention that supports better whānau and life outcomes for rangatahi.

Development of an MOU to drive effective practice

Although there were delays in establishing an MOU between OT, THO and ADL, a draft agreement is completed and internal conversations between the three partners are occurring to finalise it. The document is intended to guide the partners in how they work together, defining their roles and responsibilities in supporting Will Street kaimahi, rangatahi, and whānau. It covers areas of discipline, maintaining line of sight, conflict resolution and creation of a continuous learning environment.

In relation to embedding Māori-centred practice (as discussed above) the MOU also outlines the responsibility of partners to engage with mana whenua, to receive advice on the tikanga and kawa pertaining to the whare and implement a kaupapa Māori practice approach.

Positive changes for rangatahi

The team leader, house parents and kaimahi noted how rangatahi changed throughout their stay. Typically, they are disengaged at the beginning of their stay but after a few days they begin to open up. House parents shared examples of rangatahi thriving in the whare. After staying for 4-6 weeks rangatahi are healthy, drug free, and more settled in themselves. They gain a stronger sense of self, more confidence, and engage in learning waiata, pepeha and mihi whakatau. The house parents also reflected on how the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020 was a great opportunity for the boys staying at the whare to focus with no interruptions. During the lockdown, house parents and kaimahi worked together with the rangatahi learning how to make rewana bread and weave.

“I just like seeing them when they first come in and then by the time they leave, they’ve put on weight, their skin looks clearer, they’re having healthy meals, they’re off the drugs. Those little things are huge successes that I celebrate.” (House parent)

In spite of the short timeframe kaimahi have been working at the whare, they also spoke about rangatahi making positive decisions for themselves and not being influenced by other rangatahi staying in the whare. There are examples of rangatahi being more positive and keen to get involved in activities. Some rangatahi have also set mini goals and achieved them, gaining a sense of success.

From the perspective of the house parents, kaimahi and team leader, the rangatahi outcomes can be as small as choosing to return an hour after absconding from the whare. The point is each positive outcome or success needs to be realised in the context of each rangatahi, their backgrounds, experiences, needs and personal challenges.

The team leader shared how a rangatahi who engaged with the kaupapa Māori practices of the whare, then went on to support kaimahi to choose waiata to learn and pronounce te reo Māori correctly. House parents also noted how several rangatahi who are living positively, and staying out of trouble now visit the whare and, “pop-in for a coffee and catch up”.

“I think, for me, what I celebrate is the young people that want to come back and keep connected, because you kind of know that you’ve made a difference if they want to keep connected with you and we quite often have young people come back for a cuppa and a chat or a meal.” (House parent)

Rangatahi voice

There was mixed feedback from the two rangatahi as they shared their experiences of Will Street. They enjoyed attending the day programme and some of the activities that they got the chance to participate in. Going to the river, weaving, making sandwiches and “hanging out with cool staff” were listed as favourites. Both rangatahi mentioned that their whānau think Will Street is a good place for them to be, even though they know there are many restrictions in place. Whānau also missed them and as one rangatahi expressed “mum just wants me back out”.

Rangatahi spoke positively about some of the staff and felt that they had a good relationship with at least half of them. They explained that “good staff” show respect and listen to them. When the rangatahi are going through a tough time and may think they want to leave the whare, “good staff” sit with them and try to understand what is going on, convincing them to stay. The rangatahi shared aspirations of working with animals, and being a youth lawyer. When the rangatahi were asked to rate the usefulness of staff and the help they had received, they agreed on 3.5 out of 5.

One rangatahi described staying in the whare as “a roller coaster of emotions,” and it is fair to say that neither of them wanted to be there. They talked about some activities that were less enjoyable, particularly walking, which by all accounts they do a lot of. Rangatahi shared how they felt their freedom was severely restricted by early bed-times, locks on windows, limited phone time, and no access to personal mobile phones. Having no time or space to themselves was one of the hardest parts of being at Will Street for rangatahi, with staff keeping them in their line of sight at all times.

The rangatahi also felt that for some staff working at Will Street was just a job and they weren’t that interested in them or building good relationships. One rangatahi described this as “when you tell some of the staff something it goes in one ear and out the other”.

Whānau involvement

There are pockets of whānau engaging and connecting with Will Street. Work in this space is still emerging but every opportunity is being made available for whānau to engage with rangatahi and the activities of the whare. There is more support through additional staff to better facilitate engagement with whānau.

There are examples of whānau visiting the whare once or twice a week, coming to share a kai and to catch up with their rangatahi. Rangatahi also have constant contact with whānau through nightly phone calls. This contact is important when rangatahi live outside Ōtepoti. In a few cases, whānau outside of Ōtepoti have visited and stayed over the weekend.

“Basically, the door's always open for whānau to come in. And usually, if they have any questions as well, like, around what they can bring in for the young people. How long are they going to be here for? It's explaining to them we're here to support your young person, [and] talk to them about how they've been doing. And, you know and have their needs been met, you know, and what that looks like for them.” (Team leader)

Key to success

Success for Will Street pertains to achieving their identified goals. Alongside these we identified that a youth-led practice philosophy has supported implementation of new practices, and enabled ongoing success for rangatahi.

This involves being youth focussed, rangatahi are welcomed, engaged and informed, their needs and aspirations are considered, there are established routines and activities, getting to know the rangatahi and access to external expertise.

Youth led practice philosophy

Will Street is youth focused.

Conversations happen between kaimahi and the rangatahi so they remain informed during their stay in the whare. The focus of planning and activity is on the needs of the rangatahi. Supporting rangatahi may involve helping them to access counselling, enrolling them in school, facilitating a kōrero with whānau or showing them how to engage in a positive kōrero with others.

As shared by the kaimahi it is critical to make a connection. Generally, house parents and whare kaimahi are approachable and open, extending invitations to rangatahi to engage in positive opportunities. Te Whare Tapa Wha model was noted by the kaimahi as a useful way to connect and learn about the rangatahi. By considering taha wairua (spiritual side), taha hinengaro (thoughts and feelings), taha tinana (physical side), and taha whānau (family) they can provide holistic care, becoming more aware of needs and ways to respond.

“I keep coming back to their Tapa wha. The four walls are really important in rangatahi and being able to connect them together. So being able to connect to it, even though that's nothing like you at all; being able to be aware and understand that view.” (Youth worker)

Rangatahi are welcomed into Will Street

As soon as rangatahi arrive at Will Street they are welcomed by a mihi whakatau. This is a chance for the rangatahi to learn about the whare, house parents, kaimahi, rules and other rangatahi who may be staying there. House parents and the team leader shared how important this process is in socialising and normalising the experience for the rangatahi. Understanding that many rangatahi may not be comfortable with speaking out in group settings, mihi whakatau is an opportunity to let the rangatahi know that the whare is their safe place, and they can speak with confidence.

After the formalities and over a cup of tea and biscuit, rangatahi who are staying at the whare play a critical role in the induction of the new whare member. With support from the house parents and kaimahi they share their experiences of the whare explaining rules like bedtime, routines in the morning and daily activities. Then the rangatahi is taken on a tour of the whare.

“The young person has lots of different questions around, can they make phone calls? Are they allowed cell phones, all of those types of things. So while we're having our cup of tea and our biscuit, we always just run through some of those things with them, and it's very casual. So, whilst we're sitting around the table with a lot of the other young people, we just get them to say, “Hey, so what are some of the things that you guys do in your everyday life?” (House parent)

Rangatahi are engaged and kept informed.

Will Street kaimahi and house parents are rangatahi-centred. In practical terms this means ensuring they are informed throughout the entire process of routines, expectations, and consequences. An important part of communicating with rangatahi is ensuring they know their rights within the whare and who they can talk to if any issues arise.

Although the number of whare kaimahi may be overwhelming for the rangatahi, there is always someone to talk with. With three kaimahi and house parents available there is always a chance for the rangatahi to connect with someone they get along with and trust. An example of this was shared by the house parents, who upon returning to the whare were approached by a rangatahi who had had an upsetting phone call. They chose to wait and share that with the house parents, feeling more comfortable to speak with them.

Rangatahi needs and aspirations are considered.

Kaimahi complete comprehensive assessments of rangatahi needs, interests and goals, and then develop individual plans. As explained by kaimahi this involves finding out about rangatahi interests and then supporting them to explore and learn more.

“Just making those connections to their little achievements, like something they haven't done before. I've struck quite a few that haven't done everyday things. And like, for me, that's quite mind blowing. And then seeing them succeed and be positive and wanting to do more, like that's really cool. Even though it could be something simple for us it's huge for them.” (Youth worker)

Kaimahi look for opportunities to inspire, motivate and encourage positive change for rangatahi. In one example a young person was interested in mountain biking so the kaimahi got the whare mountain bikes out and together they broke down a bike and put it back together again. The house parents also shared how a young boy was interested in cars and would offer to give a hand when they were outside working on the car. In these situations it is also often the case that rangatahi can share their knowledge, which helps to build reciprocity and trust within relationships.

“Even planting a veggie garden... a lot of them really thrive on doing that because they've never done it before. We'll go and get the plants and plant the veggie garden and they water the plants every night, just a bit of normality.” (House parent)

“Just teaching them skills that they can use, maybe when they first leave Will Street, but it's something hopefully that will implant when they're adults and go into their own homes or flats.” (House parent)

Routines and activities help rangatahi feel safe and secure.

House parents, kaimahi and the team leader apply consistent processes and practices to help the rangatahi feel comfortable and gain confidence. Structure, routine and clear boundaries ensure that rangatahi have every chance to experience daily success, while whare kaimahi are able to adjust and be flexible, responding to rangatahi needs. The team leader is a constant presence and regularly checks in with rangatahi around any needs they might have, how they are finding the day programme and if they have any appointments or meetings that need to be organised.

“One of them wanted their vaccination done the other day. So we were able to take them down and get the other young person at the same time vaccinated. So we make things happen for them.” (Mentor)

Getting to know the rangatahi is critical.

Positive relationships are developed between the rangatahi and kaimahi, house parents, and partner organisation staff. As explained by the whare kaimahi, the key to working with rangatahi is getting to know them, “who they are and what makes them tick.” This includes understanding how rangatahi learn and recognising what triggers their stress, anxiety or anger.

Kaimahi impart knowledge using tools that capture rangatahi attention like YouTube videos. They also focus on information that is of interest to rangatahi and where the learning can be applied in their everyday lives. One example was exploring mana and then looking for examples of it from the rangatahi throughout the day.

Another kaimahi explained how one rangatahi became agitated if a different person was coming on shift. This was easily solved, as they realised that the rangatahi needed to be informed about shift changes and new staff, which eased his anxiety.

“I think it's just living in the moment as well. Yes, you can plan everything, but in this sort of role, it's not necessarily going to happen that way. So, I've been able to reflect and bounce back with rangatahi and move on with them, like finding a different way together to getting success.” (Youth worker)

Kaimahi also mentioned that working with rangatahi requires a genuine desire to help. Rangatahi have challenged the motive of some of kaimahi in the whare, claiming they only work there “for the money”. However, kaimahi expressed genuine and clear intentions, and experiences that act as a catalyst to working with rangatahi.

“I came from a similar experience, and I relate to them in a lot of ways. Being in their position and not achieving a lot of things when I was their age led me to this position. That's why I'm here, because I can understand where they're coming from, and I want to be able to help. When I went through these kinds of things, there wasn't that help. I just want to be able to give that support back.” (Youth worker)

Access to external expertise to support transition into community.

Working with partner organisations is a unique feature of Will Street that effectively supports positive change for rangatahi. ADL and THO both offer good support outside the whare, helping rangatahi to prepare for transitioning back to their whānau and the community. Through ADL, rangatahi and whānau can be connected to support services throughout Te Waipounamu/South Island.

Challenges and future opportunities

Several challenges have arisen in relation to the recent changes within Will Street. While changes were implemented to improve whare processes and practices, not all changes were welcomed and some are taking time to get used to.

As an example, the house parents mentioned how the changes significantly impacted the ‘normal’ running of the whare, as they adjusted to different working hours (time off between 9am to 3pm) and interacting with new staff. Due to the increase of staff rostered on each day to maintain line of continuous sight, the whare can feel overcrowded by adults at times. Although they understood the need to follow legislative and policy guidelines, the house parents were somewhat concerned that the whare would start to feel more like a residential facility, not a family home environment.

“Our main focus is advocating for our young people in the whare and just, you know, trying to have it more like a family home environment. I know we're fully staffed now, but like just trying to keep it more as a family as we can.” (House parent)

However, what is clear from talking with Will Street kaimahi and house parents is that everyone is working with the best intentions to support rangatahi.

There are also a few ongoing issues when it comes to communication between partner organisations and the whare. Firstly, although not serious, it can be frustrating when the day programme schedule is not adhered to and changes are made without warning. Kaimahi plan, on a weekly basis, how rangatahi will spend their afternoons after attending the day programme. If they are scheduled to have a full physical day, then kaimahi will make sure that there are different activities with a lower level of intensity planned. As kaimahi explained, sometimes rangatahi will unexpectedly return from the day programme bursting with energy and needing high level intensity activities that have not been planned. This situation is not helped by the fact that the day programme is down a staff member and is currently being run by one staff member.

Secondly, house parents and kaimahi all mentioned the importance of sharing information about the rangatahi. Internally kaimahi do a regular check-in every day with each other, mornings and afternoons. However, there is little

to no formal reporting from THO and ADL that outlines how the rangatahi are; considering their emotional, mental or physical state. Rangatahi are at Will Street typically for a short time and it's important that everyone who comes into contact with them shares this information. The whare has now asked for a quick report from each partner organisation.

“So with [the partners] we don't know what [rangatahi] have actually engaged in, because there's no reporting. So we're putting stuff together, based on what we've seen. Whereas I think it's really important that we're getting stuff from everyone, reports into how the young people have been throughout the whole week. What have been their ups, what have been their downs? It's only what our workers are seeing. So I think that's a huge gap. Because, you know, there's not enough shared information about that young person that we can actually put together to actually say, okay, you've identified this, you've identified this, how can we make this work whilst we're working with this young person for a really short period.” (Team leader)

To ensure the ongoing success of Will Street, and strengthening the support for rangatahi during their stay, several opportunities were identified by house parents, kaimahi and OT:

- Continue the support from OT as the house parents and kaimahi embed new practices and processes in the whare
- Maintain the family-friendly environment that gives rangatahi the experience of being part of a warm whānau home
- Ensure that regular communication and information sharing occurs between the partner organisations about rangatahi, their wellbeing and case progress by:
 - finalising the MOU as a shared document to guide the partnership approach
 - creating a space for open discussion and reflective learning
 - ensuring that formalised channels of communication are set up including regular reporting
- Strengthen the relationship between the whare, THO and ADL so there is a good understanding of what it takes to run the whare with a Māori-centred practice focus.
- Ongoing OT engagement with iwi stakeholders in Ōtepoti could address gaps in culturally responsive service provision, and provide innovative models to achieve positive whānau and whakapapa (re)connection for rangatahi and their whānau.

Conclusion

Will Street exhibits the resilience and strength of character that is required to provide a positive, safe whānau home. With a can-do attitude and a commitment to getting it right, Will Street kaimahi, house parents, and partners are taking on the new changes, learning, reflecting and adapting. With a strong youth-led philosophy, rangatahi needs and aspirations drive Will Street to do better.

Whare Tuhua Community-based Remand Service

E tu atu nei Ko Te Tuinga Whānau e

Here stands the family of Te Tuinga Whānau

Nau mai, haere mai ki te awahi mahana

Welcome, welcome to the warm embrace

Kei to toa ai e matou mo te hapori e

We champion for the people

Nau mai, haere mai ki te whare haumarua o Tiki e

Welcome, come to the safe house of Tiki

Whakapapa

Te Tuinga Whānau has a long, rich history in the community of supporting whānau, enabling them to move towards greater social and economic independence as well as building their ability to achieve their maximum potential. Following the revision of the Children and Young Persons Act 1987, Te Tuinga Whānau was established to help children reunite with whānau and hapū. Te Awanui Māori Women's Welfare League and Whaioranga Trust initially carried out the management of Te Tuinga Whānau. In 1993 Te Tuinga Whānau became independent, contracting directly to the Community Funding Agency and now to the Ministry for Children Oranga Tamariki (Oranga Tamariki).

Whare Tuhua is a service based in Tauranga Moana that sits within Te Tuinga Whānau Mana Tu Rangatahi Youth Services (Mana Tu Rangatahi). Mana Tu Rangatahi asserts there are two taonga we should give our children; one is roots and the other is wings. This principle underpins all youth services and approaches by Te Tuinga Whānau.

The vision of Te Tuinga Whānau has stayed true throughout the years, and as a non-profit Community Trust they continue to reflect their whakatauaiki:

Me mahi tahi tatou – mo te oranga o te katoa – We work together for the wellbeing of all.

They aspire to weave families and the wider community together, working primarily with whānau who have no connection to Tauranga Moana to develop robust relationships with local iwi, hapū, and marae.

Establishment of Whare Tuhua

In 2019, Te Tuinga Whānau entered into a partnership with Oranga Tamariki to deliver community-based remand services for rangatahi. The development of whare in the community specifically for rangatahi was needed to respond to the large numbers of Māori incarcerated within prison and youth prisons. The kaupapa of Te Tuinga Whānau aligned well with the Oranga Tamariki community-based placements' overall outcomes, such as rangatahi maintaining contact with their whānau and connecting with their communities. Te Tuinga Whānau and Oranga Tamariki committed to:

- providing bespoke and flexible care for rangatahi
- recognising rangatahi as part of a whānau, hapū, and iwi
- supporting them to return to their permanent caregiver placement, their whānau or an appropriate alternative place
- working with rangatahi in a mana enhancing way, strengthening whakapapa
- placing rangatahi in the least restrictive environment possible
- partnering in a genuine and trust-based approach.

Te Tuinga Whānau was clear that entering into this partnership was intended to prevent incarceration, and to provide better support to rangatahi and whānau. They saw the opportunity as a responsibility, not only as a kaupapa Māori organisation but as kaitiaki of whānau, and to ensure that social issues are looked at through a Māori lens to help rangatahi connect to themselves, whānau, hapū and community.

“How cool would it be to put these boys through here, they don't go to jail, and they actually go and get a job. That is what we are trying to achieve. The whare is the incubator.” (Comment from Te Tuinga Whānau Chief Imagination Officer in NZ Herald, BOP Times 2019)²⁵

Whare Tuhua Remand Home

Whare Tuhua is named after Tuhua Island, situated off the Te Moana a Toi-te-Huatahi (Bay of Plenty) coastline 35 km from Tauranga Moana. It is one of four remand homes managed by Te Tuinga Whānau. Whare Tuhua provides a tikanga based environment for rangatahi while they are on remand. The programme is structured so rangatahi can connect to their whakapapa, culture, and whānau, with an overarching focus on (re)connecting to whenua and taiao.



Named after the black obsidian found on the island, Tuhua is a place of significance to local iwi. It is a volcanic glass known for protecting against negative energy with intense healing powers to help people get back on their feet. Often referred to as a powerful anchor that grounds people, it seems only fitting that the whare carries the name of Tuhua as a protector and safe harbour for rangatahi.

Whare Tuhua caters to young boys aged 13-17 who have been detained into the custody of the Chief Executive (Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, s238(1)d and s235).

Although Whare Tuhua is run under a kaupapa Māori lens, it is suitable and accepting of all cultures and belief systems. Rangatahi are supported to connect and engage with respect through tikanga Māori and kawa (protocols). The kawa is simple and includes no drugs, alcohol, or phones. House parents and kaiako (mentor) establish routines and structures that guide the rangatahi through their stay.

The key features of Whare Tuhua are:

- Whakataua to welcome the rangatahi, outline expectations and kawa of te whare
- Karakia to start and end the day
- Mauri rounds – run in the morning and evening. Sitting together the rangatahi, house parents and kaiako will discuss their plans for the day, and how their day has gone in the evening. It is a chance to talk about any concerns and find solutions together.
- Poroporoaki - a time to farewell rangatahi, celebrate their success, and recognise their contribution to the Whare Tuhua whānau through the gifting of a taonga.

Whare Tuhua is staffed by house parents and up to eight kaiako, who are available for shift work. At any one time, Whare Tuhua can be a home for up to three rangatahi, who generally stay until they are sentenced. Depending on their court date, the length time of each rangatahi stay will vary.

While in Whare Tuhua, house parents and kaiako provide continuous 24/7 'line of sight' supervision, community engagement, and education. They support the rangatahi by taking them to Family Group Conferences and to their court hearings. This included going far as Invercargill in one example, which the house parents shared with us.

Kaiako are there every day, providing a listening ear and creating a constant positive environment for rangatahi. During their stay, rangatahi have access to individual support and weekly group programmes through Te Tuinga Whānau services.

Within the strength-based approach, all aspects of rangatahi are cared, for including their:

²⁵ www.nzherald.co.nz/bay-of-plenty-times/news/otumoetai-community-remand-home-opens/OPJHF7ZPX7RDDSPULC4PYE4QEY/

- Wairua through Mauri rounds, tikanga, and kawa
- Physical needs with healthy food, sleep, and activity
- Mental wellbeing with kaimahi to talk to, and the ability to relax because their needs are being met
- Whānau and social connections and sense of belonging.

House parents and kaiako provide holistic care for the rangatahi and learning opportunities through cultural, hands-on education and activities. A key focus is on practical education that provides the rangatahi opportunities to experience achievement and success. Activities can include hunting and fishing, 'Catch a kai, cook a kai', and learning new skills like gardening and building. Rangatahi also have the chance to learn te reo Māori through karakia, pepeha, and local iwi and rohe knowledge.

"Think about it, for hundreds of thousands of years, our ancestors hunted, foraged, and fished, which has become hardwired into our DNA. [Also] growing a garden and providing food for yourself is an important skill to have."
(Kaiako)

Whare Tuhua kaimahi/mentor mentioned how rangatahi really embraced learning activities, especially the practical education, and shared how they were thinking about their futures and what they would like to do as a result of their new experiences and the opportunities to learn. They shared their goals of returning to school, getting their driver's licence, and gaining work. After participating in a planned activity, one rangatahi had been offered employment by a local business owner, who was impressed with the attitude and work ethic of the rangatahi. While in another example, a rangatahi had left Whare Tuhua, found employment, and now is seen as tuakana of the whare, visiting the rangatahi and kaimahi sharing his achievements.

The case study approach

This case study showcases Te Tuinga Whānau community-based remand home Whare Tuhua and their commitment to supporting rangatahi on their oranga journey.

Whare Tuhua was one of four case study sites selected by the project commissioner for their decentralised commissioning framework (i.e., run by differing iwi or kaupapa Māori organisations, not Oranga Tamariki).

The evaluation team visited Whare Tuhua over two days between 26-27 October 2021 and undertook three additional Zoom interviews where it was not possible to meet kanohi ki te kanohi due to the COVID-19 Delta outbreak.

The evaluation team spoke with 11 participants during the visit, representing Whare Tuhua kaimahi or house parents (2) and kaiako (3), rangatahi (3) and Te Tuinga Whānau kaimahi (3), including Nga Pou management. Evaluators completed a detailed informed consent process with each participant, including rangatahi, at the start of every interview. Whare Tuhua house parents, kaiako and rangatahi received a koha to acknowledge their time and participation in the evaluation.

The Success Evidence Strategies (SES) framework²⁶ underpinned the kōrero between evaluators and participants. This strength-based approach encouraged the participants to consciously reflect on what success is for them, how they measure it, and what strategies they use to achieve success. This approach worked well in unpacking the participants' inherent cultural knowledge, wisdom, and experience.

Contributing to outcomes

This section focuses on the outcomes for rangatahi that Whare Tuhua is contributing to, reflecting on the extent to which the outcomes agreed with those Te Tuinga Whānau and Oranga Tamariki committed to.

Whare Tuhua is contributing to several positive outcomes for rangatahi. The house parents and kaimahi stated that the whare has a good reputation around the motu, and as shared by house parents, kaiako and Te Tuinga Whānau kaimahi, calls are often received seeking advice on how to run a successful remand service.

²⁶ Developed by Kataraina Pipi (2005).

The key outcomes highlighted by rangatahi, house parents, kaiako and Te Tuinga Whānau kaimahi included positive change in rangatahi, reduction in the rate of incarceration, trusted relationships built on respect and aroha, and smooth running of the whare.

Positive change in rangatahi

Rangatahi are reconnecting to themselves, whānau and culture, becoming more positive and stronger versions of themselves. Through wananga they are learning te reo basics, how to do their pepeha, as well as whakapapa of the local iwi and rohe.

“I have heard lots of stories about the different Maunga and Pa. Far out, I also learnt in the South Island, they say K instead of Nga.” (Rangatahi)

“When they are going for a swim, it’s not just a swim; it’s about learning the pūrākau of Tauranga Moana, learning about the maunga and moana.” (House parent)

Rangatahi also felt encouraged to learn about their iwi and turangawaewae.

“We’ve had boys ask if they can learn about the purakau from their own rohe, so they put a pin in the map [hanging on the wall in wananga], and then they’ll learn about that particular area.” (Te Tuinga Whānau kaimahi)

House parents and kaiako noted how rangatahi changed throughout their stay. Typically, rangatahi are disengaged at the beginning of their stay; however, they begin to open up and engage more fully after a few days. Rangatahi were able to identify ways that they had changed while being in the whare including, becoming more open, engaged, and keen to learn.

“[I was] awkward at the beginning and would only say, ‘Kia Ora, my day was alright’, now I’m like ‘Kia Ora whānau, I had a good as day. Thank you, Māmā G for dinner.’.” (Rangatahi)

“When I first came here, all I wanted to do was sit on the couch and watch TV. Recently, though, I’ve wanted to go out and do things.” (Rangatahi)

Reduction in the rate of incarceration

The reduction in the incarceration rate for youth is one of the most gratifying outcomes identified by all Whare Tuhua kaimahi. Of all the rangatahi that have been part of the Whare Tuhua whānau, only one has gone on to serve a prison sentence.

Matua G (Pāpā o te whare) worked as a Corrections Officer for many years and is well-versed in prison culture. His in-depth knowledge serves as a huge motivation for him to ensure that Whare Tuhua rangatahi stay out of prison.

House parents, kaiako and Te Tuinga Whānau kaimahi noted that Whare Tuhua is seen locally by court staff and Oranga Tamariki social workers as a positive influence on rangatahi. When deciding the future of rangatahi, the court takes into consideration the time spent with Whare Tuhua. As a result, the outcome for rangatahi is often more favourable, resulting in bail, not incarceration.

“For this whare, the number of rangatahi that we know that have gone to jail is so low [and] to me that is a reinforcement, a vindication that what we are striving to achieve in this whare is actually working.” (House parents)

Trusted relationships built based on respect and aroha

House parents, kaiako, and Te Tuinga Whānau all shared that ‘our rangatahi do not run’, even with rangatahi learning that Whare Tuhua has an open-door policy. Trust is built from the rangatahi enter Whare Tuhua.

The house parents and kaiako place their faith and trust in the rangatahi to not run. During their whakatau, the house parents outline the expectations and kawa (protocols) of the whare. The relationship between Whare Tuhua kaimahi and rangatahi is reciprocal and rangatahi are supported to communicate honestly and respectfully. All kaimahi seek to understand the challenges that the rangatahi is facing and respond with kindness and patience. As expressed by the rangatahi, they come to learn that Whare Tuhua kaimahi are there for them, and they can trust in them.

“Nobody runs. We have an open-door policy. [We say] the doors over there, your shoes are out there, don't climb out the window, don't smash a window, walk out the door, but be man enough to come and tell us you're going. Stay here, and we will be there for you; when you go to court, we'll be there when you have FGC, we'll be standing beside you.” (House parent)

Positive relationships develop between house parents and kaiako due to clear role boundaries, open discussions, and a shared passion for supporting rangatahi. The house parents live in a separate section of the whare, giving everyone their own space, privacy, and ability to take time out. Rangatahi and kaiako respect that and will seek permission to enter.

Kaiako expressed how through principles of whanaungatanga – kinship, connection, belonging – everyone felt a part of the Whare Tuhua whānau. For rangatahi they learn how to respect and follow Whare Tuhua kawa laid down by the house parents, such as doing simple chores like washing their clothes and doing the dishes.

Smooth running of the whare

Whare Tuhua runs smoothly with hardly any incidents and everyone contributes to keeping it running smoothly. As kaitiaki of Whare Tuhua, the house parents provide stewardship and leadership, helping to facilitate a holistic wrap-around approach to support rangatahi. Kaiako provide support and positive reinforcement for the rangatahi. Rangatahi respect and follow the direction of the house parents and kaiako.

As parents themselves, kaiako and house parents shared that they are “not asking of rangatahi anything they wouldn't ask of their own tamariki”.

“We love [our kaiako] to bits they love Dad and I... To get that tautoko from your teammates, work colleagues, that's awesome.” (House parents)

“It's the atmosphere of a relaxed atmosphere in the whare. We treat everybody with respect, and they to us in the same way.” (Kaiako)

Key to success

All participants agreed on four key enablers that support the ongoing success of Whare Tuhua, relating to the kawa and tikanga of Whare Tuhua, the role of house parents and kaiako, and the rangatahi-centred approach. These are explored below.

Rangatahi are the heart of Whare Tuhua

Consistent timelines and structures within Whare Tuhua provide comfort and familiarity for the rangatahi. All routines and activities are developed to support rangatahi wellbeing with consistent processes and practices which help the rangatahi gain personal strength and confidence. The house parents and kaiako establish fair and reasonable boundaries based on the emotional and mental state of rangatahi. Goals are identified that are achievable making sure they are not too hard to reach or high intensity.

“[We] need to be able to help [rangatahi] get a solid footing, make sure things aren't too high intensity that will tip them over the ledge... need to massage the space, build a relationship, settle them in the whare and then upskill.” (Kaiako)

Whare Tuhua can adjust and be flexible in the way it responds to rangatahi needs. Adapting can often mean stepping outside the timeframes of remand conditions and having the rangatahi for much longer than specified within the contract. At times, the house parents have requested or volunteered to have rangatahi stay longer when they have no suitable support or residency available to them. Oranga Tamariki provide the ongoing costs that this incurs, and continue to work with the whānau to find appropriate placement.

As the rangatahi become more aware and responsible for their actions, they can also recognise the dangers of returning to their communities without proper support. All three rangatahi currently at Whare Tuhua at the time of this case study had stayed there previously. They shared how a lack of support and being in the wrong environment contributed to their reoffending.

Te Kawa me te Tikanga o Whare Tuhua

Stepping into Whare Tuhua there is a sense of calm and order, it's clear to see that the whare is clean, well-cared for, loved, and respected. The walls are covered in karakia i te ata me te po (prayers to start and end the day) and values of the whare are proudly displayed.

"You can feel it when you walk into the home; it's welcoming, it's homely. You don't get that in every house; the ahua of the whare has to be set in place." (Te Tuinga Whānau kaimahi)

Kawa and tikanga of Whare Tuhua is consistently applied by all kaiako and the house parents. All activities, behaviours, and functions within the whare are measured through kaupapa Māori values of manaakitanga, rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga, and wairuatanga.

"We live to our Māori values, manaakitanga whanaungatanga, rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga he wairuatanga, and we added another one, arohatanga. We try to live to those in this whare. Keeping to tikanga and kawa as much as possible." (House parents)

The kawa (protocols) and tikanga (rules) of Whare Tuhua begin in the very first engagement when the rangatahi arrive at the whare, with a whakatau (welcome) provided by the house parents. The whakatau sets the scene through a warm and welcoming process that is underpinned by manaakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga. When rangatahi leave Whare Tuhua, they receive a poroporoaki (a farewell ceremony) celebrating their time in the whare. The farewell provides a chance for everyone to reflect on the positive changes for the rangatahi and send them on their journeys with aroha.

"When you think about where they have come from and why they are here [whakatau] helps to set the scene, [and] grounds them in the home." (House parents)

House parents and kaiako clearly inform rangatahi on the tikanga of the whare, and then, through positive reinforcement and consistency, they are supported to embed it. Everyone who is a part of Whare Tuhua understands that kawa and tikanga is "not something that you can pay lip service to," instead, everyone interviewed talked about it as "something you live and breathe."

Although kawa is about following simple rules like no smoking and respecting property, this is not insignificant for rangatahi. They are the tangible things that they can follow, enabling them to embrace and be embraced by the culture and the protection of the whare.

Kawa helps to create a peaceful, safe, relaxed environment, meaning that everyone knows where they stand and what is expected of them. Kawa is the same for everyone, rangatahi, kaimahi and manuhiri (visitors). The perception shared by rangatahi, house parents and Kaiako is that everyone is in the same waka, paddling together, in the same direction.

Consistency is key to embedding tikanga and kawa in the whare, with the Mauri rounds in the morning and evening integral to applying tikanga. Through incorporating practice and values of matauranga Māori, like manaakitanga, everyone in the whare is cared for, happy, and living in harmony.

"We are consistent with our kawa. We're consistent with our values, how we treat our kids, our kaiako, and how we treat the whare." (House parents)

Kaiako explained how kawa and tikanga contribute to a positive working environment, where they feel supported, acting with authority and planning their workday and activities with the rangatahi.

Rangatahi and kaiako spoke highly of starting and ending the day with karakia and sharing their thoughts in the Mauri rounds. One rangatahi noted how they enjoyed Mauri te po when everyone shares how their day has gone and gets the chance to work through any raruraru or problems that may have occurred. Both rangatahi and kaiako explained how sharing in this way helped them to feel understood. Mauri rounds are also an opportunity to practice gratitude, giving thanks and showing appreciation for one another in the whare. They provide a safe space to teach and role model values as "a space to speak freely and safely."

“[One of our rangatahi] is still finding his feet, but even he is starting to look a bit further in some of the things he is grateful for. So when we have our mauri round in the evening, he says, ‘I want to thank you for allowing me to come back to Whare Tuhua. Thank you, mum.’ And so I see we are making some progress.” (House parents)

He kaitiaki o tēnei whare - The G’s

Rangatahi and kaiako warmly refer to the house parents as “The G’s” or mum and dad. Through the teachings of tipuna, their upbringing, and whakapapa, the house parents have created a warm, safe, whānau home. With humility, they explain that they are just a part of an “amazing team,” and acting with manaaki and aroha is a natural expression of who they are as people.

“You know the kumara doesn’t speak of its own sweetness. We are only a cog in the wheel. We have our kaimahi, and we all revolve around our rangatahi; they are the middle, and we are just cogs in that. For me and mum, you know we help put oil on that cog to make it roll easier and a bit smoother.” (House parent)

As explained by rangatahi, kaiako, and Te Tuinga Whānau kaimahi, house parents are the constant within the whare - “they’re here 24/7” and they treat rangatahi and kaiako like their whānau.

“I’ll tell [the rangatahi], you stay here, [and] I’ll be the one to stand in front of you and take every negative shot, so none of them get to you.” (House parent)

Rangatahi spoke about how the house parents “have their backs and never give up on them”. Rangatahi used phrases like “they treat me like a person,” “they stand up for me,” “they talk about how good I am at the whare”.

Based on past experiences, rangatahi had not experienced being defended or supported in this way. It is more than a job for the house parents, they are matua whāngai for the time that the rangatahi are with them. While they are there, rangatahi are shown respect and treated with mana. When the house parents take rangatahi to court or their FGC they ensure they are treated with the same respect, at times this requires them to push back on the structures or processes. A typical example shared was walking the rangatahi through the court's front door, not leaving them to be placed in cells before the proceedings.

“Matua drove me to court, and they wanted him to take me around the back to the cells when we got there. But Matua said ‘no, we walk in the front door.’ He spoke up for me, and then we walked in the front door.” (Rangatahi)

The house parents embody the kawa and tikanga of the whare. With a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities, they have solid positive relationships and work together well. The ahua of the whare reflects their relationships, the aroha, and their respect for each other. House parents develop positive relationships with the rangatahi, with rangatahi sharing how they felt cared for and respected. All rangatahi gave examples of the house parents standing up for them and challenging others to do better by rangatahi, including whānau.

“For me upholding the mana of this whare is paramount; the mana of this whare itself, bricks and mortar, uphold the mana of the whare, the person Whare Tuhua, keeping the mana of that person always to the fore. Everything inside the whare, including the people and our rangatahi. So upholding that mana is my full-time job. That's how I look at it.” (House parent)

Kaiako as tuakana - mentoring and supporting the rangatahi

Rangatahi and kaiako form solid relationships through a tuakana-teina mentoring framework, which is linked closely to traditional whānau practices and matauranga Māori. Rangatahi and kaiako work together building trust. Kaiako provide guidance, motivation, and emotional support, as well as helping rangatahi with exploring positive options and goal setting. With diverse backgrounds and experiences, they can teach rangatahi new skills, engaging them in fun, age-appropriate activities.

Kaiako build rapport and strong relationships with rangatahi quickly, as they know they may not stay for long, and there is no time to waste if they want to have a positive impact. Kaiako work towards finding a connection with them, being vulnerable with rangatahi, opening up about their own experiences to connect genuinely.

“The ones I met before, they’re like normal workers. These ones are different; they listen to us, so we listen to them.” (Rangatahi)

Kaiako love their mahi, which shows in the interactions between the rangatahi and themselves. There is laughter, smiles, and easy korero. Like the house parents, kaiako want to make a difference in the lives of rangatahi by imparting some of the wisdom and guidance they were lucky enough to experience throughout their lives.

“I’m a little bit lucky because I had a mother who was there when I needed her. She kept me on track, but there were quite a few times during my younger years where I could have quite easily ended up like these kids, in trouble. So, for me, it’s more about trying to give back.” (Kaiako)

Challenges and future opportunities

Since opening in 2019, Whare Tuhua has celebrated much success in supporting rangatahi towards positive change. However, as shared by house parents, kaiako and Te Tuinga Whānau kaimahi, this has not been without its challenges.

Key challenges identified by house parents and kaiako included communicating and sharing information related to operations of the whare promptly from Tuinga Whānau management and giving a clear rationale as to why changes occur. An example shared by Whare Tuhua kaimahi was the lack of information concerning the resourcing restrictions placed on the whare, including the kai and petrol budget, despite the impact of this decision on the everyday operations of Whare Tuhua.

Whare Tuhua kaimahi also perceived that Te Tuinga Whānau make decisions for all four remand homes instead of treating the whare as separate entities, assessing each on their own merits. Therefore, there seemed to be no acknowledgement or recognition of Whare Tuhua running smoothly with no significant issues or incidents.

Receiving timely communication can also be challenging for rangatahi and their whānau. Rangatahi at Whare Tuhua do not live in the rohe of Tauranga and are working with social workers in other regions. It is sometimes difficult to get information from the social workers about how the rangatahi case is progressing. Matua G has to prompt the social worker in question, explaining that although the whare is a safe haven, it is a short-term arrangement.

Several opportunities were identified by house parents, Kaiako and Te Tuinga Whānau management to ensure the ongoing success of Whare Tuhua and strengthen the support for rangatahi during their stay. This includes:

- Ensure that rangatahi receive regular communication about the progress of their case. There are situations where rangatahi have been at Whare Tuhua for extended periods, as social workers try to find a viable community option for them. While this is understandable, it can make rangatahi feel insecure and anxious, with a need to understand what is going on.
- Continue to strengthen the relationship between Te Tuinga Whānau Nga Pou and Whare Tuhua, so there is a good understanding of what it takes to run the whare in a kaupapa Māori rangatahi-centred way. Such as:
 - Creating a space for sharing kōrero that extends beyond regular reporting and informal quick catch-ups
 - Ensuring there is sufficient resource for manaakitanga, kai, whakawhanaungatanga and providing rangatahi with the support needed
 - Improving communication and transparency around decision-making by Te Tuinga Whānau Nga Pou, particularly when it impacts the everyday operations of Whare Tuhua.

Conclusion

Whare Tuhua exemplifies a positive, safe, whānau home that protects and cares for rangatahi, supporting them to make better decisions. Through tikanga Māori practices, Whare Tuhua welcomes all who enter through kaupapa Māori values of manaakitanga and whanaungatanga. Te āhua o te whare reflects the positive relationships that exist between the house parents, kaiako and rangatahi.

Appendix Two

Participant information sheets and consent forms

Tēnā koe

About the evaluation

The evaluation seeks to understand how well the existing youth justice community remand homes are working and to identify any improvements that are needed to achieve intended outcomes. Oranga Tamariki has commissioned Kataraina Pipi of F.E.M and she has brought together a team to support the evaluation of community-based remand homes. The team includes:

- Kataraina Pipi
- Kym Hamilton
- Atarau Hamilton
- Maria Marama
- Laurie Porima
- Kellie Spee
- Louise Were

Their job is to ensure they provide an opportunity for you to share your insight and experiences in a safe and comfortable way. For more information on the team, please see their profiles at the end of the document.

The evaluators will work with four of the homes to understand what works and identify opportunities for improvement

The evaluators plan to visit four sites to gain an in-depth understanding about how the community-remand homes are working for the rangatahi they serve. These sites are:

- Mahuru Youth Services - Kaikohe
- Aufua le Taeao – West Auckland
- Whare Tuhua – Tauranga
- Will St whare – Dunedin

Invitation to participate

Your participation in the evaluation will involve a hui with the evaluation team, either in person or via phone or video call, depending on what works best for you and covid-19 restrictions. This will take approximately 45-60 minutes. You may also be invited to participate as part of a group hui. Your input is valued and will be confidential to the evaluation team.

What kind of questions will you ask me?

At a high-level, the evaluation is focused on understanding how each of the community based-remand homes provides support to rangatahi and whānau and identify opportunities for improvement. We will ask questions like:

- Tell us about your model of practice within your community-based remand home?
- What successes to date can we highlight and celebrate?
- What has been critical to success?
- How and to what extent does your model currently respond to the needs and aspirations of rangatahi and whānau?
- What challenges are being faced and how have we, or might we, respond to these?
- What opportunities are there for improvement, adaption, or further exploration?

What will happen to the information gathered?

What you share with the evaluation team is a taonga and will be cared for as such. Any information or responses provided will be collated with other participants' information, and key themes identified to prepare an evaluation

report for the four community-based remand homes and Oranga Tamariki. With your permission, as well as notes being taken, hui will be audio recorded and may be transcribed for analysis purposes. Audio files, transcripts and evaluation notes will be stored securely on the evaluation team's password protected laptops. The interview will only be accessible to the evaluation team and the recording will be deleted at the end of the project (December 2021/January 2022).

All identifying participant information will be removed for reporting. Anonymised quotes from our hui may be used but will not identify you individually. However, should we want to use a quote that we think may identify you, we will come back to you. De-identified data may be kept for future operational research and official records.

It is recognised that the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care is underway. Oranga Tamariki will ensure the confidentiality of all information provided, and should the information be requested, Oranga Tamariki will manage the request in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982, the Inquiries Act 2013, and the Privacy Act 2020.

I have things I want to say directly to Oranga Tamariki

If you have feedback that you would also like to raise directly Oranga Tamariki, please contact your local Oranga Tamariki office. Talk to the person you've been dealing with or ask for the manager. Otherwise,

- Call 0508 326 459 to provide this information
- Complete the online the online feedback form (www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/contact-us/feedback/)

You can also take your concern to:

- Office of the Children's Commissioner: (04) 471 1410
- Social Workers Registration Board: (04) 931 2650
- Office of the Ombudsman: 0800 802 602
- Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care: 0800 222 727

What if I get distressed when we talk?

Your safety and wellbeing is our priority. At any time during our time together, you can tell the evaluation team to stop. You are also welcome to bring someone with you to our kōrero. If the evaluation team sense you made be feeling distressed or you share things that signal that you may need support, they will stop the interview, check in with you and seek appropriate help. If you're worried about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person:

- call freephone: 0508 326 459 (available 24/7) or
- email us at contact@ot.govt.nz

Do you have questions about the evaluation?

If you would like more information about the evaluation, please feel free to contact:

- Kataraina Pipi, Evaluation Lead, katarainapipi@me.com, 021 589 918
- Parani Wiki, General Manager Youth Justice Community Homes, parani.wiki@ot.govt.nz, 029 917 5465

Ngā mihi maioha.

Evaluation of the community-based remand home consent form

Declaration by participant

I have read and I understand the Information Sheet.

I have been given enough time to think about my participation in the evaluation.

I consent to take part in this evaluation Yes No

I consent to being recorded and this transcribed Yes No

I understand that taking part is voluntary Yes No

I can withdraw my answers up to one week after the interview Yes No

I understand that a report will be prepared Yes No

I would like a copy of my transcript or notes to check for accuracy Yes No

I would like a copy of the report Yes No

My de-identified data (interview transcript or notes) can be held by the evaluation team and utilised for future operational research Yes No

and official records.

Participant Name:

Signature:

Date:

Email address for those who would like a copy of the transcript or notes

Email:

Physical address to send koha:

Address:

Declaration by evaluator

I have explained the evaluation to the participant and have answered the participant's questions about it.

I believe that the participant understands the study and has given informed consent to participate.

Evaluator's name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix Three

Sample Hui / Interview questions

Sample Pātai | Whare

- What successes to date can we highlight and celebrate?
 - What does success look like for the community-based youth justice remand placements?
- How and to what extent do the models currently respond to the needs and aspirations of rangatahi and whānau?
 - What do the existing CBRH models look like in practice?
 - What activities/processes are working well, and why?
- What needs of rangatahi, whanau and community partners and how are they being met?
- What has been critical to success?
 - What barriers are hindering in achieving desired activities/outcomes?
- What challenges are being faced and how have we, or might we, respond to these?
- What opportunities are there for improvement, adaptation, or further exploration?
 - What gaps need to be addressed to better meet the needs of rangatahi, whanau and community partners?
- What process/ways of working can be improved and how?
 - Placement
 - Decision making
 - Identifying needs
 - Transitioning in and out of homes
 - Assessments
 - Service provision
 - Educational
 - Cultural connections
 - Partnership with providers, community partners, hapū, iwi

Sample Pātai | Rangatahi (adjust if rangatahi have left)

- Whakawhanaungatanga
- What are the 3-4 words that you could use to describe your time at the whare?
- What, if anything, have you enjoyed or appreciated since being here?
- What, if anything, needed to be different?
- If 1 is not at all and 5 is fully, what number best describes how positive your time was at the whāre?
- If 1 is not at all and 5 is fully, what number best describes how helpful the team was at the whare for you?
- If 1 is not at all and 5 is fully, what number best describes how supported you felt when it was time to return home? (Did you have what you needed in place when you returned home?)
- What are the 3-4 words that you can use to describe how things are for you now?
- Oranga Tamariki want to make sure community remand works the best it can for rangatahi and their whānau, what must they do:
 - Less of / stop doing
 - More of / start doing

Sample Pātai | Rangatahi and whānau

- Whakawhanaungatanga
- What are the 3-4 words that you could use to describe how things have been while your rangatahi was at the whare?
- What, if anything, worked well for your whānau?
- What, if anything, needed to be different? Didn't work well?
- If 1 is not at all and 5 is absolutely, what number best describes how positive your engagement with the whare was?
- If 1 is not at all and 5 is absolutely, what number best describes how helpful the team at the whare were to you and your rangatahi?
- If 1 is not at all and 5 is absolutely, what number best describes how supported you felt when it was time for your rangatahi to return home? (Did you have what you needed in place when you returned home?)
- What are the 3-4 words that you can use to describe how things are for you and your whānau now?
- Oranga Tamariki want to make sure community remand works the best it can for rangatahi and their whānau, what must they do:
 - Less of / stop doing
 - More of / start doing

Appendix Four

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