



STEPPING STONE



A STEP ON THE PATHWAY TO PROFESSIONALISATION

**A REPORT ON YOUTH WORK TRENDS FROM THE 2014 ARA TAI OHI NATIONAL YOUTH
SECTOR SURVEY COMPARED AGAINST THE 2006 NYWNA *REAL WORK* REPORT**

Ara Taiohi is a peak body for the youth sector. We are a national membership-based organisation with over 750 personal and organisational members representing a diverse range of groups across Aotearoa, such as alternative education providers, youth mental health services, councils, youth justice, youth workers and youth work organisations, careers organisations, youth one stop shops, research agencies, youth development networks and collectives, district health boards, addiction services, training providers, transition services and more.

We were set up to support people who work with young people to be more connected, effective and accountable.

Our mission is to support people who work with young people, and thereby enhance youth development so that young people thrive. Our kaupapa is 'mō te oranga o ngā taiohi me ngā kaitiaki e mahi ana mō rātou - for the wellbeing of taiohi and the people who support them.'

'Ara' means 'pathway, lane, passageway to/from' and 'taiohi' means 'young person' in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Ara Taiohi - Pathway to and from young people.

The organisation was created by the New Zealand Aotearoa Adolescent Health and Development (NZAHD) and the National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa (NYWNA) and officially launched in November 2010 at the Involve Conference in Auckland.

Ara Taiohi commissioned Trina King to work with Ara Taiohi to compile and present the data from the 2014 Ara Taiohi National Youth Sector Survey, this report takes the youth worker subset of that data and compares it against the 2006 *Real Work* data, and can be read alongside the *Braided Pathways* the full report from the survey.

Ara Taiohi would like to acknowledge the Tindall Foundation for supporting this work.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Much of our work over the last four years has been about building pathways, one step at a time, growing what Ara Taiohi is to become. This report is another stepping stone in our path to establishing a professional body for youth workers.

In May 2014 Ara Taiohi carried out a national youth sector survey, this was a great opportunity to take stock and look back on the progress youth work has made. The foundations laid by the important work of Lloyd Martin and the National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa (NWKYA) in 2006 with *Real Work* gave us a solid baseline from which to compare the youth work specific data subset from the 2014 Ara Taiohi national youth sector survey, to start to paint a picture of the changes since 2006, and begin to understand what youth work in Aotearoa looks like today.

Braided Pathways: A Report on the 2014 Ara Taiohi National Youth Sector Survey presents the findings from the wider survey and sits alongside this report.

The 2014 survey shows some important progress in youth work since 2006, particularly in the area of qualifications. Overall the data shows youth workers in 2014 as an increasingly qualified workforce, with 64% holding a diploma or degree, and 78% holding some level of qualification. This represents a 29% increase in youth workers holding some level of qualification from 2006. It is important to note that this increase includes a 15% increase in youth work specific certificates and 16% increase in youth work specific diplomas and degrees.

Unfortunately this report also shows that youth worker wages have not seen any real gains since 2006, with two-thirds of full-time employed youth workers in the 2014 survey indicating they were making less than the average annual income. However, 59% of youth workers surveyed indicated their intention to still be working in the field in five years' time, despite below average pay.

Stepping Stone identifies some key areas for Ara Taiohi to focus on, including;

- the professionalisation of youth work - and for this to necessarily include working with training providers to ensure qualification pathways are accessible both in terms of locality and cost, advocating for change to the current state of low pay for youth workers, a structure for better assurances of quality standards and access to the necessary training to reflect that,
- advocating for better resourcing of the sector's work and supporting increased collaboration and more connected services,
- support for existing youth networks and the development of new ones,
- increasing access to Code of Ethics training,
- more NZ-focussed and sector specific research (this report highlights a number of areas that are worthy of further research).

You can access this report electronically, *Braided Pathways*, *Real Work*, other key resources such as the Code of Ethics and YDSA, and the Ara Taiohi Pathway to Professionalisation working group's information and all related documents on our website www.arataiohi.org.nz

There is some good progress illustrated within these pages that the whole sector can be proud of. We hope you enjoy the read and look forward to hearing your thoughts.



Sonya Hogan
Executive Officer
Ara Taiohi

BACKGROUND

In 2006 the National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa (NYWNA) published *Real Work: a report from the national research project on the state of youth work in Aotearoa*¹. Lloyd Martin authored the report, a working group within the NYWNA led the project, and it was funded by DIA, JR McKenzie Trust and MYD. *Real Work* was, and remains, the most comprehensive study of youth work undertaken in New Zealand. It has been a foundation document for the ongoing development of youth work as a profession.

In the shaping of *Real Work* 637 youth workers completed a written survey in 2004. During 2005 the results of the written survey were taken around the country to 22 youth networks where 317 youth workers participated in a total of 56 focus groups, within this 11 youth workers were individually interviewed matching the overall profile of the survey sample in terms of gender, cultural background, location and values.

There have been many developments in youth work since 2006, including;

- the development of SCOPE a tool to assist youth work organisations to improve the quality of their services to young people in 2007,
- the publication of the first edition *Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand* in 2008 (a second edition was published in 2011),
- nationally agreed core competencies for youth work and the development of a national Diploma in Youth Work based on these competencies in 2008,
- formal discussions of professionalisation with the discussion document *Potential Risks and Benefits of Establishing a Professional Body for Youth Work in Aotearoa NZ* in 2009,
- the development of the TOHU project which enabled experienced youth workers access to the national Diploma in Youth Work,
- the formation of a new national youth sector body Ara Taiohi and the dissolving of NYWNA and New Zealand Aotearoa Adolescent Health and Development (NZAHD) in 2010,
- the development of the Bachelor of Youth Development in 2011 and,
- the establishment of the Ara Taiohi Pathway to Professionalisation working group in 2012 to scope and develop a professional body for youth workers within Ara Taiohi.

In May 2014 Ara Taiohi carried out a national youth sector survey; 499 people from the wider youth sector completed the online survey, representing the breadth of people who work with young people in Aotearoa. Of those 499, 165 (33%) identified as youth workers and we were able to separate out this data subset (including three youth work specific questions) to draw some comparisons against *Real Work*, and start to paint a picture of the changes since 2006, and begin to understand what youth work in Aotearoa looks like today. *Stepping Stone* sits within the wider analysis of the full survey, which is presented in *Braided Pathways: A Report on the 2014 Ara Taiohi National Youth Sector Survey*².

This report sits within the context of the Ara Taiohi Pathway to Professionalisation group's work. In July 2012 a Background Summary report was compiled for the working group to act as an overview of discussions and work to date, to identify touch point documents and to collate feedback from key people, in order to help inform the development of milestones for the group's work. In 2013 Hannah Dunlop was contracted to complete a feasibility research report for Pathway to Professionalisation, which outlined possible models for a professional

¹ www.arataiohi.org.nz/images/uploads/general/Real_Work_youth_work_in_Aotearoa.pdf

² www.arataiohi.org.nz/images/uploads/general/Braided_Pathways.pdf

body based on research of different models locally and internationally, as well as a summary of the 'Go Pro Bro – the Professional Youth Work Journey' workshop held at the Ara Taiohi *Building Pathways Wānanga* in October 2013.

Stepping Stone contributes to the next stage of the working group's work, which focusses on compiling a picture of the current workforce to help inform the stages of development any professional body will need to support to ensure it is as inclusive as possible of the diversity of youth workers in Aotearoa NZ.

In 2013 Ara Taiohi published *Te Hautaki o Ara Taiohi Report*³ which collated feedback gathered from over 250 people at 11 hui held across Aotearoa throughout 2012. The report included 15 recommendations from the Ara Taiohi Youth Work Caucus who met regionally at each hui, and all relevant information for this report from *Te Hautaki o Ara Taiohi* is discussed in the Discussion section of this report.

Stepping Stone is made up of two components, a comparative analysis of the youth work specific data from Ara Taiohi's 2014 national youth sector survey against components of the 2006 *Real Work* report, and youth worker narrative feedback from the 2014 survey. The narrative feedback has been grouped into themes that emerged through in-depth examination of the data, and is presented throughout the report where it compliments quantitative data and is spoken to more directly in the 2014 Survey Data – Role of the Youth Sector National Body and Discussion sections of this report.

2014 SURVEY DATA PRESENTED AGAINST 2006 REAL WORK DATA

The following is a comparison of the youth work specific data subset from the 2014 national youth sector survey and the results published in *Real Work* in 2006. The 2014 survey was not meant to be a follow up to *Real Work*, and as such some questions were slightly different. In these cases a direct comparison was not possible, but a general comparison was and this is noted in the narrative.

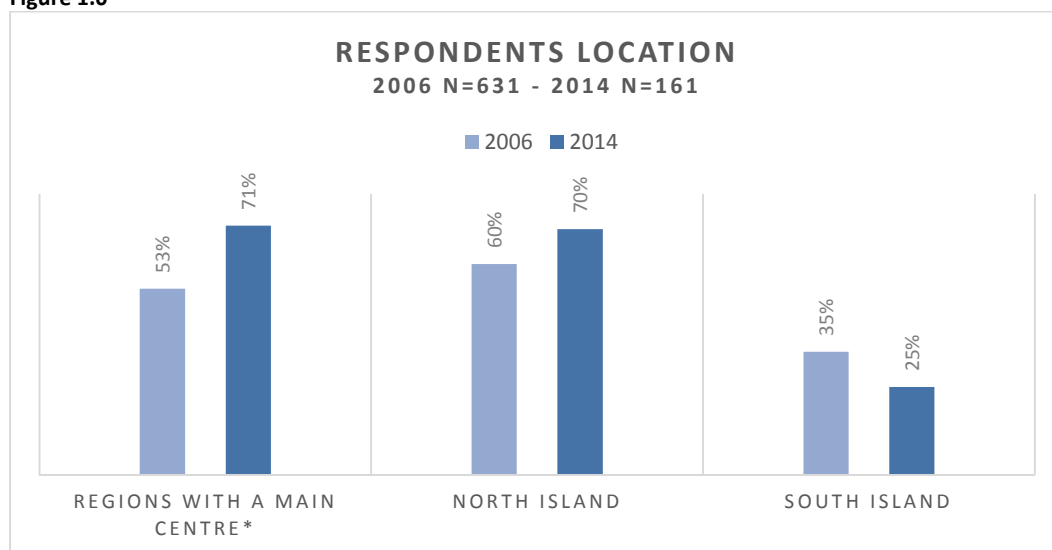
We understand that given the wider scope of the 2014 national youth sector survey that comparatively fewer numbers of youth workers were represented than in *Real Work*, however we still see value in comparing the data in an effort to begin to map where we are now and identify areas that would benefit from further research.

1. Location of Respondents

The comparative chart below illustrates, at a high level, the representation the two surveys achieved. It is a representation of respondents to the 2014 and 2006 surveys, and does not aim to represent how many people are practicing youth work in each region. There may be some variation that figure 1.0 does not fully represent as the 2014 survey asked respondents to indicate regions (eg Canterbury) and the 2006 survey did so by city (eg Christchurch), and broke numbers down to main centres, smaller cities and small towns/rural areas, which we have not been able to compare here.

³ www.arataiohi.org.nz/images/uploads/general/te-hautaki-2012.pdf

Figure 1.0



*Auckland, Hamilton (Waikato), Wellington, Christchurch (Canterbury), Dunedin (Otago)

Numbers from the 2014 survey reflect the actual population spread across the regions.⁴

2. Youth Workers Overview

In this section we focus on painting a picture of how youth work as a profession has progressed through representing data on how long youth workers are staying in the job, where they have come from and plan to go to, employment status, and salaries and wages.

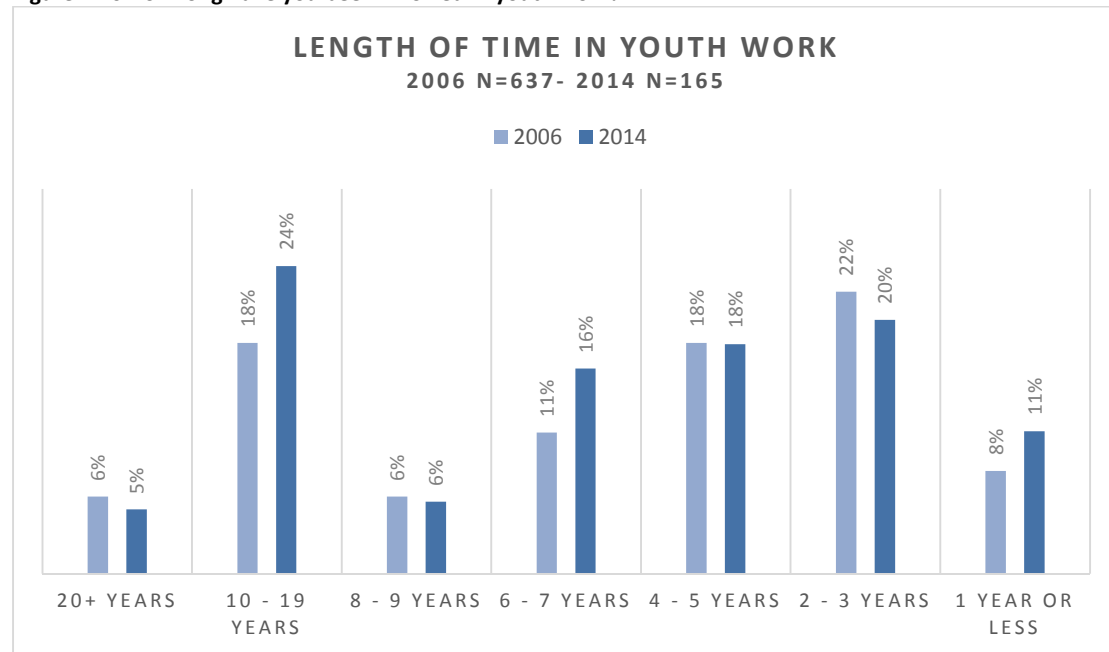
2.1 Length of Time in Youth Work

Youth work has traditionally been seen as a relatively transient area of work, *Real Work* speaks to this in Section 3.3 noting the 1979 DIA study of the Detached Youth Work Funding Scheme⁵, which showed youth workers as only staying in roles on average for 18 months. The *Real Work* data wasn't able to provide a direct comparison with the DIA figure, but showed the median length of time for involvement in youth work among survey participants as five years, and results from the 2014 national youth sector survey shows a continuation of the trends illustrated in *Real Work* with a median length of 6-7 years.

⁴ Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June 2014 (provisional), Statistics New Zealand, 22 October 2014

⁵ Department of Internal Affairs *Preliminary Evaluation of the Detached Youth Worker Funding Scheme* by Jennifer Hutt 1979

Figure 2.10 How long have you been involved in youth work?

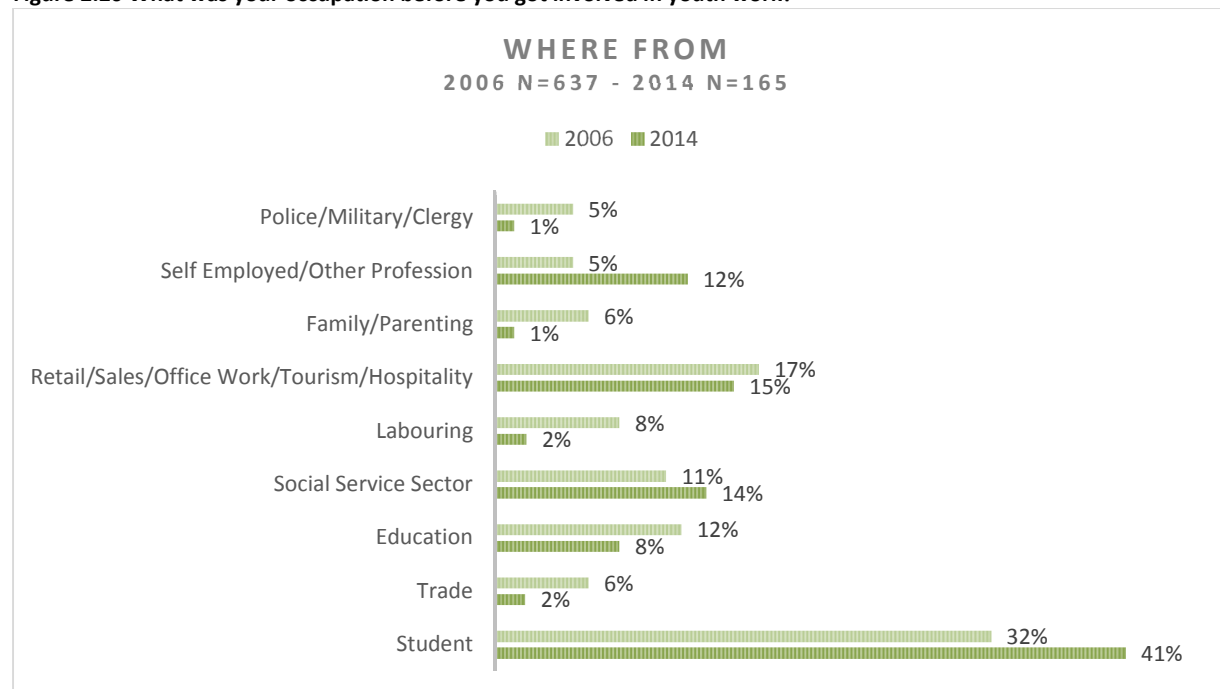


The increase of 6% of those staying in youth work for 10-19 years and 5% of those staying for 6-7 years shows increased retention over the 10 years since the *Real Work* written survey was carried out in 2004. Greater numbers of one year or less could illustrate more people coming into the profession.

2.2 Where From, Where To?

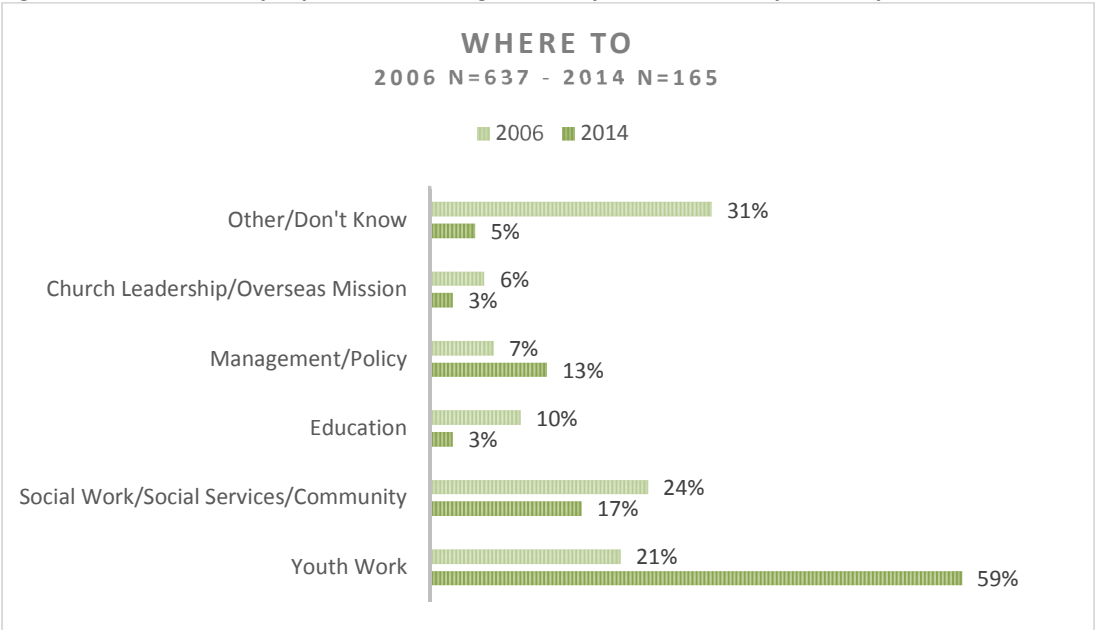
Youth workers were asked to indicate what occupation they had come into youth work from and where they imagined themselves in five years' time or when they leave youth work.

Figure 2.20 What was your occupation before you got involved in youth work?



Some examples of ‘Other Professions’ that people came into youth work from given in the 2014 survey were architecture, design, nursing, corrections, speech and language therapy, musician/artist and radio.

Figure 2.21 What area do you plan to be working in, in five years’ time/when you leave youth work?



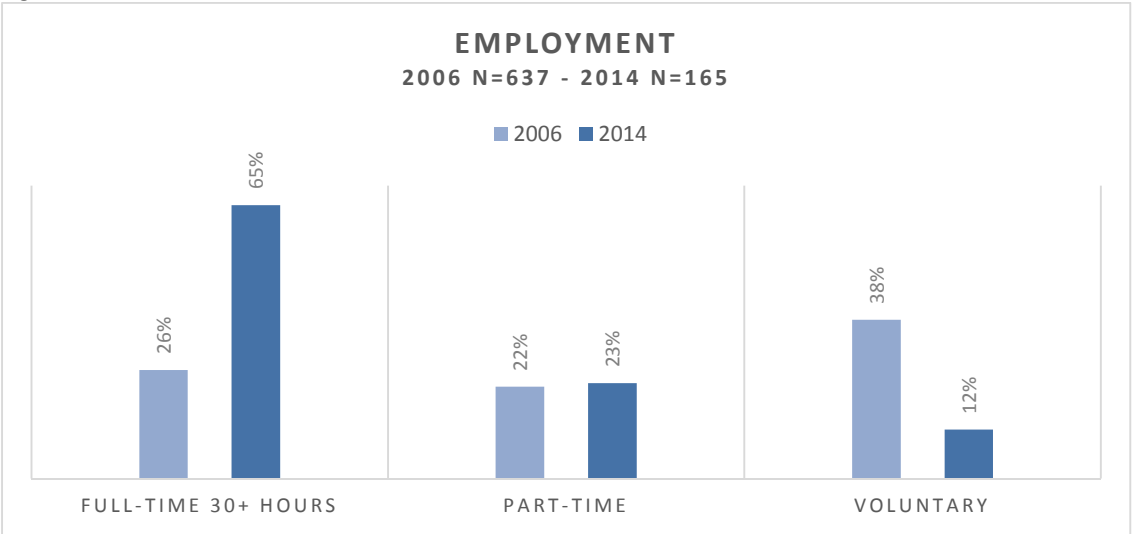
Some of the ‘Other’ category in the 2014 survey include retirement, business, sports management law and overseas, and the 2006 category includes a ‘don’t know’ option that was not included in the 2014 survey.

Fifty-nine percent of youth workers surveyed in 2014 indicated their intention to still be working in youth work in five years, a 38% increase from 2006.

2.3 Employment Status

This section is a comparison between the respondents of the two surveys, and the figures represented in figure 2.30 do not claim to represent actual proportions of youth workers in these categories, as both surveys acknowledged that the format the surveys took meant that paid youth workers were more likely to have completed them.

Figure 2.30

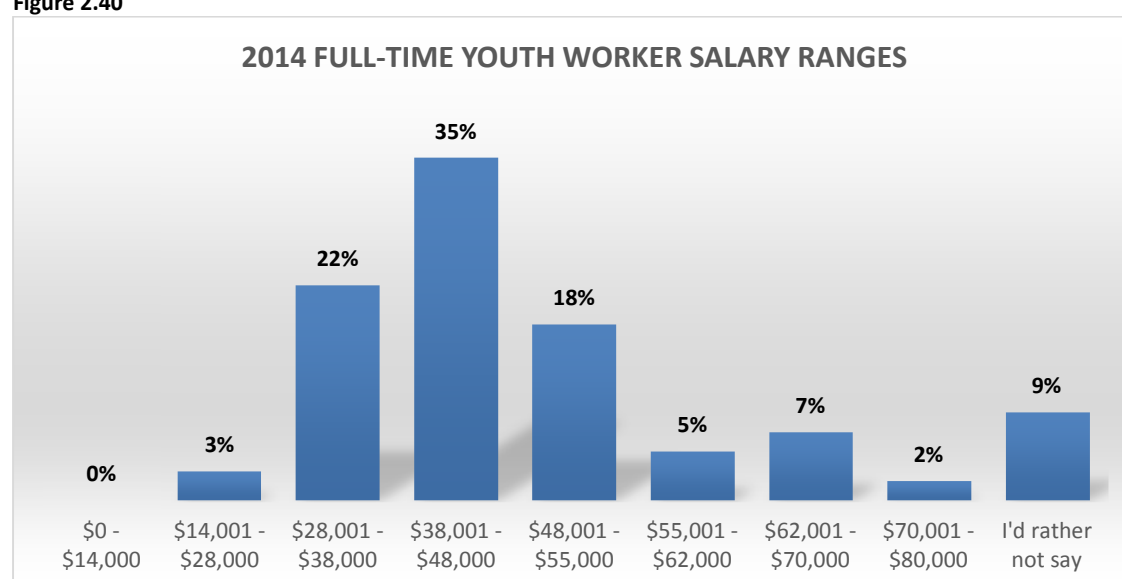


The marked increase of 39% in full-time (seen as 30+ hours per week) youth workers between 2006 and 2014 is significant. This may reflect the possibility that more paid youth workers contributed to the 2014 survey than the 2006 survey, or that there are now more full-time positions. These also vary to the results of wider youth sector survey which saw 71% employed full-time, 21% part-time and 8% volunteers. We see this is an area worthy of further research.

2.4 Salaries and Wages

Real Work based their salary figures on 93 survey participants who identified being paid full-time and opted to supply their actual income details, from this they were able to determine the average wage for a youth worker at that time as \$35,300. The 2014 survey asked participants to indicate a salary range, 142 youth workers completed the question and figure 2.40 represents findings from the 105 full-time youth workers.

Figure 2.40



The average income for a youth worker in 2014, based on the 105 full-time youth workers who responded to this question of the survey, was \$38,001-\$48,000, as compared to the Statistics NZ average annual personal income of \$51,532 for the June 2014 Quarter.

Table 2.41 Comparison of average wages of youth workers to general population	June 1989	June 2004	June 2014
Average annual salary general population	\$26,293 ⁶	\$40,067 ⁷	\$51,532 ⁸
Average youth worker salary	\$24,500 ⁹	\$35,300 ¹⁰	\$38,001-\$48,000
Percentage comparison	93%	88%	74% - 93%

This data shows that youth worker wages have not seen any real gains since 2006. With two-thirds of full-time employed youth workers in the 2014 survey (compared to close to half of the wider youth sector survey respondents as presented in *Braided Pathways*) indicating they

⁶ This figure is taken from Table 5: Comparison of average wages of youth workers to general population – *Real Work*, pg 29

⁷ This figure was taken from *Real Work* pg 29, which cites Statistics New Zealand 21/10/2005

⁸ This figure is taken from Statistics New Zealand – New Zealand Income Survey: June 2014 Quarter, average weekly income from wages and salaries \$991 extrapolated out to 52 weeks

⁹ This figure was taken from *Real Work* pg 29, which cites He Taanga Manawa, pg 70

¹⁰ This figure is taken from Table 5: Comparison of average wages of youth workers to general population – *Real Work*, pg 29

were making less than the average income it's not surprising that the issue of low-pay for youth workers featured strongly in the narrative replies as an area for change. This is discussed further in the Discussion section of this report.

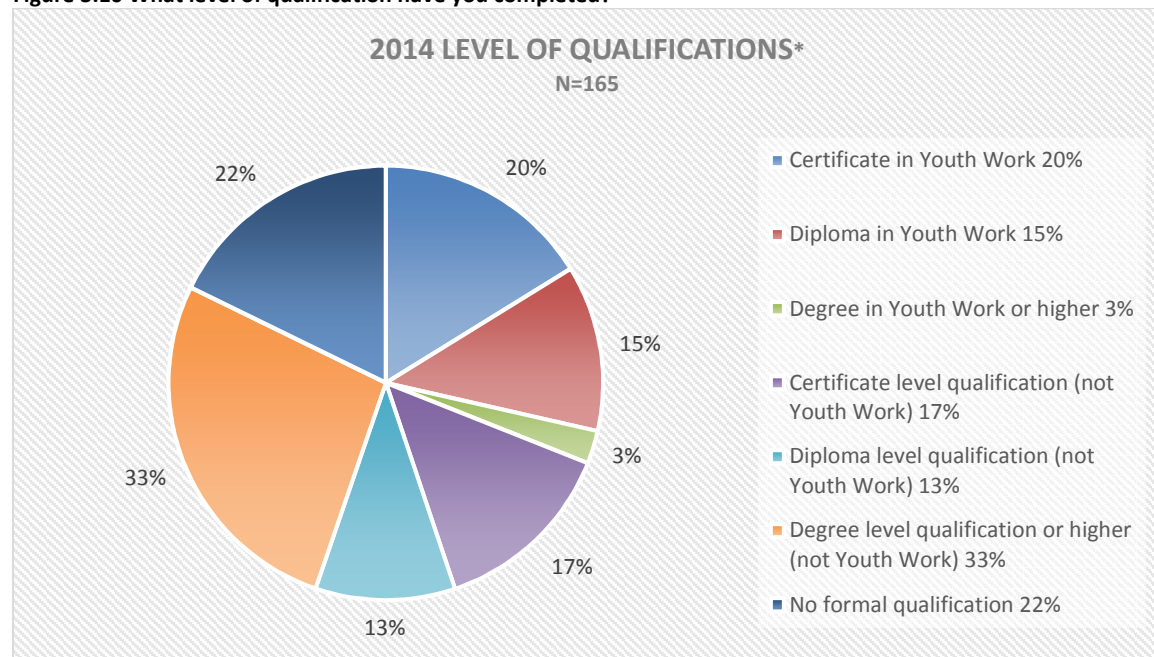
3. Training and Support

In 2006 *Real Work* identified that until that point, 'youth work qualifications beyond the certificate level had struggled to remain viable in this country'¹¹. There has been a significant change in this area from 2006 and now a National Certificate in Youth Work, National Diploma in Youth Work, Diploma in Youth and Community Studies, Tipu Ake (Certificate and Diploma in a Māori context), Bachelor in Youth Development, Bachelor of Human Studies (Youth Work major), and Masters of Youth Development are available and run by various ITOs, PTEs and tertiary education facilities across the country.

3.1 Qualifications

In this section we present levels of qualifications and details of current study for youth workers in the 2014 survey, as well as comparisons of youth work specific qualifications and overall qualifications of the two surveys.

Figure 3.10 What level of qualification have you completed?

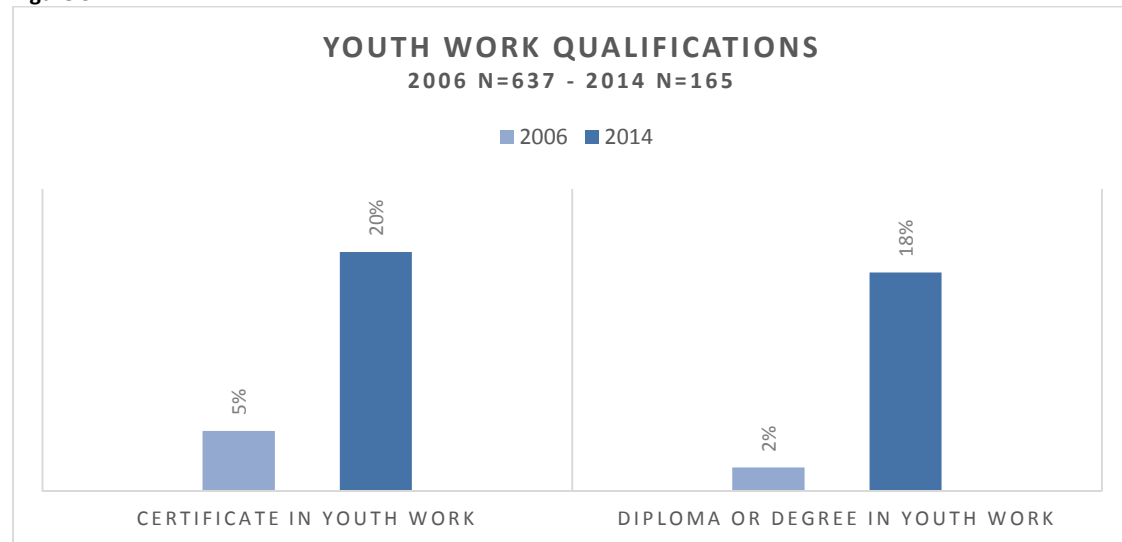


*some respondents will have indicated more than one qualification, which accounts for totals being greater than 100%

Seventy-eight percent of youth workers surveyed in 2014 held some level of qualification, 36% with a degree level qualification or higher.

¹¹ NYWNA, *Real Work: a report from the national research project on the state of youth work in Aotearoa*, Lloyd Martin, pg 53

Figure 3.11



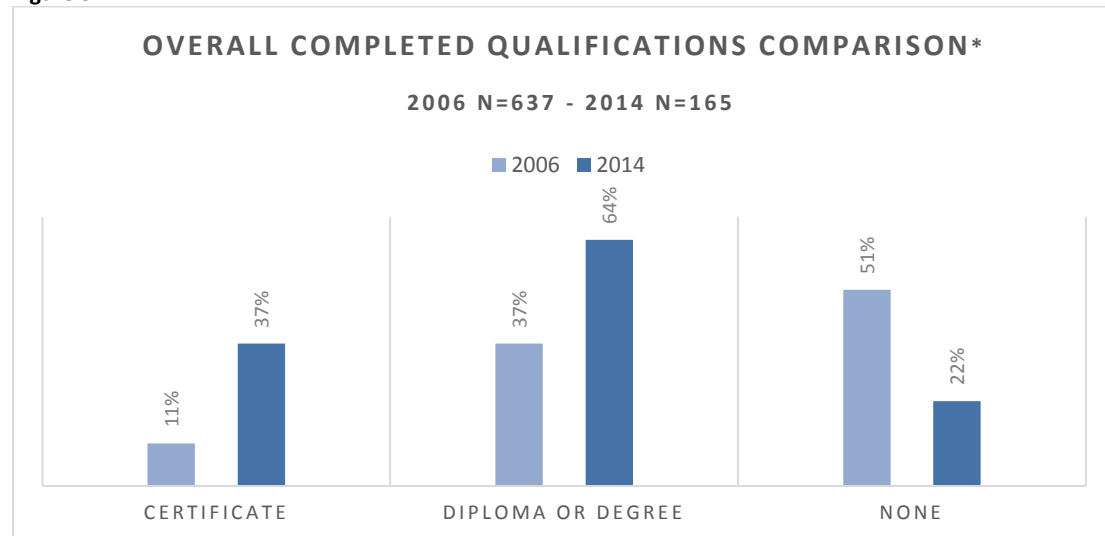
Twenty percent of youth workers surveyed in 2014 had a certificate in youth work and 18% had a diploma or degree in youth work, showing an increase in youth work qualifications of 15% in youth work certificates and 16% in youth work diplomas and degrees. The *Real Work* data does not distinguish between diplomas and degrees, but the 2014 data was broken down to 15% diplomas and 3% degrees for a total of 18%.

Within the wider sector survey results 42% of respondents who had completed youth work specific qualifications did not indicate youth work as their main role in their work with young people, and 18 of the 23 respondents who held a degree in youth work or higher did not identify as a youth worker. This is an area we have identified as worthy of further research and may speak to the issue of what defines a youth worker, something that will likely gain more clarity as we progress down the path of professionalisation.

In terms of non-youth work qualifications, in 2006 respondents were asked to distinguish between related and unrelated areas; 6% of respondents had a certificate level qualification in a related area, 22% had a diploma or degree in a related area and 13% had a diploma or degree in an unrelated area. In 2014, as noted in figure 3.10, without the distinction; 17% of respondents had a certificate level qualification (not youth work), 13% had a diploma (not youth work) and 34% had a degree or higher (not youth work).

Figure 3.12 below compares all completed qualifications; youth work, related and unrelated between 2006 and 2014.

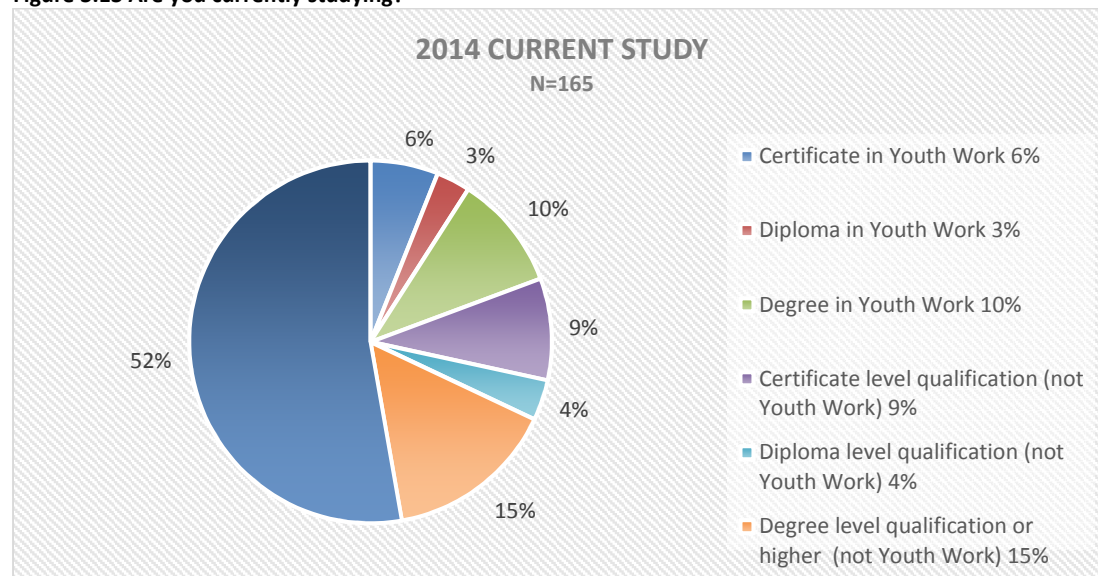
Figure 3.12



*some respondents of the 2014 survey will have indicated more than one qualification, which accounts for totals being greater than 100%

The reader needs to be mindful that figure 3.12 above is a very high level comparative, as the 2006 survey distinguished between 'entry level qualifications' (what qualifications participants had entered youth work with) and 'in-service training' (study undertaken since becoming a youth worker) so the 2006 figures above do not include details of those who indicated that they had been studying towards a qualification since becoming a youth worker. As we had no way to confirm completed qualifications vs current study for the 2006 data to directly compare against 2014's data, which distinguished between completed qualifications and current study, we are only able to present this data at a high level.

Figure 3.13 Are you currently studying?



Of the respondents of the 2014 survey who indicated they were currently studying (as presented in figure 3.13) 19% were studying towards a youth work qualification, this is a similar number taken from the focus group component (n=106) of the *Real Work* data for this section, which showed 17% of participants studying towards youth work qualifications.

Interestingly, of the youth workers who contributed to the 2014 survey more (28%) were studying towards a non-youth work qualification than those studying for a youth work

qualification (19%). This is worthwhile of further research, in order to gain better understanding for our youth work professionalisation work.

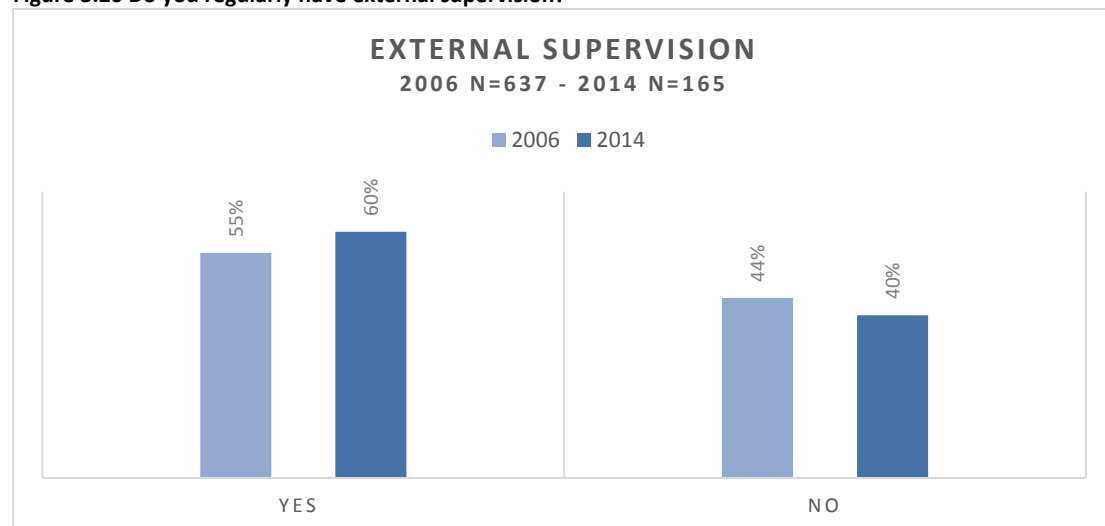
In 2006 54% of respondents to the written survey were studying and in 2014 that number was 48%. Of that 54% in 2006; 25% were studying towards a certificate, 23% towards a diploma and 25% towards a degree, 8% within the focus groups were doing post graduate study.

In the 2014 narrative feedback concern for the consistency of the standard of practice across the youth sector was clear. Training, access to and quality of, featured highly in the narrative replies, with both youth workers and senior managers who employed youth workers calling for better training of youth workers and the need for youth work to be seen as a 'valid profession' through a process of professionalisation. This is discussed further in the Discussion section.

3.2 External Supervision

Respondents of both surveys were asked if they were regularly attending external supervision. The results are presented below.

Figure 3.20 Do you regularly have external supervision?



This data set shows a very slight change between 2006 and 2014 in the use of regular external supervision. The option of 'usually, but not at the moment' was offered in the *Real Work* survey and not in the 2014 survey, so for the purposes of comparison the 9% who chose this in the 2006 data have been added to the 'no' category, on the basis that they were not attending regular external supervision at the time of the survey.

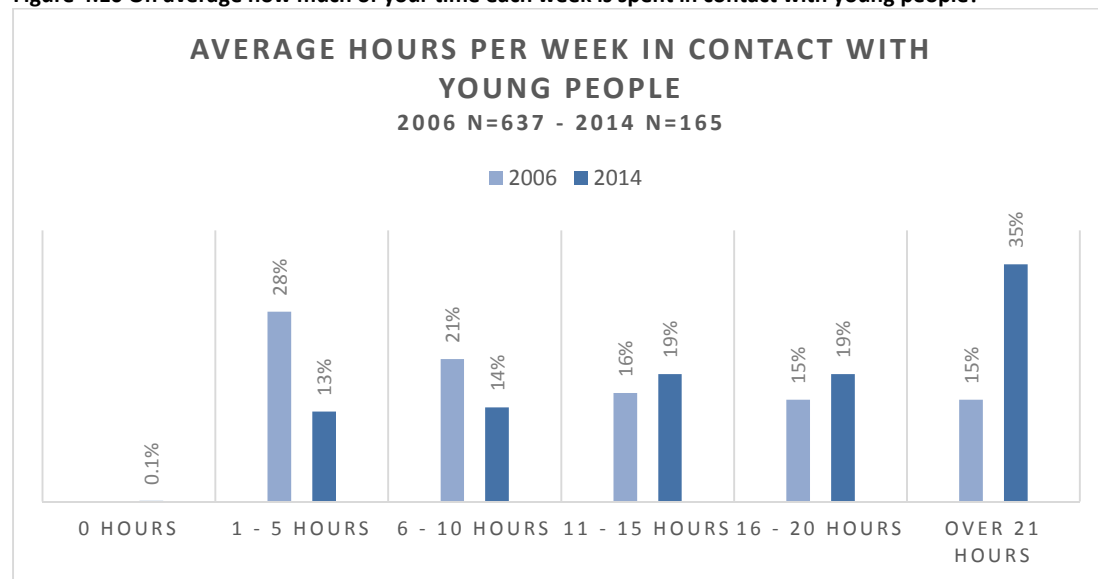
The need for greater supervision rated in the narrative feedback, with some concern being shown for safety of youth workers given the case-loads and nature of the work.

4. Youth Work Practice

This section compares youth work practice between the two surveys. Participants in each survey were asked about their contact time with and ages of the young people they work with, and how they use the Code of Ethics (CoE) and Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA) in their work.

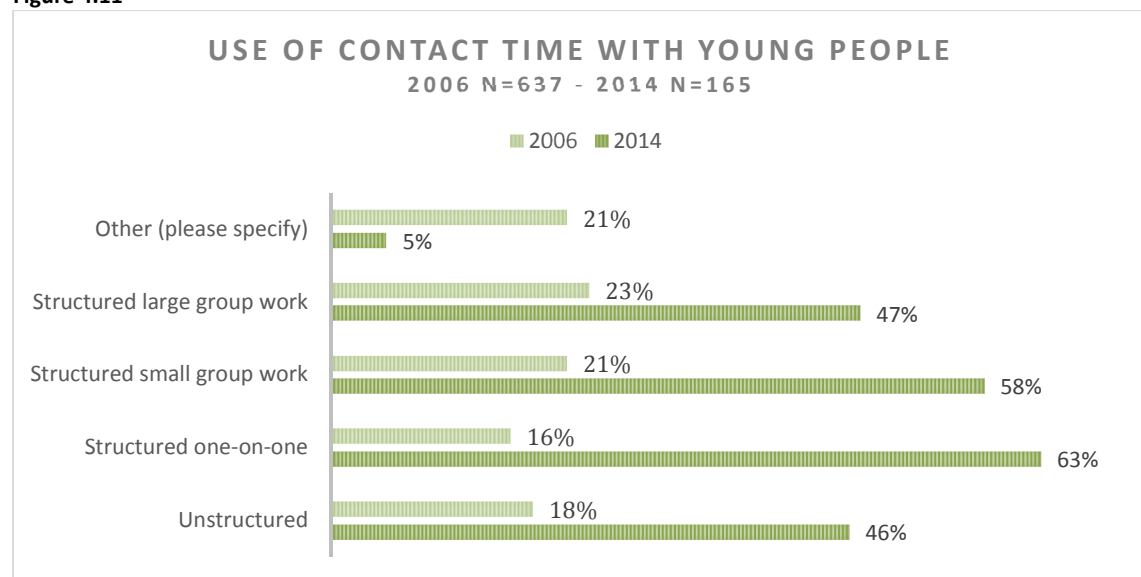
4.1 Contact Time and Ages of Young People

Figure 4.10 On average how much of your time each week is spent in contact with young people?



Overall there appears to be significant increases in time spent in contact with young people, with a significant decrease of almost 15% in youth workers spending 1-5 hours per week in contact with young people and the increase in almost 21% of youth workers spending over 21 hours per week in contact with young people. The 2014 survey broke this last category down to 21-30 hours (20%) and 31+hours (16%).

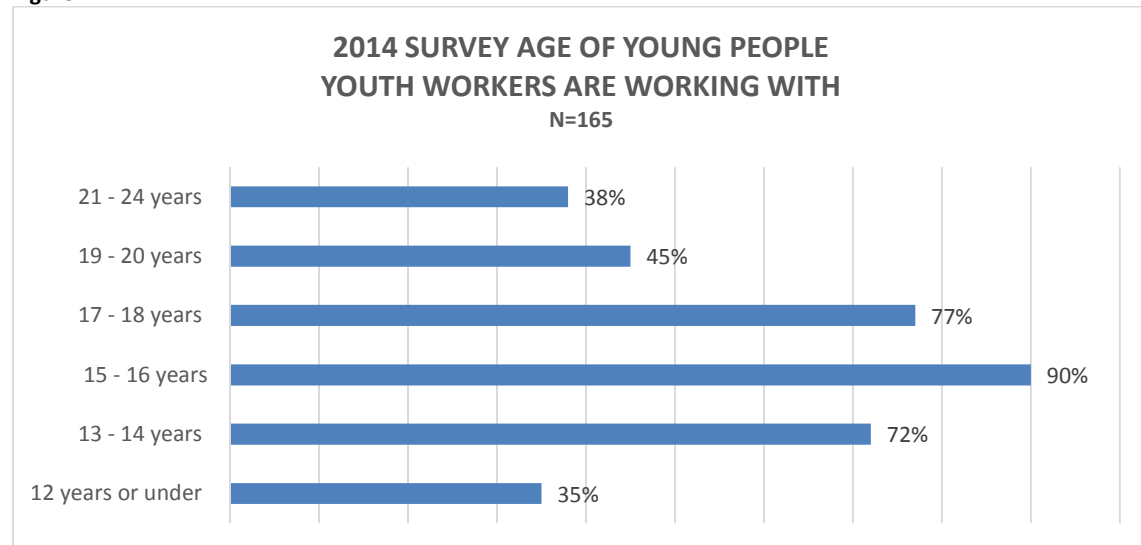
Figure 4.11



Survey participants were asked to identify how they used their contact time with young people. Participants of the 2014 survey were able to choose multiple styles so the results are not directly comparable. However, we have included the details here out of interest.

Overall over both surveys' results suggest that youth workers are spread across a range of styles in their practice, and as the 2014 survey showed, tend to utilise different styles as appropriate to the young people they are working with.

Figure 4.12



*respondents were able to choose multiple age groups which accounts for the total being more than 100%

Similarly participants in the two surveys indicated comparable responses to the question of what age groups the young people they work with were, but due to a difference in the survey questions are not directly comparable. Figure 4.12 illustrates results from the 2014 survey only, and indicates that youth workers operate across the range (12-24 years) of age groups, with 15-16 year olds being the most common group, which was the same in 2006.

4.2 Code of Ethics

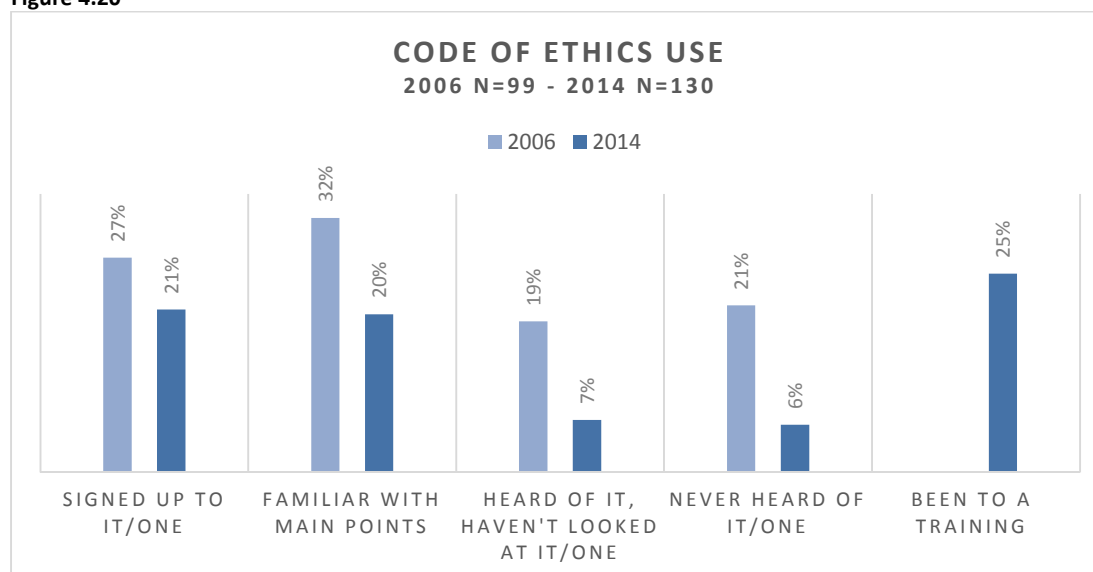
At the time of the *Real Work* research there was not a national code of ethics for youth workers. In 1998 the Canterbury Youth Workers Collective (CYWC) developed a code of ethics and had supported other collectives in establishing and developing their own, so there were different codes in circulation, but no collective code. In 2008 the NYWNA developed and published the first edition of the *Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand*¹² and a second edition was published in 2011.

For the question 'have you heard of the Code of Ethics?' in the 2014 survey, of the 165 youth workers surveyed; 73% responded yes, 6% responded no, and 21% did not answer the question.

For the question 'how do you use the Code of Ethics in your work?' in the 2014 survey, of the 165 youth workers surveyed 27% (n=45) did not answer the question. The other responses are portrayed in figure 4.20 below.

¹² www.arataiohi.org.nz/images/uploads/general/CoE2.pdf

Figure 4.20



For the purposes of comparison the data for figure 4.20 presents responses from two questions from 2014 ('have you heard of the CoE?' and 'how do you use it in your work?') and what was one question in 2006 ('what place does a Youth Worker's Code of Ethics have in your work?'). In 2014 respondents had an extra option of 'been to a CoE training', which we have included. While the code of ethics referred to in figure 4.20 are different, we felt it was still a worthwhile exercise to illustrate the changes in knowledge and use of a code since the national code was introduced in 2008, even if it cannot be used as a direct comparison.

Ninety-four percent of youth workers surveyed in 2014 had heard of the *Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand*, however only 21% had signed up to it and 75% had not received training. 'Interestingly, within the wider youth sector survey; of the 80% (n=310) of respondents who had heard of the CoE, 61% had not self-identified as a youth worker. Despite youth work not being identified as this sub-groups' main role in their work with young people 58% (n=180) of them were still engaged with the CoE (familiar with its main points, been to a training and signed up to it.)'¹³ This is discussed further in the Discussion section of this report.

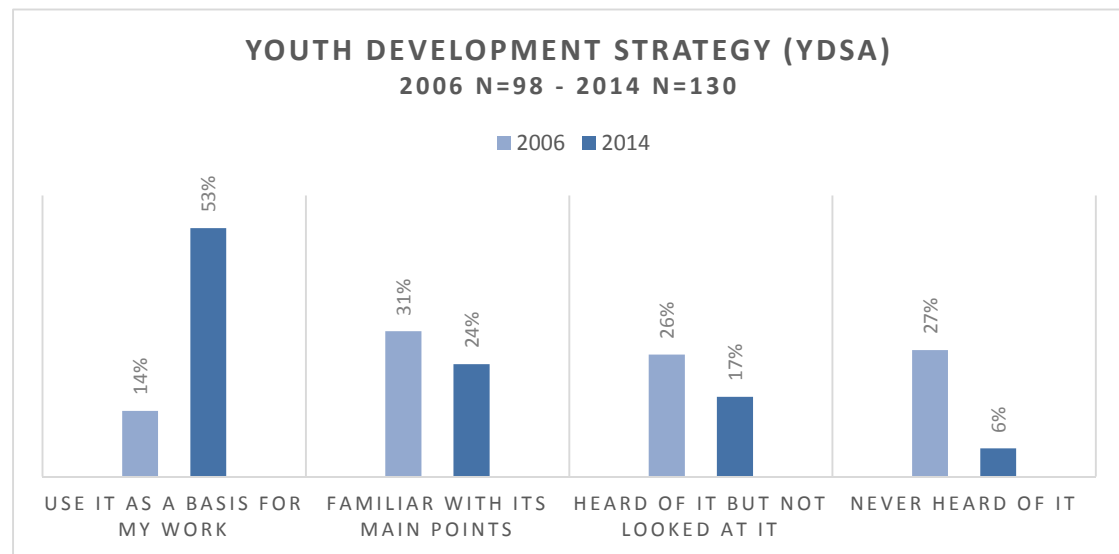
4.3 Youth Development Strategy (YDSA)

The *Youth Development Strategy of Aotearoa* (YDSA)¹⁴ was published in 2002 by the Ministry of Youth Development. In the years since it was published it has been promoted within the sector as one of the best-practice guides for anyone working with young people. Twenty-one percent (n=35) of youth workers surveyed in the 2014 survey did not answer the question 'have you heard of the Youth Development Strategy?', however we still see a significant increase in the uptake of the YDSA amongst youth workers.

¹³ Ara Taiohi, *Braided Pathways: A Report on the 2014 Ara Taiohi National Youth Sector Survey*, pg 12

¹⁴ www.arataiohi.org.nz/resource-centre/key-documents/youth-development-strategy-aotearoa

Figure 4.30



We see a 21% increase in youth workers having heard of the YDSA from 2006 to 2014 and a 39% increase in youth workers using it as the basis of their work.

5. Youth Networks

Fifty-three percent of youth workers surveyed in the 2014 survey indicated they were part of a youth network. This data was broken down into further detail in *Real Work* to 'I am a regular member' (40%), 'I get involved sometimes' (29%), 'There is one, but I choose not to get involved' (10%) and 'There isn't one in my area' (17%).

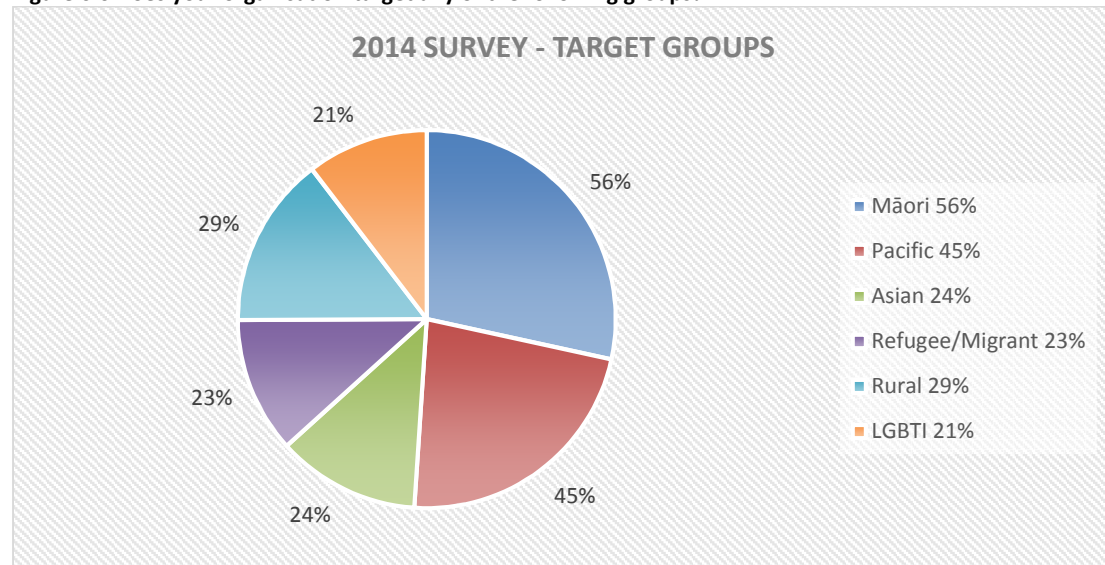
From the 2014 survey the 53% of youth workers closely mirrored the respondents of the wider survey, of which 52% said yes to being part of a youth network.

The role for Ara Taiohi to support networks and opportunities to network rated highly in the narrative replies, with youth workers identifying the importance of being supported to meet locally, regionally and nationally.

6. Target Groups

In the 2006 survey respondents were asked to identify the cultural backgrounds of a sample group of their clients; they reported that 44% were Māori, 41% European, 11% Pacific and 3% Asian. In the 2014 survey participants were asked 'Does your organisation target any of the following groups?' and respondents were able to choose multiple answers. The results of the 2014 survey are represented below in figure 6.0.

Figure 6.0 Does your organisation target any of the following groups?



The comparison against *Real Work* shows an interesting difference between groups targeted by organisations in 2014 and sample client groups in 2006, this is discussed further in the Discussion section. We acknowledge that Disability is missing from this data, an oversight on our part, which will be remedied in future research.

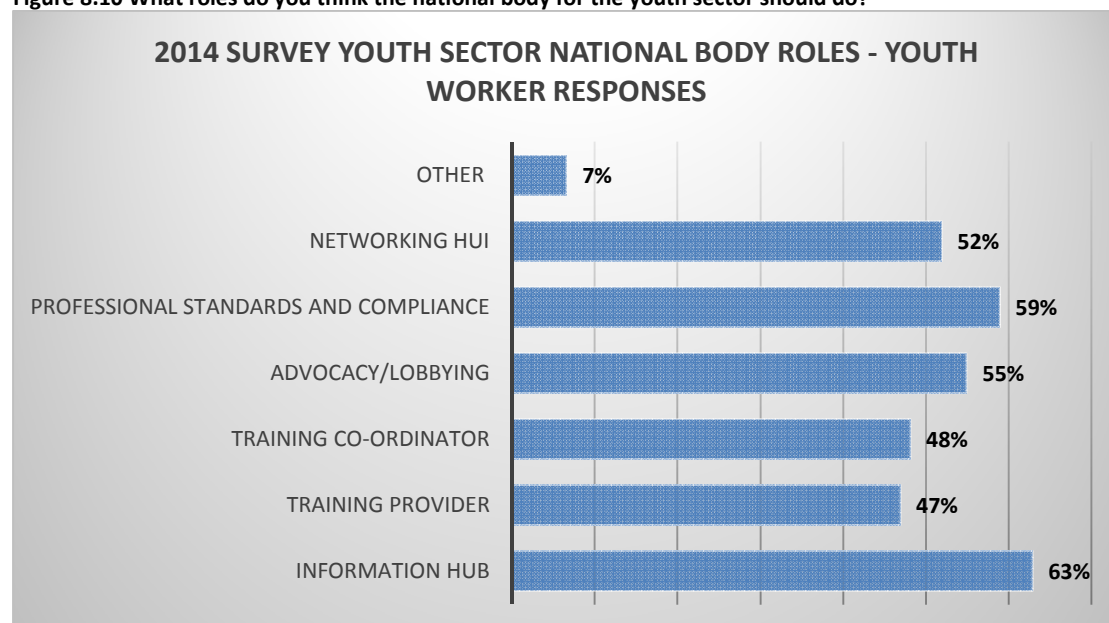
7. Kaupapa Māori Organisations

In *Real Work* 4% of paid youth workers and 5% of volunteer youth workers indicated that they worked for a kaupapa Māori organisation, in the 2014 survey 22% of youth worker respondents identified that they worked for a kaupapa Māori organisation.

2014 SURVEY DATA – ROLE OF THE YOUTH SECTOR NATIONAL BODY

Eighty-five percent (n=135) of youth workers surveyed in the 2014 survey had heard of Ara Taiohi and 42% believed they were a member. Figure 8.10 below portrays the roles youth workers who participated in the 2014 survey saw for Ara Taiohi as the national body for the youth sector.

Figure 8.10 What roles do you think the national body for the youth sector should do?



When asked to rate services in order of importance youth workers rated Training, Youth Work Professionalisation, Advocacy and Research (in that order) as the most important five out of 17 options of services for a national body in the 2014 survey.

This was reflected in the narrative replies in response to the questions ‘what would you like to see more of with Ara Taiohi?’ and ‘what do you consider to be priority issues for the youth sector?’, with youth workers and senior managers who employ youth workers calling for the move to professionalisation, which was seen to address issues of qualification pathways, quality standards and low pay – all identified as priority issues for the sector and Ara Taiohi (see *Braided Pathways* for full details).

The need for a unified voice on issues that affect young people and the people who work with them, and New Zealand youth and youth work specific research also came through in the narrative replies. Many respondents identified the need for greater collaboration between services and support for services to make the necessary connections to refer the young people they are working with to specialist services.

DISCUSSION

Youth work has seen some real gains in the years from 2006 to 2014. We saw a 29% increase in youth workers holding some level of qualification, and a 15% increase in youth work specific certificates and a 16% increase in youth work specific diplomas and degrees – and the 9% increase in numbers coming into youth work from being a student may well illustrate more people are coming into youth work via academic pathways as these become more available.

The increase of 38% of respondents surveyed indicating their intention to stay in youth work between 2006 and 2014 is one of the greatest indicators of change within the sector between the two surveys. It is likely that the initial steps towards the professionalisation of youth work that have occurred over the last 10 years including; more availability, quality and recognition of youth work qualifications, the Code of Ethics and more clear career pathways, have effected change on youth work being viewed more as a career in itself and not just a stepping stone to another career.

Reflecting on the discussion section of *Real Work* it is clear that youth work in Aotearoa still faces many of the same challenges it did in 2006. Though the data from the 2014 national survey shows some encouraging developments, we are still working through some of the very same issues we were in 2006. A complete analysis of progress made on the 13 recommendations made in *Real Work*¹⁵ is more suited to a follow up report, but we can incorporate some of those details here to reflect on the work ahead of us.

This report shows that youth worker wages have not seen any real gains since 2006. With two-thirds of full-time employed youth workers in the 2014 survey indicating they were making less than the average annual income, it is not surprising that the issue of low-pay for youth workers featured strongly in the narrative replies as an area that Ara Taiohi could advocate for change on. It is important to note that a greater percentage of youth workers are making less than the average annual income than the sector wide figures from *Braided Pathways*, which showed that close to half of the wider youth sector survey respondents made less than the average annual income.

¹⁵ Summary of Findings, *Real Work: a report from the national research project on the state of youth work in Aotearoa* (2006), Lloyd Martin page 12

Fifty-nine percent of youth workers surveyed in 2014 indicated their intention to still be working in the field in five years' time, despite below average pay. *Real Work* speaks to this saying 'poor wages, a lack of job security and high levels of volunteerism (which is not a bad thing!) have traditionally been associated with youth work in New Zealand and suggest that the majority of youth workers are motivated by a passion for what they do rather than material rewards.'¹⁶ Any future research would benefit from investigating further what motivates youth workers despite the structural challenges of the work.

A key recommendation of *Real Work* was the need to advocate for 'the value and place of youth work in the health, education, employment, welfare and justice sectors and encourag(ing) these agencies to include funding for youth workers within their own teams'.¹⁷ This sentiment was echoed within the narrative feedback of the 2014 national survey, with advocating for youth workers in schools, being suggested by some as a priority for the sector. *Real Work* 'strongly recommend(ed) that a scheme for funding the involvement of youth workers in schools be investigated and developed'.¹⁸

As minimum qualification requirements for staff funded through government contracts becomes the norm, it will be imperative for the professionalisation work to have advanced to ensure that youth workers don't miss out to a more qualified workforce such as social work. Advocacy for policy such as increasing the role of youth workers in schools would be more likely to be successful if we could illustrate that the necessary pathways to a more qualified workforce were in place. The need for all of this was echoed in the narrative feedback of the 2014 survey with a resounding call for professionalisation, which was seen to address issues of qualification pathways, quality standards and low pay – all identified as priority issues for the sector and Ara Taiohi (see *Braided Pathways* for full details).

Consistency in the standard of practice across the youth sector was a clear concern articulated through the narrative feedback, and as *Real Work* states 'if youth work is to move towards better and safer practice the development of education at all levels, from volunteers to post-graduate research, is essential.' The professionalisation work will need to incorporate support for all youth workers; paid professional, volunteers, experienced but unqualified, and unqualified to be working to a quality standard.

There has been a significant increase in the number of youth work qualifications available since 2006, however there is still important work to be done to ensure the necessary training exists to support the transition to professionalisation. One of the recommendations from the Ara Taiohi Youth Work Caucus in *Te Hautaki o Ara Taiohi Report* was the need for a training database, which has been developed as part of the Ara Taiohi website re-development.

Interestingly, of the youth workers who contributed to the 2014 survey more (28%) were studying towards a non-youth work qualification than those studying for a youth work qualification (19%) – figure 3.13. Also worth noting is that within the wider youth sector survey 42% of respondents who had completed youth work specific qualifications did not indicate youth work as their main role in their work with young people, and 18 of the 23 respondents who held a degree in youth work or higher did not identify as a youth worker. These points are worthy of further research, in order to gain better understanding for our youth work professionalisation work.

¹⁶ NYWNA, *Real Work* (2006), Lloyd Martin page 64

¹⁷ NYWNA, *Real Work* (2006), Lloyd Martin page 65

¹⁸ NYWNA, *Real Work* (2006), Lloyd Martin page 65

Real Work recommended 'that a key way forward for youth work in New Zealand is to improve funding of community organisations, which are currently the largest employers of youth workers'¹⁹. Funding and sustainability also featured highly in the narrative feedback from the 2014 survey and continues to be a big issue for youth workers and the organisations who employ them.

Many respondents also identified the need for greater collaboration between services and support for services to make the necessary connections to refer the young people they are working with to specialist services. This echoed recommendation 14 made by the Youth Work Caucus within *Te Hautaki o Ara Taiohi Report*, illustrating that there is important work to be done by Ara Taiohi in advocating for better resourcing of the sector's work, increased collaboration and more connected services. A recommendation from *Braided Pathways* is 'that a stock-take of the sector is undertaken to contribute to a body of work that maps the sector to support greater provider collaboration and referral pathways.'²⁰

This report shows little change between 2006 and 2014 in the use of regular external supervision. The need for greater supervision rated in the narrative feedback, with some concern being shown for safety of youth workers given the case-loads and nature of the work. Given that supervision is a component of the Code of Ethics and 40% of youth workers surveyed in 2014 were not receiving supervision, this has been identified as an area we need to gain greater understanding of the barriers, and how/why it's being used, within future research. The new Ara Taiohi website includes a database of qualified supervisors and we hope that as this develops it will be a tool to increasing youth workers uptake of supervision.

Real Work pointed to networks as being key to delivering best practice training and supporting greater cross sector collaboration. The need for more local and regional networking opportunities was a recommendation from the Ara Taiohi Youth Work Caucus in *Te Hautaki o Ara Taiohi Report* as well as featuring in the narrative feedback for youth workers in the 2014 survey. Work in supporting existing youth networks and the development of new ones, and their ability to share resources needs to be a focus of Ara Taiohi's work on the pathway to professionalisation, and its work supporting greater collaboration across the wider youth sector. The first component of this work has been the development of a national directory of youth networks, which can be found on our website.

Ninety-four percent of youth workers surveyed in 2014 had heard of the *Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand*, however only 21% had signed up to it and 75% had not received training. Youth worker uptake of the CoE is an important early step as we progress towards professionalisation, some work will need to be done to better promote the code and ensure greater access to Code of Ethics training. This was also a recommendation of the Youth Work Caucus held within *Te Hautaki o Ara Taiohi Report*, and CoE train the trainer work is currently a component of the Ara Taiohi Pathway to Professionalisation working group's work programme.

Interestingly, within the wider youth sector survey; of the 80% of respondents who had heard of the CoE, 61% (n=190) had not self-identified as a youth worker. Despite youth work not being identified as this sub-groups' main role in their work with young people 58% (n=180) of them were still engaged with the CoE (familiar with its main points, been to a training and signed up to it). This illustrates both the broader use of the CoE within the sector, as well as touching on the issue of what defines a youth worker, something that will likely gain more

¹⁹ NYWNA, *Real Work* (2006), Lloyd Martin page 65

²⁰ Ara Taiohi, *Braided Pathways: A Report on the 2014 Ara Taiohi National Youth Sector Survey*, pg 20

clarity as we progress down the path of professionalisation. This has significant implications for the role of the CoE and accompanying training for anyone working with young people and will be need to be considered within our youth work professionalisation work.

We were surprised by the high numbers of organisations targeting some of our more marginalised young people (figure 6.0) and are keen to see that such work is done collaboratively and with the necessary cultural safety, and that all such work is promoted and celebrated. This is an area worthy of further research to gain greater understanding of how organisations are targeting these groups of young people, and the cultural competency and partnership with specialised services approach they are taking. This was an issue raised in the narrative feedback component of the survey specifically in relation to people working with Māori and LGBTIQ young people, but we feel is applicable to any cultural group.

One of the recommendations of *Real Work*, which this report would echo, is the need for further New Zealand specific research – into both effective approaches to youth development and to gain a greater understanding of youth work, youth workers, the sector and what is needed to continue to develop.

The wider 2014 national youth sector survey was not intended to be a follow up to *Real Work*, as its purpose was to survey the breadth of people who work with young people in Aotearoa and reflect the diversity of Ara Taiohi's membership. Pulling out the youth worker subset from the wider data has allowed *Stepping Stone* to supply some needed interim data on the state of youth work and contribute to the process of compiling a picture of the current workforce to help inform the stages of development a professional body will take.

This report has illustrated the need for further research, and we hope it can act as a stepping stone from *Real Work* to helping to inform what further research might entail. A full follow up of some description to *Real Work* would be valuable to gain a more comprehensive measure of sector progress, and ideally it would include recommendations from *Stepping Stone*, as well as acting as a baseline measure in tracking progress that a professional body may effect into the future.

Overall this report shows youth workers surveyed in 2014 as an increasingly qualified workforce, with 64% holding a diploma or degree (an increase of 27% from 2006), and 78% (an increase of 29% from 2006) holding some level of qualification. These are positive indicators that we should celebrate, while still being mindful of the important body of work in front of us.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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