



**The  
Policy  
Project**

Responsive today,  
shaping tomorrow

# Demonstration project report

## Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

Demonstrating the impact of community engagement on the development and implementation of the Strategy and related initiatives

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# Executive summary

Citizens increasingly expect to have more influence over decisions that affect them. New and innovative ways to engage with communities and the public are giving people the opportunity to be involved in the policy development process – early and throughout. The development of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy) demonstrates the positive impact of engaging with communities on a strategic policy framework. Children, youth and their families from across New Zealand were asked to contribute their views about what wellbeing means and ‘what makes a good life’.

Innovative and inclusive engagement methods helped shaped the content and structure of the Strategy. Engagement was used to create alignment between the objectives of the Strategy and initiatives that give effect to the vision. The report also demonstrates how ongoing engagement with children, young people and families will be used to continually measure, monitor and test the effectiveness of the Strategy.

Underpinning the strategic vision are approximately 150 actions and initiatives within a Programme of Action that give effect to the objectives of the Strategy. The Policy Project reviewed two of these initiatives at various stages of development (the Youth Voice Project, and the Youth Plan). Both initiatives demonstrate further examples of innovative engagement practice.

The report demonstrates the value of involving children, young people and their families in the development of policy – both at the strategic level and on discrete initiatives. Inclusive engagement approaches are building a richer and more diverse range of voices into policies. In turn, this improves the quality of policy advice, and ultimately the outcomes for our children and families.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Report fulfils commitment to the Open Government Partnership Agreement

This report fulfils one of four milestones under Commitment 5 of the Open Government Partnership 2018–2021 National Action Plan. New Zealand is a signatory to the Open Government Partnership – an international agreement supporting open government, transparency and public participation in policy making. The Policy Project team (based in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet) is responsible for carrying out Commitment 5. The objective of the commitment is that we “will assist the New Zealand public sector to develop a deeper and more consistent understanding of what good engagement with the public means right across the International Association of Public Participation’s Spectrum of Public Participation (IAP2 Spectrum)” – outlined in Figure 1.

This report fulfils that objective by showcasing the high value gained from the engagement that informed and shaped the development of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy at the ‘involve’ level of the IAP2 Spectrum. It also demonstrates how ongoing engagement, especially with youth, continues to influence policy and action planning.

Figure 1: The International Association of Public Participation’s Spectrum of Public Participation<sup>1</sup>

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.iap2.org.au/resources/iap2-published-resources](http://www.iap2.org.au/resources/iap2-published-resources)

## 1.2 Demonstration project showcases engagement at ‘involve’ on the IAP2 Spectrum

Milestone 3 of commitment 5 requires us to report on a policy project that demonstrates a community engagement approach higher on the Spectrum of Public Participation than ‘inform’ or ‘consult’. This report profiles how the public were widely and actively involved in the development of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy). The promise to the public at that level is: “We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision”.

The report also profiles the community engagement associated with individual policy projects under the current Programme of Action – which gives effect to the Strategy. In order to document the impact of the engagement approaches on the Strategy’s development, we met with:

- the Child Wellbeing Unit within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- other agencies involved in leading work in two of the identified areas of focus under the Strategy.

## 1.3 Timeline for demonstration project

- February 2018 – Child Wellbeing & Poverty Reduction Group formed.
- September 2018 – Cabinet agreed a draft outcomes framework.
- October 2018 – April 2019 Engagement begins on a draft outcomes framework and focus areas for action.
- December 2018 – Children’s Act 2014 amended requiring the Government to adopt a strategy, review the strategy every three years, and publish an annual report on progress.
- July 2019 – Strategy and Programme of Action endorsed by Cabinet.
- August 2019 – Strategy and Programme of Action launched.
- August 2020 – First annual monitoring report updating progress on actions.

## 2. Involving communities in developing the Strategy

### 2.1 Strong mandate for broad engagement to develop the Strategy

Extensive community engagement on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy was well-mandated. Improving child wellbeing and reducing child poverty had been signalled as manifesto priorities for the New Zealand Labour Party and were included in the confidence and supply agreement negotiated with New Zealand First in 2017.<sup>2</sup> The Prime Minister took the Child Poverty Reduction portfolio and assumed responsibility for developing a strategy to improve child wellbeing. The Prime Minister jointly led work on the development of the Strategy with the Minister for Children. The Child Wellbeing Unit was formed and based in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to oversee engagement, development, and implementation of the Strategy.

Governance of the development of the Strategy was supported by a reference group of people outside government working in the field of child and youth wellbeing. Public service officials including Deputy Chief Executives and Policy Managers, and the Social Wellbeing Board also provided ongoing support and advice, and tested thinking as the Strategy was developed.<sup>3</sup>

Cabinet agreed to amend the Children's Act 2014 to provide a legislative mandate for the Strategy's development and requirements for broad engagement. Parliament passed the amendments with almost unanimous support.

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<sup>2</sup> [Coalition Agreement New Zealand Labour Party and New Zealand First, 52<sup>nd</sup> Parliament](#)

<sup>3</sup> The Social Wellbeing Board (former Social Investment Board) is a Chief Executives' group to help coordinate efforts by government departments and support delivery of related strategies.

<sup>4</sup> [Kōrero Mātauranga – A series of education conversations to help build the world's best education system for all our children and young people](#)

### 2.2 Developing a draft outcomes framework as a basis for engagement

A pre-engagement process developed the initial draft framework. A large body of research, cultural and international wellbeing models, and existing engagement findings were reviewed. This included the Kōrero Mātauranga<sup>4</sup> – the large scale engagement conducted to 'reimagine education in New Zealand'. A basic A3 setting out a draft strategic framework was produced which included a proposed vision, seven principles, and five outcome areas and 16 focus areas for action.

Some pre-testing of this early A3 draft was conducted with government officials and around 250 children and young people, which helped refine it further. Then in September 2018, Cabinet approved the draft outcomes framework as the basis for the major public engagement process that followed. The engagement was focused on the central question: *What would make New Zealand the best place in the world for children and young people?*

## 2.3 Engagement effort coordinated with support from other agencies

From the start, the Child Wellbeing Unit worked across agencies in partnership to coordinate the engagement effort. This drew in the experience of others working on children and young people's issues and integrated the learnings from relevant and recent engagement across government. It shared the load of engagement and meant a wide range of expertise and perspectives were drawn into the development of the Strategy.

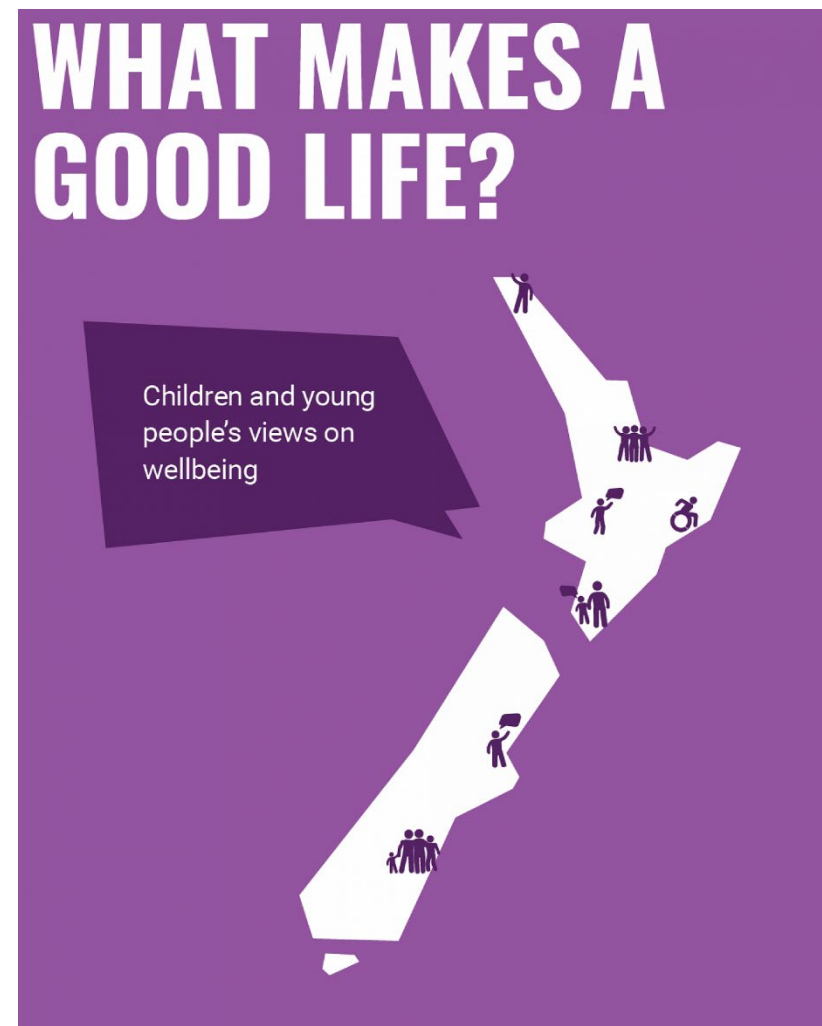
The Office of the Children's Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki formed a project team that led engagement as an input into the Strategy. Over 6,000 children and young people shared their views on what wellbeing means to them: 423 through face-to-face engagement through the focus groups and interviews, and 5,631 children and young people through an online survey. These engagements have been summarised in the report, *What makes a good life? Children and young people's views on wellbeing*.

The Child Wellbeing Unit partnered with Te Puni Kōkiri who hosted a series of regional hui across New Zealand. In total, there were 11 regional hui with approximately 175 attendees. Information from this engagement is set out in the *Māori Engagement Summary Report* document.

The Child Wellbeing Unit also attended the workshops hosted by the Ministry of Health, in partnership with their local district health boards. There were approximately 700 participants across the ten workshops.

The extensive scope of engagement coordinated in partnership with other agencies is detailed in the Appendix.

Figure 2: The *What Makes A Good Life?* report



February 2019

 **ORANGA TAMARIKI**  
Ministry for Children

 **Children's**  
Commissioner



## 2.4 Variety of methods used to capture a diverse range of voices

The Children's Act 2018 required that the Strategy must be shaped by the interests and aspirations of children, young people and their families, and by those who work directly with them. It required consultation with representatives of Māori and with children and young people. A number of engagement methods were used to ensure as many people as possible could have their say about the Strategy in this development window:

- Te Puni Kōkiri sent invitations to the regional hui to a wide range of iwi and Māori organisations, including many non-governmental service providers operating in the children and youth sector and related social sectors. In addition, Te Puni Kōkiri used its local networks to invite interested groups and individuals. Over a quarter (at least 2,500) of the children, young people and adults who provided feedback identified as Māori.
- As well as attending the Health and Māori hui, the Child Wellbeing Unit also engaged face-to-face with a range of other individuals, families and whānau, and population and sector groups. These included children and young people and whānau living in poverty, with a disability, from rural areas, with refugee backgrounds, who identify as LGBTIQ+, who are recent migrants or who have received a mental health diagnosis. Workshops and face to face interviews and focus groups were an opportunity to explore issues in depth, especially with children and young people more likely to be facing challenges and with those who support them.
- The Child and Youth Engagement Toolkit was also designed and developed by the Office of the Children's Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki to help community organisations organise their own focus groups.

- A survey of adults was made available online by the Child Wellbeing Unit and promoted by other government agencies. A paper copy of the survey was also made available to a women's prison and a men's prison. In total, 1,738 people fed back through the adults' survey.
- A written submission process was open to anyone who wanted to provide written feedback, either as an individual or on behalf of their organisation. In total, the Child Wellbeing Unit received submissions from 58 individuals and 153 groups or organisations.
- The 'Postcard to the Prime Minister' was a way for children, young people and adults to express their 'big ideas' directly to the Prime Minister. Over 1,000 people sent the Prime Minister a postcard.

**Figure 3: A postcard received by the Prime Minister as part of the engagement process**

Tēnā koe Pirimia,

Ko te mea kotahi e hiahiaia ana e nga tamariki mokopuna kia whai oranga pai ināianei me ngā wā kei te heke mai ko te...

child & youth wellbeing

Hi! My name is [redacted] and I'm writing to ask you for more and larger houses to keep families together, healthy and safe. I would also like there to be more confidential places youth can go to help and to be open.

To: Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern

Tell us about yourself:

0 - 10 years old

11 - 17 years old

18+ years old

Māori

NZ European / Pākehā

Pacific

Asian

Other: \_\_\_\_\_





## 2.6 Impact of engagement on the shape of the strategy

The engagement with over 10,000 New Zealanders showed there was broad agreement with many aspects of the draft Strategy framework and focus areas.

### 2.6.1 Key themes from engagement

- Children and young people want to be accepted for who they are, they want to be valued and supported, not judged.
- Many children and young people said they faced significant challenges, such as racism, bullying, discrimination, violence and a feeling of continually being let down.
- Many children and young people were concerned about the wellbeing of their family or whānau or their friends. Some talked about hiding their own needs as they didn't want to create more stress for their parents. They saw their own wellbeing as intrinsically linked to that of their support crew.
- Many children and young people talked about the importance of 'the basics', but they also felt a good life was a bit more than that.
- A strong message was that young people needed to have a say not just in what support is provided to them but also in how it's delivered.

Many of the barriers to wellbeing were identified through the engagement process. Poverty, financial hardship and the high cost of living were the most common themes that adults identified as key barriers.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.6.2 Changes made to the framework following engagement

The engagement process shaped many aspects of the final Strategy and document, and the Current Programme of Action. It also broadened the scope of the Strategy by increasing the age of those covered from 18 years to 24 years old. In addition, engagement led to:

- a revision of the principles, including giving greater emphasis to the importance of the Treaty and of whānau – and in particular to the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori
- updating language in the outcomes framework to incorporate Māori concepts that weren't previously explicit (such as manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga)
- separating the 'belong, contribute and are valued' domain into two high-level outcome statements: 'Children and young people are accepted, respected and empowered' and 'Children and young people are connected and contributing', with the latter providing a clearer focus on children and young people having connection and an identity beyond themselves and their immediate family, including to their culture
- reference to family and whānau being included in the principles to acknowledge that children's wellbeing is strongly influenced by the wellbeing of the family.

There was also feedback that the proposed outcomes framework needed better to support the recognition of spiritual wellbeing, faith and aspects of cultural identity as an important part of many cultural groups' wellbeing. Two additional principles were added, including one focused on holistic and spiritual wellbeing.

For an overview of the final framework and principles, see Figure 5 on the next page. You can also link to the Strategy and the current Programme of Action on a page on the [Child and Youth Wellbeing](#) website.

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<sup>5</sup> Have Your Say: Summary Report – National Engagement on Tamariki Tū, Tamariki Ora New Zealand's First Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, page 18

Figure 5: Overview of the framework of the Strategy and its principles

**Our Vision:** New Zealand is the best place in the world for children and young people

CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE...



... are LOVED, SAFE and NURTURED



... have WHAT they NEED



... are HAPPY and HEALTHY



... are LEARNING and DEVELOPING



... are ACCEPTED, RESPECTED and CONNECTED



... are INVOLVED and EMPOWERED

**Essence:** Whakatōngia te kākano aroha i roto i ā tātou taitamariki kia puāwai i roto i tō rātou tupuranga aranui oranga.

“Plant the seed of love in our children and they will blossom, grow and journey towards the greatest pathway of life.”

The following principles reflect the values New Zealanders have said are important. They guide the development and implementation of the Strategy.

1. Children and young people are taonga.
2. Māori are tangata whenua and the Māori-Crown relationship is foundational.
3. Children and young people’s rights need to be respected and upheld.
4. All children and young people deserve to live a good life.
5. Wellbeing needs holistic and comprehensive approaches.
6. Children and young people’s wellbeing is interwoven with family and whānau wellbeing.
7. Change requires action by all of us.
8. Actions must deliver better life outcomes.
9. Early support is needed.

## 2.7 The Current Programme of Action helps to implement the Strategy

Engagement on the draft framework including the original focus areas for action supported the development of a Current Programme of Action. The Programme of Action helps to drive government policy, activities and effort in a coordinated and holistic way.

The initial Programme brought together more than 75 actions and 49 supporting actions, led by 20 government agencies. These actions were backed by around \$3.5 billion in funding to improve child wellbeing in Budget 2019. The number of actions has now grown to approximately 150, and it's intended that government will deliver on and add to these actions over the next five years. The Programme of Action is being updated as original actions are completed and new actions are introduced.

Figure 6: Current programme of action



**Child and Youth  
Wellbeing**

CURRENT PROGRAMME  
OF ACTION

# 3. Ongoing engagement to implement and monitor the Strategy

## 3.1 Engagement to monitor and measure the impact of the Strategy

The Strategy outlines how progress will be measured and reported on using indicators under each outcome. This allows for progress against the outcomes to be monitored over time, and will help demonstrate improvements or where more work might be needed – see the indicators for the outcome ‘Children and young people are involved and empowered’ in Table 1 on the right.

Legislation requires the Minister responsible for the Strategy to produce an annual report to Parliament updating on the outcomes of the Strategy. The Child Wellbeing Unit also produces a monitoring report each year to update ministers on agencies’ progress towards aligning their activities to the outcomes in the Strategy. Each agency is also asked to provide an update for each action they lead and to signal any new actions that might be suitable for inclusion in the Programme of Action. The first monitoring report for the year ending 30 June 2020 was released in September 2020.

The Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018 requires the Government to set intermediate and long-term measures related to reducing child poverty, against which it must report annually. At the initiatives level, the Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey – *whataboutme?* – is an action under the Strategy’s Programme of Action. This will provide government agencies with better information about young people and will help measure progress as part of the Strategy.

**Table 1: Indicators for the outcome ‘Children and young people are involved and empowered’**

Indicator	What the indicator means
Involvement in community	Percentage of young people who report helping others in the neighbourhood or community (e.g. help out on the marae or at church, or belong to a volunteer organisation). <i>Source: The Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey – whataboutme?</i>
Representation of young people’s voices	Percentage of young people enrolled and voting in the New Zealand general election. <i>Source: Derived from administrative data</i>
Making positive choices	Percentage of young people who are hazardous drinkers. <i>Source: NZ Health Survey</i>
Criminal offending	Offending rates per 10,000 young people. <i>Source: Derived from administrative data</i>

## 3.2 Engagement to grow collective action for child and youth wellbeing

The Strategy provides a framework to align the work of government and others, acknowledging that the Government is just one player, and that collectively everyone plays a role in the lives of children and young people.

The Child Wellbeing Unit is a small team, so its engagement is primarily focussed on aligning policy and governance, although the team has also presented at events in New Zealand and internationally.

The Child Wellbeing Unit has also led the development of guidance with local government and key non-governmental stakeholders in the social sector, philanthropic groups and academics. The Unit has also engaged with:

- Inspiring Communities, to develop a set of practical guides to support child-focussed, community-led efforts that work towards achieving the outcome goals outlined in the Strategy
- the Office of the Children’s Commissioner to develop a policy guide to help agencies and organisations realise the holistic intent of the Strategy
- the Society of Local Government Managers to develop an online platform for local government, which features resources, guidelines and best practice to support child and youth wellbeing.

The model to show different levels of social influences around a child (Figure 7 on the following page) is adapted from Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory. It demonstrates the levels of influence on the wellbeing of children and young people and how important it is to build ongoing engagement at a variety of levels.

Social sector agencies play key roles in driving change within their sectors, to ensure engagement is purposeful, relevant and targeted to their stakeholders. This will involve continuing to raise awareness of children and young people’s interests and needs, helping shift practice models, and supporting locally driven solutions to improve child and youth wellbeing. The Child Wellbeing Unit’s role is to nudge and support these efforts, to ensure they reflect and align with the Strategy framework.







## 4. Case studies: Engagement on actions under the Strategy

### 4.1 Two initiatives demonstrating engagement that involves young people in policy development

There are several examples of ongoing work under the umbrella of the Programme of Action to implement the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy that demonstrate engagement at the 'involve' or 'collaborate' level. We followed two policy initiatives in the Programme of Action:

- The Youth Voice Project – The Hive
- The Youth Plan.

The Youth Voice Project and the Youth Plan both aim to increase opportunities for young people to influence policy development. These two actions fall most directly under the outcome 'Children and young people are involved and empowered'.

These initiatives are particularly relevant as case studies for this report as they both involved building diverse voice into policy making.

### 4.2 Case Study 1: The Youth Voice Project – The Hive

#### 4.2.1 Alignment of the initiative to the Strategy outcome

The Youth Voice Project is an action to support outcome six of the Strategy – 'Children and young people are involved and empowered'. One of three descriptors of that outcome is to 'Increase Child and Youth Voice and Participation' – see Figure 8 below that describes the Youth Voice Project under that descriptor. The engagement on the Strategy emphasised that children and young people want to be heard and considered in decisions that impact on their lives.<sup>6</sup> Incorporating youth voice into the policy process results in more positive outcomes for rangatahi over the longer term.

**Figure 8: The Youth Voice Project**

**The Youth Voice Project**

This project explores ways to build meaningful, two-way communication channels between young people and government. It looks at innovative ways to connect young people into government policy decisions and outcomes.

Lead agency: **Ministry for Youth Development**

Timeframe: **From 2019**

<sup>6</sup> Have Your Say: Summary Report – National Engagement on Tamariki Tū, Tamariki Ora New Zealand's First Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, page 9

## 4.2.2 Origins of The Hive

In 2018, a team from the Ministry of Youth Development and the Ministry of Social Development entered a project into Lightning Lab GovTech, to increase young people's participation in policy development process. The project aimed to do this by building a relationship of trust and two-way communication between young people and government agencies.

Rangatahi can find traditional methods of engagement to be inaccessible, such as long consultation documents (often containing jargon), workshops during school hours, and not engaging with rangatahi on their terms. It can be challenging for rangatahi to know how to engage with government, and for policy teams to reach broad and diverse groups of rangatahi.

Following GovTech, the Department of Internal Affairs Innovation Fund provided funding support to continue the project. The team partnered with Curative, a creative agency that works exclusively on projects that focus on social change. The Ministry of Youth Development and Curative worked together to take forward the project with a youth-centric approach. To do this, rangatahi from across Aotearoa New Zealand were invited to apply to be part of The Hive, a group that would co-design the direction for the project. Potential 'Hivers' submitted a YouTube video that described the change they would most like to see in the world. 69 applications were received, and from these, 15 were chosen as a diverse representation of confident, creative and 'socially aware' rangatahi who are connected to youth in their communities.

## 4.2.3 Engagement with 'Hivers' to co-design initiative

A collaboration between the Ministry of Youth Development, Curative and rangatahi was formed to identify solutions to the issue:

“How might we enable a two-way communication platform between young people and policy makers?”

To solve this, the 15 rangatahi (Hivers) were invited to a weekend-long co-design hui. After being presented with the issue, rangatahi designed:

- a new submissions process with four options for submitting (free text, answering four questions, playing a game or submitting a video)
- a webpage with videos, text and a 'policy for dummies' section describing the policy and implications
- social media to drive young people to the page.

Valuing the experience, unique skills and knowledge of our rangatahi is central to the kaupapa of The Hive. The collaborative design process was youth-led, with adults only providing support as needed or requested. The hui resulted in the creation of a new approach for engaging with rangatahi to get them involved and heard: the innovative online platform, The Hive, which facilitates young people's contribution to policy-making and guides them through the submission process using accessible language and terms.

## 4.2.4 Using The Hive to engage with young people on the Biodiversity Strategy

In August 2019, The Hive website was launched, with a call for submissions on Aotearoa New Zealand's Biodiversity Strategy, led by the Department of Conservation. During the engagement, each Hiver could contribute in a way that worked for them and their community. Hivers were tasked with giving school speeches, Instagram takeovers, collecting paper submissions, sharing the link through their networks, and creating new content.

The Department of Conservation received 281 submissions from rangatahi through The Hive, with 84% reporting they'd never submitted to government before. This demonstrates there are many rangatahi willing to share their opinions with government if the content is accessible and relevant. Figure 9 on the following page summarises the feedback given by young people on the Biodiversity Strategy through The Hive.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 'The Results are In' – post on thehive.nz [www.thehive.nz/community-updates/the-results-are-in](http://www.thehive.nz/community-updates/the-results-are-in)

In its work on the Biodiversity Strategy, The Hive demonstrated it can enable rangatahi to engage on their terms on topics that matter to them. The Hive acted as a gateway to more intensive forms of engagement with agencies. The Hive also goes one step further, relaying information and data back to youth.

By closing the feedback loop, rangatahi know their voice has been heard, they feel empowered, and they're encouraged to participate in future engagement opportunities. The Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy *Te Mana o Te Taiao* now better reflects what's important to young people, which is particularly important given its impact on future generations.

**Figure 9: Themes of feedback from youth on the Biodiversity Strategy through The Hive<sup>8</sup>**



<sup>8</sup> [www.thehive.nz/community-updates/the-results-are-in](http://www.thehive.nz/community-updates/the-results-are-in)

#### 4.2.5 Next steps for use of The Hive

The pilot was evaluated based on the learnings from working with the Department for Conservation on the Biodiversity Strategy. An independent review of the pilot was commissioned to better understand what worked well and what could be improved:

- Creating accessible content made by young people for young people increases the likelihood of getting a wide range of responses. Young people could see themselves reflected in the website and felt comfortable sharing their opinions. The ‘take home’ is to co-design with the audience you want to engage with.
- It will always be critical to have both online and offline components to any engagement approach. This can be particularly effective where members of the community you want to engage with are involved throughout.
- Communication is key – build relationships and trust. The strong relationships built with the Hivers were vital to the success of The Hive. The heart of the kaupapa was creating a youth-led space that recognises and values the expertise of young people.
- Closing the feedback loop is critical. Rangatahi have expressed how seeing their ideas and thoughts result in tangible outcomes ensures their continued interest. For any engagement to be successful, it’s essential the feedback loop is closed. To build trust and encourage people to stay involved, this process should be transparent.

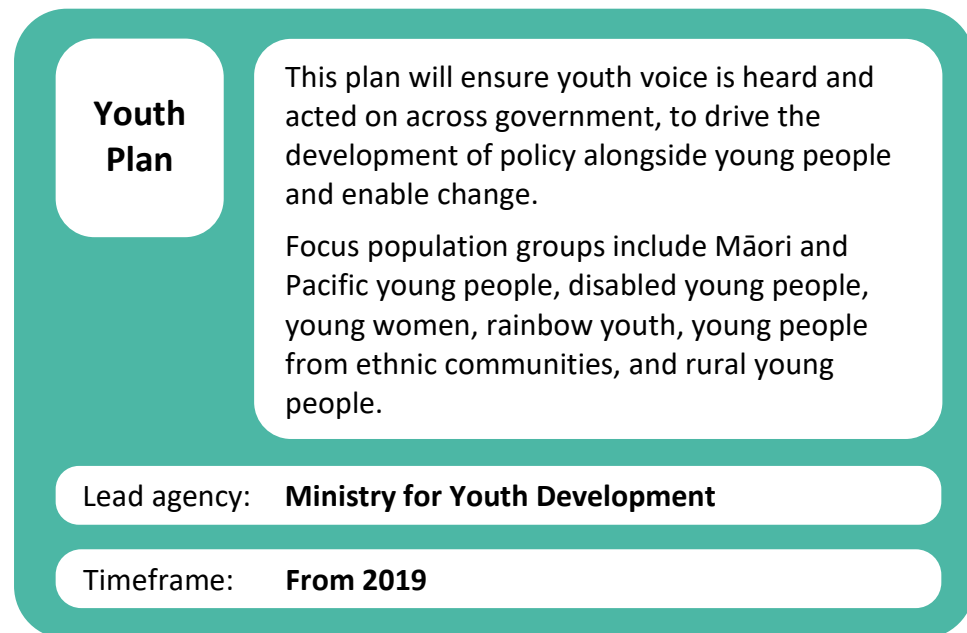
As a result of the review, the Ministry of Youth Development has funded Curative to establish a steering group for The Hive and develop a sustainable working model. Each year a new group of ‘Hivers’ will be selected to determine policies The Hive will engage on, develop the consultation approach, and engage other young people in the development of policy. A project with the Climate Change Commission is already in train.

## 4.3 Case Study: The Youth Plan

### 4.3.1 Alignment of the initiative to the Strategy outcome

The Youth Plan is an initiative under outcome six of the Strategy – children and young people are involved and empowered – and aims to increase representation of children and youth voice.<sup>9</sup> See Figure 10, which describes the Youth Plan initiative. A common theme from the engagement was that government agencies needed to unite to effect real change. People said they hoped the Strategy would break down silos and join up government agencies.<sup>10</sup> The Youth Plan and an associated Interagency Working Group made up of 20 government agencies aims to fulfil that strategic objective and realise the outcome to increase youth participation in policy making.<sup>11</sup>

Figure 10: The Youth Plan



### 4.3.2 What the Youth Plan encompasses

Approximately 17% of New Zealand’s population is aged between 12 and 24 years. The original vision for the Youth Plan was to hear, capture and act on youth voice to improve the wellbeing of rangatahi. It’s also a mechanism for driving the Child and Youth Wellbeing outcomes for young people. As is the case for much of government’s work, COVID-19 changed things for the Youth Plan. While the focus areas remain the same, the narrative and actions were reframed to respond to the new challenges that the global pandemic presented for young people. The Youth Plan now sets out actions that government will take in partnership with others to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 for rangatahi.

The Youth Plan aims to:

- ensure young people have a say in decisions about recovery
- support the wellbeing of young people and their families and whānau
- enable rangatahi leadership
- drive transformative change.

The Interagency Working Group is used to ensure that insights from engagement with young people can be shared and used more widely across government. This group developed the actions under the Youth Plan and aims to increase collaboration and information sharing between agencies. Through this group, the Ministry of Youth Development is seeing an increase in information sharing across agencies, an increase in collaboration, and a decrease in duplication of effort.

<sup>9</sup> [Youth Plan 2020-2022: Turning Voice into Action – Rebuilding and Recovering](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Have You Say: Summary Report – National Engagement on Tamariki Tū, Tamariki Ora New Zealand’s First Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy](#), page 9

<sup>11</sup> Reference to agencies involved in the Interagency Group can be found in the [Youth Plan 2020-2022: Turning Voice into Action – Rebuilding and Recovering](#), page 9

### 4.3.3 Engagement on the Youth Plan and the impact of COVID-19

The initial Youth Plan built on engagements with young people, including the engagement findings from the development of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. A stocktake of initiatives was undertaken to understand how the actions government was taking mapped to the areas young people felt were important. Following this, a specific engagement process on the Youth Plan concentrated on three focus areas that had been developed: voice, mental wellbeing, and leadership. This process involved over 1,200 rangatahi, as well as youth sector representatives and collaboration with government agencies. During that process young people provided feedback that included the following:

- Rangatahi really want to be involved in important government decisions, but the process isn't always easy, and they don't feel like they're really heard.
- Positive wellbeing is about more than just mental wellbeing. Identity, whānau and community are just as important.
- Rangatahi want more opportunities to lead, but would like support, mentoring and for adults to understand and give space for leadership on their terms.
- Government needs to change how the system works with and for rangatahi.

Feedback from the engagement process resulted in some changes to the focus areas for the Youth Plan. For example, 'mental wellbeing' was expanded to 'wellbeing', as rangatahi advised that mental wellbeing is intimately connected to other aspects of hauora, such as physical health, identity and belonging. 'Transformative change' was added, as rangatahi said that government needs to change how the system operates.<sup>12</sup>

During the COVID-19 pandemic, information about the challenges for young people was provided through regional relationship managers, a Youth Pulse Check survey, and a rapid evidence brief that was undertaken by *Te Hiringa Hauora*, Health Promotion Agency.<sup>13 14</sup> These insights informed a new direction for the Youth Plan. As mentioned above, the focus areas remained the same, but the narrative and actions were reframed to respond to the new challenges that COVID-19 presented for young people.

The development of the Youth Plan is an example of young people and government agencies working together to drive changes in how we work with and for rangatahi. It's also an example of using evidence and insights from people to quickly change our approach when needed in unprecedented circumstances.

The first progress report on the Youth Plan is due in February 2021 to the Social Wellbeing Cabinet Committee and will be made available after Cabinet consideration.

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<sup>12</sup> [www.myd.govt.nz/documents/young-people/youth-plan/final-what-we-heard-rangatahi.pdf](http://www.myd.govt.nz/documents/young-people/youth-plan/final-what-we-heard-rangatahi.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> [www.myd.govt.nz/documents/young-people/youth-voice/final-youth-pulse-check-survey-slides.pdf](http://www.myd.govt.nz/documents/young-people/youth-voice/final-youth-pulse-check-survey-slides.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> [www.hpa.org.nz/sites/default/files/Rapid%20Evidence%20and%20Covid-19%20Youth%20Recovery%20Plan%202020-2022.pdf](http://www.hpa.org.nz/sites/default/files/Rapid%20Evidence%20and%20Covid-19%20Youth%20Recovery%20Plan%202020-2022.pdf)

## 5. Conclusion

This report demonstrates how the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy was shaped by involving children, young people, their families and wider support networks in its development. Ongoing engagement approaches, particularly with young people, will continue to shape the implementation of the Strategy. Ongoing engagement on the Strategy is being used:

- to measure and monitor success against the Strategy's outcomes
- to shape new initiatives under the Strategy's Programme of Action
- to help embed the Strategy across government and outside government
- to further evolve the Strategy itself.

The Programme of Action is a living document and will evolve as engagement continues, including with children and youth. A range of voices will be reflected in new actions in response to changing levels of need and emerging issues that affect them. Innovative engagement methods are being used in an ongoing dialogue with children and young people – through initiatives such as The Hive and the elements of the Youth Plan.

The Strategy already prioritises improving the wellbeing of children and young people with the greatest needs. These groups may also experience flow-on impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ongoing engagement, including through initiatives like the Youth Plan and the Youth Voices project, will provide an opportunity for the young and vulnerable to continue to be heard. This demonstration project report also shows the benefits of sharing the results of engagement widely, so the wellbeing of children and young people is factored into a more coherent programme of work across government.

Greater coordination – both within government and outside government – will help align efforts to the overarching vision to make Aotearoa New Zealand the best place in the world for children and young people.

**Figure 11: The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy**





# Appendix: Information on engagement on the Strategy

## Summary of engagement

Overall results of engagement on the Strategy were summarised in the *Have Your Say: Summary Report – National Engagement on Tamariki Tū, Tamariki Ora: New Zealand’s First Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy*: [www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-03/summary-report-national-engagement-wellbeing.pdf](http://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-03/summary-report-national-engagement-wellbeing.pdf)

Engagements with children and young people were primarily undertaken by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki. Staff from the Office of the Children’s Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki formed a project team that designed, carried out, analysed and reported on engagement with over 6,000 children and young people across New Zealand. These engagements have been reported on publicly in the *What Makes a Good Life* report:

[www.occ.org.nz/publications/reports/what-makes-a-good-life](http://www.occ.org.nz/publications/reports/what-makes-a-good-life)

The Child Wellbeing Unit also engaged directly with children and young people through a small number of face-to-face engagements as opportunities presented themselves. These engagements were more informal and less intensive than those led by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki. At each event the main method of data collection was via the postcard to the Prime Minister. These were included in the postcard analysis. These events included:

- 25 October 2018, A Picnic with the Prime Minister, 84 participants
- 2–5 October 2018, Weaving our strengths ki te Tairāwhiti, Gisborne, over 150 children and adults
- The Wellington City Council Youth Summit, Wellington, 7 November 2018, 75 participants

- Street stall in Winton, Southland, 18 November 2018, 61 participants
- 21 November 2018, Irongate Primary School’s visit to Parliament, Wellington, approximately 65 participants
- 24–25 November 2018, The Kids Election, Te Papa Wellington, approx. 50 participants.

An additional 130 children and young people also wrote postcards to the Prime Minister that were delivered by post or completed online.

## Eleven regional Māori engagement hui

The eleven regional Māori Engagement hui attended by the Child Wellbeing Unit were:

- 12 November 2018, Te Puni Kōkiri, Gisborne, 21 participants
- 13 November 2018, The Green Shed, Hastings, 13 participants
- 14 November 2018, Nukuteapiapi Whare Tupuna, Rotorua, 20 participants
- 19 November 2018, Distinction Hotel Conference Centre, Hamilton, 20 participants
- 20 November 2018, Arai te Uru Marae, Dunedin, 20 participants
- 22 November 2018, Rehua Marae, Christchurch, 36 participants
- 26 November 2018, Te Puea Marae, Auckland, 7 participants
- 28 November 2018, Te Puni Kōkiri, Wellington, 14 participants
- 29 November 2018, Auto Lodge Motor Inn, New Plymouth, 19 participants
- 30 November 2018, Te Puni Kōkiri, Nelson, 5 participants
- 24 January 2019, Te Puni Kōkiri, Kaitiaki

The hui were typically two hours long. Most started with a mihi whakatau or pōwhiri and whakawhanaungatanga, followed by a presentation by the Child Wellbeing Unit introducing the purpose of the engagement, Strategy, and draft Outcomes Framework, followed by a whakawhitiwhiti kōrero/discussion. Notes and a summary of the discussion were recorded by one of the facilitators or officials from the Child Wellbeing Unit.

These engagements have been reported on publicly and are available at:

[www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-06/maori-engagement-summary-report-cyw.pdf](http://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-06/maori-engagement-summary-report-cyw.pdf)

## **Ten regional workshops hosted by the Ministry of Health and district health boards (12–30 November 2018)**

The Child Wellbeing Unit attended ten meetings hosted by the Ministry of Health in partnership with local district health boards. There were approximately 700 participants across the 10 hui. These were:

- 12 November 2018, St Michael’s Church Marae, Palmerston North (Kaupapa Māori hui)
- 15 November 2018, Pinnacle Health, Hamilton
- 16 November 2018, Ngā Maia Māori Midwives Conference, Napier
- 21 November 2018, Edgar Centre, Dunedin
- 23 Nov 2018, Manawa, Te Papa Hauora/Health Precinct, Christchurch
- 26 November 2018, Spire Pavilion, Whangarei
- 29 November 2018, Mangere East Hawks Rugby League Club, Auckland (Pacific Fono)
- 30 November 2018, Ko Awatea, Auckland
- 3 December 2018, Ministry of Health, Wellington (Pacific Fono)
- 3 December 2018, Waiwhetu Marae, Wellington

## **Pacific engagement**

The Child Wellbeing Unit also participated in pre-arranged Pacific national and regional meetings held by other agencies, plus it organised bespoke discussions with the assistance of NGOs. Engagements ranged from promotion (i.e. encouraging people to make a submission or complete the survey online) to one on one interviews, focus groups or workshop style discussions seeking input on the vision statement, Outcomes Framework and responses to questions related to wellbeing. These included:

- 30 October 2018, presentation at Pacific Leaders Forum, Wellington, 20 attendees
- 13 November 2018, presentation at Pacific Leaders National Summit, Auckland, 250 attendees
- 16 November 2018, Workshop with Oranga Tamariki-funded providers, Auckland, 16 participants
- 22 November 2018, Pacific Fono with Mangere Youth Providers, Auckland, 30 participants
- 27 November 2018, Pacific Fono with Whānau Ora families and navigators, Christchurch, approx. 30 participants
- 28 November 2018, Pacific Fono Pacific Leaders Forum, Wellington, 20 attendees
- 28 November 2018, Pacific Fono with Whānau Ora families and navigators, Hamilton, 8 participants
- 29 November 2018, Ministry of Health Pacific Fono, Mangere East Hawks Rugby League Club, Auckland
- 30 November 2018, Pacific Fono with Whānau Ora families and navigators, Auckland, 42 participants
- 3 December 2018, Ministry of Health Pacific Fono, Wellington
- 4 December 2018, Pacific Fono with Whānau Ora families and navigators, Wellington, 30 participants

## Other engagements

We met with a range of particular population and interest groups to obtain their unique perspectives. Engagement ranged from promotion (i.e. encouraging people to make a submission or complete the survey online) to one on one interviews, focus groups or workshop style discussions seeking input on the vision statement, Outcomes Framework and responses to questions related to wellbeing.

Meetings included:

- 19 October 2018, Local Government – Justin Lester and Jill Day, Wellington
- 25 October 2018, Regional Sport Trust Cluster, Wellington
- 6 November 2018, Matt Reid, Hutt Council, Wellington
- 12 November 2018, Local Government New Zealand Policy Advisory Group, Wellington
- 15 November 2018, Philanthropic Sector Roundtable, Auckland
- 16 November 2018, Children’s Ward Southland Hospital, Southland
- 16 November 2018, Zone 1 Local Government New Zealand, Auckland
- 18 November 2018, St Thomas Catholic Church, Winton
- 19 November 2018, South Alive, Invercargill
- 21 November 2018, Office for Disability Issues Youth, Auckland
- 21 November 2018, Shakti, Auckland
- 22 November 2018, Local Government New Zealand Rural and Provincial Mayors, Wellington
- 22 November 2018, New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services, Wellington
- 23 November 2018, Philanthropy and Government Group meeting, Wellington
- 26 November 2018, Disabilities – Office for Disability Issues focus group – Christchurch
- 27 November 2018, Southern REAP, Winton
- 3 December 2018, Rainbow Youth, Auckland
- 3 December 2018, Richard Hills, North Shore Ward Councillor, Auckland
- 4 December 2018, Asian Network, Auckland
- 4 December 2018, members of the migrant and refugee communities, Auckland Survey for Adults
- 21 December 2018, InsideOUT, Wellington
- 5 February 2019, Intersex Trust Aotearoa New Zealand, Wellington