



Transition Support Service

Final evaluation synthesis



Today we will provide a synthesis of the Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Service (TSS) based on the four-year evaluation

We will discuss:

- What is the TSS?
- How is transition support delivered?
- What difference is it making?
- How well is transition support working?
- What have we learned for future delivery of transition support?

What are the Transition Support Services?

- A range of services for young people aged between 15 to 25 years old to support transition from care or custody into adult life
- Established as a core Oranga Tamariki service
- The design was based on feedback from young people and others (caregivers, frontline professionals)
- Implemented progressively from 1 July 2019
- Young people are eligible if they have been in care or custody for three months continuously
- To the year ended June 2023 of the total cohort of 5,146 young people
 - 2,820 were eligible for transition worker support
 - 1,732 were referred to a transition worker
 - 61% of eligible young people

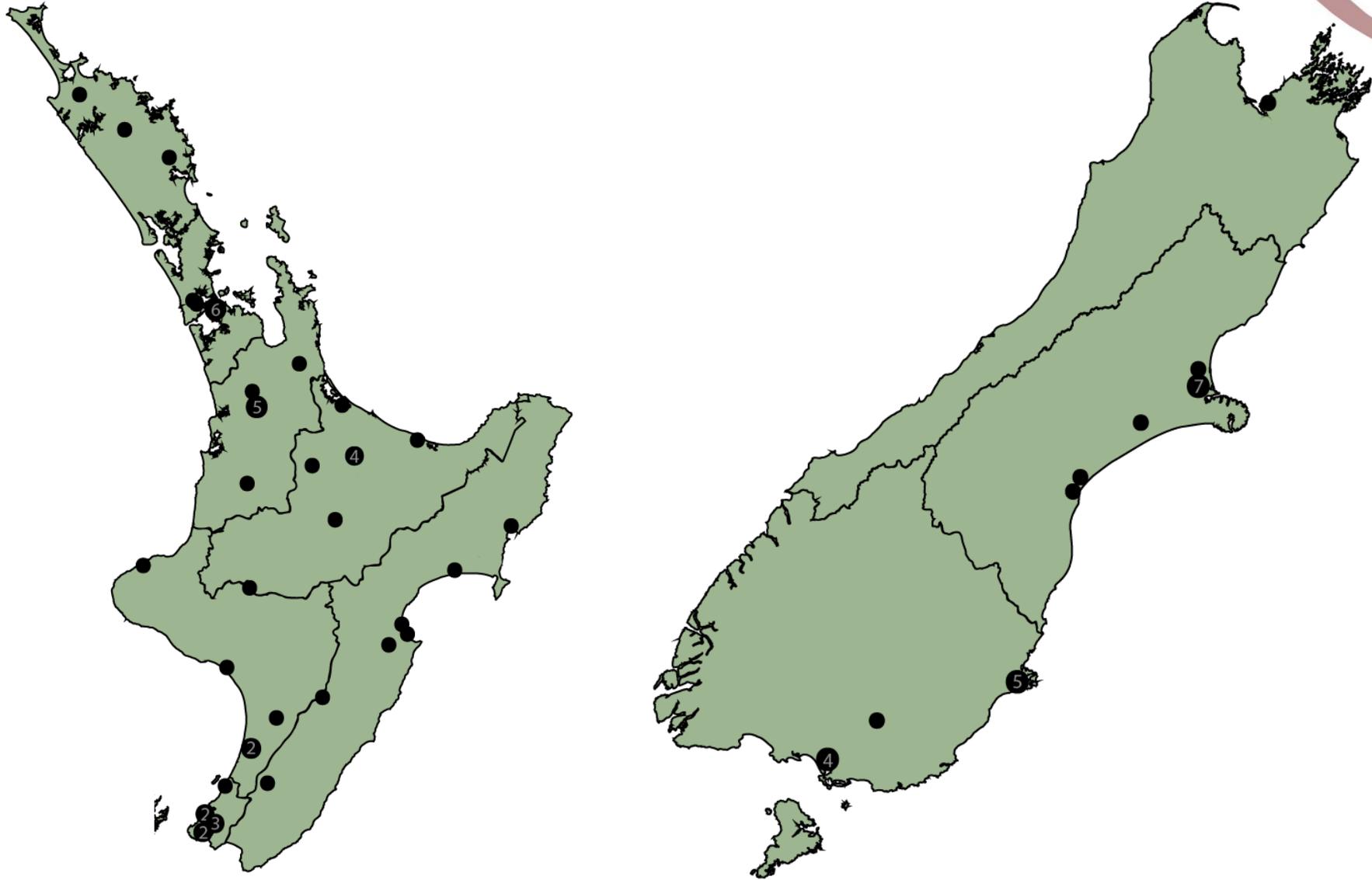
We've got a service, it's well established, the number of young people being offered the service and that know what it is, that's continuing to grow. The referral rate or the offer rate is continuing to grow. (TSS national team)

The TSS aims to support

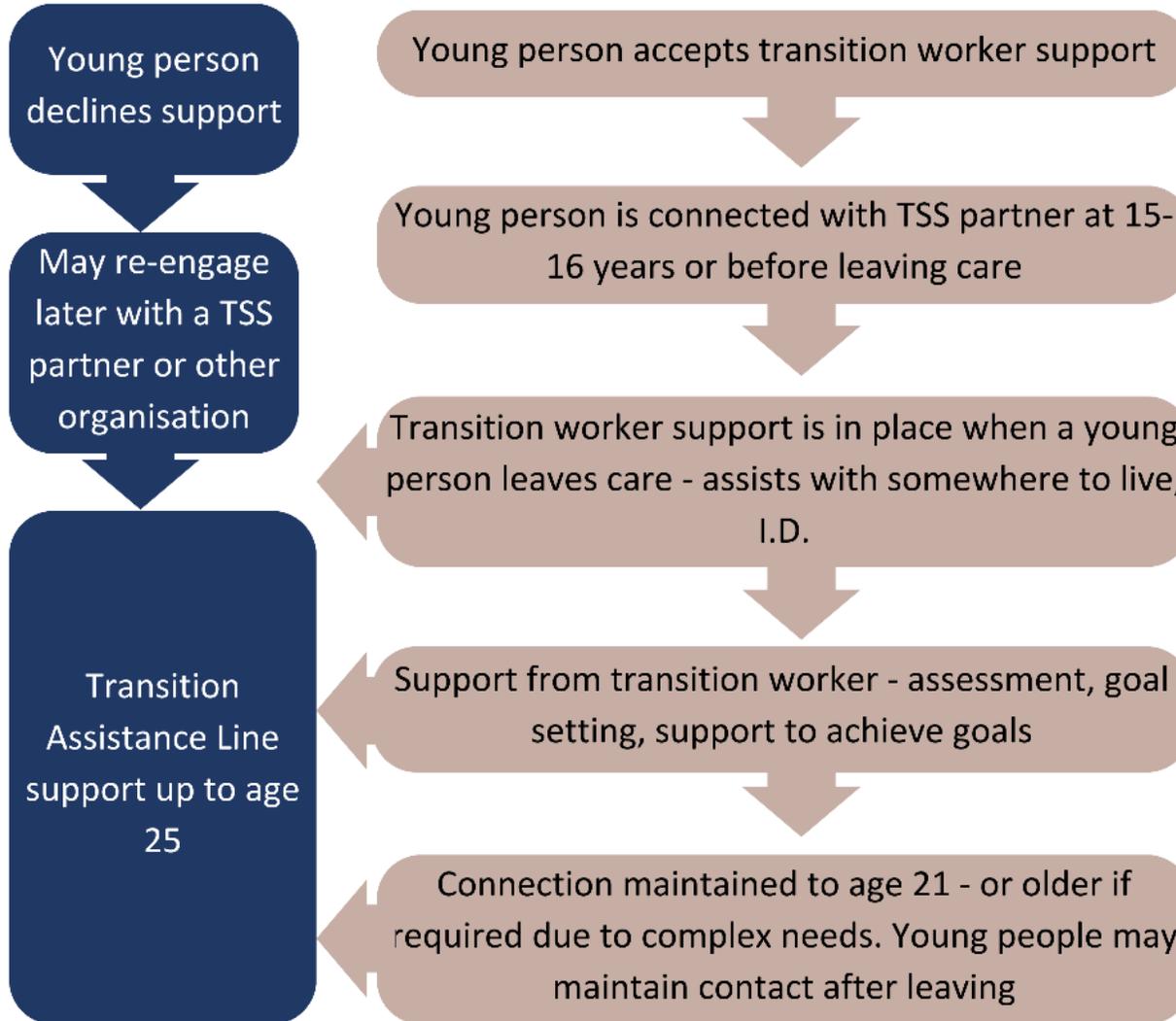
- More young people to have safe and stable living arrangements
- More young people to be healthy and recovering from trauma
- More young people to have a trusted adult in their lives and be engaged with family, cultural and community groups
- More young people to have the life skills they need to thrive as adults
- More young people to be in education, employment, training or volunteering.

TSS partners are the foundation

- 70 partners and 137.75 FTE
- Map shows the 'head office' address



Oranga Tamariki offers young people referral to TSS partner



The evaluation

Purpose:

To support evidence-informed development of the service and to gauge its effectiveness.

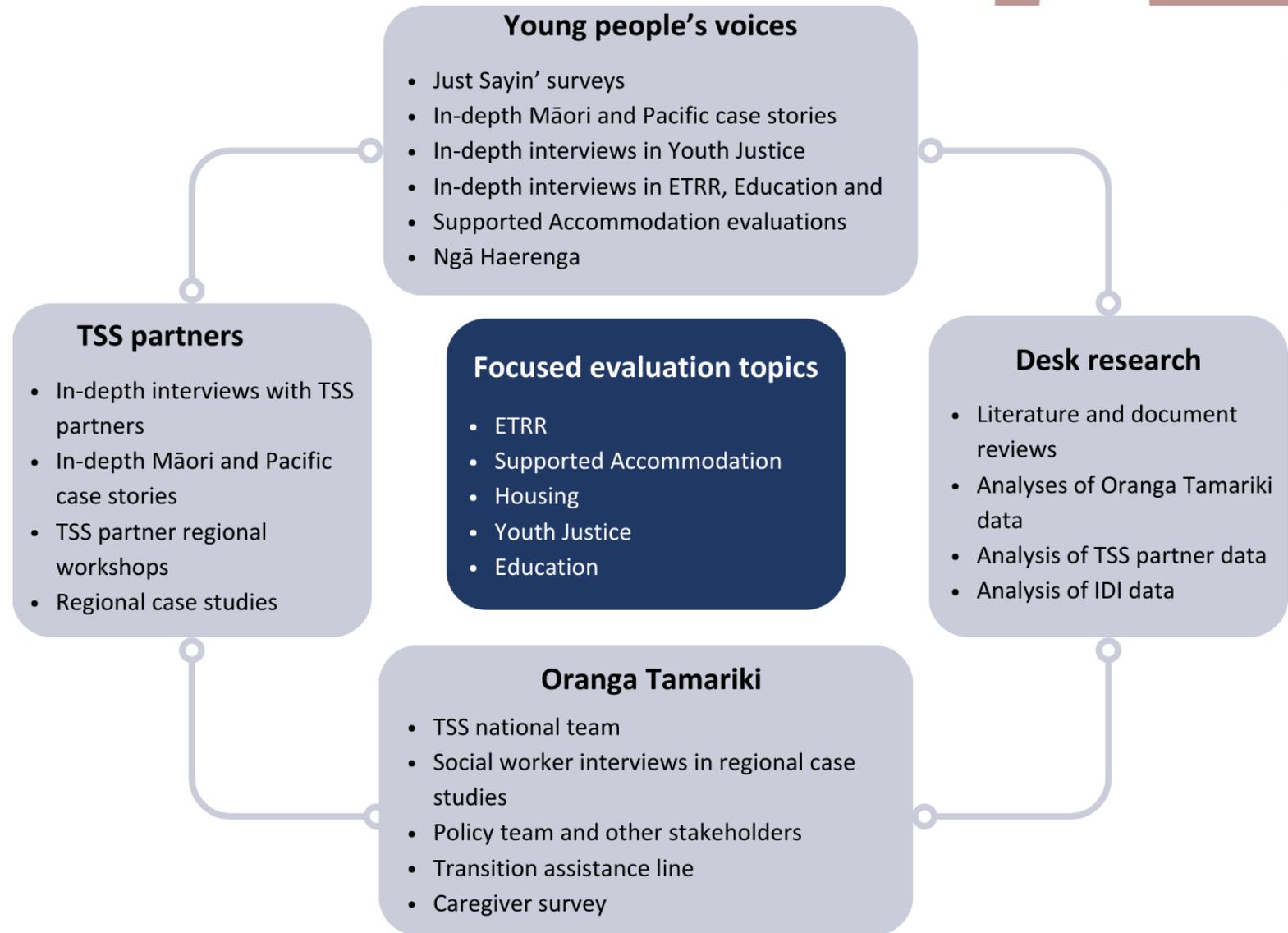
Ran from 2019-2023.

Partnership between the TSS team, the Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre and Malatest International

Three phases:

- Formative evaluation
- Process focused evaluation
- Outcomes evaluation

The voices of young people, their caregivers and their transition workers were central to the evaluation.



Transition support has made a positive difference

Just Sayin' 23:

- Most (84%) young people (both in care and who had left care) were positive about their transition worker
- Most (84%) said they had received support from their transition worker with at least one aspect of their lives that aligned with the intended outcomes of the TSS

Young people who thought their transition worker had helped with...

Connection with birth whānau	31%
Connection with doctor or nurse	42%
Connection with counsellor	32%
Connection with dentist	25%
Connection with education and training	47%
Connection with employment	22%
Received transition worker support across at least one of the aspects above	84%

TSS outcomes – young people’s voices



More young people have safe and stable living arrangements

“[I was left on the street] ...The accommodation I was in wasn’t good. They wouldn’t listen when I said [where I was staying] wasn’t good. They would say its fine, I got to stay there... [Transition worker] has helped me a lot, with housing stuff.” (Young person - Interview)



More young people are healthy and recovering from trauma

“[My TW] helped with everything that I needed. Needed to go to the doctor, got that sorted. Got a new doctor, who’s a lot better. Just made things so smooth compared to [Oranga Tamariki] and the lots of paperwork and lots of processes that they have to do.” (Young person - Interview)



More young people have a trusted adult in their lives and are engaged with family, cultural and community groups

“We’re now having to go through all the emotions, the ups and downs in our relationship. I have to work out how to be a child to my mum, and mum to be a mum to me in this short amount of time. We’re having to go through all of this now, because we lost all those years that we would naturally gone through it.” (Young person)



More young people are in education, employment, training or volunteering.

“Anything to do with that other stuff, you know with jobs or all that, I just go to [my transition worker]. She makes it real easy though, she won’t make it difficult. We're gonna do this and then we just do it, she makes it simple.” (Young person - Interview)



More young people have the life skills they need to thrive as adults

“[TW] takes me to all these courses, relationship courses, just to be a better person, managing money, got my forklift licence, my full licence.” (Young person - Interview)

TSS outcomes were identified by analysis of data from the IDI

The main changes demonstrated by quantitative data from the IDI are:

- Increases in gaining a restricted licence
- Lower likelihood to record Prison/Remanding Correction sentences, Prison/Remanding or Community Service Correction sentences
- Lower likelihood to record Emergency Department admissions, to receive benefit income and to record a vulnerably transient status.
- More likely to, and on average, earn Wages and Salary income for an additional 2.5 months.

How well is transition support working?

On average young people transitioning from care face more challenges than young people without care experience:

- The profile of young people leaving care today reflects policies and practices of earlier years
- Rangatahi Māori are over-represented in the cohort
- Young people have a range of care experiences, from stable foster parent scenarios to living rough and experiencing abuse and neglect

Times are changed and people today have much different mindsets towards our rangatahi and tamariki since I was in Oranga Tamariki. I'd change a lot back then but today's okay, but please look after our babies. (Young person – Just Sayin' 23)

- A higher percentage in the care experienced and community cohorts have worried about money for essentials and gave more negative responses to health and wellbeing questions
- Rainbow and disabled young people in the transitions cohort face additional challenges

... this is actually a different cohort, that they have further needs than the general population. (TSS national team)

The first step is referral by a social worker for transition support

- Young people receiving transition support reflect the demographic profile of the eligible cohort
- Referral rates have plateaued at 61% of the eligible cohort
- Most referrals are at age 18 – 46% at age 16 to 76% at age 18
- Regional FTE per eligible young person vary and affect referral age and waiting times
- More work is needed at the interface between Oranga Tamariki and TSS partners

*So, in the [region] for example, they are referring sometimes at the point of leaving care at 18 because the kaimahi do not have the caseload availability to take on any kids younger than that, so sometimes they're missing out on the gold, the transition FGC or that co-working relationship with social workers ...
(Regional Oranga Tamariki)*

Choice of transition worker is important for young people but difficult to achieve in some regions

- When asked in Just Sayin' 23 what is important in a transition worker, 81% of responses mentioned personality, 26% gender and 20% age
- 61% of rangatahi Māori responding to Just Sayin' were supported by a Māori TSS partner or transition worker
- 50% of Pacific young people with a transition worker were supported by a Pacific TSS partner or transition worker.

If they care and if they do what we need them to do

They need to really care about what they're doing for it to work. I'm lucky I previously knew my transition worker from his old job

Just to have the right heart. If you're in that type of business, you should have the heart that wants to help people and be proud of yourself that you've helped people.

Match my vibe

The steps in transition support



Young people who had left care said their transition worker understands what kinds of support they need (79%), is there when they need them (80%), and does what they say they would do (most or all the time) (81%).

They are still in survival mode. They just want someone to listen to them ... they don't have hope and they can't see goals. (Transition worker)

The bro's been real mean with like easing through this process of transitioning out with trying to help me explore my hobbies and that, because I don't have [many] hobbies. [Transition worker] goes out of the way and checking on things I like. (Young person - Interview)

I've never had this kind of stability in my life before. And this [supported accommodation] was definitely the place to be. (Young person)

They are meant to disengage at 21 but some still need somebody ... the transition assistance line is better than nothing and we try to engage them with it at 21. (Transition worker)

The transition assistance line

- The transition assistance line complements transition worker support
- After young people age out of transition worker support, the transition assistance line becomes their main point of contact for support from Oranga Tamariki
- There is an anticipated shift in demand as the transition cohort ages past 21
- The transition assistance line also supports transition workers, provides information to national office to identify current and emerging issues
- The transition assistance line team may also refer young people to transition workers and/or respond to immediate needs

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 – Just Sayin' 23)

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)

What have we learned for future delivery of transition support?

There are systemic challenges in supporting young people that disproportionately affect young people transitioning from Oranga Tamariki care:

- Housing shortages
... I've got 12 on my caseload, and over half of them don't have stable accommodation. (Transition Worker)
- Specialised support for mental health and trauma is difficult to access
That type of thing – mental health – is way above my pay grade. (Transition worker)
- Specialist support and/or advice for young people with intellectual disability is difficult to access
A big hole in the system that flows into the Corrections space. (Transition worker)

Recommendations and opportunities

- Continue to provide transition support for young people leaving Oranga Tamariki care as it has made a positive difference for them
- Ensure regional equity in transition worker funding
- Increase the number of supported accommodation places
- Ensure the transition assistance line is adequately resourced
- Improve Oranga Tamariki planning processes and referrals for transition support
- Enable equity of access to transition support for young people
- Enable support for young people with multi-layered support needs
- Improve reporting systems so good quality data are available to inform service development and delivery
- Continue to work with other central and regional government agencies to address the systemic barriers to effective transition

Thank you

Any questions?