



## YOUTH2000 SURVEY SERIES

**What should be changed to support young people?**

*The voices of young people involved with Oranga Tamariki*

[www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz)



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**YOUTH19**  
A Youth2000 survey

**Citation:** Fleming, T., Neems, O., King-Finau, T., Kuresa, B., Archer, D., & Clark, T. (2022). *What should be changed to support young people? The voices of young people involved with Oranga Tamariki*. The Youth19 Research Group, The University of Auckland and Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

Updated February 2022 with resources for young people seeking support.

**ISBN:** 978-0-473-60637-4

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the rangatahi whose voices are included in this report. We really appreciate the generosity and wisdom that you shared via the survey. Thank you to all Youth19 participants and the schools and families who supported them. Thank you to the Youth19 investigators and researchers who ran the survey and contributed to this analysis and to the Adolescent Health Research Group who have carried out the Youth2000 Survey Series with thousands of students over 20 years. Thank you to Professor Sue Crengle, Associate Professor Roshini Peiris-John and Kylie Sutcliffe who reviewed this report.

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## Funding

The Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey is a collaboration between two Health Research Council projects:

Clark, T.C., Le Grice, J., Shepherd, M., Groot, S., & Lewycka, S. (2017). *Harnessing the spark of life: Maximising whānau contributors to rangatahi wellbeing*. Health Research Council of New Zealand Project Grant (HRC ref: 17/315).

Fleming, T., Peiris-John, R., Crengle, S., & Parry, D. (2018). *Integrating survey and intervention research for youth health gains*. Health Research Council of New Zealand Project Grant (HRC ref: 18/473).

This report was funded by Oranga Tamariki — Ministry for Children.

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Further Youth19 publications are available at [www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz)

# Summary

This report provides data from the Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey (Youth19) about what young people who are currently involved with Oranga Tamariki say is important to them.

Youth19 is a comprehensive adolescent health and wellbeing survey completed with 7,721 Year 9–13 students in schools and kura kaupapa Māori in the Auckland, Tai Tokerau and Waikato education districts in 2019. Almost all these students were aged between 13 and 18 years. We used robust sampling processes and statistical methods to produce prevalence estimates for important health and wellbeing indicators for Year 9–13 students across Aotearoa New Zealand (Fleming et al., 2020; Rivera-Rodriguez et al., 2021). In addition, 92 Alternative Education (AE) students and 78 young people who were not in education, employment, or training (NEET) took part in the survey. These are smaller samples that were not randomly selected, so statistical data for these participants are reported separately. Youth19 was completed in English or te reo Māori with optional voiceover. Ethical approval was granted by The University of Auckland Human Subjects Ethics Committee (application #022244). For more about Youth19, see our *Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey, Initial Findings: Introduction and Methods* report, which explains how the survey was conducted, who was included and how to interpret the results. This document, the full Youth19 questionnaire, and other Youth19 outputs are available at [www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz).

This report is part of a series of Youth19 reports commissioned by Oranga Tamariki. Other reports in the series consider quantitative findings from Youth19 participants who were currently involved with Oranga Tamariki at the time of the survey, had ever been involved with Oranga Tamariki, or had never been involved. For example, the percentages of each group who know about their culture, feel part of school, have good emotional wellbeing, and have positive family connections.

The role of Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children is to promote the wellbeing of tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau. Oranga Tamariki support children and young people in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm (Care and Protection). They also work with young people who may have offended or are likely to offend (Youth Justice). The predecessor of Oranga Tamariki was Child, Youth and Family (CYF). The Youth19 survey questions are framed to capture the maximum number of young people who have engaged with Oranga Tamariki, including both Care and Protection and Youth Justice. They do not specify whether the young person has entered care or youth justice custody or is engaging with Oranga Tamariki in another way. For more information, see Appendix 2: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children.

This report presents the responses of Youth19 participants who were involved with Oranga Tamariki at the time of the survey and answered one or more of six open-text survey questions:

- *If you could change one thing to make your home or family life better, what would it be?*
- *If you could change one thing about your school/course to make it better, what would it be?*
- *What is one thing that would make things better for young people you know who have a hard time or feel bad?*
- *How could websites or online tools be more useful for you if you were having a hard time?*
- *What are the biggest problems for young people today?*
- *What do you think should be changed to support young people in New Zealand better?*

Participants could skip the questions or respond in their own words. We used a general inductive approach to summarise feedback and identify themes under each question and selected quotes that encapsulated each of these themes. Participants' age group, ethnicity and sex are shown for quotes from school and kura kaupapa Māori students. To protect confidentiality, demographic information is not shown for those in Alternative Education or NEET, or for trans, gender diverse or gender questioning young people.

The Youth19 survey required a substantial investment of time from participants (close to 50 minutes, on average) and was often completed in large spaces, such as school halls, alongside many other students. Despite these conditions, young people currently involved with Oranga Tamariki took the time to provide rich and often very personal reflections about what would make the most difference in their lives.

Although there were differences in young people's responses to the various question areas, we identified overarching themes across all areas, as shown in the table overleaf. In brief, these were:

- A powerful call for **connection, togetherness and love**, especially with family
- **Safety** at home and school
- The need to **have a say and be treated fairly** in living arrangements and at school
- Needs for **basic material resources**: warmth and housing
- Wanting **to help others and to have help** when things go wrong.

For example, as some participants responded when asked what would make the most difference at home:

*“I want my Dad to be around and for him to have a place in my life... For me and my sisters to be together and not be separated from each other”*

*“let me have a choice of where I live, instead of being told by a judge”*

*“I need a fixed place to live with me and my baby”*

And when asked what would improve things for young people who have a hard time:

*“Food and just seeing that some people care for them”*

We encourage you to read the young people’s words in this report. They are powerful and should be heard. They should be used to inform policy and practice.

Thank you to those young people who shared their insights and to those who support them and are acting to change systems and enhance wellbeing for young people and whānau.

*Associate Professor Terry Fleming  
Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington*

Table 1: Summary of themes for key questions in this report

<b>Questions in brief</b>					
	If you could change one thing to make your home life better, what would it be?	If you could change one thing to make about your school/course, what would it be?	What is one thing that would make things better for young people who are having a hard time?	What are the biggest problems for youth today?	What should be changed to support young people in New Zealand better?
<b>Overarching domains</b>	<b>Themes for each question</b>				
<b>Connection, togetherness and love</b>	Let me live with my family  Trust and accept me	I want to connect with others	People to talk to	Needs for awesome families and understanding	Love and understanding
<b>Safety</b>	I want safety, connection and harmony	I want to feel safe at school			
<b>Fairness and voice</b>	Let me have a say	Be fair and teach me			
<b>Basic material needs</b>	Let me access the basics	I want to be fed and warm	Food and care		Sufficient housing and income
<b>Give and receive help</b>	Taking on adult responsibilities	I have to try hard	I want to help others  Messages of hope	Mental health and substance use	Help when things go wrong

# Methods

Youth19 is a large-scale cross-sectional survey and is the latest in the Youth 2000 Survey Series. For more about Youth19, see our *Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey, Initial Findings: Introduction and Methods* report (Fleming et al., 2020), which explains how the survey was conducted,

who was included and how to interpret the results.

The Youth19 questionnaire and other documents are available on our website [www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz)

## Participation: Mainstream schools and kura kaupapa Māori

7,721 Year 9–13 students from 49 schools, including 4 kura kaupapa Māori, participated in the Youth19 survey. This represents about 6% of year 9–13 students across the eligible schools (Fleming et al., 2020). Details of participants are included in Appendix 1: Participant inclusion criteria.

More than 97%, a total of 7,526 students, responded to questions regarding their involvement with Oranga Tamariki or Child Youth and Family (CYF) and provided sufficient information to be included in

this report. Their demographics are shown Table 2. A total of 6,853 (91%) reported they had never been involved with Oranga Tamariki and 673 (9%) had ever been involved, of whom 143 were currently involved with Oranga Tamariki.

Students were able to indicate belonging to multiple ethnic groups. The New Zealand ethnicity prioritisation method (Ministry of Health, 2017) was used to allocate those belonging to multiple groups to a single group for statistical analyses.

## Participation: Alternative Education and young people not in education, employment, or training

In addition to students from schools and kura, 92 students from Alternative Education (AE) and 78 young people who were not in education, employment, or training (NEET) took part in Youth19.

A total of 101 young people in AE or NEET had never been involved with Oranga Tamariki, 64 had ever been involved, and 12 indicated they were currently involved, as shown in Table 3.

As AE and NEET participants were selected via convenience rather than random sampling, the results from this group include relatively small numbers of participants. Therefore, these results should be interpreted with caution, they may not be representative of all New Zealand AE or NEET young people.

## Analysis of open text responses

We used a general inductive approach (Thomas, 2006) to summarise feedback and identify themes. For each question, two or more researchers (TF, ON, TKF and BK) read all the responses and independently grouped like comments or types of responses together. Next, the researchers discussed the responses, agreed on initial codes or groupings, and independently clustered responses into groups. Together, they reviewed and refined these clusters, and identified core concepts and quotes. These were refined with reference to the original text and considering perspectives from the diverse researchers to identify the themes included. Finally, these themes were reviewed with the remaining authors of the report and any differences were resolved by reviewing the original data.

Quotes were selected from students in school or kura kaupapa Māori and from young people in Alternative Education or NEET.

As discussed in our 'Young people who have been involved with Oranga Tamariki: Identity and Culture' report students could indicate their gender identity in diverse ways (Fleming et al., 2021). There were students who had a trans or gender diverse identity or were questioning their gender who were currently involved in Oranga Tamariki. To protect anonymity of smaller groups, demographic details are not specified for those in Alternative Education or NEET or for gender minority participants.

The researchers who led the analysis brought diverse experiences and perspectives:

Olivia Neems, Ngāti Raukawa. Olivia is a third-year Bachelor of Health student at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington with background knowledge and insight into youth in care systems.

Dr Terry (Theresa) Fleming. Terry is an Associate Professor at Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington. She is experienced Pākehā youth health researcher. She has worked in Care in Protection and Youth Justice as well as youth health and mental health services.

Tatyana King-Finau. Tatyana is a Tongan, Ngāti Ruanui and Ngāruahine research assistant and clinical psychology student at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington. She has worked in mental health and disability services.

Brooke Kuresa. Brooke is a Samoan Master of Health Psychology student at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington. She is passionate about health equity for Pasifika populations and has strong ties to her Porirua community.

Findings were reviewed by experienced researchers and youth health professionals Associate Professor Roshini Peiris-John, Professor Sue Crengle (Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, Kāi Tahu) and Associate Professor Terryann Clark (Ngāpuhi).



## Participants

As shown in Table 2, a total of 673 students (an estimated 9% of all secondary school students) reported that they had *ever* been involved with Oranga Tamariki, of whom 143 indicated they were *currently* involved with Oranga Tamariki.

A higher proportion of younger students reported that they had ever been involved with Oranga Tamariki. This may reflect earlier school leaving among students with a history of Oranga Tamariki involvement. There were minimal differences in involvement for females compared to male students. There were notable ethnic disparities, as shown in Table 1. Māori students were especially likely to report Oranga Tamariki involvement, followed by Pacific students.

Oranga Tamariki involvement was lower among Pākehā and other European students and Asian students. While Oranga Tamariki involvement appears high among those of 'Other' ethnicities, this group is small and diverse, so these results should be interpreted with caution.

In addition to students from schools and kura kaupapa Māori, 92 students from Alternative Education (AE) and 78 young people who were not in education, employment, or training (NEET) took part in Youth19. A total of 101 of these young people had never been involved with Oranga Tamariki and 64 had ever been involved, of whom 12 were currently involved in Oranga Tamariki, as shown in Table 3.

Table 2: Demographics of secondary school student participants by involvement with Oranga Tamariki

	Total responses	Never involved with Oranga Tamariki		Ever involved with Oranga Tamariki		Currently involved with Oranga Tamariki	
	n	n	pct	n	pct	n	pct
Total	7526	6853	91.1%	673	9%	143	1.9%
<b>Age</b>							
13 years and under	1360	1220	89.7%	140	10.3%	34	2.5%
14 years	1687	1531	90.8%	156	9.2%	42	2.5%
15 years	1657	1496	90.3%	161	9.7%	34	2.1%
16 years	1445	1323	91.6%	122	8.4%	19	1.3%
17 years and over	1377	1283	93.2%	94	6.8%	14	1.0%
<b>Sex</b>							
Female	4130	3762	91.1%	368	8.9%	75	1.8%
Male	3396	3091	91.0%	305	9.0%	68	2.0%
<b>Ethnicity</b>							
Māori	1465	1221	83.3%	244	16.7%	64	4.4%
Pacific	905	816	90.2%	89	9.8%	17	1.9%
Tokelauan	Fewer than 10	Fewer than 10		Fewer than 10		Fewer than 10	
Fijian	70	Fewer than 100		Fewer than 10			
Niuean	67	Fewer than 100					
Tongan	260	236	90.8%	24	9.2%		
Cook Islands Māori	138	120	87.0%	18	13.0%		
Samoan	325	290	89.2%	35	10.8%		
Other Pacific Peoples	Fewer than 50	Fewer than 50		Fewer than 10			
Asian	1742	1626	93.3%	116	6.7%	20	1.1%
Southeast Asian	370	346	93.5%	24	6.5%	Fewer than 10	
Indian	442	410	92.8%	32	7.2%		
Chinese	614	570	92.8%	44	7.2%		
Other Asian	316	300	94.9%	16	5.1%		
Other	383	328	85.6%	55	14.4%	15	3.9%
Latin American	39	Fewer than 50		Fewer than 10		Fewer than 10	
African	52						
Middle Eastern	79	69	87.3%	10	12.7%		
Other ethnicity	208	168	80.8%	40	19.2%		
Pākehā and other European	3031	2862	94.4%	169	5.6%	27	0.9%
Pākehā/NZE	2383	2258	94.8%	125	5.2%	20	0.8%
Other European	648	604	93.2%	44	6.8%	7	1.1%

This table uses ethnic prioritisation reporting as per Ministry of Health Ethnicity Data Protocols (Ministry of Health, 2017).

Demographic data represents the number of students participating in the survey and is not survey weighted or adjusted for national population estimates. Those currently involved are also included in those ever involved.

Table 3: Demographics of Alternative Education students and young people not involved with employment, education or training by involvement with Oranga Tamariki

	Total responses	Never involved with Oranga Tamariki		Ever involved with Oranga Tamariki		Currently involved with Oranga Tamariki	
	n	n	pct	n	pct	n	pct
Total	165	101	61.2%	64	38.8%	12	7.3%
<b>Age</b>							
15 and under	79	43	54.4%	36	45.6%	Fewer than 10	
16 and over	86	58	67.4%	28	32.6%		
<b>Sex</b>							
Female	91	53	58.2%	38	41.8%	6	6.6%
Male	73	48	65.8%	25	34.2%	5	6.8%

Those currently involved are also included in those ever involved.

Demographic data represents the number of students participating in the survey and is not survey weighted or adjusted for national population estimates.

# Findings

## If you could change one thing to make your home or family life better

Eighty-two young people currently involved in Oranga Tamariki answered the question: *“If you could change one thing to make your home or family life better, what would it be?”* with a comment or response other than ‘I don’t know’ or equivalent. Of these, 74 participants were school or kura kaupapa Māori students and 8 were in Alternative Education (AE) or not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Most answered these questions with a few words or a sentence. Even though these were usually brief responses, they provide some rich insights into young people’s perspectives.

Overall, the responses highlighted the importance of family positive relationships, being together, in harmony and of having basic material needs met. These themes were strongly interconnected and are described below.

### Let me live with my family

Across all the responses, the most common aspiration reported by young people who were currently involved with Oranga Tamariki was being together, living with their family, or having the whānau all under the same roof.

*“Live all together again”  
(Pākehā male, aged 15 or over)*

*“I want my parents to stay with me and my brother.”  
(Asian male, aged 14 or under)*

*“I want my Dad to be around and for him to have a place in my life...For me and my sisters to be together and not to be separated from each other”  
(Pacific female, aged 14 or under)*

*“Get my other siblingz back”  
(Young person in AE or NEET)*

## I want safety, connection, and harmony

Relatedly, young people spoke about the importance of safety, connection, and harmony within the home. Aspirations included being truthful with each other, supporting and getting along with each other, spending more time together, celebrating each other's achievements and goals, and wanting peace. Some barriers that young people highlighted included family members arguing and fighting, substance abuse, and having limited time together.

*"Mum gets help and can support me instead of hurting me"*  
(Pākehā male, aged 15 or over)

*"Tell them to help each other and support them no matter what happens  
and always love each other"*  
(Pacific female, aged 14 or under)

*"Make sure there is always peace and no fighting."*  
(Other ethnicity female, aged 14 or under)

*"No lies"*  
(Asian female, aged 15 or over)

*"Spend more time with me"*  
(Trans, gender diverse or gender questioning young person)

## Trust and accept me

Participants expressed yearning for trust and acceptance and the freedom to develop and grow.

*"A lot of teenagers have a lot to say and need to be listened to without  
being looked down on because of their age."*  
(Other ethnicity female, aged 15 or over)

*"Not only for my family to accept how I am but also being supportive."*  
(Pākehā male, aged 15 or over)

*"Let me be more free and wish they'd trust me"*  
(Transgender, gender diverse or gender questioning young person)

*"For my family to accept that I want to aim high and not to be a person  
that just sits and does nothing because I have had many challenges"*  
(Pacific female, aged 14 or under)

## Let me have a say

Young people wanted to have their voices heard and listened to, be able to make their own decisions about who they lived with, or, at least, have their wants and needs taken into consideration. Several wanted Oranga Tamariki out of their lives or not to be involved with Oranga Tamariki.

*“Let me have a choice of where I live instead of being told by a judge.”  
(Pākehā male, aged 14 or under)*

*“Have Oranga Tamariki out of my life”  
(Māori male, aged 16 or over)*

## Let me access the basics

Participants expressed the needs for housing, space and/or income. These comments included housing basics and bigger houses or upgrading houses. Several highlighted the need for money.

*“I need a fixed place to live with me and my baby”  
(Young person in AE or NEET)*

*“my own room”  
(Other ethnicity male, aged 15 or over)*

*“have money for the power and i wish we had a car for me and my siblings  
and my mum and cousin.  
(Young person in AE or NEET)*

## Taking on adult responsibilities

Comments suggested some young people felt they needed to take on adult or parental responsibilities, despite being teenagers. These included responsibilities to keep their family safe or financially viable. Many of these comments were from Pacific female students.

*“I should stand strong to help them so that they can be safe more and so  
that we can eventually gather as a family.”  
(Pacific female, aged 15 or over)*

*“Get a job that pays you well and pay bills for my home.”  
(Trans, gender diverse or gender questioning young person)*

*“Work my hardest and try to help out around the house and help buy food,  
rent, Wi-Fi bills”  
(Māori male, aged 15 or over)*

## If you could change one thing about your school/course...

Sixty-five participants currently involved with Oranga Tamariki answered the question *“If you could change one thing about your school/course to make it better, what would it be?”* This included 61 school or kura students and 4 young people in Alternative Education (AE) or not in education employment or training (NEET).

These responses showed needs for basic rights such as fairness, inclusion and safety, as well as for material essentials such as food and warmth. Students also highlighted needs for social connections and described feelings of personal responsibility.

### Be fair and teach me

Students highlighted the need for basic rights at school, including teachers being fair to them.

*“Have the teachers not target me for who I am”  
(Māori female, aged 15 or over)*

*“Get better teachers, not mean, and accept me for who I am!”  
(Asian male, aged 14 or under)*

*“Change the way they talk to their students because sometimes they put us down”  
(Pacific female, aged 14 or under)*

Students also expressed that teachers were not fulfilling their learning needs or that some needed more support.

*“Teachers having the patience to teach other students”  
(Other ethnicity male, aged 14 or under)*

*“Get the teacher to explain into extra detail while teaching”  
(Māori male, aged 14 or under)*

## I want to feel safe at school

Students wanted a safe, supportive learning environment, free of substance use. They wanted staff to take steps to ensure this.

*“Be more strict on people that are bullying”  
(Pākehā female, aged 15 or over)*

*“Make sure there are no bullies or swearing in this school”  
(Other ethnicity female, aged 14 or under)*

*“No bringing drugs, no smoking, no talking about other people, making  
this school more fun and safe”  
(Māori male, aged 15 or over)*

## I want to be fed and warm

Some students commented on access to food and warmth. This was common among Māori students.

*“Make the canteen food cheaper”  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)*

*“Free food for the kids that don’t have food”  
(Māori male, aged 14 or under)*

*“Warmer winter uniform”  
(Māori female, aged 15 or over)*

## I want to connect with others

Student responses highlighted the importance of friendship and connection with others.

*“I think I will try to get more friends.”  
(Pākehā male, aged 14 or under)*

*“I want more friends I can share things with”  
(Asian male, aged 14 or under)*

*“More time with my whānau form class”  
(Māori male, aged 14 or under)*



## I have to try hard

Some students showed strong feelings of responsibility or judgements about their own work, expressing needs to improve their skills or to study hard.

*“To have better studies skill”  
(Pākehā male, aged 14 or under)*

*“I’m slipping into my own laziness”  
(Māori male, aged 15 or over)*

*“Study harder than others”  
(Asian male, aged 15 or over)*

*“I want to study hard”  
(Pacific female, aged 15 or over)*

## What would help young people who have a hard time or feel bad?

Forty-eight school or kura kaupapa Māori students and 2 young people in Alternative Education (AE) or not in employment, education or training (NEET) currently involved with Oranga Tamariki answered the question: *“What is one thing that would make things better for young people you know who have a hard time or who feel bad?”*

### Food and care

Participants’ responses highlighted fundamental human needs and rights, including love and food.

*“Food and just seeing that some people care for them”  
(Pacific female, aged 14 or under)*

*“Love”  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)*

*“Their whānau”  
(Young person in AE or NEET)*

*“Quality time with your family...  
being able to have a voice, their voices should be heard”  
(Pacific female, aged 14 or under)*

### I want to help others

Many expressed strong wishes or willingness to help others, sometimes in the context of their own painful experiences.

*“To speak up and talk to people because my brother committed suicide and it hurts it really feels like your nothing and I just want to make people feel like they’ve got a reason to live”  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)*

*“I should ask them if they are okay if they are very comfortable... I should help them for good.”  
(Pacific female, aged 15 or over)*

*“I want to help them”  
(Pacific female, aged 15 or over)*

*“To come have a talk maybe i could even help”  
(Māori male, aged 15 or over)*

## People to talk to

Relatedly, many expressed the importance of people to talk to, whether friends, family or professionals.

*“Just talk to your friends and family”  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)*

*“Talk to a close friend that's always by your side”  
(Māori male, aged 14 or under)*

*“More school counsellors”  
(Asian female, aged 14 or under)*

*“More counsellors [at school] that are actually useful”  
(Trans, gender diverse or gender questioning young person)*

*“I just want them to know they are not alone”  
(Trans, gender diverse or gender questioning young person)*

## Messages of hope

Others offered messages of hope and suggestions for coping, from talking to others, to prayer and being positive.

*“Just reach out there are people here to listen to what you are going through just don't give up yet. Just remember you got this you are strong and can fight whatever. Just know someone has always got you when you need to talk”  
(Māori female, aged 15 or over)*

*“Let them know that today maybe sh\*t but tomorrow will be good.”  
(Māori male, aged 14 or under)*

*“Pray and ask God for help”  
(Pacific female, aged 14 or under)*

*“Smile everyday”  
(Asian male, aged 15 or over)*

*“STAY POSITIVE”  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)*

## How could websites or online tools be more useful for those having a hard time?

Youth19 participants were also invited to give open text responses to the question: *“How could websites or online tools be more useful for you if you were having a hard time?”* Most participants who were currently involved with Oranga Tamariki did not respond or responded with *‘I don’t know’* or equivalent, or sometimes with a one- or two-word response which was difficult to interpret. In total, 15 participants currently involved with Oranga Tamariki provided responses that were analysed. The responses indicated that:

### Websites can help you connect

*“Help u know ur not alone”  
(Māori male, aged 14 or under)*

*“Social media could help you cause if you’re at home and have none to talk to you can talk to your mates online”  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)*

### Websites can be improved

These tools could be more useful if they were clear, less complicated, or easy to understand and if you knew they were trustworthy. For example:

*“[if they were] for kids and less complicated”  
(Other ethnicity female, aged 14 or under)*

*“If there was a Google verification patch which would mean that the article you were viewing was true and helpful.”  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)*

These themes are broadly consistent with responses from other Youth19 participants (analyses in progress), which highlight that websites can be important, especially among young people who may feel alone, and that clear, trustworthy and very easy to use sites are important.

## What are the biggest problems for young people today?

In the final questions of the survey, Youth19 participants were asked *“What are the biggest problems for young people today?”* and *“What should be changed to support young people in New Zealand better?”* For the *‘biggest problems’* question, 38 participants who were currently involved with Oranga Tamariki gave a response other than *“I don’t know”* or equivalent. Their responses highlighted a strong emphasis on mental health, including substance use, and on family relationships:

### Mental health and substance use

Participants were concerned about mental health and wellbeing, suicidality and substances.

*“Confused”*

*(Māori female, aged 15 or over)*

*“DEPRESSION”*

*(Māori female, aged 14 or under)*

*“Drugs”*

*(Young person in AE or NEET)*

*“suicide”*

*(Māori male, aged 14 or under)*

*“Taking drugs and alcohol have no parents support around them”*

*(Asian male, aged 15 or over)*

### Needs for awesome families and understanding

*“Lonely. Needs someone that can hang out with each other.*

*Needs a awesome family.”*

*(Pākehā male, aged 14 or under)*

*“Alot of people don’t / don’t want to understand how we or other people  
feel”*

*(Māori female, aged 15 or over)*

# What should be changed to support young people in New Zealand better?

In the last open text question, Youth19 participants were asked *“What do you think should be changed to support young people in New Zealand better?”* In total 18 participants who were currently involved with Oranga Tamariki gave a response other than *“I don’t know”* or equivalent. Responses highlighted themes that also came through in other questions: love and understanding, basic material needs, and support when required.

## Love and understanding

*“Better understanding”*  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)

*“Less abuse, hate. More love, kindness”*  
(Māori female, aged 14 or under)

*“Making sure everyone have friends...”*  
(Pākehā male, aged 14 or under)

## Sufficient housing and income

*“support the family who can’t afford rent and buy stuff for them to go to school”*  
(Asian male, aged 15 or over)

*“money so they can go to school”*  
(Māori female, aged 15 or over)

## Help when things go wrong

Students highlighted the need for help and support, including from the education system, and for some, the need for transformational opportunities.

*“Get more help for young people like myself”*  
(Trans, gender diverse or gender questioning young person)

*“Youth groups that check in on peoples living situations and seeing if they need help”*  
(Young person in AE or NEET)

*“...[help] change people's bad lives to the new life”*  
(Pacific female, aged 15 or over)

# Resources and getting help

This report covers some important and upsetting topic areas. On this page we have included some resources and options for help.

If you are having a hard time or you are worried about another person, **let someone know**. Talking to someone can make a real difference and they might be able to help in ways you haven't thought of. Whether it is serious or something you are not sure about, there are many people, groups and agencies who want to help or will provide options. Sometimes it's hard to get started or you might need to try different people, but there *will be* people who can help. It is ok to take someone with you and it's Ok to go to someone who might not be 'the right person', they can help you get started.

## **Talk to a family member or friend.**

There are some great hints on how to get started or what you might say on these and other websites: [mentalwealth.nz](https://www.mentalwealth.nz) | [thelowdown.co.nz](https://www.thelowdown.co.nz) | [youthline.co.nz](https://www.youthline.co.nz) | [etuwhanau.org.nz](https://www.etuwhanau.org.nz)

**Webchat, phone or text Youthline, What's Up or 1737.** They're free, private and *want* to help people with problems, big or small. Even if you're not sure if it's worth bothering someone, they can help you work this out. They won't mind if you call the wrong service, and it's fine to try different ones and see what works best for you. To get in touch with WhatsUp's: free call 0800 942 8787 or web chat [whatsup.co.nz/contact-us](https://www.whatsup.co.nz/contact-us). Youthline: Free call 0800 376 633, Free text 234 or web chat [youthline.co.nz/web-chat-counselling](https://www.youthline.co.nz/web-chat-counselling), for 1737: text or call 1737, or visit [1737.org.nz](https://www.1737.org.nz)

**Check out [familyservices.govt.nz/directory](https://www.familyservices.govt.nz/directory) for who can help with all sorts of problems in different parts of New Zealand** or call Healthline free on 0800 611 116 for advice and information from a registered nurse

**You can also talk to a doctor, nurse, counsellor or other health professional.** It's their *job* to talk about private, embarrassing or tricky stuff – lots of them do it every day. Doctors and nurses talk about personal things – not just illnesses. School counsellors and school nurses are there to help too, you can talk to them about big or small things

**YouthLaw Aotearoa** helps child and young people with legal issues. You can contact them to get free legal advice on lots of different issues from bullying at school or feeling safe at home, to police and youth justice: 0800 884 529 or [email: nzyouthlaw@gmail.com](mailto:nzyouthlaw@gmail.com)

**Rainbow youth** can get help and support from [outline.org.nz](https://www.outline.org.nz) or by calling OutLine on 0800 688 5463. Alternatively, you can contact a Rainbow Youth support worker through [ry.org.nz](https://www.ry.org.nz)

**Te Puni Kokiri** is working to prevent suicide in rangatahi Māori and provide resources and workshops on their website [tpk.govt.nz/en/whakamahia/rangatahi-suicide-prevention](https://www.tpk.govt.nz/en/whakamahia/rangatahi-suicide-prevention)

**Pacifica young people** can get support from [leva.co.nz/youth](https://www.leva.co.nz/youth) with useful resources and services for looking after your mental wellbeing, cultural identity and more

Manaakitia a Tātou Tamariki, the Children’s Commissioner, has a **Child Rights Line** where you can get info and advice about your rights and how you should be treated, call 0800 224 453

Any person can contact **Oranga Tamariki** if you are concerned about a child or young person being unsafe or suffering from ill treatment abuse or neglect 0508 326 459, or online at [orangatamariki.govt.nz](http://orangatamariki.govt.nz)

Young people with care experience can get help, support, and advocacy from **VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai** who are an independent charity organisation for children in foster or whanau care. Visit [voyce.org.nz/](http://voyce.org.nz/)

The **Transition Support Service** helps young people who are leaving care or youth justice, **0800 55 89 89**

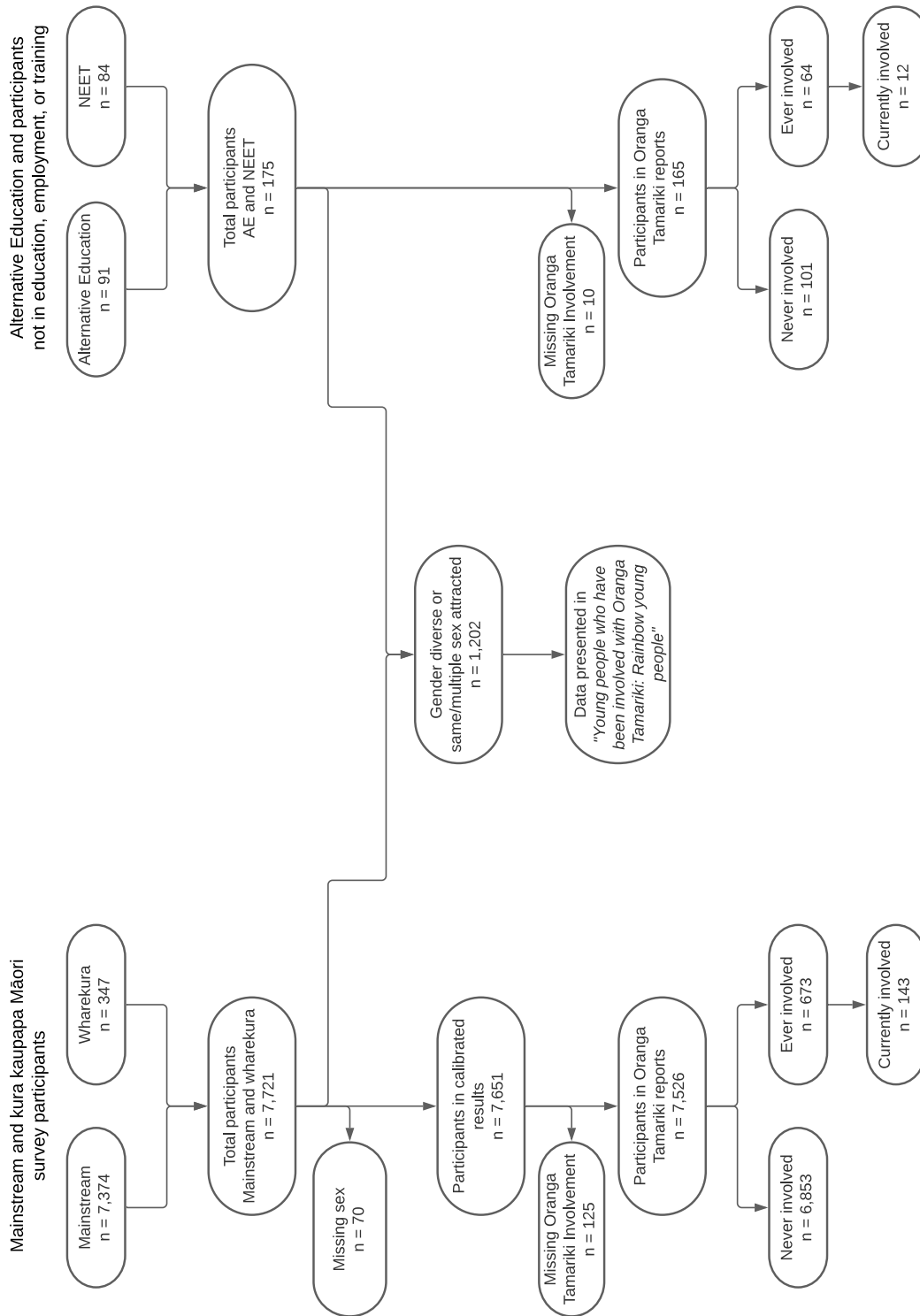


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# Appendix 1: Participant inclusion criteria

Figure 1: Participant inclusion criteria



# Appendix 2: Oranga Tamariki— Ministry for Children

The Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey (Youth19) asks students if they have been involved with Oranga Tamariki, through either the Care and Protection or Youth Justice systems. It does not specify what kind of engagement the young person has had with Oranga Tamariki. It doesn't distinguish between whether a young person has been in care or if they have interacted with Oranga Tamariki in another way. For example, the student might be involved in a Family Group Conference, where the whānau comes together with professionals to talk about the concerns Oranga Tamariki have for a child or young person and come up with a plan. Information about other ways we interact with young people and their families can be found here: [Oranga Tamariki: How we keep children safe](#)

The Youth19 survey questions are framed to capture the maximum number of young people who have engaged with Oranga Tamariki. These questions were intentionally broad as the number of positive responses need to result in a subject population large enough for statistically powerful results. This broad population of all the young people Oranga Tamariki engages with helps Oranga Tamariki understand the needs of this population and how to respond to those needs. Only a small proportion of children and young people reported to Oranga Tamariki enter care or youth justice custody. The questions that define the subject population have some limitations. A student might not report engagement with Oranga Tamariki if they don't know Oranga Tamariki has engaged with their family about their safety. Some students might report engagement if their immediate family has been involved (parents, siblings) whereas others may not. A recall period is the period of time students are asked to consider when answering a question. This is not specified for the first question, which means the recall period could differ from person to person.

## **Information about Oranga Tamariki Care and Protection and Youth Justice**

For the New Zealand Care and Protection system in the year ending 30 June 2021 (Oranga Tamariki, 2021):

- 56,900 children and young people were reported to Oranga Tamariki
- 35,100 were referred for assessment or investigation
- 6,400 had a family group conference
- 790 entered the Care and Protection of the Chief Executive.

For the Youth Justice system in the year ending 30 June 2021:

- 1,900 young people had a youth justice family group conference
- 450 entered youth justice custody
- An additional 400 young people worked with Oranga Tamariki who weren't in custody (e.g., under supervision).

More information can be found in the [Oranga Tamariki Quarterly Report to 30 June 2021](#).

