



Feedback on Long Term Briefing Insights

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on a Briefing that will be foundational to the care that our rangatahi receive for years to come. The comments below reflect the views of Ara Taiohi, the peak body of youth development in Aotearoa and Korowai Tupu, the professional body of youth workers in Aotearoa. Our vision is an empowered ecosystem of youth development where rangatahi thrive. The policies and practices of Oranga Tamariki are vital to realising this vision for rangatahi within the care and protection system and for our wider communities.

We particularly welcome the Briefing's multi-year focus that spans multiple parliamentary terms. Consistent long-term planning is vital for the implementation of long-term systemic change. We encourage the Ministry to continue to keep the youth development sector up-to-date with their plans, to give the sector the stability to plan and coordinate appropriate supports for those young people who are engaged with the Ministry.

We would also like to acknowledge the Briefing's focus on implementing a wider 'root-cause' approach. We are always available to work with you and other government ministries to ensure that social investment decisions uplift our many member organisations, who make an enormous tangible and intangible contribution to their communities by preventing, responding to and nurturing healing from child maltreatment.

What does success look like?

We envision a world where every voice is heard, every culture is celebrated, and every young person has an equal chance to shine. We recognise the sad truth that young people who come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki have faced more challenges and adversity than their peers, but that should not prohibit them from having the opportunity and support to thrive.

What changes do we need to see?

Belief in the mana and inherent worth of young people is vital to the plans and ambitions addressed in this Briefing. Mana Taiohi is a principle-based framework that informs the way people work with young people in Aotearoa.

Adopting a strengths-based approach, particularly one grounded in Mana Taiohi, across all elements of the Ministry's work will enhance young people's experience of working with Oranga Tamariki and the efficacy of your interventions.

Mana Taiohi should be adapted across all the workstreams of Oranga Tamariki to provide a solid foundation for working with young people and communities in a wide variety of circumstances, including young people in conflict with the law.

The Ministry's commitment to a care and protection approach is crucial to improving long-term outcomes for our rangatahi. This approach must remain the primary concern of all Oranga Tamariki policies and decision-making and cannot be placed behind political priorities such as an increased emphasis on youth justice.

We strongly welcome the focus on workforce development within the Briefing. However, we believe it is extremely important to extend the scope of the workforce elements of the Briefing to include youth workers, as well as social workers. Ethical youth workers have a separate set of skills that whakamana young people and are an important pou in the lives of many young people. These skills should be harnessed on a national and regional basis to support communities and rangatahi who are in contact with Oranga Tamariki.

We also note the growing reliance on data for decision-making, particularly in light of the government's move to implement a 'social-impact approach' to budgetary decisions, makes it particularly important to recognise the different starting points for young people and communities engaging with Oranga Tamariki. We urge you to consider data in the context of a staggered difference-in-differences methodology when finalising this Briefing and developing policies in the coming years. Singularly focused or narrow data analysis can miss important elements of the overall picture and risks exposing some of our most vulnerable rangatahi to increased hardship.

Going forward

We are always available to work with your team to discuss the issues raised above, particularly the important role of youth workers within the Oranga Tamariki ecosystem.