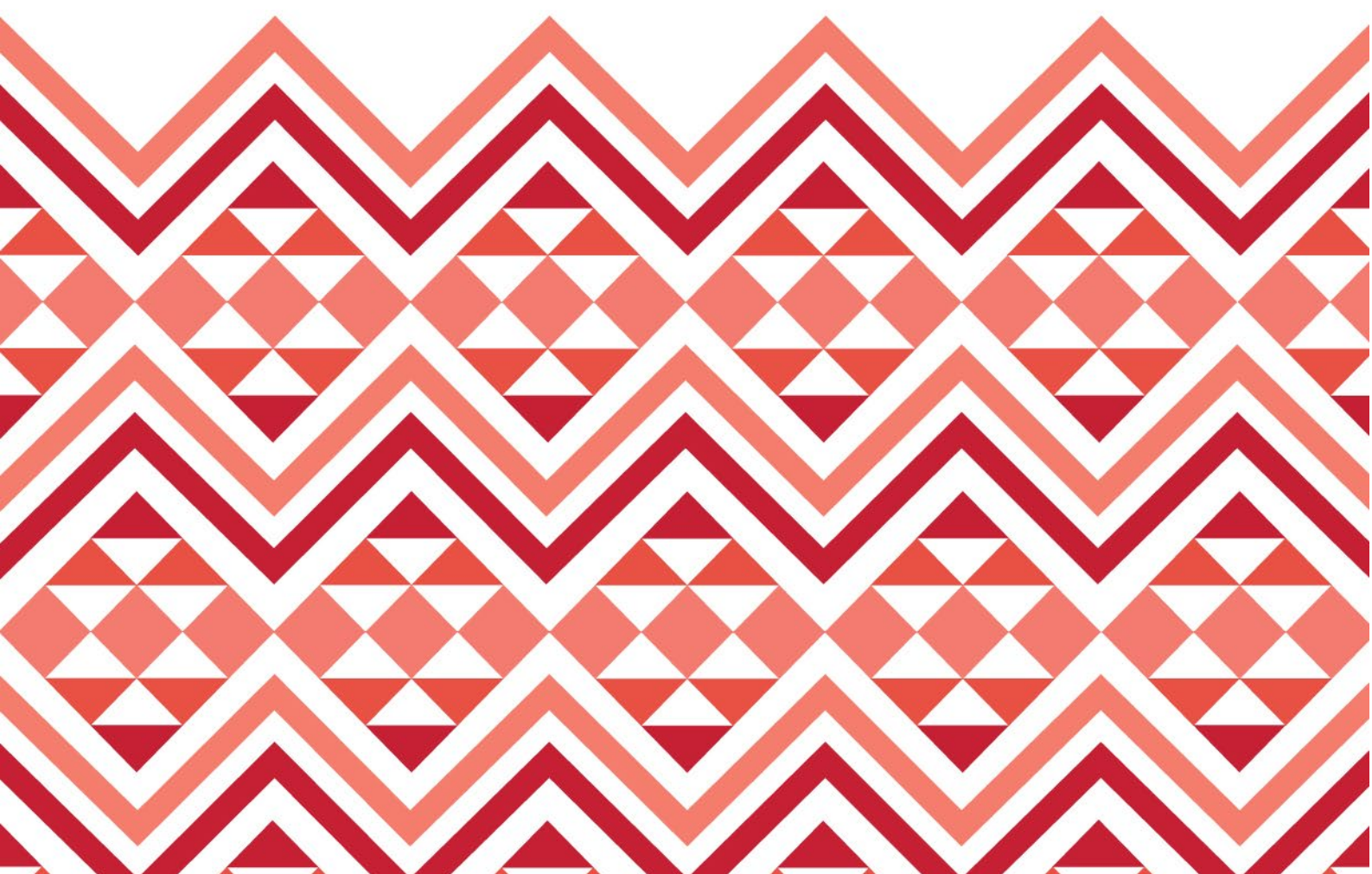




The education experiences and needs of young people moving to independence from care and youth justice

Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

In-depth assessment



"There are so many points in a young person's journey where there is a chance to put in protective factors such as education. This determines better pathways and opportunities" – Care experienced rangatahi, Youth Advisory Group

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Executive Summary

Through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan, Ministers and Chief Executives of children's agencies have made a commitment to prioritise the populations of interest for Oranga Tamariki

The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan and Implementation Plan set out how children's agencies will advance this commitment.

Oranga Tamariki is just one of the agencies that are jointly responsible for meeting wellbeing needs and improving outcomes for our priority populations¹. The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan underscores the importance of collectively meeting the needs and wellbeing of these children, young people, and their families and whānau.

To provide a foundation for this work programme, the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan includes the action for Oranga Tamariki to lead a series of in-depth assessments focused on the housing, health and education needs of our priority populations.

The purpose of the assessments is to close gaps in our understanding about the experiences of our populations of interest, and to set out where further work needs to be done by government agencies.

This assessment addresses gaps in our understanding about the education needs of young people transitioning to independence from care and youth justice

This document is the second in a series of education-focused in-depth assessments. It provides an overview of the education needs and experiences of young people transitioning to independence from care or youth justice settings / placements.

We recognised, in developing this assessment, that many young people leaving care or youth justice will face multiple issues, of which education will only be one (and not necessarily the highest priority for many young people). In addition, rangatahi Māori, tangata whaikaha Māori and disabled young people are more likely to have adverse education experiences.

This assessment has looked at the education needs of this cohort, recognising that for some, these needs could also include supporting young people with basic work and living skills which help them to access educational opportunities. Engaging in education means that young people have better pathways and opportunities to achieve their goals and aspirations.

This assessment builds on the first education in-depth assessment which identified schooling or early childhood education system gaps for young children and young people in care.

¹ Oranga Tamariki Action Plan Priority Populations: Māori, Pacific and disabled children and young people

This assessment is the second education needs assessment and has identified five focus areas where Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development, the Tertiary Education Commission and Te Pūkenga have committed to improving the educational experiences for young people in this cohort.

The education system does not always meet the needs of young people transitioning to independence from care or youth justice

Young people transitioning to independence from care or youth justice have often had negative education experiences and tend to leave school with low or no qualifications. As a result, many do not go on to tertiary education or training, and if they do, are less likely to complete tertiary level qualifications, including foundation level (Levels 1- 2) qualifications. What we've heard from young people transitioning out of care and youth justice (young people) and those supporting them is:

- *Young people are not supported to believe they can achieve.* This often reflects their schooling experiences which prevent them from believing they can achieve educationally.
- *Young people are not supported to obtain basic skills.* Young people often have gaps in basic skills, particularly literacy and numeracy, that impact on their being prepared for, participating in, and achieving in the tertiary education system.
- *Additional supports are needed for young people to be able to access and continue with education.* Many young people in this cohort often have difficulties accessing educational and training opportunities. Some require further knowledge of what is available as well as additional support to access educational or training services.
- *There are barriers for young people accessing financial support to undertake further education.* Young people in this cohort can have difficulties accessing government financial support such as student allowances.
- *Additional support is needed to enable young people to access workplace learning opportunities.* While education is important to young people, many want to be in some form of paid employment. This is an avenue by which young people could be supported into education and training (and earn while they learn).

To help improve education outcomes, this assessment has identified five key areas of focus

This assessment has identified five focus areas to improve the education outcomes for young people transitioning to independence from care or youth justice:

- *Building educational aspirations of young people:* Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, Social Wellbeing Agency and the Tertiary Education Commission will work together to identify how to prevent, reduce, and address the education system’s negative impacts on the aspirations of young people transitioning to independence. This work will also consider how to work with and enable families and communities to contribute to building the educational aspirations of care and youth justice experienced young people. This will also look at how opportunities can be provided earlier to support young people in this cohort to have confidence in themselves and their abilities.
- *Building the basic skills of young people:* Oranga Tamariki will work with the education agencies (primarily the Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission) to identify literacy and numeracy needs of young people and connect young people to services and supports that will build these vital skills.
- *Supporting young people to access and continue with education:* Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, and the Tertiary Education Commission will work together to identify and implement system enablers that will support care or youth justice experienced young people to access or continue to access tertiary education. Oranga Tamariki will develop a life skills tool that will support the identification of basic life skill needs of young people who are entering into the transition support services and transitioning to independence.
- *Improving access to financial support for young people:* Oranga Tamariki will work with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social Development to improve access to student allowances and other financial support. Oranga Tamariki will also actively support young people to live with whānau caregivers, while they continue their education.
- *Supporting young people to access workplace-based training:* Oranga Tamariki will work with the Ministry of Education, Te Pūkenga, the Tertiary Education Commission and the Ministry of Social Development to build transition workers’ knowledge and connections to the workplace-based training components of the schooling and tertiary systems, including secondary-tertiary transitions programmes and initiatives, and to reduce barriers for this cohort.

“The young people we work with (transitioning from youth justice), their education is centred on life-skills. Our approach must be holistic”
Transition Worker (Pacific Provider)

Agencies are required to report back within three months on their response to the outcomes of the needs assessment.

Under the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan Implementation Plan, agencies are required to report back to the Social Wellbeing Board in three months on how they will respond to the findings of this assessment.

Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development, Social Wellbeing Agency, Te Pūkenga and the Tertiary Education Commission will report back on how they will respond to these five focus areas.

Part A: Purpose, Methodology, and Context

Purpose of this assessment

1. This assessment describes the education needs of young people transitioning to independence from care and youth justice settings, with a focus on those eligible for the Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Service (including care or youth justice experienced young people).
2. This assessment also considers the needs of young people who are not eligible for the Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Service, specifically those who have left care aged 12-14. Evidence shows that the cohort aged 12-14 years have worse education outcomes than young people eligible for the Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Service.²
3. This assessment also sets out where further work needs to be done by Government agencies to improve the educational outcomes and achievement of this cohort.
4. For the purposes of this assessment, ‘young people’ refers to those who this assessment is for (outlined in paragraphs 1 and 2).

Advancing the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

5. The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan (the Action Plan) sets out how children’s agencies will work together to prevent harm to, and promote the wellbeing of, Oranga Tamariki priority populations. The focus on education through the Action Plan is prioritised through the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy³, which includes the outcome that “children and young people are learning and developing”.
6. This assessment is the second needs assessment and delivers on Action Three of the Action Plan.⁴ It follows on from the first needs assessment, *the educational experiences and needs of children and young people in care or youth justice*.

² Oranga Tamariki. (2023). *Transition Support Services: Post care outcomes analysis by Transition Support Services eligibility populations*.

³ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. (2022). *Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy*.

⁴ Action Three of the Oranga Tamariki Plan: Specific needs will be identified through Oranga Tamariki undertaking in-depth assessments of need in housing, education, and health with recommendations on how to prioritise access to services for the priority populations.

Methodology and approach for the assessment

7. In undertaking these assessments, Oranga Tamariki has undertaken a thematic analysis on relevant literature, data, and documents.
8. Oranga Tamariki conducted focus groups with:
 - care and youth justice-experienced young adults from various backgrounds (including Māori and Pacific) who provided insight into accessing educational services before and after leaving care
 - social workers and other relevant frontline or operational employees including Transition Support Service employees and Family Group Conference Transition Coordinators
 - transition providers including Pacific, Iwi and Māori based providers
 - iwi strategic partner Waihōpai Rūnaka (a Rūnaka of Ngāi Tahu)
 - key government agencies: Ministry of Education, Ministry for Social Development (Work and Income and StudyLink), Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), Whaikaha⁵, Ministry of Youth Development and Te Pūkenga.
9. The experiences shared by care and youth justice experienced young people as well as those who work with them, have shaped the analysis in this assessment to improve access to education and training.
10. Agencies, including Oranga Tamariki, will work with external stakeholders (such as providers, strategic partners, communities, iwi and children and young people) to progress the actions identified in this assessment.

Context for this assessment

Education is important to overall life outcomes

11. Evidence shows that engagement in education is a protective factor that contributes to good life outcomes. There is an association between achieving NCEA Level 2 and better life outcomes, including lower levels of long-term benefit dependency, lower levels of offending, and greater participation in employment, education, or training.⁶
12. Higher levels of education attainment are also associated with better self-reported health status. Someone with no qualifications is three times more

⁵ Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People did not have opportunity to provide input into the development of the assessment.

⁶ Oranga Tamariki – Voices of Children and Young People. (2019). *Experiences of Education for Children in Care – Part 2: Review of New Zealand Government Data*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children

likely to consider themselves in poor or fair health than someone with a degree.⁷

13. Education is also a contributor to social cohesion and participation. For instance, people with higher qualifications are more likely to volunteer (and volunteer more often)⁸ and be socially trusting (an aspect of cohesion) than those with no or low qualifications.⁹

Education is also linked with employment outcomes

14. Getting a school qualification can make a difference to how much a young person will earn. Those who left school with at least a Level 2 school qualification could be earning nearly 80 percent more by the age of 24 or 25 than those who did not gain any school qualifications.¹⁰
15. Completing a tertiary qualification has the potential to improve the employment rates of young people who leave school without NCEA Level 2. This is particularly the case for those completing tertiary qualifications at Levels 3 - 4 as compared to those completing Levels 1 - 2 tertiary qualifications.¹¹
16. Higher-level qualifications are also associated with higher earning potential. Having a tertiary qualification is better than not having a tertiary qualification, and lower-level qualifications may not result in significant improvements to overall employment and income outcomes.¹² The median weekly income for people with:
 - a degree is about 40 percent higher than people who only have a school qualification
 - Level 4 – Level 6 tertiary qualifications, is around 23 percent higher than for people who only have a school qualification.¹³
 - Level 1 – Level 3 tertiary qualifications is 13 percent lower than people who only have a school qualification.

Colonisation has an ongoing impact on Māori educational achievement

17. The educational disadvantages that Māori continue to face is of critical concern. The education system has not always acknowledged mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori. With its learning and teaching practices being invisible, educational settings have not met the needs of rangatahi Māori.

⁷ Scott, D. (2021). *Education and Health*. Ministry of Education

⁸ Satherley, P. (2022). *Education and volunteering*. Ministry of Education

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Scott, D. (2020). 15-year-olds in 2009, their educational achievement, where they went, and what they earned over the next decade. Ministry of Education

¹¹ The Treasury (2018). *The Impact of Tertiary Study on the Labour Market Outcomes of Low-qualified School Leavers: An update*. Treasury Working Paper 18/03

¹² Scott, D. (2021). *Education, income and earnings – with updates for 2020*. Ministry of Education

¹³ Ibid.

18. Prior to colonisation, education was viewed as a collective process involving gathering, learning, and sharing knowledge about one’s place in the world and relationships with all things.¹⁴ Rangatahi Māori have told us that their sense of belonging is paramount, and that the education setting needs to support them to safely explore their culture.¹⁵
19. In 1986, as part of the Te Reo Māori inquiry, the Waitangi Tribunal referred to the higher rates of Māori leaving school without qualifications and stated that:
- “something has gone wrong. Māori children are not being adequately educated. We think that the system is at fault and has been at fault for many years.”¹⁶
20. The Tribunal went on to say that:
- “The promise in the Treaty of Waitangi of equality in education as in all other human rights are undeniable. Judged by the system’s own standard Māori children are not being successfully taught, and for this reason alone, quite apart from a duty to protect the Māori language, the education system is being operated in breach of the Treaty.”¹⁷
21. The ‘long tail’ of Māori educational underachievement in New Zealand still exists. NCEA Level 2 is the foundation qualification that young people need to access further education, training, and employment. While most 18-year-olds nationwide achieve NCEA (83.3 percent), only 72.3 percent of Māori and 79.6 percent of Pacific 18-year-olds have attained NCEA Level 2.¹⁸
22. This pattern continues into tertiary or further education, where Māori learners have lower levels of participation in tertiary education in the year after leaving school (50 percent compared to the overall participation rate of 64.8 percent).¹⁹ Māori learners are also much more likely to be enrolled in lower-level qualifications and have lower enrolment rates into bachelors and higher-level qualifications.²⁰
- “The negative statistics are always reminders of how we fail ... why do we constantly get reminded of how we fail?” - rangatahi Māori, “Education Matters to me” report
23. Māori learners who achieved NCEA Level 2 school qualifications were also less likely to continue into tertiary education at Level 4 or above by the age of

¹⁴ Ministry of Education (2018). *Te Hurihanganui: A blueprint for Transformative System Shift*

¹⁵ Office of the Children’s Commissioner. (2018). *Education matters to me: Experiences of tamariki and rangatahi Māori*.

¹⁶ *Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Te Teo Māori Claim* (WAI 11, 1986), para 6.3.2

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ministry of Education (2022). *18-year-olds with NCEA Level 2 or above* (Education Indicator)

¹⁹ Ministry of Education (2022). *School leaver destinations* (Education Indicator)

²⁰ Ministry of Education (2022). *School leaver destinations* (Education Indicator)

20 than other learners.²¹ Māori learners enrolled into qualifications at Level 4 and above were also less likely to complete the qualifications.²²

24. Further, while Māori learners and graduates have lower student loan debt than others, it takes them longer, on average, to repay their loans.²³ This suggests that Māori borrowers do not get the same level of return on their investment in tertiary education as other borrowers do.

The government has an obligation to address these inequities

25. The articles of te Tiriti o Waitangi/ The Treaty of Waitangi require the Crown to rectify inequities experienced by Māori and provide adequate resources to address the causes of those inequities.²⁴ This means that the Crown has an obligation to create an equitable and accessible educational system that is culturally appropriate and eliminates inequalities in outcomes.
26. These requirements are reflected in the recent amendments to the Education and Training Act 2020. The purpose of the Education and Training Act 2020 includes establishing and regulating an education system that supports Māori-Crown relationships and recognises the Crown's responsibility to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
27. Oranga Tamariki also has specific legislative obligations relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 requires that Oranga Tamariki delivers its policies, practices, and services in a way that reduces disparities for tamariki and rangatahi Māori, and has regard to mana tamaiti, whakapapa and whanaungatanga responsibilities of whānau, hapū and iwi.

²¹ Earle, D. (2018). Factors associated with participation in tertiary education by age 20. Ministry of Education

²² Ibid.

²³ Ministry of Education (2022). *Student Loan Scheme Annual Report 2021/22*. Note, this data is for those who studied in 2020 did not study in 2021 and would include those who did not complete a qualification.

²⁴ Waitangi Tribunal. (2021). *He Pāharakeke, He Rito Whakakīkinga Whāruarua Oranga Tamariki Urgent Inquiry*. Wellington: New Zealand

Part B: Focus of Assessment

Young people moving to independence from care or from youth justice

28. This assessment examines the specific education needs of young people moving to independence from care or youth justice, with a focus on those who are eligible for the Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Service.

Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services

29. Oranga Tamariki set up the Transition Support Service on 1 July 2019 as part of new legislative obligations to stay in contact with and support eligible young people transitioning to independence from Oranga Tamariki care or custody.²⁵ In addition, the National Care Standards state that Oranga Tamariki must provide young people with the right support and information to access appropriate services including education.

30. The focus of the Transition Support Service is to help young people to maintain and build relationships, networks, and knowledge to support their decision making, plan for their future, and achieve their goals. The service begins while the young person is still in care or custody, and transition workers engage with young people to plan for what they need as they transition to independence.

"They're always there to help me and always ready to do their part so that I can live my best life" Young person, Just Sayin' Survey

31. To be eligible for the Transition Support Services, young people need to have been in care for a continuous period of three months after the age of 14 years and 9 months. The earliest that a person can become eligible is age 15 years.

32. Young people being supported in this service can choose to:

- have a transition worker to work with them²⁶
- stay living with, or return to live with a caregiver, if that's what they both want, between 18 to 21 years of age
- get support, advice, and assistance from the Transition Support Helpline up to the age of 25.

²⁵ The legal framework for the Transition Support Service is set out in sections 386AAA to 386C of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.

²⁶ This support is provided by partners rather than Oranga Tamariki directly. Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services has partnered with 70 community organisations and more than 100 Transition Support Workers to deliver the service for eligible young people. The community organisations are either generic, Iwi-Māori or Pacific based.

33. As of September 2022 1,656, were referred to a Transition Provider and 1,530 young people were working with a transition worker.²⁷ The following figure sets out the demographics of young people eligible for the Transition Support Service:

Demographic		Percentage
Gender	Female	41%
	Male	58%
	Diverse / unknown	1%
Disability	Young people identified that they have a disability	59%
Ethnicity	Māori	56%
	Māori and Pacific	9%
	Pacific	7%
	New Zealand European and other	27%

Table One: Characteristics of young people eligible for Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Service as at 31 March 2023.

Rangatahi Māori are overrepresented in the transitioning population group

34. Overall, Māori are overrepresented in the care and protection and youth justice systems. This is also reflected in the transitioning to independence cohort where rangatahi Māori make up 56%, and Māori and Pacific people (dual ethnicity) make up a further 9%.
35. Evidence presented to the Waitangi Tribunal during the Health Services and Outcomes Inquiry (WAI 2575) indicates that Māori experience a higher rate of disability than non-Māori.²⁸ Given the overrepresentation of rangatahi Māori in the transitioning to independence cohort, it is likely that rangatahi Māori will also be overrepresented in the number of disabled young people in this cohort.

Young people transitioning to independence may be more likely to be disabled

36. The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan estimates that between 10-25% of children and young people in care are disabled. This is a conservative estimate. Current disability measures significantly undercount the prevalence of disability among children in care. They are based on a medical diagnosis and aligned to narrow criteria which are then marked using specific and limited critical

²⁷ Young people eligible for Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services as at 30 September 2022 (as counted by the providers of this service)

²⁸ *Hauora: Report on Stage One of the Health Services and Outcomes Kaupapa Inquiry*. 2019. WAI 2575. See also Health and Disability System Review. (2020). *Health and Disability System Review – Final Report – Pūrongo Whakamutunga*.

information flags in Oranga Tamariki systems. The flags, and procedures around using those flags, have not been changed since 2011.

37. Approximately 47% of young people are, or may be, disabled. While most have one disability, one in five have, or may have, two or more disabilities.²⁹ At least 40% of young people had 'high' or 'very high' level of need.^{30 31}
38. Disabled young people involved with Oranga Tamariki have lower rates of NCEA achievement (20% achieved NCEA Level 2 or higher) than non-disabled young people with Oranga Tamariki involvement (57% achieved NCEA Level 2 or higher).³² Disabled young people are more likely to have adverse educational experiences,³³ and have higher rates of stand-downs and suspensions.³⁴ They are also more than twice as likely to leave school with no qualifications than non-disabled learners.³⁵

The education system does not always meet the specific needs of young people who are leaving care or youth justice

39. Young people in this cohort are more likely to have adverse education experiences, which can lead to poorer outcomes. Young people with any care experience have lower achievement levels in NCEA, compared with those with no care experience. This may impact on their beliefs in their ability and aspirations for further education. For instance, young people transitioning out of youth justice settings indicated they had not known they could succeed in formal learning environments and wanted to continue to learn and obtain qualifications.
40. Young people eligible for the Transition Support Service are:
 - less likely to have attained NCEA than other young people (69% of those aged between 18 – 24 having attained NCEA Level 1, and 51% having attained NCEA Level 2, compared to 92% and 97% of all young people).³⁶

²⁹ Oranga Tamariki (2018). *2018 Transitions Cohort Needs Assessment*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children. Note, because of the small numbers involved, analysis was not always broken down by ethnicity or gender.

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ This study took a sample of young people who were identified by social workers as having 'high needs'. It is not representative of the population, but could be indicative.

³² Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children. (2020). *Children and young people with impairments*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children.

³³ Education Review Office (ERO). (2022). *Thriving at School? Education for Disabled Learners in Schools*. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Government

³⁴ Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children. (2020). *Children and young people with impairments*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

³⁵ Education Review Office (ERO). (2022). *Thriving at School? Education for Disabled Learners in Schools*. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Government

³⁶ These results are not official statistics. They have been created for research purposes from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) which is carefully managed by Stats NZ. For more information about the IDI please visit <https://www.stats.govt.nz/integrated-data/>.

- four times more likely to leave school early, compared to young people with no care experience. Māori and Pacific young people are most likely to leave school early.³⁷
- less likely to be enrolled in school (93% of young people aged 15-17 were enrolled in school as at 31 March 2020, only 63% of those young people eligible for the Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Service were enrolled as at that date).³⁸
- less likely to obtain a tertiary qualification (92% of 25-year-olds with care experience had no tertiary education, compared to 28% of all young people).³⁹
- more likely to spend more time not in education, employment, or training (NEET) over a five-year period than those who had never been in care. 88% of care experienced young people were not in education, employment, or training at some point between the ages of 17-21 compared to only 56% of those who had no care experience.⁴⁰

"If I had to ask for anything, it would have been more help with my education because now I'm teaching myself a lot about business" - Young Person, Transition Support Service

Young people in the transitions population, or who have had care experience, are more likely to have adverse education experiences

41. Young people who are unknown to Oranga Tamariki are generally enrolled in secondary school, and are more likely to receive tertiary qualifications, when compared to young people eligible for TSS, or those with care experience. Figure One shows the enrolment and qualification levels of young people unknown to Oranga Tamariki.

³⁷ Oranga Tamariki Voices of Children and Young People Team. (2019). *Experiences of Education for Children in Care – Part 2: Review of New Zealand Government Data*.

³⁸ These results are not official statistics. They have been created for research purposes from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) which is carefully managed by Stats NZ. For more information about the IDI please visit <https://www.stats.govt.nz/integrated-data/>.

³⁹ Matheson, I. (2023). *A guide for tertiary education organisations on supported care experienced learners*. Tertiary Education Commission

⁴⁰ These results are not official statistics. They have been created for research purposes from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) which is carefully managed by Stats NZ. For more information about the IDI please visit <https://www.stats.govt.nz/integrated-data/>.

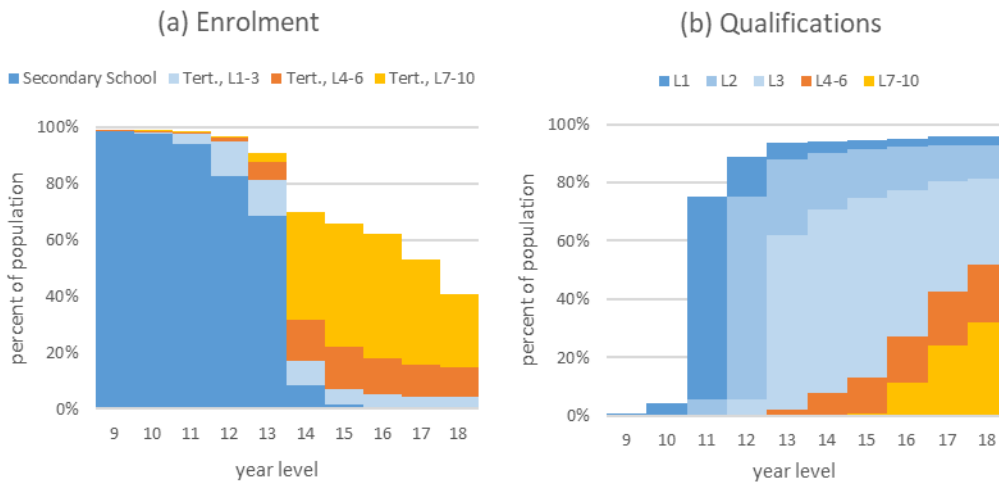


Figure 1: Enrolment and qualifications of young people unknown to Oranga Tamariki

42. Figure Two shows the enrolment and qualifications of young people eligible for TSS. In comparison to Figure One, this shows a steady decline in secondary school enrolments from year 11. By year 13, only 30% of young people are enrolled in secondary school, compared to 68% of the general population.
43. After leaving secondary school early, many of the TSS-eligible young people enrol in NZQA levels one-three tertiary courses, far more than seen in the general population. Only 66% of the population achieve any NZQA qualifications (level 1+) by year 18, compared to 96% of the general population.
44. Many of those who do achieve NCEA level one do not move onto level two or three, with the split across levels one-three approximately even from year 14 onwards (roughly 20% of the population each). This again differs substantially from the general population at year 14, where only 4% of the population achieved level one and no higher.

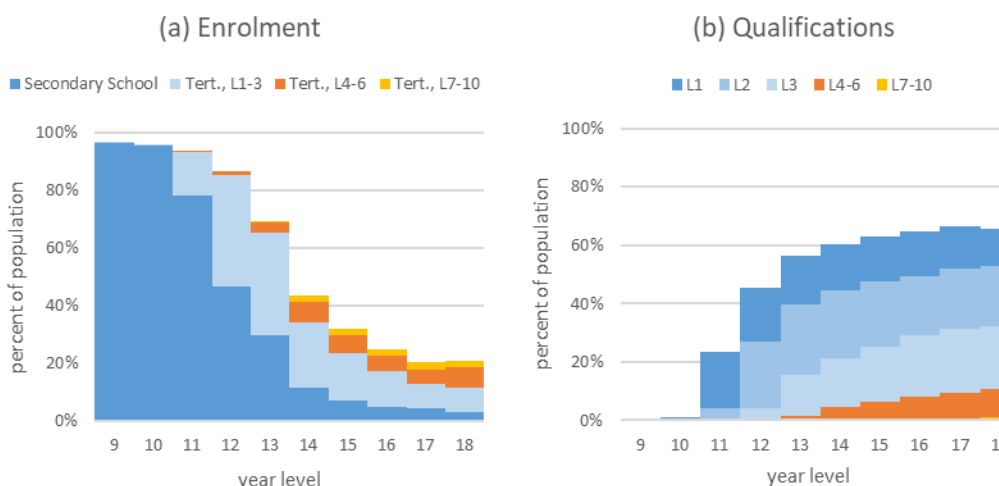


Figure 2: Enrolment and qualifications of young people eligible for TSS

45. When the TSS-eligible population is compared against other populations⁴¹, there is a marked difference in education enrolment and achievement. Figure Three shows that those involved with Oranga Tamariki in some way are less likely to be enrolled in, or achieve qualifications in, education. TSS, youth justice experienced and those who left care aged 12 and older have the lowest enrolment rate and qualification level of all groups.

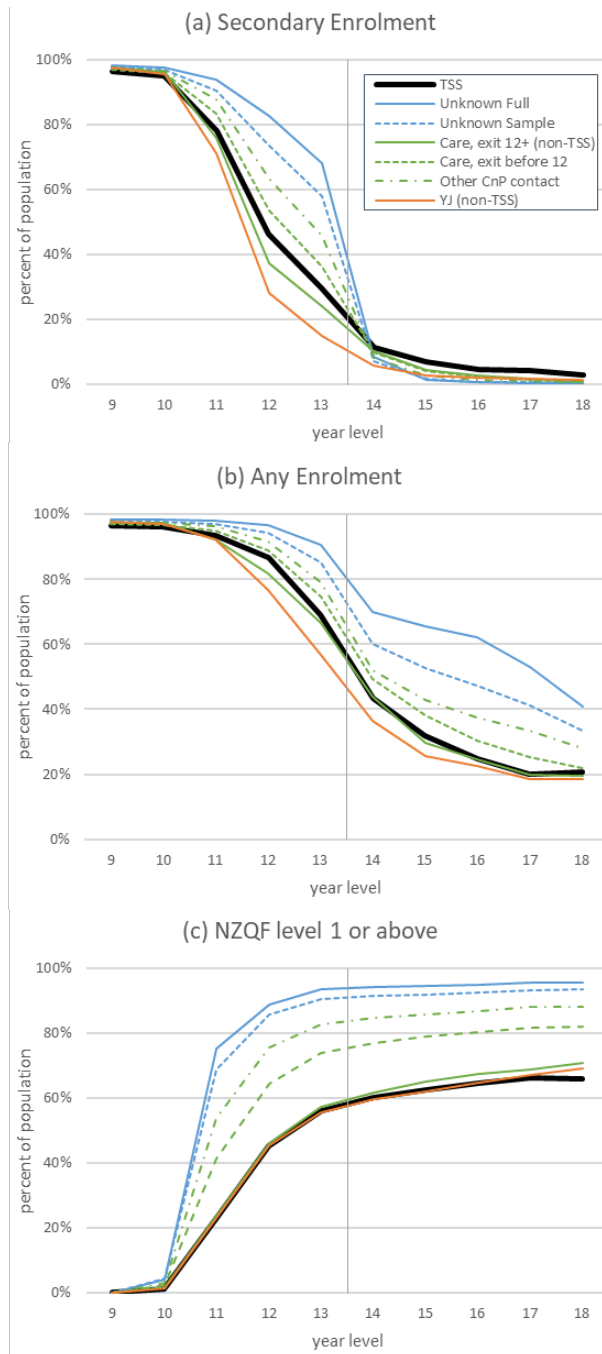


Figure 3: Enrolment and qualifications of those involved with Oranga Tamariki, compared to the general population

⁴¹ This included the general population (listed as unknown), those who match the TSS-eligible population demographics, those who have exited care after 12 years of age who are not TSS eligible, those who have been in care and left before 12 years of age, and those who are involved in youth justice, but not eligible for TSS.

Part C: Current State and System Gaps

46. The education system consists of three levels of education provision, as set out below. There are around 190,000 children in early learning, 826,000 learners in primary and secondary education, and over 530,000 learners in tertiary education.

Education level	Age range
Early childhood education	From birth to school entry age (5-6 years)
Primary and secondary education (school)	From 5 to 19 years of age. <i>Note: Schooling is compulsory from age 6 to 16 years</i>
Further education (tertiary education)	Higher and vocational education (16 years plus)

Figure Six: Levels of education in the New Zealand education system

47. The focus of this in-depth needs assessment is on secondary education and tertiary education. Across New Zealand there are 377 secondary schools, 185 composite schools (schools that offer some combination of primary, intermediate, and secondary education), and over 200 tertiary education providers.
48. In 2021, learners referred by the Ministry of Education and Oranga Tamariki made up 72 per cent of enrolled learners at Te Kura.⁴² Te Aho o Te Kura Pounami (Te Kura), the state-funded distance education provider, is part of the New Zealand schooling system. Te Kura caters for learners from early childhood to the age of 19 and plays a significant role in the education system by enrolling learners who have been disengaged from school. In addition, any young New Zealander who is aged between 16 and 19, and not in employment, education, or training (NEET) can enrol with Te Kura for free.⁴³
49. Tertiary education includes formal qualifications for foundation skills, vocational training, higher education (such as degree and postgraduate education), in work and provider-based post-secondary education, and informal adult and community education.⁴⁴
50. Schools and tertiary education providers have a high degree of autonomy as many are Crown entities, such as universities, wānanga and Te Pūkenga.⁴⁵

⁴² Education Review Office. (2021). Te Aho o te Kura Pounamu: Education Review Report 5 November 2021. Wellington: New Zealand

⁴³ Te Kura (2022). Charter and Annual Plan 2022

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Te Pūkenga – New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology is the new entity responsible for ensuring equity and excellence for all New Zealanders in the area of vocational education. Te Pūkenga reflects the

Other entities within the tertiary education space include Private Training Establishments, and community providers.

51. Along with the schools and tertiary education providers that provide educational services to young people transitioning from care or youth justice, there are also several government agencies involved in the schooling and tertiary education system. Further information on the government agencies involved, and the supports that can be provided, can be found in Appendix One.

Existing education supports and services are not meeting young people's needs

52. Leaving care is a significant transition for young people. It can be a time fraught with feelings of anxiety and fear, especially if a young person is not well supported. Nearly all young people want to be in some form of education, training, or employment.⁴⁶
53. There are limited services and supports that are targeted to address the specific education-related needs of young people. Many of these young people have had poor education experiences throughout their schooling life, resulting in them disengaging from education and having low achievement. They also face discrimination or stigma because of their care or youth justice backgrounds, which has impacted on their beliefs and aspirations. This may be on top of any other discrimination they may face such as a lack of accessibility for those with a disability or environments that are not culturally responsive.
54. The wider challenges that can arise in transitioning to independence are also more acute for some in this population group. Many of this cohort will also face additional barriers in accessing tertiary education and may need additional support for mental health or disability-related needs, unstable or uncertain living arrangements, substance abuse, and the lack of supportive adults in their lives.⁴⁷

Young people have not been supported to believe they can achieve

55. Young people, and those working with them, highlight that previous educational experiences mean that young people in this cohort often lack belief or confidence in themselves educationally. This is partly because young people transitioning to independence are more likely to have been stood down or suspended from school compared to the general population. Care-experienced young people also often face educational barriers because of their

coming together of 16 Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics and nine Industry Training Organisations to provide one national network for flexible career-focused learning including on-the-job, on campus and online learning options.

⁴⁶ Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga | Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

⁴⁷ Oranga Tamariki (2018). *2018 Transitions Cohort Needs Assessment*. Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

care status.⁴⁸ This disproportionately impacts on Māori, Pacific and disabled young people given their overrepresentation in the care cohort.

56. Young people with youth justice experience are also more likely to have been in alternative education in their lifetime compared to the general population.⁴⁹ Additionally, those with youth justice experience feel judged, causing some to become reluctant to engage in education or training.⁵⁰ These types of experiences result in many young people not achieving within the schooling education system and leaving school early.⁵¹ This would impact on Māori young people given their overrepresentation in the youth justice cohort.
57. Many young people need to be prompted and encouraged to think about their aspirations and goals.⁵² However, many young people recognise the value of further education or training, while asking for support to work through how to achieve their educational aspirations.⁵³
58. In addition, those working with young people leaving care or youth justice have told us that young people are often referred to transition providers without a comprehensive plan that does not identify important information such as the young person's education objectives or aspirations.

Young people have not been supported to obtain basic literacy and numeracy skills

59. Those working with young people leaving care or youth justice have also told us that the transitions plan also does not set out any skills – such as literacy and numeracy – that may need to be addressed. The lack of literacy and numeracy skills has life-long impacts – and young people themselves sought additional support to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.⁵⁴
60. These impacts are most likely to fall on Māori, Pacific and disabled young people because the education system does not always support the achievement of these cohorts who are overrepresented in the care and youth-justice experienced systems.
61. Not having a transition plan that identifies the assistance young people need regarding basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, can mean that the young person is not being well supported or prepared for enrolling into further

⁴⁸ Oranga Tamariki and Office of the Children's Commissioner (2019). *What makes a good life? Follow-up report*. Oranga Tamariki and Office of the Children's Commissioner

⁴⁹ For more on the experiences of children in care / youth justice in schooling, refer to the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan Education Needs Assessment on the "Education experiences and needs of children and young people in care or youth justice".

⁵⁰ Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga I Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

⁵¹ Oranga Tamariki – Voices of Children and Young People. (2019). *Experiences of Education for Children in Care – Part 2: Review of New Zealand Government Data*

⁵² Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga I Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga I Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

education and training and as a result, they may not achieve the qualifications they are enrolling in.⁵⁵ Not completing qualifications may also have broader impacts on the young person, for instance, it may impact on their eligibility for fees-free study or being able to enrol into a future programme of study or training.

Additional support is needed for young people to access and continue with education

62. Young people have told us that navigating the educational system has presented many challenges and that they have often had to navigate the system on their own. This has resulted in young people feeling frustrated and not wanting to continue to pursue education opportunities.
63. Young people and those working with them also noted that young people may do well while in residential care⁵⁶ but not when they return to their community. For some, this was because they had not realised they had the ability to succeed in a formal learning environment until they had the additional, tailored support that is available to them in the residences.⁵⁷
64. Transition workers and those working with young people also reported concerns about the lack of education support offered to young people as they transition to independence. The support available through secondary schooling is not available when they leave.
65. Young people, their carers and whānau, have also told us that more support is needed to connect young people into education, training, or employment opportunities.⁵⁸ Young people have also indicated that the people around them (such as staff, tutors, and family) also need to provide support and motivation for them to continue and succeed in further education and training.⁵⁹ This is also more likely to be the case for care and youth justice experienced Māori, Pacific and disabled young people as these cohorts are amongst those for whom the system has not supported in the past.

There are barriers for young people accessing financial support to undertake further education

66. We heard from young people and those working with them that young people transitioning from care and youth justice have difficulty accessing student allowances. The ability to receive a student allowance is dependent on the level of parental income for a young person under the age of 24. Even if the

⁵⁵ Earle, D. (2018). Factors associated with achievement in tertiary education by age 20. Ministry of Education

⁵⁶ Under Section 364 of the Oranga Tamariki 1989, Oranga Tamariki have residences established for both Care and Protection and Youth Justice

⁵⁷ Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga | Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

⁵⁸ Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga | Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

⁵⁹ Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga | Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

parents do not provide financial support for the young person the parent(s) are required to fill in the form and provide evidence of income.

67. While exclusions for this process are in place for young people who are living with or have lived with a caregiver or legal guardian under a Transition Support Living Arrangement through Oranga Tamariki, this does not apply to most young people in the transitioning to independence cohort as only a few are living with a caregiver or legal guardian.⁶⁰ As a result, most young people who are in the transitioning to independence cohort will be required to have their parents complete these forms – even if they have limited or no contact. This enforced contact can result in significant stress, conflict, and trauma for the young person.
68. The need for young people to demonstrate that they have no relationship with their parent or parents can have a detrimental psychological impact on the young person. Through engagement with young adults and transition providers, we have been told that if the young person has any contact with their parent(s), this is seen as indicating that there has not been a family breakdown. However, Oranga Tamariki highlights the importance of children and young people having contact with their parents and whānau.⁶¹ As a result, the efforts of Oranga Tamariki to help ensure connections between young people and their families may result in the young person facing barriers to obtain funding to support them into further education and training.
69. These barriers can make it difficult for young people to access funding to support them into further education and training. It can also leave young people frustrated and disillusioned, further impacting their beliefs and aspirations.

Young people want to be in paid work but need additional support to access workplace learning opportunities

70. Young people themselves have asked for more support to connect them to work, education and training opportunities.⁶² Care and youth justice experienced young people, and those working with them, have told us that while education is important to them, most wanted to be in some form of paid work. Paid work was a means to economic independence and would enable the young person to pay for essential living costs, do the things they liked, to support their mental health, and to feel they were contributing to society.⁶³
71. Of those enrolled in the transition service, 91% of those without a job indicated they would like a paid job, while 62% of those in employment wanted to work more hours.⁶⁴ Overall, 62% of young people had five-year goals that

⁶⁰ Only 56 young people have taken up the entitlement to remain or return opportunity.

⁶¹ Contact in this context can include face-to-face visits but can letters, cards, emails, text messages, telephone calls, photographs, gifts and attending special events (such as sports events or school prize-giving).

⁶² Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga | Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Malatest International and Oranga Tamariki (2021). *Summary result of Just Sayin' 2021*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

specifically related to employment.⁶⁵ However, many young people appeared not to have had the opportunity or support to discuss or plan their future employment prospects in a meaningful way.⁶⁶

72. Young people see finding work as essential to obtaining financial and / or housing security now, as well as to establish a positive future for themselves. As part of their employment aspirations, young people indicated a range of professions, including entering trades or the Defence Force so that they could earn and learn on the job.⁶⁷

73. Given the importance of work to young people in this cohort, and the importance of education outcomes to overall life outcomes, it is important that this cohort is supported to connect, where possible, with workplace learning opportunities so they can be supported to earn while they learn.

“It’s, really, having that rangatahi-centred approach and knowing what it is that you want to do with your life and how can we find the steps to get you there? Is it an apprenticeship or some work experience? -
Transition Worker

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O’Neill, D. (2021). *Ngā Haerenga / Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living*. Wellington, New Zealand: Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Part D: Driving Change through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

Government agencies are committed to improving education outcomes

Funding for tertiary providers has been increased to better support priority learner groups

74. The Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the Tertiary Education Commission, has implemented changes to the Youth Guarantee programme and to the Unified Funding System⁶⁸ from 1 January 2023. While not specific to care or youth justice experienced young people, these changes have been targeted at cohorts that are overrepresented within the Oranga Tamariki population, such as disabled learners or Māori learners. As such, these changes are likely to positively impact on care or youth justice experienced learners.

Expanding the Youth Guarantee programme (Foundation Education)

75. Providers have received additional funding as part of the Youth Guarantee programme to encourage young people (aged 16 – 24 years) with low or no qualifications back into education, work experience and skills training. This includes enabling the recognition of broader learning skills that are not always recognised through the credit-based funding system.
76. Providers have received additional funding to increase the level of wellbeing and pathway support (formerly pastoral care) for young people in the Youth Guarantee programme. This includes increasing assistance funding to enable providers to support their learners' transport needs.
77. Other, non-financial, changes to the Youth Guarantee programme, include enabling part-time enrolment / study to recognise and better support the needs of learners.

⁶⁸ The Unified Funding System funds the delivery of vocational education and training that is focused on learners, supports employers, and addresses national and regional skills priorities. For more information, see <https://tec.govt.nz/vocational-education/vocational-education/unified-funding-system-ufs/introduction-to-the-unified-funding-system/>.

The learner component of the Unified Funding System

78. The Unified Funding System (UFS) funds the delivery of vocational education and training that is focused on learners, supports employers, and addresses national and regional skills priorities.
79. The UFS which came into effect from 1 January 2023, substantively increases the funding for providers to support all learners, but particularly those for whom the tertiary education system has not previously worked well for, including disabled, Māori and Pacific learners, or those with low prior achievement. The learner component of the UFS is intended to support tertiary education providers at the centre of their organisations and to improve outcomes for learners.
80. Providers are expected to identify the unique needs of all their learners, make decisions about how to support them, and allocate funding accordingly. This means that while the transitioning to independence cohort is not specifically mentioned in the groups identified above, the funding could also be used to support this cohort, whose achievement has not been well supported by the tertiary system.

Actions through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan will also help to improve the achievement of care experienced young people through the schooling system

81. Many of the issues facing young people in the transitioning to independence cohort reflects their earlier education experiences which is discussed in the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan in-depth needs assessment “*The education experiences and needs of children and young people in care or youth justice*”. As a result of that needs assessment, the Ministry of Education and Oranga Tamariki have committed to working together to strengthen the support for children and young people in care and youth justice in their education journeys.
82. Other action areas in the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan include progressing a joint work programme to respond to the Education Review Office report *Evaluation of Learning in Residential Care (Action 7)*⁶⁹ and ensuring children and young people with the highest learning needs have access to the right supports (Action 8).⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Action 7 of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan: Learning in residential care – The Ministry of Education and Oranga Tamariki will continue to progress a joint work programme to respond to the Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation of learning in residential care.

⁷⁰ Action 8 of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan: Education high needs review – As part of the Highest Needs Review, the Ministry of Education is working with other agencies, including Oranga Tamariki, to consider how to align services and supports to ensure children and young people with the highest learning support needs, and their families and whānau, have access to the right support for learning to occur.

This assessment has identified five focus areas to help drive change through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

83. This assessment identifies five new focus areas for government agencies to help improve the education outcomes for young people transitioning to independence.
84. Agencies (the Ministries of Social Development and Education, the Tertiary Education Commission, Te Pūkenga and Oranga Tamariki) are required to report back to Social Wellbeing Board within three months on how they will respond to these focus areas.
85. We will monitor achievement through dashboards and evaluations.

Building the educational aspirations of young people transitioning to independence

86. Given the complexities that young people in this cohort experience, support that young people require when accessing further education and training requires understanding, commitment, patience, and empathy.
87. Building the educational aspirations of young people transitioning to independence is key to achieving educational outcomes. Building a young person's aspirations needs to start early in the young person's educational journey, particularly given the barriers and stigma that care-experienced and youth justice-experienced children and young people face, and which impacts on their aspirations and belief in themselves.
88. Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, Social Wellbeing Agency and the Tertiary Education Commission will work together to identify how to improve the attendance and engagement of these young people in education, and identify how the education system could be more responsive to the needs and aspirations of young people transitioning to independence. This work will also consider how to work with and enable families and communities to contribute to building the educational aspirations of care and youth justice experienced young people. This will also look at how opportunities can be provided earlier to support young people in this cohort to have confidence in themselves and their abilities.
89. Oranga Tamariki will continue to work with agencies, social workers, transition workers and young people themselves to identify how to build the aspirations of young people who are within the transitioning to independence cohort, particularly Māori, Pacific and disabled young people whose needs have not always been met by the education system.

Building the basic skills of young people transitioning to independence

90. Literacy and numeracy are fundamental skills needed to support achievement and success. Other basic living and social skills are also important to support

young people to succeed in life, as well as supporting broader educational success.

91. We will support young people to develop these essential skills, as a platform for lifelong learning. For example, Oranga Tamariki will work with the education agencies (primarily the Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission) to identify the literacy and numeracy needs of young people and connect young people to services and supports that will build these vital skills.
92. Oranga Tamariki will develop a life skills tool that will support the identification of basic life skill needs of young people who are entering into the transition support services and transitioning to independence. Literacy and numeracy will be a key part of this.⁷¹

Supporting young people transitioning to independence to access and continue with education

93. Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, and the Tertiary Education Commission will work together to identify and implement system enablers that will support care or youth justice experienced young people to access or continue to access tertiary education. This will include that:
 - Oranga Tamariki and the Tertiary Education Commission will work together to build transition workers' knowledge and understanding of the tertiary education and training system.
 - The Tertiary Education Commission will provide support for transition workers and Oranga Tamariki Contact Centre staff on the use of the Careers website.⁷²
 - The Tertiary Education Commission contact centre support will be available to support transition workers who may have questions when supporting young people with education pathway planning and decisions.
94. Oranga Tamariki is also supporting a tool created by and for care-experienced young people that will provide guidance about tertiary education and training and what to expect.
95. The Tertiary Education Commission has recently published a guidance document for tertiary education organisations on supporting care experienced learners. This, as well as the recent changes to the Youth Guarantees programme and Unified Funding System should help care experienced young people to obtain the supports, they need to undertake and succeed in tertiary education and training. The Tertiary Education Commission and the Ministry of Education will monitor and evaluate these changes with the support of Social Wellbeing Agency).

⁷¹ Oranga Tamariki (Transition Support Services and Quality Practice and Experiences) will work together to develop the tool which will be in line with the Oranga Tamariki Practice Shift that focuses on the relationships that Oranga Tamariki build in partnership with tamariki, young people, whānau, communities and partners.

⁷² The careers website that offers advice and support to help New Zealanders make decisions about their career – see www.careers.govt.nz.

Improving access to financial support for young people transitioning to independence

96. Oranga Tamariki will work with the Ministry of Education to better understand access to student allowances and to explore how access for young people transitioning from care or youth justice to student support can be improved.
97. Oranga Tamariki will continue to work with the Ministry of Social Development to identify whether operational policies can be improved to assist eligible young people for the Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Service to access support.
98. Along with this work, Oranga Tamariki is working to ensure more social workers, young people and caregivers are aware of the entitlement for a young person to live with a caregiver. This means that eligible young people may live with whānau while they are in education.

Supporting young people transitioning to independence to access workplace-based training

99. Earning and being in employment is important to this cohort of young people. Oranga Tamariki will work with the Ministry of Education, the Tertiary Education Commission, and the Ministry of Social Development to build transition workers' knowledge and connections to the workplace-based training components of the schooling and tertiary systems, including secondary-tertiary transitions programmes and initiatives, and to reduce access barriers for this cohort.
100. Oranga Tamariki will engage with Te Pūkenga to identify opportunities for Te Pūkenga and transition workers to support care or youth justice experienced young people into work-based training opportunities. If further system changes are required, these may require support from the Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission.

Appendix One: Summary of support available to young people

Agency	Role	Initiative	Description
Tertiary Education Commission	The Tertiary Education Commission is the Government's key agency for investing in tertiary education, training, and careers services. Its role is to shape the system by investing in tertiary education, sharing information and insights, and leveraging partnerships to deliver lifelong learning, and to equip learners, communities, and employers for success.	Youth Guarantee Programme	Provides fees-free tertiary education at Levels 1 -3 of the New Zealand Qualification Framework (NZQF) for young people (16 - 24 years) with low or no qualifications. ⁷³ This enables young people to achieve the equivalent of NCEA Level 2 and progress to higher levels of study or training, or to transition into employment.
		Fees Free Education and Training	Fees Free Education and Training enables first-time tertiary learners or trainees to study provider-based study fees free for one year, or two years for work-based learning. This enables young people who have not previously studied to study at Levels 3 or above on the NZQF to not pay fees for the relevant period of time. ⁷⁴ Learners will still need to pay for study materials (such as books) as well as living costs.
		Gateway	Provides opportunities for secondary learners to undertake workplace learning integrated with school-based learning, with learning assessed in the workplace. This learning can count towards NCEA qualifications and aligns with the Vocational Pathways. Gateway is offered by approximately 371 secondary schools and there are around 14,389 Gateway students.
Ministry of Social Development	The Ministry of Social Development supports people receiving income support or who are at risk of poor labour market outcomes to participate in employment, education or training through a broad range of programmes. The Ministry's investment in these supports is guided by its Employment and Social Outcomes Investment Strategy. ⁷⁵	Student Loan	Helps to pay for course fees, study materials (such as books) and living costs. Unlike the Student Allowance, eligibility for a student loan is not based on parental, personal, or partner income, however, it is still subject to other eligibility criteria and limits. As it is a loan, it is required to be paid back. The Student Loan Scheme has income-contingent repayments and is interest free for borrowers who live in New Zealand.
		Student Allowance	A weekly payment that helps with living expenses while the person is studying. It is a grant-in-aid targeted to those most in need of financial assistance and in their initial years of study. It does not need to be repaid. The amount of allowance support individual students can receive depends on their income (as well as their partners if in a relationship) and, for students under

⁷³ Note, courses funded under Youth Guarantee that started on or after 1 July 2020 do not use a learner's entitlement to Fees Free Tertiary Education and Training. Fees Free Tertiary Education and Training would still be available to first-time tertiary learners / trainees in their first year of provider-based study or the first two years of work-based learning.

⁷⁴ Note the current fees free policy does not consider the following as prior study: foundation learning (Levels 1 -2 on the NZQF), or tertiary education undertaken while enrolled in school, undertaken as part of a secondary-tertiary programme, or undertaken as part of the Youth Guarantee programme.

⁷⁵ Ministry of Social Development. (2022). *Employment and Social Outcomes Investment Strategy 2022-2025*.

			24 years, their parents' income. However, where a person does not have a parent or person acting place of a parent, the person can be exempted from the parental income test if their circumstances meet the requirements in regulation 4(4) of the Student Allowances Regulations 1998.
		Youth services	<p>Youth Service youth coaches work with three target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those receiving the Youth Payment, which is for young people aged 16 or 17 who cannot live with their parents or guardians • those receiving the Youth Parent Payment, which is for young people aged 16 – 19 who are the main caregiver for a child • 16- or 17-year-olds who are NEET, or who are at risk of dropping out of education or training, and who have been assessed as having a high or very high service level intensity rating, and not receiving a similar service funded by another agency. <p>Young people receiving Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services will not be eligible to participate in the Youth Service NEET however those who are not receiving support from Oranga Tamariki Transition Support are eligible. NEET services have expertise in education, training and employment pathways which provide young people with more specialist support.</p>
		He Poutama Rangatahi.	This is for young people aged 15-24 who are hard to reach and most at risk of long-term unemployment. This programme provides individualised and ongoing support into training.
Ministry of Education	Stewardship role in relation to the education system. This involves setting the policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks, and providing the infrastructure that enables the education system to perform. The Ministry works directly with the education sector to raise student achievement and improve transitions from secondary schooling to further education and employment. It also works with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and the New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) to influence the system and supports available to young people.	Trades Academies	Secondary-tertiary programmes that provide senior secondary students access to a broad range of trades or technology learning opportunities. There are currently 24 Trades Academies involving around 364 secondary schools and approximately 10,000 learners.
		Vocational pathways	Help learners to see how their learning is valued in the real world by aligning standards that can be achieved through NCEA with six industry pathways.
		School Leavers Toolkit	Provides young people with the core skills and knowledge that they need to launch their post-school lives. This includes enabling young people to have the opportunity to learn key

			workplace competencies, financial literacy, and personal wellbeing before they leave school.
Oranga Tamariki		Transition Support Service	<p>Eligible young people can be assisted to obtain accommodation, enrol in education or training or obtain employment in relation to education.</p> <p>A Transition Worker can assist young people with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring options, making connections with providers, and supporting applications to a tertiary provider / programmes • accessing financial support through StudyLink or Work and Income, or other sources. <p>Young people can also be supported to access educational equipment or provided with one-off cost of \$1500 associated with education, eg, fees for courses or halls of residences and course materials. However, the young person must first explore other avenues of funding or financial assistance options available to them, including StudyLink and scholarships.</p>
New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)	The New Zealand Qualifications Authority’s primary role is to ensure that New Zealand qualifications and credentials are credible and robust, both within New Zealand and internationally. They also regulate tertiary education, provide quality assurance of non-university tertiary education organisations, and administer the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.	Tertiary Education Strategy	Sets out the Government’s long-term strategic direction for tertiary education, including economic, social and environment goals, and the development of aspirations for Māori and other population groups. ⁷⁶ Both the Tertiary Education Commission and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority are required to ensure that their activities and investment plans are consistent with the priorities and direction set out in the Tertiary Education Strategy. ⁷⁷
		The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021	<p>sets out the requirements that tertiary education providers (and schools enrolling international learners) must meet for the wellbeing and safety of their learners (including care experienced learners). Tertiary providers will need to consider how their overall systems and resources support learners’ wellbeing and safety. Providers are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build capacity across their organisation to engage and empower learners to manage their own wellbeing • proactively identify and respond to learners who may face additional challenges as early as possible and tailor extra support to meet their needs • respond effectively in an emergency

⁷⁶ Tertiary Education Strategy 2020. The requirements for the Tertiary Education Strategy are set out by section 7 of the Education and Training Act 2020.

⁷⁷ Tertiary Education Strategy 2020