



Malatest
International

Summary report:

Transition Support Service evaluation findings 2022

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Executive summary

Oranga Tamariki has established a Transition Support Service in 2019

Young people who have been in statutory care or a youth justice residence are among those who have the highest needs and require the most support in New Zealand. The Transition Support Service (TSS) was established as a core Oranga Tamariki service to assist eligible young people from these groups to move into adulthood and independent living¹.

The Transition Support Service was rolled-out over three years

Transition support became a core component of the new operating model for Oranga Tamariki from 1 July 2019. The Transition Support Service (TSS) aims to provide relationship-based support to eligible rangatahi leaving care or custody up to age 21, with access to advice and assistance available up to age 25.

Roll-out of the TSS was phased over three years to 30 June 2022². To the end of June 2022, a total of 1,653 rangatahi had been referred to one of 70 external providers (TSS partners). The phased approach was planned to allow service strength to be built over time – a learn and grow approach.

A three phase evaluation contributes to the learn and grow approach

A partnership evaluation between the Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre and Malatest International was commissioned to “support evidence-informed development of the service and to gauge its effectiveness”³. The evaluation was phased to align with the roll-out:

- The first phase was a formative evaluation to provide early insights into specific aspects of TSS

¹ Office of the Minister for Children. Transforming our response to children and rangatahi at risk of harm. Paper Six: Transition Support.

² Details about the Transition Support Service can be found on the Oranga Tamariki website www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/support-for-families/how-we-support-whanau/from-care-to-adulthood/.

³ Evaluation CSO 2019.

- The second phase was a process focused evaluation to provide information about what was working well and where there were challenges to inform service delivery responses
- The third and final phase continues the process evaluation and following full implementation includes a focus on outcomes.

This report informs the process focused evaluation

This report summarises findings and informs the process phase of the evaluation. Information was sourced from:

- Oranga Tamariki TSS administrative data
- Just Sayin' 22 – the third Just Sayin' survey completed by 408 young people (www.justsayin.nz) and previous Just Sayin' surveys
- Regional case studies with a focus on Oranga Tamariki transition support and regional TSS partners
- High level findings from interviews with 26 young people from the draft Year 2 Ngā Haerenga report – included to augment the voices of young people.

Progress towards implementation

TSS is now an established core Oranga Tamariki service. Transition support is provided by a network of TSS partners who employ transition workers to build relationships with and support young people. The TSS partners vary in size, geographical location and type of organisation.

The proportion of eligible young people referred to a transition worker increased to 61% in 2022 (from 53% in 2021). There were small differences in the referral rates across groups. The proportion of eligible young people referred was lowest for young people who identified as both Māori and Pacific, Pacific young people, males, and for those eligible through care experience only.

Starting preparation and planning for leaving care as early as possible

There has been a steady increase in the percentage of rangatahi (both still in care and who had left care) who recalled being talked with and working out a plan for transition (JS 3 survey responses: Year 1 46%; Year 2 49%; Year 3 56%). However, only 38% said they had a copy of their plan.

The regional case studies demonstrated that planning for transition was more effective where there is:

- Regional leadership supporting transition and Oranga Tamariki staff who understand the transition process
- Youth-focused Oranga Tamariki personnel including those with skills in working with rangatahi with complex needs
- An Oranga Tamariki social worker who is engaged with rangatahi – defined as positive feedback by rangatahi about the social worker
- A transition support ‘champion’ in the Oranga Tamariki service centre
- An effective FGC or Hui ā-Whānau co-ordinator who enables rangatahi voices to be heard.

A life skills assessment completed by Oranga Tamariki social workers is part of preparation and planning for transition. TSS partners reported the quality of the assessments and the extent rangatahi were provided with the documentation they needed for transition was variable. When rangatahi were asked about what they needed for transition, they frequently mentioned driver licences and documentation that should be part of transition planning.

Preparation and planning with rangatahi for transition is an Oranga Tamariki care standard⁴, even for rangatahi who consider they are in a stable living situation and do not need transition support. The planning and preparation aspects of service delivery were not consistent with the Oranga Tamariki national care standards⁵ for approximately one-third of survey respondents. The percentage recalling a transition planning discussion should be higher and the quality of life skills assessments and responses to identified needs must be improved to meet care standards.

Connecting young people with a TSS partner who understands their needs

Positive connection with a transition worker and their engagement in planning for transition is the foundation for a relationship forming between the transition worker and the young person. Most surveyed young people preferred a transition worker with a similar demographic to themselves. Many described wanting someone who understood them and had a passion for supporting young people.

There are regional differences in young people’s experiences of the transition from care process. Regional differences in referral to TSS partners are associated with variable Oranga Tamariki implementation of TSS in different regions, different access

⁴ www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/children-in-our-care/national-care-standards/

⁵ www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/children-in-our-care/national-care-standards/

to TSS partners and other locality differences in services that are beyond Oranga Tamariki control.

In regions where there was more than one TSS partner and a coordinated referral process, there was more potential to match young people with the TSS partner that was the best fit. Choice was facilitated by regional hubs, and processes where transition workers assessed their fit with a young person's needs and/or where rangatahi could select a TSS partner or transition worker. Higher percentages of young people responding to Just Sayin' in these regions considered they had a choice of TSS partner.

Delays in connection between the transition worker and the young person, and lack of availability of the transition worker to meet with the young person are barriers to effective support.

Opportunities identified to improve the referral process included:

- Continuing to build the relationship and communication between Oranga Tamariki and the TSS partners.
- Improving information in referral forms where they are going to referral hubs or group discussions for allocation to a TSS partner.

Choice of TSS partner and transition worker contributes to positive connections for young people in the four Oranga Tamariki priority groups: Māori, Pacific, young people with a disability and young people in the Rainbow community.

Contributors to an effective transition process identified through the evaluation included an engaged Oranga Tamariki contact, consistent communication between Oranga Tamariki and the TSS partner, and timely responses to queries. Where working relationships were effective the transition worker was engaged early and a key part of the transition planning process.

TSS is being delivered as a relationship-based model

Although Oranga Tamariki social workers are required to refer rangatahi for transition support, transition support is voluntary for rangatahi. Not all rangatahi want or need support from a TSS partner. Some receive the support they require from their whānau or foster families. Just under two-thirds of rangatahi had an adult they could turn to for support, highlighting the importance of transition worker support for the remaining one-third.

As the TSS has aged as a service, more rangatahi have experienced changes in transition worker. Strategies to manage changes and fill gaps in services where there is only one transition worker are critical to avoid rangatahi leaving transition support before they are ready.

Evaluation data confirm the importance of a relationship-based model of transition support for young people who have not been well supported during their time in Oranga Tamariki care.

Building relationships takes investment in time. Regional case study, TSS partners and survey self-assessments by young people identified a substantial proportion (55%) of young people eligible for transition worker support had complex needs. Responding to these needs requires intensive support, time and resource.

The TSS partner contracts have recognised that young people's needs vary and time is required to build relationships and provide support varies. Caseloads need to continue to be at a level that allows this time.

Young people were generally positive about the transition support they received

Young people commonly described their transition worker as an important person in their lives.

The conversations with Oranga Tamariki staff and TSS partners highlighted a workforce that prioritised relationship building and responding to the support young people needed to move towards independence. Transition support is led by the young person's identification of the skills they would like to develop and the support they need to achieve those skills. As the profile and level of need of young people varies so should the intensity and type of support.

When asked what skills young people wanted for their future, young people most commonly said they wanted a driver licence (56%). Other skills were money management (55%), followed by other general life skills like relationship skills (40%), becoming work ready (37%), cooking (35%), getting ID (35%), parenting skills and enrolling in training (24%). Based on Oranga Tamariki care standards, some of these skills should have been in place before transition.

Most young people who had a current transition worker said they were still meeting with them (79%), however 13% were not, and 8% were not sure. Feeling they no longer needed help was the main reason for young people leaving transition worker support.

Eighty-one percent of young people who had a transition worker considered their transition worker made things better for them. Young people were more positive about the support provided by their transition worker than their Oranga Tamariki social worker, suggesting the transition support received aligned with the needs of many young people and filled a gap in support for young people transitioning from care.

The Transition Support Line

Oranga Tamariki must remain in contact with eligible young people once they leave care or a longer-term youth justice residential placement if aged 15 to 21 years old. Oranga Tamariki deliver this legislative obligation through their contracts with TSS partners and provision of a Transition Support telephone service.

Young people who have left care and don't have a transition worker are placed on an 'outbound calling' list at the Transition Support telephone service. Transition support line advisors attempt to contact them every two months to check in, see how they are doing and offer support (which may lead to referral to a transition worker after they have left care).

Young people can also call the Transition Support line with requests for assistance. The number of calls to the Transition Support line was higher in 2021 and early 2022 than in 2020. Seventy-two percent of young people responding to Just Sayin' knew how to contact Oranga Tamariki and 27% had called the Transition Support line. Young people in care were more likely to know how to contact Oranga Tamariki (83%) compared to those who had left care (66%).

Inconsistent central recording of contact details for young people in CYRAS (Oranga Tamariki administrative data system) is a barrier to maintaining contact with young people who do not have a transition worker once they have left care.

Responding to reasonable requests for financial support

Data provided by Oranga Tamariki shows the number of payments, amount and purpose of financial support payments made to young people. The number and value of payments has changed over time with a shift towards payments of smaller amounts for purposes other than accommodation (for example health or travel).

Housing support remains a challenge in all regions

Most young people had stable accommodation and lived in one place. When asked where they usually lived, most young people (89%) selected only one answer. The most common place young people lived was in a home with whānau or foster family (51%). Most young people were reasonably positive about the quality of where they lived.

Housing remains a challenge for young people wanting to live independently because:

- there are housing shortages across the country

- there is limited emergency accommodation, and some is not suitable for young people
- the time lag between when young people leave care and payments from either Work and Income or StudyLink commence places them in a vulnerable position leaving them unable to pay for accommodation.

Entitlement to remain or return to a caregiver (ETRR) was the main policy initiative to respond to housing shortages. ETRR roll-out began in July 2019. In the first iteration of Just Sayin' in 2020, knowledge of ETRR was low, but has increased through the survey years, significantly so between 2020 and 2021. However, ETRR does not meet the housing needs for many young people including those wanting to return to living with whānau or living independently.

Evaluation data suggest the TSS intended outcomes are being achieved

TSS aimed to achieve a range of outcomes for young people. The Just Sayin' surveys have monitored a range of outcomes for young people. Across all survey years, approximately one-third of young people feel their life in general is very good or good, although 72% are hopeful for the future. There has been little change between surveys in some of the factors with the potential to enable young people to strengthen their identity including chances to connect with whānau, and support to find out about their ancestry or whakapapa.

Achieving change for some young people will take substantial time. Many young people entering TSS bring with them challenges such as complex needs, lower educational achievement and loss of identity. Addressing these challenges and preparing young people for their 'best' lives may require intensive support.

Understanding what type and intensity of transition support provided to young people is effective is limited by a lack of information from TSS partners. At the start of the evaluation the need to give TSS partners a consistent data collection system was highlighted to Oranga Tamariki as a requirement for robust data for evaluation. This was not put in place.

Qualitative data show positive changes. However, regional differences in transition support advantage young people in some regions and disadvantage those in other regions.

The extent some needs can be addressed is also limited by systemic issues such as difficulty accessing mental health support, housing etc.

The impact of TSS will be explored in the Integrated Data Infrastructure

Information will be available from the National Youth Health and Wellbeing survey to compare wellbeing for young people with Oranga Tamariki experience with their peers with no Oranga Tamariki experience.

The impact of transition support will be explored in the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) where young people referred to a TSS partner can be compared to other young people with similar support needs who have not been referred.

1. The Transition Support Service (TSS)

Oranga Tamariki has established a Transition Support Service (TSS) for eligible young people leaving care or custody up to age 21, with access to advice and assistance available up to age 25. From 1 July 2019, the legislative transition to adulthood requirements in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 includes:

- That care-experienced young people can request to remain or return to live with a caregiver between the ages of 18 to 21.
- The obligation that Oranga Tamariki must remain in contact with eligible young people once they leave care or a longer-term youth justice residential placement if aged 15 to 21 years old.

The principles that specifically relate to Transition to Adulthood

- a) The young person is to increasingly lead decisions about matters affecting them and is to be supported by adults to do this.
- b) A holistic approach is to be taken and the young person's strengths and identity are to be built on and nurtured.
- c) The relationships between the young person and their family, whānau, hapū, iwi, and family group are, if appropriate, to be maintained and strengthened.
- d) Family, whānau, hapū, iwi, family groups, and communities are to be supported to help the young person move to independence.
- e) The relationships between the young person and a caregiver, other trusted adults, and the wider community are to be established, built on, and maintained.
- f) The young person is to be supported, to the extent that is reasonable and practicable, to address the impact of harm and to achieve and meet their aspirations and needs, with priority to be given to supporting the stability of their education.
- g) Assistance to the young person is to be provided proactively, promptly, and to be sustained regardless of the decision that the young person makes.

Roll-out of the TSS was phased over three years to 30 June 2022⁶. To the end of June 2022, a total of 1,653 young people had been referred to one of 70 external providers (TSS partners). The phased approach was planned to allow service strength to be built over time – A learn and grow approach.

⁶ Details about the Transition Support Service can be found on the Oranga Tamariki website www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/support-for-families/how-we-support-whanau/from-care-to-adulthood/.

2. The Transition Support Service evaluation

An evaluation was commissioned by the Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre to “support evidence-informed development of the service and to gauge its effectiveness⁷”. Evaluation and monitoring activities are completed both internally and through a contract with Malatest International (an independent research and evaluation company).

The evaluation was phased to align with the three-year roll-out of TSS and to contribute to the ‘learn and grow’ approach:

- The first phase was a formative evaluation to provide early insights into specific aspects of TSS.
- The second phase was a process focused evaluation to provide information about what was working well and where there were challenges to inform service delivery responses.
- The third and final phase continues the process evaluation and following full implementation, includes a focus on outcomes. A secondary purpose is to support the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan (OTAP) and organisational change.

Evaluation activities in each phase of the evaluation are summarised in Figure 1.

Evaluation questions (Appendix 1) guide the evaluation. The evaluation questions are reviewed annually by the Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre, Malatest International and an Evaluation Advisory group. The questions guide the different phases of the evaluation – not all questions are applicable to each evaluation activity.

This report summarises findings and informs the process phase of the evaluation (Figure 1). Information was sourced from:

- Oranga Tamariki TSS administrative data
- Just Sayin’ 22 – the third Just Sayin’ survey completed by 408 young people (www.justsayin.nz) and previous Just Sayin’ surveys (Just Sayin’ 20 augmented by an additional survey of 16 year olds, and Just Sayin’ 21)
- regional case studies with a focus on Oranga Tamariki transition support and regional TSS partners
- high level findings from interviews with 26 young people from the draft Year 2 Ngā Haerenga report – included to augment the voices of young people.

⁷ Evaluation CSO 2019.



Figure 1. Overview of TSS evaluation activities

2.1. The Just Sayin' survey has been a part of the TSS evaluation for three years

Part of the TSS evaluation is an annual survey of young people eligible for support by transition workers – the Just Sayin' surveys. The Just Sayin' surveys have been distributed in 2020 (an initial survey of 17-19 year olds complemented by a later survey of 16 year olds), 2021 and 2022 to seek feedback from young people aged 16 to 21 who are eligible for support from a transition worker. More details about the surveys are provided in Appendix 2. An overview report from the 2021 Just Sayin' survey can be found here: www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/research/our-research/transitions-service-synthesis-report/

For a full list of responses for each question see the Just Sayin' 22 technical report and the Just Sayin' 22 Fact Sheets. The Fact Sheets will be published on the Oranga Tamariki website as they become available.

This report is based on the responses of 408 young people between the ages of 16 and 21⁸ who were eligible for support from a transition worker. This figure

⁸ All rangatahi eligible for a transition worker as of June 2021 includes 2,272 rangatahi. Rangatahi younger than 16 and were excluded from the cohort used for this survey as the

represents 18% of all eligible young people, 24% of young people with contact details supplied by Oranga Tamariki and 57% of young people with contact details we confirmed to be valid (Figure 2).

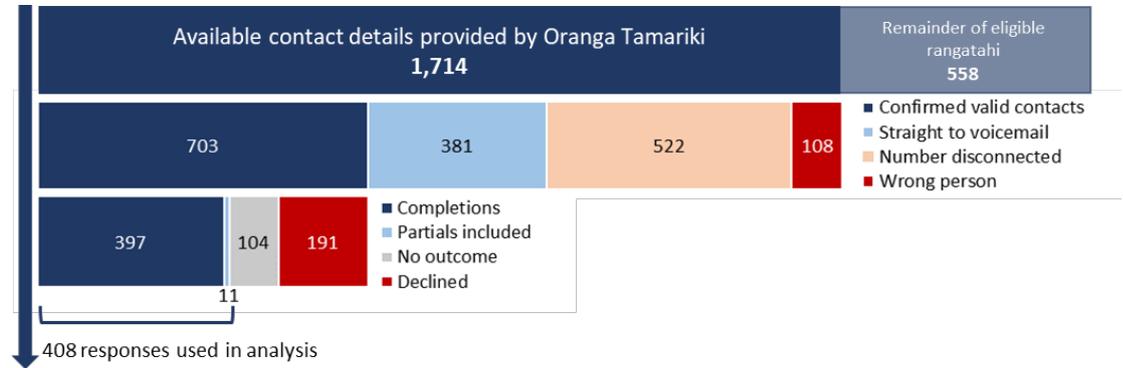


Figure 2. Response to Just Sayin’ 2022

The demographic profile of survey respondents is summarised in Appendix 2. As in previous years, females and young people who identified as non-Māori and non-Pacific were slightly over-represented amongst the survey respondents⁹.

The progressive roll-out of the TSS meant young people aged over the survey years resulting in differences in age groups. In 2020, most of the potentially eligible cohort were still in care. In later years, more had left care and were supported by a TSS partner.

expected number of responses was likely to limit analysis by this age group and many would not have been part of transition planning.

⁹ We examined the need to weight the data to align it with the cohort demographic profile but found there were no substantial differences in findings based on responses weighted by gender and ethnicity. The largest potential for bias in the representativeness of the survey is non-contact and non-response bias. That is, the lack of contact details for many rangatahi means we do not have information about their experiences and perspectives.

Young people who completed Just Sayin’ 2022 came from across Aotearoa New Zealand, with a similar spread to years prior. The areas with the smallest representation were Gisborne, Marlborough and West Coast (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Regional distribution of respondents by region.

2.2. The regional case studies provide the perspectives of Oranga Tamariki staff and TSS partners

The regional case studies complement the Just Sayin’ surveys by providing in-depth qualitative perspectives from Oranga Tamariki social workers and the TSS partners.

Regional case study details and aims are summarised in Figure 4 below. The regional case studies focus on Oranga Tamariki staff and TSS partners to balance the 2021

evaluation programme which focused on young people’s voices in different settings, including youth justice.

The regions selected for case studies included regions with high proportions of rangatahi Māori and Pacific young people and to provide a contrast between urban and rural settings (see Appendix 3). Information from the case studies provides insights into the selected regions and TSS partners but may not be generalisable to other regions.

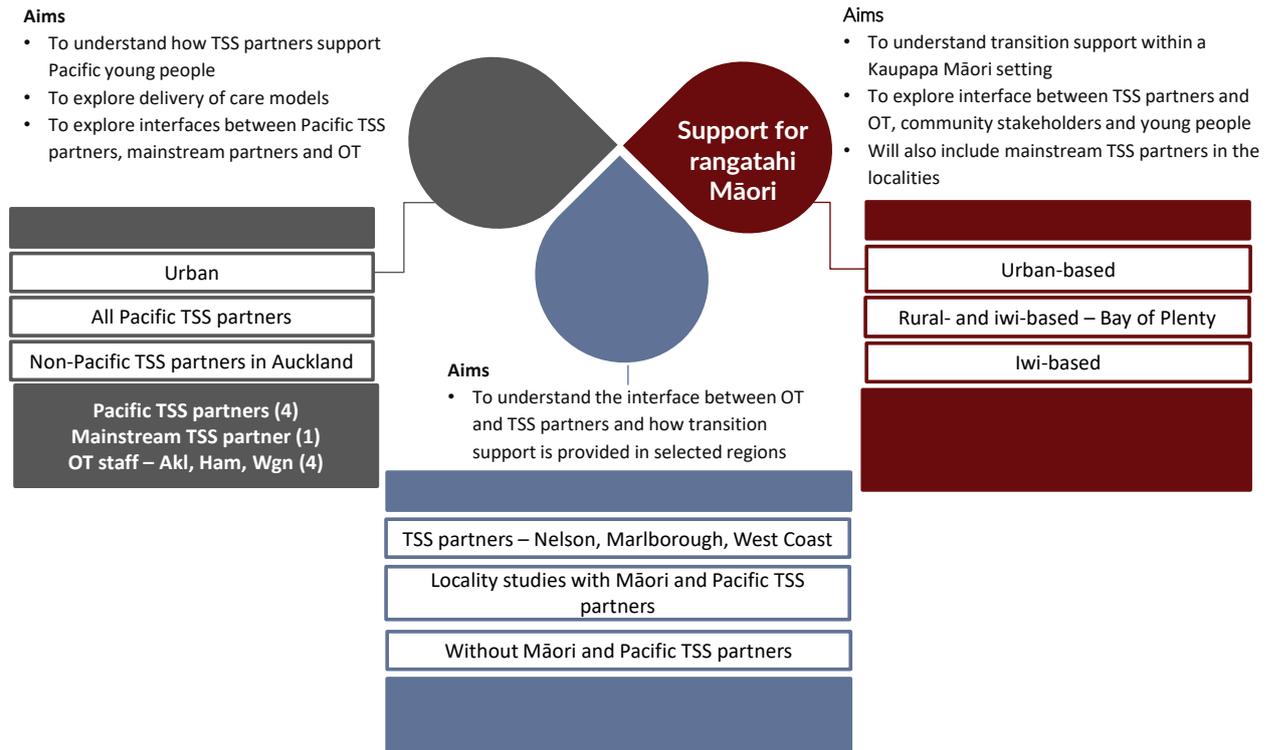


Figure 4. Numbers of providers and kaimahi engaged in each of the case study regions.

2.3. Strengths and limitations of the information informing this report

The main strength of the report is the synthesis of findings from different sources. Our approach was based on gathering and interweaving different stakeholders’ perspectives from in-depth interviews with a regional selection of TSS partners and Oranga Tamariki staff, and survey responses from young people. In-depth interviews with young people to hear about their experiences was the focus of the evaluation in 2021. Together these perspectives informed the development of a collective fabric of experiences, processes, and findings.

Our ability to conduct evaluation and research in a culturally safe and competent way led by our Kaupapa Māori and Pacific evaluation teams has enhanced the

outcomes of our work, ensuring that participants are able to contribute their thoughts and experiences to those who understand their contexts.

The main limitation of the Just Sayin' surveys is our inability to contact young people for whom Oranga Tamariki do not have contact details. Therefore, the findings in this report reflect the only views of the young people who responded to the survey. Young people for whom Oranga Tamariki do not have contact details may hold different views and be living in different circumstances. Although we worked with TSS partners to include young people they supported, many of the young people without contact details may also not be engaged with a TSS partner.

A small number of young people declined the survey because they had completed it in previous years and had seen no change in the TSS.

3. Preparing for transition

Preparation and planning with young people for transition is an Oranga Tamariki care standard¹⁰, even for young people who consider they are in a stable living situation and do not need transition support. The planning and preparation aspects of service delivery were not consistent with the Oranga Tamariki national care standards¹¹ for approximately one-third of survey respondents. The percentage recalling a transition planning discussion should be higher and the quality of life skills assessments and responses to identified needs must be improved to meet care standards.

3.1. Oranga Tamariki responsibilities for transition are set out in the care standards

The National Care Standards¹² and the Oranga Tamariki Act¹³ set out the statutory minimum requirements of Oranga Tamariki social workers in the transition process (Part Five of the regulation). Preparation for leaving should start with discussions and transition planning happening from the time they turn 15.

¹⁰ www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/children-in-our-care/national-care-standards/

¹¹ www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/children-in-our-care/national-care-standards/

¹² [National-Care-Standards-regulation-booklet.pdf \(orangatamariki.govt.nz\)](#)

¹³ [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 No 24 \(as at 01 April 2021\), Public Act – New Zealand Legislation](#)

The Care Standards require:

- An assessment of life skills and the provision of advice and assistance.
- Oranga Tamariki social workers work in partnership with young people, their family/whānau, aiga, caregivers (where relevant), practitioners and other people who are important to them in transition planning processes to develop a transition plan.
- The life skills assessment needs to be attached to a young person's transition plan, and official documentation and information about access to services is required.
- Before young people leave care or custody Oranga Tamariki must assist them to obtain any official documentation they need, such as ID, verified online identity, photo identification, a copy of their birth certificate, a bank account and information about enrolling on the General or Māori electoral roll.
- Eligible young people are advised that when they turn 16, with their consent, they will be referred to a Transition to Adulthood Service which will match them with a transition worker.
- Oranga Tamariki has a duty to maintain contact with a young person up to the age of 21 years.

3.2. Oranga Tamariki planning and preparing young people for transition

There has been a steady increase in the percentage of young people (both still in care and who had left care) who recalled being talked with and working out a plan for transition (JS 3 survey responses: Year 1 46%; Year 2 49%; Year 3 56%). However, only 38% said they had a copy of their plan. The proportion of in care and left care young people who had an FGC in Just Sayin' 2022 was similar to the Just Sayin' 2021 results.

In response to the 2022 Just Sayin' survey:

- 56% of young people still in care and 51% of those who had left care recalled someone had talked with them and worked out a plan for when they left care.
- 41% of those who had left care and recalled transition planning discussions had a copy of their transition plan.
- 81% of young people in care with a plan, felt they had a say in their plan for leaving care, but fewer (63%) said their plan reflected their goals and aspirations as they moved towards adulthood.

See Table 1 below for details.

Transition planning¹⁴	Just Sayin' 20	Just Sayin' 21	Just Sayin' 22
All young people	n=121-165	n=327-329	n=386-388
Do you feel you get to have a say in important decisions about your life? (<i>% of young people who said yes, some of the time to yes, all of the time on a 4-point scale</i>)	82%	78%	89%
Are the important people in your life involved in planning what happens with your life as much as you would like? (<i>% yes</i>)	55%	56%	56%
Young people in care	n=83	n=129	n=153-154
Has anyone talked with you and worked out a plan for when you leave care? (<i>% yes</i>)	46%	49%	56%
Have you been at a family group conference where people talked with you about what you wanted to do when you leave care? (<i>% yes</i>)	61%	68%	68%
Of those with a plan	-	n=98	n=119
Do you have a copy of your plan for leaving care? (<i>% yes of those with a plan¹⁵</i>)	N/A	38%	32%
Do you feel like you have had a say in your plan for leaving care? (<i>% yes of those with a plan</i>)	N/A	N/A	81%
Does it reflect your goals and aspirations as you move towards adulthood? (<i>% yes of those with a plan</i>)	N/A	N/A	63%
Have your whānau been involved as much as you would like in the planning process? (<i>% yes of those with a plan</i>)	N/A	N/A	68%
Young people who had left care (16-17 years old only)	n=10	n=35	n=49
Had anyone talked with you and worked out a plan for when you leave care? (<i>% yes of those who had recently left care</i>)	40%	54%	51%
When you left care had you been part of an FGC to discuss your future? (<i>% yes of those who had recently left care</i>)	50%	66%	65%
Of those with a plan	-	n=27	n=34
Did you have a copy of your plan for leaving care? (<i>% yes of those who had recently left care</i>)	N/A	59%	41%
Did you feel like you have had a say in your plan for leaving care? (<i>% yes of those with a plan¹⁶</i>)	N/A	N/A	62%
Did it reflect your goals and aspirations as you move towards adulthood? (<i>% yes of those with a plan</i>)	N/A	N/A	53%
Was your whānau been involved as much as you would like in the planning process? (<i>% yes of those with a plan</i>)	N/A	N/A	62%

7.1. Factors influencing an effective transition planning process

A transition support ‘champion’

An influential and committed Oranga Tamariki staff member(s) who supported transition and drove internal continuous improvement about the transition process. The staff member did not have to be a social worker, as we heard in interviews in 2021 that people in other roles could drive the processes.

... but [people] really passionate in the space and [who] have the ability to influence others on site. So we got a good mix of social workers, all our youth workers, some FGC co-ordinators. We got a supervisor and we got someone within the YJ [youth justice] space as well. ... (OT staff)

Oranga Tamariki social workers who:

- Understand the transition processes. While understanding of the TSS and the processes is increasing there is still a need to grow Oranga Tamariki social worker understanding of the service. One Oranga Tamariki staff member noted that the 0800 Transition phone number was a great resource for Oranga Tamariki staff and providers, though many weren't aware they could access it for themselves.

It's improving. People's ability to know what the system now can provide has improved over three years. It was zero when I was doing transitions. There was only two of us, we were the only two really, that knew what was really happening in the transition space for at least a year and a half, maybe even two years. Until the culture started to embed that the referrals need to happen at 16/17, the planning needs to take place at 18 (OT staff)

...some of the people that are in Oranga Tamariki don't know what the process is...A lot of social workers don't even know what we do and why they would refer and when to refer. (Pacific TSS partner)

- Are youth-focussed. Children and young people were described as having different needs and requiring different types of support. A dedicated Oranga Tamariki team and transition-specific social workers for young people (14+ years) with specialist skillsets to work with complex issues supported transition planning.

¹⁴ Just Sayin' survey findings include Just Sayin' survey of 16 year olds (see Section 2) and exclude those in a Youth Justice residence.

¹⁵ 'Those with a plan' is of those who selected yes, someone talked with them to work out a plan for leaving care or yes, they had an FGC to discuss their plans for leaving care.

¹⁶ 'Those with a plan' is of those who selected yes, someone talked with them to work out a plan for leaving care or yes, they had an FGC to discuss their plans for leaving care.

I think a dedicated team for all youth in each area is what should be put in place. Because once they get to 14, their needs change, they need a higher level of care from a social worker. The cases become more complex. We have more professionals involved with children. (OT social worker)

- Are adequately resourced for their role in transition support. Some Oranga Tamariki staff and social workers emphasised young people's needs required as much resource and attention as tamariki in the system.

Within Oranga Tamariki, the whole system is designed at the sort of zero, baby end and then young kids because they are the most vulnerable. When you are getting up to 16 and 17 the perception is that you should be doing okay. But the reality is that most of those kids, 50% of them, I would say, aren't doing okay, they need a lot of support... (OT staff)

If you've got a social worker who's got nil to 18 years... babies, toddlers, pre-schoolers. Young children need attention and teenagers tend to get forgotten ... And if they don't have anyone to talk that stuff, then their emotional trauma is continually added to. (OT social worker)

In one regional case study Oranga Tamariki staff noted that the dis-establishment of a youth-focused Oranga Tamariki social work role and team led to poorer relationships between Oranga Tamariki staff and TSS partners, and a loss of specialist Oranga Tamariki social work skills.

An effective Family Group Conference or Hui ā-Whānau co-ordinator

The FGC was commonly a venue where planning was discussed. A few interviewed TSS partners described the FGC co-ordinators as critical to ensuring young people's voices were heard and actioned, as well as the inclusion of all services/people that would actively support young people.

So the FGCs that I've been a part of have been really good. The co-ordinators are really good at implementing and hearing the young person's voice and bringing in people that are actually going to be helpful to that person... (Pacific TSS partner)

Young people with positive perceptions of their Oranga Tamariki social worker

Positive perceptions suggest a social worker is engaged with the young person and that engagement may flow through to transition planning. Compared to those who were less positive, young people who were positive about their Oranga Tamariki social worker¹⁷ were more likely to report:

- someone had talked with them to discuss a plan for leaving care (59% compared to 51%)

¹⁷ As assessed by positive responses to three questions about the social worker.

- they had been to a family group conference to discuss their plans for leaving care (72% compared to 64%)
- they had a copy of their plan for leaving care (36% compared to 26%)
- they felt they had a say in their plan for leaving care (87% compared to 74%)
- their whānau was involved in the planning process as much as they would have liked (72% compared to 63%)
- their plan reflects their goals and aspirations for leaving care (74% compared to 48%).

No other demographic characteristics of the young person were associated with increased likelihood¹⁸ of having been talked to about a plan for leaving care (including gender, Rainbow, ethnicity, disability, and age).

Young people's voices from Ngā Haerenga

Young people shared a loud message that it is often hard to know people's roles, where they are employed, and who does what.

Some young people who had had a good relationship with their social worker, felt let-down on being transferred to a transition worker. There were examples in year 2 where whakawhanaungatanga (connecting and building a relationship) was needed in the handover from social worker to transition worker. It was clear from rangatahi feedback that social workers should not just pull out because a transition worker is in place – instead, a period of transition between the roles is needed.

"They basically said, 'it was nice having you', discussed my future plans and then, yeah, that was pretty much it. Told me they were cutting me off. CYFS kind of were like 'okay later, here's the transitional worker'." (Bella)

"He's (social worker) helped me through so much" (Kai) –

but he now has irregular contact with his transition worker as the transition worker takes a long time to respond. (Kai)

7.2. Opportunities to improve transition planning

Opportunities to improve the planning and referral process for young people transitioning from care include:

- Continuing to increase the consistency of transition planning so all young people are part of a planning process with their Oranga Tamariki social worker and transition worker.

¹⁸ ANOVA was used, P<0.05 was considered significant.

- Further clarifying and communicating Oranga Tamariki social worker and transition worker roles and responsibilities as people interviewed in the regional case studies commonly noted a lack of clarity between Oranga Tamariki social worker and transition worker roles and responsibilities.
- Strengthening the life skills assessment. Oranga Tamariki care standards required a life skills assessment for young people but one TSS partner advised there had been a recent Oranga Tamariki decision in their region to stop assessing young people's life skills which limited transfer of information useful to TSS partners.
- Improving preparation for transition including responses to the life skills assessments. Oranga Tamariki care standards require social workers to prepare young people for transition by providing them with official documentation but TSS partners identified gaps.

Is it really working for our rangatahi? I think on the surface level, yes, for that basic needs stuff...getting what they need right now. But coming out of OT, they are not prepared. Life skills, they have got nothing coming out and it is almost like we have to start from scratch...[Young people] know they're 18 [and] leaving Oranga Tamariki but that is the extent of it. They don't know what else comes of transitioning into that new phase, whether it be back to whānau or living independently. (Pacific TSS partner)

8. Connection to a Transition Service partner

Choice of TSS partner and transition worker contributes to positive connections for young people in the four Oranga Tamariki priority groups: Māori, Pacific, young people with a disability and young people in the Rainbow community.

Contributors to an effective transition process identified through the evaluation included an engaged Oranga Tamariki contact, consistent communication between Oranga Tamariki and the TSS partner, and timely responses to queries. Where working relationships were effective the transition worker was engaged early and a key part of the transition planning process.

A network of transition partners has been established. At 30 June 2022, there were 70 TSS partners across Aotearoa/New Zealand, including kaupapa Māori, Pacific and other health and social service providers, who employed 137.75 transition workers. The number of TSS partners has increased by seven since the same time last year.

The TSS partners vary in size, geographical location and type of organisation. Some partners have extensive experience in supporting young people, and others were new to providing services for youth but brought a wealth of cultural knowledge and other expertise.

8.1. Referral rates have increased since 2021

Transition support is voluntary, so while all eligible young people must be offered a referral, not all are referred. Of those who are referred, not all go on to engage with the service. The proportion of eligible young people referred to a transition worker increased to 61% in 2022 (from 53% in 2021) (Table 2).

Table 2. Cohort of young people and numbers eligible and referred to transition workers (Source: Oranga Tamariki, CYRAS data)

	July 2019	June 2020	June 2021	June 2022
Total cohort	5,736	5,531	5,324	5,206
Eligible for a transition worker	1,673	2,066	2,372	2,713
Referred to a transition worker	112	654	1,251	1,653
Percentage of eligible young people referred	7%	32%	53%	61%

Across all demographic groups, a higher proportion of young people were recorded as referred in 2022 compared to 2021 (Table 3). There were small differences in the referral rates across groups. The proportion of eligible young people referred was lowest for young people who identified as both Māori and Pacific, Pacific young

people, males, and for those eligible through care only. However, higher proportions of males and young people with care experience are supported through the Transition Support line.

Table 3. Comparison between the characteristics of young people eligible for the TSS
(Source: Oranga Tamariki, CYRAS snapshot to June 2022)

Characteristics	Representation within the cohort eligible for TSS		Referral rates (Proportion of eligible young people referred to a TSS partner)		Representation within the cohort supported by Transition Support Line	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Gender						
Female	43%	48%	55%	62%	55%	42%
Male	56%	51%	51%	59%	44%	57%
Gender diverse	1%	1%	43%	71%	1%	1%
Ethnicity						
Māori	56%	55%	53%	61%	55%	56%
Māori and Pacific	9%	6%	50%	53%	11%	9%
Pacific	7%	7%	44%	52%	7%	7%
Other	28%	31%	55%	64%	28%	27%
Oranga Tamariki involvement						
Care	84%	78%	51%	58%	80%	81%
Care and Youth Justice	9%	15%	68%	74%	17%	10%
Youth Justice	7%	7%	59%	67%	4%	9%

8.2. A small proportion of young people decline transition support

Of young people responding to Just Sayin' 22, 60% currently had a transition worker and a further 22% had been supported in the past. Of those who recalled being asked if they wanted transition worker support, 5% had declined support (Figure 5). The main reason cited by these young people was they felt they didn't need one.

I felt I didn't need a transitional worker at the time I was in what I would call a 'perfect' state. I had no worries and I was succeeding at everything in life as a transitioning-to-independent mum would do. (Young person)

Of those who declined, 14% had a transition worker and one explained:

I said no but my social worker said that I had to have one. (Young person)

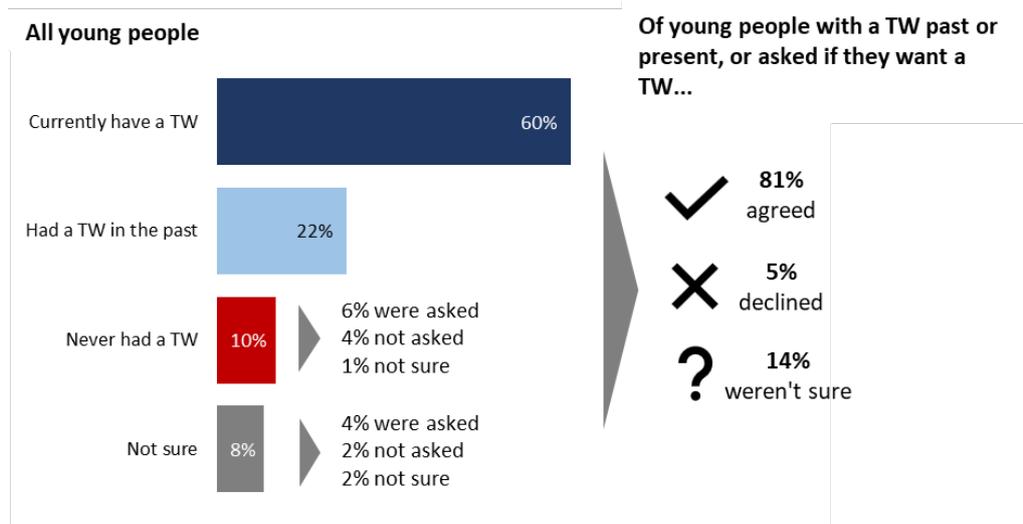


Figure 5. Young people's agreement to transition worker (TW) support (n=408).

Regional case study TSS partners and Oranga Tamariki staff noted reasons for young people declining support included:

- Some young people were not interested in ongoing engagement with OT:**
At the other end, it is the ones that really hate the system and don't want anything more to do with the system when they turn 18. (OT staff)
- Some young people had good support networks in place:**
So we have some declined because they already got a really good support network around them, which is great. (OT staff)

Young people's voices from Ngā Haerenga

Independence was discussed as a way of recognising the young people's own autonomy by making their own decisions and emphasised the fact that they did not need others – particularly Oranga Tamariki – to succeed.

'I was like I can do it myself, done it myself for 18 years now without you guys anyway. You guys were never a part of my life so I can do it on my own. I don't need you.' (Bella)

Table 4 presents how young people recall the transition process and their connection with the TSS across the last two years of Just Sayin'.

Table 4. Young people’s connection with a transition worker (TW) by care status and year

Connection with transition support services	Just Sayin’ 21	Just Sayin’ 22
Young people in care	n=14-37	n=21-134
Have you been asked about whether you want to have a transition worker? (<i>% yes of those without/not sure if they have a TW</i>)	38%	53%
Have you talked with a TW – this might be a social worker or someone else at another type of organisation? (<i>% yes of those without/not sure if they have a TW who have been asked if they want one</i>)	43%	21%
Did you agree to having a transition worker (<i>% yes of those who have TW experience or have been asked if they want one</i>)	N/A	80%
Do you think it would help you to connect with someone from a Transition Support Service? (<i>% yes of those without/not sure if they have a TW who haven’t/are not sure if they have been asked if they want one</i>)	52%	43%
Young people who had left care	n=12-39	n=14-238
Have you been asked about whether you want to have a transition worker? (<i>% yes of those without/not sure if they have a TW</i>)	31%	52%
Have you talked with a TW – this might be a social worker or someone else at another type of organisation? (<i>% yes of those without/not sure if they have a TW who have been asked if they want one</i>)	25%	40%
Did you agree to having a transition worker (<i>% yes of those who have TW experience or have been asked if they want one</i>)	N/A	82%
Do you think it would help you to connect with someone from a Transition Support Service? (<i>% yes of those without/not sure if they have a TW who haven’t/are not sure if they have been asked if they want one</i>)	33%	36%

Time delays between referral and seeing a transition worker also contributed to young people declining support. While many young people considered the time after being referred to seeing their transition worker was okay, 14% said they waited too long and 26% could not recall the time. Some interviewed Oranga Tamariki social workers and transition workers noted that in some cases the time between referral

to the TSS and young people meeting their transition worker was too long. During this time, young people received no communication or updates.

We do a referral, it goes to the transition service, they then have their meeting, and the transition workers pick who's working with who ... but then [there] just seems to be a big gap. And most of the kids in that space don't quite know what's really going on sometimes or there's not that sort of, ok, you're getting referred to transitions...So I think it's that set up engagement and stuff that could probably do with some work. (OT social worker)

The meet and greet took way too long so by the time we met up with him...they were not interested anymore... (Pacific TSS partner)

Delays also happened when the transition worker had difficulty engaging with the Oranga Tamariki social worker.

Because you are talking to the young person about this referral, timing is everything. They are ready then, and then they are going to have to wait a couple of weeks. Lots of things change, even in a day, for our rangatahi...Once they are ready to make that referral, the time to actually meet them needs to be cut down. Even trying to get in contact with the social worker is difficult to arrange that first meet. (Pacific TSS partner)

8.3. There are regional differences in referral rates to TSS partners

Regional referral rates recorded in CYRAS differ markedly, from a high referral rate of 88% in Canterbury to a low referral rate of 49% in the East Coast (Figure 6).

Results provided by young people completing Just Sayin' are not meaningfully comparable with CYRAS rates¹⁹. In the case study regions, in response to Just Sayin' 72% of young people in Auckland, 83% in the Bay of Plenty and 88% in Canterbury and the Upper South regions recalled agreeing to having a transition worker.

¹⁹ Oranga Tamariki cohort data records whether a young person was referred, or if they declined to be referred. There is a high proportion where neither 'referred' nor 'declined' is entered. Oranga Tamariki regional boundaries are not the same as young people's understandings of regions.

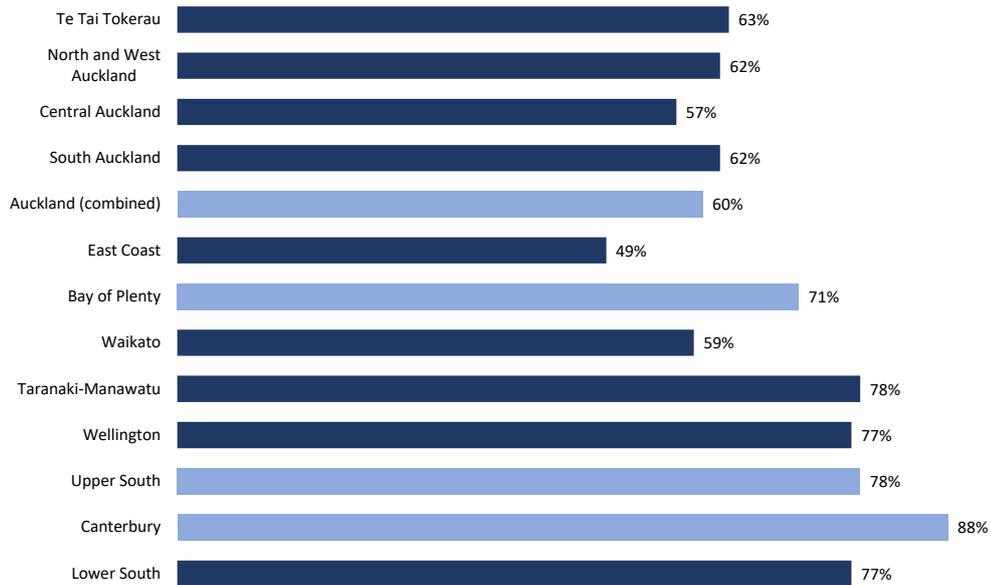


Figure 6. Proportion of eligible young people with referrals, case study regions (Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Upper South, Canterbury) are pale blue. (Source: Oranga Tamariki, CYRAS data analysis to June 2022, n=2,272)

8.4. Referral processes differed in the case study regions

Regional differences in referral to TSS partners are associated with variable Oranga Tamariki implementation of TSS in different regions, different access to TSS partners and other locality differences in services that are beyond Oranga Tamariki control. Consequently, young people in some regions are advantaged and some are disadvantaged.

At the moment, if there are 15 care and protection sites and five youth justice sites, they all operate more or less independently of each other. There are 20 different managers with 20 different social workers all doing 20 different things. If you do 20 sites times say, generally 20 social workers, that is 400 people doing something different, basically, which isn't good. (OT staff)

Referral processes in regions varied depending on whether there was a choice of TSS partners, regional capacity within TSS partners, TSS partner organisation type (Kaupapa Māori, Pacific or Western provider models) and the extent connection of a young person to a TSS partner was a collaborative process that placed the young person at the centre of decision-making (Figure 7).

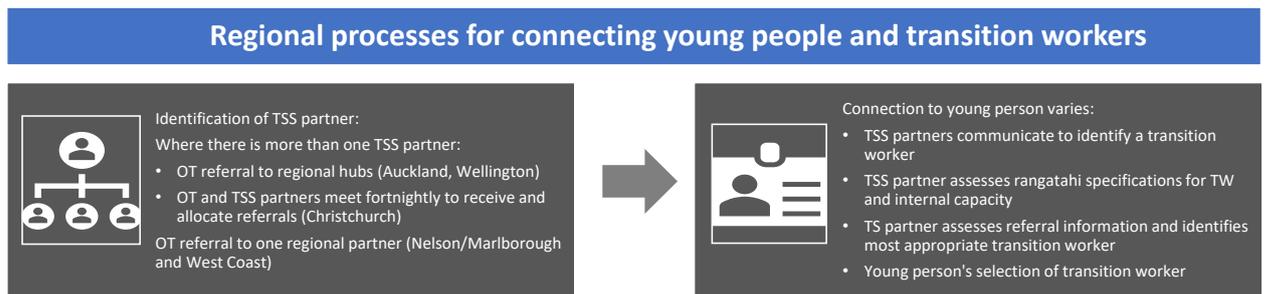


Figure 7. Connection of a young person with a TSS partner and transition worker

Regions with more than one TSS partner used different processes to match young people with a TSS partner:

- Referral hub and reference group that considers young people's fit and allocates young people to a TSS partner.
- Oranga Tamariki transition leads identify and select suitable TSS partners for young people based on the details in the referral form and the capacity of each provider. The referral is passed onto the provider, who can accept or decline it. These partners and Oranga Tamariki staff see the value in establishing TSS partner networks to share learnings and collaborate. However, for some, COVID delays have impacted on embedding these processes into practice.
- Where there was regular communication and meetings between Oranga Tamariki and TSS partners and collaboration between TSS partners, young people could be allocated to the transition worker expected to be the best fit with that young person, regardless of the TSS partner they were employed by. Regional disability advisors were available to support the connection of young people with a disability to a TSS partner.

We're trying to create a space where the rangatahi voice has more control and agency over their transition experience. ... Kaimahi are able to identify themselves, "I would be a good choice for that young person...I'm into the stuff they're into, or I match the preferences that they've identified in the referral." ... [The young person] just selects from the list of existing Kaimahi, who have put themselves forward as potential options. (Mainstream TSS partner)

Regional case study TSS partners noted that diverse representation of TSS partners was critical to matching young people with culturally appropriate services and supports. Māori and Pacific TSS partners provide a range of options and supports for young people regardless of previous engagements they may have had with other non-Māori/Pacific TSS partners and organisations.

We look at the young person, and we will match who will work better with that person, and culture is a big thing for us...Sometimes we go head-to-head with other organisations in the referral meetings because if another youth transition

organisation says “they have been with us in the past, they should be with us, again” we always go back with “they’re Pacific, they need to be with us”. We allocate within the team to who’s the best fit for that young person. (Pacific TSS partner)

Across all Just Sayin’ survey respondents, 46% felt they had a choice about their transition worker and 17% weren’t sure. Of those who had left care and had experience with a transition worker, 47% said they had a choice (Figure 8).

Different regional processes aligned with the extent young people felt they had a choice of transition worker. In Canterbury, where there is a central referral hub, monthly Oranga Tamariki champion meetings, and Oranga Tamariki and TSS partner monthly meetings, 65% of young people considered they had a choice of transition worker. In contrast, in Auckland where there is also a regional hub, 35% of young people responding to the survey considered they had a choice of TSS partner. In the Upper South Island, one service covers a large geographic area and 25% of young people considered they had a choice.

Did you have a choice about your transition worker?

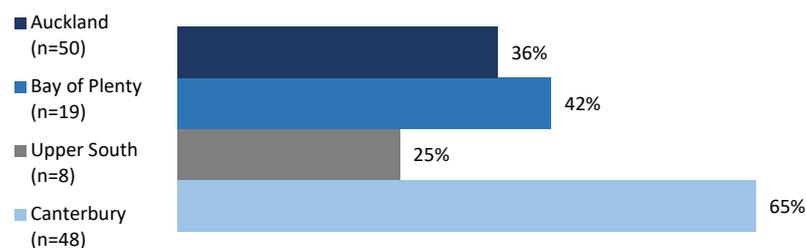


Figure 8. Just Sayin' 2022 respondents with matched CYRAS data, choice about their transition worker by Service for Children and Family region (%yes) (n=125).

8.5. Effective communication was key to an effective referral process

Regions with an engaged Oranga Tamariki contact, consistent communication, and timely responses to queries considered their transition process was working well.

One of the areas we have obviously identified was we need to strengthen the relationships between Oranga Tamariki and our providers, because in previous surveys... The key is really relationships, to make it work and that's probably why it's working quite well in our region. (OT staff)

Effective working relationships were built through:

- Effective Oranga Tamariki leadership

I think [TSS partner manager] has got a really good relationship with the [OT] site manager and managers...if we have any concerns, she goes directly to the site manager and there is a quick response from there. (Pacific TSS partner)

- A consistent Oranga Tamariki point of contact

There was a time where their [OT] staff turnover was higher. Now they've got one person more dedicated to looking after us, that's certainly helped...we've got consistency in our own service... (Mainstream TSS partner)

Good would be key social workers in OT that know what they're doing, and that communicate with you. That's great. Social workers that know the transitional service, great. Being able to keep in contact with social workers when they're off [duty] and I even when I'm off [duty]...if it's important stuff. (Māori TSS partner)

- Regular hui between Oranga Tamariki staff and TSS partners, outside of the panel meetings

We have had two hui with our providers, where we covered off different trainings needs, and just relationship building between us and them...

- Mutual respect for the Oranga Tamariki and transition worker roles and working together to support young people

My dealings with Oranga Tamariki so far have been awesome. Especially one of the social workers, she does a lot for her youth and it is quite contagious. I like one of them in particular, who communicates and tells me everything that I need to know to help the boys that I have got so far...It is quite funny, the relationship she (OT SW) has with them (young people) and they love her, you can tell. One of the boys, he is anti-Oranga Tamariki but he is not anti his social worker. She does a good job with him. (Mainstream TSS partner)

And the importance of getting together [OT and provider] right from the start when the rangatahi gets allocated, so everyone understands each other's role and responsibilities and how they can best work together. (OT staff)

We were quite strong on our first initial meeting, we'd like the social workers to be a part of it. So the young person, hopefully, already has a relationship with their social worker that then they can sort of work together, the three of us. And that doesn't always happen. And so we've really been pushing for it more and more. (Mainstream TSS partner)

A connection with a Māori social worker at Oranga Tamariki was important for Māori transition workers.

The relationships that I have with our rangatahi social workers are important to me because that's the other support person. (Māori TSS partner)

8.6. Transition for the young person is strengthened through early connection with a transition worker

Positive connection with a transition worker and their engagement in planning for transition is the foundation for forming a relationship between the transition worker and the young person.

Transition support for the young person was most effective when there was early referral. Oranga Tamariki staff highlighted that early referral was supported by an increased recognition and understanding about the role and value of TSS partners among Oranga Tamariki staff as the service has evolved. Interviewed regional Oranga Tamariki staff in the South Island noted Oranga Tamariki referral of young people as early as possible provided more time for relationship building with the transition worker and for the transition worker to be part of the planning process.

But the other thing we've tried to do is refer rangatahi as soon as possible to the transition service so that relationship can be developed. (OT staff)

Some TSS partners across all regions questioned how closely Oranga Tamariki social workers engaged and worked with young people and thought late referral may be influenced by:

- A lack of Oranga Tamariki engagement: Some TSS partners implied that this resulted in a rush to offload/discharge young people at 18 years and placed additional and unnecessary pressures on TSS partners.

I think it really depends on the social worker, ... I think part of the reason why we're getting these late referrals when they're 17, 18 is because they may have not been working closely with the young person. And then I feel that it's kind of rushed towards the end. (Pacific TSS partner)

- Limited understanding among Oranga Tamariki of the TSS partner services
I don't even think they (OT social workers) know what is happening...some of the people that are in Oranga Tamariki don't know what the process is...A lot of social workers don't even know what we do and why they would refer and when to refer. (Pacific TSS partner)

- Communication and exchange of information about the young person. The transition plan was one way of sharing information about the young person.
The initial handover, that's where there's room for improvement. [The plans] seem very detailed referrals, but we find later down the track that there's a lot more to the story than what's initially captured on that first referral form... (Pacific TSS partner)

- However, many we interviewed preferred a discussion between the Oranga Tamariki social worker and the transition worker to gain a broader understanding of the young person, their family dynamics and needs that were not included in the referral form.

But the thing is, we do this referral, and then it goes to this group of people that sit around and talk about it. We don't then have an active part in that, which annoys me, because you put some stuff on a piece of paper, we all know that the written word can be misinterpreted. ... I don't like that process, but I don't know how else it can be different. (OT social worker)

Some TSS partners built on limited information provided through referral forms with young people to develop a holistic transition plan.

... the referral form, it's just got a lot of writing. So it's a lot of reading for us. But I think just to break it down, we have an ecological model, which kind of just breaks down the individual background, aspirations, the people, professionals that are working with our young person. And we also have, goal settings that we do with our rangatahi just so we know, their goals and how we can help them and the avenues that they can take to reach their goals. (Pacific TSS partner)

8.7. Opportunities to strengthen the referral process

Opportunities to strengthen the referral process and fit between young people and the TSS partner include:

- ensuring early referral and engagement with a TSS partner
- continuing to build the relationship and communication between Oranga Tamariki and the TSS partners
- improving information in referral forms where they are going to referral hubs or group discussions about which TSS partner is the best fit for the young person.

9. Transition support for young people

Evaluation data confirm the importance of a relationship-based model of transition support for young people who have not been well supported during their time in Oranga Tamariki care.

Building relationships takes investment in time. Regional case study TSS partners and survey self-assessments by young people identified a substantial proportion (55%) of young people eligible for transition worker support had complex needs. Responding to these needs requires intensive support, time and resource.

The TSS partner contracts have recognised that young people's needs vary and time is required to build relationships and provide support varies. Caseloads need to continue to allow this time.

Eighty-one percent of young people who had a transition worker considered their transition worker made things better for them. Young people were more positive about the support provided by their transition worker than their Oranga Tamariki social worker, suggesting the transition support received aligned with the needs of many young people and filled a gap in support for young people transitioning from care.

9.1. Transition worker characteristics are important to young people

When asked what is important in a transition worker, 19% of responses mentioned a demographic characteristic and 86% mentioned a quality (Figure 9). Most young people preferred a transition worker with a similar demographic to themselves.

Prefer to have someone male (the same gender as me) and Māori, an outgoing person. (Young person)

Many of those who mentioned a quality spoke of having someone who understood them, as well as having someone who had a passion for supporting young people.

A comprehensive understanding of the difficulties kids in care face when transitioning out as well as strong emotional intelligence, knowing when to listen and when to speak. (Young person)

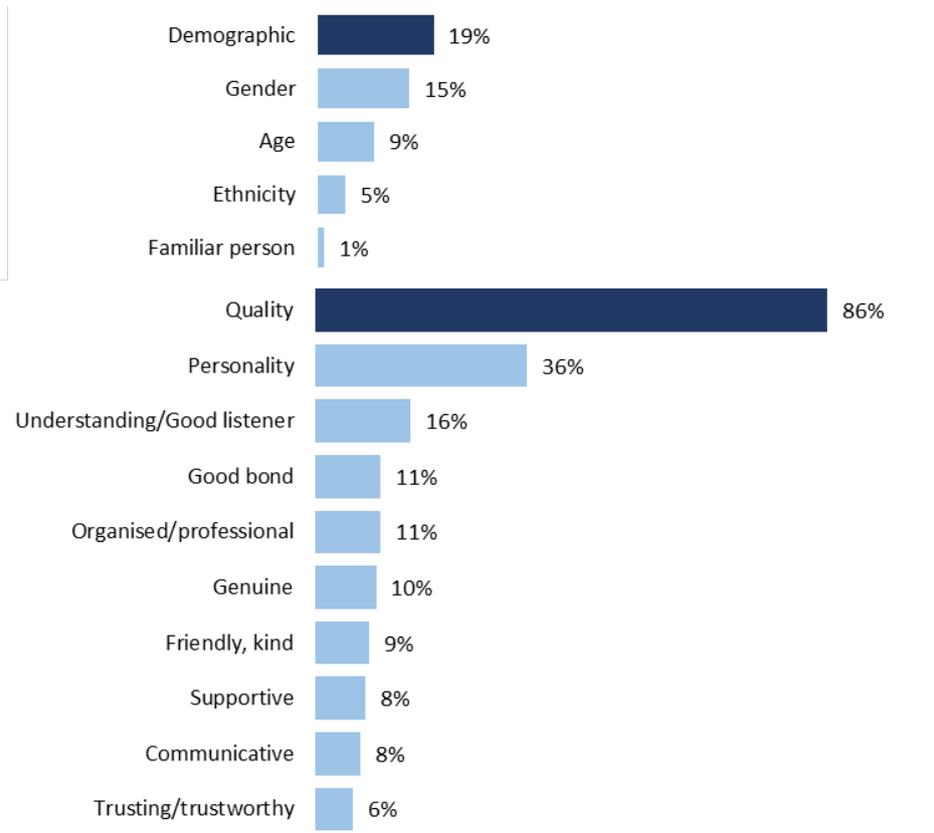


Figure 9. Open-text responses of what is important to young people in a transition worker (n=275).

Many young people explained the need for transition workers to have the ability to take time to listen and understand young people’s needs and behaviours without judgement.



Others believed having a motivated transition worker who set goals was important.

It's important that they listen to your passion and goals and plans for your future and they are there when you need help or even someone to talk to and are willing to speak up and have your back when you need them

Someone who sets realistic goals and guides me through the process someone who gets in my waka with me.

A few young people spoke of technical aspects of the role, such as being organised, available, and interacting professionally and effectively.

Their willingness to help and to know what they are doing!

Having someone that can support you and take correct care of you as a professional.

9.2. Most young people said their transition worker made things better for them

Young people's responses to survey questions about the quality of support they received from their transition worker have been consistently positive (Table 5). Eighty-one percent of young people who had a transition worker considered their transition worker made things better for them.

Young people were more positive about the support provided by their transition worker than their Oranga Tamariki social worker, suggesting the support received aligned with the needs of many young people.

Nearly three-quarters (72%) gave positive answers to all three questions below while 9% were negative to all three questions.

- Yes, my transition worker...
 - understands what kinds of support I need (83%)
 - is there when I need them (79%)
 - does what they say they would do 'most' or 'all of the time' (81%).

The characteristics of young people who were positive in response to all three questions about their transition worker compared to those who were less positive, did not vary significantly by care status, gender, ethnicity, complex needs or age, though Rainbow young people were significantly less likely to rate their transition

worker positively for all three questions, compared to those who were not Rainbow²⁰.

²⁰ ANOVA was used, $P < 0.05$ was considered significant. Due to the small sample size the margins of error for estimates is large.

Table 5. Young people's experiences of transition worker and social worker support^{21*}

Connection with transition support services	Just Sayin' 20	Just Sayin' 21	Just Sayin' 22
Young people in care (with a transition worker)	n=38	n=91-92	n=106-107
Do you think your transition worker understands what kinds of support you need? (% yes)	87%*	80%	83%
Does your transition worker do what they say they would do? (3- most of the time, to 4- all of the time, on a 4-point scale)	92%*	83%	80%
Is your transition worker there when you need them? (% yes)	89%*	83%	78%
Does your transition worker help make things better for you? (3-yes I think so, to 4 yes, definitely, on a 4-point scale)	89%*	80%	78%
Of those still in care	n=83	n=126-128	n=148
Does Oranga Tamariki help make things better for you? (3-yes, I think so, to 4-yes, definitely on 4-point scale)	64%	61%	59%
Does your Oranga Tamariki social worker do what they said they would do? (3-most of the time, to 4-all of the time, on 4-point scale)	72%	65%	63%
Is your Oranga Tamariki social worker there when you need them? (% yes)	67%	66%	66%
Do you think your Oranga Tamariki social worker understands what kinds of support you need? (% yes)	64%	65%	66%
Rangatahi who had left care	n=23	n=163	n=218
Do you think your transition worker understands what kinds of support you need?	91%*	81%	83%
Does your transition worker do what they say they would do?	87%*	79%	82%
Is your transition worker there when you need them?	78%*	78%	79%
Does your transition worker help make things better for you?	91%*	79%	83%

²¹ 16-year-olds were not asked all questions in 2020. These questions are marked with an asterisk beside the 2020 figure.

Young people's voices from Ngā Haerenga

The research team found that an important role transition workers played was firstly, connecting (building hononga) with young people, helping to provide practical support, and helping to set young people up for success by assisting them with good planning moving forward.

Overall, many young people expressed positive relationships with their transition worker.

"He [social worker] used to work at [Youth Justice Facility] so when he came in there, he knew quite a lot about what was going on so it was good talking to him. Then he left and I got [a worker of a different ethnicity]. He was pretty cool. I thought, 'I probably won't be able to connect with him much,' knowing him from here. And then it turns out he was pretty cool. He was quite helpful." (Luke)

"Then I got her maybe year 12 at college and then she turned into my transition worker and, yeah, we got along well." (Belinda)

"She's lovely. She's nice. I've been emailing her about a few things. She just lets me know when I need help, that kind of stuff, but I don't – I don't really need help so I don't ever really talk to her that much." (Bella)

However, some young people expressed difficulties.

"We were put on a once every eight weeks type of catch up... it was really hard because there were so many different people coming in saying, 'Yeah. I'll be your worker today.' I had a worker for one day and she was gone." (Oliver)

9.3. Many rangatahi Māori wanted transition support from Māori

Half (56%) of rangatahi Māori with a transition worker were supported by a Māori TSS partner and/or by a Māori transition worker (Figure 10). The percentage has increased over the survey years.

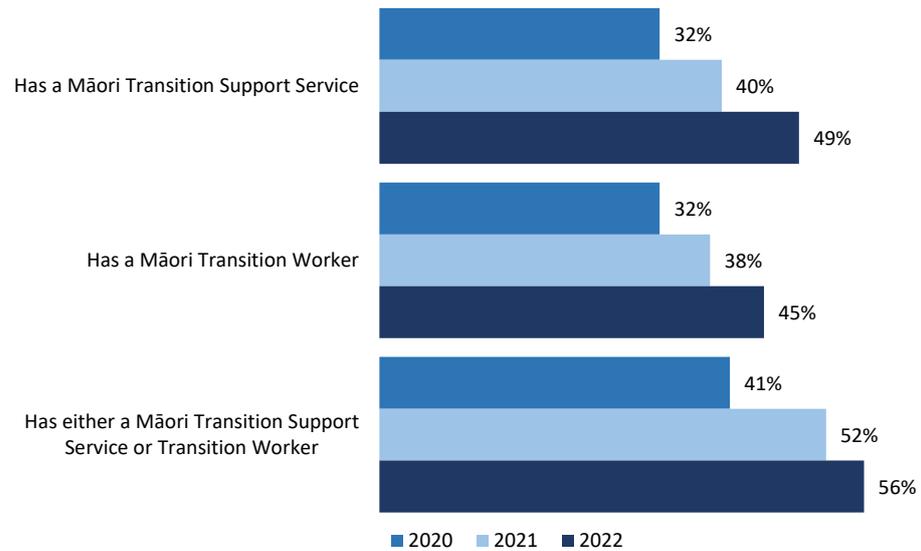


Figure 10. Ethnic match of transition support partners and transition workers (asked of Māori with a transition worker JS20 n=37, JS21 n=149, JS22 n=173)

There was no difference between the percentage of rangatahi Māori with a Māori TSS partner or Māori transition worker who responded positively to all three questions regarding their transition support compared to rangatahi Māori with a TSS partner that was not a Māori service (71% and 72% respectively)²².

The proportion of rangatahi Māori who were not being supported by a Māori organisation, who said they would like to be, has increased across the three survey years (JS20 – 17%; JS21 – 23%; JS22 – 33%) (Figure 11).

²² My transition worker understands what kinds of support I need, is there when I need them, does what they say they would do 'most' or 'all of the time'.

Would you like to have a Māori organisation as your Transition Support Service?

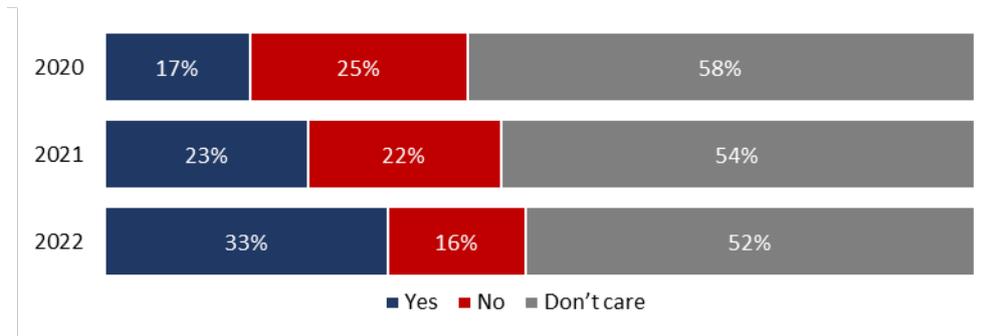


Figure 11. Rangatahi Māori desire for Māori Transition Support Service (asked of Māori without a Māori Transition Support Service JS20 n=24, JS21 n=90, JS22 n=89)

9.4. Some Pacific young people appreciated Pacific transition support

Fewer Pacific young people with a transition worker were either supported by a Pacific TSS partner and/or their transition worker was Pacific, compared to 2021. Of those not being supported by a Pacific organisation 12% said they would like to have a Pacific organisation support them, compared to 23% in 2021 (Figure 12).

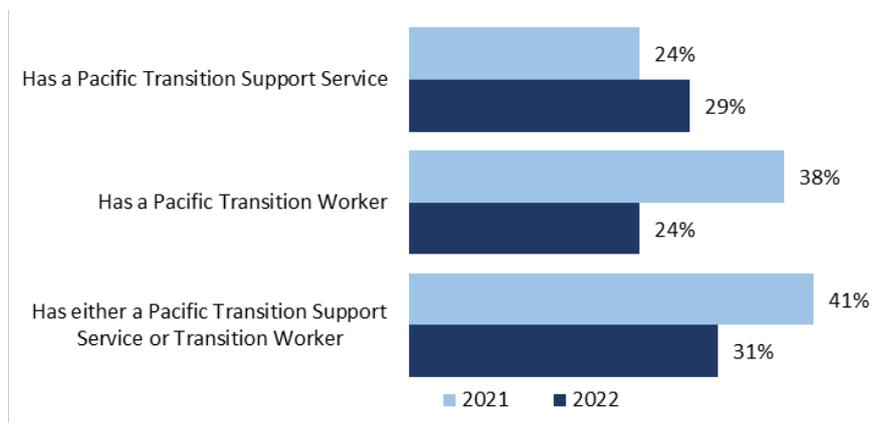


Figure 12. Ethnic match of transition support partners and transition workers (asked of all Pacific JS21 n=34, JS22 n=35²³)

For Pacific young people, a higher percentage supported by a Pacific transition worker and/or Pacific TSS partner were positive about their transition worker, compared to those without (73% compared to 63% who did not have a Pacific transition worker or TSS partner). However, the difference was not statistically significant²⁰.

²³ 2020 results have been excluded for Pacific rangatahi due to the small n value.

9.5. Transition support aims to uphold and enhance the rights, dignity and self-determination of care experienced young people

Transition support is led by the young person's identification of the skills they would like to develop and the support they need to achieve those skills. As the profile and level of need of young people varies so should the intensity and type of support.

Regional case study TSS partners highlighted several mana-enhancing aspects of their service models that upheld and enhanced the rights, dignity and self-determination of care-experienced young people. This included:

- **Relationships:** TSS partners described engagement with young people and building strong, trusting and ongoing relationships as a critical part of their work.

It's re-establishing that relationship with us... We're picking up the scraps of broken relationships through the system. Kids are often traumatised and I think it's hard for them to trust us. They assume that we're just like every other organisation that they've been with. (Pacific TSS partner)

One TSS partner also noted young people in prison valued the trusting relationship and support they received which helped them to improve their relationships with prison staff and peers and to de-escalate potential risky situations.

One [young person] just appreciated having someone that she could trust...even when the prison officers would pass the phone through me, they'd speak to me and then speak to her they're like, you know, thank you so much. It's helpful for them that we're having this kōrero because it just helps to de-escalate stuff quite often. (Mainstream TSS partner)

Prioritising relationships was described by TSS partners as:

- Supporting young people to be directly involved in choosing their preferred transition worker.
- Proactively engaging in opportunistic discussions and connections with young people to promote TSS supports and benefits and, emphasise that the services were external to Oranga Tamariki.

We've tried to be really proactive in how you actually talk to the rangatahi about the transition service and what the benefits of it [are]... Some [young people] don't want to have that ongoing relationship with OT. There are benefits to having someone else sort of seen as not being attached to OT. (Mainstream TSS partner)

- **Young people's holistic needs:** and working together to develop a transition plan that is responsive to and inclusive of young people needs.

We do get together with other professionals, could be their lawyer, the social worker, their doctor, the teachers in school. We have a meeting, so we're kind of all

on the same page with that young person...So that we're just all in the loop...and where each professional can utilise their services for the young person. (Pacific TSS partner)

Engagement with whānau/families has also contributed to developing responsive and inclusive plans and relationships for some young people. One Pacific TSS partner was opportunistically able to engage with whānau/families through delivering food parcels during COVID-19 lockdowns in Auckland. This strengthened relationships with Pacific families and young people.

I like to meet with the family also. I met with the young person first, but then working very closely with the family, seeing what kind of supports I can implement at home. (Pacific TSS partner)

- **Young people's voices:** TSS partners commonly noted the importance of a young person-centred approach.

If the young person is in the driver's seat, regardless of what's going on, if they are driving the change, or the support, or whatever they're doing, that's one of our key indicators of success... (TSS partner)

A youth-centred approach was demonstrated through:

- Including young people in decision-making processes and supporting them to identify their own goals.

... we sit down with a young person. It's all about talanoa. It's all about listening, and not listening to react, but listening to understand kind of thing. Sometimes their plans can be out the gate but we don't tell them what to do. We just kind of drop gems here and there and guide them slowly. (Pacific TSS partner)

- Supporting young people to develop realistic plans to achieve their self-identified goals and overseeing progress toward these.

... being adaptable to what they feel they need but reminding them what they said and what they said their goals were at the beginning. (Pacific TSS partner)

We do a client plan with them. Pretty much it's all about goal setting ... The barriers and everything like that. What's going to stop them from achieving their goals? The little steps to help them achieve that goal and what can we do? ... We try and actually let them take the lead for everything as we try to support them. (Māori TSS partner)

- **Cultural contexts:** Māori and Pacific TSS partners engaged with young people in culturally meaningful ways. Mainstream providers held close relationships with other Māori and Pacific local providers to enhance accessibility to broader cultural support and (re)connection to culture and

identity. Some also recognised the importance of providing young people with mainstream and ethnic-specific options.

Utilising the Pacific models of care and practice...[our] assessment tool [is designed] around the Fono Fale model...assessing each pillar, like physical, spiritual, mental and then incorporating family culture and the environment...It's that need to be culturally responsive, culturally appropriate and to be respectful and mindful of people's different contexts. (Pacific TSS partner)

A Māori provider was offering to support with whakapapa and understanding where some of our rangatahi whakapapa to ... Being able to connect them with other providers with other strings, and some more cultural strengths has actually been useful for the rangatahi and our service as well. (Mainstream TSS partner)

9.6. Young people wanted to learn a range of skills

When asked what skills young people wanted for their future, young people most commonly said they wanted get their driver's licence (56%). Other skills were money management (55%), followed by other general life skills like relationship skills (40%), becoming work ready (37%), cooking (35%), getting ID (35%), parenting skills and enrolling in training (24%). In 2022, a larger proportion of young people selected each skill, except for becoming work ready (Figure 13).

What skills would you like to learn to help you get where you want to?

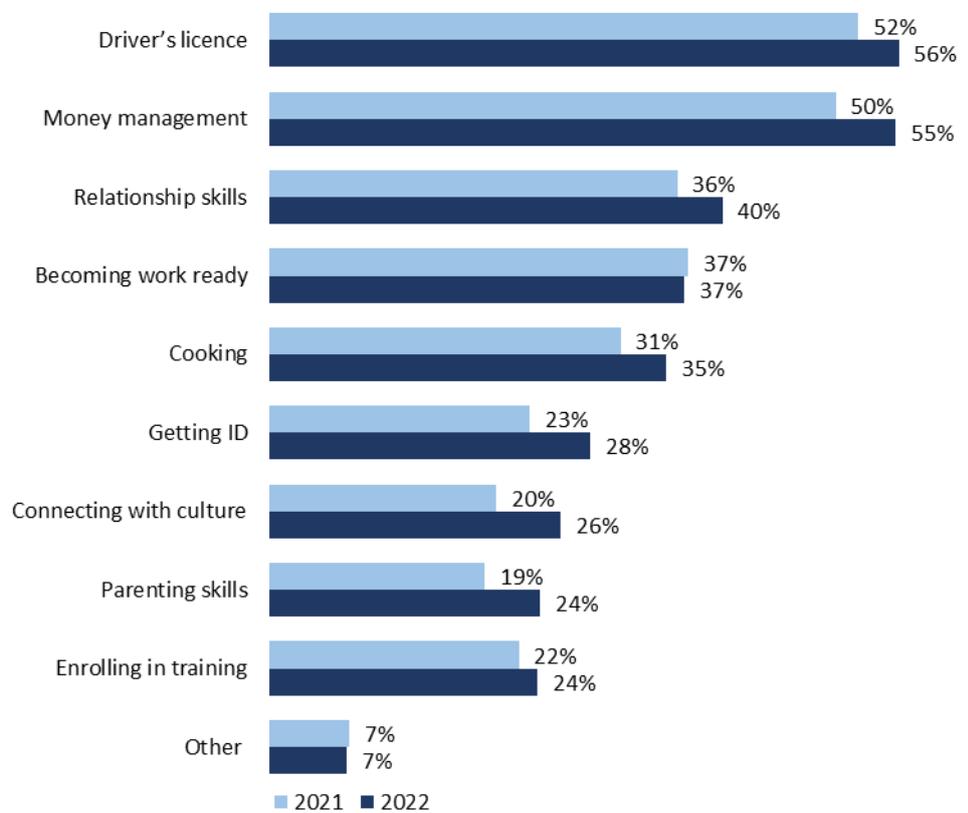


Figure 13. Skills young people would like to learn by survey year (2021 n=320, 2022 n=385)

A slightly larger proportion of young people felt supported to learn the skills they wanted to learn, compared to last year (2020 – 63%; 2021 – 61%; 2022 – 64%) (Table 6).

The proportion of young people who said they were getting the support they needed to learn those skills did not differ between people with a transition worker and those without. Although Oranga Tamariki care standards specify young people should have identification prior to leaving Oranga Tamariki care, 28% of young people still wanted help with getting identification, an increase from 23% in 2021. Of those who still wanted help getting ID, 54% were still in care and 46% had left care.

Table 6. Proportion of young people who felt supported to learn the skill they wanted to learn, by year (2021 n=320, 2022 n=360)

Skill	2021 % of young people supported	2022 % of young people supported	Change in % points
Driver's licence	62%	60%	-2%
Money management	54%	62%	8%
Relationship skills	52%	59%	7%
Becoming work ready	57%	64%	7%
Cooking	53%	56%	4%
Getting ID	49%	60%	10%
Connecting with culture	54%	53%	-1%
Parenting skills	51%	53%	2%
Enrolling in training	53%	56%	3%

TSS partners gave examples of what young people had been supported to achieve:

- Improve their life skills: TSS partners have encouraged and helped young people to learn and practice a range of life skills including basic hygiene, house cleaning and maintenance, social skills, grocery shopping and money management, obtain driver licences etc.

...How to build trust with people so they will then feel comfortable to go out flatting...There is hygiene, there's budgeting, there's how to do your washing...budgeting, saving, paying your bills. (Mainstream TSS partner)
- Improve access to services and information: TSS partners have helped young people to learn about and access services and systems such as WINZ and IRD to obtain official documents and records.

Access things like WINZ documents (OT staff)
- Gain their NCEA credits and identify and enrol with education providers.

Most of ours are just getting level one and two NCEA. Getting some background so that they can get into courses and education they are needing or wanting to get into. (TSS partner)
- Access physical and sexual health information.

What is their health doing? Are they getting their dental check before they leave care? Do they have a GP? Do they even know that they can get their free dental checks up to the age of 18? (OT staff)

- Be more independent.

It's just amazing seeing that transformation with her. When she first started, she was very, very needy, she couldn't fill out forms. She was not ready to be independent, but she found herself in a space where she had no choice. She was one that you'd get bombarded with texts all day every day. And now she will only reach out if she does need something. She's taken the initiative to do things herself now. (Māori TSS partner)

- Build self-worth: TSS partners have helped young people to gain a wider understanding of their rights and access a range of supports and entitlements (e.g., legal support).

Stuff with the law, like finding lawyers. Their rights, not understanding what they are going through in the court process. (Pacific TSS partner)

9.7. Most young people were happy with their frequency of transition worker contact

Sixty-five percent of young people who had a transition worker thought their frequency of contact with their transition worker was about right. A larger proportion of those who had left care thought their frequency of contact was about right, compared to those in care (in care – 58%, left care – 69%).

There were no substantial changes between surveys in the frequency with young people saw their transition worker (Table 7).

Table 7. Frequency young people see their transition worker by survey year (JS21 n =253, JS22 n=240)

Frequency	2021 %	2022 %	Change in % points
Weekly or more	27%	21%	-6%
Fortnightly	14%	21%	7%
Monthly	14%	15%	1%
Every few months	9%	17%	7%
Once or twice a year	5%	3%	-2%
Just when I request it	19%	19%	1%
Never	12%	5%	-7%

A smaller proportion of young people said they wanted to see their transition worker less, compared to 2021 (2021 – 12%, 2022 – 6%). In 2022, nearly half (42%) saw their transition worker weekly or fortnightly.

Just under one-third (29%) of young people wanted to see their TW more often (Figure 14). Nearly half (49%) of those who wanted to see their TW more often currently saw their TW monthly or less often.

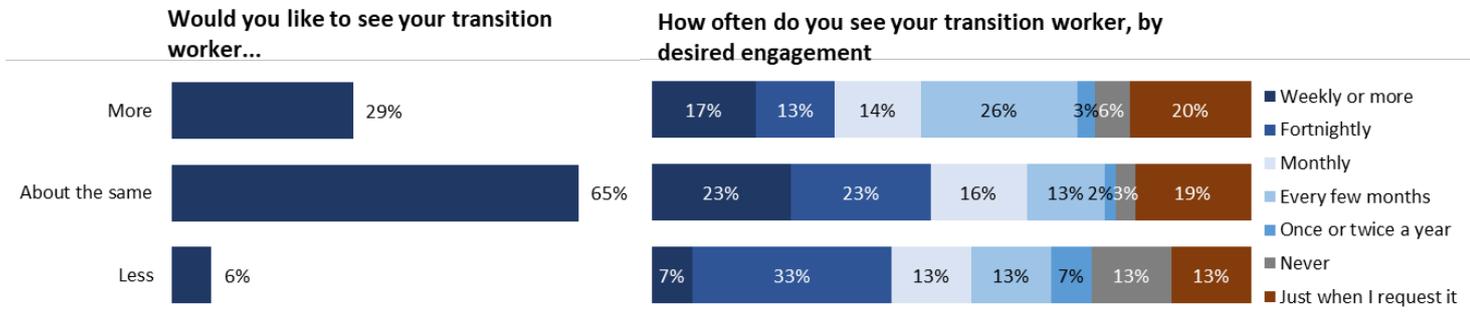


Figure 14. Frequency of support from transition workers (n =239)

COVID lockdowns challenged opportunities to interact effectively with young people. Oranga Tamariki and TSS partners swiftly pivoted to virtual service delivery during lockdowns. While this provided an opportunity to remain connected with young people, virtual engagement was not considered as effective and/or meaningful as face-to-face engagement.

9.8. Transition worker caseloads are important in a relationship-based service

There were mixed views among TSS partners about a caseload maximum of 15 young people. Some considered 15 manageable, while others thought it was too high and a caseload of 10 or 11 was ideal given the need to provide intensive support for young people with complex needs. Some TSS partners in smaller regions also noted a need to consider extensive travelling distances between TSS partners and young people when identifying ideal caseload numbers.

I think this is probably one of the contracts in our service with the most realistic caseload volumes. Our mental health clinicians have caseloads of 50. So to have been able to work with a small caseload in an intensive way, it's actually a really, really good thing. (Pacific TSS partner)

Some Oranga Tamariki staff anticipated an increase in demand for TSS and male transition workers in some regions which current capacity cannot meet. Some staff also noted that differential pay scales between Oranga Tamariki social workers and transition workers may impact on workforce recruitment and/or retention. TSS partners also considered that engaging multiple other providers who have expressed interest in becoming TSS partners could support workforce capacity and sustainability, and potential increased demand for services. However, as noted by Oranga Tamariki staff, while the splitting of FTEs across organisations may be

helpful, there is also a risk that this may result in less attention being afforded to young people.

I think the only risks that I always see is that we are running out of capacity. And because we have a lot of rangatahi coming our way and remaining in [South Island case study region]...so far, so good, we still have capacity...but...my biggest worry [is] that we run out of capacity and we have to put someone on the waitlist. (OT staff)

9.9. Responding to reasonable requests

The National Contact Centre recorded the number of calls to the TSS contact line showing the increase in calls from the end of 2020 continuing through to the April to June period in 2022 (Figure 15).

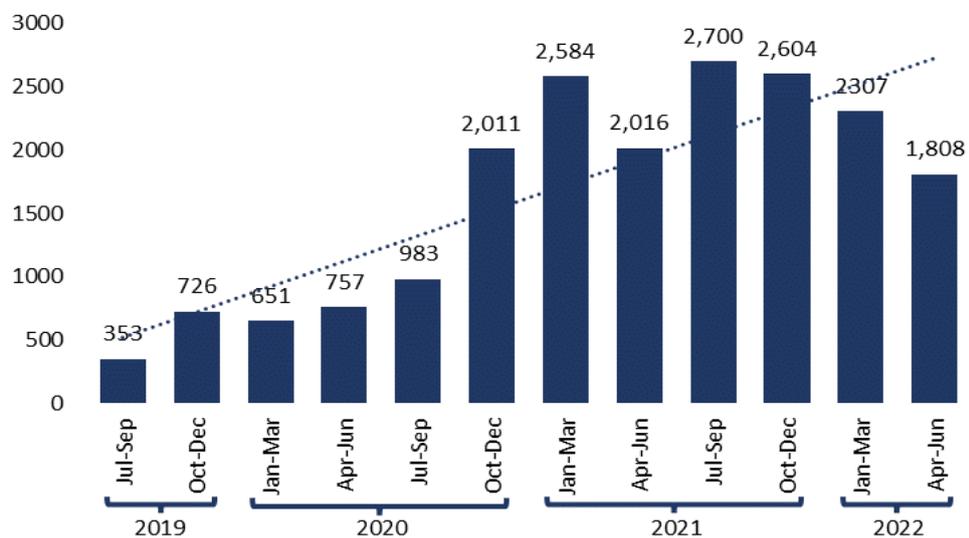


Figure 15. The number of calls to the TSS contact line by quarter (Source: Oranga Tamariki)

In response to the survey, 72% percent of young people knew how to contact Oranga Tamariki and 27% had called the transition support line. Young people in care were more likely to know how to contact Oranga Tamariki (83%) compared to those who had left care (66%) but a greater proportion of young people who had left care had contacted the support line (30%) than those in care (22%).

Compared to 2021, knowledge of how to contact Oranga Tamariki has improved for those who are in care, and a higher proportion of both in care and left care groups had contacted the support line (2021 in care; 15%, 2021 left care; 24%).

Most young people who had called the transitions support line were positive about the support provided, with 84% answering they helped either a little or a lot (Table 8).

Table 8. Awareness of how to contact Oranga Tamariki for support (Source: Just Sayin')

Maintaining contact with young people	Just Sayin' 20	Just Sayin' 21	Just Sayin' 22
	n=163	n=321	n=388
Do you know how to get support from Oranga Tamariki if you needed help? (% yes)	79%	69%	72%
Have you called the Transition Support Line at Oranga Tamariki? (% yes)	17%	21%	27%
Those who have called: Did they help you?			
(% yes – a lot)	41%	53%	43%
(% yes – a little)	41%	27%	41%

9.10. Financial assistance

Oranga Tamariki provides financial assistance directly through the National Contact Centre as well as through the TSS partners. Oranga Tamariki financial support payments to young people through the National Contact Centre peaked in the quarters ending December 2020 and March 2021 (Table 9). In the first two quarters of 2022 there were 277 (average value \$340) and 205 (average value \$280) payments.

Table 9. Financial payments made to young people from NCC (Source: Oranga Tamariki)

Quarter ending	Number	Total amount	Average amount
Mar-20	83	\$49,110	\$592
Jun-20	116	\$57,058	\$492
Sep-20	170	\$69,587	\$409
Dec-20	488	\$218,822	\$448
Mar-21	577	\$237,903	\$412
Jun-21	384	\$147,435	\$384
Sep-21	374	\$134,582	\$360
Dec-21	283	\$101,559	\$359
Mar-22	277	\$94,317	\$340
Jun-22	305	\$85,388	\$280

In the first half of 2020, early in the implementation of the TSS, there were more payments and they were for higher amounts on average. Over that period they were most often for accommodation (Table 10). Later quarters saw a shift towards payments for travel, and more recently for other purposes.

Table 10. NCC purpose of payments (Source: Oranga Tamariki)

Quarter ending	Travel	Accommodation	Education	Health	Emergency	Other
Mar-20	23%	37%	22%	3%	6%	9%
Jun-20	26%	48%	4%	5%	15%	1%
Sep-20	46%	9%	12%	2%	11%	17%
Dec-20	46%	25%	5%	1%	8%	14%
Mar-21	42%	14%	11%	10%	6%	15%
Jun-21	41%	6%	14%	5%	10%	25%
Sep-21	43%	8%	11%	6%	11%	20%
Dec-21	29%	17%	10%	16%	4%	25%
Mar-22	19%	15%	15%	12%	9%	31%
Jun-22	30%	8%	15%	16%	6%	26%

TSS partners may also provide financial assistance to young people. In financial year 21/22, Oranga Tamariki provided \$925,811 in financial assistance funding to TSS partners.

One of the biggest things has been around the funding that's been available, which has been very helpful. In terms of the financial assistance, I would say in terms of the transition grant, because now we don't hold the transition grants, and they're held by the contact centre. In my experience with rangatahi and it's a situation that's been quite difficult at times... Lots of the times, we would have to go back and get purchase orders, for example, from Oranga Tamariki, to have that transition grant use. But lots of young people don't want to go back to Oranga Tamariki, because they've been discharged and that just has a lot of trauma background. (Mainstream OT partner)

TSS partners also described helping young people navigate government systems, including accessing their full and correct financial entitlements through Work and Income.

9.11. Changes in transition worker

The TSS is a relationship-based service and inevitably over time transition workers will leave their roles. Of young people with experience with transition support, 50% had one transition worker and 44% had changed transition workers at least once (Figure 16).

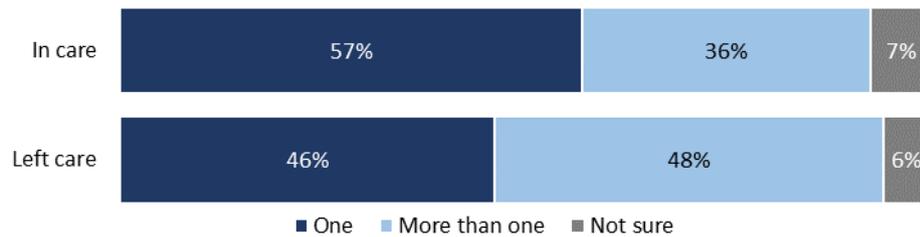


Figure 16. Number of transition workers young people have had (in care n=107; left care n=219)

Young people who had been supported by only one transition worker spoke of the difference it makes to have a constant person to support them in their transition towards adulthood.

[I] found that having the same transition worker for the past three years has given stability, having a familiar face and name has been really helpful. (Young person, Just Sayin' 2022)

There was no difference by age or ethnicity in the proportion of those supported by one or more transition worker. However, a larger percentage of Rainbow young people (50%) than young people who were not Rainbow (42%) had been supported by more than one transition worker, and a larger percentage of young people with complex needs (52%) had been supported by more than one transition worker, compared to young people with no disability (33%).

9.12. Leaving transition worker support

Most young people who had a current transition worker said they were still meeting with them (79%), however 13% were not, and 8% were not sure.

Feeling they no longer needed help was the main reason for leaving transition worker support for the 38% of young people who had a transition worker in the past or were not still meeting their transition worker (Table 11).

Table 11. Reasons given by young people for stopping transition worker support

Reasons	Just Sayin' 21 (n=56)	Just Sayin' 22 (n=137)
I no longer needed their help	41%	38%
I moved to a different area	18%	21%
I wasn't getting any help from them anyway	23%	19%
Can't be bothered	4%	6%
I didn't like my transition worker	9%	4%
Another reason	21%	28%

Other reasons were given by 28% of young people and included their transition worker moving on to another job or falling out of contact with them. Others said they were removed from the books for not being active, or that life circumstances got in the way, such as full-time work, having a baby or going to prison.



Regional case study TSS partners noted a breakdown in relationships between some young people and their transition worker – for some this is mainly due to high young people expectations for transition worker support and immediate calls for transition worker transfer if requests are not addressed immediately.

Just not getting what they want on the spot straightaway. Just expecting instant results, where some things take time. Just wanting things straight away and not getting it and saying, you're not helping me, I need someone else. (Mainstream TSS partner)

A regional case study TSS partner highlighted a commitment to maintaining contact with young people even after they left. If young people declined being supported by a TSS partner – partners ensured young people were aware that the *door was always open*, and some remained in contact regardless but less frequently.

So they can opt to just get a phone call from our transition support team. And that's done on a monthly basis. So it's not like a person walking alongside you. It's pretty much just a person giving you a call every month or so checking in and seeing how you are, and then they can always opt in as well. They're eligible for the service till they're 21. So they might change their mind when they turn 18. And be like, oh, no, actually, I really do need some one-on-one support...more than welcome to come back on board. (Pacific TSS partner)

9.13. Opportunities to strengthen transition support

As a relationship-based service a priority is ensuring continuity of a relationship for young people and maintaining caseloads at a level that enables transition workers to respond to young people needs. TSS partners with only one transition worker need to have processes where young people have alternative contacts within the TSS partner organisation and have built trust in a team to mitigate loss of relationships when one key worker leaves.

Understanding how to strengthen transition support and assess workloads and the aspects of support that are most effective requires quantitative data about how TSS partners assess young people, intensity of support and what interventions enable change. This information was not available to the evaluation.

10. Maintaining contact

Oranga Tamariki must remain in contact with eligible young people once they leave care or a longer-term youth justice residential placement if aged 15 to 21 years old. Oranga Tamariki deliver their legislative obligation through their contracts with TSS partners.

Inconsistent central recording of contact details for young people in CYRAS is a barrier to maintaining contact with young people who do not have a transition worker once they have left care.

Young people who have left care and don't have a transition worker are placed on an 'outbound calling' list at the Support Line. Transition Support Line advisors attempt to contact them every two months to check in, see how they are doing and offer support (which may lead to referral to a transition worker after they have left care).

Some young people are supported by other organisations as well as the TSS partners. One organisation is VOYCE Whakarongo Mai.

10.1. VOYCE Whakarongo Mai

Consistent with the results of Just Sayin' 2021, nearly two-thirds of young people (65%) knew about VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai, but only one-half (47%) knew how to contact them (Table 12).

Table 12. Awareness of how to contact Voyce – Whakarongo Mai for support (Source: Just Sayin')

Maintaining contact with rangatahi	Just Sayin' 20	Just Sayin' 21	Just Sayin' 22
	n=163	n=320	n=388
Have you seen or heard about an organisation called VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai? (% yes)	61%	65%	65%
<i>(All survey respondents)</i> Do you know how to contact VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai? (% yes)	46%	48%	47%

11. Young people's lives

11.1. Health and wellbeing

Young people were asked to assess their life in general. Proportions did not vary substantially across survey years, gender, ethnicity, care status, or whether young people had a transition worker (Table 13). However, fewer young people with complex needs were positive about their life compared to those without (52% reported good or better compared to 76%).

Table 13. Attitudes to life in general.

Note that the question "Are you receiving the health support you need?" was asked of everyone in 2022 but only of those who indicated poorly on Te Whare Tapa Whā in 2020 and 2021.

Life in general	Just Sayin' 20	Just Sayin' 21	Just Sayin' 22
	n = 115-165	n = 250-325	n = 325-390
How do you feel about your life in general? <i>(4-very good, to 5-excellent on 5-point scale)</i>	39%	40%	32%
To what extent do you feel hopeful about your future? <i>(3-reasonably to 4-very on 4-point scale)</i>	72%	72%	72%
Are you worried about anything in your life just now? <i>(7 to 10, severe worries, on a 10-point scale)</i>	15%	27%	23%
Are you receiving the health support you need? <i>(% yes)</i>	69%	56%	73%

Young people's voices from Ngā Haerenga

Although many young people had either experienced an improvement in wellness or described no great change in wellbeing, some also reported experiencing mental health challenges since leaving care and did not appear to be doing as well as they were when first interviewed.

A number of young people seemed much more aware of their past trauma at the Year 2 interview, as they journeyed into independence: over a third had accessed counselling or therapy or were in the process of arranging this, in some cases with assistance from Oranga Tamariki and the Transition Support Services.

The negative impact of young people's mental wellbeing and the lack of support for this also diminished mana. Some shared that they were struggling but felt

unsupported to deal with this and lacked information around their entitlements or how to access resources.

“I had to go back to counselling, so it’s been a bit hard but I am doing a course that helps me find myself, as well as my journey through things so it’s kind of a win-win system.” (Tania)

11.2. Where young people live

Most young people had stable accommodation and lived in one place. When asked where they usually lived, most young people (89%) selected only one answer (Table 14). The most common place young people lived was in a home with whānau or foster family (51%). Young people in care commonly lived with whānau or foster family (65%).

Table 14. Where young people live by care status.

Where young people live	In care % (n=149)	Left care % (n=245)	Overall % (n=394)
A home with whānau/foster family	65%	42%	51%
A home with partner or friends	20%	31%	27%
A home or flat by myself	8%	23%	17%
Living rough, in a garage, car or van, motel or couch surfing	4%	7%	6%
A group residence	5%	4%	4%
A school hostel or university	3%	4%	3%
Somewhere else	6%	4%	5%

A few young people (6%) were living in unstable accommodation (including: a garage, couch surfing, motels, cars/vans and sleeping rough). The number living in unstable accommodation is likely to be under-counted because they may be less likely to have their contact details recorded in Oranga Tamariki administrative data (CYRAS).

Most young people were reasonably positive about the quality of where they lived. Not unexpectedly, compared to the rest of survey respondents, the young people who reported living in unstable accommodation were less positive about where they lived, on an agreement scale from 7 to 10 regarding the following aspects:

- I have somewhere warm to live (41% compared to 89%)
- I feel like I belong (30% compared to 77%)
- I feel safe where I live (45% compared to 84%)

- I feel settled where I live (35% compared to 73%)
- I feel accepted for who I am by the people I live with (40% compared to 83%).

Young people in unstable accommodation were also more worried than the rest of survey respondents, with 33% rating their worries between 7 to 10, compared to 23% of the remainder of survey respondents (Table 15).

I'm really stressed I have to find somewhere else to live. (Young person)

Table 15. Housing quality

Accommodation	Just Sayin' 20	Just Sayin' 21	Just Sayin' 22
	n=117-121	n=312-323	n=381-389
How much do you disagree or agree with the following statements about where you usually live: (7-10 agreement out of 10-point scale)			
I have somewhere warm to live	91%	84%	86%
I feel like I belong	72%	70%	74%
I feel safe where I live	84%	84%	82%
I feel settled where I live	77%	75%	71%
I feel accepted for who I am by the people I live with	83%	78%	80%

Young people in care reported they wanted to live by themselves, with their partner, or friends and flatmates after they left care (Figure 17).

Who do you want to live with when you leave care?

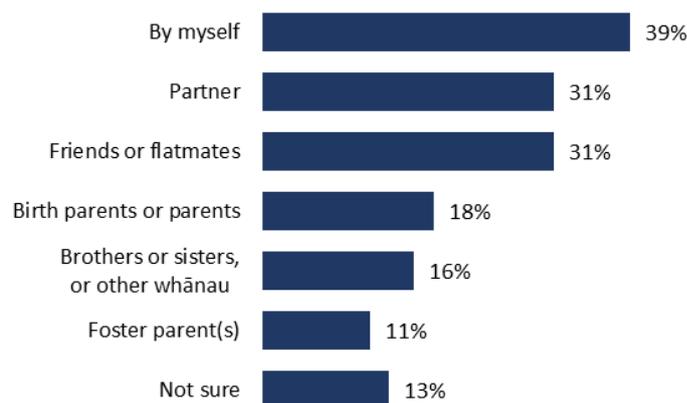


Figure 17. Young people in care living aspirations for leaving care (n=149)

Young people are mobile when they leave care. Forty percent of young people still in care weren't sure where they would move to after leaving care. Of those who had left care, 26% lived in the same house as before they left care (Figure 18).

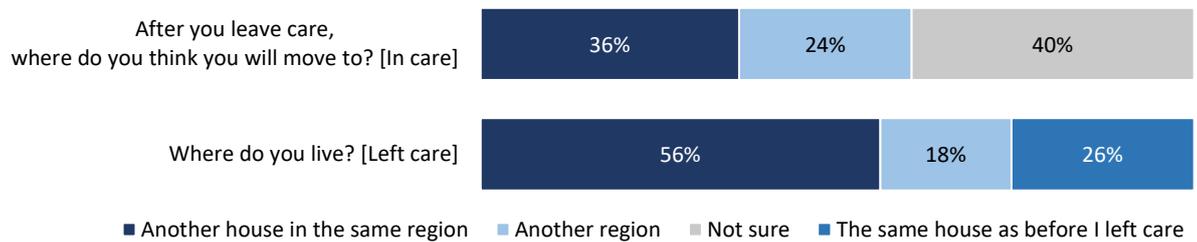


Figure 18. Young people mobility after leaving care (in care n=149, left care n=250)

Young people's voices from Ngā Haerenga

Only three of the 26 young people interviewed in Year 2 of Ngā Haerenga were in the same housing situation as at the time of the initial interview when all were living with whānau. A small proportion of young people had moved several times during the past year.

While the majority of young people talked about periods of disruption or tough situations they had to navigate within the last year, most were experiencing a sense of safety and stability with housing and living situations at the time of the Year 2 interview and were therefore able to reflect this sense of stability in their day-to-day lives.

Those young people lacking safe and stable living environments expressed a desire to have stability but were challenged by a lack of affordable accommodation, finding the right friends/peers to flat with, and, for several young people, not getting the needed support from agencies such as Work and Income.

"I haven't had a stable place for a long time apart from that unit, which I hated." (Bella)

"I was on the streets and then couch surfing to mates for like a couple of months and then I was like, 'I've had enough of this, I'm going to WINZ and try and get a place' but they wouldn't co-operate with me... I was trying to get a hold of WINZ (during a busy period of COVID-19) but they just keep hanging up on me saying their phone lines are too busy." (Kai)

If you had your choice, where would you like to live? (Just Sayin' 2022 n=358)



11.2.1. Knowledge of housing options and ETRR

The TSS cabinet paper outlined the intended aim of trialling a wide range of needs-based housing solutions to sit alongside and complement other housing supports available to young people, including those funded by the Ministry of Social Development. ETRR was the main accommodation option funded as part of transition support.

One of the Oranga Tamariki transition planning functions is to make sure that young people know of this entitlement and to find a caregiver if a young person wishes to remain or return to living with a caregiver. Additionally, Oranga Tamariki has the lead responsibility to provide ongoing training and support for caregivers, monitor the living arrangements, and provide financial assistance to meet the reasonable costs of the living arrangement.

ETRR roll-out begun in July 2019. In 2022, 43% of the cohort eligible for a transition worker was also eligible for ETRR. In the first iteration of Just Sayin' in 2020, knowledge of ETRR was low, but has increased through the survey years, significantly so between 2020 and 2021. There were no significant differences of knowledge of ETRR by gender, Rainbow, ethnicity, care status or complex needs²⁴ (Figure 19).

²⁴ ANOVA was used, P<0.05 was considered significant.

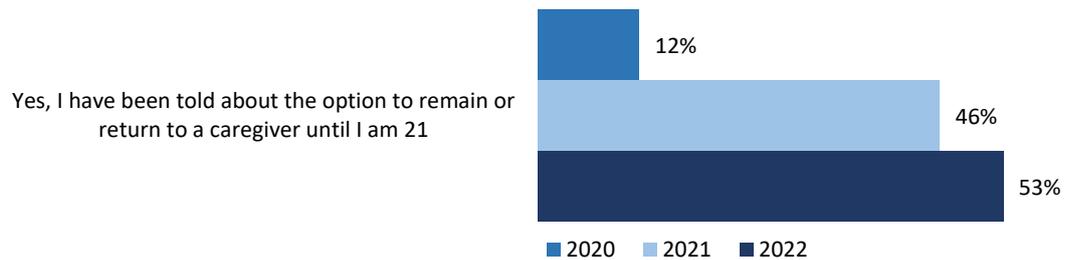


Figure 19. Entitlement to remain or return of those who had lived with a caregiver (JS20 n=165, JS21 n=250, JS22 n=305)

11.2.2. Housing challenges

Regional case study Oranga Tamariki staff and TSS partners highlighted that while many young people may want to live independently, there are major challenges to address young people’s housing needs.

- **Housing shortages across all regions:** Housing supply for TSS was further limited by a general lack of willingness among housing providers to accommodate young people – many of whom do not have references, credit history, or income. Oranga Tamariki staff and providers further acknowledged the struggles young people face in attempts to prove they can be optimal tenants.

We need housing. Already know there is like a shortage of housing nationwide, but no one wants to take on an 18 year old or 16, 17 year old. (Pacific TSS partner)

It’s ensuring that they’re in safe and stable living situations, which is very tricky, especially with the lack of resources and that at the moment in that housing space. Their age is definitely a barrier. You know, you’ve got to have a reference to get a house. But to get a reference, you’ve got to have had a house, you know, that kind of stuff. (Māori TSS partner)

Yeah, that’s a tough one, because obviously, our rangatahi...they haven’t got any references or any way of applying...And then, trying to apply for a flat when you’re 18. And you’ve got no potentially no family to back you up or be a guarantor. It’s super awkward and super hard for rangatahi. (OT staff)

- **Limited emergency housing:** Although some young people may return to whānau, some relationships may waiver and the risk that situations can change quickly and emergency housing is required is high.

Accommodation is hard to come by doesn’t matter what where you are. But that’s very hard. A lot of the rangatahi have relationships with their families, but it’s very up and up so they can have, they can be amazing this weekend. And next week, family breakdown, we need emergency housing. (Pacific TSS partner)

- Lack of continuity of income places young people in a vulnerable position and unable to pay for accommodation. There is a time lag between when

young people leave care and payments from either Work and Income or StudyLink commence. Bridging support is provided to assist young people in this position.

Actually, the biggest issue is when rangatahi in our custody, we're paying for a caregiver and then once they leave, they need to apply for potentially a job seeker [benefit] or student allowance, you know, to help with [their] study. But the process between custody ending, doing the application and getting it coming through it's like a couple of months, sometimes two months. So for them to have their own income to be able to even apply for a house is quite messy. So often on site, we're continuing to fund even though they've left custody, kind of like, bridge the gap, and support, but it's kind of a mess. (OT staff)

Example of housing solution

One region noted recent connections and access to local providers that can support young people with housing needs. However, supply was not able to meet demand and housing for young people with complex needs remained a challenge.

Thankfully, we got [organisation], we have got a transition house. We've only had that for a few months, which is amazing. Prior to that, it was definitely a struggle, but also there's some rangatahi that don't fit their criteria, the high needs ones, there's definitely no place for them to go, that's the hard part. Sometimes it's a long wait to get that if you need it straightaway. (Mainstream TSS partner)

One big need is obviously housing. That's a massive need and massive issue. We are very lucky now to have supported accommodation in our region, which has been absolutely brilliant and we have 20 spaces which is great, but it's still not enough. So housing is obviously a big barrier, especially for our rangatahi. (OT staff)

11.3. Identity

Most young people felt secure in their identity, proud of who they were and hopeful about their future: 59% were positive about **all three**. A slightly larger proportion of young people felt secure in their identity compared to 2021 (2021 – 72%; 2022 – 78%).

There was little change between surveys in some of the factors with the potential to enable young people to strengthen their identity including chances to connect with whānau, and support to find out about their ancestry or whakapapa.

Some young people didn't want any contact with whānau, others felt they 'sort of' saw them as much as they would like, and others mentioned logistical barriers (Table 16).



Table 16. Sense of identity and knowledge of whakapapa

Young people have an improved sense of identity and belonging	Just Sayin' 20 (n=164-5)	Just Sayin' 21 (n=326-9)	Just Sayin' 22 (n=387-8)
To what extent do you feel secure in your identity? (3-reasonably to 4-very on 4-point scale)	75%	72%	78%
To what extent do you feel proud of who you are? (3-reasonably to 4-very on 4-point scale)	72%	72%	73%
Positive for all three (Secure, proud, hopeful) (3-reasonably to 4-very on 4-point scale)	58%	58%	59%
Do you have as many chances as you would like to connect with your whānau? (% yes)	65%	69%	68%
Do you know your ancestry (whakapapa)? (3=yes, I think so, to 4=yes, definitely on 4-point scale)	41%	54%	55%
Do you want to know more about your ancestry or whakapapa? (% yes)	46%	51%	45%
Are you being supported to find out more about your ancestry/ whakapapa? (% yes – of those who wanted to know more)	52%	54%	49%

Two-thirds of rangatahi Māori knew about their whakapapa (66%). Of all young people, 55% knew their whakapapa or where they came from and 45% wanted to know more about their whakapapa. Of the young people who did not already know their whakapapa, fewer were being supported to learn more compared to 2021. Young people who identified as non-Māori or non-Pacific were less likely to want to know more about their whakapapa (Figure 20).

Connection with whānau and whakapapa

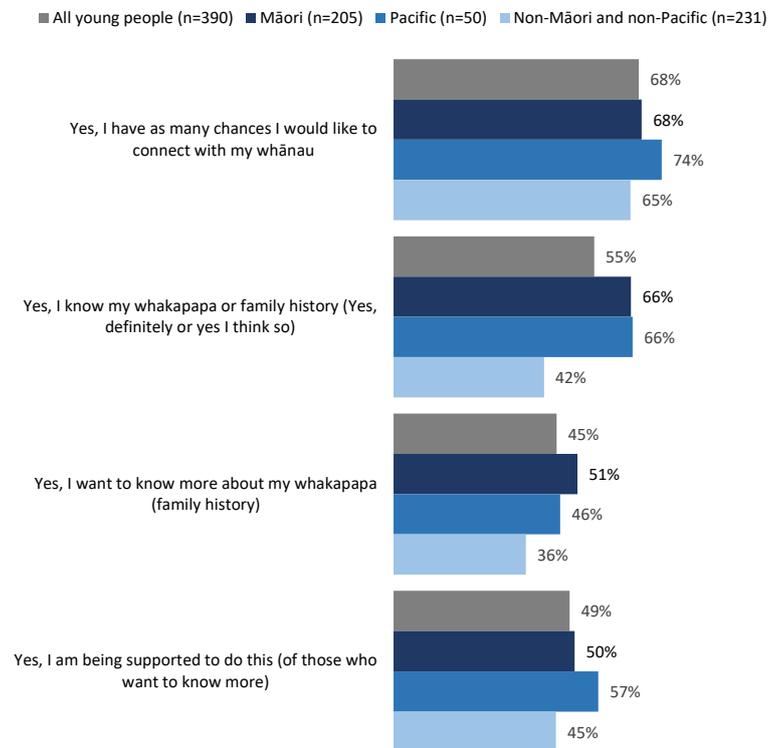


Figure 20. Connection with whānau and whakapapa (ethnicity is based on total count, n=390)

Young people's voices from Ngā Haerenga

A number of young people have a growing sense of pride in, and gave importance to, strengthening and maintaining connections with their whakapapa, whānau and culture through learning more about their connections to whānau, trying to connect with their marae, keeping connected with whanaunga (relatives) and beginning to reclaim their Māoritanga, by engaging in and learning about their culture and language. Examples of the diverse types of connections to their cultural heritage were shared. Several young people were learning, or had a desire, to speak te reo Māori.

"Well, I want to learn a bit more about the language because I only know some of it." (Brooke)

Other young people were not seeking out their whakapapa connections, but some were happy in knowing that if they wanted to they could.

"I'm just like, 'I have my family and they're my family, but if I want to know, I want to know, but if I don't, it's all right'. But I'm not too worried." (Britney)

11.4. A supportive adult in their lives

Just under two-thirds of young people had an adult they could turn to for support. When asked who they would go to for support, young people commonly said adult whānau members or carers. Sixty-one percent of young people included an adult in the list of these they would turn to for support, while 27% would only turn to a friend, sibling or partner and 12% said they would not turn to anyone. There was no statistically significant difference in the proportions of young people in care and who had left care who had an adult they could turn to (Table 17).

Table 17. Who young people would go to for support

More young people have a trusted adult in their lives	Just Sayin' 20	Just Sayin' 21	Just Sayin' 22
	n=163	n=320	n=380
If you were going through a difficult time and needed help, do you have someone you could turn to? (% yes)	80%	76%	77%
Young people who could turn to...			
An adult	68%*	68%	61%
Only a friend or sibling	26%*	21%	27%
No one	6%*	11%	12%

One-half of young people who had someone to turn to, could ask for help or advice from adult whānau members such as their parents, grandparents or carers, adult brothers or sisters and 12% of young people mentioned they would turn to someone else (Figure 21). Of those who selected 'someone else' 16% mentioned a counsellor or therapist. Others mentioned mentors, health professionals, social services or old caregivers who have assisted them in their life. Two young people mentioned members of their church.

Young people who could turn to their:

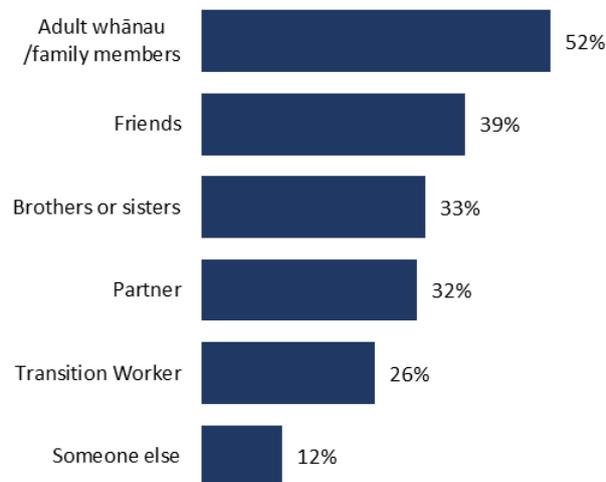


Figure 21. Young people who had someone to turn to (multi-select) (n=348)

Young people's voices from Ngā Haerenga

In the Year 1 interviews, rangatahi described being let down by those expected to fill a tuakana or mentoring role. This resulted in many young people looking to their peers, workmates, and partners for ārahitanga. Being let down by those responsible for their care could potentially sow seeds of neglect and mistrust in 'authority figures' – the people who are meant to care for young people.

Kōrero from Year 2 further reflected this concern as young people suggested some reluctance to reach out for support.

"I have a hard time trusting people, I think, and I don't trust very many people. Actually, I probably only trust my mum, you know?" (Ethan)

11.5. Education and employment

Slightly fewer than one-half (44%) of all young people responding to the survey were still in education or training (Figure 22). In each age group, a higher proportion of those still in education and training had achieved NCEA 2 or a higher qualification.

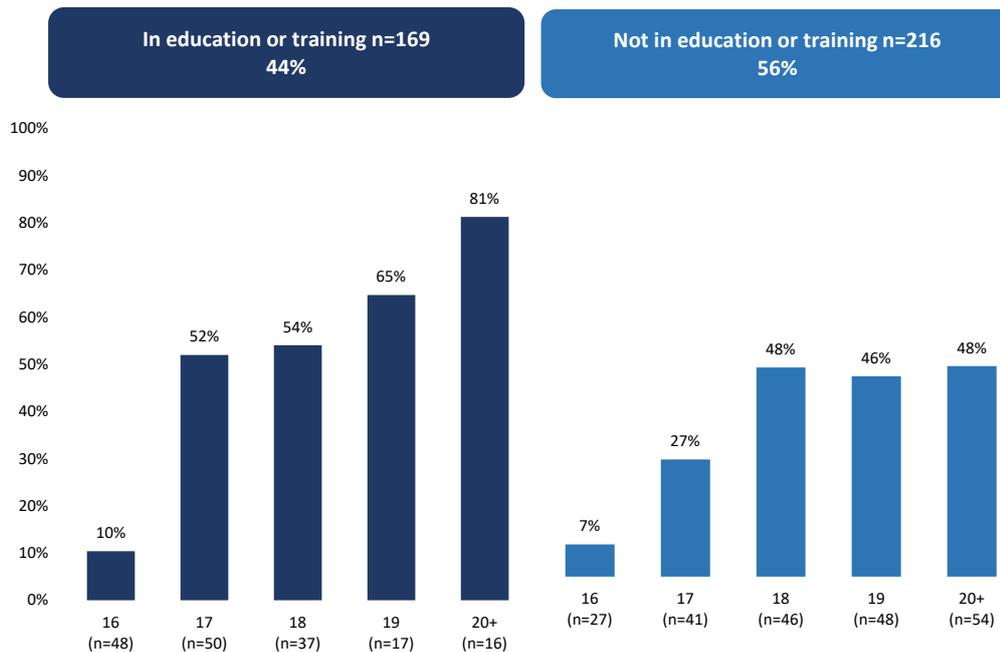


Figure 22. Young people education or training status NCEA 2+ (percentage of each age group within those at school and who had left school that had achieved NCEA 2+ by group and age)

Educational attainment was lower for the survey respondents who had left school than school leavers nationally²⁵ (38% compared to 81%) (Figure 23).

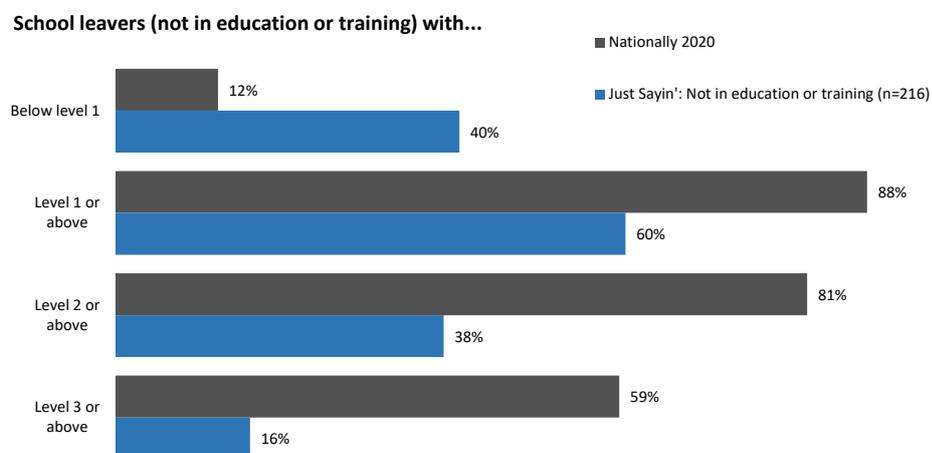


Figure 23. Young people NCEA achievement, Just Sayin' and national comparison (Just Sayin' n=385, national n=approximately 60,000)

Fifty-one percent²⁶ of all young people who responded to Just Sayin' had a full- or part-time job, a slight increase since 2021 (46%) (Figure 24). A similar proportion of

²⁵ www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/school-leavers

²⁶ Note a few young people selected both full-time and part-time options. This was not changed as they may hold multiple jobs.

young people said they had volunteered in the last 12 months compared to 2021 (2021; 37%, 2022; 38%). A slightly larger proportion of those in care had volunteered compared to those who had left care (40% compared to 36%). One-half of survey respondents had a job and many wanted more hours.

In the last 12 months I had...

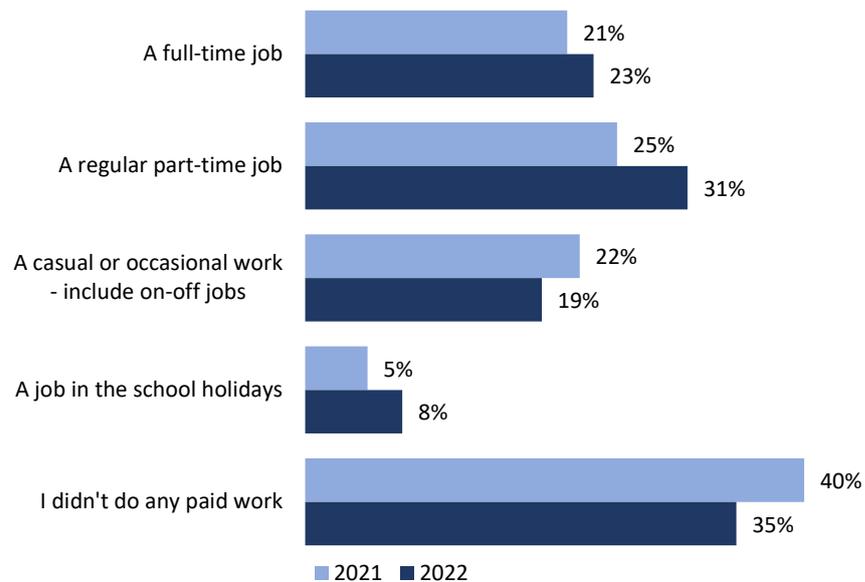


Figure 24. Young people employment (JS21 n=320, JS22 n=385)

Young people's voices from Ngā Haerenga

Fifteen of the 26 young people interviewed at Year 2 were on a clear trajectory towards meeting / having met the goals they articulated regarding study or work at Year 1. A further four young people had refined their goals or set new ones since the first interview and were also on a clear path towards these goals.

Those who were in paid employment were employed across a wide range of roles and sectors including agriculture, horticulture, the beauty industry, construction and trades, retail and manufacturing. Those studying were enrolled in university, polytechnic, correspondence school and special education units.

Appendix 1: The TSS evaluation questions

Formative evaluation questions:

- Is the underpinning TSS theory of change still relevant?
- Does the theory of change reflect the programme as implemented? What changes have been made?
- Does the design of TSS meet the needs of those involved including Māori?

Process evaluation questions:

- How far along implementation is TSS?
- How well has the intended TSS design been implemented?
 - Is TSS meaningfully offered to all eligible young people leaving care and if not why not?
 - How well does implementation serve to uphold and enhance the rights, dignity, and self-determination of care-experienced young people?
 - What have been the intended and unintended changes to or gaps in implementation, and the reasons for and impacts of these?
- How has TSS responded to any challenges in implementation?
- What can we learn from pockets of strong and weak performance?

Outcome evaluation questions:

- How good are the intended and unintended outcomes and impacts for young people transitioning from care, and where, when, for whom, under what circumstances, and why
- How effective are each of the individual components and TSS as an integrated whole?
- To what extent can identified outcomes and impacts be directly attributed to TSS?
- Who has it worked for and who has it not? E.g. Has TSS served Māori as well as, or better than, non-Māori?

Appendix 2: Just Sayin' 22 details

Just Sayin' includes questions about:

- Preparing for transitioning out of care
- Connection with a transition worker
- Feedback about transition workers and how young people are being supported
- Life at the moment including education and employment, accommodation, parenting, wellbeing, health and complex needs, support networks, money and skills.

The 2022 Just Sayin' survey was completed by 408 young people

Young people were eligible to complete Just Sayin' if they were 16 years or older and eligible for a transition worker.

Just Sayin' heard from 408 of the 703 (58%) valid contacts for young people (18% of the eligible cohort of 2,272). Eleven of these were partial responses included in the final analysis. Of the 408 included in analyses in this report, 154 were still in Oranga Tamariki care and 254 had left care. Young people responding to Just Sayin' were broadly representative of the total eligible cohort in age, ethnicity and geographical location. However, women were over-represented in the sample (64% in Just Sayin' compared to 42% of total eligible cohort).

The results from the 408 respondents cannot be conclusively extrapolated to all the young people who are eligible for TSS. It is probable that the views and experiences of those young people without contact details differ from those who have current contact information recorded. A further caution in interpreting the findings is that information from young people is self-reported.

How young people took part in Just Sayin' 2022

Oranga Tamariki provided Malatest with a list of names with contact phone numbers of young people eligible for the survey. Oranga Tamariki was not told who completed the survey, unless the young person specifically asked for Oranga Tamariki to contact them (a final question in the survey).

Young people were invited to take part in Just Sayin' by text message and phone calls through:

- an initial text message one week before calling young people to give them the opportunity to decline participation in the survey
- three more text invitations
- two-to-three phone calls to each young person (on different days and different times of the day).

Young people were told they could respond ‘No’ to a text message and they would not be contacted again. Text messages contained a direct link to the survey and a link to the Just Sayin’ website (Justsayin.nz) with more information. Malatest also asked all TSS partners to promote the survey and to encourage young people to complete it.

Young people could complete the survey online or by telephone. The survey and all information about the survey was available in English and te reo Māori. Those who completed the survey received a \$30 voucher in recognition of their time.

Data collection began in April and finished 21 June 2022.

Survey respondents were similar across all three years of the surveys (Table 18).

Table 18. Survey respondent characteristics

Survey respondents	Just Sayin’ 2020 n=165	Just Sayin’ 21 n=331	Just Sayin’ 22 n=408
Sex			
Male	30%	36%	33%
Female	67%	63%	64%
Gender diverse	2%	2%	3%
Age			
16	27%	18%	19%
17	30%	25%	25%
18	33%	28%	21%
19	5%	19%	17%
20 and older	5%	11%	18%
Ethnicity (total count)			
Māori	54%	61%	53%
Pacific	16%	13%	13%
Non-Māori and non-Pacific	42%	36%	40%
Care status			
In care	62%	39%	38%
Left care	38%	61%	62%

Weighting

We considered weighting the results of the 2022 Just Sayin' survey to align with the cohort demographics more closely. In 2021, weighting was tested for gender and ethnicity and the differences between the weighted sample compared to the unweighted sample were very small (usually 0-1% but up to 3% different for some specific questions). We decided that non-contact and non-response bias were larger factors with an unknown effect on the representativeness of survey respondents. Therefore, it was decided no weighting would be done for the analysis.

We are using the same approach for the analysis of Just Sayin' 22 to enable comparison with 2021 findings.

Statistical analysis

ANOVA and individual t-tests were used to compare differences between groups. Although this repeated use of individual tests increases the chances of a type one error (saying the test shows a significant difference even though it occurred by chance), it was considered the most practical approach to answer questions of simple group differences for a range of separate questions.

Ethics

The survey was reviewed by the ethics advisor from Oranga Tamariki and approved prior to any contact with young people.

Appendix 3: Regional case study details

As part of the overall evaluation of the TSS, Oranga Tamariki commissioned regional case studies to better understand how well the interfaces between Oranga Tamariki and the TSS partners are working, how TSS partners provide transition support and the extent the transition needs of young people are being met.

Regional case study selection

The following criteria were used to identify and select case study regions:

- TSS partner type (Māori, Pacific, mainstream [with and without Māori and/or Pacific])
- TSS partners in the locality are established and not newly formed – to enable them to talk about their experiences and learnings
- TSS partner setting (urban and rural based).

The following case study locations were selected to ensure a range of partner types and settings:

- Auckland: Selected to inform support for Pacific young people provided by the Pacific Collaborative and other services. The Pacific Focus also included the Pacific TSS partner in Kirikiriroa/Hamilton and in Wellington.
- Christchurch: Focused on a TSS partner and hub for supporting young people. Christchurch also included a TSS partner supporting young people with complex needs.
- Bay of Plenty: Focused on a kaupapa Māori TSS partner in a rural setting with a high Māori population.
- A rural South Island locality: Focused on a TSS partner providing transition services in the West Coast, Nelson and Marlborough.

In 2021, we held workshops with TSS partners to present/discuss findings from the Just Sayin' survey, and the regional case study project. Feedback in the workshops helped to inform the selection of the case study localities, and TSS partners in the workshops were supportive of the case studies.

Analysis

A general inductive approach was used to guide the analysis of qualitative interview data. A coding framework was developed and used to identify emergent themes, clusters, and categories. Our Māori and Pacific research team members led the analysis, bringing their own interpretive frameworks and methodologies, and reflective positioning to ensure that findings were framed accordingly, interpreted, and reported in a way that considered the context, worldviews and safety of participants.

How our Kaupapa Māori and Pacific methodologies underpin our work

The Oranga Tamariki TSS evaluation is not a kaupapa Māori evaluation. However, our team acknowledges the high proportion of rangatahi Māori that exist within the project and made a conscious choice to ensure that interviews with rangatahi Māori and kaupapa Māori providers were undertaken by Māori evaluators. This approach allowed for cultural nuances to be observed and reduced the need for providers to justify mātauranga Māori approaches to service delivery. This approach also allowed us to ensure that analysis of collected data and information was culturally appropriate and completed by our kaupapa Māori team.

Our Pacific evaluation approach is informed by the *fa'afaletui*²⁷, *Kakala*²⁸, and *Tivaevae*²⁹ research methodologies which include and respect all stakeholders' perspectives and knowledge throughout all phases of the evaluation approach. Applying aspects of these methodologies means:

- We are committed to maintaining respectful and meaningful relationships with Oranga Tamariki staff, and all Pacific partners and young people. The evaluation team remains accessible to all stakeholders outside of data collection timeframes. Multiple communications and engagements provide opportunities to add new strands of knowledge and information from different stakeholder groups at different timepoints.
- We interweave all knowledge strands that make up the tapestry of Oranga Tamariki Pacific partners within our analysis, interpretation and reporting.
- We are respectful of Pacific cultural protocols and behaviours. communicate in Pacific languages where possible, and provide appropriate information to ensure participants can make informed decisions. Participants' contributions are acknowledged through meaalofa and refreshments.
- We prioritise relationships through clear and consistent communications.
- We acknowledge there are similarities and differences in ethnic specific and historical reference points, and migration and New Zealand-born journeys and experiences within Aotearoa New Zealand. We respect any different power dynamics between children and their elders, males and females, as well as status and roles within families and communities. We are committed to providing opportunities for discussion in safe spaces for participants.
- We put our clients and participants at the centre by considering the outcomes that are important to them.

²⁷ Tamasese, K., Peteru, C., & Waldegrave, C. (1997).

²⁸ Konai Helu Thaman (1992).

²⁹ Maua-Hodges (2000).

Appendix 4: Ngā Haerenga

Ngā Haerenga – Transition Journeys research (Ngā Haerenga)³⁰ – is a three-year longitudinal study commissioned in 2019 by Oranga Tamariki–Ministry for Children and undertaken by an independent group of researchers. It sits alongside the Transition Support Service evaluation activity but is not an evaluation study. Its focus is on increasing understanding of the journeys and lived experience of young people and aims to share their voices as they move from statutory care to self-determined living.

The Year 2 report provides key findings from a cohort of young people who were initially recruited and interviewed as part of Ngā Haerenga study in 2020, and who participated in a second interview with our researcher team. Between 1 July 2021 and 31 January 2022, 26 young people from the original cohort of 44 took part in a second interview (11 wāhine, 15 tāne). Twelve identified as Māori, 12 as New Zealand European, one as Pasifika and one as Asian. For six young people, disability was a significant part of their journey. Young people were from the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Lakes District Regions, Wellington, Kāpiti, Horowhenua, Manawatū and Wairarapa regions and the Greater Canterbury region and Northern Otago in Te Waipounamu.

It provides an update on journeys of young people (from January to December 2021) leaving Oranga Tamariki care contexts. This report seeks to highlight the perspectives of young people (in some cases, supplemented by their whānau and caregivers who participated in interviews).

High level findings from the Year 2 report have been added to the *Transition Service evaluation findings 2022* to augment the voices of young people. The Year 2 Ngā Haerenga report is in draft form. The final will be published on the Oranga Tamariki website.

³⁰ The name for this project was collectively developed as a working title by the research rōpū over a series of planning hui. It was chosen as it encapsulated the project's focus on rangatahi and their experiences of journeying from statutory care to more self-determined living and reflected the bicultural approach to this research. The bilingual working title suggested by the research rōpū was enthusiastically supported and adopted by the Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre and the project advisory group.

Appendix 5: Definitions

Term	Description
Complex needs	Self-reported assessment on the Washington Group Scale. A young person is defined as “having complex needs” if they report they ‘often’ or ‘always have difficulty with one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeing (even when wearing glasses or contact lenses) • hearing (even when wearing hearing aids) • doing physical tasks like walking • learning remembering or concentrating • emotional, psychological or mental health conditions.
Entitlement to Remain or Return (ETRR)	The intention of the ETRR is to support eligible young people to remain in a stable caregiving arrangement past the age of 18 and up to the age of 21, should they wish. Young people can also potentially return to a previous caregiver whose home they have left. To meet the intention of the ETRR, caregivers are supported in providing the agreed arrangement with the young people.
Ethnicity	Young people were able to select multiple ethnic groups. If they selected Māori for one of their ethnic groups, then they were included as Māori and the same applied for Pacific ethnicities. If a young person identified as both Māori and Pacific, they were included in both ethnic groups (a total count approach). All young people not identifying as Māori or Pacific were included in a non-Māori and non-Pacific group.
Just Sayin’ surveys	Annual surveys of young people eligible for support from a transition worker between the ages of 16 to 21. Just Sayin’ 2021 ran from June to August 2021, and Just Sayin’ 2022 from April to June 2022.
National Care Standards	The National Care Standards set out the standard of care every child and young person needs to do well and be well, and the support all caregivers can expect to receive when they open their hearts and homes to tamariki. They came into effect on 1 July 2019.
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training. In this report if a young person reports they are in any type of training or employment (full-time, part-time or casual) they are not classified as NEET. The national NEET rate is based on the Household Labour Force Survey which asks respondents about the week before the survey and if they did any paid work. This is more specific than Just Sayin’ which asks about the last 12 months.
Positive about social worker	Refers to answering positively to all the following three questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My social worker understands the support I need leaving care (Yes) • My social worker is there when I need them (Yes) • My social worker does what they say they would (Most or all of the time).
Positive about transition worker	Refers to answering positively to all the following three questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My transition worker understands the support I need leaving care (Yes) • My transition worker is there when I need them (Yes) • My transition worker does what they say they would (Most or all the time).
Rainbow	Young people who reported they identify as part of the LGBTQIA+/Rainbow community.

Rangatahi	Māori young people.
Social worker	The young person's Oranga Tamariki social worker if still in care or their former social worker if they have left care.
Transition support service (TSS)	The Transition Support Service (TSS) supports eligible young people leaving care or custody up to age 21, with access to advice and assistance available up to age 25.
Transition support service partner (TSS partner)	A community organisation contracted to provide transition support to eligible young people in the form of transition workers.
Transition (support) worker	The young person's assigned transition worker from a TSS partner.
Transition Support Line	A helpline within the National Contact Centre that supports young people and TSS partners.