

Manaaki Kōrero

He mana tamariki, He mana whānau, He mana tangata e!

Handwriting practice area with multiple rows of dotted lines and directional arrows (left-pointing chevrons and right-pointing chevrons) for tracing and letter formation.

A journey where mana can prevail when raising needs and concerns
with Oranga Tamariki



Te reo ō mihi

E tau nei te wairua o ngā mātua tīpuna mai i a Ranginui e tū iho nei
Ki runga ki te mata o Papatuānuku e takoto nei hei ārahi i ā tātou mahi katoa i te tika,
te pono, te māramatanga me te aroha.
Puritia, kia mau kia ita, ita, ita
Mau tonu!

E rere rā te reo o mihi ki nunui mā, ki roroa mā, rātou kua whiti ki tua o pae mahara.
Rātou i kōkiri ai ngā take huhua i te wā i a rātou. No reira me waihotia rātou ki a rātou
Ko tātou tēnei e kawea nei ngā pikautanga o te wā
Tihei mauri ora!

Kāti – E Oranga Tamariki nei rā te pūrongo hei kai mā koutou kia ea ai te kī:

“Manaaki kōrero: He mana tamariki, He mana whānau, He mana tangata e!”

Nā te reo o tamariki mā, o whānau mā i tuitui ai te pūrongo nei, ā mā te koi o te kupu
e kaha wero ana me whakatikatika ināia tonu nei! Nō reira, e Oranga Tamariki e ara,
maranga mai, kia mau ō mata, kia puakaha ō taringa, kia tau ai ko te wairua hihiko o
tēnei pūrongo ki a koutou! Takatū ake!”

Mauri Tū, Mauri Ora e!

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Preface

Oranga Tamariki heard from tamariki, rangatahi and whānau that its complaint processes are not fit-for-purpose. In response an action plan was developed and, at the end of 2021, Oranga Tamariki invited VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai to partner with them in creating fit-for-whānau feedback, complaints and grievance services, by working collaboratively with tamariki, rangatahi and whānau in their design and delivery.

VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai agreed to this partnership and to a commitment to uphold Kia Tika, Kia Pono: Honouring Truths. This pou tarāwaho (framework) sits at the heart of how VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai engages with tamariki and rangatahi who are care experienced. Within this framework are values and ways of being which ensure the voices of tamariki and rangatahi who are care experienced are included in an ethical and culturally safe way.¹

VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai stands for the Voice of the Young and Care Experienced – Listen to me. Established in 2017, it is an independent not-for-profit organisation that was co-designed by and for tamariki and rangatahi with care experience. VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai help to advocate for the approximately 4,500 tamariki and rangatahi in State care in Aotearoa. VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai exists to amplify these voices and ensure that they are heard, so there is positive change for their individual care journeys and across the wider care system.

Through existing networks and relationships VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai engaged sixty-one tamariki and rangatahi, and thirty-eight caregivers and whānau from around the country. The conversations, feedback and ideas shared were heartfelt and painful, hopeful and bold, simple and humble, and essentially all human rights based. These insights informed the foundation for a wider Oranga Tamariki work programme called Manaaki Kōrero. The Manaaki Kōrero programme contributes to the Oranga Tamariki Future Direction Action Plan to:

Strengthen the feedback and complaints system so it is ‘fit-for-whānau’, and ensures that tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau have their voices heard and have confidence in the process. (Action point 1.4 Oranga Tamariki Future Direction Action Plan, September 2021).

VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai acknowledge all those who contributed to this report from across the VOYCE community. Amplifying the voices of those with lived experience of the State care system is at the heart of everything we do. VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai tautoko the courage and leadership of all involved, and honour those who fiercely advocate for the love, respect and empowerment of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau who come into contact with the care system. We stand firm in our belief that their voices have the power to transform systems and change the world. We reiterate the words of one group of rangatahi:

“

”

What we are asking for is our basic rights and needs. It's not hard to provide us with our basic needs.

¹ Kia tika, Kia pono: Honouring truths was co-created by rangatahi/rangatahi who are care experienced, staff members from VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai, researchers from Waipapa Taumata Rau/ The University of Auckland and Te Rōpū Rangahau Hauora e Eru Pōmare, University of Otago Wellington.



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Executive Summary

In the 2021 'Direction for Oranga Tamariki – Cabinet Paper to the Social Wellbeing Committee', Minister for Children, Kelvin Davis, committed that Oranga Tamariki would:

“Strengthen the feedback and complaints system so it is ‘fit-for-whānau’, and ensure that tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau have their voices heard and have confidence in the process” (p.5).

Insights on major gaps in Oranga Tamariki’s feedback and complaints system, and the agencies that came before it, have been gathered over several years. Despite all the strategies and provisions that were introduced to try and address these issues, there is a clear gap between what is currently provided and what is needed for those who are navigating the feedback and complaints system within Oranga Tamariki.

Oranga Tamariki asked VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai to answer the question: What do tamariki, rangatahi and whānau need to feel safe, comfortable and confident raising their needs and concerns and providing feedback to Oranga Tamariki? VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai engaged with tamariki, rangatahi, caregivers and whānau from across Aotearoa to hear their views.

Approach

This project was approached using Appreciative Inquiry to encourage a solution focused discussion. Care experienced tamariki, rangatahi, caregivers and whānau from around Aotearoa were invited to participate in workshops hosted by VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai. Collaborative conversations were facilitated to generate ideas and develop an ‘ideal experience map’. The findings from each workshop were collated to develop two ‘ideal experience maps’, one for tamariki and rangatahi, and one for whānau and caregivers.

Who shared their voices?

16

tamariki and rangatahi workshops were held between September and November 2022.

61

care experienced tamariki and rangatahi took part in the workshops.

7

workshops were held for caregivers and whānau between October and December 2022.

The tamariki and rangatahi participants were aged between

7-25

and had existing relationships with VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai.

38

whānau participants.

Whānau and caregiver participants came from a range of geographical areas and demographic groups, representing diverse voices from across the care community.



What did we hear?

From the insights captured within the workshops five themes emerged which formed the basis of the ‘ideal experience maps’. These themes illustrate how mana can prevail for tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregivers, when raising feedback or concerns with Oranga Tamariki:

- **MANAAKITANGA (Care) :**
Feeling cared about by workers and the system.
- **KA WHAI RAUEMI (Access) :**
Having access to the right info and resources.
- **TAUTOKO/TAUAWHI (Support) :**
Having support from a trusted adult to reflect and explore options.
- **KO TE HUARAHI KI TE MANA TANGATA (Process) :**
Knowing the process will be safe and respectful.
- **KO NGĀ WHAKATAU (Outcome) :**
Being kept informed and reaching a fair outcome.

Both groups shared preventative and proactive measures, workforce development ideas that would be quick to implement and proposals for investments that would provide substantive and meaningful change.

Conclusion

It is acknowledged that the specific experiences contained in this report only represent those who took part in this research. However, the views and experiences we heard from diverse tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers are consistent with insights and stories shared by tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers spanning many years.

The insights gathered through the workshops state that rangatahi, whānau and caregivers want to be treated with care and compassion before, during and after any feedback or complaints process. There is work to be done to ensure tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers have timely access to the right information and resources, and that this information meets the needs of a range of audiences. The insights highlighted that there is limited understanding amongst tamariki and rangatahi about what constitutes a trusted adult, and how that adult is supported and informed to provide the advocacy that care experienced tamariki and rangatahi are entitled to.

The ‘ideal experience’ of a feedback and complaints system was a rich and thorough discussion amongst both groups. Rangatahi, tamariki, whānau and caregivers are asking for a feedback and complaints system that is starkly different from what they have experienced in the past. Participants are seeking a new and transformational approach which is safe, respectful and fundamentally tamariki and rangatahi centred. Tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers want a process that seeks fair and restorative solutions, ensures accountability and provokes ongoing positive system change.



Introduction

1.1 Oranga Tamariki asked VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai to find out from tamariki, rangatahi and whānau what they would need to feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise their needs and concerns with Oranga Tamariki. This report presents what young people, whānau and caregivers told us would make the feedback and complaints process ‘Huarahi ki te mana tangata ake ake tonu - A journey where mana can prevail’.

1.2 Oranga Tamariki is the government organisation responsible for the care and protection of children and rangatahi in Aotearoa. It was created in response to a report by the Expert Advisory Panel (EAP, 2015) which found that “the current system is fragmented [and] lacks accountability” (p.7). Insights were gathered over many years on major gaps in the feedback and complaints system of Oranga Tamariki and the agencies that came before it. The EAP (2015) report proposed “a stronger and more influential complaints process for all system participants (including children and young people, families and whānau, caregivers and delivery partners)” (p.134). In 2018, the need for “strong internal and credible complaint processes that are accessible, have integrity and are seen to work” was highlighted (Batie, 2018, p.8).

1.3 Leading up to the conception of the Manaaki Kōrero programme, there were significant reports published between 2015 and 2021 which incrementally shifted perceptions and understandings of the responsibilities of Oranga Tamariki to be accountable to tamariki, rangatahi, caregivers and whānau. National Care Standards came into effect on 1 July 2019 with the intention of ensuring tamariki and rangatahi in care understand what they are entitled to and know how to provide feedback or make a complaint. Te Mātātaki, 2021, reported on the experiences of 1,545 tamariki and rangatahi in care. The survey was based on areas tamariki and rangatahi had said are important to them. The findings highlighted the pivotal role of the social worker to develop a trusting relationship with tamariki and rangatahi (Priority 3) and to enable tamariki and rangatahi participation in decisions by ensuring their voices are listened to and understood (Priority 2) (pgs.45-46).

1.4 In 2020, a Whānau Ora review of Oranga Tamariki, ‘Ko te Wā Whakawhiti: It’s Time for Change’, recommended “legal resources and resourcing for whānau, clear and coherent communication and complaints pathways” (p.69). The 2020 Office of the Children’s Commissioner report, ‘Te Kuku o te Manawa – Moe Ararā! Haumanutia ngā moemoeā a ngā tūpuna mō te oranga o ngā tamariki’, called for “advocacy services to support whānau involved with the care and protection system” (p.110).

1.5 In 2020, an Ombudsman’s report, ‘He Take Kōhukihuki: A Matter of Urgency’, found that honesty, transparency and clarity were essential to addressing whānau grievances and rebuilding trust (p.102). The report also stated that whānau who have had tamariki removed and disabled parents need to have “access to independent advocacy” and “information about their legal rights... in an accessible format” (p.198).

1.6 A 2021 Waitangi Tribunal Report, ‘He Pāharakeke, he Rito Whakakīkinga Whāruarua’, found that, “Oranga Tamariki’s online complaint system is extremely complicated. As a result, users of Oranga Tamariki are reluctant to complain, and lose confidence. Additionally, the claimants say the follow-up process lacks transparency since no information on the outcome of the complaint is shared with the complainant. The claimants also allege guidelines prescribing timely responses to complaints are not being adhered to” (p.78). The Ministerial Advisory Board’s (2021) report, ‘Hipokingia ki te Kahu Aroha, Hipokingia ki te Katoa’, recommended that “opportunities to provide advocacy support for whānau are identified through the development of workforce and partnering strategies”.

1.7 As a response Oranga Tamariki has made a commitment to finding solutions through the Manaaki Kōrero programme. In July 2023, the Manaaki Kōrero Steering Group endorsed a three-year programme of work informed by the engagements conducted by VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai, outlining what tamariki, rangatahi and whānau want to experience when they engage with Oranga Tamariki. The programme focuses on collaboratively designing and delivering future feedback, complaints, grievance, information, advice, and assistance processes with tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau in partnership with VOYCE-Whakarongo Mai.

1.8 In undertaking this partnership with Oranga Tamariki, VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai also made key commitments to the community:

- Firstly, to gather, collate and share the insights of tamariki, rangatahi, caregivers and whānau with aroha and manaakitanga; ensuring they are represented authentically and publicly.
- Secondly, to work in partnership with Oranga Tamariki to maintain a dialogue with our community and, through this, that solutions would be found that will transform the experiences of the community when concerns are raised with Oranga Tamariki.

Who shared their voices?

Voices of Tamariki and Rangatahi

2.1 Between September and November 2022, we held 16 workshops with a total of 61 care experienced tamariki and rangatahi. The participants came from a range of geographical areas and demographic groups, representing diverse voices from across the care experienced community.

Over a third of participants (25) were living outside of the five main urban areas of Aotearoa at the time, and a third (21) were living in a secure residence or group home. Two-thirds (41) identified as Māori, one-sixth as Pasifika (10), and one-fifth (13) as part of the Rainbow community.

Over half the participants (33) identified as having a disability according to the Washington Group definition, and more than a quarter (16) identified as having multiple disabilities.

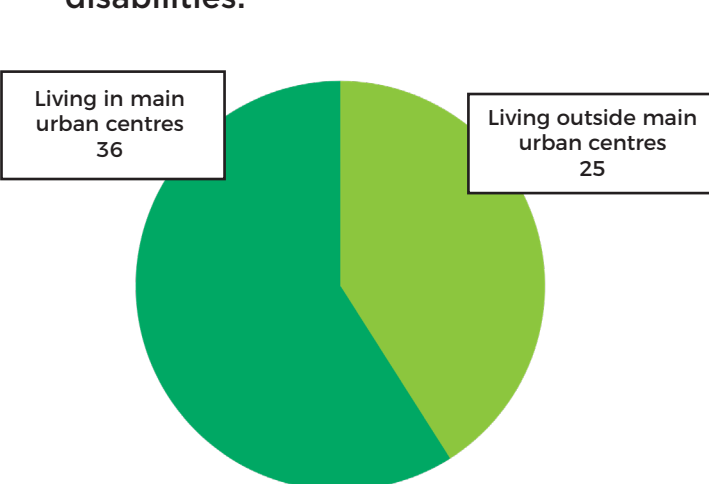


Figure One: Representation outside main urban centres

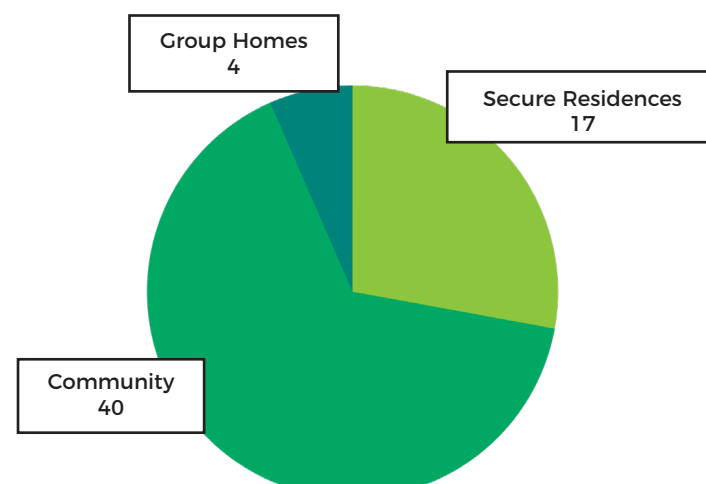


Figure Two: Representation from group care settings

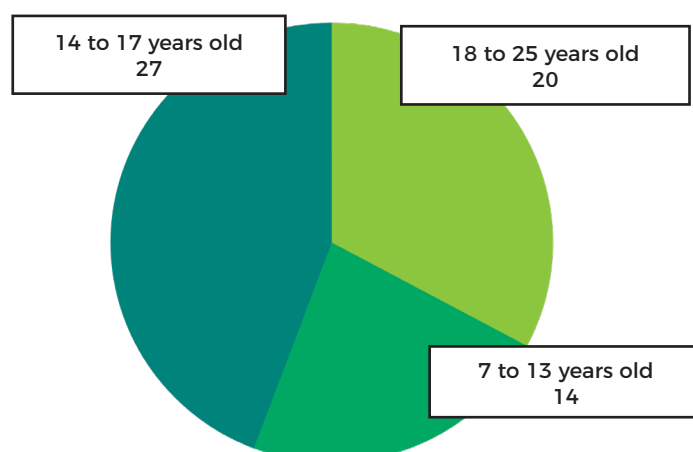


Figure Three: Age of participants at the time

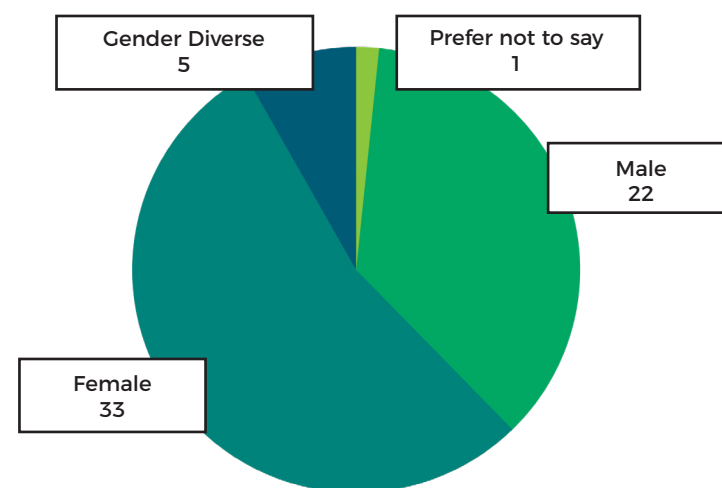


Figure Four: Gender identities of participants

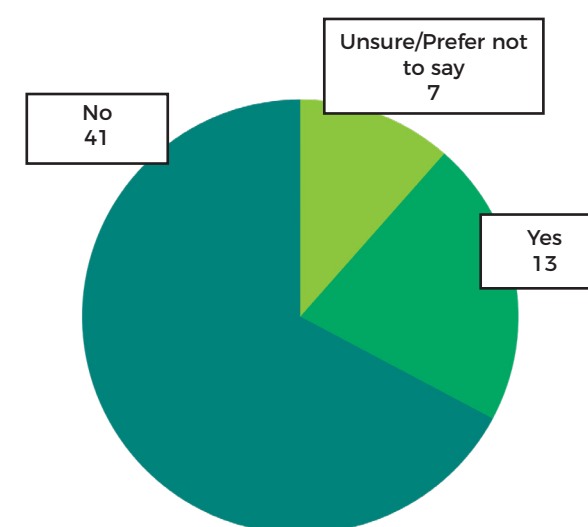


Figure Five: Rainbow, Takatāpui, LGBTQI+ participants

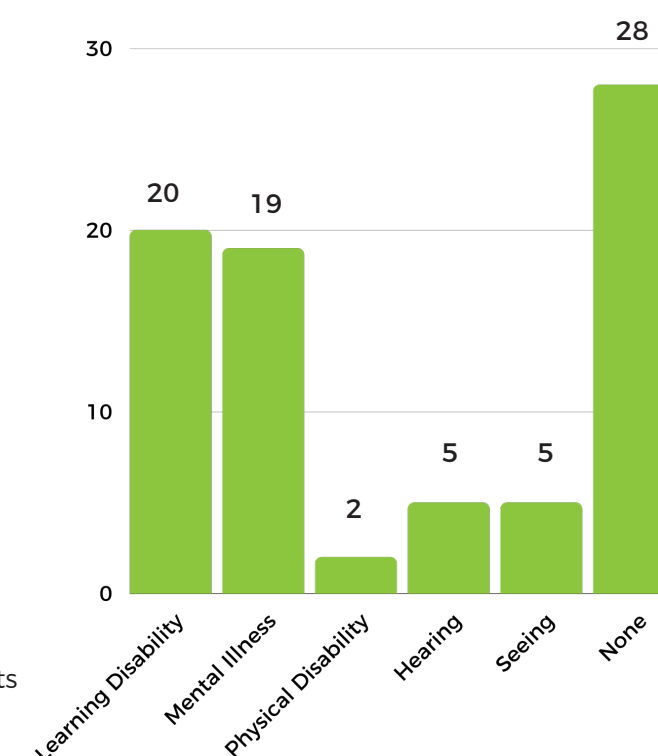


Figure Six: Disabilities that participants identified with

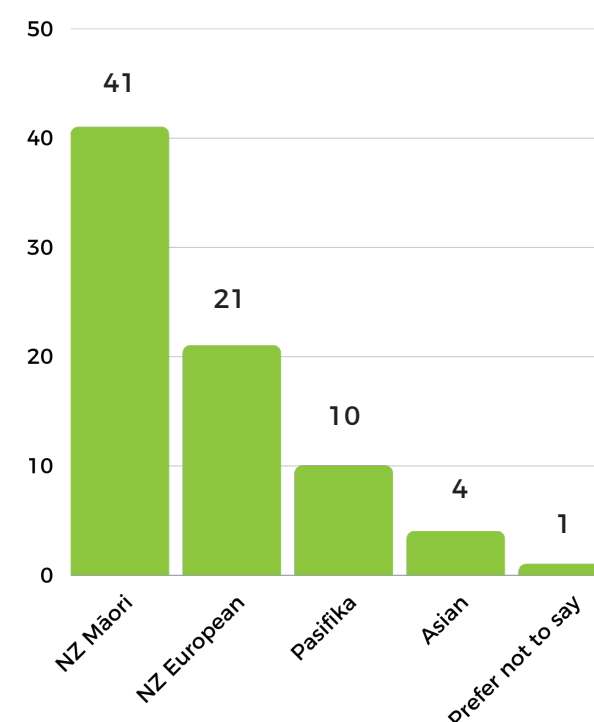


Figure Seven: Ethnicities that participants identified with

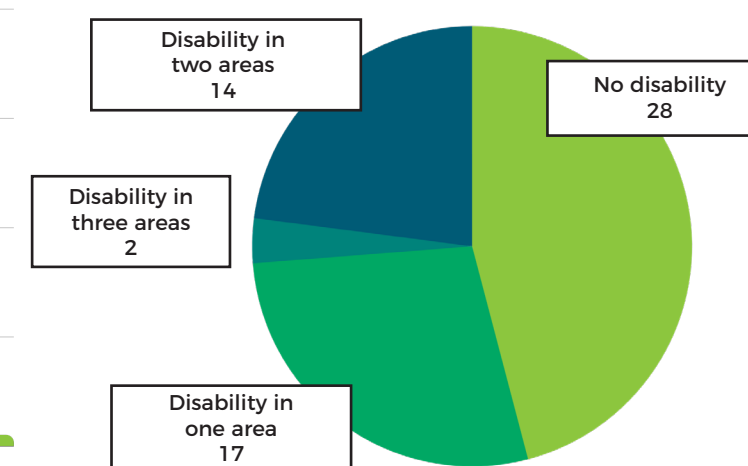


Figure Eight: Number of disabilities participants identified with



Voices of Whānau and Caregivers

2.2 Seven workshops were held between October and early December 2022 with a total of 38 participants. One was a virtual workshop, held with a group of Pasifika caregivers. The participants came from a range of geographical areas and demographic groups, representing diverse voices from across the care community.

How many attended?	Age	Ethnicity (Self-identified)	Caregiver/ Whānau	Region
3	19-23	Māori/Pakeha	Whānau	Whangārei
7	25-65	Māori/Pakeha	Whānau/ Caregivers	Whangārei
5	40-70	Māori/Pakeha	Caregivers	Hastings/Napier
4	30-60	Māori	Whānau/ Caregivers	Wellington
8	20-40	Māori/Pakeha	Caregivers	Wellington
8	24-57	Māori/Pakeha	Whānau	Christchurch
3	30-40	Pacific	Whānau	Online

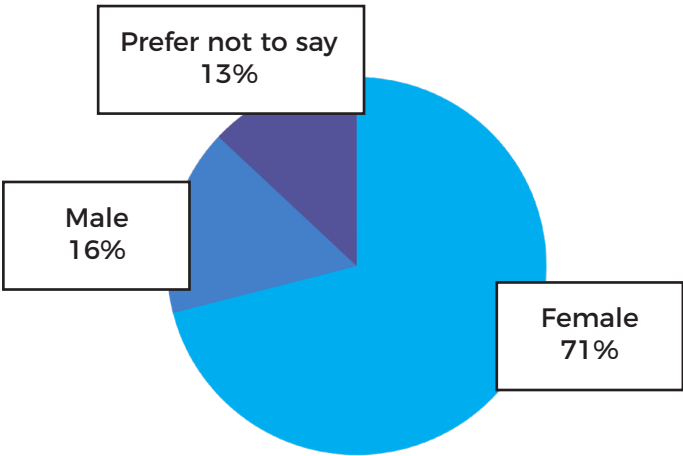


Figure Two: Gender identity of participants

What did we hear? The Insights

From the insights of both groups, shared views on the key points of the complaints process were clearly highlighted as requiring system change. Tamariki and rangatahi insights, and whānau and caregiver insights were collected independently of each other, however there is uniformity in their ideas to improve the feedback and complaints process. Essentially five themes emerged from the inquiry into what the journey looks like, where mana can prevail for tamariki and rangatahi and whānau and caregivers, when raising their needs and concerns with Oranga Tamariki:

- **MANAAKITANGA (Care) :**
Feeling cared about by workers and the system.
- **KA WHAI RAUEMI (Access) :**
Having access to the right info and resources.
- **TAUTOKO/TAUAWHI (Support) :**
Having support from a trusted adult to reflect and explore options.
- **KO TE HUARAHİ KI TE MANA TANGATA (Process) :**
Knowing the process will be safe and respectful.
- **KO NGĀ WHAKATAU (Outcome) :**
Being kept informed and reaching a fair outcome.

The two participant groups clearly articulated how changes to the system must meet the specific needs of tamariki and rangatahi and how this can differ from the needs of adults. Therefore, within these five shared themes, sub-themes are discussed in each section which relate to tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregiver needs respectively as captured in the illustrated ‘ideal experience maps’.



Tamariki and Rangatahi Insights

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

Five themes emerged from our inquiry into what the journey looks like where mana can prevail for tamariki and rangatahi when raising their needs and concerns with Oranga Tamariki:

MANAAKITANGA (CARE)

Workers spend time building relationships with me.

"I wish they would hang out with me more."

Tamariki and rangatahi want to have trusting relationships with workers and caregivers, who demonstrate compassion, show that they care, and spend regular quality time with them.

Workers understand and respect me and my needs.
"I need to feel seen and heard, not just treated as part of the system."

Young people want their individual needs and preferences to influence how workers engage with them, and to feel confident they'll be heard and understood, without judgement.

Workers regularly check in and ask me for feedback.

"Kaimahi proactively identify when a young person is asking for help, wants to speak up."

Tamariki and rangatahi want kaimahi to proactively check in with them, to encourage them to speak up, normalise giving feedback, and prevent issues escalating.

Workers follow up and respond fairly to issues.

"There needs to be a foundation of trust, consistency, reliability."

Young people told us they want kaimahi to demonstrate integrity and transparency in how they respond to feedback, keeping each other accountable, calling out poor practice, and following through.



KA WHAI RAUEMI (ACCESS)

I have all the info I need about being in care.

"We know what good quality care and caregiver practice looks like."

Tamariki and rangatahi want to be fully informed of their rights, entitlements and options at different stages along their care journey, so they can recognise when standards aren't being met.

I know how to raise my needs and concerns.

"I know when to speak up because I understand the rules."

Young people want to be proactively reminded where to find info and guidance, and for the multiple pathways to be streamlined and fully understood by the adults in the system.

I can understand the resources available to me.

"All resources need to be accessible for the young, neurodiverse, disabled, and in multiple languages."

Tamariki and rangatahi need resources to be child-friendly, visually appealing, accessible for multiple ages, languages, learning styles and needs, and available both digitally and in hard copy.

I can access the resources and pathways I need.

"Use platforms young people use - keep up!"

Young people want to have free and private access to the complaints pathway at all times, including access to paper forms, a phone line, and an online portal to make and track complaints.



TAUTOKO/ TAUAWHI (SUPPORT)

I know what support I can get and how to access it.

"Tell us about other organisations who can help - VOYCE."

Tamariki and rangatahi want to understand their right to advocacy and have access to a safe drop-in space and confidential phone line to get support with navigating the complaints process.

I have ongoing support from a trusted adult.

"Finding that one person you can open up to and tell everything - everyone needs someone."

Young people need to know from the start they have support via long-term meaningful relationships with trusted adults of their choice, who are independent of Oranga Tamariki.

My natural supports are able to be my trusted adult.

"Want to be able to move on from care and still have that someone to lean on."

Tamariki and rangatahi want their natural supports (whānau, caregivers, peers, teachers, school counsellors) to be available to them longer term and trained in how to support them.

My trusted adult knows how to advocate for me.

"I might not have the energy or faith to do it alone."

Young people want their trusted adults to be equipped to help them with feedback and complaints - someone to listen, be in their corner and go into battle for them if it's needed.



KO TE HUARAHI KI TE MANA TANGATA (PROCESS)

I can tell the process is meant for me and feels safe.

"I can tell someone cares and will listen."

Tamariki and rangatahi want the process to feel approachable and safe, meet diverse needs and preferences, and be inclusive of whānau, trusted adults and support animals.

I can tell the process has some accountability.

"Someone independent from OT looks at the grievance first - not just staff look and say unjustified."

Young people want complaints to be received by an independent external panel with diverse perspectives, and for the process to be confidential, monitored and accountable.

I understand what will happen and what to expect.

"I know where information is going, what will happen and who will respond."

Tamariki and rangatahi want the process to be transparent from the start, so they are fully informed of options, expectations, realistic timeframes, who will find out, and possible outcomes.

I can easily connect with someone who is able to help.

"Only need to tell one adult once, then it's taken care of."

Young people want there to be no wrong way to speak up. They want to be acknowledged by an actual person right away, have a choice of who deals with their complaint, and meet them in person.

I'm treated with care by the person managing the complaint.
"Meet on my terms, convenient time, safe space, with support, put my safety and comfort first."

Tamariki and rangatahi want to raise their concerns in private and for their information to be kept safe. They want to be treated with sensitivity and empathy by a consistent person throughout.



KO NGĀ WHAKATAU (OUTCOME)

I'm included in the process and kept informed.

"Give me choices and power to make decisions."

Young people want to be included throughout the complaints process, be proactively kept informed through open and transparent dialogue, and be empowered to make some decisions.

The process is followed, and timeframes are met.

"If the process is tika, mana will prevail."

Tamariki and rangatahi want their feedback to be taken seriously, for kaimahi to follow the correct process and for reasonable timeframes to be consistently met.

The outcome is fair and creates resolution.

"Te ao Māori approach to resolution, pōwhiri, poroporoaki, karakia, whakanoa."

Young people want the approach to resolution to be culturally informed, to honour their wishes wherever possible, to make things better and ensure their safety and protection.

Outcomes are ongoing and the door stays open.

"Need actions, not just words, enforce outcomes, hold people accountable, keep me in the loop."

Tamariki and rangatahi want to be able to move on after a complaint, to have ongoing access to supports, for the door to remain open if things change, and for issues to be learned from.



Whānau/Caregiver Insights

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

Ten key themes emerged from our conversations into how mana can prevail for caregivers and whānau when raising their needs and concerns with Oranga Tamariki:

MANAAKITANGA (CARE):

We are heard and acknowledged.

CARE and RESPECT

"We want respect for all involved."

Caregivers and whānau want to feel that their complaint is heard and acknowledged. They want to experience genuine care and respect from workers and the system.

FAITH and TRUST

"We need to feel believed in order to trust."

The process will be experienced as fair and just.

TAUTOKO/ TAUAWHI (SUPPORT)

Support is available to effectively navigate the system.

SUPPORT

"You work alongside us. You persevere with us."

"It feels like you make us a priority."

We are supported through the process. Adequate support is available.

MANA MOTUHAKE

"Get the right people around the table."

Honour Pūao Te Ata Tū and Māori approaches. Involve whānau and bring the process to the marae. Bring power back to the marae.

KO NGĀ WHAKATAU (OUTCOME)

We know the process is transparent and we are kept fully informed. We know there will be follow up and accountability.

TRANSPARENT PROCESS

"We want to know what's happening – keep us in the loop."

People know what to expect. Caregivers and whānau want a transparent process. People expect to be kept fully informed along the way.

ACCOUNTABILITY

"There's an outcome I can sit with."

"The process is fully documented - with a copy for me."

Follow processes and provide closure. Caregivers and whānau want to see staff taking responsibility, following through and ensuring the process is followed.

KO TE HUARAHI KI TE MANA TANGATA (PROCESS)

We know the process will keep us safe.

SAFETY

"We feel safe to raise issues."

"We are confident to navigate the system."

It feels safe to make a complaint. Caregivers and whānau want to feel safe when they make a complaint.

KAITIAKITANGA

"Ensure access to legal, health, mental health and rongoā services."

"There are more internships within the system for care experienced young people."

The system has to be safe for kaimahi. Kaimahi at all levels are supported to be able to work in ways that are mana enhancing, uphold people's rights and are tika and pono with the kaupapa.

KA WHAI RAUEMI (ACCESS):

We have access to information and resources including our rights and what to expect. We have an independent advocacy service for caregivers and whānau.

ACCESS

"We shouldn't have to do our own research into our entitlements."

We have access to information and resources including our rights and what to expect.

INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS PROCESS AND ADVOCACY SERVICES

"We want an independent support body for caregivers."

Caregivers and whānau should have dedicated services outside of the Oranga Tamariki system.

MANAAKITANGA

Care: Feeling cared about by workers and the system.

“ ”

I can tell someone cares and will listen.

Tamariki and rangatahi insights shared preventative and proactive measures that would support direct communication with kamahi where issues could be shared at this level. For this direct line of communication to occur, the key starting point for tamariki and rangatahi was for their social worker to build a relationship with them.

Workers spend time building relationships with me.

3.1 Tamariki and rangatahi told us they want to have trusting relationships with social workers, residence staff and caregivers, so they feel able to express their feelings.

3.2 Rangatahi want kaimahi to demonstrate compassion and show that they care through small acts of kindness, hugs, positivity, consistency, and respecting privacy and boundaries.

Workers understand and respect me and my needs.

3.3 Rangatahi told us they want their individual communication needs and preferences to be recorded in their care plans, and for those to be observed by kaimahi.

3.4 Tamariki and rangatahi want to feel confident that when they speak they will be heard, without judgement, and that their mana will be respected.





Workers regularly check in with me and ask me for feedback.

3.5 Tamariki and rangatahi want kaimahi to proactively check in with them to prevent issues escalating.

3.6 Make sure I feel safe to talk freely - this may require being away from caregivers.

Workers follow up and respond fairly to issues.

3.7 Rangatahi told us they want kaimahi to demonstrate integrity and transparency in how they respond to feedback and to proactively follow through with what they have promised without needing to be chased.

For whānau and caregivers, feeling care and respect by the system was about acknowledgement and feeling heard, a process which is empathetic, genuine and emotionally responsive. Whānau and caregivers want a system that listens, validates and can be agile in its response, which would include:

3.8 An emotionally responsive and non-judgemental process.

3.9 Recognition of whānau or caregiver role and expertise in the life of the tamariki or rangatahi that the complaint is related to. Ability to engage in a process that acknowledges, and can adapt to, the caregiver's cultural context, including ability to speak in their first language.

3.10 Time is spent with the complainant to ensure the complaint is clearly understood and any 'bigger picture' issues are explored.

Preventative measures were also shared by whānau and caregivers.

3.11 There was acknowledgement that social workers were under pressure and need support. A review of manageable workloads for social workers is required, so they can do their job to the standard that was suggested.



KA WHAI RAUEMI

Access: Having access to the right info and resources.



I know when to speak up because I understand the rules.

Ready access to information was voiced as essential to being aware and being able to participate in Oranga Tamariki processes. Enhancing the quality, supporting comprehension, and ease of accessibility to information, is a proactive action which would meet many of the following needs shared by tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregivers.

I have all the info I need about being in care.

4.1 Tamariki and rangatahi told us they want to be informed of their rights, Care Standards, entitlements, and allowances, at the stage of entering care and via regular refreshers throughout their care journey, to check they understand the information being shared.

- Having this information supports clear and consistent expectations and gives rangatahi the ability to recognise when Care Standards aren't being met.
- In addition, rangatahi want access to their care information; their 'All About Me' plan, case notes, and who and how to contact people noted in their care plan, i.e. Lawyer, social worker, and who to go to if their social worker is unavailable.

4.2 When care circumstances change, rangatahi want information provided to them so they feel informed and prepared. Such as what to expect from Oranga Tamariki when moving to a new placement or residence, returning home, being discharged, and transitioning to adulthood.

- Access to information and resources, including tamariki and rangatahi rights while in care and what to expect, was echoed in whānau and caregiver workshops.





I know how to raise my needs and concerns.

4.3 Tamariki and rangatahi raised the following feedback on what they need to know to be able to raise their needs and concerns:

- They want access to information about common concerns for rangatahi in care.
- They want information on how to raise their needs and concerns, and clear guidance on how to do it.
- Information shared via social media, posters, billboards, and TV advertisements, to publicise how to raise needs and concerns, would reach and educate a wider care audience.
- To have the complaints process for Oranga Tamariki and the grievance process in residences to be streamlined into one pathway to support access.

4.4 Both groups, tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregivers, raised the need for better and more accessible information on the feedback and complaints process. Training on the complaints and feedback process was also raised by both groups to ensure trusted adults are equipped to provide support to tamariki and rangatahi - see 5.14-24.

I understand the resources available to me.

4.5 Tamariki and rangatahi told us that resources need to be accessible and visually appealing, so they know the resource is meant for them.

4.6 It is important to rangatahi that kaimahi can explain information in person.



All resources need to be accessible for the young, neurodiverse, disabled and in multiple languages.

I can access the resources and pathways I need.

4.7 Access to and the delivery of forms. Tamariki and rangatahi told us they want to have free and private access to the complaints pathway at all times, without having to ask for a form.

- This includes accessible peel-off pads of hard copy forms, i.e. at Oranga Tamariki sites or residences, pre-paid envelopes and pencils being available in all rooms of residences, group homes and private homes.
- Complaints and feedback information packs proactively mailed out every 6 to 12 months.
- Rangatahi want to independently place the form into a grievance box or post box themselves, without giving it to kaimahi first.





4.8 Verbal communication. It is important to rangatahi that they can raise issues verbally via phone, voice recording or in person, or provide a phone number to have someone call them back. For this reason, the following suggestions were made to improve access to verbal communication:

- Tamariki and rangatahi want access to phones or internet capable devices, at all times, for ease of communication and for their safety.
- Access to a free call feedback and complaints phone line, with no wait times.
- To be able to message their social worker without using data or credit.

4.9 Accessibility online.

- Rangatahi want proactive information on how to access online information, such as how to access internet in the community through schools and libraries.
- Tamariki and rangatahi want access to an online portal, where they can make and track complaints, access live updates, files and notes, and book appointments with kaimahi.
- Tracking the process of complaints was also raised by whānau and caregivers, suggesting a visual process tracker of the complaint could be built into an app and provide updates and timeframes.
- Rangatahi want to co-design a digital app that provides information on their rights and entitlements, Care Standards, complaints process, and includes 24/7 live chat.
- Whānau and caregivers also share the benefit of having an app for tamariki and rangatahi to lodge complaints, and an app where caregivers can create notes under the file of the tamariki or rangatahi they are caring for and provide feedback.
- Whānau and caregivers want online information that is easy to search for, a menu of rights, entitlements, and other relevant information. They shared that resources should use simple language and asked for Te Reo Māori versions.

Whānau and caregivers also raised having access to information through a dedicated service that sits outside of the Oranga Tamariki system – see 6.9 & 6.10.

TAUTOKO/TAUAWHI

Support: Having support from a trusted adult to reflect and explore options.



Finding that one person you can open up to and tell everything - everyone needs someone.

I know what support I can get and how to access it.

5.1 Tamariki and rangatahi told us they want a safe and physical drop-in space to raise needs or to follow up with safe people outside the Oranga Tamariki system.

5.2 Rangatahi want to understand that 'advocate' can mean VOYCE, and for this to be explained on forms.

5.3 Rangatahi want to know that they have the right to access advocacy and be provided with contact lists for support people and services e.g., VOYCE.

5.4 Tamariki and rangatahi want to know how to contact an advocate, and for there to be kaimahi dedicated to dropping off letters or checking in with them and reminding them how to speak up.

5.5 Rangatahi want access to an easily remembered 3- or 4- digit confidential phone/text line, and support groups for rangatahi who are navigating the complaints process.

I have ongoing support from a trusted adult.

5.6 Tamariki and rangatahi told us it is important to know from the start they have support that is independent from Oranga Tamariki.

5.7 It is important to rangatahi that this support comes via a longer-term relationship with a trusted adult, who may be a known member of their community, or an allocated mentor or advocate.

5.8 Rangatahi want this person to be safe, know them, care about them and believe in them, and look for positives.

5.9 They want to be able to choose someone they can trust and have confidence in, ideally someone with lived experience of being in care.

5.10 Tamariki and rangatahi want to know this person is always there for them and can stay in contact by phone and regular catch-ups in person, even when there are no issues. Tamariki and rangatahi told us this will help their trusted adult to recognise when things aren't going well and would help them to open up.

5.11 It is important that this person walks alongside the young person when they do raise issues, to support them and monitor their wellbeing.

My natural supports are able to be my trusted adult.

5.12 Tamariki and rangatahi told us how important their natural supports are, including whānau, caregivers, peers, teachers and school counsellors. They want these supports to remain available to them longer term, and for professional boundaries to enable caregivers and, if they wish, education staff to stay involved when the young person moves on.

5.13 It is important to rangatahi that their support people are involved in OT processes and that whānau are advised whenever there is a complaint.

5.14 For whānau and caregivers, this begins with mana motuhake "Get the right people around the table". As natural, trusted supports for tamariki and rangatahi, whānau, hapū and iwi need to be involved in the process. Whānau and caregivers shared there needed to be more wraparound support for whānau, and resources allocated to whānau, to ensure they could provide adequate support for tamariki and rangatahi going through the complaints process.





My trusted adult knows how to advocate for me.

5.15 Tamariki and rangatahi told us they want a trusted adult to be able to help them with feedback and complaints, and for this to be known and in place before issues arise. This will require their trusted adult to have access to education, training and resources on how to support them with feedback and complaints.

5.16 Rangatahi told us it is often helpful just to talk things through and understand what happened, and that they might not need to complain if they feel heard.

5.17 Rangatahi want this person to be in their corner, even if they are wrong - to listen, help them reflect, see the bigger picture, and give them advice and guidance.

5.18 Rangatahi want help to prepare and practice what they want to say, write letters, or complete forms and to build their confidence to speak up.

5.19 Where necessary, rangatahi want this person to be trained to step in, advocate, speak on their behalf and go into battle to consistently pursue satisfactory outcomes.

5.20 Rangatahi want support to enhance their engagement with, and access to, lawyers.

5.21 Tamariki and rangatahi want to be able to make complaints through their trusted adult, and for the trusted adult to have access to tools (such as an app) and kaimahi support and advice.

5.22 Caregivers and whānau want adequate support available to them to effectively navigate the process.

5.23 Giving power back to whānau, through allowing the process to be brought back to the marae, was also raised by caregivers and whānau.

5.24 Caregivers want a person that walks each step of the way with them, and to have a peer support network available to them. This is similarly reflected in the request for an Independent Support Body for whānau and caregivers - see 6.10.



KO TE HUARAHI KI TE MANA TANGATA

Process: Knowing the process will be safe and respectful.

Fostering an organisational culture that welcomes feedback was seen as fundamental. In addition, the professionalism of kaimahi was raised in various ways throughout workshop discussions with relevance to feeling cared about and feeling safe to raise concerns, to ensuring healthy relationships were maintained when an outcome was reached. Both tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregiver groups were keenly aware and cautious of the impact on themselves or on existing relationships when raising concerns with Oranga Tamariki. This section outlines what tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregivers need from the system to feel safe and respected.

I can tell the process is meant for me and is safe.

6.1 Tamariki and rangatahi told us they want the feedback and complaints process to feel approachable, so they know it's okay to complain. It is important to tamariki and rangatahi that speaking up doesn't affect how they are treated by kaimahi.

6.2 They want different options available to meet diverse people's needs and preferences, such as in person, by phone, paper and digital pathways, and available in different languages.

6.3 Rangatahi want information on the process to be visually engaging and inclusive.

6.4 Tamariki and rangatahi want options to be available for those who are homeless or have no safe contact details to put on a form.

6.5 Rangatahi want to be assured that the process is safe if they are asked to share their personal information online.

6.6 Rangatahi also want to be able to raise issues and give feedback anonymously if they wish.



I can tell the process has some accountability.

It is important to both groups that they understand and have confidence in the way Oranga Tamariki is monitored and kept accountable.

6.7 Both tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregivers want a process where there is a written record of their verbal complaint, or confirmation that their written complaint had been read. Rangatahi shared they want to be acknowledged by an actual person right away, so they can feel confident they have been heard.

6.8 Whānau and caregivers want practice standards in place for kaimahi receiving and processing complaints.

6.9 An argument for an independent feedback and complaints system was raised by members of both groups as a factor to raising accountability.

● Tamariki and rangatahi told us the person receiving complaints should be independent of Oranga Tamariki. Like grievance panels in residences, rangatahi want an external panel to review all complaints, with a rotating panel of care experienced and panel members with diverse perspectives.

● Whānau and caregivers wanted an alternative for those where a system managed by Oranga Tamariki is a roadblock to engagement due to deeply felt mistrust or negative past experiences.

6.10 Whānau and caregivers also stated a need for a support body or advocacy service. An independent support body for whānau and caregivers would ideally provide:

- A go-to hub for support, information and advocacy, for whānau and caregivers. This would include support expertise on accessing legal, health, mental health and Rongoa services.
- A service that would proactively reach out and work with whānau and caregivers when there is a complaint raised.



I know where info is going, what will happen and who will respond.

I understand what will happen and what to expect.

Transparency from the beginning was raised throughout the feedback sessions. For both participant groups it was about understanding the process from the start and a key element of this is how the process is communicated.

6.11 Rangatahi want to be fully informed of their options, know what the process will look like if they speak up, be provided timeframes, know who will find out and the possible outcomes.

6.12 Rangatahi want open and transparent dialogue, and information checking for understanding, so there are clear expectations and accountability. Rangatahi stated information checking with them is done better in person - see 6.14-15.

I can easily connect with someone who is able to help.

6.13 Advocacy is important to both groups so that they don't need to understand a complex system to escalate their concerns. Tamariki and rangatahi want there to be no wrong way to speak up - that they tell one adult, and this person is then responsible for raising their issue through the feedback and complaints process. This links to 5.15-5.24.

6.14 They want to not be infantilised, to be met with on their own terms, at a time and place that is safe and convenient for them and doesn't interrupt their education.

6.15 Tamariki and rangatahi want a person receiving complaints to be physically based in every region so they have the option for face-to-face contact.

6.16 Rangatahi want to have a choice of which kaimahi within the feedback and complaints system deals with their complaint, by being able to review worker biographies.





6.17 Both tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregivers, want to connect with the same kaimahi consistently throughout the feedback and complaints process.



**Stay involved through to resolution
and keep meeting with me in person if
that's what I want.**

I'm treated with care by people managing complaints.

6.18 Both groups shared they want those managing complaints to take time to acknowledge their cultural needs, minimise cultural distance, validate their experience, and increase cultural safety through awareness of self, unconscious bias, and power dynamics.

6.19 Rangatahi want communication to be personalised to their specific circumstances, rather than standard generic responses or automated replies.

6.20 Rangatahi want workers to come to hui prepared, seek guidance from others where needed, and facilitate a healing and restorative process.

6.21 Whānau and caregiver participants want kaimahi, at all levels, supported to be able to work in ways that are mana enhancing, uphold people's rights and are tika and pono with the kaupapa.



**Take our words into account - we don't
just share our hearts with you and then
nothing happens.**

KO NGĀ WHAKATAU

Outcome: Being kept informed and reaching a fair outcome.



Within this theme there were many shared visions on what an outcome needs to look like for both tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregiver groups. Clear and transparent timeframes, good communication and documentation throughout, and methods of accountability once an outcome was found were raised.

I'm included throughout the process.

7.1 Tamariki and rangatahi told us they want to be included throughout the complaints process, so they can contribute their opinion and preferred solutions, verify and update information, and have power to make decisions.

7.2 Rangatahi want to be involved in every step, including the outcome, so they can have closure and move forward in peace.

7.3 Rangatahi want there to be open and transparent dialogue, and checking for understanding, so there are clear expectations and accountability.

I'm kept informed.

7.4 They want to be proactively informed of meeting minutes, decisions, changes, and next steps, verbally via in-person check-ins and phone calls, and in writing via texts and emails.

7.5 Tamariki and rangatahi want a direct dial or messaging option for communicating with the person managing the complaint, and to be kept informed of who else sees their personal information.

7.6 Rangatahi want to be asked how the process is going for them, whether anything needs to change, and be reminded of any additional supports available to them.

7.7 Rangatahi want kaimahi to be honest with them, to not over-promise, and to provide genuine responses.

The process is followed, and timeframes are met.

7.8 As highlighted in point 6.7 both groups shared a desire for an immediate response to confirm their grievance or complaint has been lodged, and to be provided an understanding of the process that will follow such as timeframes for resolution and reasons for the timeframes.

7.9 Rangatahi would like quick fixes or interim measures to be actioned if there are any safety issues raised in their complaint.

7.10 It was important to both tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregivers, that timeframes are transparent, reasonable and are consistently met.

7.11 Rangatahi would like weekly updates through to resolution, and for resolution to occur within a maximum of 60 days.

7.12 If more time is needed, rangatahi stated they should be advised of the new timeframe and the reasons for it as soon as possible, within the original 60-day timeframe.

“If the process is tika, mana will prevail.”





Outcomes are ongoing and the door stays open.

7.13 Rangatahi want to know that the door remains open to re-engage with the complaints and feedback process if the situation changes or deteriorates, and there will be a review after three months to ensure issues have been resolved.

7.14 Rangatahi want to have ready access to support to process what they have gone through, without needing to justify costs, and that all those with care experience be entitled to life-long counselling via Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC).

The outcome is fair and creates resolution.

7.15 Tamariki and rangatahi told us it is important that all involved can move on after a complaint, and they don't want kaimahi to hold it against them or dwell on it.

7.16 As raised earlier, maintaining existing relationships is important to rangatahi and they want the outcome to include careful management and restoration of their relationships with those the complaint is about.

7.17 Tamariki and rangatahi want the approach to resolution to be culturally informed and to honour their wishes wherever possible, not just what the adults believe is in their best interest.

7.18 Tamariki and rangatahi want solutions to be creative, and for outcomes to make things better and ensure their safety and protection.

7.19 Both groups suggest that if the issue can't be resolved straight away, they are offered interim solutions.

7.20 Rangatahi told us they want more compassionate language to be used, rather than 'justified' or 'unjustified'.

7.21 Both groups requested that outcomes are to be provided in writing and for someone to follow up with them that they understand the outcome reached. They want to be informed of outcomes even if a change doesn't directly affect them.

Follow up and accountability.

7.22 Both groups want to know people have done their best to make it right, for mistakes to be owned, and for apologies to be genuine and in person.

7.23 That when a grievance is 'justified' there is clarity on what will be done to change or resolve the situation.

7.24 It is important to tamariki and rangatahi, and whānau and caregivers, that the root causes of issues are learned from, that the system is adjusted accordingly, and that practice improves. Having an agile system and learning culture will prevent reoccurrence of similar complaints.

7.25 It was raised that Oranga Tamariki publicly release data on complaints and outcomes for accountability.

7.26 If tamariki or rangatahi are not satisfied with the outcome, they want to be able to problem-solve, and be given compromises or alternatives and support to process the decision until they do feel satisfied.

7.27 Whānau and caregivers also wanted to be provided information should they not be satisfied with the outcome and wish to take the complaint further.



Need actions, not just words, enforce outcomes, hold people accountable, keep me in the loop.



CONCLUSION

An Opportunity to Restore Mana

It is acknowledged that the specific experiences contained in this report only represent those who took part in this research. However, the views and experiences heard from diverse tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers are consistent with the insights and stories heard from tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers which have been documented over many years. The sixty-one tamariki and rangatahi and thirty-eight whānau and caregivers we spoke to generously shared their hopes and dreams for a better future.

They also shared their experiences, hurts, fears and grief. The views, experiences and solutions represented were generously shared to generate change; to “strengthen the feedback and complaints system so it is indeed ‘fit-for-whānau’” (Minister for Children, 2021, p.5). There is a weight of expectation from all those represented within these pages that their contributions will be clearly seen, felt, and represented within the solutions that are implemented by Oranga Tamariki.

Many of the participants expressed frustration and cynicism as to whether their voices would make a difference, with one caregiver sharing, “What we are talking about today, I was talking about 10-15 years ago”. It is incredibly important to the participants, and the wider care community they represent, that this report is not just added to the ‘too hard’ basket, but it is used to create an environment where mana can and does prevail for all who are impacted. Rangatahi, whānau and caregivers collectively ask decision makers within Oranga Tamariki to take this opportunity to implement substantive and meaningful change that will restore mana to those they serve.

The insights gathered in this report showed that rangatahi, whānau and caregivers want to be treated with care and compassion before, during and after any feedback or complaints process. There is work to be done to ensure tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers have timely access to the right information and resources, and that this information meets the needs of a range of audiences. The insights highlighted that there is limited understanding amongst tamariki and rangatahi about what constitutes a trusted adult, and how that adult is supported and informed to provide the advocacy that care experienced tamariki and rangatahi are entitled to.

The ‘ideal process’ for feedback and complaints was a rich and thorough discussion amongst both groups. Rangatahi, tamariki, whānau and caregivers are asking for a feedback and complaints system that is starkly different from what they have experienced in the past. Participants are seeking a new and transformational approach where feedback provision is normalised, the process is safe, respectful, and fundamentally tamariki and rangatahi centred. Lastly, tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers want a process that seeks fair and restorative solutions, ensures accountability, and provokes ongoing positive system change.

How does a system restore mana?

“
By ensuring everyone within the
system treats us with care and respect,
meets our basic needs and upholds our
rights.”



GLOSSARY

Aotearoa	.....	New Zealand
Te reo o mihi	.....	Acknowledgement
Ka whai rauemi	.....	Having access to the right info and resources
Kai	.....	Food; to eat
Kaimahi	.....	Worker
Kaiwhakamana	.....	Advocate (name of front-line role at VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai)
Karakia	.....	To recite rituals/chants
Kaupapa	.....	Purpose or theme
Ko ngā whakatau	.....	Being kept informed and reaching a fair outcome
Kōrero	.....	Telling, speaking, discussing, findings, history, traditions
Mana	.....	Power, control, rights
Mana Whenua	.....	People with tribal connection to and authority over a place
Manaaki	.....	Caring, kindness, hospitality, reciprocity
Manaakitanga	.....	Feeling cared about by workers and the system
Māori	.....	Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand
Oranga Tamariki	.....	Children’s wellbeing (Statutory care and protection agency)
Ōtākou	.....	Otago region of Aotearoa New Zealand
Poroporoaki	.....	To take leave; farewell
Pou	.....	Pillar

Pōwhiri	.....	Rituals of encounter; welcome
Rangatahi	.....	Young person
Tamariki	.....	Children
Tautoko / Tauawhi	.....	Support/Having support from a trusted adult to reflect and explore options
Tāmaki Makaurau	.....	Auckland region of Aotearoa New Zealand
Tāngata	.....	People
Te Ao Māori	.....	A Māori world approach
Te huarahi ki te mana tangata	.....	Knowing the process will be safe and respectful
Te Moana a Toi	.....	Bay of Plenty region of Aotearoa New Zealand
Te Tai Tokerau	.....	Northland region of Aotearoa New Zealand
Te tiriti o Waitangi	.....	The Treaty of Waitangi
Te Whanganui-a-Tara	.....	Wellington region of Aotearoa New Zealand
Tūhono	.....	Connection (One of five pou for VOYCE)
Waitaha	.....	Canterbury region of Aotearoa New Zealand
Whai pūkenga	.....	Skills development (One of five pou for VOYCE)
Whakamana	.....	Empowerment (One of five pou for VOYCE)
Whakanoa	.....	To bring back to a state of neutrality, inclusive of karakia/kai
Whakarongo mai	.....	Listen to me
Whakatairanga		Amplification (One of five pou for VOYCE)
Whānau		Family group



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APPENDIX A:

The approach

This project was approached using Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI has a growing evidence base as a strengths-based participatory research approach (Bellinger & Elliott, 2011; Reed, 2007). AI is based on the idea that “in every society, organisation, or group, something works” (Reed, 2007, p. 27). It is also important to the VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai community that the way we work reflects our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and is appropriate for Māori, by showing:

- “Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people)
- Kanohi kitea (the seen face, that is present yourself to people face to face)
- Titiro, whakarongo ... korero (look, listen ... speak)
- Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous)
- Kia tupato (be cautious)
- Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the mana of people)
- Kia mahaki (don’t flaunt your knowledge)”

(Tuawahi Smith, 2012, p.124)

Fiona Cram (2010) confirms that AI is compatible with honouring Māori approaches by recognising and building on strengths, valuing relationship and collaboration, giving importance to people’s stories, exploring issues deeply and widely, recognising the collective experience, and encouraging the use of metaphors. The humanistic values and strengths-based lens of AI aligns with the kaupapa of VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai.

The 5-D Model is encouraged as a way to carry out AI: Definition: choose the positive as the focus, Discovery: discover best experiences, Dream: gather ideas and themes to create ideal statements, Design: expand the ideal statement to design the preferred future, Destiny: deliver on creating the preferred future (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012; Reed, 2007).

Tamariki and rangatahi engagements

Tamariki and rangatahi were invited to take part in three-hour workshops, guided by the questions provided in Appendix A. These workshops included a shared approach to grouping ideas into themes, covering four key stages of the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) (CDC, 2006; Potter, Gordon, & Hamer, 2004): Generating ideas - Recording ideas - Discussing ideas - Voting on ideas.

The ideas rangatahi generated were turned into positive statements describing their preferred future, based on their best experiences (Reed, 2007). These statements, along with other findings from each workshop, were written up and shared back with participants for feedback. An ‘ideal experience map’ of what tamariki and rangatahi told us they want was developed. The findings were shared with participants for feedback before being finalised.

Whānau and caregiver engagements

The work with caregivers and whānau was modelled on the approach taken with the tamariki and rangatahi groups. VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai project facilitators worked with trusted community partners to engage caregivers and whānau. Through these relationships caregivers and whānau from around the country were invited to participate in workshops hosted by VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai.

The workshops took a collaborative conversation approach using visual harvesting to capture the ideas. A large visual template was developed and used to capture and collate the ideas. Copies of the visuals were sent to each participant, including a version of the template with all the ideas typed out (see copies in Appendix). Participants were then invited to provide feedback.





APPENDIX B:

What else did we hear?

While the workshops created some space to talk about how people had experienced the current feedback and complaints system, the appreciative inquiry approach meant that the focus and insights centred on people’s preferred experiences. However, the shared experiences of the current system highlighted important barriers, roadblocks, and system gaps, and offer a background to the insights section.

Barriers

- 1.1** A lack of relationship or, more specifically, a trusting relationship with the social worker, was raised by both groups as a barrier to making contact with the social worker or local Oranga Tamariki office directly. Tamariki and rangatahi shared experiences of not having spent enough time with their social worker to have developed a relationship with them where they felt they could raise a worry or concern.
- 1.2** Past experiences were also acknowledged as barriers to utilising this process again. For example, tamariki and rangatahi and whānau and caregivers, from both participant groups, shared experiences where they felt their complaint had not been taken seriously, feelings of being dismissed, or that there was no record provided to them of their contact. Similarly, examples were raised from both groups that when raising a complaint they felt they were not treated compassionately, empathetically or sympathetically.
- 1.3** Cultural responsiveness - Participants also shared that they were not able to speak in their first language and a lack of Pasifika speakers available was noted.
- 1.4** Requirement of individual support was needed by some with lodging feedback with Oranga Tamariki, for example support with putting a complaint in writing, and with ongoing communication on process once a complaint had been lodged.

Roadblocks

- 1.5** Intergenerational experiences - Participants in the whānau and caregiver workshops raised that intergenerational experiences had created mistrust with the system, and thus was a roadblock to contacting Oranga Tamariki directly when they had a concern.
- 1.6** Access - Some tamariki and rangatahi shared they did not have access to a phone, internet, or transport to their Oranga Tamariki site.
- 1.7** Identification of trusted adults - The process for tamariki and rangatahi was reliant on support from a trusted adult and there were times where tamariki and rangatahi were unsure who that was for them.

System Gaps

- 1.8** Awareness of the feedback and complaints process - Tamariki and rangatahi stated they had not been aware or did not have sufficient understanding of the Oranga Tamariki feedback and complaints processes.
- 1.9** Access to the feedback and complaints process - Rangatahi in residential facilities shared that they were not permitted access to a phone, internet or physical access to an Oranga Tamariki site therefore were unable to engage with the feedback and complaints systems currently in place when their concern with Oranga Tamariki lay outside of the residential facility.





APPENDIX C:

Personas

To give a clearer picture of the lived experience of facing barriers, and/or system gaps, the following personas were developed from stories participants shared during the workshop phase of Manaaki Kōrero. This section was originally developed for the Manaaki Kōrero presentation by VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai to Oranga Tamariki. Each persona integrates aspects from 2-3 real stories shared within the workshops and highlights real life experiences.

Hine, age 7, highlights barriers.

Hine was a very quiet, very shy 7-year-old girl that arrived at one of our workshops with her brother. Her brother was 9 years old and very protective of her, and together they live in a family group home that aims to keep siblings together. Hine has been in care for two years and has already had four social workers so far. She’s met her current social worker once, but that was a couple of months ago. Hine might not know exactly everything a social worker does, but she knows her social worker makes a lot of decisions about her life, and she just wishes her social worker would hang out with her.

The adult that Hine trusts the most is her current house parent. Hine can tell her house parent anything, even when things aren’t feeling good. But Hine’s house parent is not familiar with the Oranga Tamariki complaints system and needs support and training to know how to be an advocate or progress a worry about Oranga Tamariki shared by a child in their care.

- Hine needs a system that allows time for a genuine investment in relationships between tamariki and their Oranga Tamariki social worker.
- Hine’s house parent is important to her, and tamariki told us it’s important that their natural supports and preferred trusted adults are able to help them with feedback and complaints.
- Hine’s trusted adult needed to know the process to take when Hine raises a complaint about her care experience.

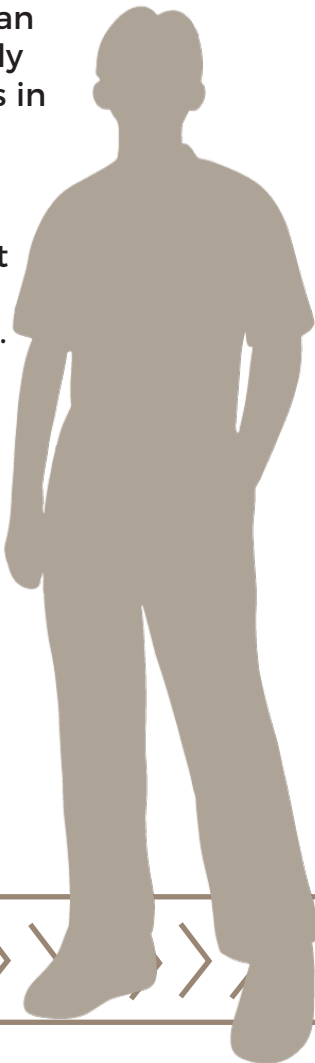


Wiremu, age 14, highlights system gaps.

Wiremu lives in a care and protection residence. Wiremu doesn’t have strong attachments to any adults, struggles with emotional dysregulation due to complex trauma, and has a strong distrust of adults and authority. Wiremu has been in residence three times, but first heard about the grievance process when he was invited to a workshop put on by VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai.

A day later, Wiremu became upset because his Oranga Tamariki social worker hadn’t called him as promised. He felt upset and let down and asked residence staff for a grievance form but was told he couldn’t have a grievance form while he was elevated. He was confined to his room until he calmed down. Wiremu felt calmer the next day, asked for a form, and filled it out the best he could, but didn’t understand some of the words. He handed the completed form to staff to put in the grievance box in the office. The staff read it first and ripped it up and told Wiremu that he couldn’t use the grievance process for Oranga Tamariki social workers. Wiremu then became really distressed and acted out and was placed into a secure wing of the residence.

- Wiremu needed to be told how to raise his needs and concerns to Oranga Tamariki at his first entry to the residence.
- Wiremu needed a feedback and complaints system that ensured universal and private access, i.e. having access to a complaints form with an envelope to seal it in to maintain his privacy and ensure that only authorised persons have access, having a pad of grievance forms in his room so he doesn’t have to ask for the paperwork, having a grievance drop box that is accessible to Wiremu in his unit.
- Wiremu needed a streamlined complaints process, independent oversight, and a robust monitoring mechanism to ensure his worry was seen, independently reviewed and a resolution found.

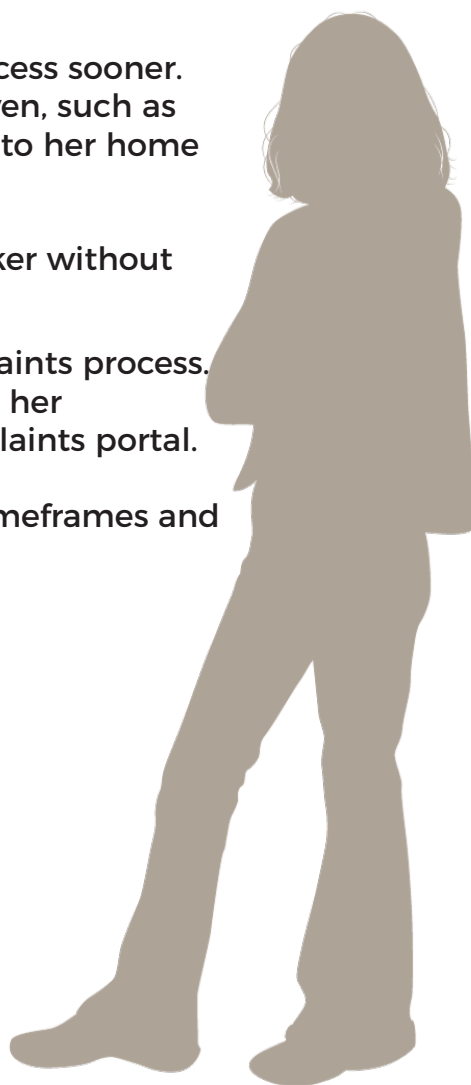


Desiree, age 18, highlights barriers and system gaps.

Desiree, a transgender female, recently transitioned out of care after being in care since she was two weeks old. Desiree experienced abuse from her long-term caregivers and never had the opportunity to speak to her social worker away from caregivers.

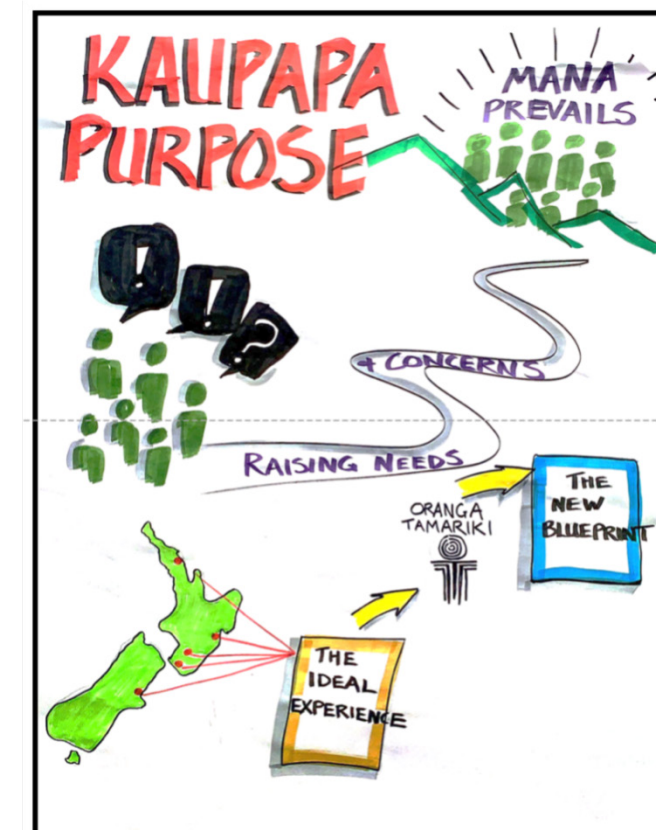
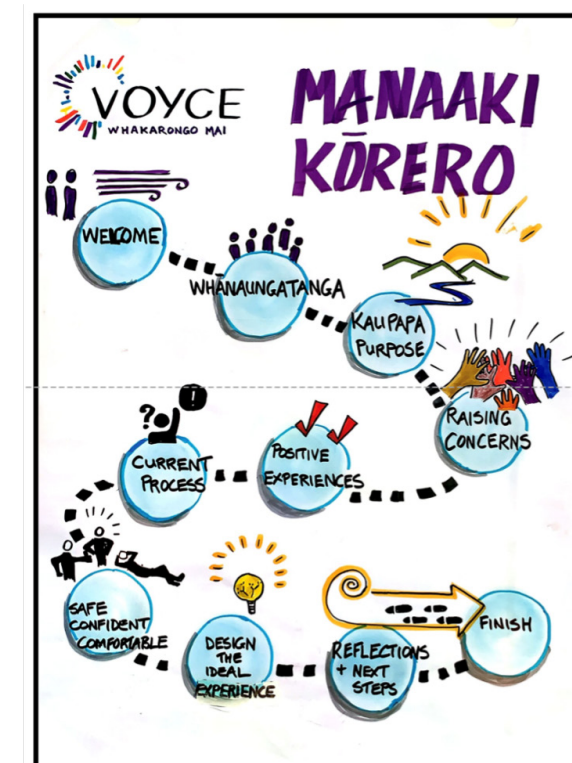
Desiree didn't know about the complaints process until she met VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai about 18 months ago. With the support of VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai, Desiree made a complaint to the local site which wasn't followed up. Desiree then filed a complaint with the complaints team. This was taken more seriously and a kaimahi travelled to interview Desiree in person. The young person enjoyed being able to speak with a person face to face and not over the phone. Things then went quiet for ages. VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai followed up with the complaints team and they said the kaimahi was sick, but there was no formal communication with the young person. There were just huge delays and Desiree was left with no clue as to where things were up to. Desiree thinks it's been handed back to the local site to respond and action. She is waiting to hear about a hui but feels like her life has moved on now and it will just retraumatise her.

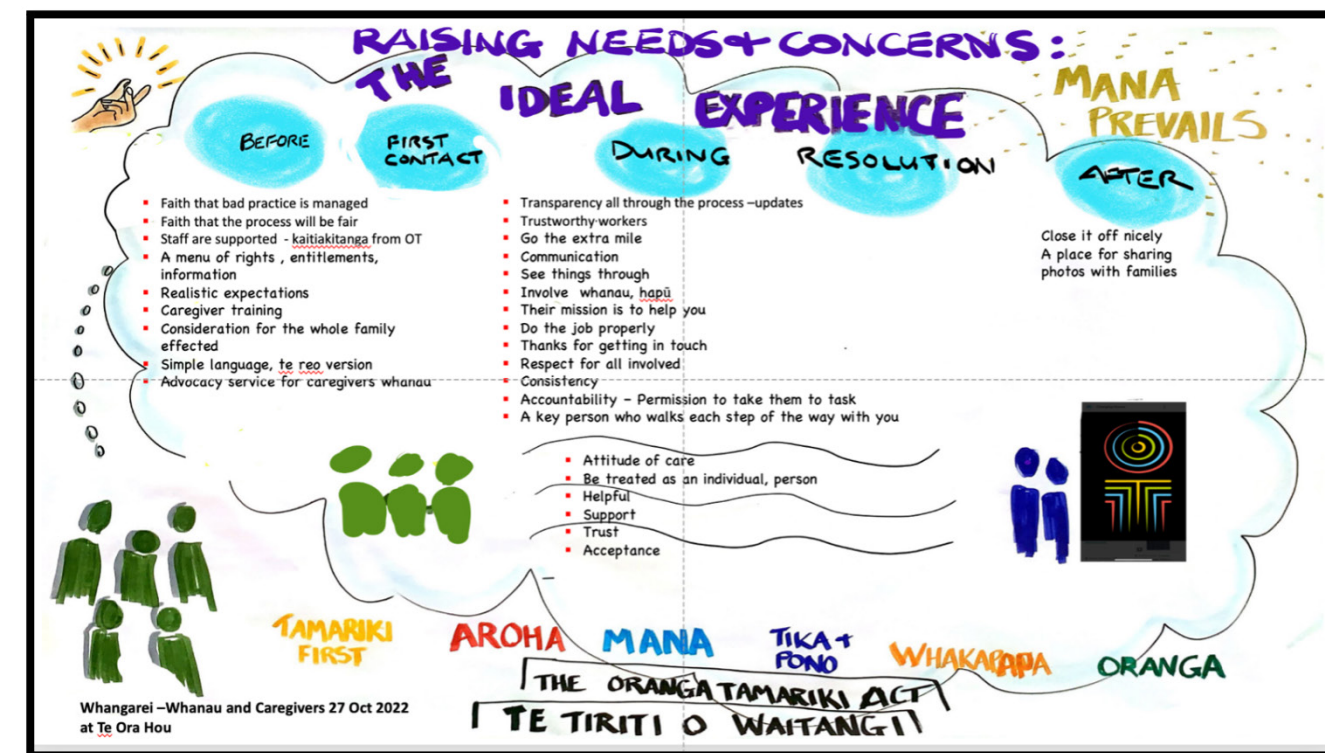
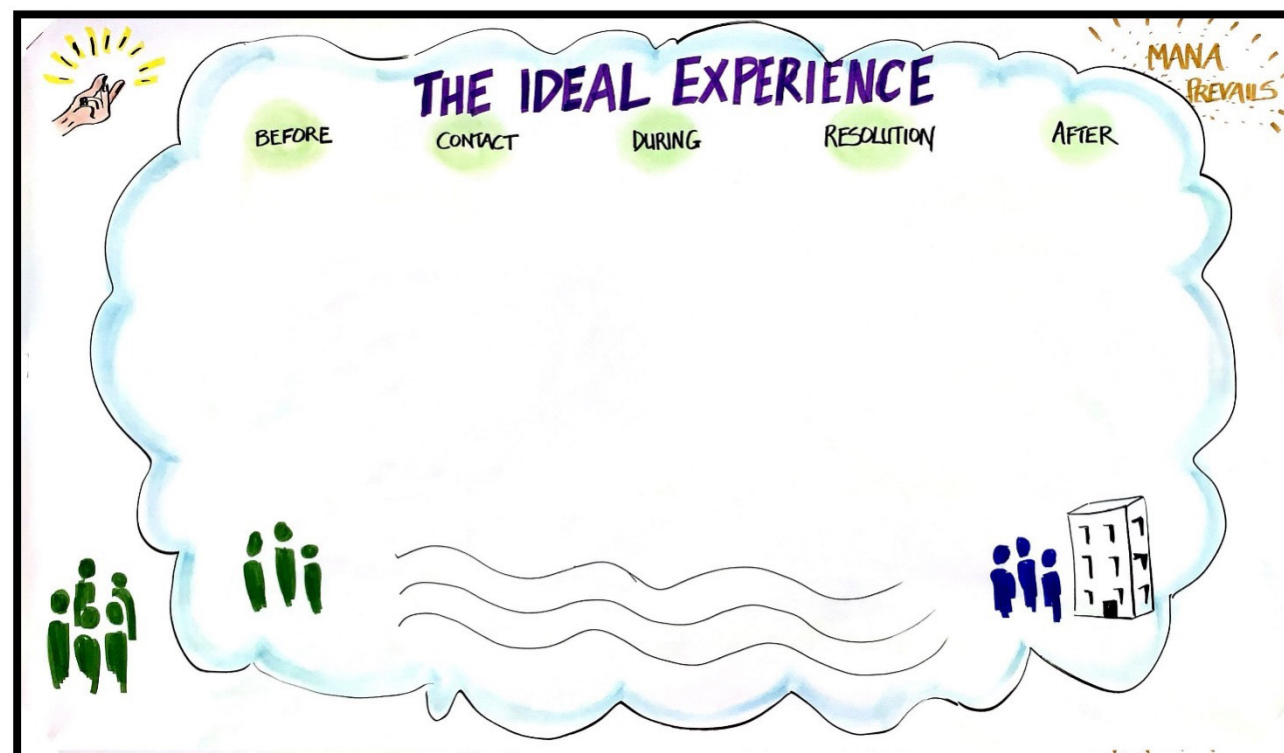
- Desiree needed information about the complaints process sooner. Information and forms could have been proactively given, such as sending information packs about making a complaint to her home periodically, including forms and pre-paid envelopes.
- Desiree needed opportunities to talk to her social worker without her carers present.
- Desiree needed to be kept informed during the complaints process. Desiree would have benefited from being able to track her complaint, possibly through an app or an online complaints portal.
- Desiree needed a system that worked to reasonable timeframes and ensured robust follow up.



APPENDIX D:

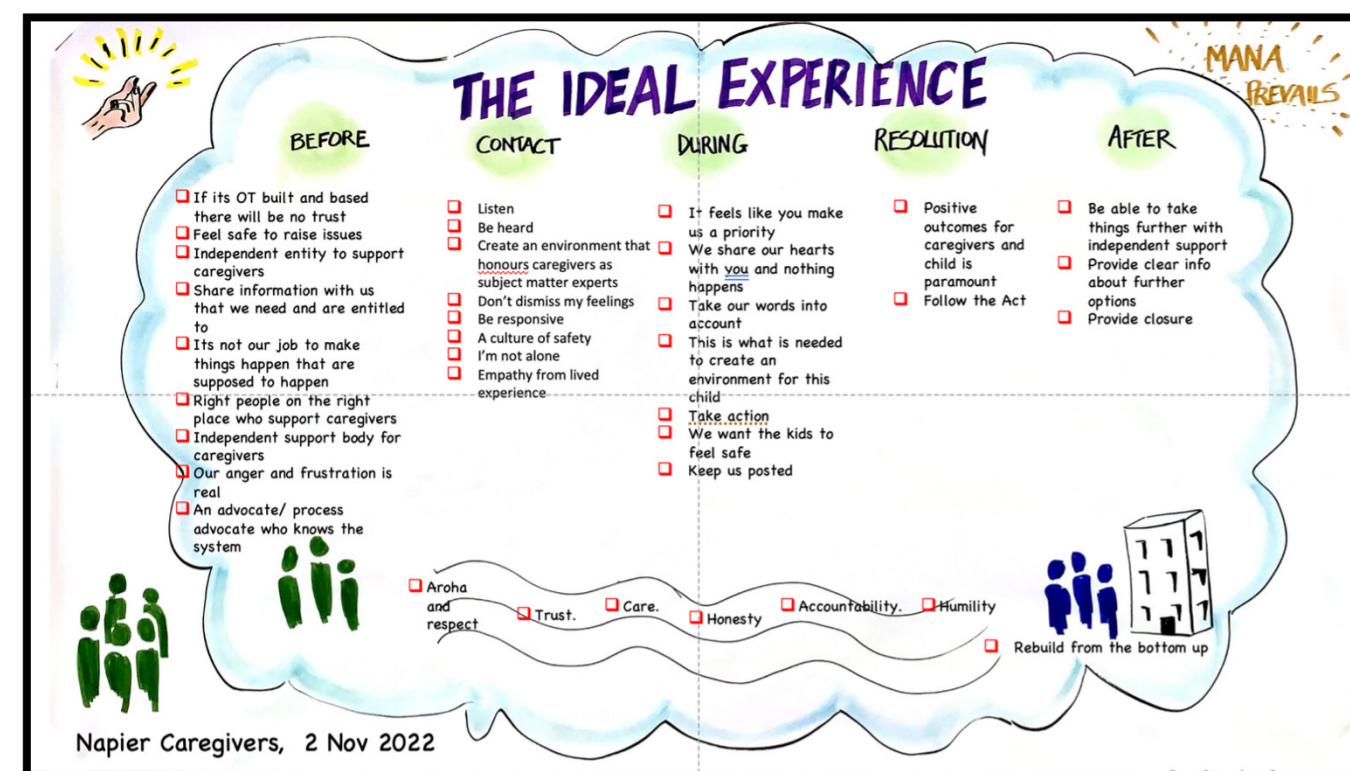
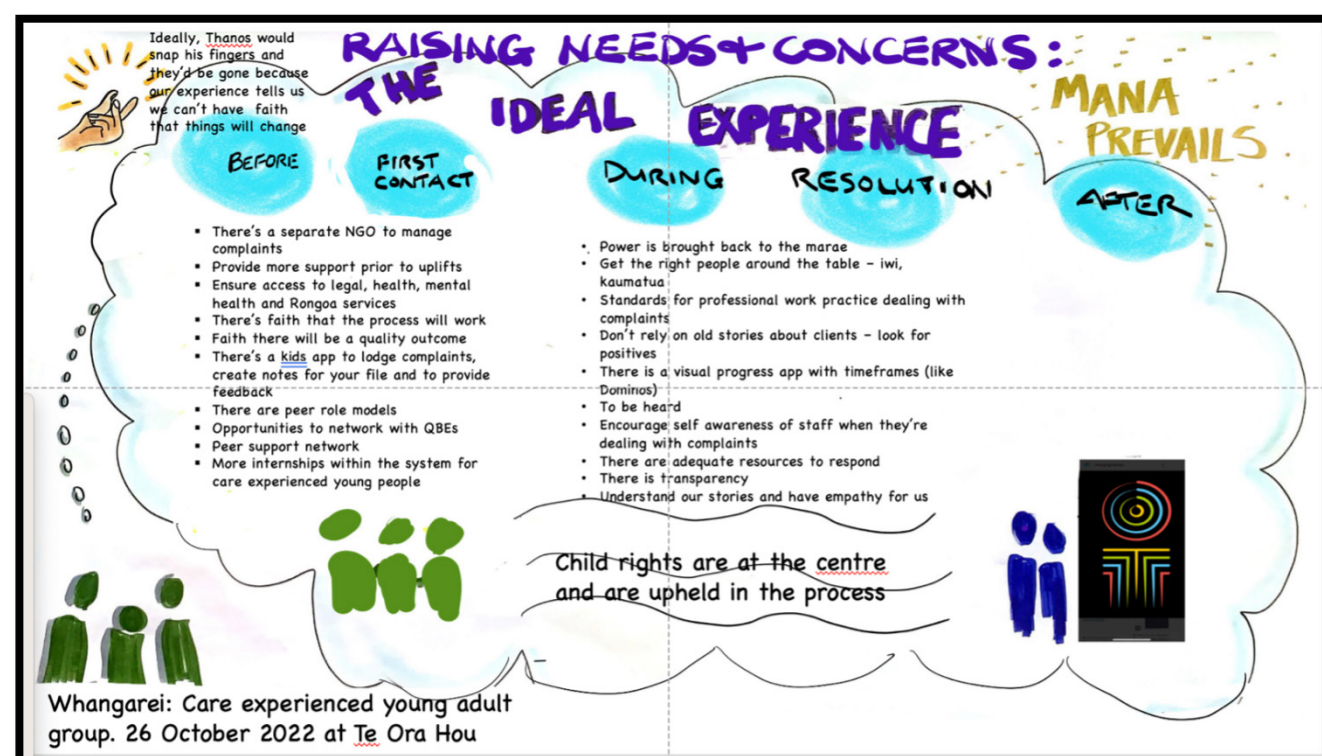
Visuals used in the whānau and caregiver workshop process

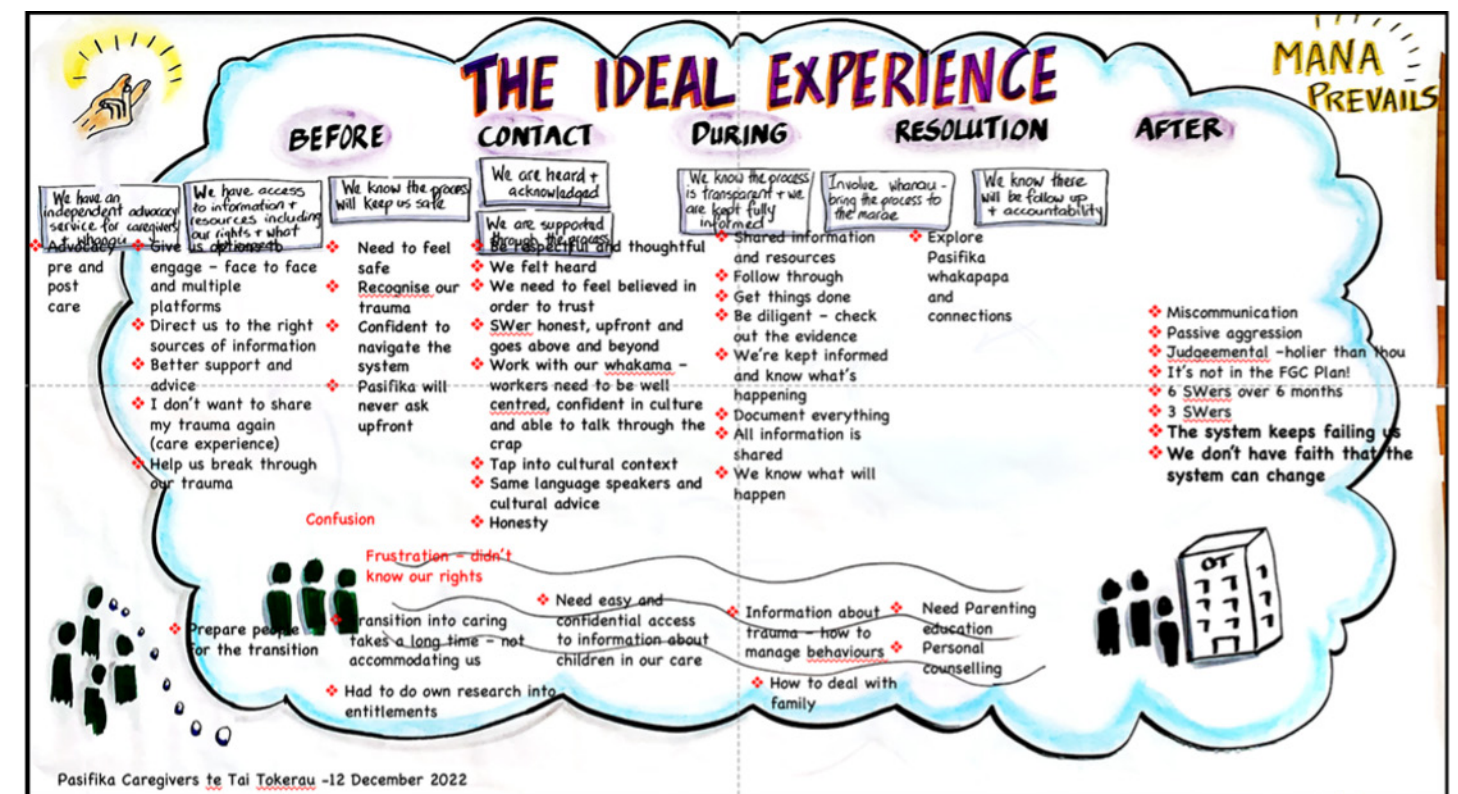
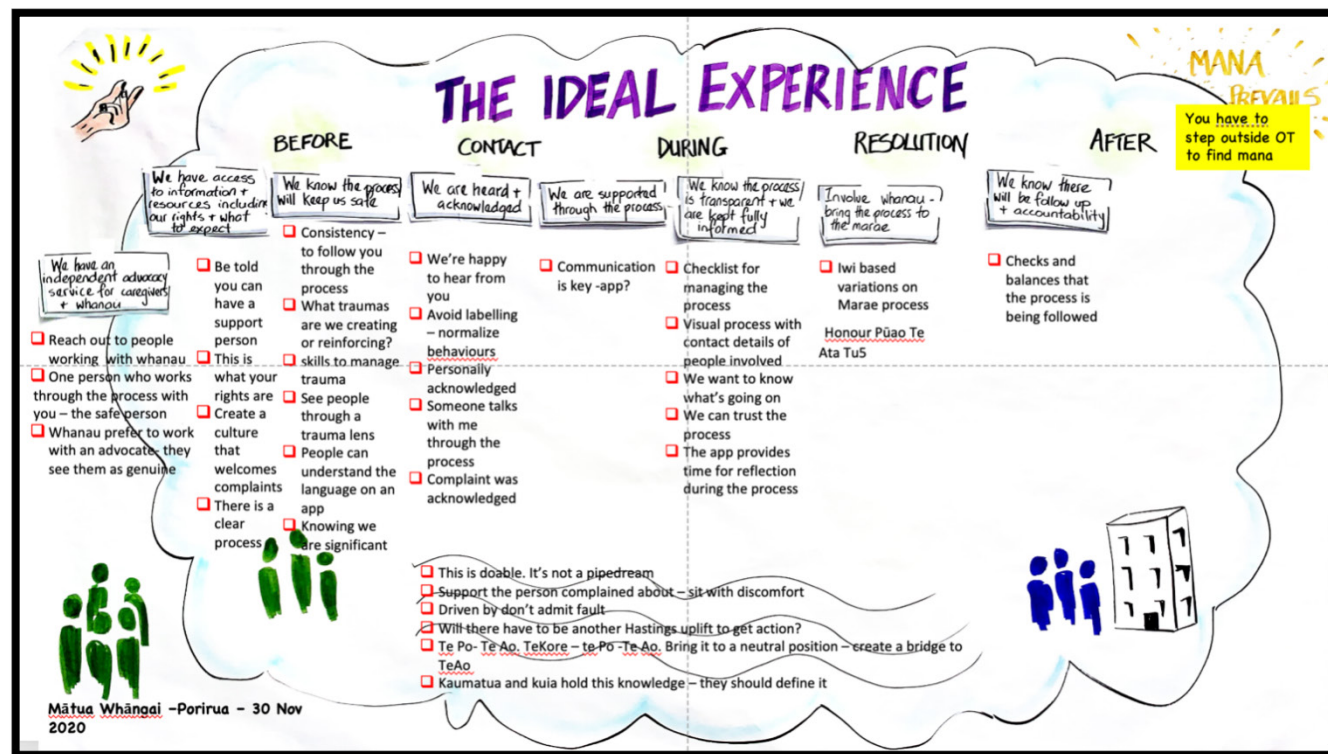
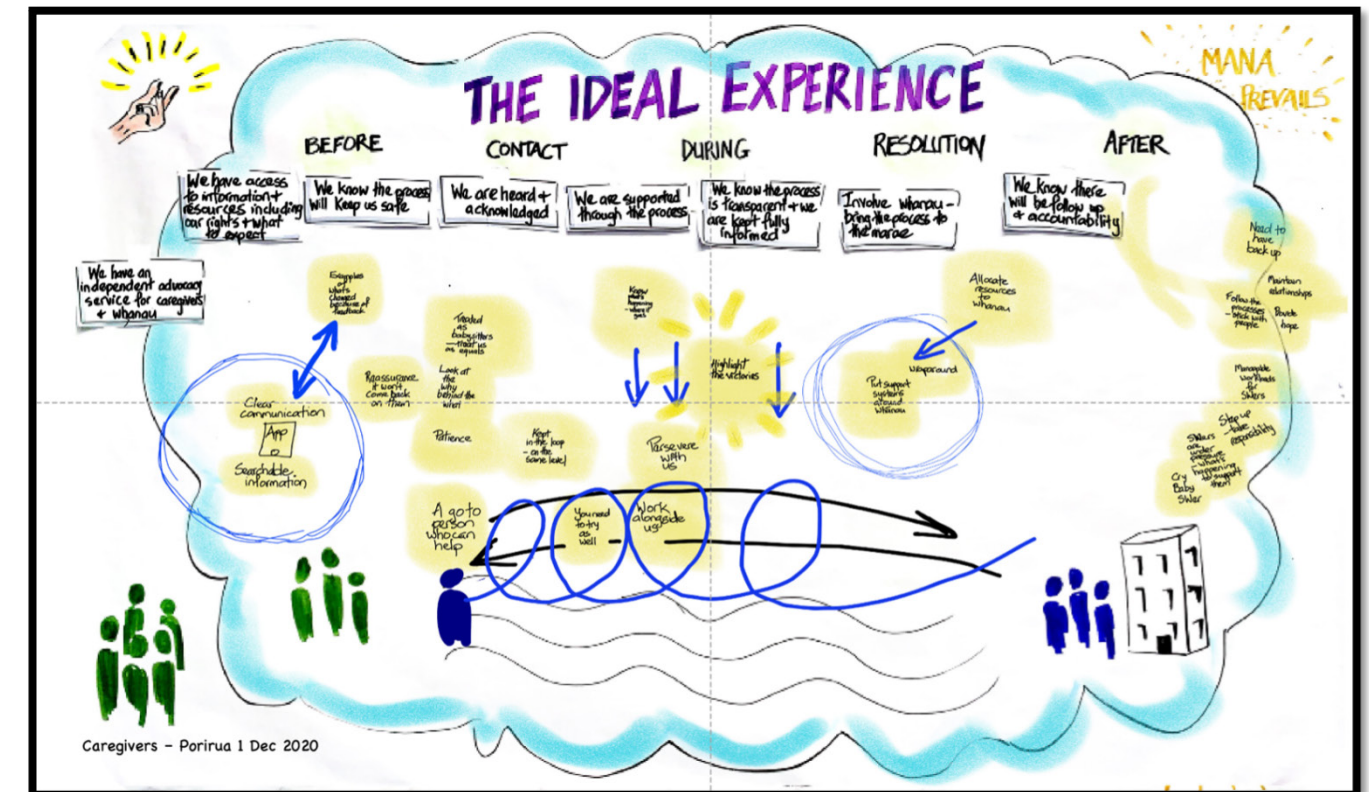
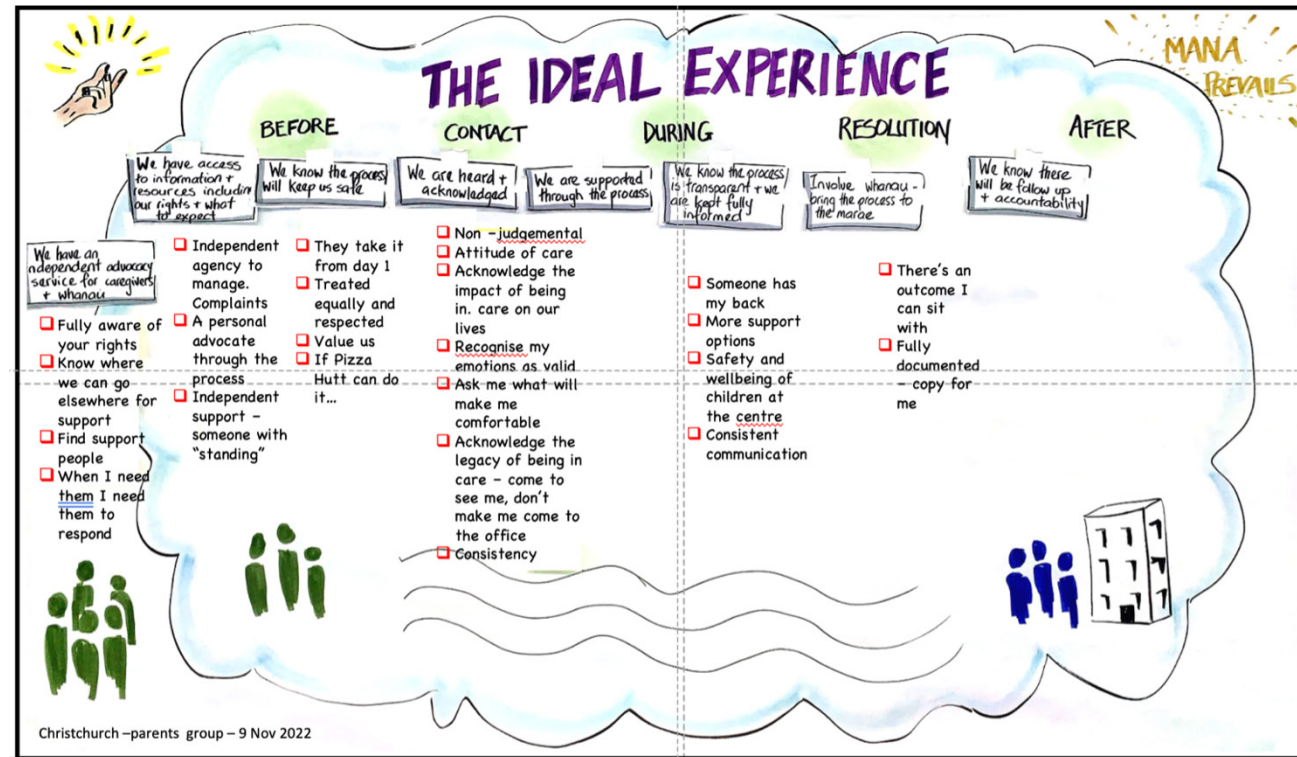




APPENDIX E:

Visual summaries of the Ideal Experience generated by each workshop







APPENDIX F:

Tamariki and rangatahi workshop questions

Define: What we’re focusing on

We defined and discussed what ‘raising your needs and concerns’ looks like:

“Raising your needs and concerns’ is about those times when you have something to say - a concern, a thought, some feedback. This could be because something’s happened that’s not okay, or something you need isn’t happening well. It could be small ideas or suggestions, or really important things about your safety or rights. You can ‘raise your needs or concerns’ by letting people or organisations know what you think, sharing what’s happened, or letting them know what you need.

In Oranga Tamariki, you might ‘raise your concerns’:

- directly with your social worker, residence staff, or their supervisor
- by making a grievance or formal complaint

In other contexts, you might ‘raise your needs or concerns’:

- at school, in your community, with your caregiver, with your lawyer.”

Discover: The best experiences

We asked participants to share their best experiences of raising their needs and concerns:

“Describe a time when you felt safe, comfortable or confident to ‘raise your needs or concerns’ with a person or organisation.

- What happened? How did you feel?
- What did you value most in that situation?
- What made you feel safe and supported?
- How did you know what to do or what would happen?

- What made you feel heard and understood?
- How were your views taken on board or how did they make a difference?
- What made you feel like the situation was resolved?”

Dream: The preferred future

We outlined the current Oranga Tamariki feedback and complaints process, discussed some age-appropriate and context-specific examples, and then asked participants what they think tamariki and rangatahi need from an Oranga Tamariki process:

“If you had three wishes that would help young people to feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise their needs and concerns with Oranga Tamariki, what would they be?

- What supports or resources are needed?
- What needs to change? What should stay the same?
- What specific needs do young people of your age/identity/context have?
- What’s needed so young people feel safe and supported?
- What’s needed so young people know what to do or what will happen?
- What’s needed so young people feel heard and understood?
- What’s needed so young people’s views are taken on board or make a difference?
- What’s needed so young people feel like the situation gets resolved?
- Who should contribute to this future and how?”

Design: The ideal experience

We asked participants to identify the key elements of their ideal experience when raising their needs and concerns with Oranga Tamariki:

“Consider all the conversations you’ve had today - what are the key points, ideas, themes? Write down a key word or phrase to represent each of these themes.”

We asked participants to vote on what they felt were the most important themes and then describe them in more detail:





“Now, imagine an Oranga Tamariki system where young people feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise their needs and concerns, and for each theme:

- Describe what this looks like (present tense positive statement)
- What supports or resources are in place? How are they used? Who is involved?
- How have the specific needs of young people your age/identity/context been met?
- How can you tell that young people feel safe and supported?
- How can you tell that young people know what to do or what will happen?
- How can you tell that young people feel heard and understood?
- How can you tell that young people’s views are taken on board or make a difference?
- How can you tell that young people feel like their situations get resolved?

Destiny: Creating what’s possible

The ideas, themes and descriptions from each workshop were collated into one ideal experience map, and shared back with participants for feedback before being finalised.

APPENDIX G:

- 1 Ko ngā rangatahi takatāpui - Rainbow young people
- 2 Ko ngā tamariki Māori - Māori children
- 3 Ko ngā rangatahi e noho kainga tauwhiro ana - Young people in residence
- 4 Ko ngā taitamāhine - Young women
- 5 Ko ngā taitamāhine Māori - Māori girls

- 6 Ko ngā rangatahi e noho tāone ana - Urban young people
- 7 Ko te kaunihera rangatahi o te motu - National youth council
- 8 Ko te kaunihera rangatahi ā takiwā - Regional youth council
- 9 Ko ngā tama Māori - Māori boys
- 10 Ko tetāhi taitama - One young man
- 11 Ko ngā tama e noho taiwhenua ana - Rural boys
- 12 Ko tetāhi tamāhine - One girl
- 13 Ko ngā tamariki e noho taiwhenua ana - Rural children
- 14 Ko ngā rangatahi whaikaha - Young people with disabilities
- 15 Ko ngā tamatāne kei te pūnaha manatika rangatahi - Boys in youth justice
- 15 Ko ngā tamāhine kei te pūnaha manatika rangatahi - Girls in youth justice



MANAAKI KŌRERO #1 KO NGĀ RANGATAHI TAKATĀPUI

"We feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise our needs and concerns when..."

"... we are heard and acknowledged"

- Foundation of trust, consistency, reliability
- Kaimahi are open, transparent, and listen
- Kaimahi show respect and validate feelings
- Kaimahi don't run the show, allow me to talk
- Kaimahi ask follow up questions to clarify
- Kaimahi are enthusiastic to listen to me
- Kaimahi check we understand throughout
- Kaimahi addressed as a person not a child
- Being addressed as tamariki / rangatahi friendly
- Everything is rainbow friendly language is used
- Inclusive rainbow friendly language by real humans
- We speak to/acknowledged by the right person
- We're connected through to the right person
- Kaimahi ask where and when I want to meet

"... we have access to info and processes"

- We know our rights, entitlements & options
- We're reminded every 6 months how to do it
- Kaimahi explain it for those with disabilities
- Processes and timeframes are clear upfront
- Website has a friendly video and text reader
- Website easy to read, accessible font / text
- Website easy to navigate, dropdown menus
- Website has accessible downloads
- Website has accessible with support ppl
- Phone line for complaints to call line
- We have access to own phone to call line
- We have access to internet capable device
- Info is visually appealing & inclusive (flags)
- Social workers know the process inside out

"... we are supported throughout the process"

- Kaimahi respond transparently re process
- Process inclusive of support people/animals
- Access to/existing relationship with VOYCE
- Support from those with lived experience
- Having an advocate to step in and support
- Being able to speak away from caregiver
- Set up in-person meetings throughout
- We're kept informed of where it is at
- Summarise things verbally with me
- There's check-ins after every conversation
- Follow up with phonecall, email, next steps
- Ask 'how is this going for you?'
- Ask 'is there anything we need to change?'

"... we know there'll be follow up & accountability"

- We have access to plans / notes in writing
- Resources encourage - 'it's ok to complain'
- Kaimahi seek feedback and not defensive
- There's a papertrail follow up at every stage
- Notes are shared by email after every hui
- Timeframes are stuck to throughout process
- Kaimahi come to hui prepared
- Kaimahi seek guidance if they don't know
- Knowing there'll be resolution & I'll be safe
- We receive outcomes in writing
- Ask if we're happy with the outcome
- If not happy, problem solve to make it ok
- Apologise if it's needed

MANAAKI KŌRERO #2 KO NGĀ TAMARIKI MĀORI

"We feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise our needs and concerns when..."

"... we have good relationships with our social workers"

- Have confidence to talk without doubts
- Trust and compassion - give me a hug!
- Explaining things so I understand
- Being understanding of our situations
- Knowing that they'll listen & have my back
- Allowing me to express my feelings
- Care about me & always treat me the same
- Spend time with me so I feel comfortable
- Believe in me, respect me and my privacy
- Showing support, comfort and sympathy
- Someone who isn't overly clingy
- I wish they would hang out with me more
- I know they listen if they help with solutions

"... we know our rights, what to expect, what's not ok"

- I need it explained in a way I understand
- I need the info communicated to me
- I need to know where to look & how to do it
- Kaimahi explain how to make a complaint
- When they tell me, tell me everything
- Social workers need to not get defensive
- I need to know what happened to me
- I need someone to help me process it
- I need to understand what's not ok
- People need to be open so I can be honest
- I want it to go better than I think it will
- I expect changes, I want to expect actions

"... we know the process will keep us safe"

- Knowing you'll keep me safe & protect me
- Don't interrupt my learning at school
- Meet me in a safe place, at home or school
- I don't need to hide who I am or my identity
- Cyber safety of sharing personal info online
- What I say is kept safe - don't be a nark
- I can see face, personality, body language
- I have a connection and bond with kaimahi
- I know they'll care and make it ok
- Follow through with what you say
- Better dealing with one person not heaps
- Being able to prepare what I want to say
- Getting a response, confirm I've been heard

"... we have support to make a complaint"

- Knowing I'll be supported by someone I trust
- One on one support throughout the process
- Support from someone that really cares
- Peer support / those with lived experience
- Support that looks for positives
- Someone who understands my disability
- Access to complaint forms in group homes
- Contact lists for support in group homes
- Posters for what to do in group homes
- I am supported by an advocate, link to rights
- Support people communicate on my behalf
- My support person understands & guides me
- Get support to prepare what I want to say

MANAAKI KŌRERO #3 KO NGĀ RANGATAHI E NOHO KAINGA TAUWHIRO ANA

"We feel safe, comfortable
and confident to raise our
needs and concerns
when..."

"... you're straight up with us
and do what you say you'll do"

- Make sure it happens
- People actually read the grievance or complaint
- Respond to me - don't ignore me
- Give me updates
- Be honest - don't over promise
- Be straight up - don't keep me in the dark
- People listening - this looks like my social worker actually answering my calls
- Keep me informed of decisions or changes
- Do what you say you're going to do

"... we can trust people and
processes to keep us safe"

- Hidden grievance box - so no drama
- Anonymous - might be scared to put name
- Confidential, does everyone need to know?
- Every week or two put form under your door
- Meet in my safe space - chill out space
- Privacy to complete the form
- Don't feel like a snitch or get in trouble
- Someone on your side helping you
- Confidence in the person you tell
- Knowing where the info goes & to who
- Tell a school staff member
- Choice of who to go to & how to raise
- Might not agree but treat me with respect
- Normalise complaints, don't overreact

"... we know how to do it
and have access to forms"

- Need to know how for in & out residence
- OT feedback forms should be available in all residences
- Grievance forms should be available without having to ask for it, & electronically
- Easily available
- Access to form any time (even if 'elevated')
- Option to see someone face to face
- What's Up form but online
- Space to give your number so they can contact you
- Have an App
- Access to internet

"... we're supported and
empowered to sort stuff"

- Don't judge us, educate us
- It's my shit don't judge me
- Give me power to make decisions
- Rangatahi support each other
- Give number for support person to talk to
- People might want to talk about what happened before they make a grievance
- Listen to the young person about options that will help going forward
- Give me choices
- Be ok with me talking to other people
- Give me opportunities to practice asking

MANAAKI KŌRERO #4 KO NGĀ TAITAMĀHINE

"We feel safe, comfortable
and confident to raise our
needs and concerns
when..."

"... we feel heard, respected
& safe to speak up"

- Bad stuff doesn't happen in the first place
- Communication preferences in care plan
- No stigma re making complaints
- Simple process not extra burden to issue
- Caregiver knows who to direct you to
- Personalise standard statements
- Direct dial/ messenger for person allocated
- Ensure safe space away from others
- Person taking complaint independent to OT
- No wrong person / door to complain to
- Only need to tell one person once, then adults take care of admin/system burden
- Use the channels I already see as safe
- No negative consequences for me

"... we have a say in how
things are resolved"

- Knowing what my options are
- Use my words, my timeframes - it's my story
- Give me all the info so I can know what my options are and make an informed decision
- Not being pressured or led to a solution that suits the adults or is 'in your best interests'
- Asked for my opinion, not just told
- Choice of who deals with the complaint
- Person receiving complaint stays involved and invested through to resolution
- Check ins at every step on every detail
- Opportunities to verify, update, and discuss
- Need to feel satisfied with the outcome
- Take responsibility, give proper apology

"... we are kept informed of
process and outcome"

- Clear process, possible outcomes from start
- Keep whānau and trusted adults informed
- 'Informed' is wrong word - rather 'involved'
- No generic emails - give me info / updates
- Inform me of the outcome even if a change doesn't directly affect me
- Having a review after a certain timeframe e.g. after 3 months is it still resolved
- Close the feedback loop - what was the outcome? How have things changed?
- Root cause learned from, practice improves
- Need to not have to dig and chase for info

"... we have our cultural
and relational needs met"

- Be trustworthy, have empathy, be sensitive
- Te ao Māori approach to resolution, pōwhiri, poroporoaki, karakia, whakanoa
- See young person in context, as a whole
- Ensure diversity on the complaints panel
- Use my preferred language
- Have complaints kaimahi based in regions
- Take time to acknowledge cultural needs
- Minimise cultural distance through awareness of self, unconscious bias, power dynamic
- Increase cultural safety through dynamic
- Different options / avenues to meet diverse people's needs and preferences
- Carefully manage relationship with person
- Complaint is about - restore or improve

MANAAKI KŌRERO #5 KO NGĀ TAMĀHINE MĀORI

"We feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise our needs and concerns when..."

"... we have access to the info and resources we need"

- Free youth-friendly app, and TV advert
- Info about common concerns for kids
- Info is easy to read and multiple languages
- All kids in OT get a phone for safety reasons
- Able to call without using credit
- Extension code to contact same kaimahi
- Posters that have all the info in short takes
- Kaimahi dedicated to drop off letter, poster or have 1:1 talk, reminding how to speak up
- Kaimahi are independent of OT
- Kaimahi are in a package for all kids
- Pre-paid envelopes in a package straight away
- If feedback by letter, respond straight away
- Email or letter to acknowledge or update
- Safe drop-in space to raise or follow up

"... we have independent and confidential support"

- 3 or 4 digit confidential phone line (or text)
- Giving name, contact details is optional
- It's important as it means I'll open up more
- Given info pack with phone no. & website
- Call me back to check in and follow up
- Check they've understood, missed anything
- Advertise with posters, billboards, tv ads
- Teachers, school counsellors give out flyers
- Deal with consistent people, so don't repeat
- (like WINZ case manager)
- Could be a stranger, mentor, trusted adult (not therapist, not OT)
- Someone willing to walk alongside me everyday, make sure I'm ok

"... you own mistakes, make it right, & give me closure"

- Everyone makes honest mistakes, so just own it, tell me what went wrong to my face
- Always in person unless we prefer otherwise
- Show me by making time to contact me, call me back and give me closure
- I want to know you tried your best to fix it
- Explain what you did, why, and how it went
- Enforce the outcome, follow up to hold people accountable, keep me in the loop
- Make sure you really genuinely apologise
- Face to face, and make it right
- It's only resolved when we can all move on, don't guilt trip me and don't dwell on it

"... we feel like we matter & are genuinely cared for"

- Always get a follow up call to ask "are you ok?" "how's the complaints process going?"
- I feel accepted for my identity
- I feel like you want me to be happy
- Checking in to see what's been happening
- Encouraging me to have a voice
- When I speak I feel heard, mana-respected
- Calling out other people's behaviours
- Speaking up on my behalf
- Finding that one person you can open up to & tell everything - everyone needs someone
- Having support - known person or stranger
- Getting good advice and really listening
- Respecting boundaries

MANAAKI KŌRERO #6 KO NGĀ RANGATAHI E NOHO TĀONE ANA

"We feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise our needs and concerns when..."

"... we have support from independent trusted adults"

- Every kid in care has a safe person, not OT, e.g. VOYCE, community member, mentor
- Not necessarily a kaimahi, but someone who knows me well and longer-term relationship
- I need natural supports who care about me
- Want to be able to move on from care and still have that someone to lean on
- Knowing from the start that I have more support than OT
- I can contact my safe person by phone
- I have list of other orgs who can support me
- Safe person checks up on me once a month in person regardless what's happening
- Might not need to complain, just be heard

"... continued re: independent trust adults"

- I need a tuakana / mentor who I can trust
- Needs to have trust in order to speak up, so I need to be able to change if no trust
- Do little things - show you care about me
- I need a guidebook so I know my rights in care & that I have access to this person
- OT needs to tell us about my rights
- Mentor lets me know about rights & VOYCE
- Pamphlets in offices about rights with other orgs
- OT recognise and team up with other orgs available to support kids in care, eg VOYCE
- OT and VOYCE work together but separate
- Someone in my corner even if I'm wrong, to hear me out, give advice, help me reflect

"... we have access to the info and resources we need"

- 24/7 access to own phone and free phoneline
- All resources need to be accessible for young, neurodiverse, disabled, languages
- I need to know my rights, and what good quality care & caregiver practice looks like
- Pamphlet/book on rights for every young person entering care with regular refresher
- Different versions suitable for young people at the different significant milestones
- There should be an app or website - should recognise other orgs not OT, e.g. VOYCE
- Online tracking number: live updates, files, casenotes, contacts, timeframes
- Know where info is going, what will happen and who will respond - include kaimahi bio

"... we feel safe to speak up and issues get resolved"

- Safe places to go in person to speak to safe people (not OT) and kai, e.g. school, VOYCE
- No fear of judgment, repercussions, unknown
- No wrong door / wrong way to speak up
- People act on what I've said & things change
- I'll know I made a difference because the situation improves
- Follow through, take it higher, action change
- Increase in volume of feedback and complaints from young people
- Set timeframes to reply & resolve complaint
- Important to own up when you done wrong
- Just want to carry on my future in peace
- Be receptive, open to different opinions, and take my feedback seriously

MANAAKI KŌRERO #7 KO TE KAUNIHERA RANGATAHI O TE MOTU

"We feel safe, comfortable
and confident to raise our
needs and concerns
when..."

"... we have access to info & resources we need"

- Accessible, child-friendly, visuals, clear
- Kaimahi proactively identify when a young person is asking for help, wants to speak up
- Opportunity to speak to someone trusted
- Access to paper forms, sealable envelopes
- Downloadable / printable form on website
- Peel-off pads accessible in family homes, bedrooms, receptions; shouldn't have to ask
- Always able to have things posted for you
- Info available as videos for accessibility
- Able to complete verbally / voice recorded
- Packs mailed out every 6 to 12 months
- App/online portal login to track complaints, make appointments (OT / VOYCE collab)
- I know to access internet at school, libraries

"... outcomes demonstrate accountability & change"

- Trust is built through actions, word of mouth
- Outcomes are actions, not just words
- Public accountability to do the right thing
- Publicly release data: complaints, outcomes
- Resolve straight away wherever it's possible
- Outcome and reason is clearly explained
- Use nicer language than justified / unjustified
- I know who has been involved throughout
- Even if not upheld - support me to process
- Give me alternatives, point in right direction
- Response demonstrates accountability - this is what happened, what we'll do to make it right, & how we'll help you or create change
- Able to say when outcome doesn't cut it
- I have input in every step including outcome

"... we have support from independent trusted adult"

- Able to talk to someone independent and in person first, e.g. VOYCE, support person
- Able to make a complaint through a trained trusted advocate e.g. kaiwhakamana
- Need support person throughout the whole process to help support, advice, encourage
- Someone to build me up, who give me positive affirmations
- I might not have energy/faith to do it alone
- I need existing strong relationships with the people I'm raising my needs with
- Someone to go into battle for me to make sure my entitlements are met
- Someone who consistently pursues outcome

"... we are genuinely cared for & treated with respect"

- Feels resolved because someone cared
- Process feels healing and restorative, not punitive or risky, or about justice or revenge,
- I can see how many people care about me
- I feel listened to, understood, received
- Share my info only for the right reasons
- Outcome is always better with good comms
- Feel seen and heard with grace and dignity,
- Not just treated as part of the system
- Knowing anything I say won't affect their opinion of me - need to trust no judgment
- When it feels so natural to speak up you don't feel vulnerable, doesn't feel so hard
- Social worker is able to spend time with me

MANAAKI KŌRERO #8 KO TE KAUNIHERA RANGATAHI A TAKIWĀ

"We feel safe, comfortable
and confident to raise our
needs and concerns
when..."

"... we have regular open access to independent trusted adults"

- Someone advocacy trained like VOYCE, or train youth/transition workers, teachers
- Able to contact and have regular catch ups even when I don't have issues to raise
- Able to ask to raise issues on my behalf
- Need an external advocate to relay info on my behalf and keep up with the comms
- Support people are better informed about legal info and can assist with lawyers
- Better engagement and access to lawyers
- Have contact details for lawyer and regular (6 monthly) check-ins
- Being able to keep trusted contacts, e.g. teachers, caregivers, with prof boundaries

"... you respond safely and appropriately to issues raised"

- I am able to talk privately, in person or on the phone, away from others
- Caregivers respecting my privacy
- Reasonable timeframes are consistently met e.g. 5 days to respond, 20 days to resolve
- Immediate responses to quick fixes or for safety issues - be open to change
- Ways to raise issues/complain anonymously
- Independent people review complaints
- Meet with me on my terms, familiar place, convenient time, safe space, with support
- Put my safety & comfort first
- Give me info about supports throughout
- Quality & consistency of social work training

"... we have the info and resources we need"

- Need online platform with live chat 24/7
- Use platforms young people use - keep up!
- VOYCE app (browser capable): info about OT, rights, care standards, complaints
- Support people can also use app
- Able to raise it verbally coz of my dyslexia
- Need access to internet, devices, services
- Focus on support for kids who are homeless
- Section in All About Me plan on how to raise needs and concerns
- Get rid of the whole system, build new one
- Social media posts on how to raise issues
- Education campaigns for schools, teachers
- Form for kids with no safe contact details

"... the outcome is meaningful and creates change"

- I'm contacted with an outcome
- I can see change, thing are different
- Outcome includes counselling / trauma person process what's happened to help young
- Get creative with solutions, take a risk!
- Be real with me, don't just say what you're supposed to say like I'm just a case number
- Process and response includes community, e.g. schools, whānau, support people
- Honour my wishes wherever possible
- Outcome must be that I'm in a safer place
- Ideally outcome that both parties want
- If can't resolve straight away, offer interim solutions and provide clear timeframes

MANAAKI KŌRERO #9 KO NGĀ TAMA MĀORI

"We feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise our needs and concerns when..."

"... we have support to speak up when we need to"

- Feeling safe to speak up because we've spent lots of time together and they're kind
- The support person knows the answer
- My social worker needs to visit more
- Going to people I know and trust
- Having family be a part of the process
- Support my family more with their concerns
- Meet with me face to face twice a week
- I want my support person to tell my social worker what I need
- I know where to go because someone says "come to me" when we need help

"... we know what the rules are and how to speak up"

- I know when to speak up because I understand the rules
- If I get told no it feels ok because they're kind and there is a good reason for it
- You just know who to go to and how to contact OT when you have an issue
- I don't go into the OT office so I need to be able to get the form in other ways
- No online forms - make it more fun and easier to read for kids
- You can print the form from the website or have forms in our houses
- I need a phone so I have a way to contact my social worker

"... we're taken seriously and treated with respect"

- Someone writes down my concerns and goes to sort it out
- They tell me what they're going to do
- People who are nice, who try to help, who ask them to stop
- Easy to feel nervous so they need to make you feel safe and comfortable
- Be more supportive and make them listen - get bosses in to make them listen

"... things get better after we speak up"

- I know it's sorted because it hasn't happened since

MANAAKI KŌRERO #10 KO TETĀHI TAITAMA

"I feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise my needs and concerns when..."

"... I have support to speak up when I need to"

- I can talk to someone familiar who I trust
- Someone who believes in me
- Reduce marginalisation and stereotypes
- Who supports the support person? They need holistic support too
- I need support to know I can tackle this
- Support should come from whoever the young person feels comfortable with

"... I have access to the info and resources I need"

- Beginner-friendly resources
- Access to information IS support
- Easy process that feels approachable
- I know it's worth speaking up because of previous experiences
- Need to feel like it's worthwhile
- Someone cares and will listen
- Easy flow chart like the What's Up process
- Streamline the OT and residence complaints processes
- Shouldn't need to understand the system and hierarchy to escalate
- Clear expectations and 'what if's' covered

"... the process is tika and pono"

- If the process is tika, mana will prevail
- Treat us like adults, we are no longer innocent children
- Open dialogue, transparency and accountability, nothing behind closed doors
- Follow through, do what you say you'll do
- Ensure and fair and just system
- Not bullied or forced to escalate in order to feel heard
- Call out behaviour that's not ok without trampling on someone's mana
- Don't sugar coat - be real with us

"... the outcome gets things back on track"

- I know I can go back if I need to - the door is always open
- Interim solutions - options in case anything comes up in the meantime
- If things change or fall over it doesn't take long to get things back on track

MANAAKI KŌRERO #11 KO NGĀ TAMA E NOHO TAIWHENUA ANA

"We feel safe, comfortable
and confident to raise our
needs and concerns
when... "

"... we know we'll be heard,
respected and kept safe"

- Follow through
- When you're on a break, let me know who I can go to and who can make decisions
- I need to know things will change
- Meet with me face to face, listen to me
- I want my social worker to listen to me and understand when I'm frustrated
- Treat people how you want to be treated
- People who really care - not just there for the money
- There needs to be a consistent response - if it doesn't work once I won't use it again
- I want a personalised email response

"... we have access to the
right info and resources"

- I know what I'm entitled to
- I need free data so I can call my social worker
- I wish the house rules didn't change when the caregiver changes
- Have after hours info available for young people in care
- Messenger would be the easiest way to communicate
- There's a space created to have a say in the right forum

"... we have support from
people we can trust"

- I need support from people I can trust
- I need people I can get advice from
- I need to feel confident to speak up
- I need to trust they will pass the info on
- I value knowing I am being heard
- People who treat me good
- People who are always available
- Being able to speak to someone confidentially
- Able to talk to my kaiwhakamana or counsellor - someone I trust

"... outcomes make sense
and make things better"

- Take responsibility
- Things change because I speak up
- They do something about it
- They do what they say they'll do and follow through

MANAAKI KŌRERO #12 KO TETĀHI TAMĀHINE

"I feel safe, comfortable
and confident to raise my
needs and concerns
when... "

"... I have support from
someone I trust"

- They check in with me
- They're trustworthy
- I need to know they'll keep my info safe
- She can tell when something's up coz she knows me
- She's a mentor
- She can help me
- She's always there
- Got to get to know them first
- Trust goes both ways
- I'd need help to fill out the form

"... I am kept informed"

- Need to know what will happen if I speak up
- Need to be informed
- Better in-person, easier to understand
- Keep meeting with me in-person
- I need to know what's going on

"... the outcome makes
things better"

- I need you to change the problem

MANAAKI KŌRERO #13 KO NGĀ TAMARIKI E NOHO TAIWHENUA ANA

"We feel safe, comfortable
and confident to raise our
needs and concerns
when..."

"... we feel cared for by our
social workers and the system"

- Listen to me, without needing to nag
- They answer me, don't ignore me
- Social worker checks on me
- Make sure I'm ok
- Pay attention, don't daydream
- Give me your phone number
- More social workers = better service
- More service from social workers - they get back to you faster

"... we know we'll be heard,
respected and kept safe"

- Make sure I'm in a good and safe place
- Feels good inside
- Don't dis-include me
- I wish I didn't have to be persistent to see change
- I want to know who my complaint is going to - should go to my social worker or someone I know

"... we have support from
someone independent"

- Able to tell them when being bullied
- They told them to stop bullying me
- I trust the person
- Just have a gut feeling about who to go to
- Getting checked on every week in person
- I want to be able to ask for help to make a complaint

"... we have the info and
resources we need"

- All kids in care should have a device - tablet or phone
- When you go into a home you get a pack of forms, pencils and envelopes
- Form needs to be more simple, readable, use pictures

Suggested timeframes

- Original complaint: 3 days
- Acknowledged: 7 days
- Final report: 60 days
- If extension needed: advise before the 60 day mark
- Extension: up to 45 days
- Updates: every 7 days

Alternative to forms

- Have easier options for people with disabilities or who can't read or write
- Let them draw instead of using words
- use a 1 to 10 scale
- use smiley faces

MANAAKI KŌRERO #14 KO NGĀ RANGATAHI WHAIKAHA

"We feel safe, comfortable
and confident to raise our
needs and concerns
when..."

"... our wellbeing is supported
when we speak up"

- Shit is said and done - actually do it
- Someone outside OT supports me, checks in throughout, takes me out for a coffee
- Face to face so you can pick up on my body language
- Having someone I feel safe to communicate to - knowing I have someone to trust
- Check on my mental health, how I'm feeling
- All in care entitled to ACC trauma-informed counselling for as long as needed
- Support group for people who have made complaints
- Give me what I need if I complain - don't hold it against me
- Judgment free
- Send out care packages - acknowledge and respect my holistic wellbeing needs

"... we are heard, empowered,
respected and believed"

- OT workers not questioning things I say - especially allegations
- Being treated like a human being
- Guidance and assistance to go down a healthy life path
- Ability to be independent (as age appropriate for young people)
- Write things down - esp. important things, key info from meetings etc, be more open
- Be trauma / development informed - re expectation of memories, dates, timeframes
- Person dealing with complaint is not biased
- Listen to me, believe me
- Not having a label of OT with me
- Shouldn't have to ask for support - provide me with options
- Give me the support I need - shouldn't have to prove what I've gone thru or justify \$\$\$

"... you respond to us, keep
us updated and informed"

- Don't just take the info and forget about it
- Send updates by text, letter to mailboxes
- Acknowledged specific needs and concerns in reply instead of generic reply
- OT should come to me first with updates - I shouldn't have to ask first
- See someone once a week face to face for updates - not just OT, could be VOYCE
- Inform people of timeframes and WHY? Why will it take 7 days? Then meet timeframes
- Always at least 72 hours notice of changes (e.g. placement) - unless valid reason
- More specific and detailed timeframes for responses; contact details for key liaison
- No automated messages - be genuine, kind
- APP! Keep complaints, updates, info in one place to track; codesign with young people

"... we have access to
supports and resources"

- Doesn't argue with me about right or wrong
- Safe place, not intimidating or confronting
- Wrote a letter together; helped lay it all out
- Give me advice; look wider than I can see
- More accessible forms / handouts available everywhere, e.g. G.P's
- Shouldn't have to ask for form, just grab one
- Whānau involved; advise them of complaint
- Independent, confidential complaints body
- Friendlier, less legal, language for all ages
- Send letters / info about how to complain
- Website information in dyslexic font/audio
- Panel of care experienced adults to review
- Phone shouldn't have a wait time
- Tell us about other organisations who can help, e.g. VOYCE
- Who monitors OT?

MANAAKI KŌRERO #15

KO NGĀ TAMATĀNE KEI TE PŪNAHA MANATIKA RANGATAHI

"We feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise our needs and concerns when... "

"... we trust you to follow process properly & offer me support"

- Process works - they bother to look at it
- They actually put the grievance form
- Someone checks the grievance box
- It's worth bothering to speak up
- Someone independent from OT looks at the grievance first - not just staff look at it and say it's unjustified - that's not fair
- Keep the grievance panel fresh - fresh eyes
- Social worker should explain OT process
- Have list of options to contact on form

"... you communicate with us throughout the whole process so I know where it's at"

- Actually listen to you, easy to talk to them
- Pick up the phone when we call
- Have one person in charge of complaints
- Having their number so you can call directly
- I feel listened to and safe
- I want to be equal to staff, not below them
- Let me know you've got my form
- Let me know within 1 day - 3 days too long

"... you get back to us quickly and actually follow through"

- The stuff your asking for actually happens
- Always try to make things better for you
- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Get back to us reasonably quickly
- Find a way to make it work
- They follow through with what they say
- Actually do something about grievances
- Get back to me on time or even at all
- Having a choice in decisions but without punishment

"... we can easily access pathways and we have support to use them"

- Need people I trust to help with process
- Safe person, keeps me out of trouble
- Always there for me, always got my back
- We need access to the internet in residence
- Know about process before we get here
- Different coloured forms for different things
- Tell us about grievance process more often
- OT feedback forms should be at residence
- Shouldn't have to ask for a form
- Everyone has pad of forms in their room
- We should be able to but in box - not staff
- Need to explain 'advocate' means VOYCE
- Step 2 'the team' - change this to VOYCE

MANAAKI KŌRERO #16

KO NGĀ TAMĀHINE KEI TE PŪNAHA MANATIKA RANGATAHI

"We feel safe, comfortable and confident to raise our needs and concerns when... "

"... we have access to the right info and resources"

- We shouldn't have to ask for the forms
- Should tell me my entitlements and allowances
- OT don't give out all the options so our decisions are limited
- Give us a chance

"... we have support to reflect and explore options"

- VOYCE are our voice
- Playing up shouldn't be the fastest way to sort it
- If people listened we'd use the grievance process

"... we're kept informed and the outcomes make sense"

- Things change - even if it's not what I want find a compromise
- There's an independent jury looking into grievances like in court
- I only grievance dumb stuff because they're more likely to help
- Come back to me when I make a grievance - I'm still waiting after 3 months
- Talk to us asap after we make a grievance
- Staff shouldn't know we're grievancing them - TLO talks to staff but not say who it's from
- If a grievance is justified something should be done - OCC don't do anything with it
- You ask our opinion - do something with it

"... we feel cared about by workers and the system"

- Staff listen and talk to us nicely
- Don't take sides - staff don't just back each other regardless when it's not right
- Let us share things with each other
- They care about our hygiene and wellbeing
- We have enough food, allowance, activities
- They don't label us as criminals
- Don't make us the bad guy in every situation
- They understand us, treat us equally
- Treat us like adults - be firm but fair
- They take more responsibility for their roles and actions
- Not feeling like I have to make a grievance

