GROW

Rangatahi connecting with themselves, each other, and engaging in their communities

GROW Manual: Programme Overview and Evaluation Plan

Acknowledgments

Development Team

Dr Laura A. Chubb
PhD Social Work, MSc, B.PE
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Education & Social Work,
University of Auckland

Suzette Jackson
RSW, MSW, BSW
Te Ātiawa/Research Assistant/ Registered
Social Worker
Faculty of Education & Social Work
University of Auckland

Shirley Anne Ikkala
Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei/ RSW, Tātarariki, MSW,
BSW/ Professional Teaching Fellow
Faculty of Education & Social Work,
University of Auckland

Professor Christa B. Fouché
PhD, RSW, MA, BA
Faculty of Education & Social Work,
University of Auckland

Chris Davidson
General Manager - Programme Design,
Systems and Innovation
Youthtown Inc.

Table of Contents

1   PROGRAMME SCOPE

The *GROW* programme manual presents the programme purpose, provides an overview of the state of provisions for disengaged rangatahi in Aotearoa, justifying the need for such a programme, and details elements of implementation as well as an evaluation plan. The manual is to be read in conjunction with the document Grow programme: Kōwae ako|learning modules, which is a detailed guide to running 10-weeks of activities for young people in care, alternative education or those who are otherwise disengaged.

1.1.   Purpose of GROW

Take care of our children

Take care of what they hear

Take care of what they see

Take care of what they feel

*For how the children **grow***

So will be the shape of Aotearoa

- ***Dame Whina Cooper***

For young people to have successful life outcomes and be resilient in the face of challenges, it is essential they have supportive relationships with important people in their lives. The *GROW* programme was developed for New Zealand young people who will benefit from intentionally building structured developmental relationships into their lives. Its focus is on rangatahi in care, alternative education or those facing other challenges in their lives that impact on their ability to engage in educational pathways that support successful life outcomes for them.

Youthtown's practice with young people supports one vision: ***'empowered young people, engaged in their communities'***. This practice is underpinned by four key objectives:
- Learning life skills
- Working collaboratively
- Building resilience
- Unlocking potential

The *GROW* programme curriculum builds on these with the addition of the following two features:
- Growing self-awareness
- Widening worldview

These new objectives are a response to insights from Deane, Dutton and Kerekere's (2019) robust review of the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA) that also reconsidered the needs of contemporary young people in Aotearoa. The authors of the review recommended new youth programmes be underpinned by "home-grown Māori youth development models" (Deane, Dutton, & Kerekere, 2019, p. 6). Specifically, that approaches be guided by mātauranga from both Māori and Tauiwi spaces, whanaungatanga should be harnessed and mana strengthened, all through practises

of manaakitanga. Hence why leading out the *GROW* programme curriculum with the Ngā Uri Ō model (described in detail in section 1.3) was a natural starting point.

1.2.   A Review of Provisions for Disengaged Rangatahi

The current youth development landscape in Aotearoa defines a critical need for programmes and services specifically tailored to support rangatahi in care and alternative education with many shared characteristics between rangatahi in care and alternative education. This review highlights the challenges and current opportunities for rangatahi in care across Aotearoa New Zealand as well as a brief overview of youth development programmes that respond to the needs of rangatahi in alternative education or those experiencing disengagement with schools. While several strong youth programmes exist, many are not designed for the complex needs of rangatahi care. Thus, this review provides an overview of what is required to create effective and meaningful youth development programmes – accounting for the fact that several rangatahi identify as Māori and require culturally authentic programmes responsive to their needs. Ultimately, the review demonstrates that there are not enough services operating to provide extra support for the many rangatahi in care or those involved with alternative education.

There is a need to grow resilient rangatahi in Aotearoa New Zealand. The country has over 5.1 million people, with 1.6 million aged under 24 making up almost 32% of the total population (Stats NZ, 2021). According to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry of Children (OT), as of December 2018, there were 6,400 children in their care, of which 59% identify as Māori and 9% as Māori and Pasifika (Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children, 2018). Given Māori makeup 25% of the youth population and 16.7% of the total population (Stats NZ, 2020), Māori rangatahi are significantly over-represented within a statutory care setting in Aotearoa. This is an important consideration in the design of youth programmes as journeying through care can result in a loss of cultural connection (Atwool, 2020) and what BERL (2019) termed '*He awa auktia/A journey interrupted'.*

Who are Rangatahi in Care and How are They Best Supported?

Young people entering care are placed with a caregiver from Oranga Tamariki, the wider whānau, or a non-governmental organisation contracted by OT (Ashton, 2014). OT provides statutory care and protection for children and young people in Aotearoa. Most young people living in care are placed within kin and non-kin family settings. Some young people also spend time in a residential environment such as youth justice residences and group homes (Atwool, 2020). Given these statistics, rangatahi in care or those involved in alternative education must receive appropriate supports that facilitate positive development and transition into adulthood. Over the years, youth development programmes in Aotearoa have flourished and have become better tailored and targeted towards those rangatahi requiring extra support.

Young people are placed under the state's care for various reasons. For example, young people are placed in foster care because they are at risk of experiencing abuse, maltreatment, and neglect (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). Young people can also be taken into care because of offending or at risk of offending (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). Research studies evidence that young people in care may experience trauma, a lack of supportive networks, grief, feelings of loss, limited educational success, increased mental health concerns, and often develop insufficient skills to live an independent life in comparison to their peers in the general population (Ashton, 2014). Due to these factors, youth development programmes need to incorporate personal growth, practical skills and educational learning and tasks to adequately meet the needs of young people within the care system.

Many international and domestic studies confirm that young people in care experience poor outcomes and difficult transitions out of the care system (Ashton, 2014). Young people in care go through multiple home placements, with a New Zealand study showing that those in care

experienced four to six placements, and over 22% of those interviewed lived through over six placements. Moving multiple times often means changing schools and moving away from a community, deepening a disconnect from family, friends, and culture (Ashton, 2014). Given this, programme developers and leaders cannot underestimate the value of friendship and community within youth development programmes. Programmes should be nurturing personal growth, friendships, and a sense of community within the group.

As esteemed youth researcher Nicola Atwool highlighted, "the State as parent is a dismal failure". The statement was supported by findings from a 2016 Minister for Social Development report indicating young people who have contact with Child Youth and Family (CYF now Oranga Tamariki) go on to experience "dramatically worse outcomes as young adults" (Modernising CYF Expert Panel, 2015, p. 36). Results from outcome data at age 21 for a cohort born in the 12 months to June 1991 show that 80 per cent of those who entered state care left school without achieving National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 2 (foundation skills for employment) compared to a national average achievement rate of 70 per cent. Almost 90 per cent of those in care were receiving a benefit, and over 60 per cent of those with a prison sentence had previous contact with CYF (Ministry of Social Development, 2014). These figures clearly show rangatahi in care are not achieving academically compared to those outside the care system. Due to this, any programmes which include rangatahi in care must have a strong educational focus. Youth development programmes could include more content that is educationally focused in conjunction with their education provider, caregivers, and whānau to ensure provision of best academic supports to fulfil their potential within the classroom.

Rangatahi and Engagement Challenges

In 2019, the New Zealand government raised the care leaving age from 17 to 18, with those in care now entitled to resources and support through to 25. In 2018, 948 young people aged 15 to 17 were in care (Atwool, 2020). Māori and other minority groups were over-represented in those ageing out of care, including those who identify as LGBTQ. Most of those had high or very high levels of need that manifested in different behaviours. For example, many rangatahi were unwilling to engage with services, needed help to find housing beyond state care, experienced high levels of unmet mental health needs and over half identified as having a substance abuse issue (Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre, 2018). Given this, youth programmes should be designed to meet the specific cultural, social, and emotional needs of young people in care. This could be creating programmes from a Māori te ao (worldview) supportive of all young people no matter their identity or worldview.

The stigma associated with being in care leaves a lasting impact. Those in care can achieve independence early, but this brings challenges such as a fierce survivalist stance that can stop young people from reaching out for support (Atwool, 2016). Unfortunately, the concept of interdependence, where maturity is reached through social relationships that support and scaffold youth development, is replacing the notion of independence (Atwool, 2016). Despite care leavers facing many challenges, research shows hope to achieve positive outcomes for those in care. Through increased systemic support, young care leavers can make positive changes in their lives and achieve their personal goals, helping to reduce individual and societal costs associated with poor outcomes (Atwool, 2016). Due to this evidence, youth development programmes must be designed to be a core part of the systemic support needed to see young people in care make positive changes in their lives and transition to independent living.

International research has shown that transitioning out of care is more straightforward if young people feel connected to peers, whānau and other trusted adults. Furthermore, young people need a supportive relationship with at least one adult willing to walk alongside them (Atwool, 2016). In

Aotearoa, interdependence is at the centre of whānau, hāpū and iwi social structures given most young people in care are Māori, where whakapapa (relationships) and collectivism are central. Therefore, the care system must embrace interdependence and its relational ethos (Atwool, 2020). Given most young people in care are Māori and interdependence is central to Te Ao Māori worldview, it is essential youth development programmes are culturally responsive and adhere to tikanga within all areas of service provision.

It has been known for some time that most young people in care are educationally disadvantaged (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021; Palmieri & La Salle, 2017) and achieve less academically than those not in care (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). Matheson (2019) reported on the experiences of seven New Zealand care leavers who attended university and highlighted the successes and barriers they encountered. Matheson (2019) anecdotally stated that very few care leavers make it to university, but the ones he interviewed viewed education as an important protective factor in their often-complex lives. Young people saw education as a positive experience to build resilience and improve their situation. Going to school engendered a sense of belonging. However, the researcher found that most participants enrolment in Higher Education was down to luck and not due to any support from the care structures they were engaged within (Atwool, 2016). Consequently, it is critical to consider the educational needs of young people in care because of the many challenges they encounter (Palmieri & La Salle, 2017).

These challenges range from trauma experienced before and during foster care, disrupted schooling due to frequent changes in foster care homes, lack of supportive adults or whānau (Mendis, Gardner & Lehmann, 2015; Strolin-Goltzman et al., 2016). Trauma can lead to emotional and behavioural concerns that teachers are ill-equipped to manage (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). Young people in care can also be stigmatised and bullied in school (Clemens et al., 2017; Voices of Children and Young People team, 2019a). Additionally, statistics show they also experience higher suspension and expulsion from school (Voices of Children and Young People team, 2019b). These challenges create a context within which young people in care are more likely to do poorly academically (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). In understanding these challenges, youth development programmes must embed academic and educational learning firmly within their curriculum and activities.

Matheson (2019) drew on relevant literature to summarise the main educational barriers facing young people in care. Schooling barriers for students living in care included often having literacy levels below their peers and being sent to lower decile schools or alternative education providers. Being subjected to a change in secondary schools and having teachers and school management not adequately trained to support or sympathetically respond to the trauma-related behavioural needs of young people in care. Some teachers fail to recognise their academic abilities and those in care sense teachers hold underlying negative views towards them. Young people in care are excluded from school more frequently and experience stigma if held back a year. There are also systemic failures within the child welfare and education sectors resulting in barriers for young people in care. Several other obstacles were identified in international and national studies, including challenges due to the stigma attached to being in foster care and foster caregivers limiting access to extracurricular school activities for those in their care (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). Considering many schooling barriers for rangatahi in care centre on them being seen in a deficit focused manner, it is critically important that all youth programmes focus on identifying and developing their strengths. There is a need to create safe environments where young people in care feel heard, respecting and valued, where their skills and strengths have an opportunity to be seen, praised and reinforced.

What Works Well for Rangatahi?

Much literature is dedicated to reporting educational success factors and barriers for young people in care. Matheson (2019) drew on various pieces of literature to outline the core educational success factors within schools and universities. Within schools, success factors include feeling valued and having a voice and viewing a young person's attendance as critical. It is also essential for schools to maintain high expectations of their students and provide academic rigour and early recognition of intellectual talents. Young people in care need educational stability and continuity alongside good relationships with supportive teachers and school staff. Participation in extra-curricular school activities and providing scaffolded learning geared towards supporting rangatahi in their final year are essential to help young people in care. Finally, access to financial support for higher education and college, information and advice are also vital markers of success. Matheson (2019) highlighted the crucial role of teachers, school workers, and management structures in creating successful academic outcomes for rangatahi in care. Youth programmes should aim to replicate these success factors to support positive educational outcomes for rangatahi better. For instance, youth workers or those running the programmes can provide supportive relationships and ensure boundaries are stipulated and upheld. Further, the programme could be an extra-curricular activity that gives those in care additional supportive adult relationships and more connection with other young people.

Other factors are also crucial in supporting educational attainment for those in care. The encouragement, love, and participation in the young person's learning by caregivers and social workers is vital to academic achievement (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). Having friends is vital for young people in care as they can provide stability while changing home placements. Moreover, social goals are more important than academic goals for some and should not be overlooked (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). Interdependence and the need for support from trusted adults, friends and whānau are essential to positive futures for those in care. However, having an independent voice and developing resilience and self-reliance are vital for nurturing wellbeing and growth for young people in care. These two personal development pieces are needed to help young people gain control over their lives while in care and transitioning out of care (Miller, Bourke & Dharan, 2021). Social support outside of school, trusting relationships, and developing interdependence and resilience need to be core elements within youth development programmes. The inclusion of whānau, fostering a healthy group culture where young people can build healthy friendships, and providing mentoring and supportive adult relationships are core ways to create a successful youth development programme. And finally, making sure programme content focuses on increasing resilience and independence for young people in the course.

Aotearoa-Based Development Programmes for Rangatahi in Care and Alternative Education

A 2018 report from the Centre for Social Impact provided an overview of current effective practice within youth development approaches and programmes. Examples of crucial characteristics include early intervention, youth mentoring approaches and intensive support for those with higher levels of risk. Successful programmes involve whānau and the community and incorporate cultural frameworks. Effective practice means fostering shared decision making within youth-adult partnerships, processes that develop the whole person and programmes that take a long-term approach. Given these factors, it is critical those developing youth activities and programmes incorporate these evidence-based measures to ensure the best possible outcomes for the young people taking part.

The Ara Taiohi review of Aotearoa New Zealand Youth Development Research reported on the strengths within youth programmes and outlined areas for improvement. Young people spoke in glowing terms about the positive learning and development they underwent. The main areas

needing improvement were increased cultural responsiveness in programming and further development of skills and characteristics for youth workers and others supporting young people (Deane, Dutton & Kerekere, 2019). Considering these gaps, it is imperative that youth development programmes incorporate kaupapa Māori frameworks and increase the capabilities of the staff and mentors working alongside young people.

One organisation that supports youth workforce development and incorporates tikanga Māori models within practice is Lifehack. They are a unique youth-focused organisation operating at a structural level to support and increase competency within Aotearoa's extensive youth workforce. Lifehack started in 2013 as an innovative systems-led endeavour aimed to build strength, skills, and capacity within the youth workforce. Initially, they began with a mandate to tackle youth mental health. The organisation quickly shifted to a strengths-based vision of "supporting youth wellbeing". Since this time, they have provided support to organisations and youth workers throughout Aotearoa and helped them grow their knowledge and ability to respond better to the needs of young people. Lifehack along with Sovereign, Youthline and Christina Leef (Lifehack Flourishing Fellow and Māori Entrepreneur), created Ngā Uri Ō, which is a tikanga Māori framework designed to support creative, experimental, and safe group work. Ngā Uri Ō honours the individual's background (whakapapa) and cultural lens while also providing a space for people to join together and co-create within a collaborative and trusting space. There are three distinct elements of Ngā Uri Ō, the role of self, the role of others, and the role of the collective.

Several youth development programmes are designed to support young people in foster care or the youth justice system. Voice of the Young and Care Experienced (VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai) was established in 2017 and advocates for children in foster and whānau care in Aotearoa. One of its services is a 10-week Born to Make an Impact Leadership Development programme tailored for young men 15-19 in South Auckland who have been in or are currently in care. Each session was targeted at building relationships and supporting attendees to embrace their potential. In Christchurch, the Youth and Cultural Development (YCD) service provide various programmes for young people. They provide residential care for young women and men who need care and protection and additional support transitioning into long term placements. YCD also has programmes tailored to young people aged 12 – 16 with a history of offending. This service provides practical life skills and outdoor team building activities, and cultural development through a marae stay. Finally, they provide youth work support for young people in care as they transition into independent living. Also, Christchurch based Youth Pathways provides individualised development plans for young people in foster care or engaging with youth justice. This service works alongside the wider youth development sector to achieve long-term beneficial changes for young people and their whānau. They provide a range of services, including mentoring, supervision with activity led programme, alternative education for 13–15-year-olds and a transition to adulthood programme that supports young adults leaving care to thrive in their newfound independence. These organisations clearly provide a range of excellent services to the young people in care. However, given the need within our communities, more youth programmes are needed to ensure positive outcomes for those in care or transitioning out of care into independent living.

Several other youth development programmes explicitly target young people involved in the youth justice system. In Taranaki, the START Early programme supports young people at high risk of offending. The early intervention programme provides an intensive seven-week intervention comprised of a three-week wilderness component followed by four weeks of intensive community transition. Young people are then provided with a full year's worth of mentoring from a START Early Community Support Worker. Community Approach is an Auckland based service that supports young people referred through Police Youth Aid. They offer a 13-week programme that provides mentoring, events and a range of activities for youth aged 14-17 years. The primary focus is on

developing resilience, stopping recidivist offending, and supporting them in continuing education, employment, and training. The other programmes on offer include a yearlong mentoring programme, a school holiday programme and 2–5-day wilderness and adventure camps.

There are many other youth development programmes throughout Aotearoa New Zealand; however, many are targeting young people in schools and the community rather than specifically for those in the care of Oranga Tamariki. For example, project K is a 14-month youth development programme for 13–15-year-old students with low self-efficacy. It is a three-part programme comprised of wilderness adventure, community challenge and individual mentoring. A recent longitudinal study found Project K had considerable positive effects on resilience, self-efficacy, and wellbeing (Furness, Williams & Gardner, 2017). Based in Marlborough Sounds, Outward Bound provides specialised outdoor programmes for young people 13-18 years. Courses range from 8-21 days, and one programme is tailored for younger teens and their caregivers. Participating in Outward Bound comes with a substantial financial cost. However, they do offer scholarships for teens that meet specific criteria. Another outdoor-based programme but targeted towards at-risk youth is 180Degrees Trust. They run four personalised learning programmes for 13-18-year-olds, focusing on 1 to 1 mentoring and outdoor adventures. The Active Youth Wellness Programme specifically targeted Māori and Pasifika youth. Designed by Community Leisure Management with support from Aktive – Auckland Sport and Recreation, the 20-week programme provided weekly physical activities and health and wellbeing workshops based on Te Whare Tapa Whā Māori health model.

Alternative education provides a short-term intervention for young people 13-16 years disengaged or alienated from mainstream schooling. The goal is to re-engage young people in programmes tailored to individual needs that support young people to move back into mainstream school, further training, education or employment (Ministry of Education, n.d.). There are many examples of alternative education providers throughout Aotearoa, and often they are affiliated or supported by mainstream schools. Vision West is one organisation that has a team dedicated to working with students to help them back into education or transitioning into employment. They work closely with Green Bay High School and the West Auckland Alternative Education Collective to support students to achieve better life outcomes (Vision West, 2021). Similarly, Springboard, operating in the Rodney area, North of Auckland, for over 19-years, provides a broad range of services to support young people in the district. They are a Christian organisation that practises whanaungatanga (relationships) as a core value underscoring their services. Impact Alternative Education is its oldest programme which has received recognition for the innovative way it supports 13-16-year-olds to achieve better results in the classroom. A core focus is on helping young people to gain NCEA Level 1.

Several factors are fundamental within all youth programmes. Literature shows us that relationships are crucial. Young people in care need trustworthy adult role models around them to support their learning and personal growth aspirations. Supporting their journey through education is also of critical importance. Statistics show a grim picture for rangatahi who do not achieve academic success. Thus, programmes must provide a supportive learning environment to encourage educational attainment or a career pathway.

A Way Forward
Rangatahi across Aotearoa New Zealand report having largely positive experiences with youth programmes (Deane, Dutton, & Kerekere, 2019). The body of knowledge surrounding youth development is growing nationally, but there is a lack of research on youth developmental programmes that centers the voices of rangatahi with intersecting marginalized identities (Deane, Dutton, & Kerekere, 2019). Initial evidence points toward youth programmes that are culturally

responsive and incorporate opportunities to share diverse worldviews as well as Māori values working well in Aotearoa. Given most young people in care and alternative education identify as Māori, we cannot overstate the importance of designing programmes using, at the very least in part, a Māori framework. *GROW* was designed based on the Ngā Uri Ō model to provide a culturally responsive curriculum for the rangatahi referred to the programme. The ten-weeks scaffold rangatahi from self-exploration to building relationships and developing as a collective group. Rangatahi are encouraged to take their learning and knowledge acquisition back to their whānau, schools, and communities. Educational activities are woven throughout the *GROW* programme, that were designed to grow resilience. Using the insights across the sector and scholarly reporting, Youthtown believes that rangatahi in care, alternative education or disengaged from learning can thrive when given the right resources and supports.

1.3.   GROW Design and Delivery

GROW was originally piloted as a one-off 30-week programme. After trialling this mode of delivery, Youthtown discovered that due to the transitory nature of some of the young people in care who participated in the programme, not all were able to move through the full journey to their graduation. The sense of achievement and accomplishment that can come from completing the programme is important and taken into account in its current 10-week rolling design. At present, Youthtown aims to run the programme four times (each term) through the year.

A key point to highlight is that a challenge with the original programme was that Youthtown were simply relying on the young people turning up each week, ideally supported by their care family and/or social worker. Assuming this would happen turned out to be a mistake! A key element of the new approach is that the lead Kaiako (facilitator) will have capacity during the week to engage with the young people and their families, helping them overcome challenges to attending the programme and getting buy-in from their careers along with other important people in their lives. Further, Youthtown is partnering with Oranga Tamariki to ensure Youth Worker taking on role of programme kaiako will be provided with access to their client management system, avoiding the

reliance on a young person's social workers to provide timely information.

The 10-week rolling design is modular in nature. Each module has dedicated learning outcomes underpinned by the concept of Ngā Uri Ō which highlights ancestral connections through exploration of whakapapa for individuals, groups, and of others. This model is informed by Te Ao Māori and useful for building developmental relationships in the Aotearoa context. Youthtown uses an adaptation of the *Ngā Uri Ō* model that was born from a collaboration between three organisations, Lifehack, Sovereign and Youthline. The journey represented through the model- featured right- from Lifehack (2016)- presents the guiding theme of whanaungatanga that, in the context of the *GROW* programme, invites rangatahi to explore their whakapapa, learn together and from one another.

The *Ngā Uri Ō* model has three key ideas:

1. *ko wai au/ who am I?*
2. *ko wai koe/who are you?*
3. *ko wai tātau/who are we?*

Journeying through the programme, rangatahi will work through activities to determine how they want to reach their destination and who they want to be when they arrive. Youthtown actively use these three themes of Ngā Uri Ō to shape the activities in weekly modules to grow skills that assist rangatahi in navigating their journeys to understanding themselves as individuals, in relation to others and their communities. Through participating, rangatahi will grow to know how to make better decisions that positively impact their lives and feel more comfortable and confident in their identities.

In *GROW*, *ko wai au* starts with rangatahi understanding self, their values, their narrative, and their journey. From there, they will explore resilience and self-esteem, individual competencies, knowing your whakapapa, and respecting tikanga (customs). During the initial weeks of the programme, Youthtown staff – as elected Kaiako – prioritise building foundational relationships with rangatahi and encourage deepening of whanaungatanga as the programme continues. In addition, our *GROW* programme engages rangatahi in a range of activities such as water sports and activity-based learning exercises to develop individual competencies.

In the *GROW* programme, *ko wai koe* is understanding who I am in relation to the world around me with a focus on developing strong ties between members of the group, widening the focus from the individual to each other. *GROW* encourages rangatahi to explore how they see themselves fitting into the team and what they bring to the table. The underlying value of this stage is whanaungatanga that involves building relationships through shared experiences and working together fostering belonging. This stage of the programme uses a range of activities to make bonds within the group. Similar processes of whanaungatanga are practiced during the two camps offered in addition to the *GROW* programme. The camps are an opportunity to provide a shared experience for the group and to begin developing goals and an action plan to link the group to local contacts to set them up for future success beyond the programme. These camps are also open to participants from the preceding two terms.

In our programme, *ko wai tātau* is about who we are and how we move forward together, focusing on engaging the group in their local community. The group will collaborate on identifying a project through which to give back to their community. This project is a culmination of community connections and engagements, allowing the group to engage with the community.

The *Ngā Uri Ō* model works powerfully alongside the Developmental Relationships Framework (Search Institute, 2021). The Search Institute has developed this evidence-based framework which explains that through developmental relationships, young people:
- Discover who they are
- Cultivate the abilities needed for them to shape their own lives, and
- Learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them.

The Search Institute identified five elements that make relationships powerful in young people's lives and these elements are central to the *GROW* programme:

1. Express care, show me that I matter to you (be dependable, listen, believe in me, be warm, encourage)
2. Challenge growth, push me to keep getting better (expect my best, stretch, hold me accountable, reflect on failures)
3. Provide support, help me complete tasks and achieve goals (navigate, empower, advocate, set boundaries)
4. Share power, treat me with respect and give me a say (respect me, include me, collaborate, let me lead)
5. Expand possibilities, connect me with people and places that broaden my world (inspire, broaden horizons, connect) (Search Institute, 2021).

The Search Institute emphasises that relationships are bidirectional, with each person giving and receiving. Having strong relationships with important people in their lives, means rangatahi are more likely to engage in and experience each of these actions (Deane, Dutton, & Kerekere, 2019). Youthtown staff are trained to ensure the five elements of the Developmental Relationships Framework are applied bidirectionally to ensure authentic engagement and power sharing with young people as they navigate ko wai au, kow wai koe, and ko wai tatou. It starts with developing an understanding of self as individuals, then connects with others and the world around us. Our weekly activities help rangatahi recognise their assets, grow their strengths in a team environment and take those strengths out into the world.

The modular nature of this programme allows for outcomes to be met, while providing flexibility in delivery mechanisms. A comprehensive curriculum entitled *GROW* **Programme - Kōwae ako/Learning Modules** accompanies this manual with instructions for each kaiako/teacher who choose from a range of activities and will lead 10-weeks of modules. The programme also features a leadership development component—rangatahi to rangatira—for rangatahi returning each term. Prompts to facilitate this leadership role are in-built into weekly module activities. The programme fits into the 10-week school term, with four deliveries per year (in addition to weekend activities and two camps per year). The *GROW* programme will be delivered across OT sites at Papakura, Manurewa and Pukekohe. Delivery may extend to other sites in the future.

1.4.   Recruitment of Kaiako and Selection of Rangatahi

The *GROW* programme employs staff with experience working with youth. Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti) defines the relationship between Māori and non-Māori and is consequently central to all relationships between these groups of people. Youthtown staff will navigate many relationships through their work, and view Te Tiriti as the foundation upon which good relations can be built. Youthtown provides Te Tiriti training to all staff and utilizes the Code of Ethics for Youth Work in

Aotearoa New Zealand (Korowai Tupu, 2020) to guide its commitment to youth-led, relational practice.
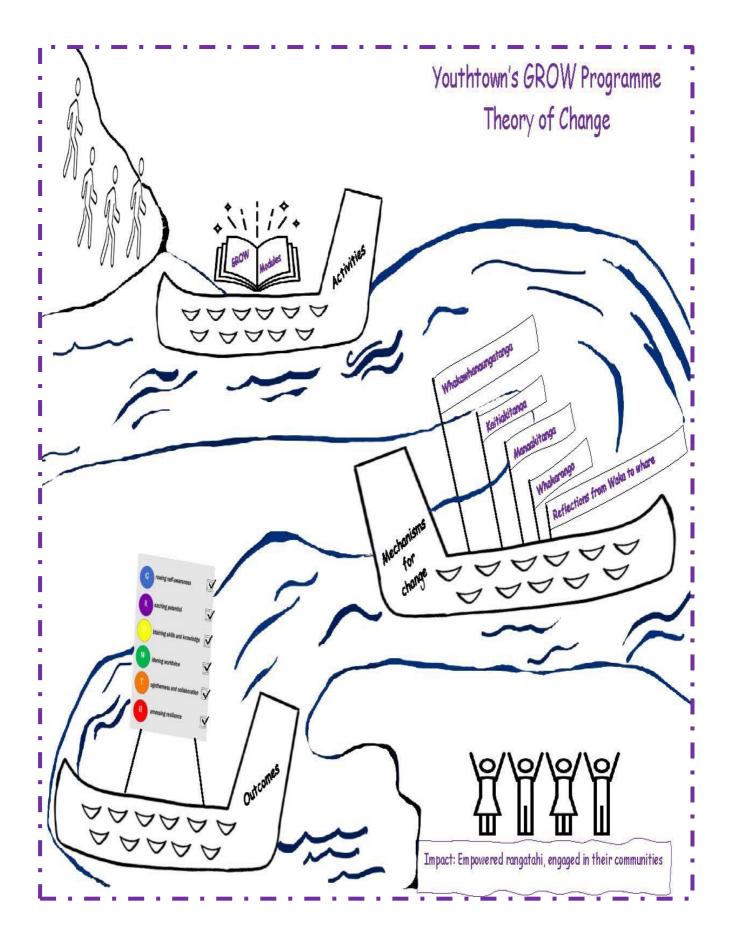
The youth worker recruited to lead the *GROW* programme has experience *in Not in Education, Employment or Training* (NEETs) service. They will be supported by other Youthtown staff, who are all involved in programmes such as the OT Breakaway programme, in school *Education Outside the Classroom* (EOTC), and outdoors activities amongst other youth development areas. Staff chosen as kaiako for the programme will be guided through the *GROW* Programme - Kōwae ako/Learning Modules. Youthtown's Cultural Advisor is also available to support staff who feel less comfortable with the Te Ao Māori aspects of the programme.

Rangatahi who will participate in the programme will all be referred from OT. It is primarily aimed at rangatahi who are still engaged in school, but their social workers have concerns that without additional scaffolding there is a risk of disengagement.

2 PROGRAMME EVALUATION PLAN

1.5. GROW Programme Theory of Change, Logic Model and Evaluation Plan

Similar to the Ngā Uri Ō model, *GROW*'s theory of change diagram is represented through rangatahi's journeying together in their waka 10-weeks. Mechanisms for change in the TOC are activities shaped through the five pou: 1)whakawhanaungatanga; 2) kaitiakitanga; 3) manaakitanga; 4) whakarongo; and, 5) waka to whare reflections. Exploring these mechanisms, rangatahi begin to achieve each of the six *GROW* goals working towards the overall desired impact of becoming empowered and engaged in their communities.

GROW Modules

Activities

Whakawhanaungatanga

Kaitiakitanga

Manaakitanga

Whakarongo

Reflections from Waka to whare

Mechanisms for change

G rowing self-awareness

R eaching potential

O btaining skills and knowledge

W idening worldview

T ogetherness and collaboration

H arnessing resilience

Outcomes

Impact: Empowered rangatahi, engaged in their communities

The GROW logic model presents inputs needed for the programme, its main outputs, outcomes, and overall desired impact. Assumptions for what will occur if the programme is successful and external factors that may impede success are also noted. To account for the complexity of the GROW programme, an evaluation plan inclusive of two types of evaluation formats are presented. The first is a qualitative process evaluation to understand staff and rangatahi perceptions of implementation challenges, successes and future improvements. The outcomes evaluation focuses on understanding the rangatahi's skills acquisition and behavioural changes, and whether or not they perceived the 10-week programme as successfully helping to achieve the GROW goals.

Logic Model

>>Inputs	Outputs >>		Outcomes		Impact
Resources	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long-term goal
What we invest	What we do	Who we reach	What are the short term results?	What are the medium term results?	What are the ultimate desired impact?
- Staff as programme Kaiako - Cultural Advisor - Community delivery sites - Equipment for weekly module activities as outlined in GROW curriculum - Funding	- Cultural training of staff for programme delivery - GROW curriculum training - Deliver 10-week modules of GROW Programme - Programme evaluation	10-12 rangatahi per term that are either in care, alternative education or experiencing disengagement. - All referrals through Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children	- Rangatahi are learning life skills - Rangatahi are growing self-awareness - Rangatahi are widening their worldview	- Rangatahi are working collaboratively and growing engagement - Rangatahi are experiencing opportunities to unlock their potential - Rangatahi are building resilience demonstrating through patience, confidence, life skills and willingness to participate in module activities	Empowered rangatahi, engaged in their communities
Process evaluation			Outcome evaluation		Impact evaluation

Assumptions	External factors
• Youthtown staff will feel confident after their cultural and curriculum training to reach out to the Cultural Advisor for support in Te Ao Māori • Rangatahi will fully engage each week	• Some rangatahi may be transitory and may not complete the entire 10-weeks

Evaluation Plan

1. A qualitative process evaluation of the pilot delivery of GROW curriculum to evidence if it was implemented as intended, encountered any barriers, require any changes, and perceived reasons why outcomes were or were not achieved.
2. An outcomes evaluation of the short- and medium-term outcomes in the logic model.

*** An impact evaluation is not included in this evaluation plan.*

Process Evaluation: Data Collection with Staff and Rangatahi	
Outcome measures	*Evaluation tools*
1. Maintain an accurate record of any weekly insights that can be relayed in the final semi-structured interview, related to implementation of curriculum, barriers, and changes required.	*Staff journal entry* *Demographic data*
2. Document Kaiako experience of leading the 10-weekly modules to determine what activities worked well, which could be adapted or removed, where more development is needed to better respond to rangatahi needs and if resources were sufficient.	*Post semi-structured interviews with staff* *Post semi-structured focus group with rangatahi*
3. Document Kaiako experience of cultural and curriculum training and Cultural advisor experience leading these activities.	*Post semi-structured focus group with Kaiako* *Post semi-structured interview with cultural advisor*

Outcomes Evaluation: Data Collection with Rangatahi	
Outcome measures	*Evaluation tools*

1. Determine rangatahi's readiness to work collaboratively and be engaged in their communities before and after completing 10-weeks of *GROW* modules.	*Pre and post engagement surveys with rangatahi* *Attendance data*

2. *Determine progress toward GROW goals against each session within and across the modules*	Data collection points embedded in specific weekly modules:
	Weekly manaakitanga activities to capture life skills, self-awareness and worldviews) including:
	    o Waves of emotion
	    o H.A.L.T.E.D
	    o Graffiti wall
	
	Weekly kaitiakitanga activities to capture unlocking potential:
	    o Strengths identification and examination activities
	
	Weekly activities to capture resilience: patience, confidence, life skills
	    o Mindfulness journal entries
	    o Head, heart, and feet
	    o Paper quilt
	    o Four F's
	    o Shout outs
	    o Stories of most significant change

Timeline
- Each 10-week cycle will be evaluated a minimum of four times before compiling data for analysis.
- *****Data analysis techniques not included in this evaluation plan, requires further co-development.*

(Adapted from New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network Effective Practice Guide, NZYMN 2018)

References

Ashton, S. (2014). The rights of children and young people in state care. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 46*(9), 1082-1088. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2014.931432

Atwool, N. (2016). Journeys of exclusion: Unpacking the experience of adolescent care leavers in New Zealand. In P. Mendes & P. Snow (Eds.), *Young people transitioning from out-of-home care* (pp. 309-328). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-55639-4_15

Atwool, N. (2020). Transition from care: Are we continuing to set care leavers up to fail in New Zealand?. *Children and Youth Services Review, 113*, 1-7. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.104995

BERL. (2019). *Education awa: Education outcomes for Māori. BERL, Wellington, New Zealand.*

Centre for Social Impact. (2018). *Evidence review: The youth development ecosystem. Mapping the context for a review of the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa.* https://www.centreforsocialimpact.org.nz/media/1428/the-youth-development-ecosystem-an-evidence-review.pdf

Clemens, E. V., Helm, H. M., Myers, K., Thomas, C., & Tis, M. (2017). The voices of youth formerly in foster care: Perspectives on educational attainment gaps. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *79*, 65-77. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.06.003

Deane, K., Dutton, H. & Kerekere, E. (2019). Ngā Tikanga Whanaketanga – He Arotake Tuhinga. A review of Aotearoa New Zealand youth development research. Wellington, NZ: Ara Taiohi. https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/handle/10092/100869

Furness, K., Williams, M. N., Veale, J., & Gardner, D. H. (2017). Maximising potential: The psychological effects of the youth development programme Project K. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology 46*(1), 14-23. https://hdl.handle.net/10289/13315

Korowai Tupu. (2020). *Code of ethics for youth work in Aotearoa New Zealand* (3rd ed.). Ara Taiohi. https://arataiohi.org.nz/publications/code-of-ethics/

Lifehack. (2016). Ngā Uri Ō – Descendants of. https://lifehackhq.co/nga-uri-o-descendants/

Matheson, I. (2019). Education success factors and barriers: Learning from the experiences of New Zealand care leavers who went to university. In P. McNamara, C. Montserrat & S. Wise (Eds.), *Education in out-of-home care* (pp. 267-281). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26372-0_19

Mendis, K., Gardner, F., & Lehmann, J. (2015). The education of children in out-of-home care. *Australian Social Work 68*(4), 483-496. https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2014.963134

Miller, H., Bourke, R., & Dharan, V. (2021). Fostering success: Young people's experience of education while in foster care. *International Journal of Inclusive Education,* 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2020.1867378

Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *Alternative education.* https://alternativeeducation.tki.org.nz/Alternative-education

Ministry of Social Development. (2014). *Ministry of Education statement of intent: 2014-2018.* https://assets.education.govt.nz/public/Documents/Ministry/Publications/Statements-of-intent/2014SOI.pdf

Modernising Child, Youth and Family Expert Panel. (2015). *Modernising Child, Youth and Family: Interim report.* https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/evaluation/modernising-cyf/interim-report-expert-panel.pdf

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network [NZYMN]. (2018). *Guide to effective practice in youth mentoring in New Zealand.* Auckland, New Zealand: Youth Mentoring Network.

https://youthmentoring.org.nz/content/docs/GYM/J000765%20NZYMN%20Effective%20Practice%20Guide_Oct%202018-PRINT%20updated%20November%202018.pdf

Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre. (2018). *Transition cohort needs assessment.* Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children. Wellington, New Zealand.

Palmieri, L. E., & La Salle, T. P. (2017). Supporting students in foster care. *Psychology in the Schools, 54*(2), 117-126. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21990

Search Institute. (2021). *The development relationships framework.* https://www.search-institute.org/developmental-relationships/developmental-relationships-framework/

Stats NZ. (2020). *Māori population estimates: At 30 June 2020.* https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/maori-population-estimates-at-30-june-2020

Stats NZ. (2021). I*nfoshare.* http://infoshare.stats.govt.nz

Strolin-Goltzman, J., Woodhouse, V., Suter, J., & Werrbach, M. (2016). A mixed method study on educational well-being and resilience among youth in foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *70*, 30-36. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.08.014

Vision West. (2021). *Youth solutions. Alternative education.* https://visionwest.org.nz/youth-solutions/ae/

Voices of Children and Young People team. (2019a). *Experiences of education for children in care: Part 1: Voices of children in care in Aotearoa New Zealand.* https://orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/About-us/Research/Latest-research/Educational-experiences-of-children-in-care/Experiences-of-Education-Part-1-Voices.pdf

Voices of Children and Young People team. (2019b). *Experiences of education for children in care: Part 2: Review of New Zealand Government data.* https://orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/About-us/Research/Latest-research/Educational-experiences-of-children-in-care/Experiences-of-Education-Part-2-Data-Review.pdf