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## Designing and implementing actions

The following section outlines four key tools that should be used when designing or implementing actions. Links to further information and resources are available on the MYD website:

<https://www.myd.govt.nz/young-people/youth-plan/youth-plan.html>.

### Mana Taiohi

Mana Taiohi is a principle-based framework that informs the way people who work with young people work in Aotearoa New Zealand with a Te Ao Māori worldview. Mana Taiohi is based on the overarching principle of mana, and a further eight interconnected and holistic principles. The principle of Mana is defined as “the authority we inherit at birth, and we accrue over our lifetime. It determines the right of a young person to have agency in their lives and the decisions that affect them. Young people are supported to have a voice, work to their strengths, and step into leadership”.

These principles acknowledge the mana that young people have, and how we can work to uplift that mana through voice and leadership. From this flows Whai Wāhitanga, participation. Whai Wāhitanga determines the right of a young person to have agency in their lives and the decisions that affect them.

Within the context of the Youth Plan, engagement with young people should create safe spaces that enable young people to express their voice, have it heard, and influence decisions. Whai Wāhitanga is undoubtedly about involving young people in decision-making in all aspects of their lives. This approach recognises the role that active participation can play as a vehicle for positive youth development and highlights the opportunity to achieve a broader range of positive outcomes that contribute to youth wellbeing.

Mana Taiohi principles, outlined in the diagram below, are holistic, exist in relation to one another, and are stronger when connected. Without any one of them, the others are weaker.

Source: [Ara Taiohi – Mana Taiohi](#)

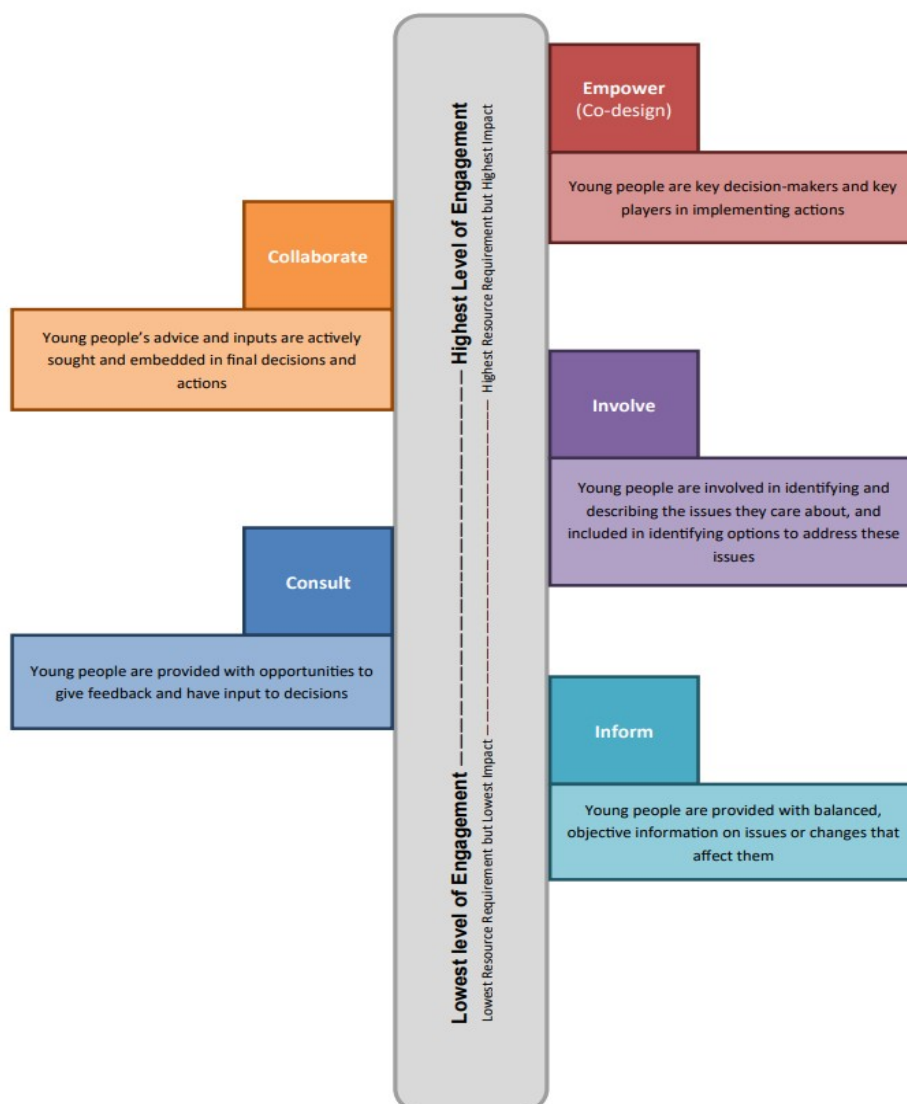
## Engagement Continuum

Agencies are encouraged to consider the level at which they wish to engage with young people. This includes considering what level of engagement may be most appropriate for their mahi, the level of resource they have available, and the outcomes they wish to achieve with, and for, young people.

More intensive levels of engagement, such as 'empower' and 'collaborate', will feature a higher level of youth voice and leadership, but likely with a smaller cohort of young people. Less intensive levels of engagement, such as 'consult' or 'inform', will feature less concentrated levels of youth voice and leadership but often achieve a wider reach of young people.

The level of engagement can also be different at different points in an action's life cycle. For example, collaboration may be most appropriate during a design and testing phase. During implementation and evaluation, consulting may be more appropriate.

At all levels, communication and transparency is essential to ensure the depth and scope of engagement is mutually understood.



Source: [Harvard Catalyst – Community Engagement Continuum](#)

## **Age Range Guidelines**

The Youth Plan is for all young people aged 12-24 years. This wider cohort can be divided into two groups based on common development stages: young people aged 12-17 years, and young people aged 18-24 years.

These age ranges are a general guide for government agencies and others formulating actions for the Youth Plan. Broadly, the 12-17-year-old cohort are functioning in education environments, while the 18-24-year-old cohort are likely to be experiencing life transitions, including but not limited to: entering the workforce, further education, or moving out of home.

Experiences within each cohort are diverse. Young people are not meeting the same milestones or undergoing transitions according to fixed linear progression. Age, developmental stage, context, lived experience, and legal rights are all factors to be considered. For example, the rights and needs of a 12-year-old will not always align with those of a 17-year-old. Additionally, many young people leave school or enter employment at different ages. Those formulating individual actions should consider whether their objectives would better suit a broader or more narrow and targeted age range.

Engagement with appropriate age groups is important when developing actions to effectively address their needs. Young people have valuable insights and are experts in their own experiences. Government agencies and organisations should acknowledge that the voices and perspectives of young people at all ages are crucial.

## Priority Cohorts

Some groups of young people experience higher threats to wellbeing, based on factors such as their ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, disability, and geographic location. Many of these young people also struggle to access support services, for example, services that are culturally appropriate, accessible, accepting, and gender-affirming.

The Youth Plan will focus particularly on seven priority cohorts. These are:

- Rangatahi Māori;
- Pacific young people;
- Rainbow young people;
- Disabled young people;
- Young women;
- Young people from ethnic communities (in particular, former refugees and recent migrants); and
- Young people living in the regions.

The priority cohorts are not distinct categories, and many young people belong to multiple groups, with intersectional identities that result in unique experiences. When forming actions, this complexity must be considered.

It is important to remember, even within each cohort, individual experiences are diverse. Labels such as 'ethnic' or 'rainbow' are necessary generalisations that capture broad trends, but all people within these groups do not share one common experience. For example, ethnic young people include those born in Aotearoa New Zealand, those who migrated, and refugees undergoing forced migration, all following different paths and belonging to different population sub-groups.

Actions and measurements must embed diverse definitions of voice, and leadership. Particular attention should be given to the priority cohorts along with tailored responses to address their unique needs. Young people cannot succeed as a group while those facing disproportionate threats to wellbeing are left behind.