

Supporting the Positive Development of Young People in New Zealand

A discussion document for consultation on a
Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa

*Published in April 2001
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*ISBN 0-478-25002-9 (Booklet)
ISBN 0-478-25003-7 (Web)*

*The document is available on the Ministry of Youth Affairs' website:
www.youthaffairs.govt.nz*

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Foreword

There could be no more worthwhile investment than the healthy and happy development of young women and young men. Done well, what we put into it builds the social and economic health and wealth of our nation. Done poorly, it costs us dearly in unhappiness and negative expenditure.

Sustaining our current New Zealand lifestyle will depend on how well we handle the major trends of an ageing population and the accompanying need for less people of working age to be more productive and innovative. Educational or employment failure for any group of young people will cut deeply into our health and well-being as a society.

We each then have a very real interest in ensuring that all young New Zealanders are supported to grow into resourceful and resilient adults.

Within this new and changing context, we adults must seriously assess how we raise our young, how we teach them what they need to know, how we support them as they take risks and make mistakes, and how we pass on the wisdom of the past. In doing this, we must listen and respond to young people, and admit that the world has changed dramatically for them in the last few decades.

Adults and young people are partners in healthy youth development.

This discussion document has been put together to help you have input into a Youth Development Strategy for Aotearoa/New Zealand. It sets out current understanding of youth development and proposes a draft vision and goals to be discussed and changed through consultation. Feedback on the consultation on this discussion document will be analysed by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and will be used to prepare the final Strategy.

A Strategy implies action. Action and change can be unsettling for some. My role as Minister of Youth Affairs is to lead the process of action that will result from this consultation exercise.

The Strategy will address all young New Zealanders. I want us to shift our thinking from the old common focus on young people as ‘problems’ to an understanding of young people as participants in their own development with a positive focus on what action is needed.

There is a big difference between acknowledging that many young people have real problems in their lives, and labelling the young as the problem themselves.

The Youth Development Strategy will be unique to New Zealand. It will need to reflect the experience of growing up in Aotearoa/New Zealand and respond to the question of what makes a New Zealander unique.

Laila Harré

HON LAILA HARRÉ
Minister of Youth Affairs

Introduction

The Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa is all about improving ways the Government and everyone in New Zealand can support the positive development of young women and young men who are between 12 and 25 years old.

To achieve this, we need a framework of goals and actions that everyone involved with young people can use to make sure we get the best possible results. That’s what this discussion document is all about – to get people talking about what should be included in the Strategy and to contribute their ideas.

The document has been produced by the Ministry of Youth Affairs with help from an external Reference Group made up of people who work with young people, and a Youth Advisory Forum made up of young people. It has three sections:

- Section 1 outlines the youth development approach¹
- Section 2 outlines the proposed vision, aims and goals for youth development that may become the basis of the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa
- Section 3 provides some information on young people in New Zealand today.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs is seeking feedback on Sections one and two, which will then be used to create the final Strategy. The Strategy will be formally presented later this year.

Who are “Young People”?

The term “young people” describes young women and young men who are between childhood and adulthood. There are no strict boundaries between “children” and “young people” – they vary depending on the person’s culture and their social and financial circumstances.

Laws and government policies often take different approaches to young people. For example, in New Zealand young people can leave school, consent to sex, leave home, get married (with parental consent), and be paid the youth minimum wage at age 16. However, they can’t vote or run as a candidate in national parliamentary elections, buy tobacco and alcohol, or bet at the TAB until they are 18. They can’t do jury service until they are 20 and they are not entitled to a student allowance without their parents’ income being assessed until they are 25.

¹ This document has not been extensively referenced. A comprehensive description of the literature used in its development – from overseas and from New Zealand – will be published with the final Strategy.

Young people’s rights and responsibilities are determined by a combination of the law, their parents’ rules, social rules and individual circumstances. They are semi-dependent and semi-autonomous – somewhere between childhood and adulthood.

What is “Youth Development”?

In this document, youth development is defined as “the process of young people growing up and developing the skills and attitudes they need to take part positively in society, now and in the future”. You’ll find more information on the proposed youth development approach in Section 1.

Links to the “Agenda for Children”

The “Agenda for Children” is currently being developed by the Ministry of Social Policy together with the Ministry of Youth Affairs. The two projects are closely related and have similar timeframes – the main difference is that the Agenda focuses on 0 to 17 year olds. Information from the analysis of consultation will be shared with the Agenda project.

Links to the Treaty of Waitangi

Ongoing discussion on how the Treaty of Waitangi influences New Zealand and New Zealanders links to our understanding of how it can contribute to the growth of young Māori and other young New Zealanders. The Treaty recognises the special relationship between tangata whenua and the Crown and provides for the aspirations of Māori within that relationship. By understanding and knowing about the Treaty, we can ensure youth development is firmly within a “New Zealand” context.

Seeking Your Feedback

The Ministry of Youth Affairs would like to know what you think about the issues and proposals in this discussion document. You can provide feedback in two ways:

At Meetings

During May and June, the Ministry of Youth Affairs will be holding a small number of meetings or group discussions throughout the country with:

- adults who work with young people or on youth issues
- young people
- parents.

For more information on these meetings, contact the Ministry of Youth Affairs or visit our website at **www.youthaffairs.govt.nz**

In Writing

You can provide written feedback in the form of a letter or by using the response form at the back of this document or by using the form from the Ministry of Youth Affairs' website at www.youthaffairs.govt.nz

Please send your response to Youth Affairs by **Friday 15 June 2001**. You can:

Post it to:

Youth Development Strategy Consultation
Ministry of Youth Affairs
PO Box 10-300
Wellington

Fax it to: (04) 471 2233

Email it to: info@youthaffairs.govt.nz

Need Help?

- The response form includes some questions designed to help you prepare your response. However, you're welcome to comment on any other issues relevant to youth development.
- The Ministry has also produced information to help community groups and groups of young people respond – it's available from the Ministry and on our website.
- If you have any questions about this discussion document or the consultation process, please contact the Ministry of Youth Affairs by phoning (04) 471 2158.

Section 1

This Section provides an outline of what is meant by a positive youth development approach. The Ministry of Youth Affairs would like your feedback on the issues it covers and its approach to youth development – you'll find some questions at the end of this Section that may be helpful in your response.

The Positive Youth Development Approach

What is it?

A youth development approach is a positive, holistic approach that supports the development of young people. It addresses the broader developmental needs of young men and women. Instead of focusing on solving their problems, it helps ensure that young people are fully prepared for adult life. The approach contrasts with the deficit-based models, which focus on youth problems and risk factors. Instead the focus is on a positive resiliency approach that includes a sense of belonging and “connectedness” and safe, caring relationships.

To grow into healthy contributing adults, our community needs to support young people to:

- feel they are contributing something of value to society
- feel connected to the groups they belong to
- believe they have choices about their future
- feel positive and comfortable with their own identity.

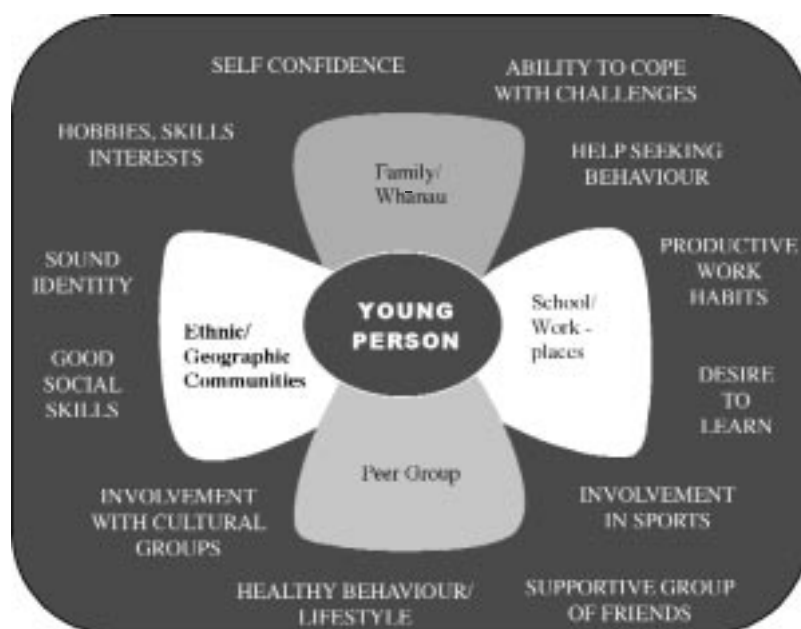
Active participation of young people is an important part of youth development, and it influences their participation as adults. The diversity of young people also needs to be understood when applying a youth development approach.

Where does positive youth development happen?

Positive youth development happens in four interconnected social environments (See Figure 1):

- 1 The family and whānau.
- 2 Ethnic and geographic communities.
- 3 Schools and workplaces.
- 4 Peer groups.

FIGURE 1 Positive youth development – a young person who is “connected”



Young people who are doing well, feel they belong within these social environments. The results of this “connectedness” are illustrated by the words around the four environments in *Figure 1*. Young people who are struggling can be helped if these social environment connections are understood and ways are found to strengthen them.

A positive youth development approach will help young people develop:

- self confidence
- supportive peer and adult friends and mentors
- respect for people who are different from themselves
- a desire for, and involvement in, learning (in a range of settings)
- involvement in cultural groups and/or community activities
- involvement in sports, the arts and other (constructive) leisure activities
- an ability to experience intimacy
- a willingness to be involved in decision-making processes.

The rest of this Section summarises the four social environments and the adults in them who successfully support young people’s development.

1 Family and Whānau

Families and whānau have the most important influence on most young people.

Warm, positive family relationships make a difference in the lives of young people, no matter how the family is structured. Parents, and others who act as parents, are vital – it is they who must provide most of the support, encouragement and guidance that young people need.

Family structures vary and are undergoing rapid change. For example, families can include one or two parents, natural or step-parents and siblings, or groupings of relatives (including whānau groupings). Families can also be defined as groups of unrelated people who support and care for one another in the ways that well functioning families do. It is the quality of relationships within families that matters to young people, not their structure.

2 Schools

Schools provide most of the formal educational opportunities for young people, and school qualifications continue to be important in gaining employment.

Effective schools:

- provide a warm, welcoming environment where individual differences are respected and all students are free from harassment or discrimination
- set high standards for all students
- respond positively to students' different learning needs
- provide opportunities for non-formal education, such as life skills training, sports and recreation
- encourage students to maintain and celebrate their cultures
- reflect their community through representation on boards and committees.

Good schools are also well integrated with the communities they serve. They have strong links with local employers, which helps to ensure that students receive and value schoolwork that is relevant to future job opportunities.

3 Paid and Unpaid Work

Work, both paid and unpaid, can provide young people with important opportunities to learn work skills, form social connections and make a contribution. Paid work (which includes self-employment) is also a source of income.

A positive work environment for young people provides:

- contact with adults who are likely to interact in ways that promote social confidence and competence
- opportunities for skill development
- opportunities for interacting with peers in purposeful activities
- a recognition or a belief that the work is of value
- a sense of purpose and achievement.

Workplaces need to offer young people:

- equal opportunities for employment
- freedom from harassment or discrimination owing to age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, political or religious belief

- jobs that benefit them, such as through opportunities for advancement and skill development
- fair pay
- safe working conditions
- jobs that match their skill level
- a recognition of their current and potential skills and their aspirations for the future.

Young people also need good information and guidance to support their transition to work.

4 Community

Many adults in the community have a role in supporting positive youth development. They include neighbours, friends, sports coaches, health care workers, employers, youth workers, social workers and police.

Ideally, these roles reinforce each other in supporting youth development – however, each also has the potential to compensate for gaps in others’ contributions.

The community includes the voluntary and not-for-profit sector, which provides valuable youth development opportunities. The sector includes sports clubs, churches, cultural groups, and youth organisations, which offer:

- opportunities to socialise and for recreation
- opportunities to be of service
- opportunities for spiritual development
- opportunities for maintaining cultural practices
- opportunities to strengthen identity by mixing with people with common interests or concerns
- adult friends and mentors
- opportunities to attend structured programmes
- support for families.

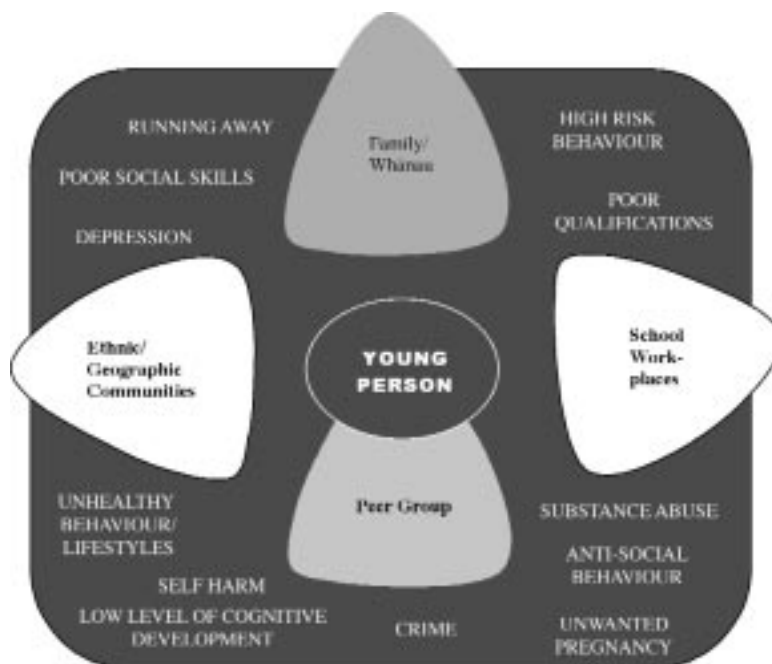
5 Peer Groups

Peer groups provide young people with:

- friendship and support
- role models
- feedback they can’t get from parents or teachers
- a place for developing and expressing autonomy
- opportunities to test decision-making skills in the absence of adults
- a natural setting for talking, negotiating, socialising and exploring future options
- opportunities for leisure.

Peer groups can also be an important influence on young people’s educational and occupational plans, and provide valuable support for young people who have poor connections with the other social environments – for example, they may have been suspended from school and their family is not supportive (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2 A young person who is “disconnected”



The behaviour and activities of these young people who are “disconnected” are often dangerous for young people and can be disruptive to the wider community (as illustrated by the words in Figure 2). Positive adult mentors and role models are particularly important in helping to reconnect them with other, more supportive environments.

Youth Participation – A Key Part of Youth Development

Youth participation is about the involvement of young people in having a say in decisions that affect them, their family, their community and their country, and in acting on and reviewing those decisions. It is more than just consulting young people.

The three main aspects of youth participation are:

- 1 **Enabling:** Creating the conditions in which young people can act on their own behalf and on their own terms, rather than relying on other people (and especially professionals) to do things for them.
- 2 **Ensuring:** Operating according to value systems that give a sense of purpose and meaning to how young people use their skills and knowledge.
- 3 **Empowering:** Putting democratic principles into action so that young people can play an assertive and constructive part in decision-making that affects them at all levels of society.

Youth Development Programmes

– Supporting Young People

Effective youth development programmes offer young people opportunities and support to develop and grow.

They include:

- voluntary programmes like the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Guides or Cadets, where young people participate around schools, community organisations, sports clubs or work. School-based youth development activities are often provided on an extracurricular basis, for example through cultural groups, sport and recreation activities, music groups and special interest clubs
- programmes mostly funded by the Government, such as the Youth Corps Programmes, crime prevention-based programmes and mental health promotion programmes. Appendix 1 has some examples of youth development programmes and activities in New Zealand.

Well run, comprehensive youth development programmes can be very effective in helping achieve positive results for young people (including work and training) and can help them develop values, explore their talents and develop their personal goals.

Effective youth development programmes:

- recognise the many and inter-related ways we can help young people learn to thrive in unfavourable circumstances
- help young people develop social skills
- appreciate young person's needs for self-direction and empower them
- support young people in exploring and defining their identity, including their gender, sexuality, education or employment
- help integrate a sense of ethnic identity into a young person's sense of personal identity
- provide opportunities for young people to participate in decision-making that builds and promotes leadership qualities.

Effective youth development programmes also work to improve connections between young people and the four social environments. This can involve working with families, schools, peers, employers and other people in the community in supporting young people and maintaining connections with them.

Recognising Cultural Differences

Youth development programmes must address relevant cultural issues in our society. Young people who are encouraged to appreciate their own culture and are secure in their own ethnic identities are more likely to have positive attitudes towards people of other ethnic groups.

The Critical “People” Factor

Youth development programmes are most effective when led by people:

- who have an affinity with young people
- who have high levels of self awareness and respect for individual difference
- whose interactions with young people provide support, high expectations and moderate control
- who use good communication as the main way of achieving discipline
- who have high personal and professional standards and ethics.

What Do You Think?

- 1 Have we adequately described the youth development process and approach?
- 2 How would you improve it?
- 3 It's important we acknowledge the diversity of young people within a youth development approach. How can this be strengthened?
- 4 What do you think are the key components of good youth development programmes?

Section 2

THE PROPOSAL: A Strategy for Youth Development in New Zealand

An effective youth development strategy has four important elements:

- 1 **It needs a vision:** The “vision” is a statement of what we would like to see happen for young people. It is the foundation for the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa.
- 2 **It needs aims:** The aims support and expand the vision.
- 3 **It needs goals:** The goals help us to enact the vision. Having goals we all agree on will help us develop a strong, cohesive approach to youth development.
- 4 **It needs actions:** Actions are the tangible ways to achieve our goals. Once this consultation process is complete, we’ll use the final vision, aims and goals to develop actions for the future.

The Strategy also needs:

- **Communication:** We need to make sure everyone involved with young people understands how to support them in their development.
- **Effective co-ordination:** We need government agencies and others who work with young people to work together with a common understanding to achieve our goals.
- **To be appropriate and relevant:** The Strategy is for all young people in New Zealand, which means our policies and services must be appropriate for different cultures and circumstances. For example, the Government wants to make sure that policies and services for young Māori people are developed in partnership with – and are appropriate and effective for – Māori. The increasing number of young Māori, young Pacific peoples, young Asians and young people from other ethnic communities means policies and services also need to look at the best ways to meet their needs.

This section of the discussion document shows progress so far on developing the vision, aims and goals of the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa. Right now, we need your feedback – so please read through this section and let us know what you think. We’ve provided some questions throughout that you may find helpful – they are repeated on the response form.

1 The Proposed “Vision” for Youth Development

The proposed vision for youth development is:

“All young people in New Zealand are supported and empowered to take up new challenges and to seek a fulfilling life.”

What do you think?

- 5 Do you think the vision for youth development is the right direction for New Zealand?
- 6 What would you change to improve it?

2 The Proposed Aims for Youth Development

The proposed aims for youth development in New Zealand are:

- to make sure all young people (Māori, Pakeha, Pacific, Asian and other ethnic groups, and those with disabilities):
 - feel they are contributing something of value to society
 - feel connected to the groups they belong to
 - believe they have choices about their future
 - feel positive and comfortable with their own identity
- to encourage rangatahi (young Māori people) to identify with and contribute to the development of their whānau, hapū and iwi
- to help the Government listen to and act on what young people have to say and encourage their participation in decisions that affect them
- to make sure young people have access to information that enables them to understand their rights as citizens – and that they exercise those rights and contribute to their community
- to help adult New Zealanders understand the importance of their contribution to young people’s development
- to contribute to the development of a vibrant, cohesive, industrious society where:
 - innovation and tradition flourish
 - all people respect one another and their differences
 - young people’s contributions are a cause for celebration.

What do you think?

- 7 Do you think these are the right aims to support the vision for youth development?
- 8 How would you change them to improve them?

3 The Proposed Goals for Youth Development

The following proposed goals are not listed in any order of importance.

GOAL 1 **Achieve a greater understanding of and commitment to a youth development approach across all government sectors**

Government agencies (such as those involved with education, employment, health, justice, and local government) often need to change how they view and interact with young people. That means being influenced less by organisational boundaries and definitions and more by understanding and acting on the best interests of young people.

Government agencies can have a big effect on young people's development. For example:

- **education:** research shows that young people's ability to thrive in difficult circumstances can be greatly enhanced by a sense of belonging to school
- **employment:** unemployment affects a disproportionate number of young people and can make it hard for them to develop and maintain self-confidence. This makes it essential to prepare young people for work through school and provide ongoing learning opportunities (particularly for young people with disabilities).

Appendix 2 shows the government portfolios integral to youth development.

What can we do to achieve this goal?

Actions to achieve this goal could include:

- consulting young people on policies relating to education
- reviewing some of our legal age limits
- getting government agencies to work together on policies and programmes for young people
- getting government agencies to analyse how their policies affect young people.

What do you think?

9 Do you agree with this goal?

10 What can the Government and government agencies do to promote a greater understanding of and commitment to youth development?

GOAL 2 **Increase the participation of young women and young men in decision-making and in acting on and reviewing these decisions**

This goal is all about youth participation – about young people being involved and having a say in decisions that affect them, their family, their community and their country, and in acting on and reviewing those decisions.

This has implications for organisations providing services for young people, including schools, health services, government agencies and local authorities. For example, a youth development approach to improving young people's participation in sport could include:

- involving them in sports administration and coaching
- creating an environment that allows them to develop their own recreation opportunities, such as games of touch at the local park.

Youth participation can support rangatahi becoming more involved in iwi/tribal and Māori community development issues. They also need to be supported and trained to assume a greater role in Māori communities.

Effective youth participation should:

- be enjoyable, challenging and fun
- be appropriate to young people's culture and values
- be related to issues that interest young people
- use youth-friendly processes
- raise young people's awareness of social, political, economic, cultural and personal issues that affect them
- involve training and skills development for young people
- provide opportunities for young people to analyse their experience of the process
- ensure that young people's contributions affect the final decision
- involve adults familiar with, and committed to, the principles of youth participation² (this may require training).

What can we do to achieve this goal?

Actions to achieve this goal could include:

- providing opportunities for young people to participate in government processes
- providing opportunities for young people to participate in local government through forums like youth councils
- using public radio to help more young people air and express their views
- developing resources to help agencies get better youth participation
- developing a database of names of young people who could be appointed to boards and committees.

What do you think?

11 Do you agree with this goal?

12 What can the Government, government agencies, local government, non-government agencies and communities do to increase opportunities for young people to participate?

² Adapted from National Children's and Youth Law Centre 1995, *Promoting Youth Participation: A Rights Perspective*.

GOAL 3 Provide a coherent approach to youth development programmes and activities

Youth development programmes and activities – in schools and communities as well as Government funded programmes – play an important role in offering young people opportunities and support. They include cultural groups, marae-based youth activities, youth services clubs, sport and recreation clubs, and voluntary youth organisations.

These activities provide excellent opportunities for young people to make a real contribution to their community. They enable them to develop a sense of value and a greater sense of ethnic identity, and to explore their talents and skills with the help of supportive adults.

However, we need a more coherent and co-ordinated approach to providing these programmes and activities. This includes sharing more and better information on effective programmes and providing more support in monitoring and evaluating them.

We also need to consider and respond to the different needs of young people (such as those from ethnic communities and young migrant workers) by providing opportunities to maintain cultural practices and promote understanding, tolerance and awareness.

Because youth development programmes do not address single problems, they can sometimes appear invisible, in particular to government agencies who tend to focus on specific aspects of young peoples' lives. Providing activities and programmes that are preventive does not tend to attract much attention or recognition.

What can we do to achieve this goal?

Actions to achieve this goal could include:

- increasing recognition and support for youth development programmes and activities
- better co-ordination of government-funded youth development programmes
- encouraging communities to provide development opportunities for young people
- ensuring programmes consider and effectively respond to the diversity of young people
- ensuring effective programme evaluation and monitoring.

What do you think?

13 Do you agree with this goal?

14 What can the Government and government agencies do to promote a coherent approach to youth development programmes and activities?

GOAL 4 Equip adults to better understand and effectively support young people

Adults play an essential role in young people's positive development – whether they are parents, grandparents, whānau members, caregivers, neighbours, co-workers or friends, or working with young people as voluntary workers and professionals.

- Parents and adult family members need to provide young people with support, encouragement and guidance – and it's important they know how to do this. But how do they learn? Helpful models are not always available and adults often have trouble recognising and asking for help.
- Many adults work with young people in a professional capacity – such as teachers, social workers, police and health care professionals. Some focus on problem areas such as criminal behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse, and mental health issues. It's important they know how to communicate with and support young people.
- Others have contact with young people in community settings. They need to understand what they can do to support young people's positive development.

Adults need to:

- appreciate how young people define themselves
- appreciate that being a young person brings challenges as well as solutions
- help by providing the connections to the social environments young people need.

What can we do to achieve this goal?

Actions to achieve this goal could include:

- encouraging training in parenting skills and family development programmes for families
- boosting secondary school teachers' training in youth development
- providing specialist training for adults who work with young people.

What do you think?

15 Do you agree with this goal?

16 What can the Government, government agencies, local government, non-government agencies and communities do to help adults understand and support young people better?

GOAL 5 Promote appropriate and responsive approaches that support rangatahi development

Young Māori aged between 12 and 24 make up a larger proportion (27 percent) of the total Māori population than do Pakeha young people (18 percent) of the Pakeha population. The number of young Māori as a proportion of Aotearoa New Zealand's total population is forecast to increase, creating a number of opportunities and challenges for government agencies, Māori and communities in general.

Rangatahi need to be properly equipped to contribute to their whānau, hapū and iwi – many find that developing a greater sense of their Māori cultural identity helps strengthen their connection to their whānau, hapū, iwi and wider communities. Whānau may be able to teach rangatahi about their Māori identity, but some need more support than others. The Treaty of Waitangi establishes this as a right.

What can we do to achieve this goal?

Actions to achieve this goal could include:

- encouraging whānau, hapū and iwi to develop practices that help and support the inclusion of rangatahi in their communities
- supporting initiatives and resources to promote te reo Māori among rangatahi
- providing rangatahi with opportunities to participate in decisions affecting their lives
- promoting cultural development for rangatahi, including relevant Māori values and practices
- increasing opportunities for mentoring and role modelling for Māori parents and families
- encouraging Māori communities to recognise the diversity of rangatahi.

What do you think?

17 Do you agree with this goal?

18 What can the Government, government agencies, local authorities, non-government agencies and communities do to better promote appropriate and responsive approaches that support rangatahi development?

19 What do you think of the term “rangatahi” for young Māori? Other terms that could be used include “taiohi”, “taitamariki”, “ōhanga” (when one is in their prime), “te hunga ririki” (the younger ones) or “tēnei reanga” (this generation).

GOAL 6 Promote appropriate and responsive approaches that support young Pacific people’s positive development

Most young Pacific people in New Zealand are from the main Pacific ethnic groups: Samoan (50 percent of the Pacific population); Cook Island (23 percent); Tongan (16 percent); Niuean (9 percent); Fijian (4 percent); and Tokelauan (2 percent). However, an increasing number are of mixed heritage as a result of marriages between Pacific and other Pacific or non-Pacific peoples.

Pacific culture, values and practices are very strong in New Zealand – however, the majority of young Pacific people (58 percent of the total Pacific population in 1996) were born here. This means they are faced with developing their own identity among conflicting systems and two or more cultures.

Many young Pacific people's social, spiritual, cultural and youth development activities centre around the church. Pacific communities also identified mentoring as an important factor in Pacific youth development in the recent Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs' Pacific Capacity Building project.

What can we do to achieve this goal?

Actions to achieve this goal could include:

- developing mentoring programmes for young Pacific people
- empowering young Pacific people to contribute to decisions that affect them
- encouraging Pacific communities to develop practices that support the inclusion of young Pacific peoples in their communities
- promoting cultural development for young Pacific people, in particular language and cultural practices
- training Pacific adults in understanding and working with young Pacific people
- promoting youth work by young Pacific people.

What do you think?

20 Do you agree with this goal?

21 What can the Government, government agencies, local government, non-government agencies and communities do to better promote Pacific young people's positive development?

And finally...

22 Are there any other goals that should be included?

Section 3

Young People in New Zealand – An Overview

This section provides some information on young people growing up in New Zealand.

A Snapshot of Young People in New Zealand

How many young people do we have?

Young people aged between 12-25 currently account for around 20 percent of New Zealand's population (747,200 in the 1996 Census). Young men outnumber young women – however, women outnumbered men in the 20-25 year age group in 1996, with a sex ratio of 98 men per 100 women. The youth proportion of the whole population is decreasing and is expected to fall to around 15 percent over the next 50 years. Within this proportion, an increasing percentage of young people will be non-European³.

What is their ethnicity?

Young people are more ethnically diverse than the whole New Zealand population. Within the youth population, younger youth are less likely to belong to the European ethnic group than older youth (*See Table 1*). These differences are linked to immigration and different birth rates between ethnic groups.

TABLE 1 *The ethnic composition of New Zealand's young people (Census 1996)*

ETHNIC GROUP	12 - 15 YEARS	16 - 19 YEARS	20 - 25 YEARS	12 - 25 YEARS
European	64.1%	65.0%	69.8 %	66.8%
Māori	22.2%	20.3%	18.2%	19.9%
Asian	6.4%	7.5%	5.6%	6.4%
Pacific peoples	6.7%	6.7%	6.1%	6.4%

Where do they live?

Young people tend to live in large urban areas, reflecting the educational, employment and lifestyle opportunities available to young people in the cities. Rural areas have a relatively high proportion of young Māori, especially in the North Island. Young people also move around more than the rest of the population.

What kind of education are they getting?

Young people are generally spending more time in education and achieving higher qualifications than previously. Their overall rate of participation in secondary and

³ *Statistics New Zealand, 1998. New Zealand Now – Young New Zealanders.*

tertiary education is also quite high compared with other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries.

There are differences between ethnic groups and males and females in qualifications achieved. Young women are outperforming young men in achieving formal secondary school examinations and the proportion of females aged 16-25, with a post-school qualification, in 1996 was slightly higher than that of males of the same age (27.9 percent compared with 24.7 percent). Asian and European young people tend to leave school with higher qualifications than Māori and Pacific young people.

What's their working status?

More women aged 15-17 work than men of the same age – then at age 18 the pattern reverses and more young men become part of the labour force as they get older. Female working rates stay fairly constant from age 22, declining slightly at 25. There are significant variations between ethnic groups, with fewer Māori and Pacific young peoples working than Europeans.

More young people are unemployed than other groups, and more young Māori and Pacific young people are unemployed than others. Young people go through shorter periods of unemployment but tend to experience them often.

What's their financial status?

Young people are taking longer to become financially independent than earlier generations, owing to social and economic changes such as higher unemployment and more participation in education.

Many young people take on debt in getting a tertiary education and some, especially those from Māori or Pacific backgrounds, come from families who rely on them for contributing financial support.

How many are parents?

Young people are less likely to be parents than in the past. By the age of 25 most women (63.2 percent) have not had children. Māori women in their late teens and early 20s have higher rates of fertility than other women of the same age.

How many have disabilities?

In 1996 about 8 percent of all 15-25 year olds had a disability that limited their daily activities in some way. The most common disability is physical (which affects mobility), followed by sensory disabilities affecting sight or hearing and not fully corrected with glasses or hearing aids.

How healthy are they?

Young people are very healthy compared with the rest of the population, but do poorly in some areas – most notably, New Zealand has the second highest suicide rate for 15-

24 year olds in the OECD. Other areas of concern include car accidents, alcohol and drug issues, and poor sexual and reproductive health. Young people are the most physically active in the population (young Māori men the most) but the trends are decreasing.

An Immense Diversity...

Young people have many different types of social and cultural characteristics shaping their dreams, their choices and their opportunities.

These characteristics include:

- their gender
- their age
- where they live – urban, rural, provincial
- how they live
- their ethnic background – Māori, Pacific, European/Pakeha, Asian, other ethnic groups
- their “connectedness” to their ethnic background (for example the language they speak)
- their fundamental beliefs and values (or “world view”)
- their religious affiliations and spirituality
- their sexual orientation
- their disabilities
- their level of educational achievement
- their socio-economic background
- their lifestyle interests, such as sports, recreation and music
- their dependency on and responsibilities for others
- their paid and unpaid work, including self-employment and family responsibilities.

Affected by Global Trends

Young people’s development is shaped by global trends:

- young people are growing up in a time of extremely rapid social, economic and environmental change – which means challenges in passing on wisdom and experience and in making the most of new opportunities
- the process of globalisation is influencing many people’s lives – the music they listen to, the clothes they wear and their ability to communicate internationally. At a wider level, it affects the types of jobs available and increases access to information
- young people are now more dependent on their families – for longer – than previous generations. This is linked to the more time needed in education and training and the shrinking employment opportunities for young people. More grandparents are looking after grandchildren to allow young parents to continue their own education or employment

- young people are becoming heavier and taller and reaching puberty younger than earlier generations – probably because of better nutrition. This affects their sexual and reproductive health needs
- national and international patterns of wealth creation and distribution have resulted in an increasing gap between those with financial wealth and those with little.

Growing Up – How it Works

The process of moving from childhood to adulthood includes:

- achieving physical maturity
- developing a sense of identity and personal values, including vocational, ethnic, cultural, gender, sexual, spiritual and social identities
- acquiring the skills for adult roles and relationships, including becoming parents
- achieving independence or adult roles within families. This may mean different things for different cultural and socio-economic groups.

The stages of growing up

Achieving adulthood involves many transitions including:

- leaving primary and secondary school
- entering paid work
- establishing independent living arrangements
- starting relationships
- physical maturity
- becoming parents.

Each transition depends on social and economic conditions. For example, young people may be entitled to leave school and find work at 16, but the opportunities in the workforce may limit their ability to do so. They may wish to do tertiary study, but be prevented because it means long-term financial dependence on their families.

Developing a sense of self

Identity is the way a person sees and feels about themselves. It includes self-esteem and personal values, and goals and dreams for the future. It also covers ethnicity, culture, gender and sexuality.

“Ethnic identity” is the sense of belonging to an ancestry or racial group and can include a group’s unique cultural practices, history, values, world view, spirituality, and social ways of relating. Ethnic identity is different from “cultural identity”, which is more related to lifestyle.

From a sense of social identity (who we are), young people develop a sense of personal identity (who I am). Gender identity relates to their sense of masculinity, femininity or sex role and is different from sexual identity, which includes sexual orientation.

Appendix 1

Current Youth Development Programmes and Activities in New Zealand

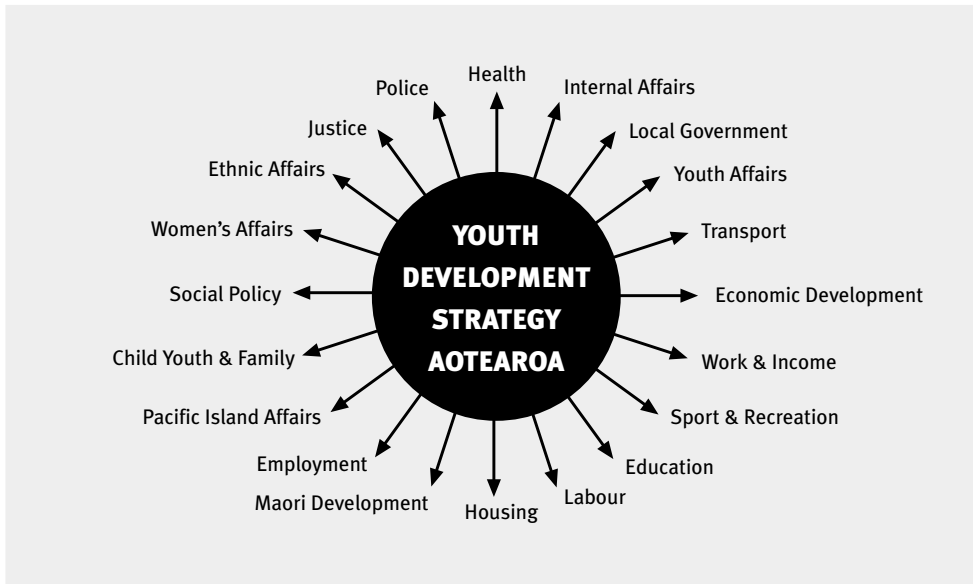
Here are some examples of youth development programmes and activities that are currently provided across different areas of government activity and through the non-government and voluntary sectors.

- The *Ministry of Youth Affairs* contracts with a range of providers to provide New Zealand Conservation Corps and Youth Service Corps Programmes. The Ministry's other youth development activities include Youth Parliament, youth advisory forums and the Student Representatives Scheme.
- The *Ministry of Justice's Crime Prevention Unit* funds or part-funds youth crime prevention programmes.
- The *Department of Internal Affairs* administers the Youth Development Fund (which funds programmes with a suicide prevention focus), Lottery Youth (which funds youth community development programmes), the Community Project Workers' Scheme (CPWS) and the Community Project Workers Scheme – Crime Prevention (CPWS-CP).
- Some *local authorities* provide sport and recreation facilities and part-fund a range of youth programmes. Some have youth councils.
- The *New Zealand Police* runs youth aid and blue light programmes, operates youth-at-risk projects and provides education in schools focused on safety and decision-making.
- The *Ministry of Defence* runs New Zealand Army Youth and Limited Service Volunteers Programmes.
- In the *education sector*, secondary schools provide youth development activities and sports-focused programmes, as do alternative education providers, student councils and associations.
- The *health sector* provides youth development activities as part of mental health promotion programmes and health-promoting-schools programmes, and youth health services.
- The *Hillary Commission* provides youth development activities in the sport and recreation sector.
- *Māori* provide hapū and iwi-based youth programmes.
- Some organisations provide *adventure-based programmes*, eg. Outward Bound, Spirit of Adventure, Project K.

- *Voluntary sector* youth development programmes and activities include the Prince's Trust, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Guides/Scouts/Venturers/Rangers, Cadets, youth services clubs, YMCA and YWCA activities.
- *International youth programmes* include youth exchanges and international relations.
- *Youth programmes* are also run by cultural groups and organisations and religious/ church organisations.

Appendix 2

Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa – Government Portfolio Areas



This diagram illustrates the many government portfolios integral to youth development and the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa. A number have been or are working on specific youth policies and strategies.

Response Form

Please complete this form with your feedback.

- If there isn't enough room for your response/submission, please continue on additional pages.
- Remember to number the pages of your response and, if you're posting it, staple the pages together so we can make sure we have them all.
- Please use pen and write as clearly as possible.
- If you would like more copies of this form, contact the Ministry of Youth Affairs or visit our website at www.youthaffairs.govt.nz

The deadline for responses is **Friday 15 June 2001**.

Can we contact you?

The following information is helpful if we need to check something with you and provide you with a copy of the final Strategy. However, you do not have to supply these details.

If you are responding as an individual:

1 Your name: _____

2 Your address: _____

3 Your contact phone number during the day: _____

4 Your e-mail address: _____

5 Let us know if you are a young person (12-25 years) _____

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation:

1 Organisation's name: _____

2 Organisation's address: _____

3 Contact person's name/title: _____

4 Contact person's phone number during the day: _____

5 How many people were involved in developing your response? _____

6 What ranges of occupations were involved in your response? _____

Thanks!

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback - we look forward to receiving your contribution to help us develop the final Strategy.

Please return your response by **Friday 15 June 2001**: You can:

Post it to:

Youth Development Strategy Consultation
Ministry of Youth Affairs
PO Box 10-300
Wellington

Fax it to: (04) 471 2233

Email it to: info@youthaffairs.govt.nz

Supporting the Positive Development of Young People in New Zealand

Please read the discussion paper before completing this response form. Answer as many or as few of the following questions as you wish – you're also welcome to comment on any other issues relevant to youth development.

Section 1

The positive youth development approach (refer to pages 6 to 12)

1 Have we adequately described the youth development process and approach?

Yes No Undecided

2 How would you improve it?

3 It's important we acknowledge the diversity of young people within a youth development approach. How can this be strengthened?

4 What do you think are the key components of good youth development programmes?

Section 2

A proposed vision for youth development

“All young people in New Zealand are supported and empowered to take up new challenges and to seek a fulfilling life.”

5 Do you think the vision for youth development is the right direction for New Zealand?

Yes No Undecided

6 What would you change to improve it?

The proposed aims for youth development (refer to page 14)

7 Do you think these are the right aims to support the vision for youth development?

Yes No Undecided

8 How would you change them to improve them?

The proposed goals for youth development (refer to pages 15 to 20)

GOAL 1 Achieve a greater understanding of and commitment to a youth development approach across all government sectors

9 Do you agree with this goal?

- Yes No Undecided

10 What can the Government and government agencies do to promote a greater understanding of and commitment to a youth development approach across all government sectors?

GOAL 2 Increase the participation of young women and young men in decision-making and in acting on and reviewing these decisions

11 Do you agree with this goal?

- Yes No Undecided

12 What can the Government, government agencies, local government, non-government agencies and communities do to increase opportunities for young people’s participation?

GOAL 3 Provide a coherent approach to youth development programmes and activities

13 Do you agree with this goal?

- Yes No Undecided

14 What can the Government and government agencies do to promote a coherent approach to youth development programmes and activities?

GOAL 4 Equip adults to better understand and effectively support young people

15 Do you agree with this goal?

- Yes No Undecided

16 What can Government, government agencies, local government, non-government agencies and communities do to better ensure that adults better understand and effectively support young people?

GOAL 5 Promote appropriate and responsive approaches that support rangatahi development

17 Do you agree with this goal?

- Yes No Undecided

18 What can the Government, government agencies, local authorities, non-government agencies and communities do to better promote appropriate and responsive approaches that support rangatahi development?

19 What do you think of the term “rangatahi” for young Māori? Other terms that could be used include “taiohi”, “taitamariki”, “ōhanga” (when one is in their prime), “te hunga ririki” (the younger ones) or “tēnei reanga” (this generation).

GOAL 6 Promote appropriate and responsive approaches that support young Pacific people’s positive development

20 Do you agree with this goal?

Yes No Undecided

21 What can the Government, government agencies, local government, non-government agencies and communities do to better promote Pacific young people’s positive development?

And finally...

22 Are there any other goals that should be included?

Your submission may be requested under the Official Information Act 1982. If this happens the Ministry of Youth Affairs will release your submission to the person who has requested it. However, if you are an individual, as opposed to an organisation, Youth Affairs will remove your personal details from the submission if you tick the box below:

- I do not give permission for my personal details to be released to persons requesting my submission under the Official Information Act 1982.