

# Rangatahi Engagement Project Report

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DRAFT



TE ORA HOU AOTEAROA

[www.teorahou.org.nz](http://www.teorahou.org.nz)

## **Introduction**

Te Ora Hou Aotearoa is a national network of faith-based Maori youth and community development organisations. For more than 30 years Te Ora Hou has been working with rangatahi and whanau in communities around the country.

Tautoko is a bi-annual national hui for rangatahi involved with Te Ora Hou centres. Tautoko is held over five days and includes a diverse range of experiences and opportunities for rangatahi including a sports competition, outdoor recreation, motivational speakers, times of reflection and celebration.

In January 2008 the Tautoko hui was hosted by Te Ora Hou Heretaunga in Hawkes Bay – approximately 180 rangatahi, whanau members and youth workers registered for the event which was based at a marae in Flaxmere.

Groups of rangatahi and youth workers from Whangarei, Heretaunga, Whanganui, Otautahi and Hawai'i participated – there were also a few other young people and youth workers in attendance from Kirikiriroa, Te Tairāwhiti and Porirua.

The Families Commission is interested in understanding perspectives and priorities of rangatahi in relation to their whanau and recognised the significant opportunity such a national gathering provided for information collection. The Families Commission made a contribution to the event in exchange for information from participants.

This document is a summary of the information collected from participants by Te Ora Hou through written surveys.

## **Methodology**

Two main methods of gathering information from participants about their perspectives on whanau were used over three days.

1. A professional speaker and facilitator was engaged to help rangatahi reflect on their experiences – these reflections were shared through small group discussions and note-taking on large sheets of paper. Comments from the sheets were typed up into electronic format.
2. Three written surveys were administered – one each day over three days. These were distributed to team leaders who gave them to their rangatahi and collected them back after each survey was completed. The results were entered into an online survey database and findings collated electronically. 94 completed responses were received from the first survey, 95 for the second and 94 for the third.

## **Limitations**

A number of limitations were present in the survey process:

- the survey took an appreciative enquiry approach that, combined with the limited time and space available for respondents to complete questions meant that negative indicators such as identifying the proportion of rangatahi with gang involvement and their particular perspectives on the questions were not solicited;

- written surveys may favour rangatahi who are more literate than their peers with less confidence in reading and writing;

- time constraints for responses and the limited value that rangatahi may put on research meant that answers to open ended questions were reasonably short;

- responses cannot necessarily be considered to reflect all rangatahi that Te Ora Hou work with as Tautoko is targeted at teenage rangatahi and those who attend are the ones who have been motivated and organised enough to get themselves there – other rangatahi who planned to attend did not because of whanau or work commitments and/or lack of personal motivation and/or organisation to ensure attendance.

## Key Findings

### SURVEY 1

- Rangatahi from provincial centres seem to know their whakapapa better than those from the larger places:

	<b>Know iwi &amp; hapu/marae</b>	<b>Know iwi</b>	<b>Don't know iwi or hapu/marae</b>
Whangarei	84% (21)	92% (23)	6% (2)
Heretaunga	40% (2)	40% (2)	60% (3)
Wanganui	44% (7)	69% (11)	31% (5)
Otautahi	17% (4)	78% (15)	22% (3)

- Most rangatahi attending Tautoko are aged between 13-15 years
- There is a reasonable balance between male and female rangatahi
- Most rangatahi either stay involved for a long time (3 years or more) or a short time (less than a year)
- Whanau are the most common entry point into involvement with Te Ora Hou, followed by friends and then school and other social services
- Most of our rangatahi are still in school, and there is a mixed feeling amongst them about how good school is as a place for them
- 20% of Te Ora Hou rangatahi are working and 10% on a course – no respondents said they were doing anything other than school, work or training
- A high proportion (47%) of TOH rangatahi attend church or another youth group
- Most rangatahi involved with Te Ora Hou know their neighbourhood and get on well with their neighbours
- Most of them see the Police in a reasonably positive light (the younger they are the more positive they seem about the Police) though nearly one in four believe the Police never or rarely protect the people and places the rangatahi care about
- A high proportion (52%) say they live in homes that their whanau own
- Two thirds of Te Ora Hou rangatahi have not spent any time at a marae that they whakapapa to in the past two years – Whangarei has the highest proportion of rangatahi who have spent time on their marae recently
- Most know the names of at least two great grandparents – 10% can name six or more great grandparents
- Most of them have talked with their parents over the past year about the need to save for things they want/need

### SURVEY 2

- Most rangatahi live with their whanau (92%), but 43% come from families with separated parents
- One in five only 'sometimes' feel like a valued member of their whanau, but 83% feel valued by their whanau all or most of the time

- Youth workers are just below grandparents and just above uncles and aunties (and well below parents) in terms of adults that rangatahi identify as supporting them most – step parents, neighbours and teachers rank the lowest in terms of supportive adults
- Whanau members (brothers, sisters and cousins) are the most important peer influences closely followed by friends of the rangatahi respondents
- One in four rangatahi cannot remember talking to a grandparent about something from the grandparent's life
- Nearly three in five (54%) have not had any paid employment in the past two years
- Most rangatahi (77%) would prefer to save up for an expensive item rather than put it on Hire Purchase or borrow money from whanau or a commercial lending provider

### SURVEY 3

- Over 80% of rangatahi involved with TOH report their relationships with their caregivers and peers have improved over the past year
- 14% never see their grandparents but nearly 60% see their grandparents at least once a week
- 10% have no grandparents still alive
- A high proportion of rangatahi report that their grandparents have had a significant influence in areas of their life including:
  - the grandparents providing fulltime care for them since early childhood
  - teaching them about how to survive off the land and sea
  - motivating them to stay in school and achieve specific goals
  - providing a sense of belonging and encouragement
- Three out of every four whanau make some decisions together about family issues and/or plans for the future including:
  - care arrangements for family members (young and old)
  - land development
  - goals as a whanau
  - education
  - tangi arrangements
  - travel and family holidays
  - food purchases and budgeting
- Nearly 70% have people outside of their biological family who they think of as members of their 'whanau' – the roles of these people are varied but common relationship characteristics include:
  - sustained relationships since childhood
  - unconditional care and aroha
  - mutual encouragement and support
- 81% believe that overall their relationships with people their own age have improved over the past year

- Over 85% think of TOH as a whanau they are part of
- 94% of respondents said they think the youth worker cares about them ‘heaps’ or ‘a lot’
- 85% think their mother cares about them completely but 8% think their father does not care about them at all
- All respondents trust their youth worker either ‘completely’ or a ‘lot’

### **Conclusions**

Time and resources have not permitted a fuller comparison between the findings of this small survey and what is known about rangatahi at a national level – it is also significant that Hawaiian young people are part of these findings (results can also be provided that exclude the Hawaiian rangatahi if required).

Overall however the picture of rangatahi involved with Te Ora Hou provides a lot to be optimistic about – a high proportion of these rangatahi feel connected to their whanau in a number of positive ways, have a strong sense of belonging and identity, know their neighbours and can identify a range of significant others who support them – and whom the rangatahi also provide support to.

### **Recommendation**

Further exploration of the relationship between rangatahi involved with Te Ora Hou and the similarities and differences between these rangatahi and others in their communities would highlight the impact of involvement with initiatives like Te Ora Hou on rangatahi development and the positive connections they have with their whanau and wider community.

Surveying the same group over a number of years would also add greater clarity to the types of support that fosters healthy relationships and attitudes amongst whanau members.