



Malatest
International

Evaluation Report:

Transition Assistance Line Review

October 2023



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Executive summary

The transition assistance line is one part of the wider transition support service

The transition assistance line is a free service offered to eligible young people leaving care or youth justice settings. It is also available to Transitions Support Service (TSS) partners, social workers and other Oranga Tamariki staff.

The TSS was established in July 2019 and the dedicated transition assistance line was established in August 2020.

Oranga Tamariki commissioned an evaluation to understand how the transition assistance line was meeting the needs of young people

The evaluation included information from a range of sources and perspectives including:

- Interviews with Oranga Tamariki regional leads, the transition assistance line manager and team
- Interviews with 15 young people who had called for support
- Focus groups with 52 staff from 33 TSS partners
- Information from the 2023 Just Sayin' survey of young people
- Transition assistance line call data.

The transition assistance line has developed and grown in response to identified needs

The transition assistance line has moved away from the National Contact Centre. It currently has a dedicated team of five advisors, a client support specialist and a team leader. After-hours support is provided by the National Contact Centre.

Transition assistance line staff thought the service was adequately set up to manage the number of calls currently received. However, efforts to increase knowledge of the line and increases in the number of young people over 21 who are eligible for transition support will likely increase the frequency of calls and the service may need to expand. Transition service management are aware of this and are monitoring demand.

Opportunity: Extend the transition assistance line after hours and through the weekend or upskill staff within the National Contact Centre to be confident with transitions-specific support.

Explore whether calls to the transition line that are transferred to the National Contact Centre can be answered 'Transition line' rather than 'Oranga Tamariki'.

Transition assistance line advisors were satisfied with their roles following changes implemented in early 2023.

Each advisor is responsible for a region of the motu with the aim of establishing relationships with TSS providers and developing specialised knowledge of the support available in the area.

All advisors felt supported by the transition assistance line team leader and other transitions service management. Much of the advisor learning and knowledge development was obtained through on-the-job observation and time in the role. Advisors believed the training was adequate for them at the time but wouldn't be sufficient for someone entering the role now.

Opportunity: Access to expertise and professional development around trauma-informed care and cultural practice frameworks, such as Te Whare Tapa Whā is an opportunity to strengthen transition assistance line support.

Young people are supported by the transition assistance line through inbound and outbound calling

In Just Sayin' 2023¹, 65% of young people knew how to contact Oranga Tamariki if they needed help. A higher proportion of those currently in care knew how to contact Oranga Tamariki (71%) compared to those who had left care (57%).

As expected, most of the young people we spoke to found out about the transition assistance line from their transition worker or their social worker. The young people we interviewed consistently wanted to have known about the transition assistance line earlier.

Opportunity: Promote the transition assistance line more, particularly to those who are preparing to leave youth justice residences.

¹ A national survey of young people eligible for transition support

The main types of support young people requested were around basic needs such as health, housing and education

Interviewed young people and those responding to the Just Sayin' 2023 survey were positive about the support they received from the transition assistance line.

Interviewed young people were particularly complimentary about the transition assistance line advisors. Advisors were described as patient, friendly, understanding, non-judgmental, helpful and thorough.

The types of support requested differed by age. Understandably, a greater proportion of young people aged 16 to 20 years called the transition assistance line for support with education, concerns about whānau and getting a transition worker. Young people aged 21 to 24 years more commonly requested support for health needs (compared to those aged 16 to 20 years), while support for housing needs was the same across cohorts.

Financial assistance data showed that of those who were under 18 years old, 69% of completed requests were for financial support for driving.

Opportunity:

- Improve communication around reasons for declined financial requests.
- Make it clear that young people can talk to another advisor if their usual advisor is not available.
- Provide clear updates on the status of financial requests.

Young people from all demographic groups were the accessing transition assistance line

A greater proportion of females had called the transition assistance line compared to males. Transition assistance line support was being accessed by similar proportions of ethnic groups, rainbow young people and young people with a disability. Similar proportions of rangatahi Māori and New Zealand European young people had called the transition assistance line (20.4% and 20.3% respectively). The number of Pacific young people who called the line was slightly lower at 16.4%.

As expected, a greater proportion of young people who had left care had called the transition assistance line compared to those who were still in care (22.6% and 13.4% respectively). The types of support requested also followed expected patterns. For example, young people who had left care were much more likely than those in care to request support for housing-related needs, while those in care were much more likely to ask about getting a transition worker. Requests for support with health and education needs were similar across care-status.

A small number of young people had accessed support 10 or more times between July 2022 and June 2023. This accounted for 3% of young people who had accessed financial assistance (18 out of 565 young people).

The most noted barrier to young people's engagement with the transition assistance line was lack of knowledge about its existence.

TSS partners, Oranga Tamariki staff and other organisations were supported by the line through inbound calling

The transition assistance line was widely used by TSS partners and Oranga Tamariki regional leads, including for themselves and the young people they support. The service was described as an essential aspect of the transition support service.

1. Transition assistance line

1.1. The transition assistance line is one part of the wider TSS umbrella

The Transitions Support Service (TSS) was established as a core Oranga Tamariki service in July 2019. The aim is to assist eligible young people who have been in care or a youth justice residence to move into adulthood and independent living.

The transitions assistance line is a free service offered to eligible young people leaving care or youth justice settings. It is also available to Transitions Support Service (TSS) partners, social workers and other Oranga Tamariki staff.

The TSS was established in July 2019 and the dedicated transition assistance line was established in August 2020. Prior to then, young people called the Oranga Tamariki National Contact Centre directly for support.

Young people call the transition assistance line to speak with an advisor who can provide support for various transition needs including:

- Finding a place to live
- Getting a driver's licence
- Finding a job
- Getting legal advice
- Getting counselling
- Enrolling in a training course
- Getting food
- Financial assistance (in some circumstances)².

TSS partners contact the transition assistance line for guidance around:

- Clarifying support a young person may be eligible for
- Assisting a young person to access financial support for housing, education, health or life skills
- Supporting kaimahi with sharing relevant case notes
- Connecting young people with external services
- Maintaining an up-to-date list of TSS providers.

² <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/children-in-our-care/transition-support-service/>

1.2. The transition assistance line is one way Oranga Tamariki maintain contact with young people who have left care

In addition to the inbound calls made to the transition assistance line from young people and TSS partners, the transition line advisors make outbound calls to eligible young people who are not connected with a TSS partner. This is part of Oranga Tamariki's legislative obligation to proactively remain in contact with TSS eligible young people between 15 and up to 21 years of age once they leave care or longer-term youth justice placements. Young people aged between 21 and 25 years (who are not typically connected with a TSS partner) can also request support through the transition assistance line.

2. The evaluation

2.1. Oranga Tamariki commissioned an evaluation to understand how the transition assistance line was meeting the needs of young people

The objectives of the evaluation were to understand:

- How the transition assistance line works
- The types of support requested and received through the transition assistance line for different profiles of young people
- Factors that help facilitate young people’s engagement with the transition assistance line and any barriers to engagement
- Young people’s experiences of calling the transition assistance line.

2.2. The evaluation included data from a range of sources and perspectives including interviews and survey data

Qualitative interviews with:

	Oranga Tamariki regional leads 2 Regional leads responsible for transitions support
	Transition assistance line staff 1 Manager 5 Advisors 1 Client support specialist
	TSS provider staff 52 Staff from 33 providers
	Young people supported by the line 6 18-20 year olds 9 21-24 year olds

Quantitative data:

	Transition assistance line call data (n=8,454)
	Financial assistance data (n=1,527)
	Just Sayin' 4 survey data (n=442)
326	16-20 year olds
116	21-24 year olds

2.3. Strengths and limitations

- A key strength of the evaluation is the collaborative, mixed methods approach to data collection. A range of voices were heard through qualitative interviews with Oranga Tamariki staff and young people who had been supported by the assistance line. These interviews were supplemented by two sources of quantitative data.
- The young people we interviewed were diverse across age, ethnicity, gender and transition worker status. However, the generalisability of the conclusions is limited by challenges connecting with young people for whom Oranga Tamariki does not have up to date contact details.
- The evaluation likely overestimates young people's knowledge and use of the transition assistance line as we are unable to present the voice of those young people who are less connected with transition support services.

3. Implementation, systems and infrastructure

3.1. The transition assistance line has developed and grown in response to identified needs



Figure 1. The timeline of the development of the transition assistance line

3.2. The transition assistance line currently has a dedicated team of five advisors, a client support specialist and a team leader

- Four of the five advisors and the client support specialist are based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. One advisor is based in Kirikiriroa Hamilton and the team leader is based in Tauranga. They stay connected through MS Teams, online group chats and team hui.

- The advisors take most of the calls. The client support specialist processes purchase orders and can take calls if required.
- The team leader signs off on financial requests greater than \$250 and is on hand to support advisors with challenging or unusual requests.
- There is a roster system in place so not all advisors are on the line at the same time. Each advisor is on the line every day for half the day.
- When they are not taking calls, advisors work toward individual projects that assist other parts of the transitions service i.e., helping manage the transition assistance line call data.
- Each advisor is responsible for a region of the motu with the aim of establishing relationships with TSS providers and developing specialised knowledge of the support available in the area.

Transition assistance line staff thought the service was adequately set up to manage the number of calls currently received. However, efforts to increase knowledge of the line and increases in the number of eligible young people over 21 will likely increase the frequency of calls and the service may need to expand. Transition service management are aware of this and are monitoring demand.

I've talked to [transition service manager] about call levels and what we do if we need to increase...if the call rates did increase, then we'd definitely look at the possibility of building up the team but at the moment we're good. (Transition assistance line manager).

3.3. The recent changes made to the delivery of the transition assistance line were welcomed by the advisor team

Transition assistance line advisors were satisfied with their roles following changes implemented in early 2023. Changes included:

- Shifting away from a transactional, Call Centre focus toward a more holistic approach to support provision.
- Being included within the wider transitions team, including attending weekly transitions team meetings.

It's nice to be like, hey, we're all on the same team, we're all working together. (Transition assistance line advisor)

- Connecting and building relationships with TSS partners and Oranga Tamariki staff in assigned regions.

We get to make connections with the providers in the regions and even Oranga Tamariki staff in those regions and some of them don't really know about our service. They've heard of it but they don't really know what we provide. So yeah I can see the benefits of creating connections within our team and the regions. (Transition assistance line advisor)

3.4. Transition assistance line staff identified the need for further training and opportunities for professional development

Most of the transition assistance line advisors were onboarded during the development of the standalone service in August 2020. The training was delivered online due to COVID lockdown and was largely focused around using CYRAS and other Oranga Tamariki systems.

Much of the advisor learning and knowledge development was obtained through on-the-job observation and time in the role. Advisors believed the training was adequate for them at the time but wouldn't be sufficient for someone entering the role now.

I think it [the training] was good for us at the time. I think the same level of training for someone starting now wouldn't be sufficient. It's a lot busier now and I think it would be a lot harder to pick things up as you go. (Transition assistance line advisor)

However, several advisors acknowledged the challenges involved in delivering training for the role as assistance is often individualised to a young person's circumstances.

It's a really hard thing to teach because everything is grey, there's no black and white or this or that. What might be a yes in one situation is a no in almost a near identical situation. It's about teasing everything out. (Transition assistance line advisor)

All advisors felt supported by the transition assistance line team leader and other transitions service management. Advisors were happy for supervision arrangements with the team leader to continue as usual.

Opportunities to improve service delivery:

Access to expertise and professional development around trauma-informed care and cultural practice frameworks, such as Te Whare Tapa Whā.

3.5. Calls made to the transition assistance line outside hours are directed to the National Contact Centre

Calls made to the transition assistance line outside the 8.30am to 5pm weekday hours are directed to the Oranga Tamariki National Contact Centre. Staff at the National Contact Centre can assist with general enquiries but are not equipped to provide the level of transitions-specific support that is delivered through the transition assistance line.

One Oranga Tamariki regional lead described a situation where a staff member needed to call the transition assistance line on the weekend to support a young

person in crisis. The support provided by the National Contact Centre did not adequately meet the young person's needs as they didn't have access to the information required.

There was a situation with a young person, which because it was a weekend and there is no one there [on the transition assistance line], the call went to the contact centre...they didn't have the information available that the assistance line have or the knowledge of transitions and actually the situation was quite unsafe. (Oranga Tamariki regional lead)

Opportunities to improve service delivery:

Extend the transition assistance line after hours and through the weekend or upskill staff within the National Contact Centre to be confident with transitions-specific support.

4. Support for young people through the transition assistance line

4.1. Young people are supported by the transition assistance line through inbound and outbound calling

The diagram below shows the typical process for both inbound and outbound calling for young people.

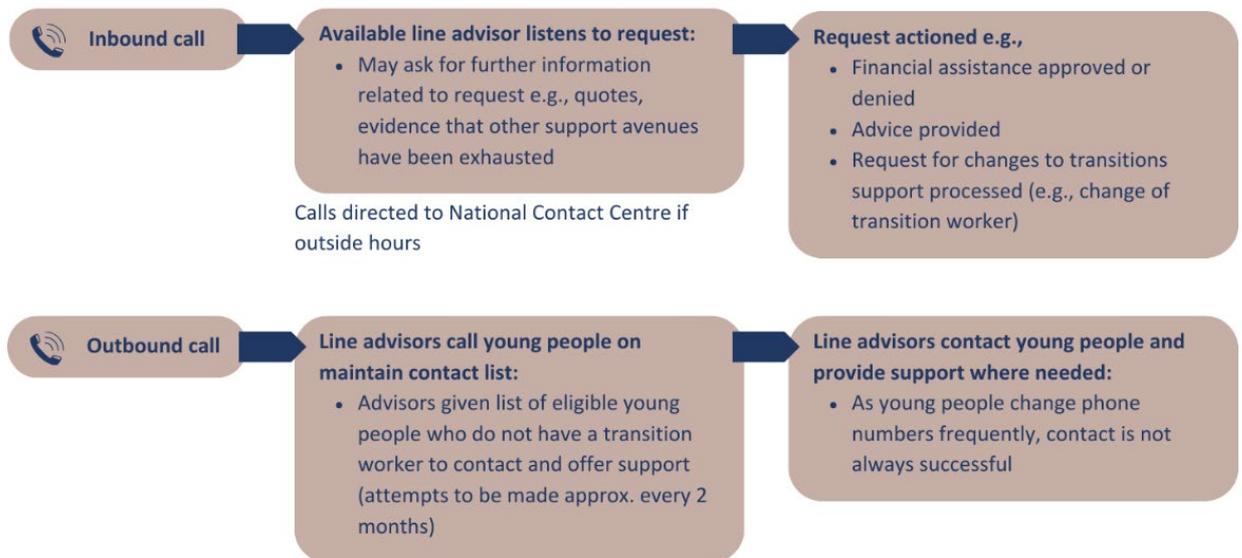


Figure 2. Calling process for young people

4.2. Knowledge of the transition assistance line varied across young people

In Just Sayin' 2023³, 65% of young people knew how to contact Oranga Tamariki if they needed help. A higher proportion of those currently in care knew how to contact Oranga Tamariki (71%) compared to those who had left care (57%). Inconsistent central recording of contact details for young people is a known barrier to maintaining contact with young people who have left care and do not have a transition worker. Note, this data is based on a question which asked young people if they knew how to contact Oranga Tamariki if they needed help and may not be specific to the transition assistance line.

³ A national survey of young people eligible for transition support

The 15 young people we interviewed found out about the transition assistance line in a variety of ways.

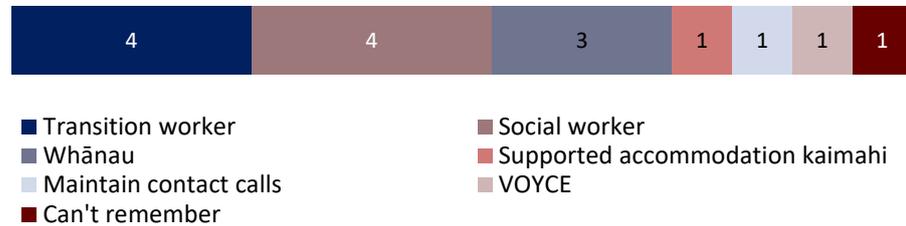


Figure 3. The different methods by which young people we interviewed found out about the transition assistance line (n=15).

As expected, most of the young people we spoke to found out about the transition assistance line from their transition worker or their social worker.

[Transition worker] explained it to me, I have these supports available for me, even though I'm not in the system of service anymore? If I need support, like I need someone to talk to, or if I need assistance, like financial stuff, or like, budgeting kind of things, I can contact them. (Young person)

Several young people found out about the line through whānau who either had experience calling the line themselves or had researched what support was available for transitioning out of care.

I think it was from my brother, because he got stuff from the Transition Service and he told me to give them a call. (Young person)

The young people we interviewed consistently wanted to have known about the transition assistance line earlier. Some young people only found out about the line within the past year, despite being eligible since its inception in 2019.

Some of them [young people in youth justice residences] are trying to change their lives for real and it could actually help but they don't know about it. (Young person)

Opportunities to improve service delivery:

Promote the transition assistance line more, particularly to those who are preparing to leave youth justice residences.

4.3. Around a fifth of young people who participated in the Just Sayin’ 2023 survey had called the transition assistance line

Transition assistance line call data showed that 8,453 calls were made or transferred to the line in the 2023 financial year. This data includes calls that were either wrong numbers or hang ups and does not identify specific instances where support was provided.

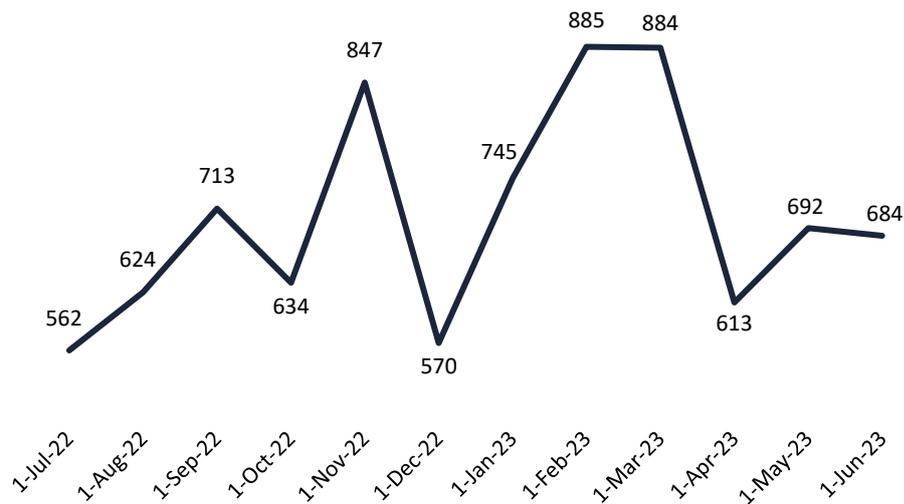


Figure 4. Number of calls made or transferred to the transition assistance line in FY23 (Transition assistance line call data, n=8,453)

Of the 442 young people surveyed through Just Sayin’ 2023, 19% had called the transition assistance line – a slight decrease from previous Just Sayin’ surveys (2020 – 17%; 2021 – 21%; 2022 – 27%). Again, this number may include calls that did not result in support provision.

4.4. The main types of support young people requested were around basic needs such as health, housing and education

The 85 young people who had called the transition assistance line in the Just Sayin’ 2023 survey commonly requested support to meet their basic needs, including support for housing (including help with rent payments), health (including mental health), and education or training.

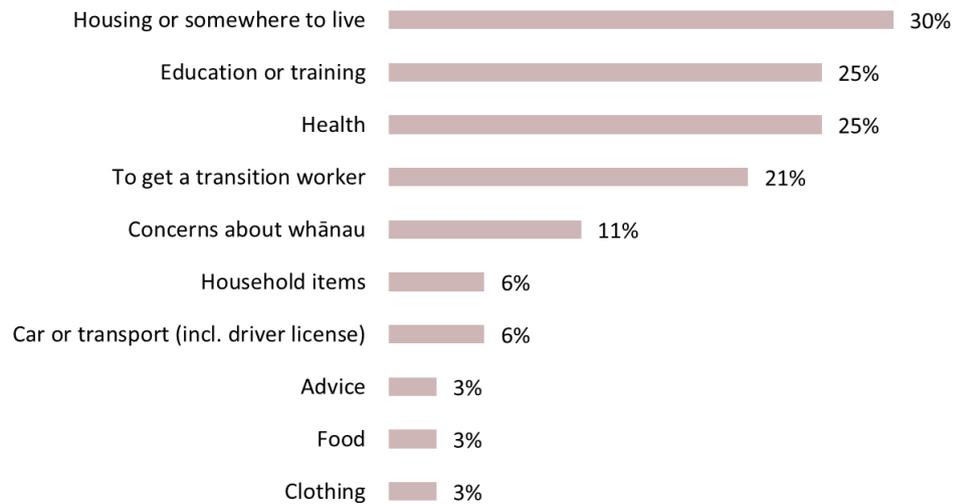


Figure 5. Types of support requested by Just Sayin' 2023 respondents who had called the transition assistance line (n=85).

Transition assistance line call data shows 1,527 requests for financial assistance were logged from July 2022 to June 2023 and 75% were complete. Of completed requests, 50% were related to driving, cars, transportation or travel. The second most common request related to food (20%), followed by 'other', which included accessing the Achieving Independence grant. Financial support for health, accommodation, clothing, employment/education and official documents each totaled less than 5%.

Similar types of support were mentioned across the 15 young people we interviewed. These young people requested support for:

- Help with dental and therapy/counselling payments
- Course fees
- Emergency accommodation and help with rent payments, bond and university accommodation fees
- Car repairs or other transport-related costs (e.g., taxis, flights)
- Food vouchers or parcels
- Connecting with siblings.

4.5. Young people were overwhelming positive about the support they received from the transition assistance line

The young people from the Just Sayin' 2023 survey who called the transition assistance line were satisfied with the support they received, with 86% saying the transition assistance line helped a little or a lot.



Figure 6. Satisfaction with support received from the transition assistance line from Just Sayin' 2023 respondents (n=85) (Just Sayin' 2023).

A similar level of satisfaction was expressed by the young people we interviewed, who were particularly complimentary about the transition assistance line advisors. Advisors were described as:

- Patient
- Friendly
- Understanding
- Non-judgmental
- Helpful
- Thorough.

Every time I've called them, I've never come back disappointed. I've always been very, very happy and grateful for the conversation, and I feel like I'm really supported by the line. (Young person)

She [the transition assistance line advisor] goes above and beyond to help me. And she tries to understand the situation any way that she can. (Young person)

Young people also shared their satisfaction about the transition assistance line with transition providers, including how easy the service was to use compared to other services.

I've heard nothing but good things about the transition line, all of the young people have always said that it's super, super helpful and easy, easy, not like WINZ. (Transition Worker, TSS Provider)

Several transition assistance line advisors noted that satisfaction with support was typically linked to a young person's expectations about the support the transition assistance line could provide.

When a young person has those expectations of like, "I'm entitled to this and you need to give it to me", yes often it doesn't meet those expectations. But when someone calls with, you know, the expectations of something that's within your role, it does what they are expecting. (Transition assistance line advisor).

Indeed, when young people were unsatisfied with the support they received from the transition assistance line it was usually because their request was more complex and required further discussion by transition service management or was not within the parameters of what the line can fund e.g., lawyer fees or house deposit.

Case Story: Miriama

Miriama is a 21-year-old young person who used to have a transition worker. She found out about the transition assistance line through VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai.

She has called the line multiple times. One time she requested transport and accommodation support to see a close family member who had recently faced a medical emergency.



The transition assistance line supported her with flights and accommodation. When she arrived, she realised Uber was unavailable and called the line again. They supported her by ordering and paying for a taxi.

[Advisor] was really good... even on the phone, she got back to me pretty quickly... And then when I ran into issues because, I got there to find that there's no Uber, there is no nothing. And I had no way [to get there], no one to pick me up. And she was able to get me a taxi. (Young person)

However, some young people described experiences with the transition assistance line that provide opportunities for improvement, including being unclear about reasons for declined financial support, having to wait for their usual advisor to become available and not getting back to complex requests promptly.

It still happens now that they say things are going to be done and then, I don't know, they might just be busy and then it doesn't get done. (Young person)

So they said, okay we'll see what we can do. And then they went away and weeks went by and I thought why haven't they got back to me? You know, this is quite important...you know I was genuinely struggling...and then I called again and they said they would look into it again...I get that people get busy but yeah that was hard. (Young person)

Opportunities to improve service delivery:

- Improve communication around reasons for declined financial requests.
- Make it clear that young people can talk to another advisor if their usual advisor is not available.
- Provide clear updates on the status of financial requests.

4.6. The number of outbound calls made to young people in the 2023 financial year was lower than previous years

Due to staffing availability and changes, there was a decrease in the number of maintain contacts in the 2023 financial year.

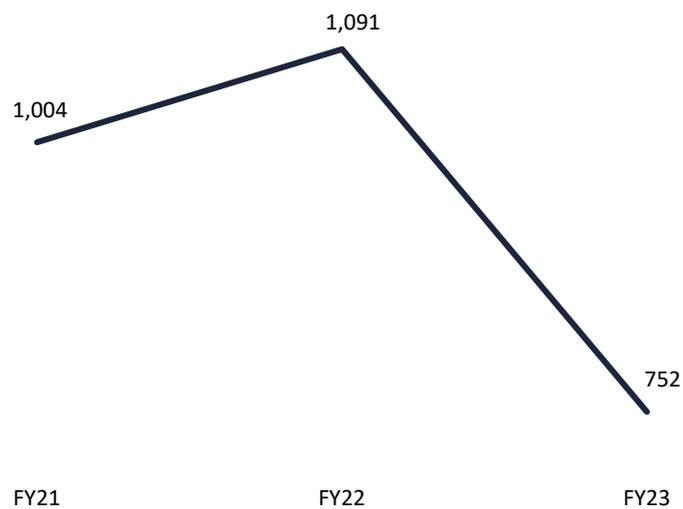


Figure 7. Number of outbound 'maintaining contact' calls (Transition assistance line call data)

Case Story: Sarah

Sarah is a 19-year-old young person with a current transition worker. She is also being supported through supported accommodation. She heard about the line through her transition worker.

Sarah has called the transition assistance line multiple times, typically for purchase orders taken from her Discharge Grant.



The transition assistance line helped Sarah keep track of her Discharge Grant and get a couch, TV, kitchen appliances and bedding for her current supported accommodation where and to keep for her future home.

I think one of my youth workers went away on leave. They said that if I needed support or help or anything that I could contact the transition phone number line...I've been using it a lot lately, just getting basic furniture to get me sorted for when I do get a proper house, which is very big for me because I come from a low income family. (Young person)

5. Support accessed by different profiles of young people

This section describes the support accessed by young people from different demographic groups, including age, gender, ethnicity, care-status, rainbow identity and disability.

5.1. Support through the transition assistance line differed by the age of the young person

A greater proportion of young people who responded to the Just Sayin’ 2023 survey aged between 21 and 24 years had called the transition assistance line (24%) compared to those aged 16 to 20 years (18%). This is not surprising as the younger cohort are more likely to still be supported by a caregiver, parent or guardian or be supported by a transition worker.

The types of support requested also differed by age. Understandably, a greater proportion of requests from young people aged 16 to 20 years who called the transition assistance line were for support with education, concerns about whānau and getting a transition worker. Young people aged 21 to 24 years more commonly requested support for health needs (compared to those aged 16 to 20 years), while support for housing needs was the same across cohorts.

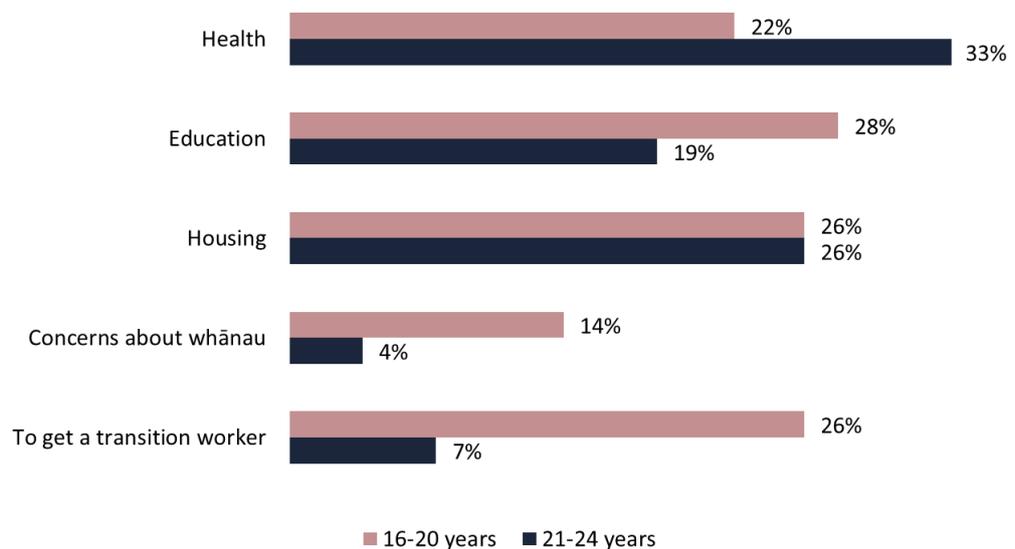


Figure 8. Types of support requested by 16 to 20 year olds (n= 58) vs 21 to 24 year olds (n=27) (Just Sayin’ 2023).

Financial assistance data showed that of those who were under 18 years old, 69% of completed requests were for financial support for driving.

Of those who requested financial support, a higher proportion of those who were 21 or older received financial support compared to those who were 16-20 (Figure 9).

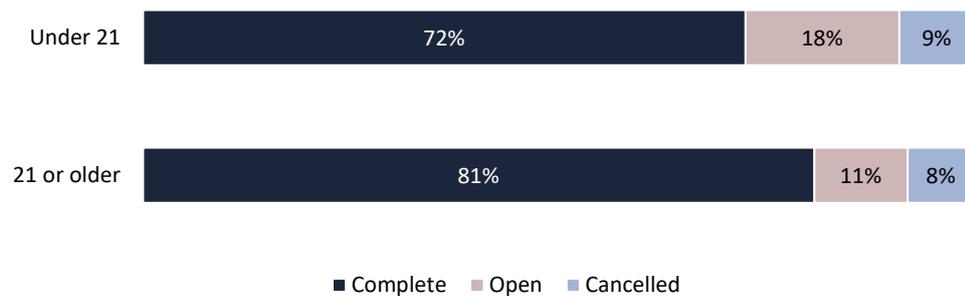


Figure 9. Requests for financial assistance from July 2022 to June 2023 (n=1,526)

There was very little difference in satisfaction levels across the age groups, with most young people in both age groups rating the support they received as either a little or very helpful (16 to 20 years – 85%; 21 to 24 years – 86%)⁴.

5.2. A greater proportion of females had called the transition assistance line compared to males

Almost a quarter of females responding to the Just Sayin’ 2023 survey had called the transition assistance line (23.1%), while only 13.5% of males had called the line. As only two gender diverse young people had called the transition assistance line comparisons with other groups was not possible. Of those who had made financial assistance requests, 59% were female and 40% were male. Less than 1% were another gender.

A greater proportion of males called the transition assistance line about support for health, education and housing needs, while a greater proportion of females called about concerns about whānau and getting a transition worker.

⁴ Just Sayin’ 2023

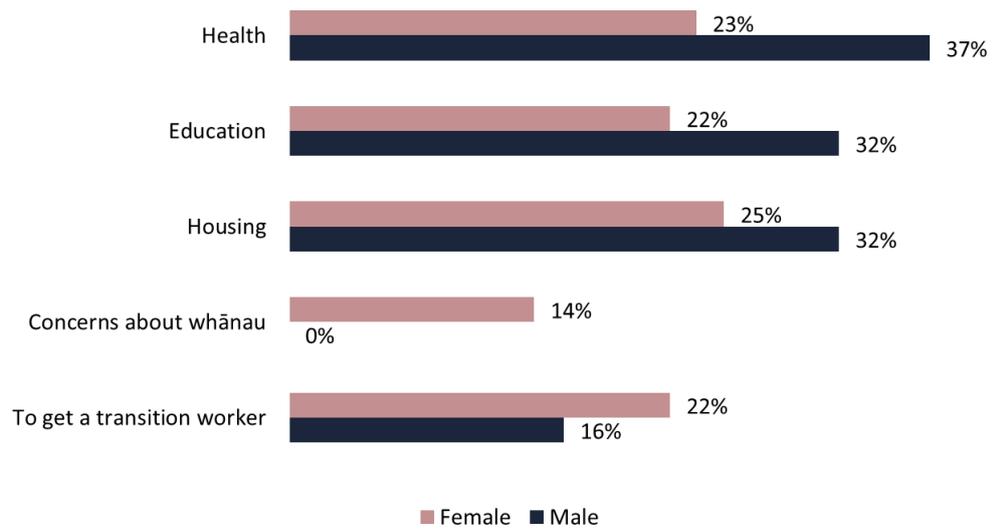


Figure 10. Types of support requested by males (n=19) vs females (n=64) (Just Sayin’ 2023).

Both males and females who called the transition assistance line were reasonably satisfied with the support they received. A greater proportion of males were positive, with 90% saying the transition assistance line helped a little or a lot compared to 84% of females⁵.

5.3. Requests differed across ethnicity for some types of support, including health and housing

Similar proportions of rangatahi Māori and New Zealand European young people had called the transition assistance line (20.4% and 20.3% respectively). The number of Pacific young people who called the line was slightly lower at 16.4%⁶.

The proportions of requests for support with education and getting a transition worker were similar across ethnic groups. Some notable differences across ethnicity include, a greater proportion of New Zealand European young people requesting health-related support and calling for concerns about whānau (compared to both Māori and Pacific young people).

⁵ Just Sayin’ 2023

⁶ Just Sayin’ 2023

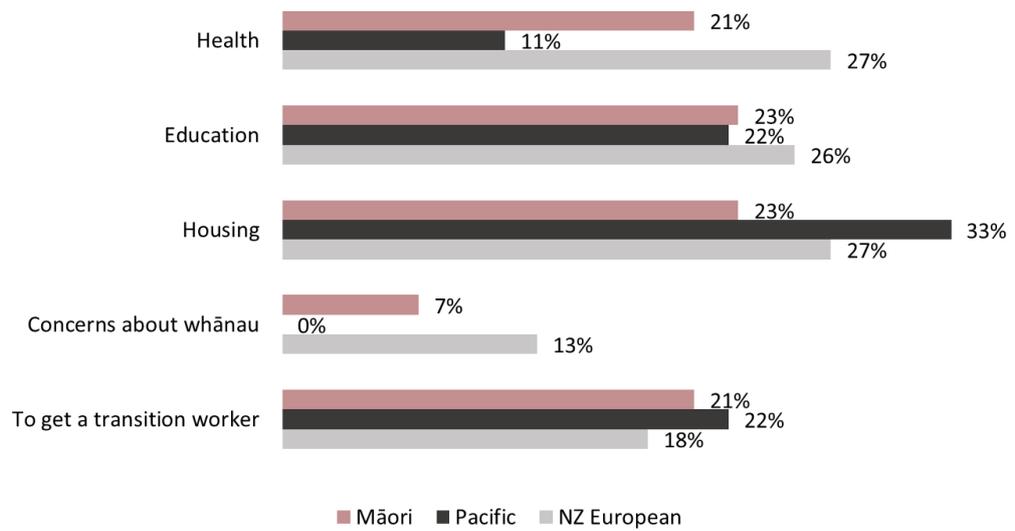


Figure 11. Types of support requested across ethnic groups, including Māori (n=44), Pacific (n=9) and New Zealand European young people (n=55) (Just Sayin’ 2023).

Of those who requested financial assistance, Pacific young people had the lowest proportion of completed requests. Rates of completed requests did not differ across Māori, Pacific, and non-Māori, non-Pacific young people.

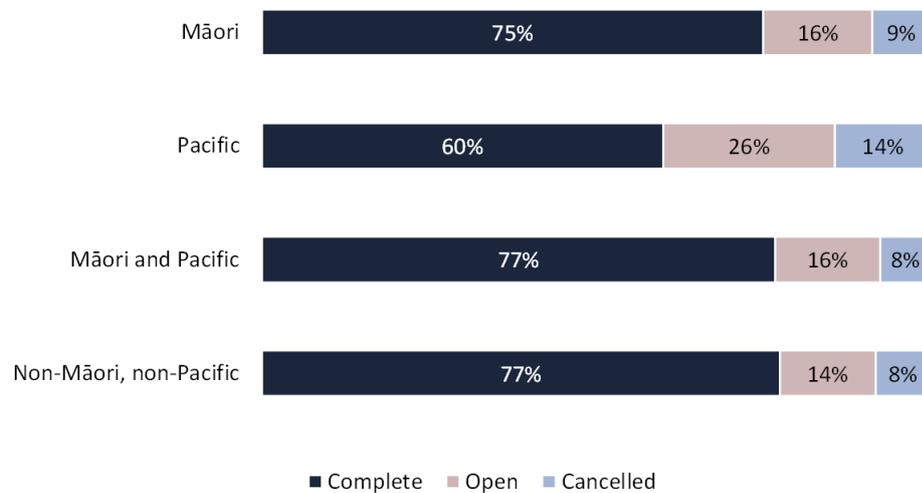


Figure 12. Financial assistance data requests by ethnicity (n=1,526).

Through Just Sayin’ 2023, Pacific young people gave the highest satisfaction ratings, with 100% of young people rating the support they received as helpful (either a little or very helpful). Rangatahi Māori also rated the support they received highly (91% said it was helpful), while New Zealand European young people were the least satisfied (78% said it was helpful).

5.4. A higher proportion of young people who had left care had used the transition assistance line

As expected, a greater proportion of young people who had left care had called the transition assistance line compared to those who were still in care (22.6% and 13.4% respectively)⁷.

The types of support requested also followed expected patterns. For example, young people who had left care were much more likely than those in care to request support for housing-related needs, while those in care were much more likely to ask about getting a transition worker. Requests for support with health and education needs were similar across care-status.

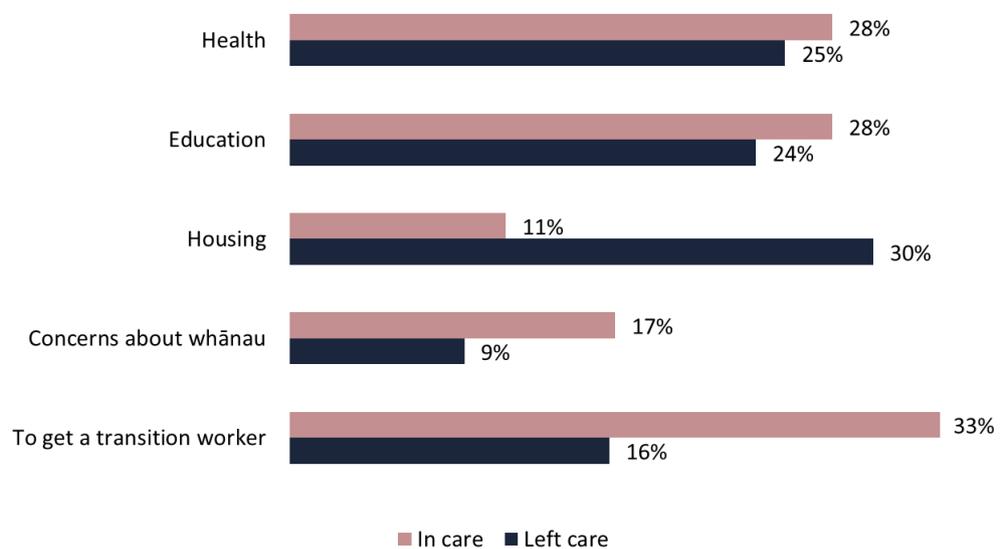


Figure 13. Types of support requested by young people in care (n=18) vs those who had left care (n=67) (Just Sayin' 2023).

Satisfaction differed across care-status. All young people who were still in care rated the support they received from the transition assistance line as helpful (either a little or very helpful), while this was lower for young people who had left care (82%)⁸.

⁷ Just Sayin' 2023

⁸ Just Sayin' 2023

5.5. A greater proportion of rainbow young people had called the transition assistance line to request a transition worker compared to non-rainbow young people

Similar proportions of rainbow and non-rainbow young people who responded to the Just Sayin’ 2023 survey had called the transition assistance line (23.9% and 18.6% respectively).

The types of support requested were similar across rainbow and non-rainbow young people for health and education needs, as well as concerns about whānau. A higher proportion of rainbow young people requested support with housing and getting a transition worker (compared to non-rainbow young people).

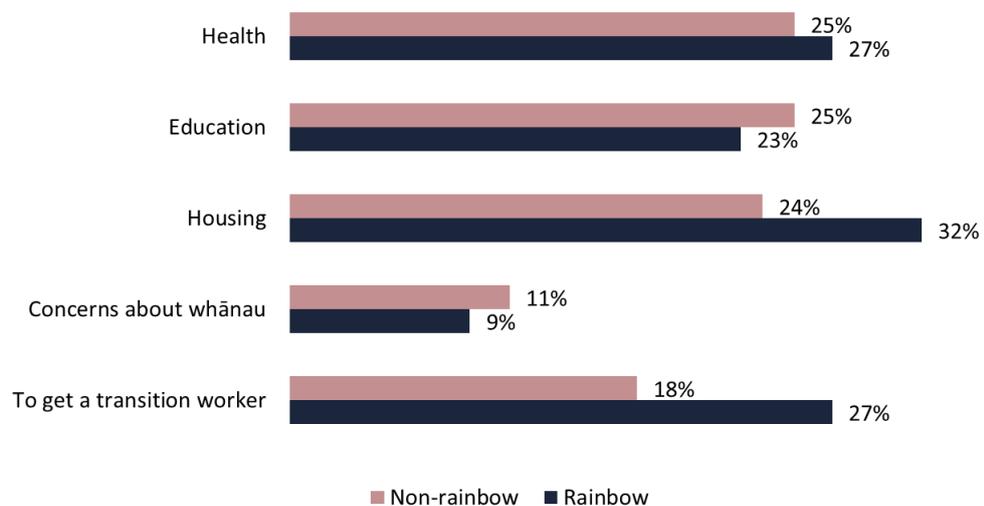


Figure 14. Types of support requested by rainbow (n=22) vs non-rainbow young people (n=63) (Just Sayin’ 2023).

Rainbow young people were satisfied with the support they received from the transition assistance line, with 91% saying it helped either a little or a lot⁹.

5.6. A greater proportion of disabled young people requested support with housing-related needs

Disability was measured using self-reported assessment on the Washington Group Scale. A young person is defined as disabled if they report they ‘often’ or ‘always’ have difficulty with one or more of the following:

- Seeing (even when wearing glasses or contact lenses)
- Hearing (even when wearing hearing aids)

⁹ Just Sayin’ 2023

- Doing physical tasks like walking
- Learning, remembering or concentrating
- Emotional, psychological or mental health conditions.

According to Just Sayin' 2023, 21.7% of disabled young people had called the transition assistance line while 17.2% those without a disability had called.

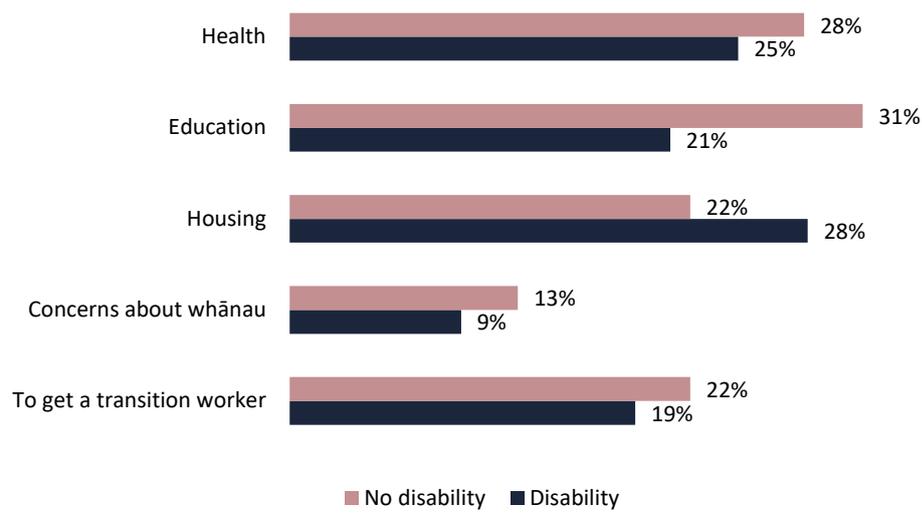


Figure 15. Types of support requested by disabled young people (n=53) vs young people without a disability (n=32) (Just Sayin' 2023).

Similar levels of satisfaction with the support from the transition assistance line was reported by disabled young people and those without a disability (85% of young people said it helped either a little or a lot compared to 88% of young people without a disability).

When split by physical disability (i.e., disability associated with seeing, hearing or doing physical tasks) vs. psychological/cognitive disability (i.e., disability associated with learning, remembering or concentrating, or with emotional, psychological or mental health conditions) the results were similar across groups. Notable differences are listed below.

- None of the young people who had a physical-only disability called the line about housing needs (compared to nine young people who had a psychological/cognitive-only disability).
- All of the young people who had a physical-only disability were satisfied with the helped they received from the line, compared to 80% of those with a psychological/cognitive disability.

5.7. There was a small proportion of high users of financial assistance

Of those who requested support through the transition assistance line, 88% had done so once or twice. A small number of young people had accessed support 10 or more times between July 2022 and June 2023. This accounted for 3% of young people who had accessed financial assistance (18 out of 565 young people).

Figure 16 represents a young wāhine Māori who was 21 years old at the time of the requests for financial assistance. In the one-year period from July 2022 to June 2023, she requested financial assistance 33 times and received support 31 times. The breakdown of financial assistance received over time suggests she has a child and may have faced issues with housing. The increase in support received in the January to March 2023 quarter indicates she may have moved into a new housing arrangement.

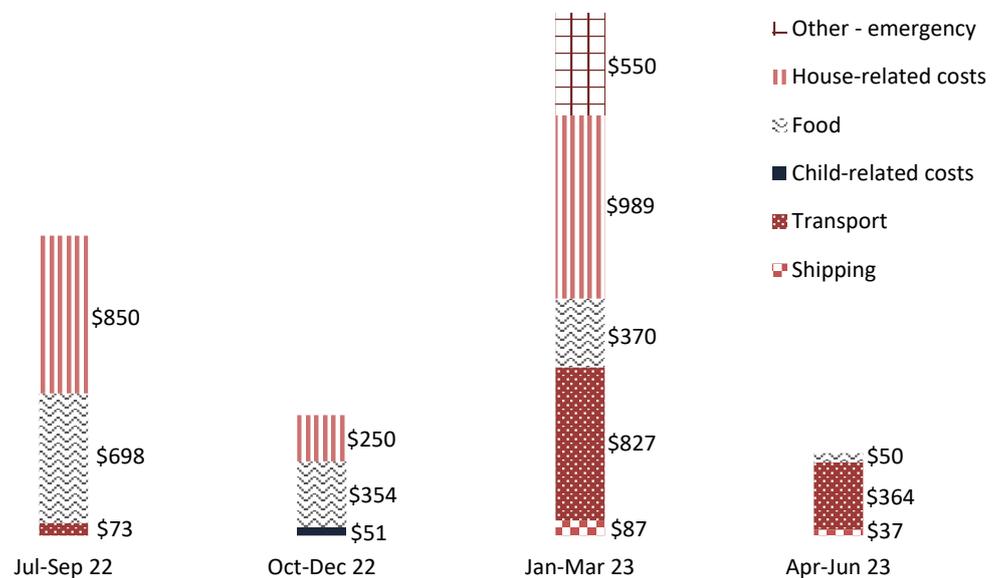


Figure 16. Quantitative case story of high financial assistance user one (financial assistance data)

Figure 17 represents a young wāhine Māori aged between 20 and 21 years old at the time of requesting financial assistance. She made 22 requests and 15 were granted. The breakdown indicates she has a child and may have moved cities in the January to March 2023 quarter. During the first quarter of 2023 she received several supports to help get back on her feet. The requests reduced after March 2023.

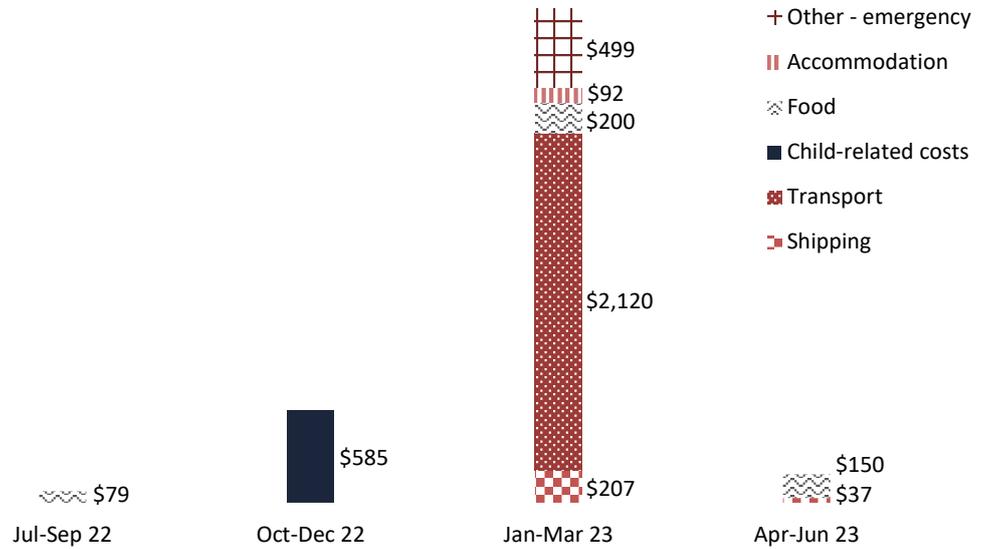


Figure 17. Quantitative case story of high financial assistance user two (financial assistance data)

Figure 18 represents a non-Māori, non-Pacific young person who was between 24 and 25 at the time of requesting financial assistance. She made 15 requests for support and received support on 13 occasions. In November 2022 she turned 25, ageing out of the Transition Support Service. However, she was able to continue accessing support for education/employment until February 2023.

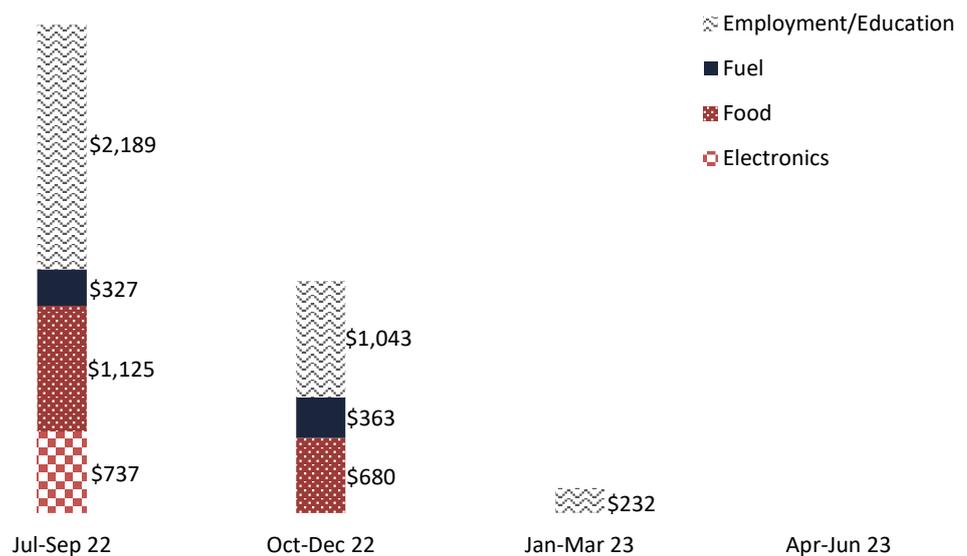


Figure 18. Quantitative case story of high financial assistance user three (financial assistance data)

Figure 19 shows the use of the transition assistance line by a Māori and Pacific young person aged between 21 and 22, who requested financial assistance 16 times and received support 12 times. Support received was predominantly for accommodation costs (e.g., help with board/rent payments). Smaller, irregular payments were also made over the 12-month period for food, clothing and transport.

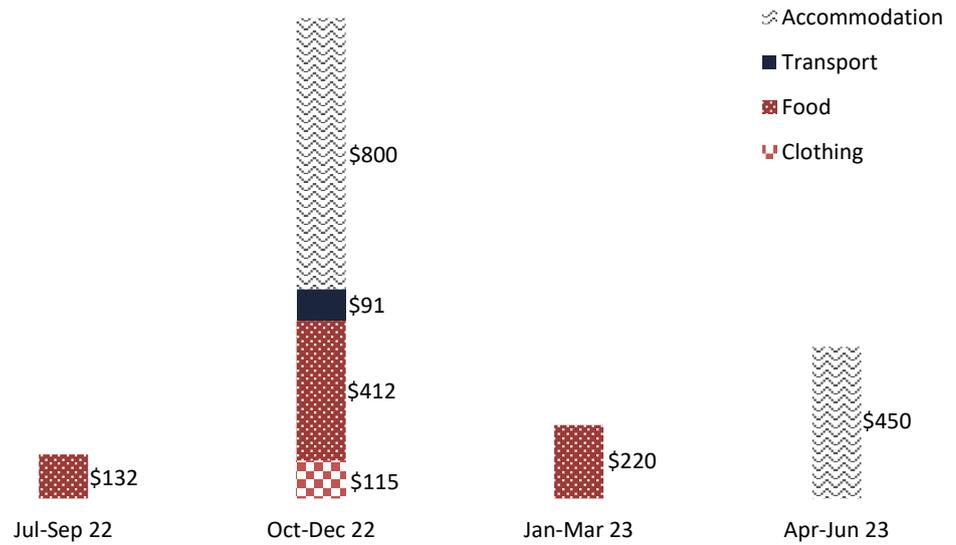


Figure 19. Quantitative case story of high financial assistance user four (financial assistance data)

6. Barriers and facilitators to young people’s engagement with the line

The most noted barrier to young people’s engagement with the transition assistance line was lack of knowledge about its existence. This was mentioned across interviews with young people, transition assistance line staff and Oranga Tamariki regional leads.

I think what doesn't work well is that young people still don't really know to call us. And I think we need to put more work into our sites, into our social workers, because at the end of the day, they're the ones that have access to those young people before they leave care. (Transition assistance line advisor)

Other barriers and facilitators are summarised below in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of the barriers and facilitators to young people’s engagement with the transition assistance line

Barriers	Facilitators
Accessing the transition assistance line	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited knowledge of existence of the line. Unrealistic expectations about what the line can offer. Challenges asking for help in general. Preference for support that doesn’t require calling e.g., online chat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of existence of the line. Prior experience calling the line or whānau/friends who have called.
Service delivery	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a specific advisor could increase wait time if that advisor was unavailable. Demonstration that other financial options had been exhausted was seen as an additional burden for some young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisor professionalism and friendly, non-judgemental approach. Having the opportunity to speak to the same advisor each time facilitated relationship building and meant young people didn’t have to repeat their past experiences.
Comparison to other services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less personal than face-to-face services, such as VOYCE Whakarongo Mai. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little to no wait time, especially compared to Work and Income. More efficient and friendlier than other services, including the National Contact Centre. Provide financial support for items that other services do not cover (e.g., a reasonable amount for clothing).

7. Support for TSS partners and others

7.1. TSS partners, Oranga Tamariki staff and other organisations were supported by the line through inbound calling

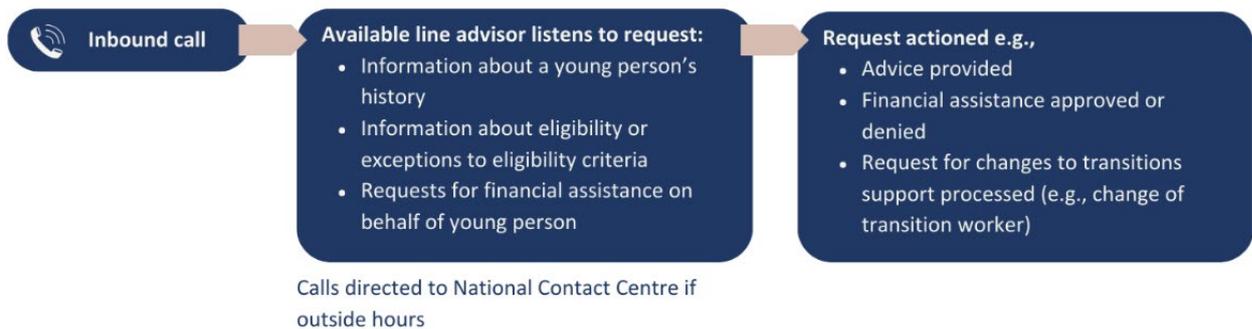


Figure 20. Call process for TSS partners, Oranga Tamariki staff and other organisations.

7.2. TSS partners were well supported by the transition assistance line

The transition assistance line was widely used by TSS partners, including for themselves and the young people they support. The service was described as an essential aspect of the transition support service. The providers described the transition assistance line as:

- Easy to use. Transition workers felt the advisors were easy to reach and were a great first port-of-call where they did not have to wait on hold for a response.

I'm queen of using the helpline, I'm forever on there. I make use of that! (Transition worker, TSS partner)

- Prompt in actioning requests and providing support or answers.

I think I requested to get a replacement driver's license, and to get the driver's license, and they had it ready within like two days. So they made me look very cool (Transition Worker, TSS partner)

- Supportive and patient with transition workers. Transition workers feel comfortable to ask any question to the advisors free from judgement.

What I hear though, is the feedback around the transition line, being extremely supportive, always open to our phone calls. Nothing's a silly question. We can ring 100 times they are fantastic. (Manager, TSS partner)

- Providing valuable expertise not provided outside of the TSS context.

We have very good connections with the transition hotline. And we can call and ask any questions. So yeah, pretty supported. But yeah, it's a very nuanced space that unless you know about it, or have worked in it, it can be hard to articulate what is it is that you need. (Transition Worker, TSS partner)

- Personal. TSS providers often mentioned knowing the advisors by name. Some described being upset when an advisor had left in the past.

This is the time and place to note they're very valued in this space and they are needed to our services. We do require the support, and it's sad when they move on, because they've been very helpful. A few moved on to other important roles. We just would like to advocate that that's a well needed service for us. (Transition Worker, TSS partner)

Some of the support transition workers mentioned using the line for:

- Connecting a young person with the assistance line for the first time.

What I try to do especially with as you're getting to 21 is always try and ring them with me. (Transition Worker, TSS Provider)

- Checking a young person's entitlements e.g., whether the discharge fund has been used.
- Requesting money for life skills e.g., a replacement drivers license
- Providing an up-to-date list of transition providers.

One transition provider noted that the out of hours calls go to the National Contact Centre rather than transition assistance line team, meaning the phone is answered as 'Oranga Tamariki'. This undid any work the transition worker had done to try and distance themselves from the TSS being Oranga Tamariki support.

Opportunities to improve service delivery:

- Explore whether calls to the transition line that are transferred to the National Contact Centre can be answered 'Transition line' rather than 'Oranga Tamariki'.

7.3. Oranga Tamariki regional leads felt the transition assistance line was a valuable resource for young people and transition support staff

The two Oranga Tamariki regional leads we spoke to were extremely positive about the impact the transition assistance line had both for eligible young people and for transitions-related staff. The regional leads used the line for:

- Requesting information about a young person quickly.

We had a situation recently where a transition young person was dealing with some really, really difficult stuff and contacted the line. They [the line] were then able to come to us and we could respond immediately as a region. That process would've taken a lot longer without the assistance line. (Regional lead)

- Helping TSS partners access to a young person's information.

Without them [the transition assistance line], I would be stuffed because what would happen is that kids would turn 18 and you'd never be able to track any information between partners, you'd be lost. You couldn't do it without them. Our partners don't have the information that's on CYRAS so we need the transition line. (Regional lead)

- Discussing exceptions to eligibility criteria (notably supported accommodation requests).

I use the transition support line for all exceptions for supported accommodation...and checking eligibility if I don't have time to go back through the young person's file. (Regional lead)

- Helping provide more wraparound support for some young people (an example of this is presented in the case story about Hemi below).

The regional leads felt the transition assistance line was a crucial part of the transitions service. They believed it plays an important role in helping young people to successfully transition toward independence.

To have a central point of information like that available to young people, it helps majorly. It's a real pivotal connection point for young people, transitions partners and OT staff. If we didn't have access to that information through the line, it would be a lot harder for transitions partners to know what a young person has been through and what support they might need. They [the transition assistance line] make a big difference! (Regional lead)

Case Story: Hemi

Hemi is a 19-year-old young person who was constantly relocating around the motu. As a result, he was unable to develop any stable connections with support providers.

The Oranga Tamariki regional lead in his area called the transition assistance line and was able to build a relationship with the advisor who looked after him and get access to information she wouldn't otherwise have had to develop a plan for Hemi.



The regional lead, the transition line advisor and a local housing provider now meet with Hemi weekly via video conference to check in and provide support where needed. He is now stable for the first time and is looking toward education opportunities.

He's been moving from region to region...so when he came here we kind of thought, let's do something a little bit different...Now, we're all talking, we're on the same page and we're here to help It's been so amazing, he's stable and actually, he can see we're all here for the same reasons, to help and support him. He's now looking at going into education, which is huge. Before, no one could get on top of it but the joined-up approach has made a big difference. (Regional lead)

8. Conclusion

8.1. Summary

Overall, the transition assistance line is an important element of transition support. The transition assistance line supports young people, especially those who do not receive transition worker support. It also supports Oranga Tamariki staff and regional partners.

8.2. Opportunities for service improvement

A small number of opportunities for improvement were identified with the potential to strengthen a well-functioning service.

Table 2. Summary of evaluation findings and suggestions for strengthening the transition assistance line

Evaluation findings	Opportunities to strengthen the line
From interviews with young people	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some young people didn't know why they were declined financial support or when payments had been made for services. Some young people thought the line could be more proactive in offering support Some young people felt the person they spoke to did not have the knowledge and expertise required to support their request 	Improve communication around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declined requests Confirmation of payment made to a third party Introduce follow-up calls for those who have accessed support and check-in calls for young people who are about to age out of the service Train new or step-in staff to the same quality as typical advisors
From interviews with transition assistance line staff, TSS partners and regional leads	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition assistance line staff believed they were most effective when they understood and took into consideration the experiences of the young people who call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build holistic rather than transactional practice base, including training around trauma-informed care and cultural practice frameworks. A staff member with trauma and more specialised mental health counselling experience may be needed to augment the transition assistance line team.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional lead recalled negative experience when calling the line on the weekend when young person was in crisis • TSS partners felt that when the phone is answered as 'Oranga Tamariki', this undid any work transition workers had done to try and distance themselves from being Oranga Tamariki support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upskill National Contact Centre staff to be knowledgeable about transitions-related support • Explore whether calls to the transition line that are transferred to the National Contact Centre can be answered 'Transition line' rather than 'Oranga Tamariki'.
<p>From all groups interviewed</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most people we spoke to identified lack of knowledge of the transition assistance line as the biggest barrier to accessing support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater promotion of the line, including to young people in Youth Justice residences, Oranga Tamariki social workers and other staff, TSS providers and external agencies e.g., Work and Income