

# Youth Plan

Engagement 2019

## What we heard from the youth sector



Throughout October 2019, the Ministry of Youth Development – Te Manatū Whakahiato Taiohi heard from over **1,200 rangatahi and 90 youth sector** representatives on the development of the Youth Plan.

One young person wrote on the online survey

**“we tell adults stuff like this all the time and nothing happens or changes”.**

We think this should change and have published this document to let rangatahi, their whānau, the community and youth sector organisations know what we heard.

### A huge thanks!

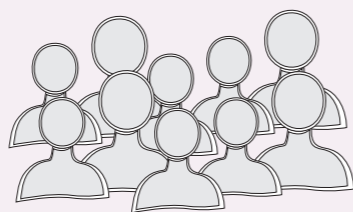
Thank you to those who contributed their voice, time, thoughts and expertise. You have helped to shape the work government does.

We also owe a massive thank you to the youth sector organisations who were crucial in setting up hui with rangatahi. Without you, we could not have done it!

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa.

### A bit about the process we used

#### By numbers:



Over **600 rangatahi** attended **30 hui**



Over **600 rangatahi** responded to the online survey



Over **90 youth sector** representatives attended **3 hui**

We held **three formal** hui with youth sector representatives. These were held in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

In total, over **90 people attended these hui**, including youth workers, mentors, senior managers, academics, programme providers, public sector officials, philanthropic organisation representatives and funders. We also held some informal hui with youth sector representatives, and this document also captures what we heard in those hui.

#### We asked the following questions:

1. What does good look like when the youth sector and government partner together?
2. What actions can the sector and government partner on to act on listening to and prioritising youth voice?
3. What actions can the sector and government partner on to act on improving mental wellbeing for rangatahi?
4. What actions can the sector and government partner on to act on providing a platform for rangatahi leadership?

All the responses were typed up, coded and analysed. This allowed us to understand the main themes as well as points of difference. A summary of what we heard is on the right.

### What will we do with this information?

The information that you and rangatahi gave us will help to inform the Youth Plan. This is an action plan that sets out the action's government will take, in partnership with others, to support rangatahi to thrive and succeed. What was heard throughout October 2019 will help us to decide what actions government should take to work towards Aotearoa New Zealand being the best place in the world to be a young person.

### Final thoughts

We cannot thank you enough for your mahi. Throughout this process we were reminded of your passion, skills and drive. So many rangatahi throughout the country turn to you for support and they are really lucky to have you. The Youth Plan will form the foundation for government to support opportunities for rangatahi to thrive and succeed and we look forward to continuing working closely with you to achieve this.

### Summary of what we heard

#### Partnership

You told us that partnership needs to be based on genuine relationships. This requires trust, respect and communication. The partnership should not be purely financial but should include reciprocity and information sharing.

You said that current processes can be overly complex and disadvantage some groups as they are largely based on a Western model. You told us that partnerships could be improved by government officials visiting you more regularly and by changing funding processes to ensure they meet the needs of the sector.

#### Voice

You told us that rangatahi need to feel their voice is valued and that hearing from them should not be tokenistic. While some government agencies are very effective in working with rangatahi, there are lots of inconsistencies.

You would like to see a more consistent approach, more value placed on rangatahi perspectives and an improved, inclusive approach to working alongside rangatahi Māori, which recognises collective voice.

#### Mental wellbeing

You told us that the youth sector is deeply concerned about rangatahi mental health. Many of you felt that wellbeing should be viewed more holistically, that there are too many diagnoses, not enough ongoing support and services are under-funded.

Youth One Stop Shops and marae were broadly supported by you as appropriate places for delivering supports and services. Many of you were also supportive of peer-to-peer services and actions that would destigmatise mental health conditions.

#### Leadership

You told us that rangatahi are commonly considered the leaders of tomorrow, but feel government needs to acknowledge that many are the leaders of today. Developing our rangatahi will require adults to empower rangatahi to take an active role in decision-making, and this is deeply connected with 'voice'.

You told us that it's important to look at culturally relevant ways to develop rangatahi, for example using a tuakana/teina model. Many of you also said that leadership can be an exclusive term for some rangatahi and this means we need to ensure the leadership space is inclusive.



The Youth Plan has been refocused as a COVID-19 recovery plan. The insights gathered through engagement will continue to inform the development of the Youth Plan.