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Stories of Survival and Resilience:
An enquiry into what helps tamariki and rangatahi through whānau violence

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Clinical Psychology

at The University of Auckland, Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau
Aotearoa New Zealand

Anna Walters

2016
Abstract

Family violence is overrepresented amongst Māori, the indigenous people of Aotearoa/New Zealand, and as elsewhere has been found to have significant consequences for children. Extant research has been predominantly deficit-focused. The current project focused on protective factors and resilience. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with professionals working with Māori who had experienced whānau (family) violence as tamariki/rangatahi (children/youth) and survived through this difficult experience. Thematic analysis of transcripts revealed several dominant themes. These included that resilience is a complex concept, internal resources of the child contribute to resilience (involving inherent qualities, having an understanding of whānau violence, having dreams, hope for the future and goals, and self-belief in their abilities), having a significant, supportive person in their life, having a strong positive Māori identity and having a wairua connection. Interventions to assist the development of resilience were also identified including building a relationship, early systemic interventions and using Māori guided interventions. Implications of these findings include the importance of staff in the helping professions being able to develop effective therapeutic relationships with tamariki/rangatahi and attend to these factors thought to promote resilience.
Acknowledgements

*Ehara tuku toa i te toa takitahi, engari tuku toa i te toa takitini*

*My success is not mine alone as it was not the work of one but the contribution of the collective*

I would like to begin by thanking the participants in this research. It was evident how busy professionals were who have worked in this area. Their willingness to put time aside to participate in this research truly shows their dedication to helping Māori who have survived through whānau violence. Participants spoke about how it was a privilege to do their mahi and this was definitely my experience in doing this research where I felt inspired by participants. I am so thankful to the many survivors who have trusted these professionals to share their stories, enabling a wealth of knowledge to help other tamariki and rangatahi through these difficult experiences.

I would like to thank my main supervisor, Professor Fred Seymour along with my other supervisors Dr Erana Cooper, Dr Kerry Gibson and Dr Ainsleigh Cribb-Su’a. Fred, your ongoing support and encouragement has been very much appreciated. Your wisdom, knowledge and patience are unmatched and I am so grateful to have had you as my supervisor. Erana, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to develop this research project with you and learnt so much in the time we worked together. Kerry, thank you for sharing your specialised knowledge about methodology, this definitely strengthened the research. Ainsleigh, I am appreciative of your input with this research during analysis, especially given your experience doing research in a similar area.

Thank you to the West Auckland Anti-Violence Essential Services (WAVES) network as well as various other agencies I spoke with along the way. Your encouragement and support has kept me grounded in why this research is important and kept me connected with the community. The ability to regularly catch up and share ideas has been invaluable.

I would also like to thank my internship supervisor, Dr Hilda Hemopo and the He Kākano team at Whirinaki for the support and ability to stay connected with this research during internship. My work in this team reiterated why this research is so important.

Finally, I would like to thank my whānau, including my amazing partner for their ongoing love and support as well as my friends, colleagues and classmates. I am so grateful to all of you.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Māori</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aotearoa</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aroha</td>
<td>Kindness, love, compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atua</td>
<td>Gods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hapū</td>
<td>Kinship group/tribe, subtribe; pregnant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harakeke</td>
<td>Flax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinengaro</td>
<td>Mind, thought, consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwi</td>
<td>Extended kinship group/tribe; bones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kai</td>
<td>Food, to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaikōrero</td>
<td>Facilitator, speaker, orator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaitiaki</td>
<td>Guardian, carer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapa haka</td>
<td>Māori performing arts, performing group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karakia</td>
<td>Prayer(s); chant(s) and incantation(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaumātua</td>
<td>Elder (male or female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaupapa Māori</td>
<td>Māori based topic; by Māori, for Māori, with Māori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kia tupato</td>
<td>Be careful, be cautious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koha</td>
<td>Gift of appreciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koro</td>
<td>Grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kōrero</td>
<td>Speak, talk, discuss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kotahitanga</td>
<td>Unison and togetherness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kōtiro</td>
<td>Girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuia</td>
<td>Elder (female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kura</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahi</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamae</td>
<td>Hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mana</td>
<td>Prestige, authority, dignity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manaakitanga</td>
<td>Hospitality, kindness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Māori</td>
<td>Indigenous New Zealander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marae</td>
<td>Courtyard, meeting place; complex of buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mau rakau</td>
<td>Traditional weapon training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maunga</td>
<td>Mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauri</td>
<td>Life force, life essence, vitality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mokopuna</td>
<td>Grandchild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngākau</td>
<td>Heart, emotional wellbeing or feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noa</td>
<td>Common, safe, unrestricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>New Zealander of European descent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pūkenga</td>
<td>Skills and abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangatahi</td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangatiratanga</td>
<td>Self determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ririki</td>
<td>Be small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roto</td>
<td>Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taha Hinengaro</td>
<td>Related to mental and emotional well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taha Tinana</td>
<td>Related to physical well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taha Wairua</td>
<td>Related to spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taha Whānau</td>
<td>Related to family connection and belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takahi</td>
<td>To trample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamariki</td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangata</td>
<td>People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapu</td>
<td>Sanctity; sacred, special, restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te</td>
<td>The</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te ao hurihuri</td>
<td>Contemporary realities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te ao Māori</td>
<td>The Māori world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te reo Māori</td>
<td>The Māori language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te tiriti o Waitangi</td>
<td>The Treaty of Waitangi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tikanga</td>
<td>Cultural principles, practices and customs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinana</td>
<td>Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tupuna/Tīpuna</td>
<td>Ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wahine/Wāhine</td>
<td>Woman/women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiaata</td>
<td>Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wairua</td>
<td>Spirit, spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wairuatanga</td>
<td>Spiritual essence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waka</td>
<td>Canoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whakapapa</td>
<td>Genealogy; descent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whakataukī</td>
<td>Proverb, saying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whakawātea</td>
<td>Act of clearing the way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whakawhanaungatanga</td>
<td>The acts of establishing relationships, connecting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whānau</td>
<td>Family, extended family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whānau ora</td>
<td>Family well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whanaungatanga</td>
<td>Kinship, relationships, social cohesion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whenua</td>
<td>Land</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter One: Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of what helps tamariki (children) and rangatahi (youth) who have experienced whānau violence. Understanding family violence has become something both personally and professionally important to me. From stories I have been told by my family of violence against children within their families of origin and extended family I have wanted to understand how people cope with such experiences and what happens that enables intergenerational cycles of violence to continue or be broken. Thankfully I have been fortunate to grow up in an environment that is free from violence. However, I wonder how my family members have developed coping skills and resilience to these difficult experiences.

While employed in the Department of Corrections for eight years I worked with many perpetrators and survivors of family violence, with the focus of my role being on helping perpetrators to stop their violence. I have also completed research looking into the effectiveness of a men’s stopping violence programme as an intervention through a family violence court. The idea of the current research came some years later after an unscheduled visit trying to locate a client. In a home I was visiting I was alarmed to find a mother holding her baby with serious facial injuries which appeared to be from an assault. I later found out the perpetrator was her partner. After taking all possible steps to ensure her safety I was left with questions about what this young child’s life was going to be like after such a difficult start and what would help this young child to overcome these difficulties and have a good life free from violence.

In terms of my cultural heritage, like many New Zealander’s I have mixed ancestry. My father’s whānau (family) are of Māori (Ngāpuhi), Irish and English descent while I have limited information about my mother’s biological family as she was adopted at birth. While I have been raised in a predominantly Pākehā environment, I have always felt a connection with tikanga Māori and since leaving university (the first time) have worked with Māori and learnt much about my own culture from those with whom I have worked. I continue to develop my knowledge of tikanga Māori and hope this research will contribute to my knowledge while enhancing the wellbeing of Māori. Given my predominantly Pākehā upbringing, I carefully questioned my suitability of undertaking this research. After consultation and support from supervisors, community agencies, whānau and friends we decided this was important research which I could undertake with my knowledge and the knowledge of my supervisors. Following a brief literature review, I found that not only was there an absence of published material
required to answer these questions in Aotearoa/New Zealand but that it was particularly limited for Māori. This was of particular concern to me given the over-representation of Māori as survivors of whānau violence.

**Family Violence and Māori**

Family violence is a critical and complex social issue in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Ministry of Social Development, 2006b). In 2014 there were 101,981 family violence investigations by New Zealand (NZ) Police, 62,923 of which involved at least one child who was linked to the investigation (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2015). However, it is estimated that only about 25% of all family violence in Aotearoa is reported to Police (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). In 2014 there were 10 family violence related homicides of children and young people aged under 20 and 146,657 reports of concern received by Child, Youth and Family (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2015). These included physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect. In 2013/14, women’s refuges received 78,161 crisis calls and provided 2,794 women and children accommodation in safe homes (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2015).

The over-representation of the indigenous people of Aotearoa in family violence is of particular concern (this is also seen in other indigenous populations), with Māori being over-represented as perpetrators and victims of family violence (Dobbs & Eruera, 2014).

Legislative changes and government initiatives have delivered a clear and strong message that family violence is unacceptable and laws and strategies have been introduced which relate to family violence. The Domestic Violence Act (1995) aims to ensure effective legal protection for victims of family violence and promote the view that all forms of family violence are unacceptable behaviours. Protection orders are a fundamental part of the Domestic Violence Act (1995) and are designed to prevent the respondent from physically, sexually or psychologically abusing the protected person or any child covered under the order. The Care of Children Act (2004) aims to promote children’s welfare and best interests and is related to guardianship and care while the Vulnerable Children Act (2015) is a newer piece of legislation which aims to prevent the maltreatment of vulnerable children.

In 2002, Te Rito – a NZ Family Violence Prevention Strategy was developed by the Family Violence Focus Group consisting of numerous community and government organisations (Ministry of Social Development, 2002). Te Rito is a government initiated action plan which has 18 specific interrelated areas of actions. Of particular relevance to this research is the recommendation to prioritise Māori-based approaches, early interventions and prevention evaluation. The Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families was established
in 2005 to advise the Family Violence Ministerial Team on how to make improvements in addressing and stopping family violence (Ministry of Social Development, 2006a). Te Puni Kōkiri (Ministry of Māori Development) commissioned a report as part of their work on the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families, “Rangahau Tūkino Whānau: Māori Research Agenda on Family Violence” (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). One of the priority areas of research identified was to build an evidence base about “what works” in relation to whānau violence which is of particular importance to this study.

Whānau ora is a state-led, cross sectorial policy which provides a framework for whānau wellbeing and involves a whānau aspirational aim, principles, whānau outcome goals and whānau-centred services (Taskforce on Whānau-Centred Initiatives, 2010). One of the whānau outcome goals involved cohesion, resilience and nurturance within whānau, aligning well with the aims of the current research which seeks to explore resilience and what helps tamariki and rangatahi survive through the difficult experiences of whānau violence.

**Defining Whānau Violence**

Family violence in respect of adult to adult acts is defined legally through the Domestic Violence Act, 1995 and is termed “domestic violence”. Domestic violence is defined as acts including physical, sexual and psychological abuse against one person from another person with whom that person is, or has been, in a domestic relationship. The Child, Young Persons and Their Families Act, 1994 provides a definition of child abuse involving the harming (physical, emotional or sexual), ill treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person (Fanslow, 2005). Te Rito provides a wider definition of family violence, encompassing a broad range of controlling behaviours of a physical, sexual and psychological nature involving fear, intimidation and emotional deprivation, occurring within interpersonal relationships between partners, parents and children, siblings and other family and household members (Ministry of Social Development, 2002).

The above definitions have been critiqued for focusing on the nuclear family, a westernised approach that does not enable the recognition of the broader constructs of violence that impact on Māori whānau (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). Family and whānau are also used interchangeably which does not accommodate the varied ways in which Māori are located within whānau, hapū, iwi and whakapapa (Kruger et al., 2004; Pihama, 1993). It has therefore been argued that whānau violence needs to incorporate a broader definition which includes an analysis of wider historical, social and political influences (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). Similarly, Cram, Pihama, Jenkins and Karehana (2002) state that the Domestic Violence Act (1995) “fails to recognise its own inclusion as part of a greater mechanism of continuous violence
perpetrated upon Māori people within a colonised Aotearoa” (p.4). Te Rito has recognised the need to move beyond western models, stating that the strategies to address whānau violence need a different approach (Ministry of Social Development, 2002; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010).

It becomes evident that using the terms family violence and whānau violence interchangeably is inadequate. A definition of family violence for Māori must engage the wider social, economic and cultural context and exist within a kaupapa Māori framework that is grounded upon tikanga Māori (Krug e t al., 2004; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). This includes all violence against whānau, widening abuse to include constitutional, legal and ethical abuses such as colonisation. Further to this, whānau violence has been recognised as intergenerational which directly impacts on whakapapa where it has taken several generations of learned behaviour and practice to entrench and will take time to unlearn (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010).

**Understanding Māori in the Context of Aotearoa**

In order to understand the current situation for Māori as the indigenous people of Aotearoa, it is necessary to understand the broader context and history. Jackson (1987) used the following whakataukī (proverb) to describe this:

Ngā hiahia kia titiro ki te timatatanga, ā ka kite ai tātou te mutunga (You must understand the beginning if you wish to see the end).

Jackson (1987) explained how the current context does not exist within a vacuum and is influenced by the past. It is therefore important to understand tikanga Māori and how Māori viewed whānau violence.

The impact of colonisation on Māori can be seen in the evidence within te ao Māori that whānau violence was not acceptable nor common in traditional Māori society (Cooper, 2012a; Durie, 2001; Jenkins & Harte, 2011; Mikaere, 1994; Pihama, Jenkins, & Middleton, 2003; Rickard, 1997; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). The role of women and children was one of divinity and sanctity where the status of women, Mana Wāhine, was an essential part of spiritual, emotional and cultural wellbeing for whānau, hapū and iwi. The mana (see below) of women was related to her place as te whare tangata, the carrier of future generations while children also had their own mana and were viewed as taonga (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010).

The whakataukī below has been used in the context of the prevention of whānau violence and describes how destructive behaviours can harm the equilibrium within an environment and as a result place at risk all of the other elements in the environment (Pihama et al., 2003). The harakeke is a native flax plant and a symbol of whānau and protection. The centre shoot, te rito, is used to symbolise the central importance of the child. It is also considered to be a total environment in that the past stands as a resource to sustain current and
future generations, as current generations arise from ancestors (Pihama et al., 2003). Children like rito are the hope of continuity and represent the future.

\[
\text{Hutia te rito o te harakeke} \\
\text{Kei hea te komako e ko} \\
\text{Ki mai koe ki a ahau} \\
\text{He aha te mea nui o te ao?} \\
\text{Make e ki atu} \\
\text{He tangata, he tangata, he tangata} \\
\text{Pluck the centre shoot from the flax bush} \\
\text{Where will the Bellbird sing?} \\
\text{You ask me} \\
\text{What is the most important thing in the world} \\
\text{I will say} \\
\text{It is people, it is people, it is people}
\]

Jenkins and Phillip-Barbara (2002) described how traditionally there was a collective response to whānau violence where people acted with mana in their response to violence in whānau and hapū. This included supporting and protecting victims whereby extreme lengths were taken by perpetrators to restore their mana. Violence was seen as dangerous to the wellbeing of the collective group and in extreme circumstances when the mana of the perpetrator could not be restored they lost the love and support of their whānau and could be disavowed. In addition, Milroy (1996) identified how acts of violence were viewed as transgressions upon the whole whānau and hapū and that in these circumstances community intervention was a key element in terms of both prevention and intervention.

Tikanga Māori and traditional cultural constructs are therefore essential to understanding Māori approaches to whānau violence. Traditionally Māori social order was based on tikanga, a set of beliefs and values which acted as a guide for moral behaviour and appropriate conduct for Māori (Cooper, 2012a; Durie, 1998; Jackson, 1987). Understanding some of these values and beliefs is essential to understanding whānau violence including, whakapapa, whānau, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, mana, mauri, wairua, utu, tapu and noa.

Whakapapa has been considered to be the foundation of a Māori worldview and is a key construct for understanding relationships (Eruera & Dobbs, 2010). It has been defined by Kruger (2004) as “the relationships between te ao kikokiko (the physical world) and te ao wairua (the spiritual world)...sets of relationships, conditional obligations and privileges that determine a sense of self wellbeing between whānau, hapū and iwi and the interconnectedness
between whānau, hapū and iwi and the environment...the continuum of life that includes kinship and history.” (p.16) Whakapapa was influential over relationships and essential in the continued succession and protection of whānau land and overall wellbeing (Eruera & Dobbs, 2010). It is through whakapapa that Māori are born into whānau.

Whānau is considered to be the fundamental building block within the Māori world (Pihama et al., 2003). It has been defined as being extended family which can consist of three to four generations and is a social unit under direction of kaumātua (elder) and kuia (elder female) (Henare, 1988). In addition, whānau is a resource of support and knowledge and a system which reinforces tikanga Māori and provides accountability and responsibility. Traditionally whānau is the initial point of learning for tamariki with kuia and kaumātua introducing developmentally appropriate knowledge and skills and educating their mokopuna (Pihama et al., 2003). Māori children were therefore collectively nurtured, raised and educated, having a range of adults and siblings from which to learn language, values and belief systems congruent with Māori societal structures.

Whanaungatanga is another value and is an integral part of Māori identity and culture. It has been defined by Pa Henare Tate (1993) as being the birth place of the collective, whānau (to birth) nga (the) tanga (collective). This involves relationships, kinship and a sense of connection. This is closely linked with manaakitanga which Mead (2003) describes as involving looking after, nurturing and taking care of how people are treated, regardless of the circumstances. He noted that the Law Commission uses the term aroha (love) to encompass this value which is an essential part of both manaakitanga and whanaungatanga.

Relationships are guided by the high value placed on mana which has various meanings involving the external expression of achievement, power and influence (Kruger et al., 2004; Mead, 2003). These include, the sacred power of the gods (mana atua), the power or authority handed down through chiefly lineage (mana tūpuna), the power associated with possession of land (mana whenua) and the power gained by an individual through their ability, skills and knowledge (mana tangata). Closely linked to mana is another important concept for Māori, mauri which in contrast is the internal values of power and influence (Kruger et al., 2004). Mauri has been further described as life force, life essence and vitality (Cooper, 2012a; Durie, 1998; Kruger et al., 2004).

Wairua is also a significant concept for Māori and is joined with the physical body at birth by the mauri (Barlow, 1991). It is considered to be the spirit of the person and their sense of being and is one of four parts of Te Whare Tapa Wha (the four sided house), a Māori model of health which identifies the four important parts of a person which need to be balanced in
order to achieve wellbeing (Durie, 1985). The remaining three sides include hinengaro (emotional wellbeing), tinana (physical wellbeing) and whānau. Wairua is also linked with places such as whenua (land), roto (lakes) and maunga (mountains) which have spiritual significance.

Utu is referred to as compensation, revenge, reciprocity and seeking to restore balance (Mead, 2003). Its main purpose is to maintain relationships and whanaungatanga. It is considered that when the sanctity of women is infringed upon, for example traditionally in war, it was regulated by utu.

Tapu is a Māori concept considered to be an important element in all tikanga which is present everywhere in the world including in people, places, buildings, things and words and involves the power and influence of the gods (Mead, 2003). It is considered to be inseparable from mana and has two opposing sides (good or bad) in which a person has the capacity to choose what power they follow. Noa is described as the opposite state of tapu whereby it is common, safe and free from restriction (Durie, 1998). It is through tapu and noa that balance can be achieved in wellbeing.

It is evident that the above concepts and values conflict with the use of violence in whānau and provide support for the above assertion that whānau violence was not acceptable in traditional culture. Rather these customs provided a framework involving social control and dispute resolution (Jackson, 1987). It then becomes important to examine the impact of colonisation on Māori traditions and wellbeing.

As with other indigenous cultures, Māori have experienced devastation, loss and trauma as a result of colonisation, which has in turn been inextricably linked to Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi 1840 and its violations (Cooper, 2012b). Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi is referred to as the founding document of Aotearoa, however, there were significant differences in the English and translated Māori versions of te tiriti (the treaty) regarding sovereignty. The Māori version stated the British could govern so long as Māori autonomy and rights were upheld (Cooper, 2012a). In contrast, the English version was less concerned with Māori rights and as a result led to considerable consequences for Māori as their translated version of te tiriti was not upheld.

The undermining of traditional Māori knowledge and practices through colonisation has been viewed as an act of violence on all Māori whānau and therefore a form of family violence for Māori (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). The negative impacts on Māori health including physical, emotional and spiritual, social, cultural and economic wellbeing have been described as including loss of land, language and access to culture as well as discrimination,
marginalization and systemic and structural racism (Balzer, Haimona, Henare, & Matchitt, 1997; Cooper, 2012b; Durie, 1998; Pihama et al., 2003). The term historical trauma has been used to encompass these profoundly negative and significantly harmful impacts which continue to contribute to health and socioeconomic inequalities as well as over-representation in the criminal justice system and lack of an effective political voice (Balzer et al., 1997; Harris et al., 2006).

The loss of language and knowledge of tikanga has had a devastating impact on Māori (Durie, 1998; Kruger et al., 2004; Walker, 1990). The contrasting practices of disciplining children became evident between Māori and English. It was noted by a Native School inspector that a punishment which to them did not seem harsh, seemed cruel and excessive to a native (Hohepa, 1994). Early missionaries noted that Māori children were indulged by whānau, hapū and iwi. As a result of physical punishment at school, Māori children would refuse to attend which was understandably condoned by their whānau (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010).

The Native Schools system was also a key part of undermining Māori structures through the reconstruction of gender roles and introduction of the nuclear family. The curriculum taught by teachers for Māori children included domestic skills such as sewing, cooking, washing, ironing and embroidery while Māori men were given leadership roles in their communities (Hohepa, 1994). This contributed to the introduction of a patriarchal ideology which positioned women as submissive to men while placing men in positions of power and authority. Redefining the role of women undermined protective cultural practices where men and women were seen as complementary (Eruera & Dobbs, 2010). The breakdown of Māori structures, the imposition of the nuclear family and the reconstruction of whānau and gender roles have been identified as consequences of colonisation which are related to family violence (Pihama et al., 2003).

The ongoing devastating effects of colonisation continue to be evident today in the economic and social disadvantage for Māori. In addition, the strong following of westernised culture has exacerbated the consequences of colonisation through racism, discrimination and marginalisation (Cooper, 2012a). It has been argued that Māori have been rejected by the dominant culture and distanced from their ancestral culture, concentrated in poor housing with low wages, and subjected to racism, all of which have contributed to an intergenerational cycle of poverty, alcohol, drugs, gang culture, single-parent families, domestic violence, hopelessness and frustration (Cooper, 2012a; Taonui, 2010). Connections have been made between whānau violence and the wider context of poverty (Erai, Pitama, Allen, & Pou, 2007). A strong relationship has been found between violent victimisation and financial stress
whereby financial stress appears to contribute to family conflict (Snowball & Weatherburn, 2008).

Allard (2010) noted that these impacts of colonisation have contributed to social disorganisation and an intergenerational cycle of violence. While there is limited research into risk factors for whānau violence, an ecological framework which provides an opportunity to acknowledge the multiple inter-related layers of risk within families, including individual factors, family/relationship factors, community factors and societal factors is helpful (Cooper, 2012b). This recognises how risk factors associated with whānau violence may be prevalent in whānau as a result of inequalities (Cooper & Wharewera-Mika, 2011).

Moewaka Barnes et al. (2013) developed a social determinants of health conceptual framework which incorporated several levels including socioeconomic and political context, governance, policy, cultural and societal norms and values on one level, social position, education, occupation, income, gender and ethnicity/race on another level, and finally at another level, material circumstances, psychosocial factors, social cohesion, behaviours and biological factors.

In summary, an examination of traditional Māori concepts and practices suggests that whānau violence was not acceptable in traditional Māori society. Through the devastation, loss and trauma as a result of colonisation and the undermining of traditional Māori knowledge, Māori have become vulnerable to a range of risk factors associated with whānau violence, many of which have also been identified in international literature. These common factors are discussed in the following section.

**Risk Factors**

Previous research has identified a broad range of factors associated with an increased risk of family violence. International literature provides some guidance in relation to risk and while this is not the focus of this research, it is helpful to understand in order to identify the importance of the concept of resilience and how strength-focused research has emerged.

**International research.** Due to the inconsistency in the findings of international studies, meta-analyses have proved useful in determining which risk factors are most strongly correlated with violence against children. Stith, Davies, Boykin, Alder and Harris (2009) utilised Brofenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory to guide their research, which gives recognition to the multiple levels in which factors can impact on an individual, including their family and more distal social and community influences. Such an approach is appropriate for understanding how these risk factors may interact within Aotearoa. It is important to
acknowledge that risk factors rarely occur in isolation and usually co-occur, as well as having a cumulative risk and accumulate over time (Masten, 2014).

Firstly, at the level of the individual child, risk factors have been identified to include premature birth, low birth weight, birth anomalies, twins, exposure to toxins in utero, disability (physical, cognitive or emotional), physical or mental illness, age, attention deficits, difficult temperament and aggressive behaviour (National Clearinghouse on Childhood Abuse and Neglect Information, 2003; Sidebotham & Heron, 2006). Parental factors associated with increased risk of violence against a child include low self-esteem, psychopathology (depression and anxiety), history of childhood abuse, insecure attachment with own parents, substance abuse (particularly alcohol), parental stress, poor parenting skills, psychophysiological activity, non-responsivity/negativity towards child, unrealistic expectations of child, belief the child has a behavioural problem, impulsivity, social isolation, high parental conflict, separation/divorce, young age (under 20 years), and low educational achievement (National Clearinghouse on Childhood Abuse and Neglect Information, 2003; Sidebotham & Heron, 2006; Stith et al., 2009).

At what is considered the more distal level, which includes the social and community environment, risk factors have been identified to include low socio-economic status, gender and social inequality, unemployment, low levels of family stability, social isolation, lack of social support, lack of access to resources, inadequate housing, exposure to racism and discrimination, poor schools, exposure to environmental toxins, community violence and stressful life events (National Clearinghouse on Childhood Abuse and Neglect Information, 2003; Sidebotham & Heron, 2006; Stith et al., 2009; Wooley & Gregory, 2007).

**Indigenous research.** As stated earlier, Māori children are at a higher risk of family violence than non-Māori children (Ministry of Social Development, 2006b). While research on specific risk factors is limited, it is noted that Māori are over-represented in many of the above factors (Cooper & Wharewera-Mika, 2009). This is also the case for other indigenous populations. For example, Memmott, Stacy, Chambers and Keys (2001) undertook a literature review of indigenous violence and were able to identify three categories of causes for violence in aboriginal populations in Australia. The first category is the precipitating causes which focuses on one or more particular events which trigger an episode of violence. The next category is situational factors which include secondary exacerbating circumstances in the social environment such as alcohol abuse, other people encouraging violence and conflicting social differences. Lastly underlying factors identify the deep historical circumstances of
indigenous people which contribute to vulnerability including colonisation and leading to their enactment or becoming victim of behaviour.

Caution should therefore be taken in interpreting the causes of higher rates of violence in Māori without a full understanding of the context which has led to the current situation for Māori in Aotearoa.

The Impacts of Family Violence

**International perspectives.** International literature has found exposure to violence can have significant ongoing negative consequences for children and young people’s health, education, social and economic wellbeing (Geffner, Igelman, & Zellber, 2003; Murphy, Paton, Gulliver, & Fanslow, 2013b). International research can help to inform the understanding of impacts of violence on children although caution is warned in interpreting its relevance for Māori given it cannot take into account specific cultural factors.

Holt, Buckley and Whelan (2008) undertook a review of relevant literature and concluded that children and adolescents living with family violence were at an increased risk of experiencing emotional, physical and sexual abuse, developing emotional and behavioural problems and increased risk of exposure to other adversities in life. The negative impact of exposure to and experiencing of family violence on children’s physical, emotional, mental and behavioural wellbeing are believed to contribute to the development of mental health diagnoses, including Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), depression and anxiety (Jaffe, Wolfe, & Campbell, 2012).

An ecological approach is again relevant to understanding the impacts of family violence at the level of the individual, family and community. At an individual level it is important to recognise the impact of trauma on development. Children experiencing family violence can experience feelings of anxiety, worry, sadness, depression, anger, aggressiveness, confusion, guilt, fear, loneliness, shame, powerless to stop abuse and experience low self-confidence, low self-esteem and poor self-construct (Cunningham & Baker, 2007; McGee, 2000; National Clearinghouse on Childhood Abuse and Neglect Information, 2003). Experiences of family violence can also impact on the development of certain beliefs, including the child believing that the violence is their fault, that if they try really hard to be good the abuse will stop, that if there is no blood the victim was not hurt, that the man and woman are equal parties in what is seen as a “fight” and developing disrespect for women (Cunningham & Baker, 2007; National Clearinghouse on Childhood Abuse and Neglect Information, 2003).
Behavioural impacts are also important to consider at an individual level although these effects will be evident in interactions at other levels as well. The behavioural impacts of experiencing family violence are diverse and include children being themselves aggressive and using violence, being emotionally abusive, and being disobedient and disrespectful towards their non-violent parent (Mittal & Carrington, 2012; National Clearinghouse on Childhood Abuse and Neglect Information, 2003; Robertson et al., 2007). Substance use, delinquency, anti-social behaviour and youth offending have also been identified as potential impacts (Baker & Cunningham, 2004; National Clearinghouse on Childhood Abuse and Neglect Information, 2003; Rathgen, 2008). Additional difficulties include accelerated responsibility and autonomy, poor communication and negotiation, withdrawal, hyper-vigilance, leaving home early, nightmares, insomnia, sleepwalking, enuresis and increased risk of self-harm and suicide attempts (Baker & Cunningham, 2004; Martin, 2002; Mittal & Carrington, 2012; Onyskiw, 2003). Impacts of exposure to family violence have been identified to differ by gender where females are at a greater risk of being victimised in future whereas males are at a greater risk of becoming perpetrators (Whitfield, Anda, Dube & Feletti, 2003). At the level of the community impacts can include reduced social competence, difficulty making and keeping friends, peer conflict, academic and cognitive difficulties and school drop-out (Baker & Cunningham, 2004; McGee, 2000; Mittal & Carrington, 2012; Rathgen, 2008).

New Zealand research. Consistent with international research, research in Aotearoa has also found negative impacts of family violence on mental and physical wellbeing of children and adult survivors (Fergusson, Horwood, & Lynskey, 1997; Flett, Kazantzis, Long, MacDonald, Millar, Clark, Edwards & Petrik, 2012; Mullen, Martin, Anderson, Romans, & Herbison, 1993). Fergusson and Horwood (1998) undertook longitudinal research with a birth cohort of over a 1000 children and found that exposure to interparental violence was associated with mental health problems including anxiety and conduct disorder, substance abuse behaviours and criminal offending. Mullen et al. (1993) completed a survey with a community sample of adult women and found childhood abuse was associated with a wide range of mental health problems including depression, anxiety, suicidal behaviours and substance abuse. Flett et al. (2012) also undertook research with an adult community sample and found that adults who had suffered sexual abuse as a child were more vulnerable to psychological distress.

In contrast to previous studies which utilised retrospective data, Clark et al. (2008) undertook a national survey with a contemporary population of young people. It was found that children who had been exposed to violence in the home were more likely to have
significant symptoms of depression (males 12.6% and females 25.9%) and have attempted suicide (males 7.3% and females 13.4%) compared to those who had not been exposed to violence (males 5.7% and females 11.3% and males 2% and females 4.5% respectively). However it is noted there is no research which specifically focuses on or differentiates between the experience and impact of family violence for Māori tamariki and rangatahi.

**Theoretical understandings of the impact of family violence.** It is relevant to next consider theoretical explanations of the processes involved in the impacts of violence.

Cognitive-contextual theories posit that the children’s cognitive appraisals of the violence can impact on their adjustment (Jaffe et al., 2012). If the child believes their behaviour is the cause of the violence, a consequence is they may blame themselves which accentuates the impact and can result in poor self-esteem and externalising behaviour problems. In addition, perceived threats and fear of abandonment are associated with feelings of anxiety and depression (Jouriles et al., 2010). The perceived threat and unpredictability of violence can also lead to feelings of helplessness while conflict that revolves around the child tends to lead to feelings of guilt and self-blame.

Developmental traumatology theory involves the study of psychiatric and psychological impact of child maltreatment on the developing child. This includes the interactions between a child’s genetics, psychosocial environment and proposed periods of vulnerability and resilience and the influence on biological stress systems, adverse brain development (De Bellis, 2001). The influence of childhood abuse and neglect on biological stress systems regulation and brain maturation is seen as complex and challenging to disentangle, however it has been found to be associated with adverse brain development. It also explains how children can go on to experience difficulties in emotion regulation as a result of structural change in the brain, thus impacting on the child’s stress-response systems (Jaffe et al., 2012).

From a Social Learning Theory perspective, behaviour can be learned through direct experience where it is shaped by consequences either being rewarding or punishing or by observing others and deliberately or inadvertently modelling the behaviour (Bandura & McClelland, 1977). Violence can therefore be learned through modelling where a child imitates aggressive models and accentuated by reinforcement whereby the child is rewarded for behaving in a violent manner, for example at school with peers.

Social Learning Theory was then adapted to Social Cognitive Theory whereby learning is seen to occur in a social context which involves a dynamic and reciprocal interaction between the person, environment and their behaviour. This also involves children’s
perspectives and beliefs and therefore their ability to cope and survive through traumatic events (Benight & Bandura, 2004). However, children can learn to use violence to solve their problems and this helps to explain the intergenerational transmission of violence hypothesis. As discussed previously, for males, exposure to violence is associated with later perpetration of violence which is consistent with the above intergenerational hypothesis, while for females it is associated with victimisation which may suggest submissive behaviour in relation to threats is learned through modelling (Stith, Rosen, & Middleton, 2000).

Explanations of the impact of family violence on the relationship between a mother and child are provided in attachment theory whereby children are less likely to have a secure attachment style and more likely to have an avoidant attachment style as a result of exposure to violence (Levendosky, Huth-Bocks, Shapiro, & Semel, 2003). Mothers experiencing family violence can be distracted, depressed and anxious as a result of suffering violence which can impact on the quality of attachment with their children. Failure to form secure attachment as children can have significant negative impacts later in life (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970). This includes difficulties in relationships with their mother, father, extended family and friends (McGee, 2000).

Both national and international research demonstrate the significant impacts of family violence on children at the level of the individual, their family and community. Theoretical understandings of these impacts provide insight into these experiences and provide a platform of knowledge into then exploring how children survive through these difficult experiences.

**Resilience**

It is important to remember that the negative impact of whānau violence is not inevitable. Studies examining the impact of family violence have found variable responses which are considered to be mediated or moderated by multiple variables such as factors related to the abuse and disclosure of the abuse as well as individual differences in resilience and coping abilities (Briere & Elliott, 2003; Putnam, 2003). For example, one study found that 22% of children who experienced physical abuse and neglect met the study’s criteria for resilience in adulthood in that there appeared to be no long lasting negative impact of the experience of violence (McGloin & Widom, 2001). This suggests that there are certain factors protecting some children from the negative effects of violence (Kolbo, 1996).

Traditionally, research has focused predominantly on risk factors for children exposed to family violence and the negative impacts on their health, education, social and economic wellbeing. However, such a focus supports a pathologising or deficit approach which neglects the creativity, courage, initiative and ingenuity displayed by children experiencing family
violence and has led to the exploration of resilience (Laing, 2000). International research has found that the presence of risk factors are not the only predictors of outcome for children. The observation that not all children succumb to the effects of these risks has led to the investigation of a strengths approach to understanding resilience and protective factors (Rutter, 2000; van Heugten & Wilson, 2008).

Resilience has become a well-established theoretical concept (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2015). While it is not known how risk and protective factors interact to produce outcomes, there is substantial support for focusing on understanding resilience (Gewirtz & Edleson, 2007; Goldstein & Brooks, 2013; Ketchel, 2004; Kolbo, 1996; Martinez-Torteya, Anne Bogat, Von Eye, & Levendosky, 2009; van Heugten & Wilson, 2008). This has led to the introduction of programmes using “strengths-based” approaches despite limited knowledge being available about how they contribute to building resilience (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2015).

Resilience has been defined as the maintenance of healthy and successful functioning or adaption within the context of adversity or threat as well as the ability to “bounce back” and doing well against the odds, coping and recovering (Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009). It has also been described as “ordinary magic” and a dynamic developmental process with new strengths and vulnerabilities emerging over time and throughout changing circumstances, involving interactional processes between individuals and their environment (Gewirtz & Edleson, 2007; Masten, 2001; Ungar, 2012). Higgins (1994) further added that resilience involves the ability to function psychologically at a greater level than expected given their developmental history.

While there has been debate about the definition of resilience, it has been recognised that with each wave of research on resilience in children, definitions and models have become more dynamic with a shift towards focusing on different systems and levels of analysis across disciplines (Masten, 2014). Masten defines resilience as “the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability or development”. The preferred definition for this research is provided by Ungar (2015) and provides a more ecological and culturally sensitive definition: “In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural and physical resources that sustain their wellbeing, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways”.

Protective factors have been considered to be the circumstances that moderate the effects of risk or enhance adaption (Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009). As with risk factors, it is
helpful to consider these factors from an ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) at the level of the individual, family, community, culture and society and this is addressed in detail below.

Family resilience is an emerging area of research where the focus moves beyond the individual’s capacity to develop resilience to the family’s ability to cope with adversity. Family resilience has been defined as the family’s ability to adapt to risk and adversity by drawing on protective factors and resources from individual family members as well as the wider community and/or the way the family functions (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2015). The Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit have developed a model of family resilience which uses a metaphor of a tree and includes, firstly, strong deep roots as representing protective factors across the individual, family, community and society, and secondly, wind, storms and erosion as risk factors, and finally, the branches as individual resilience and the canopy as representing family resilience.

It is essential at this point to acknowledge that the discourse of resilience has in the past been co-opted by proponents of a neo-conservative agenda that argue if one person can survive and thrive, then the responsibility for success should be on all the individuals within that population at risk to do the same (Ungar, 2005). This is not the standpoint taken in this research as such a position is considered to deny the very real structural constraints on children’s lives where not all children have the constellation of capacities to succeed. It is also important to acknowledge that even if a child or young person presents as being resilient, they may still be struggling. Therefore, a position where all children experiencing violence have access to support seems most appropriate.

**Resilience factors from an international perspective.** There is ample international literature on resilience which has been studied at the level of the individual, family and community.

At the level of the individual an easy temperament has been identified as a protective factor where children are better able to regulate their emotions and tend to be less reactive to stressors and use flexible coping strategies (Gewirtz & Edleson, 2007; Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009). Protective factors have also been identified as including, problem solving skills, a secure base from which the child can feel a sense of belonging and security, self-belief and good self-esteem where the child has an internal sense of worth and competence, a sense of self-efficacy where they have a sense of mastery and control and awareness of their personal strengths and limitations, emotion regulation, faith, hope and belief life has meaning, motivation to succeed and opportunities to succeed (Daniel & Wassell, 2002; Herrenkohl,
Sousa, Tajima, Herrenkohl, & Moylan, 2008; Martin, 2002; Masten, 2014). Children feeling in control with good self-concepts, the ability to avoid self-blame and the determination to be different from the abusive parent have also been identified as protective factors (Bancroft, Silverman, & Ritchie, 2012; Grych, Jouriles, Swank, McDonald, & Norwood, 2000; Gullie, 2004; Herrenkohl et al., 2008; Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009). In addition, intelligence and good cognitive abilities have been associated with positive adaption in the face of adversity, as well as a strong commitment to school, social competence and the development of natural sporting, scholastic or artistic talents (Bancroft et al., 2012; Buckner, Mezzacappa, & Beardslee, 2003; Daniel & Wassell, 2002; Herrenkohl et al., 2008; Jaffee, Caspi, Moffitt, Polotomás, & Taylor, 2007; Masten, 2014).

Research examining factors at the level of the family have identified that a relationship with a parent or another familiar and caring adult is the child’s greatest protective resource (Masten, 2014; Osofsky, 2004). This is consistent with attachment theory which posits that a bond with a primary caregiver serves the function of providing for safety, emotional security and learning (Bowlby, 1973). A secure attachment to a non-violent parent or significant other, at least one stable caregiver and strong bond, a positive and supportive child/caregiver relationship, which provide nurturance and trust, a lack of separations, competent and effective parenting, family problem solving strategies, equality, hope, shared beliefs, flexibility and the mother’s ability to model assertive and non-violent response to violence and a positive perception of their mother, have all been identified as protective factors (Atwool, 2007; Daniel & Wassell, 2002; Gewirtz & Edleson, 2007; Graham-Bermann, DeVoe, Mattis, Lynch, & Thomas, 2006; Herrenkohl et al., 2008; Humphreys & Houghton, 2008; Kalil, 2003; Masten, 2014; Osofsky, 2004). Positive caregiver mental health and the absence or recovery from mental health difficulties have also been identified as protective factors (Daniel & Wassell, 2002; Humphreys & Houghton, 2008; Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009). Additional protective factors include close and strong relationships with siblings and grandparents (Bancroft et al., 2012; Daniel & Wassell, 2002). The importance of supporting children’s relationships with the non-abusive parent has been recognised (Murphy et al., 2013b).

While the focus has often been on the individual child and their families, communities have an essential role in promoting children and young people’s wellbeing. This is through facilitating the development of a sense of belonging, meaning and involvement within the wider community (Whitlock, 2007). Protective factors at the level of the community include, the availability of strong peer relationships which can provide support and nurturance and buffer the effects of family violence, positive adult role models, strong secure relationships
with caring and competent adults including relatives, teachers and neighbours, collective efficacy, and safe havens such as school, sports, social clubs and faith-based communities (Bancroft et al., 2012; Banyard, Cross, & Modeki, 2005; Masten, 2014; Murphy et al., 2013b). Further to this, good schooling experiences, high neighbourhood support and social responsibility, sufficient financial and material resources, the absence of life stressors and poverty and early intervention are protective factors (Banyard et al., 2005; Daniel & Wassell, 2002).

Regrettably, while being a member of a majority ethnic group is a protective factor, being a member of a minority ethnic group is not (Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009). It is important to note however that cultural connectedness has been recognised as an important component to resilience. Ungar (2005) undertook an international research project across ten communities in seven different countries which confirmed the importance of cultural connectedness. Ungar (2012) studied resilience in the indigenous people of Canada who suffer poorer physical and mental health compared to the general population. This is linked to the impact of colonisation, displacement and loss of culture through ongoing racism and assimilation. He found the indigenous people were able to identify specific aspects of resilience that were distinctive. These included family and social connectedness, oral tradition and storytelling, connection to the land, collective knowledge and identity, cultural continuity and political activism.

Ungar (2012) noted that “the social ecology of resilience is best understood in terms of trajectory, a sense of meaning-making that orders the world and gives coherence to the past, present and future” (p. 385). This involves having an understanding of the past, being able to be present in the here and now as well as giving attention to and having hope for the future. Ungar posited that the social ecological factors related to resilience such as family, social, neighbourhood, community services and cultural aspects are as influential as psychological aspects of the individual.

It becomes evident that resilience is not an isolated individual characteristic and that most resilient children and young people have access to protective factors at the level of the individual, family, community and culture, although having access to any one of these can make a difference. Atwool (2007) noted that it is, however, difficult to see how any of these protective factors could be acquired outside of a secure and consistent attachment with a caring adult.
Resilience in Māori. Resilience has been cross-culturally recognised as a concept (Hunter, 2001). Durie (2006) recognises the importance of both reducing adversity and building resilience to ensure the ability for indigenous people to thrive and prosper. He has also described how resilience involves the capacity for indigenous people to engage in their culture, networks and resources as well as with global societies and communities. Durie identified how while resilience literature predominantly focuses on individual factors relating to overcoming adversity, for indigenous people strong links to cohesion, achievements and success of the collective including whānau, hapū, iwi and the indigenous population as a whole are important. Durie asserts that while in western theories insight is believed to develop through looking inwards and examining thoughts and attitudes, for Māori insight is gained through relationships with whānau, marae, land and wider society. Resilience has therefore been considered to be fed and nourished by Māori language, traditional practices and oral traditions (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010).

Boulton (2013) examined resilience in health care settings and found two different and distinct definitions for Māori. The first viewed resilience as a personal quality encompassing strength of character or spirit and values that enabled the person to overcome adversity and trauma. The terms toughness, resourcefulness, adaptability, flexibility and the ability to bounce back were used to describe this. It was recognised that this was not an innate quality, but rather was acquired through surviving a hard upbringing or being taught the values by elders such as wairuatanga (spiritual essence), kotahitanga (unison and togetherness) and whanaungatanga. Boulton suggested that it is this resilience which enabled Māori to survive despite the devastating impact of colonisation.

The second understanding of resilience focuses on the journey or process of empowerment and self-determination from trauma and risk to a healthier and safer self (Boulton, 2013). In this understanding it is considered that a trigger was necessary to prompt this process such as a conversation with someone respected or the birth or death of a loved one. The ultimate goal was individual strength as a part of a strong, supportive and functioning whānau where it was considered that an individual can only be resilient if they also have a resilient whānau supporting them in their journey. Whānau with greater resilience were defined as those with greater access to natural resources such as whānau, friends, marae and other culturally significant places as well as greater education and knowledge. Resilience therefore relies on connections with others, however the need to develop coping skills and strategies at a personal level to work through the process were also considered important and this will be addressed below (Boulton, 2013).
Although there is no one agreed definition of whānau resilience, it has been defined as “the ability of whānau as a whole to overcome or to endure hardship and adversity” (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). It has been identified as being different to “family resilience” due to the larger and more complex nature of whānau and the “glue” that binds whānau processes and relationships which is distinctive and emerges from Māori worldviews and related cultural constructs.

The following factors have been argued to be important for whānau resilience: whanaungatanga (networks and relationships), pūkenga (skills and abilities), tikanga (values and beliefs) and tuakiri-ā-Māori (cultural identity) (Waiti, 2014). Protective factors have also been identified as including: having access to and maximisation of resources, the ability to learn from and build on experience, the presence of support networks and good communication within whānau.

It has been evidenced that Māori have responded to challenge and adversity, drawing on cultural beliefs and values and that this is a common theme in oral and written tradition (Families Commission, 2010). This has been expressed in waiata, pō, woven into tukutuku, painted on kowhaiwhai and carved into wharenui to ensure events are not forgotten and to describe the ways in which difficulties were overcome.

A strong and secure cultural identity and connectedness have been identified as protective factors for Māori (Cooper, 2012a; Durie, 2006; Kruger et al., 2004; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). Connectedness with cultural practices, supports and resources are considered to serve as a buffer to negative life events. Lawson-Te Aho and Liu (2010) identified how within a collective, the individual trauma can be shared and support and encouragement provided within the context of kinship.

While there is no research specifically focusing on resilience in Māori who have experienced whānau violence, the following research has been undertaken in Aotearoa and included some Māori participants. The first, while a small qualitative study of eight participants with the actual number of Māori unknown, identified internal attributes and external environmental factors which were protective and helped children through their experiences of family violence (Douglas, 1998). These factors included having a family member who provided nurturance, family support, siblings, wider social support such as extended family, peers, trusted adults, school staff, neighbours and religious and cultural groups, involvement in education, hobbies such as music, dancing, kapa haka, sports, religious and spiritual beliefs and an internal locus of control. For Māori the connection with the spiritual (wairua) world was particularly important as well as culturally specific activities such
as whaikōrero. One participant spoke about whaikōrero as being a moment where he enjoyed the sense of achievement which led to him engaging in other protective activities.

Another small NZ study which included a survey with Māori and Pacific Island survivors of family violence found that the support of friends, neighbours, a cousin and access to services such as counsellors and women’s refuge were beneficial (Yates, 2013). A further NZ qualitative study in which nine adults were interviewed who had been exposed to family violence as children, including some Māori, attributed resilience to the presence of at least one supportive adult at some stage during or after the violence which included a school counsellor and teacher, “spiritual nourishment” which involved acknowledging ancestors and a divine power and the opportunity to talk about their lives in an oral history interview (Henderson, 2013).

The large longitudinal birth cohort Christchurch Health and Developmental Study also examined childhood adversity and resilience. While they did not specifically examine children who have survived whānau violence they focused on child abuse, socioeconomic disadvantage, parental change and conflict and parental adversity. They found that personality factors of low novelty seeking and high self-esteem were associated with resilience along with strong parental attachment and avoidance of delinquent peers (Fergusson & Horwood, 2003). These findings are generally consistent with international research. However, it is evident that there is a lack of research in this area and the current research project will contribute to increasing knowledge through exploring the perspectives of professionals who have worked with Māori who have experienced whānau violence, providing access to a diversity of perspectives and experiences.

**Resilience, help seeking and coping strategies.** International studies have found that children actively engage in a range of coping strategies in adverse situations (Houghton, 2008; McGee, 2000; Mullender et al., 2002). Adaptive coping strategies have been identified as, being involved in activities in the community such as sports, running, fitness, writing, journaling, drawing, poetry, acting, being creative and excelling academically, having supportive relationships outside the home, actively intervening and seeking help through telling a teacher, neighbour or friend’s parent, calling the police or talking to siblings, friends or supportive adults (Cunningham & Baker, 2007; Humphreys & Houghton, 2008; Mullender et al., 2002; van Heugten & Wilson, 2008). Informal social support is the most common way young people seek help and can include talking to a family member, neighbour, sports coach, teacher or group of friends whereas talking to formal supports such as police and counsellors is less common (van Heugten & Wilson, 2008).
International studies have also found differences in help seeking by ethnicity where a mistrust of people outside the family is stronger in some cultures than in others (Mullender et al., 2002). One retrospective qualitative study with 70 African American survivors of childhood violence found that African Americans used spirituality, extended family and community support to help cope with their trauma (Bryant-Davis, 2005). Spirituality is seen to involve the use of one’s faith in a higher being or in the universal order of things to make sense of the trauma or to increase one’s feelings of efficacy in handling the impact of the trauma.

One piece of research which has been completed in NZ involved advocates of a child’s programme, which provides a rapid response service for children who have witnessed family violence, sharing children’s voices of their experiences. They found that children make complex decisions in terms of their own safety and survival as well as that of their siblings and mother (Mittal & Carrington, 2012). Strategies were diverse and included children using psychological barriers such as distancing and distracting themselves to block out the violence, monitoring, interpreting and assessing situations in order to have some feeling of control over the situation and to try and make the abuse stop, while others had feelings of guilt and blamed themselves (McGee, 2000; Mittal & Carrington, 2012; Mullender et al., 2002).

A sense of optimism and hope have been linked with help-seeking (van Heugten & Wilson, 2008). Individual characteristics such as self-acceptance, self-confidence, coping skills and academic performance have also been associated with increased likelihood of supportive resources being utilised and are therefore considered essential in building resilience (van Heugten & Wilson, 2008).

Consistent with international research, Henderson (2013), as discussed earlier, found that having a strong and caring relationship with a significant other person contributed to resilience through serving as sources of strength and protection. Safe relationships and spaces were also important as well as having an escape to extracurricular activities such as sports and work. Accessing forgiveness through religion was also identified by some participants as contributing to resilience.

A small NZ qualitative study which focused on four young adults of Indian ethnicity who were exposed to family violence identified the importance of schooling and counsellors in building resilience (Chetty & Agee, 2009). The importance of school was recognised as being a caring and nurturing environment where young people could achieve their goals. Counsellors were also seen as a significant part in ensuring young people maintained their education and achieved academically.
It should be recognised that not all coping strategies are positive. Negative coping strategies include escape and avoidance such as running away, mental blocking, emotional numbing, making it better through fantasy such as fantasising about killing the abuser or being rescued by super-heroes, overcompensating by taking care of siblings and/or parents as well as more risky and self-destructive behaviours such as early engagement in intimate relationships, sexual risk taking, suicidal gestures and self-harm and addictive behaviours including substance use (Cunningham & Baker, 2007; Houghton, 2008; van Heugten & Wilson, 2008). While these coping strategies can provide some relief in the short-term, they can also have a significant impact on individuals, trapping them in unhelpful trajectories that can result in mental illness and involvement with the justice system (Margolin & Gordls, 2000).

Aotearoa has given little attention to the subject of resilience (Higgins, 1994). The lack of focus on resilience research in Aotearoa is concerning, especially given the role the above factors can have in improving mental health and wellbeing. Preventative interventions have been shown elsewhere to enhance the development of children, youths and adults and to avert maladaptive adjustment when individuals are at risk for mental disorders or other negative outcomes and this will be explored further below (Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009).

**Responding to Whānau Violence**

In considering the best way to respond to whānau violence, it is important to first understand the context within which responses occur. It has been recognised that to achieve whānau living free from violence within healthy relationships, individuals, agencies and government agencies must work collaboratively with close involvement from whānau, hapū and iwi (Murphy & Fanslow, 2012). This is consistent with the New Zealand Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families Programme of Action which encourages a collaborative and cooperative relationship between government and non-government agencies (Ministry of Social Development, 2013). It also aligns with international literature which supports a systems approach to addressing family violence termed “Coordinated Community Responses” which have good evidence of reducing family violence (Shepard, 2005). This also supports a socio-ecological approach to addressing whānau violence which recognises the levels of deeply rooted causes including the multiple historical, cultural, political, community, relational and individual factors (Murphy & Fanslow, 2012).

It therefore becomes important to understand the legal systems related to child protection in NZ. The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act (1989) states that children and young people are considered in need of care and protection if they are being (or
likely to be) harmed, ill-treated, abused or seriously deprived or if their emotional, mental or physical wellbeing is being (or is likely to be) impaired or neglected and that this is likely to be serious and avoidable. The Domestic Violence Act (1995) also includes children where allowing a child to see or hear abuse is considered to be psychological abuse of the child. Family violence courts have been established to deal with family violence matters in a coordinated manner which ensures that those affected by family violence receive appropriate support and education. This was led by the Waitakere Family Violence Court which was initiated by the judiciary and other community members in Waitakere to improve the response to family violence and develop a multi-levelled response (Morgan, Coombes, & McGray, 2007).

While the most common referral pathways for intervention arise from police risk assessments (Police Family Violence Investigation Reports) of victims who have reported family violence, psychologists may also be working with children in relation to other difficulties which exist within the context of whānau violence, although this may not be the referral reason (Murphy & Fanslow, 2012). In addition, it is important to recognise that children are far more likely to seek support from their whānau, family and friends than they are from formal agencies (Te Pokapū Rangahau Arotake Hapori, 2010). It has therefore been recommended that informal social support networks such as family and friends as well as others who come into contact with children such as other children and schools be given the knowledge and skills to enable them to respond effectively to children and help them access appropriate services when required (Murphy, Paton, Gulliver, & Fanslow, 2013a).

**International literature on what works.** The following principles have been identified as being essential in psychosocial interventions when working with children who have experienced family violence: protecting the children, protecting the non-abusing parent, providing supportive resources to the non-abusing parent to help them protect and care for the children, holding the perpetrator responsible for their behaviour, and respecting the non-abusing parents right to parent insofar as it is not placing the child at risk of further abuse (Burke, 1999; Healy & Bell, 2005).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasises working in a child-centred way which recognises the rights of children and young people. The findings of international literature from the perspectives of children like research in Aotearoa found children wanted to be listened to and have their opinions taken seriously (McGee, 2000; Mullender et al., 2002). They also wanted to be involved in decision-making although
regrettably they said their opinions were overlooked by adults involved in the violence as well as professionals trying to help which lead to them feeling powerless.

**Tamariki and whānau violence approaches.** In terms of whānau violence, it has been argued that western models of analysis and intervention methodologies “run short” for Māori in that they do not give sufficient recognition to the complex range of factors that underpin violence in indigenous communities (Eruera & Dobbs, 2010; Kruger et al., 2004; Pihama et al., 2003; Robertson et al., 2007). Furthermore, research has often been undertaken by non-Māori with a deficit based approach (Murphy, Paton, Gulliver & Fanslow, 2013a).

Māori providers in the area of whānau violence have been working to develop kaupapa Māori approaches to programme delivery (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). Mauri Ora is a kaupapa Māori framework used to achieve wellbeing in the area of whānau violence (Murphy et al., 2013a). It involves a strength-based, holistic, ecological approach which encompasses wairua, hinengaro, ngākau and tinana which aligns with other Māori health models.

Three fundamental tasks have been identified in this framework to analyse and approach whānau violence (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). These include, removing the illusion that whānau violence is normal and acceptable, empowering whānau, hapū and iwi through education and removing opportunities for whānau violence to be perpetrated, and teaching transformative practices based on tikanga Māori that provide alternatives to violence. This is linked with three elements to bring about the transformation from whānau violence. These are, firstly, te ao Māori (the Māori world) which involves six cultural constructs, whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana, secondly, te ao hurihuri (contemporary realities) which addresses how contemporary influences undermine cultural constructs from te ao Māori such as colonisation and thirdly, the integration of these which applies cultural constructs from te ao Māori to the environmental and contextual interference from te ao hurihuri.

Several kaupapa Māori approaches to addressing whānau violence have been evaluated. Tū Tama Wahine and Te Whare Ruruhau o Meri are provided under the Domestic Violence Act (1995). Tū Tama Wahine is a multi-levelled approach which aims to develop internal and whānau strengths as powerful ways to enable protection. This programme involves providing education and support to enable empowerment and protection; developing a sense of whānau, building knowledge and self-esteem; an ability to self-reflect on their own situation and ability to challenge things within their situation (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). It is considered that this is only possible through analysing and understanding the impact of colonisation and assimilation on Māori culture. Te Whare Ruruhai o Meri also has a strong kaupapa Māori base which uses tikanga Māori and understandings of historical, social and
political influences to address whānau violence. It also covers nurturing whānau, empowerment, self-reflection, promoting lifestyle approaches and independent thinking (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010).

In terms of programmes specifically for children, He Taonga te Mokopuna is a domestic violence programme for children which was developed from a kaupapa Māori base (Cargo, Cram, Dixon, Widdowson, & Adair, 2002). It views tamariki Māori as needing nurturing and protection and includes the following key elements: aroha, manaakitanga, mana whenua, mana tangata and mana wahine. These enable the empowerment of children to understand what is happening in their whānau, demonstrate care and unconditional love, contribute to wellbeing, instil a sense of belonging and belief of being valued, the adult providing an appropriate environment and the positive portrayal of mana wahine.

In the evaluation of this programme the positive benefits for tamariki were evident (Cargo et al., 2002). Caregivers described the increased skills and confidence of tamariki and their increased ability to talk about their feelings. They also spoke about the value of having a Māori facilitator who also served as positive Māori role model in the children’s lives and enabled tamariki to see Māori can “do things”. From the perspectives of the children, they spoke of many benefits. These included being able to talk to someone about their problems and feel understood, learn new skills to manage difficulties and feel safer.

While the development of these programmes provides an understanding of what is effective for tamariki, there is limited knowledge on best practice for psychologists working with tamariki and rangatahi who have experienced whānau violence.

**Professionals working with whānau violence.** It has been argued that professionals or staff working within social and mental health programmes should recognise that resilience is malleable and can be developed through the acquisition of skills and knowledge, and accordingly that professionals should build their knowledge in this area (Hage et al., 2007). Mittal and Carrington (2012) provided a number of recommendations for professionals who encounter a child experiencing family violence. These included: asking the child about the violence, acknowledging how difficult it must be and listening to how they feel about it; assuring the child that it is not their fault; asking what they have done before to keep themselves safe and commending them for this; talking to the child about what they can do if it happens again, for example safety planning and doing what needs to be done to keep the child safe, for example contacting child protection services.

Waitakere Anti-Violence Essential Services (2012) also provided suggestions of ways to support children living with abuse and help them build resilience. These include, supporting
the child by affirming their reality, empowering them with a safety plan, providing a safe place, being a positive role model and providing strong boundaries. Supporting the parents is achieved by helping them to parent with warmth and affection, to talk with their children about the abuse, to reassure the children that it is not their fault, to support them in coping with emotions, to set rules and have firm boundaries and understand behavioural difficulties in the context of their current problems. Professionals should also help parents provide access to interventions including getting children involved in social activities.

Violence Free Waitakere has also developed guidelines for therapists and social workers when working with families with children who have come seeking help to deal with the impact of family violence in their lives (Violence Free Waitakere, 2014). It involves helping the child to understand their right to feel safe and have strategies to help them create safety as well as understanding that reaching out for help can move the family away from violence and that they don’t have to take responsibility for trying to stop the violence themselves.

**The Current Study**

Whānau violence is a critical issue in Aotearoa. Exposure to and experience of family violence has been found to have significant consequences for children. The negative impact of exposure to family violence on children’s physical, emotional, mental and behavioural wellbeing has been found to contribute to the development of mental health diagnoses (Jaffe et al., 2012).

To date, research has focused on risk factors for children exposed to violence. International research has however found that risk factors are not the only predictors of outcome for children. The observations that not all children succumb to the effects of these risks has led to the investigation of resilience and protective factors. There is, however, limited research in Aotearoa into the factors contributing to resilience for children, in particular Māori children, perhaps due to the tendency for research on family violence of oppressed groups being designed to determine the incidence of pathological behaviour (Fontes, 1998).

While international research can help inform what the potential effects of whānau violence may be, it is clear the experiences of Māori are likely to be different when accounting for the historical, cultural, economic and social context within which Māori are located. This includes giving consideration to how colonisation has undermined whānau structures and relationships within whānau at multiple levels such as gender relationships and approaches to children (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). There are few studies available which explore the experiences and effects of whānau violence for Māori. This is detrimental to prevention and intervention
programmes for Māori to firstly determine what cultural differences exist from western models, and secondly, to understand how Māori tamariki and rangatahi learn healthy or violent behaviours in relationships, respond to such behaviours and whether these behaviours are then normalised (Eruera & Dobbs, 2010).

It is through developing an understanding of the factors that contribute to the development of resilience that coping can be enhanced in tamariki and rangatahi, preventing mental health difficulties. The current research project aims to explore and understand what helps build resilience in tamariki and rangatahi who have experienced whānau violence from the perspective of professionals working with Māori who experienced whānau violence. Through this knowledge, including the application of this knowledge to psychological practice, the wellbeing of Māori can be enhanced.
Chapter Two: Methodology

International resilience literature has grown from person-focused studies including single-case studies and aggregated case studies as well as variable-focused studies which have used multivariate statistics and methods (Holt et al., 2008; Masten, 2014; Suzuki, Geffner, & Bucky, 2008). There has, however, been less research in Aotearoa which uses systematic qualitative methodologies to explore the long-term effects of family violence and characteristics of resilience in those who have had these experiences, although this type of research is starting to emerge (Henderson, 2013).

A qualitative methodology informed by a kaupapa Māori approach was considered appropriate to explore resilience in Māori tamariki and rangatahi who have survived through whānau violence. By describing the perspectives of professionals with whom they have worked it was hoped this would provide an in-depth understanding of what strengths and resources Māori tamariki and rangatahi require to survive through whānau violence.

Method Overview

Kaupapa Māori research and Māori centred research. The present study was informed by a kaupapa Māori framework and tikanga Māori principles. Walker, Eketone and Gibbs (2006) identified how kaupapa Māori research emerged from several developments. These included a worldwide movement by indigenous people to increase tino rangatiratanga or self-determination over their language, land and culture, as well as in Aotearoa a better commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi. This has enabled increased sharing of research skills and greater protection of Māori data and participants (Glover, 2002; Powick, 2003). It also involved a shift from western research methods employed by non-Māori researching Māori.

Smith and Smith (1999) have described the fundamental elements of kaupapa Māori research as being related to “being Māori”, being connected to Māori philosophy and principles, taking for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori including Māori language and culture, and being concerned with the struggle of autonomy for Māori over their own cultural wellbeing. Smith and Smith (1999) also provided seven guiding principles on engaging ethically with Māori in research. Cram (2001) expanded these principles to include, aroha ki te tangata which involves having a respect for people and allowing them to define their space and meet on their terms, he kanohi kīte where it is important to meet people kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face-to-face) and be a face that is known and seen in the community, titiro, whakarongo…kōrero, which is about looking, listening (and then maybe speaking) and
developing an understanding in order to find a place from which to speak, manaaki ki te tangata which involves sharing and hosting people and being generous, kia tupato, meaning to be cautious, politically astute, culturally safe and reflexive about “insider/outsider” status, kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata, that is not to trample on the “mana” or dignity of a person, and finally kia māhaki which involves being humble and not flaunting knowledge, rather finding ways of sharing it.

Walker et al. (2006) identified important Māori concepts that need to be applied to ensure Māori protocols are maintained in research, and these link with the above principles. They include tino rangatiratanga, social justice and whakawhanaungatanga; the last referring to the process of identifying, maintaining or forming past, present and future relationships to allow Māori to locate themselves within the present. The use of te reo (Māori language) where appropriate was also identified as important to ensure understanding of Māori perspectives and encouragement of the revitalisation of te reo. Whānau was also recognised as important whereby the importance of understanding whānau and collective accountability is acknowledged along with the practices of generosity, cooperation and reciprocity which include the joint collaboration in the research.

When considering the present research project the concept of kia tūpato (to be careful) was the starting point to weigh up the potential value and benefit of such research. Hudson (2010) described the process of undertaking kia āta-whakaaro (precise analysis) and kia āta-kōrero (robust discussion) of the practical, ethical and spiritual dimensions of a research project. This discussion started with my then primary thesis supervisor, Dr Erana Cooper, who has engaged in kaupapa Māori research in a similar area. I also consulted with a number of university staff and Māori outside the university as well as taking a reflexive approach which will be explored in more detail below. This process then provided a foundation to kia āta-whiriwhiri (consciously determine) the conditions which then allowed the research to kia āta-haere (proceed with understanding).

Taking a strengths-based approach to understanding what helps Māori tamariki and rangatahi survive through whānau violence fits well within a kaupapa Māori framework. The holistic focus on contextual influences as well as my drive towards social justice also fit well with this framework. The potential to provide preventative knowledge on how to help tamariki and rangatahi survive, from the voices of experienced professionals, also has the potential to improve Māori wellbeing.

While this research has been guided by and has aspired to kaupapa Māori research principles (involving kaupapa Māori theory and research being designed by, conducted by,
made up of and for the benefit of Māori), it is rather seen as sitting within a *Māori centred research framework* (Māori participation and involvement represented in research team, participants and analysis and outcomes). This is reflected in the reality that the research was initiated within a university rather than within and by a whānau, hapū or iwi group. Furthermore, it is reflected in recognition of my own limitations, being of Māori and Pākehā lineage and having been raised predominantly in a Pākehā way. The inclusion of both Māori and Pākehā professionals in this research also places this research within a Māori centred framework.

**Qualitative research.** While quantitative research has been the method of choice for researchers in the field of psychology, the potential of qualitative research has recently been revitalised (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This is in part due to the preference of psychologists and other social scientists to conduct research that is congruent with paradigms and methods that are more closely related to practice and relevant to multicultural psychology (Ponterotto, 2005).

Qualitative research is concerned with the quality and texture of experience whereby importance is placed on the meanings of events to research participants (Willig, 2013). It has been identified as helpful when investigating complex issues such as family violence and resilience and topics for which there is no or little research where research can bring new or unexpected knowledge to the forefront; for example, with Māori where there is little research available in this area. It has also been used to formulate interventions and to bring about social change (Morrow, 2007). Qualitative research has also been recognised for its ability to enable understanding of meanings that oppressed people made of their experiences and give voice to people who had been marginalised, made invisible or silenced; aligning well with the focus of social justice in kaupapa Māori or Māori centred research. It has previously been recognised that qualitative research methodologies fit well with kaupapa Māori approaches (Cooper, 2012). The way in which qualitative researchers study people in their own territory and within naturally occurring settings is congruent with aroha ki te tangata whereby research participants define their space and meet on their terms (Willig, 2013).

The current research was positioned within an interpretivist paradigm with a relativist ontology which honours meaning and acknowledges that multiple realities exist (Morrow, 2007). While the research focus was inductive or “data-driven” where themes were developed from the data gathered from the participants themselves, it is acknowledged that completely freeing oneself from theoretical and epistemological commitments is unrealistic, especially in developing questions to ask participants where the questions may be based on my
understanding of the existing literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, a semi-structured interview structure was used to guide the interview and therefore did impose certain topics on the participants.

**Subjectivity and reflexivity.** In qualitative research it is explicitly acknowledged that all research activity is influenced by the researcher. The research is seen as a subjective process as the researcher brings their own history, values, assumptions, perspectives, politics and mannerisms into the research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, participants bring their own experiences, perspectives and values to the research. Subjectivity therefore requires careful consideration and one way in which to do this is by being reflexive.

Reflexivity is a concept that encourages the researcher to acknowledge their contribution to the research process (Welsh, 2002). In qualitative research such as this project, this includes an awareness of the choices made by the researcher in respect of the setting of the research, questions asked, interpretation made of responses, and the selection of quotes for illustration of ideas within the completed report. It is also important to consider how the current study emerged and the inherent assumptions in this research.

This research was undertaken as part of the Doctor of Clinical Psychology training programme. I arrived at this programme having chosen to pursue a therapeutic role where I could help people improve their wellbeing. My previous work in the Department of Corrections had a rehabilitative focus and I had wanted to develop my skills and understanding further in how to support people going through difficult times in their lives. Since beginning my training I have had further opportunities through placements and an internship to work with Māori and hear diverse stories of how they have survived through whānau violence.

Clinical psychology has been defined as a discipline which aims to reduce psychological distress and enhance psychological wellbeing through the application of psychological knowledge (Harper, 2010). While there is a strong influence on individual wellbeing gained through introspection within clinical psychology, I am aware of the potential limitations of this and find myself drawn to a broader, more holistic model of wellbeing such as the Social Determinants of Health Conceptual Framework and models such as Te Whare Tapa Wha (Durie, 1985; Moewaka Barnes et al., 2013). From a Māori perspective, recognising the importance of contextual factors is particularly important. This aligns well with my focus on the promotion of social justice, empowerment and prevention of difficulties within the context of historical power differentials among groups, marginalisation and oppression (Robertson & Masters-Awatere, 2007). A strength-based, holistic approach to working with
individuals, groups and communities is also an important focus for me, especially given past
deficit-focused research on Māori.

Another relevant consideration was identified by Haverkamp (2005) who noted that
his role and skills as a practicing psychologist could contribute to participants experiencing a
deep level of trust and disclosing more deeply than is in their personal interest. Therefore, it
is important to be aware of the potential impact of my professional role in this research.

Awareness of my cultural position is also relevant. Being Māori, meant I had a strong
passion for enhancing the wellbeing of Māori and hoped the current research could contribute
towards this. I was, however, aware of my insider and outsider positions, where I sit as an
insider being Māori although also being Pākehā and having a predominantly Pākehā
upbringing. This influences how I experience and make sense of the world and may place me
as an outsider in some regards. Having said this, over the past ten years my interest in my
whakapapa and connection with te ao Māori has increased, mostly through working with
Māori who were undertaking tikanga Māori programmes through the Department of
Corrections and observing them learning more about their whakapapa. This led to me finding
out more about my whakapapa and undertaking te reo courses to enrich my knowledge of my
own culture. I also chose to undertake my internship in a Māori team within a Child and
Adolescent Mental Health Service working with Māori tamariki and rangatahi and their
whānau.

As mentioned previously, having grown up free from violence my position may also
be considered to be that of an outsider in this regard. However, through my mahi (work) I have
had the privilege of being able to work with whānau who have survived through whānau
violence as well as with many perpetrators, and have seen the impact of these experiences on
their and others lives. This, in addition to seeing the impact of whānau violence on members
of my own whānau and how differently they coped, contributed to my motivation to continue
research in the area of family violence and understand what helps people to survive through
these experiences. This experience of having worked for many years with those who are
insiders and experiences in my own whānau of violence have meant I feel connected to the
pain of these lived experiences. Being aware of this position has the potential to enrich this
research through “empathic resonance” (Etherington, 2004); however, I needed to maintain
awareness to avoid over-identification.

Having access to regular supervision while undertaking the interviews with
participants and the interpretation of interview data helped to maintain awareness of my
position within the research and to maintain an open and curious approach to interviews with participants.

**Method**

**Participants.** The criterion for participant inclusion in the study was professionals who had experience working in community, social and mental health services with Māori clients who had experienced whānau violence as tamariki/rangatahi. Recruitment of participants involved meeting with various organisations and agencies and asking them to identify professionals who met the above criteria. This included contacting professionals whom I had worked with in the past and inviting them as well as others they may know to participate in the research. Potential participants were then approached and provided with information about the research. They were then given time to consider their involvement and invited to contact the researcher if they were still interested. A snowballing method of recruitment was also used by providing participants who had participated in the research with information they could pass onto others who may be interested.

Of the 18 participants who contacted me to participate in this study, all were interviewed. Eleven of these identified as Māori and provided their iwi affiliations. The remaining seven participants were non-Māori and identified as Pākehā but had extensive experience working with Māori whānau. Thirteen were woman and five were men. Participants were aged 31 to 80 years and had from four to 45 years of experience working in a range of areas including child protection, mental health, criminal justice, education and other social and community services. Roles included social workers, counsellors, psychotherapists, family therapists, teachers, psychologists, programme facilitators and various other community support and child advocacy roles within social services as well as policy and management and supervisory positions. Participants tended to have held various and multiple roles across these different areas.

Details of participants are not given beyond the above broad description, and quotes used in the Findings section are not tied to particulars of the speaker. This is in keeping with the undertaking given to participants to protect their identity and to meet the approved ethical requirements. However, in presenting quotes in the Findings section, a number is assigned to each participant in order to show the range of quotes used and represent the spread of opinions and views.
Interview schedule. Semi-structured interviewing is the most common method of data collection in qualitative research (Willig, 2013). A semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix A) was developed through consultation with community agencies, input from supervisors and a review of literature.

The interview involved asking participants about their experience working with Māori who had experienced whānau violence. They were then asked about how they understood whānau violence and whether their ideas about whānau violence had changed over time. Participants were then asked about their perspective of what helped Māori tamariki and rangatahi to survive through these difficult experiences. This involved providing a preamble such as, “What I would be really interested to talk about next are some of the things that you think may have helped Māori children to survive and cope in these difficult times” before posing the question, “What do you think helped them to get through?”. Prompts were given for both internal and external factors and enquiries made about whether Māori had specific strengths or ways of coping that were culturally related. They were also asked about whether the way tamariki and rangatahi coped changed over time as well as being asked about the role of professionals and what else could have been helpful for tamariki and rangatahi. Finally, participants were asked about where they thought the strength of tamariki and rangatahi came from to survive; “Where do you think their strength came from?”, and any wisdom they would pass onto tamariki and rangatahi going through these experiences: “Any last words of wisdom you want to share with me that would help Māori children survive and make it through these experiences?”.

The semi-structured interview schedule was reviewed after initial interviews were completed and the question asking professional’s about their understanding of whānau violence was removed as it did not appear to relate directly to the research agenda and appeared to decrease rapport with participants as it seemed to quiz participants rather than invite exploration of their experience.

Procedure. Ethical approval for this research was obtained from the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee.

Interviews were carried out kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face-to-face) and participants chose the location which included their homes, workplaces, university and public places (e.g., café). Interviews lasted between 47 minutes and two hours.

Following initial greetings and settling into the interview location, time was taken to explain the structure of the interview and read through the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix B) and Consent Form (see Appendix C). This including explaining about
confidentiality and recording the interview. Participants were then given the opportunity to ask any questions about the process. This ensured participants understood the nature of the research from the outset. Once consent had been obtained and the Consent Form signed, all interviews began with an offer to start with karakia. For participants who preferred this, karakia was done by myself or the participant where they had indicated they would like to do this. Whakawhanaungatanga followed this and included sharing information about my whakapapa and my motivation for undertaking this research.

Before commencing the interview the participant was reminded about their participation being voluntary and that if they needed to take a break that was fine.

Following this, the interview questions were usually asked as per the schedule although there was flexibility in this regard. The interview initially involved gaining an understanding of what the participants’ experience had been in working with Māori who had experienced whānau violence and how they had become interested in this area of mahi (work). If participants disclosed their own personal experience of whānau/family violence, they were then invited to share what they had learnt through their own experience, how this had helped them in their mahi and whether it had ever been problematic for them in their work. The interview schedule was used in a flexible manner and given time constraints some participants did not answer all of the questions as per the schedule.

Participants were then thanked for their generosity in sharing their knowledge before closing with a karakia (if they wished). Time was also taken to share kai (food) with participants provided by the researcher. Where this was not possible kai was left with the participant. Koha (gift) was also given to thank participants for their time.

Consideration was given to the sensitive nature of the knowledge participants were sharing and the potential that participating in the study could lead to distress. It has been suggested that counselling techniques are used in qualitative research on sensitive topics (Coyle & Wright, 1996). This was made possible given my ongoing engagement and training in the clinical psychology programme as well as my prior work experience.

A digital recorder was used for the interviews and each recording was transcribed into a Microsoft Word document. I transcribed three of the interviews in entirety, with the remaining 15 being completed by an independent transcriber. The transcriber was contracted for this work by myself and signed a confidentiality contract. I cross-checked transcripts for accuracy and also completed transcripts where the transcriber had left gaps, which was most often the case where te reo was used. Participants were invited to review their transcripts and minor amendments were received from three participants and incorporated.
Data analysis. Within qualitative research there are a number of ways to analyse data. Thematic analysis involves identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For this research thematic analysis was chosen due to its theoretically flexible approach which enables a rich, detailed and complex account of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke (2006) provided a step-by-step guide to thematic analysis which was used to analyse data. The analysis of the data began during data collection where I looked for patterns of meanings and issues of potential interest. The first phase identified by Braun and Clarke involved familiarising and immersing myself with the data through repeated reading of data to search for meanings and patterns while taking notes and marking ideas for coding. As noted above, data was transcribed into a written form to enable data analysis. In the process of checking the transcriptions completed by the transcriber for accuracy I began noticing things of interest, making notes of potential themes for each of the interviews and displayed these on a wall to provide a visual representation of all the initial themes and ideas I identified in the data. To avoid narrowing my analytic field of vision and consistent with an inductive approach I did not engage with literature until after I had completed analyses and written the findings section of this study.

I then read the transcripts and identified codes. Braun and Clarke (2006) identify codes as being a feature of the data which is of interest to the analyst and relevant to the research phenomena. I then reread transcripts to further identify and to refine codes. Data was coded manually using an electronic copy of data where codes were numbered and colour coded. In total, 66 codes were generated.

The next phase involved searching for themes and organising codes accordingly. I used visual representations at this point to assist in sorting the different codes into themes. Phase four then involved reviewing and refining themes. I examined the data extracts to see whether they formed a coherent pattern and re-read the data set to gauge whether the themes "worked" and accurately reflected the data set as a whole. Consultation was important at this point in reviewing themes and occurred with my supervisors, including one of whom is Māori and has experience in research in this area.

The next phase then involved defining and renaming themes. This included developing definitions and names as well as considering their relationship to each other and how they fitted with the broader overall “story”. Finally, a set of themes were produced with vivid examples and extracts that linked with the original research question “to explore professionals’ perspectives on what was helpful for tamariki in surviving through whānau violence”.
In addition to addressing the role of subjectivity and reflexivity the adequacy of data and its interpretation was also considered. While in quantitative research the number of participants is related to quality, it has been identified by Patton (1990) that validity, meaningfulness and insights are generated in a different way in qualitative research whereby emphasis is placed on “the information-richness of cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher rather than with sample size” (p.185). In order to enhance the quality and trustworthiness of the data analysis, prior to and during analysis, I engaged in regular supervision with my primary supervisor as well as a Māori researcher with experience in kaupapa Māori and resilience research. This supervision included discussing codes and how I had initially combined them into single themes, discussing the titles of themes and the ways in which I had related the themes with one another. When these discussions raised different views, these were considered and where appropriate led to revisions.
Chapter Three: Findings

This chapter presents the perspectives of professionals about what helps tamariki/rangatahi survive through whānau violence. Eight themes were identified from the thematic analysis and these were seen to sit under two categories: (1) Resilience which includes five themes and (2) Interventions to assist the development of resilience which includes three themes. The categories and themes are presented below in Table 1. Where relevant sub-themes are presented within the relevant section under the theme.

Table 1
Categories and themes

<table>
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<th>Category One: Resilience</th>
<th>Category Two: Interventions to assist development of resilience</th>
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<td>Building a relationship</td>
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<td>Internal resources of the child contribute to resilience</td>
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Category One: Resilience

This section presents the themes related to resilience for tamariki/rangatahi who experienced whānau violence. Five themes are presented here: (1) resilience is a complex concept, (2) internal resources of the child contribute to resilience, (3) having a significant, supportive person in their life, (4) a strong positive Māori identity helps and (5) wairua – “the heart of resilience”. Subthemes are included under the theme where relevant.

Resilience is a complex concept. Existing literature demonstrates the complex nature of resilience and variety in its definition, and this was reflected in the current study. While not directly asked, a few participants spoke in detail about the concept itself of “resilience”. This included discussion about what the term resilience refers to or means, the multifaceted and dynamic interplay of factors contributing to resilience and concerns regarding a political agenda in relation to resilience.
Generally, participants viewed resilience as a complex interplay between internal qualities relating to the individual, external qualities connected to the individual’s environment and cultural factors associated with identity and spirituality. A few participants specifically emphasised the complexity of resilience. This included resilience not involving any particular one factor or element and instead being a combination of factors; for example, having a significant supportive person in their lives, and self-belief and a strong positive cultural identity:

*But in terms of what makes them more resilient I think it will be a combination of all the things we talked about - P15.*

A few participants were clear in differentiating between resilience which involved “surviving and staying strong” and alternative pathways which were not considered to be encompassed in the term resilience. Many participants identified that tamariki/rangatahi could be drawn into maladaptive ways of coping including internalisation and withdrawing, acting out, becoming tough and hardened, joining gangs, alcohol and drug use, gambling and having mental health difficulties. A few participants mentioned suicide and how not everyone survives through whānau violence. This discussion seemed motivated to provide insight into the serious nature and impact of whānau violence and to emphasise the strength that was necessary for tamariki/rangatahi to survive.

Resilience was also considered to be different for everyone and vary from child to child. One participant said resilience was a “different kind of cocktail for each kid” while another emphasised that there is no “one size fits all”. This variation seemed to be due to children all being different and therefore responding to things differently:

*I think every single young person’s tale is different. And the reason why they might have made it through would be a bit different too - P1.*

A few participants saw resilience and ways of coping as being something that changed over time. One participant described resilience as being fluid, contextual and circumstantial and another participant described resilience as changeable like the weather:

*I think coping, resilience, yeah, coping, resilience and all of those words related to that, are fluid and contextual and circumstantial. There will be times in a person’s life where things are going better for whatever reason. They might, some of those might be intrinsic, some of those are likely to be environmental, some of those are sometimes seasonal, you know, depending on what the weather’s like - P16.*
In addition to the complexity recognised by participants in understanding resilience, caution was expressed by one participant in regard to identifying tamariki/rangatahi as resilient not being taken to mean they did not need other help and support:

Yeah, well, there’s a lot of talk about resilience. And I’m a little bit worried that resilience is kind of seen as, oh well, you know, kids are resilient, they’ll get over it. Or we’ll chuck a bit of something at them to make them more resilient and they’ll get over it - P4.

The importance of giving attention to tamariki/rangatahi who did not appear resilient was also emphasised:

But I think we, you know, and I’m rather afraid that we love the ones that have the resilience and drop the others off the edge - P4.

This may be related to an idea that if one individual can survive and stay strong through whānau violence that there is an expectation that all individuals should be able to do the same and responsibility is therefore placed on other tamariki/rangatahi to similarly succeed.

**Internal resources of the child contribute to resilience.** This theme represents the idea that internal resources of the child are helpful for tamariki/rangatahi who experience whānau violence. Internal resources were considered to be strengths within tamariki/rangatahi. This is also reflected in existing literature, as discussed in Chapter One, which identifies intelligence, an easy temperament, avoidance of self-blame, problem solving skills, faith, hope and motivation for the future and self-belief and self-efficacy as helpful.

Four subthemes are presented here: 1) inherent qualities, 2) understanding whānau violence, 3) having dreams, hope for the future and goals and 4) self-belief in their abilities.

**Inherent qualities.** Several participants spoke about an inherent resilience that some tamariki/rangatahi have that helped them to survive through whānau violence. In general this was defined as an innate quality or temperament that tamariki/rangatahi were born with:

Something has definitely got to be said for an innate resilience and I think that in terms of temperament, I think resilience is not something that either exists or doesn’t exist, but I think that there are intrinsic factors that we may have been born with that might lead you to be more resilient than other people - P16.

A few participants described resilient tamariki/rangatahi as “smart”, “tough” and “spunky”. In contrast however, one participant cautioned that resilience was not being “toughened up”, indicating that this could lead to suppression and building a barrier to keep others from becoming close or getting to know what they were experiencing:
You know, and this is another thing about resilience. It’s watching that we’re not thinking this, coz they’re toughened up, that that’s resilience and that’s good. Because what are they closing, you know, what are they covering up? What sort of shell are they creating? - P4.

On the whole participants related inherent resilience to a strong will to survive and pull through whānau violence:

And I think the human will to survive is so, so strong - P15.

Well, we’re survivalists as a species. We’ve survived a long while...so I think it’s very inherent in human character to survive - P4.

Nevertheless, internal resources were not considered by participants to be fixed at birth. It was considered tamariki/rangatahi could be born with inherent qualities that could develop if the opportunity was provided:

But I do believe that we’re all born with certain tendencies, personality tendencies and strengths. And they develop if they get the opportunity - P4.

Resilience was not viewed as solely related to inherent qualities. Instead inherent qualities could exist, but life events were seen to determine how resilient tamariki/rangatahi ultimately would become:

But I do believe there are certainly things that happen to you in your life that can have implications for how resilient you become or not - P16.

**Having an understanding of whānau violence.** A few participants talked of the contribution that tamariki/rangatahi having an understanding of whānau violence would make to helping them survive through these difficult experiences. Children can often take responsibility for family violence and attribute blame towards themselves for the violence (see also Cunningham & Baker, 2007; National Clearinghouse on Childhood Abuse and Neglect Information, 2003). Participants emphasised the importance of tamariki/rangatahi knowing the violence was not their fault and not taking responsibility for the violence:

What was really interesting for me was neither of them saw, saw it as their responsibility, they’re really clear...somebody else’s fault - P15.

This was supported by one participant who shared their own personal experience of locating the responsibility for the violence with the perpetrator:

It’s got, it’s had nothing to do with me, it was about him. It wasn’t that I was bad, you know, or anything like that - P17.
It was identified that having a significant support person who also took this position of attributing the responsibility to others (perpetrator/s) was helpful in assisting a child to attribute responsibility elsewhere:

> Children tend to blame themselves for separations and all sorts, so I mean that’s a gift. I think for a child to have someone that understands that and can help them see that, or feel not so blamed, or ameliorate the self-blame - P5.

This included tamariki/rangatahi being believed and told that family violence was not okay and reassured it was not their fault. The importance of having a significant supportive person in their life as well as interventions that assist will be explored further in later sections.

Interestingly, one participant was clear that tamariki/rangatahi externalising responsibility for the violence did not mean tamariki/rangatahi necessarily blamed a parent. Instead, they attributed the violence to difficult family circumstances and stressors:

> And not one of them has laid blame on their parents, which is amazing, coz often the kids will say oh it was my father’s fault, not one of them, even though we knew they had a rat shit life, you know - P9.

Instead, tamariki/rangatahi were able to develop an understanding of why the violence had happened. A few participants spoke about tamariki/rangatahi being able to have an analysis of why the violence happened and the stressors that had been present. It was through this understanding and insight that tamariki/rangatahi could survive:

> However, it seems to be that the children who were the best survivors of violence and abuse were the ones who had an analysis of what was happening. The ones who...he had recognised the horrificness of his mother’s life, the stressors that she’d been under...he saw her struggle...he has been able to survive because he saw all of that and therefore saw why these things had occurred and why he became the brunt of her anger. And is able to sit with that - P10.

This analysis then provided a foundation for making peace with the trauma and having aroha (love) and forgiveness which helped tamariki/rangatahi to survive:

> In terms of whatumanawa (seat of emotions, heart) I also found that the children who survive...they tend to have a demeanour of aroha. They have a forgiveness inherent within them...they have a ngāwari, internal contentment about them. And that seems to serve them well in the days of horror that they may experience - P10.

This quality may also be seen as an inherent quality such as those discussed in the previous section.

One participant also identified how having this analysis could prevent further harm:
So it must be about something to do with the ability to have an analysis whether it’s as a person who’s going through that, oh no gee my parents they are P users. Oh no there they go again. I’ll just go down the road to my mate’s place cause I know that after they finish their session, if it’s Saturday, on Monday all shits gonna break loose cause they’re gonna be coming down. So I’m just gonna stay at school and stay at my mate’s place and come home when they’re sleeping it off at 10 o clock or something. A child that doesn’t have an analysis of that cause and effect might then just every time step back into that negative situation - P10.

**Having dreams, hope for the future and goals.** Many participants talked about goals, dreams and hope as being helpful for tamariki/rangatahi to survive through whānau violence. This seemed to help them see there is a future with different options and possibilities available to them. It was through these avenues that tamariki/rangatahi may see other possibilities and what they want for their life and future as well as others seeing and encouraging their potential. This was able to give them drive and motivation:

> I think whenever there’s other opportunities for young people then it helps them get through. So if somebody is, I guess playing rugby or sport or has hobbies and stuff that kind of take them away from the family environment, I mean it gives them a glimpse into another kind of world. Then that can be really, be a really big thing for them and for their drive, their motivation for their goals - P1.

For some rangatahi/tamariki this included career aspirations and then being able to support their whānau:

> And the desire, I mean hope springs eternal, it’s the desire for things to improve and for mum to be happy, and mum and dad to be happy - P5.

> So, and he was very close to his mother...one day I asked him, William, what would you like to see for your mother? And he says I want to buy my mother a really big house and I wanna get her all, you know I want her to have the biggest TV, the best furniture. And I said well that’s great, so how are you going to do that? He says oh I'm gonna get a job - P9.

One participant spoke about seeing hope and resilience as being entrenched in each other:

> Hope, resilience and success are all very much entrenched in each other - P16.

Another participant referred to how in Māoridom even in the deepest darkest times there is still potential:
I think Māori even have a, have a, it’s not so much a whakataukī (proverb) but it’s about, thinking about the different stages of darkness. And even in the, the deepest darkness there’s always the potential, you know - P17.

Building and instilling a sense of hope in tamariki/rangatahi, as well as developing a desire and aspirations for their future was seen by many participants as important:

“I did a lot of work with him around some of his strengths, some of his goals, and his moemoeā, dreams. And he talked about wanting to be in the navy, he talked about wanting to be, you know the best rugby league player in the whole wide world, all of those sorts of things - P9.”

It was considered that goals, dreams and hope could be inspired by a public figure such as Stan Walker (a popular Māori singer) or a well known rugby player, sport and hobbies, exposure to a friend’s whānau, a teacher who saw a different pathway or trajectory for tamariki/rangatahi:

“I think goals...some of the kids that I’ve seen have had public figure role models, so it’s like a support person like Stan Walker, a rugby player whatever and that’s given them an idea of something that they would like to do and I think if they have a strong goal or aspiration to be you know whatever, rugby star to a model. If they see, if they are you know have their eyes open to this being a possibility in the world than that can often be a strong motivating factor. They’ve got things they aspire to, they’ve got dreams to lose I guess - P3.”

It was identified that sometimes tamariki/rangatahi needed other people to initially hold that hope for them, and from this developed self-belief. Tamariki/rangatahi having a significant, supportive person in their life who is able to hold this role will be explored in more detail below.

**Self-belief in their abilities.** Many participants spoke about the importance of self-belief. A sense of self-efficacy, self-worth and self-esteem were believed to contribute to resilience in tamariki/rangatahi. This appeared to enable tamariki/rangatahi to pursue their goals, dreams and hopes for the future through giving them the confidence to take actions towards achieving them. A sense of self-efficacy was seen to involve tamariki/rangatahi having a sense they are capable of doing something well. This sense of successfulness could be obtained through sports and hobbies which enabled them to develop an idea of what success looks like. It related to having a sense of mastery, being able to see themselves as competent and feeling proud of their achievements. A sense of self-efficacy was also related to developing a positive identity, which will be discussed in a latter section:
Being proud of accomplishments, and talents. And that’s the other thing that helps to build resilience is, you know fostering a sense of identity, and pride, and achievements - P5.

A few participants spoke about tamariki/rangatahi having a significant, supportive person in their life such as a school teacher or mentor who helped build their self-belief. This seemed to occur through other people having a belief in tamariki/rangatahi which helped them to develop the belief themselves:

She put that down to people again believing in her, seeing that she had potential, making her believe in herself - P9.

One participant spoke about building self-belief through kapa haka and used a metaphor of “building totara trees” to explain the process of helping tamariki/rangatahi to feel proud of themselves:

I think the vision should be actually just building totara trees, cos I feel that when we build that up, and it’s going to take longer, I said you watch them fly long-term, you watch these kids. We won’t need to drive them. They’ll drive themselves - P6.

Having a significant, supportive person in their life. All of the participants spoke about the importance of tamariki/rangatahi having a significant, supportive person and how even just one significant person could make the difference. The significant, supportive person could be someone located within whānau such as a paternal or maternal grandparent, aunt, uncle sibling, parent, cousin or someone outside of the whānau such as a staff member within a school; for example, a teacher, school counsellor, nurse or Special Education Needs Coordinator, clinicians in the community such as counsellors, telephone counsellors, psychologists, caregivers, friends, neighbours, sports coaches and/or mentors.

Participants identified a number of characteristics and qualities of a significant, supportive person. A significant, supportive person was someone with whom tamariki/rangatahi could build a close relationship and who provided unconditional love and support, stability and guidance. Unconditional love and support from a safe significant person was related to tamariki/rangatahi forming a connection with them:

Having what social workers call having a significant other. Some person who would be accepting and caring. Awful social work term I suppose but would above all be trusted, and I think that for children who are being umm suffering some form of abuse or yes including I suppose neglect. It makes such a difference if they’ve got someone to talk to because a lot of kids, a lot of the tamariki are not going to, to tell. And I think that it is critical too that the child has preferably, is in a climate,
where there are always people that it’s safe to talk to. And you know in the more traditional umm living there would have been, mokupuna would have someone they could go to - P2.

This relationship with a significant other enabled tamariki/rangatahi to build trust and speak openly, feel valued and have a sense of being seen and heard. One participant noted that the strength of such a relationship may last beyond the passing of the significant supportive person, in this case a koro (grandfather):

*But again it comes back to that thing of being seen and heard. And you may not be seen and heard by a therapist; you may not be seen and heard by your parents, or your whānau. But you have to be seen and heard by somebody. And I still maintain that that is the core...but her koro, her grandfather, was the one man that had believed in her. And I found it was incredible that she was able to continue on and survive just off the back of that...and she’d say, you know, sometimes I can smell my grandfather, his clothes. I really feel like he’s close to me, coz he’s passed. She just, he was like her light, a light in the darkness really. And it’s amazing how, with all the abuse and stuff that she’d gone through - physical, sexual, emotional, mental - with all that she’s still, she held on to him. He was like this treasure that she had. That’s what kept her going. But it’s being seen, heard, believed. That sense that somebody’s got me. Somebody gets me. That’s the core of resilience I think - P11.*

One participant spoke specifically about the concept of attachment in this context:

*It’s about attachment. It’s about good successful, positive, healthy attachment. And that’s the best thing for a child. So if they have a really healthy attachment with their mother, that’s, you know, that’s a real strength. Even when their mother’s going through terrible times. If she’s able to maintain that attachment. But it’s, you know, it’s a big ask of her...absolutely. Yeah, and if it’s not to their mum, then it’s to grandma or aunty or whoever. It might not be as strong as some attachments but it’s a darn sight better than nothing - P4.*

Other characteristics of a significant, supportive person included their being accepting, non-judgemental, validating, compassionate and understanding. It was believed these qualities facilitate the development of a sense of belonging.

A few participants emphasised the importance of providing stability and care that met the basic needs of tamariki/rangatahi. This involved a significant supportive person who was consistently available and who was also able to provide clear routine and structure and protection:
So we want to support our children in terms of their resilience around some of this.
Give them some basic stuff like some stable security and care. You know, so that
kids get their basic needs met for a start - P14.

It was also someone who took tamariki/rangatahi under their wing and provided guidance. The
significant supportive person was likened to being the navigator on waka (canoe):

*We needed navigators and things like that on our waka didn’t we, so that’s what,
that’s what they need from adults* - P18.

The significant supportive person was also someone who believed in them and encouraged
tamariki/rangatahi and saw their potential and this was related to them being able to develop
self-belief and confidence (as discussed previously). Self-belief also appeared to be related to
tamariki/rangatahi having a sense that they were worth something, seeing themselves as
someone of value and having a purpose:

*And I thought at least start with resilience and confidence to know that no matter
what happens, you have a purpose, you were born for a reason, and you matter.
That’s it* - P6.

As discussed earlier, the significant supportive person may also provide tamariki/rangatahi
with a glimpse of a different world and this appeared to enable them to develop hope for the
future and be sent off on a different trajectory:

*And so for one of my clients actually it was a school teacher, you know, who just
took that extra effort to see that there was some potential in her and that then, she
had I guess, she was able to see that her trajectory further on in life could be
different to the expected norm* - P17.

A significant, supportive person in their life was also someone who could advocate on their
behalf when required given they had an understanding of what tamariki/rangatahi wanted:

*Well I suppose it’s someone who, someone who they can talk to and someone who
will listen to them. But I mean really listen, sometimes it’s difficult, kids, because
yeah half the time you don't know what they're talking about. But someone in there
will understand what they're trying to say, they need someone to advocate for them*
- P9.

It was noted that the significant, supportive person was someone who could see beyond deficits
and the complexity of behaviours that tamariki/rangatahi can present with when having these
experiences of whānau violence.

*Whānau support person has advantages*. A subtheme identified from the responses
of participants spoke to the importance of tamariki/rangatahi having a significant supportive
person within their whānau, as compared to external people, while recognising this was not always possible. Several advantages were identified for the significant, supportive person being whānau. These included a greater opportunity to develop a positive Māori identity, to connect with whānau, hapū and iwi and to develop a sense of belonging. The importance of having a supportive person within whānau was indicated by an earlier quote where the koro was the significant supportive person; a “treasure” and “light in the darkness” for a kōtiro (girl) experiencing whānau violence.

It was suggested that searching within whānau for someone who could potentially be a significant, supportive person was important as this person could be built up to then fulfil this role and become a guardian or kaitiaki for the child, thus allowing the above advantages:

*But if you find the strongest person in that mix and you build them up, they’re going to be the best guardian or kaitiaki for that child. And it doesn’t, yeah, even if the parents are like very vulnerable, very hard to work with, you’ll find somebody. You’ll find someone in the mix. And I do believe it is important that you do find someone within iwi to be caregivers. I do believe that that’s important because it’s so broken. There’s so much disconnection. You know, talk to some Māori and they don’t even know what marae they’re from. That’s just, I’m like, wow! So you know, it does - P6.*

Several participants spoke about this significant, supportive person being a sibling. An older sibling was seen as helping younger siblings through acting as a protector while older siblings found the role of being a protector to younger siblings helped them to survive through:

*So if they’re the oldest in their family and they’ve got younger siblings then often they take quite a protective role. And they usually get the brunt of it. And if they’re the youngest they’ll always talk about how their older siblings always looked out for them, and would take the hit for them - P1.*

If it was not possible for the significant supportive person to be within whānau, then it was believed the safe significant person needed to be within iwi to prevent disconnection.

**Positive peer relationships.** A further subtheme concerned peer relationships. A few participants spoke about the importance of having a prosocial network of friends and how this could help tamariki/rangatahi to survive through whānau violence. Prosocial friends appeared to provide safety, a trusting relationship in which they could share their difficulties and a sense of belonging:

*Just I think just a strong sense of knowing, like being comfortable in who you are, you know like they had a strong sense of what they liked, what they wanted to be*
and yeah just kind of being okay with themselves. I think that can come from peer
groups as well. I think more so than when I was younger, young people have their
own ways of dressing, speaking that I think can kind of foster an identity and sense
of belonging that can be quite protective - P3.

Others spoke of positive peer relationships providing a distraction from their difficulties as
well as a safe haven away from the violence.

**Safe place.** A few participants emphasised the importance of having a safe place and
how this helped tamariki/rangatahi survive through whānau violence. The safe place could be
a place where there was the presence of significant supportive person they could talk with, but
could also be a place that provided a sense of safety, free from violence. It could be a place
where they were not questioned about the violence and what had happened but allowed them
to stay there until it was safer to return home. This could be with a whānau member, friend or
neighbour:

> I think also quite often people think of their safe place, where they were safe.
> Whether it be with a certain person like an uncle or a grandmother, or whether it be
> their safe place like they get solace at a neighbour’s house. Oh yeah, I know it’s
> Thursday, Dad’s going to come home, he’s going to be drunk, so I’ll go play at the
> neighbour’s house and I won’t come home - P1.

One participant described this as a “place to fall” and shared how their professional experience
in working with tamariki/rangatahi was consistent with their own personal experience which
identified the importance of having a safe haven with a significant supportive person:

> But a lot of the, the resilient ones would be those that have some relationship with a
> significant adult, that be a paternal, maternal grandmother, grandfather, aunt,
> someone that you could run to. See even in my experience I had an auntie, I would
> run to her...so I think having someone that you can, you know, trust and even from
> a young age, you know, run to - P17.

**A strong positive Māori identity helps.** Almost all participants emphasised the
importance of a strong positive cultural identity as Māori for tamariki/rangatahi who
experienced whānau violence. A positive Māori identity was described as the “prevailing
factor”, an “anchor” and the “essence” of what helps tamariki/rangatahi survive with it being
identified as critical to wellbeing.

A positive Māori identity was seen to be knowing who you are and where you are
from, including knowing your whakapapa and having a connection to whānau, hapū and iwi.
It was also about knowing where you stand, your tūrangawaewae and tino rangatiratanga which was related to integrity and being able to stand in one’s own mana:

Where does it come from for Māori to get through it? Where we do get through it, and again it comes back to what I’ve said before, that identity, that culture, that knowing who you are, where you stand. Coz it’s one of the things that we actually know in terms of it’s been well proven in research. It’s critical to wellbeing. Its identity and culture. So for Māori who get through it it’s being connected to that, to knowing who they are. That ultimately their connection to their identity and who they are, that’s it - P14.

I actually think it’s about standing in your own mana. So you know, like tino rangatiratanga, it’s often used as this term, you know, flying the flag and our sovereignty and all of that. But another interpretation of tino rangatiratanga is absolute integrity. You know. And so as Māori we often think that things like mana for example is something that’s bestowed on people or other people have it. And I, for that sense of self for myself it’s about having, for me to have tino rangatiratanga I’ve got to have integrity. And to have integrity I need to stand in my mana. And that’s myself. That’s my sense of self. And if our ririki and our rangatahi who aren’t in the most ideal situations growing up could have some sense of that that’s what carries you through - P14.

Feeling good and comfortable with who you are and inherently “knowing you’re Māori” were also identified as important. It was considered that this enabled tamariki/rangatahi to have a sense of belonging.

One participant appeared to be formulating the importance of identity as they told stories of tamariki/rangatahi who had survived through whānau violence:

What I’m thinking as I’m talking, and clarifying my ideas is the fact that, what I’m actually saying to you is that maybe there needs, the answer is connection with their roots. And their family, particularly, I guess when you're talking about Māori children or tangata whenua children...and what I seem to be saying is that, you know the children, to counter this sort of, but then I don’t know, to counter the anger and suppression of emotions is to keep people linking - P12.

Diversity of identity. A related subtheme was that positive Māori identity was seen to be diverse and vary for tamariki/rangatahi. A few participants used the idea of a continuum to explain identity. This involved a tikanga related or traditional Māori identity sitting at one end of the continuum and integrated/assimilated (with the dominant Pākehā culture) identity sitting
at the other, with the middle being bicultural. Placement on the continuum was seen as
dynamic and changeable where tikanga or more westernised ideas may be drawn upon more
or less across different situations. This demonstrates the complexity of identity, especially
within the context of colonisation and the advantages that accrue from having access to
identities in both worlds.

However, while it was considered adaptive for tamariki/rangatahi to sit comfortably at
various points along this continuum a position of displacement where they did not sit at any
point indicated disconnection from both Māori and Pākehā worlds, and was acknowledged as
a difficult place to be:

> So when I’m thinking about identity, particularly cultural identity, I always think of
> this young person or the whānau in terms of sitting along a continuum, you know, of
> traditional at one end assimilated at the other, bicultural in the middle and then,
you know, displaced, which they don’t belong anywhere...that don’t have a sense of
> place anywhere, you know, so they don’t fit in a Pākehā world because...they don’t
> have any life in the Pākehā world. Because they don’t go to school, they can’t do
> the schoolwork, you know, their families can’t afford for them to go on trips, they
can’t do what, what, you know, the Pākehā world is so they’re taken away from
> that. But they also don’t fit in the Māori world, you know, and that’s, that’s the
> place I guess where a lot of our kids sit, you know. That dislocation – P17.

One participant described how for some tamariki/rangatahi who had become disconnected
from te ao Māori, it was building their knowledge of tikanga and identity of being Māori that
was helpful and enabled them to build a sense of identity and survive through whānau
violence:

> Then you might get another client who knows very little about their Māoriness but
> they want to go for it, like everything you know. That, that tends to be the part that
> is missing, you know, that sense of identity of being Māori - P17.

For other tamariki/rangatahi it was explained how an identity of being Māori and having
access to tikanga based practices did not necessarily ensure access to this strength when
needed and there was an additional element involving their relationship with their “Māoriness”
that was required: that of feeling okay about being Māori – valuing that attribution:

> Some of them they, they may speak fluent te reo and they have an identity that is
> Māori. But they haven’t necessarily developed a personal identity in that, in that
> relationship with their Māoriness. So what’s, what’s missing, I guess, is that ability
to feel okay about oneself. So sometimes you’ll come here, when you come here,
some of the kids might have had Māori backgrounds so they know, you know, tikanga, they know everything, but when they get here under an acute or a crisis situation some of them don’t want to know about that - P16.

For other tamariki/rangatahi, the Māori environment they were raised in became entangled with the violence and gangs and led to an identity as a “young person” rather than Māori:

But the Māori environment, even with the reo, the kapa haka, there was the violence there on the whole. And so she wanted really to have nothing to do with it. So her identity was basically, how would I put it, how did she identify herself, she would’ve just identified herself as a young person, didn’t even want to know that she was Māori, you know - P17.

Emphasis was therefore placed on not assuming what a positive Māori identity meant or that tamariki/rangatahi may want a tikanga-focused intervention without exploring for each person what will be helpful:

And when you have right smack in the middle centred the identity, doesn’t matter what it looks like really, sometimes, like it can be a, see, I’m a Māori that don’t like certain Māori food. But don’t dare say I’m not Māori, you know. And I’m okay, I’m sitting with that. I don’t speak reo, but don’t dare say that I’m not Māori, cos Māori come, they come looking different, all different. And that’s really awesome - P6.

There’s no one size fits all. So you can’t see a Māori kid walking through the door and think okay we’ll slap the tikanga model on them. I think it’s more complex than that - P15.

However, having access to activities which supported a sense of pride, achievement and mastery and bolstered a positive Māori identity or connection with te ao Māori was generally seen as helpful for tamariki/rangatahi in building resilience. This included activities such as rugby, rugby league, boxing, gardening by matariki, kapa haka and waka ama:

I think there are, what has been really great for Māori as well as non-Māori has been the dragon boat racing and you see quite a lot of Māori in that. They are good at team work, good at team work but they have to do the head stuff…the intellectual, the psychological, social, physical, that’s a great activity and you know there are, you look at rugby which is not my favourite sport but it has allowed Māori and Pacifica people to be able to really use their often superior physical strength and stamina and this sort of thing. It’s also giving them a chance of prosperity - P2.
Further activities that supported a sense of pride, achievement and mastery and bolstered a positive Māori identity or connection with te ao Māori included doing kapa haka:

> And I just notice that with these kids knowing, they were so proud, you know, when they did their first performance. They were so, you know, you could see. They were just head right up, they were looking around and really excited - P6.

**Whānau support of Māori identity.** A subtheme related to identity was that when a positive Māori identity could be encouraged by whānau this was considered to have an amplifying effect in terms of resilience:

> And when a whānau can come alongside of a young person who, for example, is proud of being Māori, and the whānau are like we’re proud that our son is proud to be Māori, that has such an amplifying effect in terms of resilience - P16.

In contrast, if whānau were unsupportive this was seen to have an undermining effect on resilience:

> But when a whānau are in opposition, and this happens often, with their child’s willingness to uphold and to acknowledge their taha Māori, that has a really undermining impact on a young person’s resilience, because then, where do I fit? - P16.

Participants provided an understanding of how whānau may come to be in a position where they were unsupportive of a positive Māori identity in tamariki/rangatahi. This included having negative or limited experiences themselves of being Māori. However, it was emphasised that whānau could have these negative experiences and still be able to support tamariki/rangatahi:

> On the other hand, there are plenty of parents who have had negative or very little experience of what it means to be Māori in their upbringing but very willing to tautoko (support) their child. And this is even families who are entrenched in family violence but who will still be willing to go, ooh, you know, my son’s awesome at haka. And we go along to tautoko him cos he’s, you know, he holds our mana, he holds the mana in our whānau, even if they don’t know what that means - P16.

**Wairua – “the heart of resilience”**. Many participants spoke about the role of wairua in helping tamariki/rangatahi to survive through whānau violence. Wairua was referred to as “a spiritual depth”, “the heart of resilience” and “true resilience”. It was described by participants as a link with a universal wholeness, a reservoir of energy and power and a place to seek solace during these difficult experiences. Wairua was seen to affect everything we do as well as our environment affecting our wairua. While wairua was identified as an “inherent”
and “intrinsic” strength, it was related to connections with others, including tīpuna. The impact of traumatic experiences on wairua was acknowledged where wairua could be “sucked away”, leaving only an “ember”:

> Wairua is the concept that comes to my mind first and foremost. And I say that because our wairua affects everything we are and everything we do, but also the people around us and the environment affect our wairua. So at the end of the day, if your wairua can bring you through with what you’ve got left of it or what you’ve managed to pull into it so that it exists and has an ambience, for lack of a better word, then you will get through. But when wairua has been sucked away to the extent that there’s just a tiny little ember left, then really that ember needs to be inflamed in order for the young person to get through - P16.

So even though, yeah, the taha wairua might be strong I think because there is aroha there, probably in their days of darkness, when these children revisit the abuse and violence that they’ve seen or had done to them, anybody would have depression. Anybody would have deep moments of sadness because that is a natural thing. And I think that the component that can bring those young people out and help them survive is recognising that sadness is okay, gee you know it’s a product of all of this and if you weren’t sad you’d be manic and that to build their taha wairua so that in those times of sadness they can seek solace from a place which is in terms of the energy and power that’s available to them it’s limitless - P10.

Wairua was also seen as providing opportunities to reach back to tīpuna and bring their power of positivity. This involved bringing forth people have been positive in their whakapapa who can provide nurturing. It was identified that this ancestor may not be someone who they have met:

> And also if they need to and believe in things Māori, reach back to their tīpuna and bring the power of that positively into the room with them and that’s where I suppose the power of taha wairua for Māori really sits and that is to bring fourth those that have been positive in your whakapapa who you may have never met but as you call them fourth they will bring their wairua to you and provide you with nurturing - P10.

One participant specifically explained the significance of a strong, supportive person who was able to recognise the worth of tamariki/rangatahi and impart their wairua on them:
It’s more to do with wairua connection, you know, when somebody in this world can impart their wairua with you because you are worth being alive and worth being on this earth. Then we can begin, you know, to build. That’s the foundation. Basically, that’s the foundation - P17.

However, one participant spoke about how tamariki/rangatahi can counter-productively block off and protect their wairua, stopping wairua from being a vehicle which allows people to move into their life and have aroha for them. Nevertheless, it was identified that reopening can quickly create resilience:

*But for those who have blocked it off and you slowly begin to reopen that as an adult how quickly that creates resilience for them – P10.*

Wairua could be linked to a specific faith for example Christianity, however could also be a connection with a universal wholeness.

**Summary.** Participants spoke about the complexity of resilience, including how for each individual, a range of different factors could be helpful for tamariki/rangatahi surviving through whānau violence. This included internal resources such as inherent qualities, understanding whānau violence, dreams, hope and goals and self-belief as well as external factors relating to having a significant supportive person. Two important factors involving culture were also identified of having a strong positive Māori identity and a wairua connection. Through these understandings of what helps tamariki/rangatahi to survive through whānau violence, participants were then able to provide suggestions of the types of interventions that could help to build resilience.

**Category Two: Interventions to Assist Development of Resilience**

All participants where asked about what they considered to be helpful from their experience working in community social and mental health services with Māori who experienced whānau violence as tamariki/rangatahi. They were also asked to reflect on what interventions could have been helpful and would be helpful for other tamariki/rangatahi in the future. This section presents three themes evident within interventions: (1) building a relationship, (2) early systemic interventions and (3) using Māori guided interventions.

**Building a relationship.** Almost all participants spoke about essential qualities and processes when engaging with tamariki/rangatahi who had experienced whānau violence. Participants emphasised the importance of the relationship with the person involved in an intervention. The therapeutic qualities of these professionals working with tamariki/rangatahi included respect, trust, being non-judgemental, maintaining confidentiality, non-blaming, offering choice, collaboration, empathy, advocacy and connection.
It was considered that these qualities were essential to being able to develop rapport and reach the “core issues” through enabling a “sense of holding” and for tamariki/rangatahi to feel they had been understood, seen and heard:

*And it’s all about the relationship. It’s about building that sense of trust. And the sense of holding. So that they understand that whatever is talked about in these sessions it stays here, you know...you have to be able to build relationship. You can have all the modalities, you can have all the assessment tools you want. If you don’t have the relationship with the client and their trust, you have nothing. And you won’t be able to get to the core issues* - P11.

Connection was also linked to whakawhanaungatanga which will be addressed in a later section.

Treating tamariki/rangatahi with respect was seen as a basic yet essential component of working with tamariki/rangatahi:

*Respect definitely helps them. I think if you’re going to jump on them, like these kids have been dealing with, you know, negative, critical or abusive adults before or just expecting people to get down on them that if you actually, I don’t know it just seems real basic. You treat them with respect and with empathy* - P18.

Another important quality in working with tamariki/rangatahi and their whānau was being non-judgemental and allowing their mana to remain intact:

*I’m not there to judge. I’ve always said to colleagues that I’ve worked out, you never, what we say is we never takahi (trample) on someone’s mana. So, because again you’re not just looking at one person, so even though the mother’s been the ugliest mother ever to this young man, she comes with the, you know she comes with the whole tupuna system as well. So never takahi on their mana, you must always keep one’s mana intact no matter how bad it is when you’re dealing with murderers, no matter how bad it is you keep mana intact* - P9.

Having an awareness of the power dynamics within these relationships was also seen as helpful:

*But we need to be careful with our power, especially around depowered, people that are feeling depowered. So used in the right way we can power up some people, but we can also hold people down with power* - P8.

It was also identified by one participant that using personal self-disclosure and sharing their own journey helped to portray their genuineness, authenticity and demonstrate their understanding:
One of the things that I do is I often speak to people about my journey. I keep it in quite a shorthand form of it as opposed to the, you know, the full monty story. So that people can identify where I’m at. And that they’re not just talking to a textbook counsellor. That it’s someone who’s got an understanding of the struggles - P12.

Another participant identified how being Pākehā meant this process of engagement and building trust took longer:

The problem also for me was that I was Pākehā. And these kids were looking at this old Pākehā lady, talking about very personal stuff. And I did have a Māori therapist who came from another organisation who sat in a couple of the sessions. But it was very hard to tee them all up together. So I needed to have lots of hours with them before I got their trust - P4.

Participants expressed how the process of engagement with tamariki/rangatahi needed to be creative and include non-verbal as well as verbal modes of communication. This included having activity-based ways of engaging such as art, using sand trays, rugby analogies and storytelling as well as many Māori centred activities such as whakairo, taiaha, flax weaving, poi, stick games and Māori legends (Māori guided interventions will be discussed below):

To be able to instead of kind of discussing your feelings in words to be able to get them out in art and I think more Māori specific things like having the taiaha and groups like that in terms of teaching mindfulness but I think you can also use those things, anything as just as a vehicle to then have discussions about. You know if you’re playing stick games or learning poi you can talk about the, you know you can have songs that relate to what you are going to talk about and then you can discuss the songs in terms of teaching skills as well as building awareness around violence - P3.

I think storytelling is really powerful, and that whole storytelling of shared experience and identifying how things can be different. But I think by virtue of being Māori you’ve already got a lot of other things that tell stories in different ways. You’ve got, you know whakairo carving, you’ve got flax weaving. They all tell stories. You’ve got myths, even walking through the bush you can tell stories. There’s a lot of things that you could be doing that are a lot more hands on and a lot more engaging - P1.

Having a strengths focus was also identified by participants as important when working with tamariki/rangatahi. This involved recognising what strengths tamariki/rangatahi already had which had helped them survive through whānau violence and building on these. This also
included focusing on what tamariki/rangatahi enjoyed. One participant used a metaphor of a toolbox to describe the process of building on existing strengths:

And just being about to hear that, and use that, and yeah, so being able to add to, add to their tools that they already possess rather than, rather than go and buy him a tool box. He already has a tool box, he’s here, he has a perfectly good tool box. Can you add to it? Sure you can add to it. But he doesn’t need a new tool box, he needs you to have a look at his tools and you know, kinda stick some, you know, grease on them or something, you know. And maybe chuck a couple of other helpful ones in too. And maybe ask what other tools does this fella need. But trust me, he has tools that you’ve never even seen. And yeah, so, know that there are two experts in the room - P8.

**Early systemic interventions.** Most participants emphasised the importance of tamariki/rangatahi having early and systemic interventions. Interventions were seen as needing to be multi-layered and holistic, consistent with ecological/systems theories as discussed in Chapter One. The systemic nature of whānau violence was seen as requiring a systemic response/intervention.

While not dismissing the importance of working with individual children, participants emphasised that working with whānau as a whole was usually required. The reasons provided for this included that working with an individual did not enable for change in the whānau, which would contribute to maintaining their difficulties. The reality is that even where children are separated from whānau as a result of their treatment, they were likely to return to being together eventually. Therefore, including all whānau members was the most effective way to create a safer envirnoment for tamariki/rangatahi:

Where it feels hopeless at times is when, is when you might make a difference to that child’s internal understanding, but you don’t, you can’t make any difference to the external circumstances. And that’s where I really think that the family, the whānau, is as important, if not more important than the child’s wellbeing. Because if you change how the parents, or the caregivers, or the wider whānau, then you can change the external, the environment for the child. That’s much, much more valuable, well not much more valuable, but that’s the key - P5.

And sometimes, well for me personally, they’re, they’re going to take them back sooner or later so I like to work with, like if, I like to actually work with fathers too, you know. And help them to come to terms with why they do what they do, where
that’s coming from and where they learnt that and all that kind of stuff, so yeah, it’s good - P17.

However, one participant cautioned that putting the perpetrator into the room with tamariki/rangatahi after a crisis and instead suggested that each party be given a chance to heal separately before everyone is brought together:

*It’s to if there’s a crisis, get them out real quick, but then focus on all of them, yeah, not just child. You can’t do it without the other. Never, ever put the, if there’s abuse between parents, never, ever try and put them all in the same room and try and heal them together. It needs to be done separately initially - P6.*

Examples of interventions at the level of the whānau were provided and these included parenting programmes and therapy including individual and family therapy to change patterns of interaction and instigate change. It was seen as beneficial for parents to be able to find a way to speak about the violence and reinforce that it was not the young person’s fault:

*Well if things are explained to you, coz I work quite often with a parent and I encourage the parent to tell the child what’s going on. And, you know in child terms, coz on the other hand you get a parent who over shares, and shares adult concerns. And then that child becomes kinda like a parent themselves, or, so, but the majority of parents, or a lot of parents, they don’t say enough to the kids, they don't explain enough. And I think the explanation, and I don't think the explanation necessarily, it shouldn't really just come in from the counsellor...and you can also work with the child for them to, you know really understand that it wasn’t, that there’s nothing that they're doing that’s wrong and there is a way to manage anger - P5.*

It was noted by participants that the intervention needed to match the needs of the whānau at that point in time and match to what they were open and able to deal with. It was also stated that behaviour change was achieved through exploration and providing information to whānau rather than telling them what to do:

*Because I don't think that behaviour change happens from anyone being told. It happens through exploration, story and more information going into the system. Because the more information that’s available, then the more that will lead, in my opinion anyway, in my experience, is the more it leads to behaviour change - P5.*

These levels of intervention were also seen as crucial to build strength in whānau and prevent further whānau violence in the future:
So I suppose in te taha whānau it’s about creating, building up the strength of biological whānau and if we need to do that through the surrogate organisations yes. However the long term goals are whānau ora because that whānau is going to be the kind of tūpuna of the next generations. And if we want to stop this we need to address that whānau there and the new generation coming through which is the child who is the recipient of abuse or violence. So te taha whānau is critical because it provides the infrastructure within which the context, within which the current and future and past is the whakatika, the healing the whakawātea, the healing process is then stopped at the current, healed from the past and prevented in the future. So we need to have that long-term view - P10.

**School and community.** The role of the school was spoken about extensively by some participants. This included recognising that tamariki/rangatahi spent a significant amount of time at school which provided opportunities for intervention. Also, being exposed to a safe significant person such as a teacher or social worker at school (as discussed above) was regarded as important as well as the possibility of being able to participate in educative group programmes.

A few participants spoke about the benefits of group programmes at school or within the community. These included education about violence not being okay as well as resiliency building programmes that taught relationship skills, emotion management and distress tolerance. Being with others who may be in the “same boat” was seen as helpful as well as encouraging a sense of belonging. It was also an opportunity to learn ways to talk about whānau violence and their feelings about what has happened:

*Helping guys to kinda communicate stuff and say, you know what, this, this happened aye. And then because it’s now words and not a memory it has some kind of form and so to be able to look at the form, now it’s out, and we kind of inspect that and go, oh you know what, well that’s not okay aye? That’s, well that was difficult actually, shit…so have some recognition that, you know what, you actually have gone through that aye? You know, so, and be able to talk about it, you know, to be able to put, talk about feelings and stuff. What’s that, what was that like then? And really explore that in a group - P8.*

*And putting them in a group with other kids is real, I think just could be central, where they can belong and feel valued. Coz you foster an atmosphere of, you know everyone belongs here, and you care about each other ...It kind of replicates, in a way it replicates the whānau - P5.*
Other levels of intervention at the level of the community included positive natural networks such as community groups, iwi organisations, youth groups, positive peer groups, church, kapa haka as well as sports and hobbies as discussed above previously. Public education about whānau violence was also seen as an important intervention. A government level of intervention regarding issues which were identified as related to whānau violence such as poverty and education/employment was also seen as important.

In terms of integrating these levels of intervention participants had different ideas about how this was most effectively done. A few participants talked about a “hub” type integration of services which served as a “one stop shop”. However, another participant warned that too many professionals being involved can be overwhelming and unhelpful while another participant warned that professionals coming in can take away from Māori their own ability for whānau to become involved:

*Those artificial, surrogate family, that are organisations now stop the family from stepping in but more sadly also provide an excuse for the family not to step in - P10.*

**Using Māori guided interventions.** Given participants talked extensively about the significance of culture in terms of a positive Māori identity, engagement in a Māori world and wairua, it was not surprising that many participants spoke about using Māori guided interventions for tamariki/rangatahi who experienced whānau violence.

It was recognised that there are many principles within te ao Māori that can be used to guide interventions for tamariki/rangatahi. Participants spoke about these including karakia, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, whakataukī, Māori legends and use of te reo. A few participants described the importance of whanaungatanga in building relationships with tamariki/rangatahi:

*And it starts off, you know, I never assume that by going in, you know, single-handedly and saying oh so you’re the Walker whānau, do you have links into this hapū? And I just start off very basically so where are your people from? You know because there’s also that thing that Māori also carry quite a lot of, and I speak for myself here, you know up until recently. Because there are gaps in our knowledge so often, you know people will have either disconnected from their whānau or the whānau actually can, as is I regret to say sometimes the cases is actually the seat of trauma...I just proceed very gently by saying oh where are you from. And then they’ll say where are you from? And we do that whole. It’s all about connecting - P11.*
One participant described the challenge of implementing some of these principles and explained that having a good understanding of kaitiakitanga, respectful stewardship could help guide interventions:

\[
\text{So I think Māoridom has some wonderful, wonderful sort of principles. And we talk about them a lot. But we don’t actually think of them in terms of how they translate into action. And so for me, and I could think with, when we talk about resilience, is how the workforce could support resilience for our ririki, is around truly having a good understanding about what kaitiakitanga means. And taking people, that respectful stewardship. I mean, we’ll all jump on the waka and we go on a little journey shall we? - P14.}
\]

Cultural advisors were also seen as having a role in working with tamariki/rangatahi as well as having tikanga focused programmes. Models such as Te Whare Tapa Wha and Te Tuakiri o Te Tamaiti were seen as being able to be implemented into practice. Through this engagement and using tikanga practices tamariki/rangatahi had opportunities to learn more about te ao Māori:

\[
\text{Coz I just remember I did have a client who, like, he wanted, he wanted to learn more about his whakapapa, which is great, so I introduced him to [cultural advisor] and they did really cool activities...I showed him tapa wha and we did, and he got that really well, he got how, you know, different parts of his life he could fit in, in spiritual and whānau related...he wanted to learn a bit more about proverbs so I would bring him kind of a little, you know, like a piece, like a little proverb that we’d talked to him about. And one was the, you know, nau te rourou, naku te rourou, you know with your basket, like basket of knowledge, with your knowledge, and our knowledge and things like that...and yeah he just seemed to really like that...he was really interested in learning about te reo and more about te ao Māori - P18.}
\]

However, caution was recommended in determining who may want a more Māori focused intervention giving recognition to the impact of colonisation and historical trauma and how this needed to be understood. As discussed previously a positive Māori identity was complex and diverse and there was no “one size fits all”, however, interventions were still seen as needing to be “Māori driven”:

\[
\text{So I think it’s the same with Māori kids, we can’t just make an assumption that, that one model is going to work with them. But in saying that it needs to be Māori driven}
\]
and so if we’re thinking about, kind of, therapeutic and family interventions I think we need to be cognisant of that - P15.

I think having an understanding, like, if, if you’re Māori and you don’t speak te reo or you don’t know much about your whakapapa can be really painful and can be really shameful sometimes too. And especially if people say well how come you don’t speak te reo Māori, it’s really offensive, it’s like well go and read a couple of history books and you’ll see - P18.

A few participants talked about the advantages of Māori working with Māori including the sense of kinship that can come from this:

One of the things I know about in terms of when I’ve worked with Māori is there’s a, there are things that we inherently just understand and we know. You know and for Māori to work with someone who can take them to that place of what being Māori is, who can have that, you know, start to have that little conversation. And there’s ways of doing it. You know, some people get it really wrong. But there’s ways of doing it, you know? And that’s that, and you hear this all the time, you know, when you meet a Māori whānau, and it’s like so where are you from? You know and even if they don’t know it’s a really, really important question. And even if they may not want to go there you can still go there. And slowly you start to, slowly they’re encouraged to start talking about it. And what you start to realise is there’s tremendous mamae, of hurt, grievance in this. But there’s a way to do it. And it takes a little bit of time of unpacking it...but it’s that thing about when you’re Māori and you’re working with Māori there’s always a sense of kinship - P14.

A few participants also spoke about the role Pākehā who have manawa, the heart, passion and love for working with tamariki/rangatahi:

But it’s not just Māori that can influence us in the way that we practice, that we work with our young people. Because often you find, these people, they have the manawa, they have the heart, they have the essence, they have, which, in the way that we work with anybody, and everyone, not just children, anyone. And for Māori we can see, often we can see that in people, and that’s what I, and a brilliant relationship and we share the same passion and the same love for all people, it doesn’t matter, not just Māori or Pacifica, but everybody. They have that, and they still do – P11.
Summary. Participants described a range of interventions to assist tamariki/rangatahi in developing resilience. Building a relationship with tamariki/rangatahi was important and the qualities of this relationship were detailed. An early, systemic approach and using Māori guided interventions were also seen as helpful for developing meaningful interventions to help tamariki/rangatahi survive through whānau violence.
Chapter Four: Discussion

This chapter will begin with an overview of the current project. The themes will then be discussed with reference to existing literature. Implications for providing interventions to tamariki and rangatahi surviving through whānau violence are then outlined, following which the limitations of the study will be addressed and suggestions for future research provided.

Overview

The current project explored what helps tamariki and rangatahi to survive through whānau violence from the perspectives of various professionals who have experience working in community social services. The study focused on understanding protective factors and resilience from a Māori-centred perspective. Eighteen semi-structured interviews were conducted and a thematic analysis of transcripts revealed several themes across two areas: resilience, and interventions to assist the development of resilience. In regards to resilience, the themes were, resilience is a complex concept, internal resources of the child contribute to resilience, having a significant, supportive person in the life of tamariki and rangatahi, a strong positive Māori identity and having a wairua (spiritual) connection which was seen as the “heart of resilience”. Themes in relation to interventions which could assist the development of resilience were also identified. These included, building a relationship, the need for early systemic interventions and having interventions which are guided by Māori.

Overall, the aim of this thesis was to explore what helps tamariki and rangatahi to survive through whānau violence. Participants provided insight into resilience for tamariki and rangatahi and discussed the complex and dynamic interplay between a range of factors across different individuals and at multiple levels (individual, whānau, community, culture). The value of this knowledge becomes evident when discussing interventions considered as helpful for tamariki and rangatahi surviving through whānau violence.

Themes Concerned with Resilience

Not surprisingly, the construct of resilience received attention from participants in this research. As discussed in Chapter One, there is an absence in existing literature of an agreed upon definition of resilience by experts in the field of resilience (Masten, 2014). This reflects the complex nature of resilience which was discussed by participants. Participants’ responses seemed to match the ecological and culturally sensitive definition provided by Ungar (2012), whereby resilience is related to the capacity to navigate psychological, social, cultural and physical resources which sustain wellbeing both individually and collectively and in culturally meaningful ways. Participants in this research demonstrated awareness of the difference
between surviving and perhaps developing maladaptive coping strategies and surviving and using internal, external and cultural resources to achieve wellbeing. This provided insight into the serious nature and potential negative impacts of whānau violence, emphasising the strength that was necessary for tamariki and rangatahi to survive.

In addition, participants were clear that being identified as “resilient” did not mean they did not need help and support. This related to an aspect of participants’ discussion of the concept of resilience where there was caution in respect of using the term resilience, in view of the neo-conservative agenda. Ungar (2012) has discussed the difficulties with the neo-conservative discourse which carries the implication that if one person can survive and thrive then the responsibility of success should be on all individuals to do the same. In contrast to the neo-conservative agenda which places focus on the individual, this research supports attention being given to broader considerations including addressing societal factors contributing to whānau violence such as unemployment and poverty which contribute to family pressure as well as attitudes towards tolerating violence.

Participants also recognised the complex interplay of factors where resilience for tamariki and rangatahi who experienced whānau violence was a combination of factors that was different for everyone and dynamic. As discussed above, resilience was related to a range of internal resources, having a significant supportive person in their life and factors related to culture.

The findings of this research clearly support a social ecological model in regards to resilience such as proposed by Ungar (2012). While the social ecological model was developed in the context of exposure to adversity generally, it also fits well with the complex and multifaceted nature of whānau violence. This includes recognition of the multiple levels of factors influencing resilience as well as the complex interplay of factors which help tamariki and rangatahi survive through whānau violence. Similar to Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological model which emphasised the complexity of the interactions between the person and their environment at different levels, including the role of an individual’s cultural context, focus moves beyond deficits and individual psychological strengths.

An ecological model is particularly relevant for Māori where distinctive aspects of resilience have been identified, similar to the aspects of resilience identified for indigenous people in Canada who have also suffered the impacts of colonisation, displacement and loss of culture as well as ongoing racism and assimilation (Ungar, 2012). As with other indigenous cultures, Māori have experienced devastation, loss and trauma as a result of colonisation. The negative impacts of colonisation on Māori include impacts on physical, emotional and
spiritual, social, cultural, and economic wellbeing, as a result of loss of land, language and access to culture as well as discrimination, marginalisation and systemic and structural racism (Balzer et al., 1997; Cooper, 2012b; Durie, 1998; Pihama et al., 2003). This has contributed to an intergenerational cycle of poverty, alcohol, drugs, gang culture, single-parent families, domestic violence, hopelessness and frustration (Cooper, 2012a; Taonui, 2010).

In an ecological model and from analysis of impacts of colonisation, individual factors nevertheless remain relevant. However, it is important to see these as sitting in a context alongside other factors which will differ in importance between individuals. At the level of the individual, having self-belief which involves self-efficacy, self-esteem and a sense of mastery were identified as important as well as having hope and motivation to succeed in the future. These qualities are consistent with those identified in existing international literature (Daniel & Wassell, 2002; Herrenkohl et al., 2008; Martin, 2002; Masten, 2014).

Interestingly, the individual qualities of intelligence and cognitive abilities are emphasised in the literature but were not commonly identified in the current study. While some inherent qualities were discussed by participants, such as temperament and being “tough” and “spunky”, participants emphasised the role of dynamic factors which could be developed to help tamariki and rangatahi survive through whānau violence rather than the more static ones of intelligence and cognitive abilities.

Literature demonstrates the longstanding interest in temperament being related to resilience, however there is limited evidence to suggest a “resilience” trait as such exists (Masten, 2014). Research has identified that an appealing, agreeable or easy-going personality or temperament was often associated with resilience, however this is not always found across the board in the research, especially in non-western research contexts (Gewirtz & Edleson, 2007; Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009; Masten, 2014). The cultural relevance of these factors for Māori is therefore less clear.

Participants in this research considered it of relevance for tamariki and rangatahi to have the ability to locate responsibility for the problem with the perpetrator of the violence and have an understanding of why the violence had happened. While it is common for children and young people to attribute self-blame for violence that is inflicted upon them, being able to externally attribute blame and avoid self-blame is recognised in existing literature as being important to recovery (Grych, Jouriles, Swank, McDonald, & Norwood, 2000; Martinez-Torteya et al., 2009). While a good level of cognitive abilities may be necessary to have this level of understanding and insight, it seems other qualities such as empathy may also be relevant. This could involve the ability to be able to understand another person’s difficulties.
from their perspective. Through tamariki and rangatahi being able see the perpetrator’s position this may help them to understand why the violence happened which enables them to survive through these difficult experiences.

It is likely that for many children the appropriate attribution for violence is facilitated by having a significant supportive person who models an empathic and understanding relationship towards tamariki and rangatahi allowing them to feel accepted. This may also include telling them that it is not their fault that the violence happened.

It is also possible that it is this level of empathy and understanding which allows for tamariki and rangatahi to develop peace and forgiveness which was seen by participants as important. This is reflected in current literature which identified the role of forgiveness in resilience (Henderson, 2013). However, it seems important to identify that forgiveness was not identified by all participants and that such a process needs to be self-driven given literature has identified the adverse impacts of forgiveness being forced upon adult female survivors of family violence (Anderson, Renner, & Danis, 2012).

Consistent with international and national research, the significance of having a significant supportive person in the life of tamariki and rangatahi was emphasised by all participants. Masten (2014) has also identified the central significance of close relationships for resilience, noting that virtually every review of resilience in child development over the past 50 years has recognised it. A parent or another familiar adult has been regarded as a child’s greatest protective resource (Osofsky, 2004; Rutter, 2000).

The importance of attachment was raised in the current study. There is ample literature demonstrating the significance of an infant’s bond with their primary caregiver and how a secure attachment serves the function of safety, emotional security and learning, including its contribution to resilience (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970; Bowlby, 1973; Fergusson, & Horwood, 2003; Thompson, 2000). Early attachment creates templates for future relationships (Bowlby, 1969). That is, attachment plays a lifelong role in human adaption (Masten, 2014). This has involved attachments eventually being built with others in nurturing roles such as teachers as well as peers.

Participants spoke about the numerous people who could have the role of a significant, supportive person, including people within whānau and outside of whānau in the community. It has been identified elsewhere that access to these people tends to expand over time. Masten (2014) noted how initially the role of the primary caregiver is the most important (as discussed above), supplemented by extended family and others in caregiving roles, however, as a child’s social context expands so does access to others at school, in the neighbourhood and community.
as well as eventually friends, and later romantic partners. Masten used the term “enduring presence” to describe the ongoing nature and importance of the safe significant person.

Participants identified a range of characteristics or qualities of the significant supportive person and these correspond with those identified in existing literature. These include unconditional love and support, affection, nurturance, understanding, acceptance, compassion, validation and being non-judgemental; these providing a context where tamariki and rangatahi could be seen and heard. Other characteristics involved believing in tamariki and rangatahi and seeing their potential and providing guidance as well as providing stability by way of routine and structure. The role of advocacy was also seen as important. These ideas have been reflected in both international literature and research in Aotearoa (Daniel & Wassell, 2002; Gewirtz & Edleson, 2007; Jaffee et al., 2007; Simcock & Duncan, 2010; Yates, 2013). In Aotearoa, Simcock and Duncan (2010) found that children wanted a kind adult to ask “Are you okay?”, “Can I help?” or say “I’m here if you need to talk” which was consistent with Yates (2013) identifying that children wanted a safe and trusted adult to talk to who would listen.

Participants identified advantages of a significant supportive person being someone within their whānau. This provides for greater opportunity to develop a positive Māori identity, connect with other whānau, hapū and iwi and develop a sense of belonging. This is consistent with Masten (2014) identifying how parents can be “cultural conduits” who transmit cultural practices that can foster resilience. Having a strong relationship with whānau becomes vitally important for tamariki and rangatahi given the importance of cultural factors evident in the themes of strengthening positive Māori identity and wairua.

Strengthening a positive Māori identity in tamariki and rangatahi was identified as helpful by almost all participants. This is consistent with existing opinion and research in Aotearoa where a strong and secure identity and connectedness have been identified as protective for Māori (Cooper, 2012a; Durie, 2006; Kruger et al., 2004; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). It is also consistent with international research with other indigenous populations where distinctive aspects of resilience have been identified including collective knowledge and identity and pride in one’s heritage (Andersson & Ledogar, 2008; Ungar, 2012).

Knowing who you are and where you are from, including knowing your whakapapa, having a connection with whānau, hapū and iwi as well as wairuatanga (to be discussed in detail below) and being able to draw on cultural beliefs and values has helped Māori to survive and respond to challenge and adversity in the past (Cooper, 2012a; Durie, 2006; Kruger et al., 2004; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). It has been suggested that it is the same resilience which enabled
Māori to survive despite the devastating impact of colonisation and that is present in the lives of tamariki and rangatahi that helps them survive through whānau violence (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010).

Consistent with existing literature in Aotearoa, wairua was seen to be a significant factor in resilience for tamariki and rangatahi who survived whānau violence (Douglas, 1998; Henderson, 2013). It was viewed as the “heart of resilience”. Wairua is significant for Māori. It is considered to be the spirit of the person and their sense of being and is one of four parts of Te Whare Tapa Wha (the four sided house), a Māori model of health which identifies the four important parts of a person which need to be balanced in order to achieve wellbeing (Durie, 1985). As discussed above, wairuatanga is traditionally seen as a source of strength for surviving through historical trauma and its ongoing impacts and it seems to be this same “link with a universal wholeness”, “reservoir of energy and power” and “place to seek solace” that has helped tamariki and rangatahi to survive through whānau violence. The ability to bring forth tīpuna and draw on their strength and develop a “wairua connection” with others appears to be a distinct strength, emphasised by Māori to contribute to resilience.

Themes Concerned with Resilience-based Interventions

These sources of resilience identified by professionals who have worked with Māori experiencing whānau violence as tamariki and rangatahi create hope for being able to effectively provide interventions for tamariki and rangatahi. Participants spoke extensively about interventions to assist the development of resilience.

Early, systemic, Māori guided interventions were identified as helpful for tamariki and rangatahi experiencing whānau violence. Of course, interventions for family violence need to be “coordinated community responses” given the systemic nature of whānau violence, in accordance with international best practice (Shepard, 2005). In line with a social, ecological theory, interventions need to be multi-layered and holistic according to participants in this research. This involves working with whānau as a whole, school interventions such as resiliency programmes, and programmes and therapy such as family therapy, parenting programmes and individual therapy. Networks including community groups, iwi organisations, youth groups, peer groups, church and activities such as kapa haka and other sports and hobbies were also seen as important. Intervention at a broader level was also seen as necessary, involving public education and government level intervention in areas such as education, housing, financial wellbeing and employment.

Many participants talked about how interventions needed to be guided by Māori or “Māori driven”. This of course would take into account the importance of the factors identified
in relation to resilience of having a positive Māori identity and a wairua connection. While some participants raised the idea of Māori working with Māori and the advantages of this (e.g., the sense of kinship), it was identified that this was not always possible and that Pākehā can also have the manawa, the heart, passion and love for working with tamariki and rangatahi. It became evident that Māori could also use western models of therapy and violence prevention and adapt these to be effective and relevant for Māori.

Principles within te ao Māori were identified to lead interventions such as karakia, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, whakataukī, Māori legends and use of te reo. This could also include consideration of Māori models such as Te Whare Tapa Wha and Te Tuakiri o Te Tamaiti. However, given the complexity of Māori identity addressed earlier, caution needs to be exercised in determining who may want and/or benefit from a more Māori-focused intervention. Cultural advisors, kaumātua and kuia may be in a good position to identify some of these complexities.

Previous research has found that “blended approaches” to preventing whānau violence can be helpful (Cooper, 2012a). This involved using Māori cultural practices and interventions alongside others which are useful; for example, clinical and community psychology in the prevention and intervention of whānau violence. Examples of existing effective interventions for children who have experienced family violence include cognitive therapy, trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy and resilient peer treatment programmes (Cohen, Mannarino, Murray, & Igelman, 2006; Harvey & Taylor, 2010). In terms of parents and caregivers, parenting programmes developed in a western tradition such as Triple P (Prinz, Sanders, Shapiro, Whitaker, & Lutzker, 2009) and Incredible Years Parenting Programme (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010) have been found to be effective in numerous studies, and are used locally in Aotearoa. Another intervention with growing evidence which is used locally in infant mental health services with tamariki (and current research is being undertaken specifically with Māori tamariki) is Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) which focuses on strengthening the attachment between the child and caregiver and has been used with children who have experienced family violence and caregivers who have perpetrated violence against their children to provide alternative skills in how to interact with their child differently (McNeil & Hembree-Kigin, 2010). Adoptions of Triple P, Incredible Years and PCIT have been made for working with Māori.

In terms of relationships with people intervening, a core element of intervention was seen to be building a relationship. Literature suggests that interventions focusing on building protective relationships are important, with some of the effective interventions in building
relationships focusing on bolstering the quality of attachment and caregiving in the lives of children exposed to high levels of adversity (Masten, 2014).

In relation to the relationships between professionals and children and families, research on the therapeutic alliance reveals there is a strong association between the therapeutic relationship and treatment outcome (Karver, Handelsman, Fields, & Bickman, 2006; Lambert & Barley, 2001). Participants spoke about the qualities and elements of professionals’ relationship with those effected by whānau violence and the importance of these involving a strong connection. The qualities evident in this relationship were identified as respect, trust, being non-judgemental, non-blaming and empathic. Choice, collaboration and advocacy were also important elements of the relationship.

**Implications**

This research demonstrates that a range of people can help tamariki and rangatahi who have experienced whānau violence, and that one person can make a big difference to tamariki and rangatahi surviving through these difficult experiences. This has implications for professionals working in the community with tamariki and rangatahi. Providing opportunities and helping tamariki and rangatahi to build a relationship with a significant supportive person could be a powerful therapeutic intervention, as well as the therapeutic relationship with a clinician being an intervention to assist the development of resilience.

The research participants identified that tamariki and rangatahi often have significant strengths that they already use to help them survive, and that these provide a foundation or platform for other interventions. It was therefore considered essential to explore existing strengths. These existing strengths could include significant supportive people within whānau and/or the community. Given there is no “one size fits all” approach, beginning with identifying the strengths of tamariki and rangatahi appears paramount to building a meaningful intervention.

Interventions to assist tamariki and rangatahi in building resilience following whānau violence were also considered to ideally be systemic, multi-layered and holistic, consistent with a social ecological approach; including a cultural context. If preventative resiliency type programmes could be implemented in this way, this would be ideal.

While an element of resilience was seen to be related to inherent resilience, several factors were identified that would be relevant to further enhancing individual strengths. Helping tamariki and rangatahi to locate responsibility for the violence with the perpetrator and understand it is not their fault is important. In addition, helping tamariki and rangatahi to
develop self-belief in their own abilities and instilling hope and helping them to moemoeā (dream) and have goals for the future is also considered helpful.

Sensitively enquiring about and finding ways to help tamariki and rangatahi build a positive Māori identity is important. It must be emphasised that the way in which this can be a strength was diverse and therefore guidance from kuia, kaumātua and cultural advisors is desirable. An awareness of the power and significance of wairua is also significant. This emphasised the importance of using Māori guided interventions with the ability to adapt these in a way to match the needs of the individual.

These findings are relevant for professional training programmes such as in psychology and social work to provide guidance to training professionals about how to understand this complex area and intervene meaningfully and effectively for tamariki and rangatahi who have survived through whānau violence.

**Limitations**

It is not known how representative the views expressed through this research are of the broader community of helping professionals. It is possible that the methods of recruitment may have resulted in a sample bias in that I utilised previous connections I had with network organisations and agencies with professionals who have worked with Māori. It is possible participants were therefore not representative of all people working in community and social services. However, my existing networks were extensive and across a broad range of areas and in addition to this, participants were asked to identify other potential participants and these were often people who were previously unknown to me.

This study was undertaken with professionals in the Auckland area. As a result, the understandings gathered are likely to be most relevant to this area. Given Auckland is an area where Māori moved in large numbers due to urbanisation, it is possible that these understandings may be less relevant to rural people or for Māori who have not moved away from their whenua (land). However, Auckland does have a diverse Māori population which did provide a range of experiences.

**Reflexivity**

It is possible that my insider and outsider status as a researcher may have influenced research processes. Participants being aware of my experience working in the area of whānau violence as well as experiences of violence within my own whānau (although having myself grown up free from violence) may have been a strength in terms of being able to engage with participants and gather information that may not have otherwise been provided. However, having this experience may have made me more likely to attend to experiences familiar to
what I had previously known. Maintaining my awareness of my insider and outsider position, having a semi-structured interview format and an open and curious approach as well as regular supervision helped to manage this.

Also, my position as a young “researcher/student” may have also influenced the research process. Participants being aware of my position as a student may have led to them engaging in a different manner. This could have meant the research was seen as a learning process on my part or a means within which to gain further education. This may have led to participants being more guarded or alternatively, using the research as an opportunity to teach, creating less of a reciprocal interaction with the researcher.

My insider and outsider position in terms of being Māori/Pākehā may have also influenced the research processes. While aspiring to kaupapa Māori principles in the research and having a strong sense of responsibility for this research to benefit Māori, I was aware of my gaps of knowledge and it is possible this influenced the way in which participants shared information and how I understood the information shared. In addition to the above strategies of having regular supervision and an open and curious approach to research, ongoing discussion with other Māori students and other Māori professionals and meetings with a Māori supervisor alongside working in a Māori team helped me to maintain awareness of my position and seek expert knowledge. This process helped me to develop both personally and professionally with an experience of feeling more comfortable with my own cultural identity at the end of the research.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

Resilience is a complex concept and while there is disagreement by academics in this area about what resilience is, this research provides insight into how professionals view resilience in tamariki and rangatahi who have survived through whānau violence. Further research could be longitudinal to explore how resilience develops and changes overtime for Māori tamariki and rangatahi. It is also suggested that research be undertaken which directly asks tamariki and rangatahi themselves about their experience. Gaining the perspective of whānau members could also provide further insight into how tamariki and rangatahi survive through whānau violence. Such research will give tamariki and rangatahi a voice in the literature as well as provide opportunities for them to help other tamariki and rangatahi going through similar experiences. Further research could also include rural areas to provide insight into how tamariki and rangatahi living in different areas survive through these difficult experiences.
Given the extent of whānau violence in Aotearoa, it is vital that further research is undertaken in this area. It is also important that research maintains a kaupapa Māori approach whereby research is “for Māori” and the relevance and utility for Māori communities is maximised. These insights provided by Māori may also help contribute to a broader knowledge base for other indigenous communities internationally whom have shared similar experiences to Māori.
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Appendix A:
Semi-Structured Interview Schedule
Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Karakia/opening

Preamble: If you’re ready it would be good to get things started. If you need to take a break or do not wish to continue in the interview please let me know.

Let’s start by talking a bit about your experience in working with Māori children who have experienced whānau violence.

(1) Tell me about your current and/or past roles in which you have worked with children who have experienced whānau violence
(2) How did you become interested in working in this area?

*If discloses own experience of whānau violence emphasise that it’s great that they want to share your experience and that if as we are talking today they become upset we can take a break.

(a) What did you learn through your own experience?
(b) How has that helped you in your work with children who have experienced whānau violence?
(c) Has that even been a problem for you in your work?

I’m really interested in how people understand whānau violence.

(3) How would you define whānau violence?
(4) Has your understanding of whānau violence changed over time? How?

What I would be really interested to talk about next are some of the things that you think may have helped Māori children to survive and cope in these difficult times.

(5) What do you think helped them to get through?
   - How did they survive?
   - How did they cope?

Prompt for internal factors:

(6) What do you see as the children’s own strengths that helped them get through experiencing whānau violence?

Prompt for external factors:

(7) Who do you think helped them to get through? What did they do?

(8) Had they told anyone? How did they respond? Was that helpful for them?

(9) Are there differences in the way that Māori children survived through these experiences? How do you understand that?
Looking back, is there anything else you can think of that helped Māori children to make sense of what was happening or how they got through?

Did the way they cope change overtime?

Looking back, what else do you think could have been helpful for them?

What role do you think other professionals have in helping Māori children survive through these experiences?

So we are coming towards the end of the interview. I just have a few more questions today.

Where do you think their strength came from?

Any last words of wisdom you would want to share with me that would help Māori children survive and make it through these experiences?

Do you have any questions before we finish up?

How has it been for you today discussing these things?

Thank you for your time and reflections about what helped Māori children to survive through whānau violence. I appreciate your generosity in sharing your knowledge to help children get the support they need.

Karakia/Closing
Appendix B:
Participant Information Sheet
Resilience in Māori children who have experienced whānau violence: a qualitative inquiry into what helps

Participant Information Sheet

Tena koe,

My name is Anna Walters. My family are of Māori (Ngāpuhi), English and Irish descent. I am doing this research as part of my study towards a Doctor of Clinical Psychology. My supervisors are Dr Erana Cooper, Dr Kerry Gibson and Professor Fred Seymour, who are Registered Clinical Psychologists and Lecturers in the School of Psychology at The University of Auckland.

I would like to invite you to take part in an interview to share your knowledge and experience about working with Māori children who have experienced whānau violence. I am interested in exploring and understanding what helped Māori children to survive and cope through these experiences. I am also interested in other ideas you may have about what could have been helpful for them. I hope this will then help professionals to know how best to work with Māori children who have experienced whānau violence.

For the purpose of this research, whānau violence includes physical, psychological, emotional, sexual and economic abuse within relationships between partners, parents and children, siblings and other family and household members as well as wider historical, social and political influences.

Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary and you have the choice not to participate.

Who will benefit from this study?

It is hoped that Māori children will benefit from this study through professionals being able to give voices to Māori children they have worked with. It is through understanding what helped them and what could have potentially helped them that professionals can know how best to support children who are experiencing whānau violence.

What does this study involve?

Professionals who have experience working in community social services with Māori children who have experienced whānau violence will be invited to participate in the study.

I hope to interview about 20 professionals altogether. During the interview you will be asked to talk about your views about what helped Māori children to cope when they experienced whānau violence. This may include general ideas about this topic, specific cultural factors, specific clinical factors, or any combination of these. The interview should take between one and two hours, but this will depend on how much information you share with me. You can share as much as you feel comfortable with and do not have to answer all the questions and can stop the interview at anytime, either for a break or to finish completely. I need to take a few notes and audio-tape the interview to be sure I have a correct record of what you tell me. Please feel reassured that anything you say will be confidential and private.

Another part of this study will involve interviewing Māori who have experienced whānau violence as children to explore their perspectives on what helped them to survive during these difficult times. If you know anyone who may be interested please let me know.

Where will it be done?

The interview will be in a place where we can talk privately and you can feel comfortable. I will travel to you so you do not have to pay travel costs.

What will happen at the end of the study?

After we talk I will write up the main themes from the audio-tape. You will have a chance to check the record of your interview two weeks after the interview. You can take out, change, or add anything that you said in the interview. I would like to share the final results with you and if you are interested discuss them with you. When I write up the study, no material will be used that could personally identify you. The university requires me to keep all the information you have given me in secure storage after completion of the study. Only myself and my supervisors will have access to this information.

What are your rights as a participant?

You can withdraw from the interview at anytime and I will send you the transcripts from the interview to you. You can also withdraw the information you have given me up until four weeks after the interview. You do not need to say why you are withdrawing if you do not feel comfortable doing so. You can do this by contacting me or one of my supervisors. We are happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have. Our details are on the last page.
Are there any risks involved?

Whānau violence can be a difficult and upsetting area to talk about given it effects so many people. If you think the risk of becoming upset may be a problem for you, it may be better that you do not take part in this study. Alternatively, we can begin and then stop if you feel uncomfortable. You can have a break and then continue or stop altogether. You are welcome to discuss these issues with me. If any issues arise that might suggest your safety or someone else’s safety may be at risk, I will need to talk about this with someone that I think can help reduce this risk.

Where can I get more information about this study?

You can contact me on the number provided below, leave a message for me and I will call you back as soon as I can. By replying, you are not committing yourself to the research. What you are agreeing to is giving me your contact details and allowing me to discuss whether you may like to participate. I would be very grateful if you could take the time to reply as soon as you have had enough time to think about this.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and considering sharing your valuable knowledge with me. I hope to hear from you soon.

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For any queries regarding ethical concerns please contact:
The Chair, The University of Auckland Human Subjects Ethics Committee,
The University of Auckland Research Office – Office of Vice Chancellor,
Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142 Tel. 09 373 7999 ext.83711

If you or someone else would like to talk about the effects of whānau violence or want to get help, you could ring one of these numbers or look online.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 17 APRIL 2014 FOR 3 YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER 011448

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Violence Information Line</td>
<td>Call 0800 456450</td>
<td><a href="http://www.areyouok.org.nz">www.areyouok.org.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Provides self-help information and connects people to services)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Youthline</td>
<td>Call 0800 376633 or free txt 234</td>
<td><a href="http://www.youthline.co.nz">www.youthline.co.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeline Aotearoa</td>
<td>Call 0800 543354</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lifeline.org.nz">www.lifeline.org.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Action</td>
<td>Call (09)836 1987</td>
<td><a href="http://www.familyaction.org.nz">www.familyaction.org.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAVES</td>
<td>Call (09)838 4834</td>
<td><a href="http://www.waves.org.nz">www.waves.org.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHINE</td>
<td>Call 0508 744633</td>
<td><a href="http://www.2shine.org.nz">www.2shine.org.nz</a></td>
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CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS

Researchers: Anna Walters, Dr Erana Cooper, Dr Kerry Gibson, Prof. Fred Seymour

Title of Project: Resilience in Māori children who have experienced whānau violence: a qualitative inquiry into what helps

I agree to take part in this research.

I have been given, read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for this project for volunteers taking part in the study to explore professionals perspectives on what helped Māori children survive through whānau violence. I have had the opportunity to discuss this study, ask questions and have them answered. I have been given time to consider whether to take part.

☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntarily and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.
☐ I understand that the interview could take up to two hours of my time.
☐ I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material which could identify me will be used in any reports on this study.
☐ I understand that my interview will be audio-taped and that I have the right to turn off the tape at any time.
☐ I understand that I can request the tape be returned to me after transcription has taken place (after the words on the tape have been listened to and written down) by contacting the Principal Investigator.
☐ I understand that I have two weeks after the transcription to edit the transcript if required.
☐ I understand that even if I am not distressed now, that it is possible I may become upset when I am about whānau violence during the interview. If this happens I understand that I can take a break during the interview and then continue, or leave if I want to and the researcher will be able to help me with access to further support services should I need them.
I understand that this consent form will be stored separately to any other data related to me. These will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in Dr. Kerry Gibson’s office at the University of Auckland for a period of six years.

I understand that I will receive a copy of the summary of findings of this research should I wish to, and I must provide my contact details below so that I may receive this.

Contact details:

Name: (please print clearly)

Date:

Signed: