

Kei roto tō tātou rongoā

A community- whānau-based approach to wellbeing
and harm prevention and elimination and equity

Key Findings and Outcomes

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Kei roto tō
tātou rongoā



good health design **hrc** nz

About

The aim of this research was to produce a uniquely Māori, holistic prevention approach that optimises ora ng a whānau with a focus on harm elimination, acknowledging that whānau have aspirational and successful futures.

We sincerely thank the wāhine, rangatahi, tāne, kaimahi and providers who participated in this research.

We are humbled by your generosity, honesty, and willingness to share your pūrākau (stories).

Without your kōrero, whakaaro, and pūrākau, this research would not have happened.

We are grateful to you all and will treasure your knowledge, wisdom, expertise, and guidance.

By weaving your pūrākau and feedback with our research skills, together we can help reshape the perspectives of those you encounter when seeking help for whānau living with violence.

Ko te mauri,
he mea huna i te Moana
Unlocking and unravelling
our potential to heal



Sites across Aotearoa

Wānanga was held at seven sites across Aotearoa



Participants

Wānanga 1 & 2

N= 115 Whānau and Kaimahi

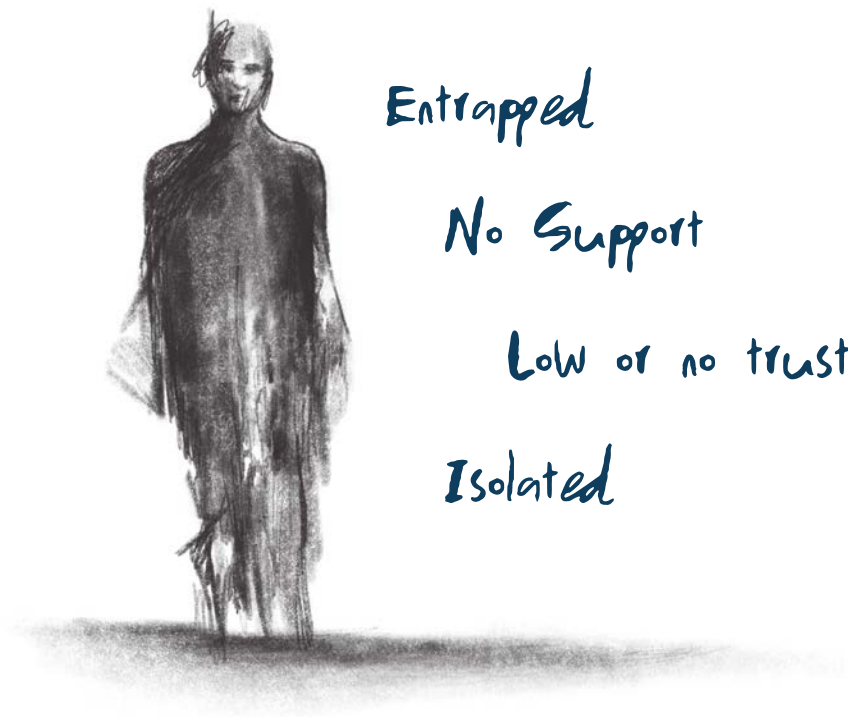
Wānanga 3

So far, n=99 @ 7+1* wānanga

* An additional wānanga held in Kaikohe



Whānau of I



Circumstances

– Violence +/- Alcohol & Drugs

Role of agencies in perpetuating

Disconnection from whānau

Damages that are associated with disconnection

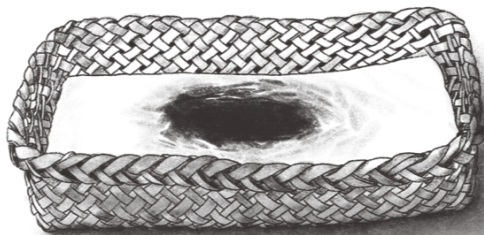
Unsafe Housing

- Not safe for tamariki
- Violence
- Sexual violence
 - *Prostitution*
- Alcohol
- Drugs (especially methamphetamine)
 - *Drug dealing*
- Gangs
- Precarity
- Transience



The Oranga Tamariki Effect

- Leave a path of chaos and destruction
- Whānau rendered powerless
- Disconnection
- Isolating
- Infinite fight
- Shifting goalposts
- Destruction of whakapapa
- Grandparents neither equipped to care for tamariki with complex needs or resourced
- **“Trafficking”**



Layers of Trauma

- Historical/ancestral
- Disconnection and dislocation from whakapapa and whenua
- World wars (e.g. Vietnam)
- Removal from whānau
- Generational state abuse
- Alcohol and drug misuse
- Removal of tamariki from whānau care
- Precarity – emergency house
- Trauma is also rooted in repeated state abuse



Issues

These were the issues that whānau identified and talked about in the wānanga...

ORANGA TAMARIKI

- Mistrust
 - Lack of respectful interaction
 - Shifting goalposts
- Them vs Us mentality
- Inequities in entitlements, services & resources

WORKFORCE

- Lack cultural competency,
- Absence of humanity and empathy
- No accountability

WHĀNAU SOLUTIONS

- Whānau-led – reconnecting to te ao Māori
 - Change generational norms
- Tamariki need a voice
- Access to walk-in and holistic services
- Any door is the right door

Whānau needs

Prevention – they want to know how to stop what they are experiencing

Resources – a variation of things to support:

- Whānau
- Kaimahi

What Whānau Want?

Tools for Wellness

- Rather than tools for healing and fix-ups
- Forms of evidence beyond social media
- Mātauranga Māori informed tools are key

Prevention of Removal of Tamariki

- Processes are unclear
- Misinformation is prevalent
- Lack of information
- Need to work @ whānau speed

Gaps in Mental Health & Addiction Services

- Not trauma-informed
- Need support person(s)
- Need Patu Ngākau* approaches
- Need to know how to navigate mātauranga/
Kaupapa Māori and mainstream

*Note: Matua Takirangi Smith states “... patu ngākau is a strike or a blow to the ngākau, literally an attack, an assault on the ngākau either psychologically or physically...” (p.87)

In Pihama et al. (2020). He Oranga Ngākau: Māori approaches to trauma informed care. Te Kotahi Research Institute

Tāne Violence Programmes

- Relationships are key
- Conducive to Kaupapa Māori approaches
- Need to be enabled to talk about trauma
- Need to listen to hear
NOT listen to say approaches

Oranga Tamariki

- Improvement in OT practices and models of care
- More support for whānau, not just kids
- Being valued and heard by government agencies
 - Supporting achievement of goals



Whānau need...

"Advocacy"

- Have to traverse te ao Māori, te ao Pākehā, te ao Tūre
- Encounter judgemental and abusive people
- Shifting goalposts
- Support before uplift of tamariki
- Act in crisis – agencies cause stress and make assumptions without right to respond
- Non-judgemental people
- Consistency
- Safe places where teenage boys can also go

Mana-enhancing parenting

- Culturally appropriate – te ao Māori
- Being honest without fear of losing kids or being judged
- Rebuilding bonds with tamariki
- Creating routine and structure

Healthy Whānau

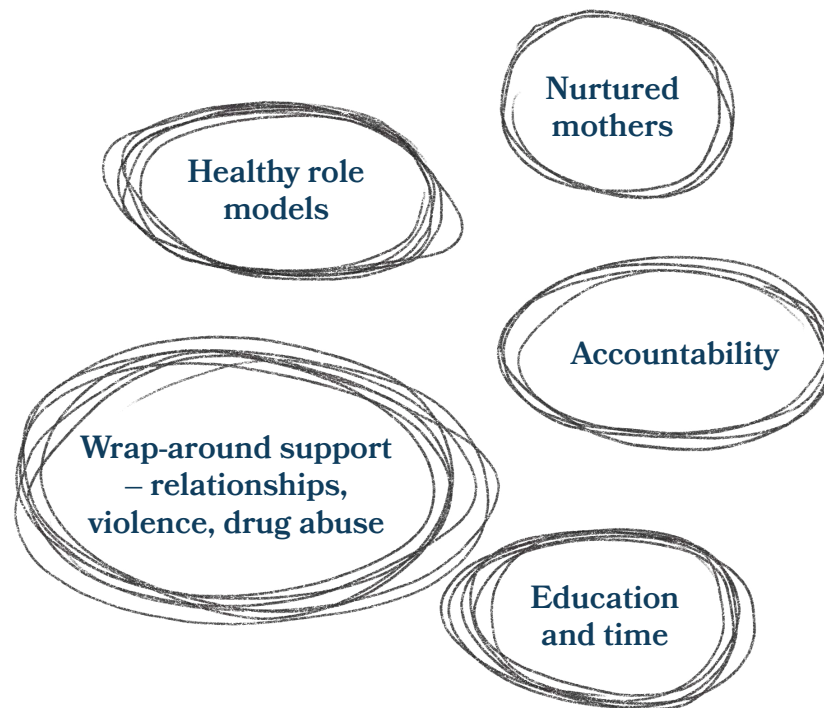


Education

*Learning things never taught
They don't know what they don't know*

- Conversations with tamariki and whānau
- Mana-enhancing parenting te ao Māori
- Rebuilding bonds with tamariki
- How to establish routine and structure
- Unlearning toxic behaviours and how to express feelings
- Restoring relationships and expressing feelings
- How to parent
- Creating safe spaces that feel like home
- Enhancing mana of the whānau

These all need...



- Ā-Whānau, ā-hapū, ā-iwi, ā-hapori (bespoke whānau) solutions
- Prevention is key
- Healing-centred practice
- Mātauranga – Whakapapa - Karakia
- Creating positive environments



Solutions that lead
to positive outcomes

"When I am happy,
my kids are happy"

Kaupapa Māori | Mātauranga informed

Mā te māori, ka ora ai te māori



What
Whānau
Want?



What Whānau Want?

No more struggling

- Change the generational “normal”
- Having a better lifestyle
 - Positive environments
 - Being able to live a happy, normal life
 - Honest living – stability, work, be a good provider
 - Uplifting tamariki and whānau
 - Being honest with self | having a sense of direction
- Building a “bright” future for tamariki
 - Confident happy tamariki and mokopuna



What Whānau Want?

Strong connections with culture and whānau

- Reunited with whānau
- Having my whānau all together
 - Returned from state care
- Strong connections with whānau
 - Having more whānau involvement
- Feel a sense of belonging
- Healthy relationships

What Whānau Want?

Staying Safe

- Being able to trust others
- Process of keeping māmā and tamariki safe
 - out of unsafe environments
- To feel loved
- Being comfortable to do self-healing in future
- Having a say without judgment

Tamariki having their own voice

- How to keep tamariki safe and provide positive support
 - Growing kind, contributing members of whānau and community
- Tamariki
 - Control of themselves
 - Having their own voice
- Support to keep whānau and tamariki on the right track



What Whānau Want?

Healing – “A better me is a better you = a better us”

- Whānau-centred healing
 - Ongoing support – regular check-ins
- Early assessment and research of adult and child behaviours differences
- Self-healing
- “A better me is a better you = a better us”
- Being accountable
- Knowing your whakapapa
 - who you are, where you are from
- Alcohol and drug-free
- Dealing with trauma

What Whānau Want?

To thrive

- Aspirations for a better life
- Better future
- Change the generational “normal”

What Whānau Want?

Resources

- Whānau and tamariki access to resources
- Achieving aspirations
 - Tamariki not receiving a government benefit
- Role models
- Creating change
 - Knowing the track to journey down
- Being a voice
- Build foundations for whānau



Resources

A range of resources were developed in response to what whānau told us they would find helpful.

You can access a digital copy of the resources at www.tāmata-oranga.co.nz/keirototatourongoa/home



Ko te mauri he mea huna i te moana

The design illustrations that came from the wānanga responded to Aotearoa's indigenous culture, whakapapa, and sense of place by focusing on the hidden strengths that whānau shared but struggled to see within themselves.

The illustration spreads consist of direct quotes that were shared by whānau Māori from the wānanga. Through illustration and storytelling, the project gave form to voices often marginalised, ensuring their mana was both acknowledged and celebrated.

Designed and illustrated by Jordan Tane as part of her Masters research.



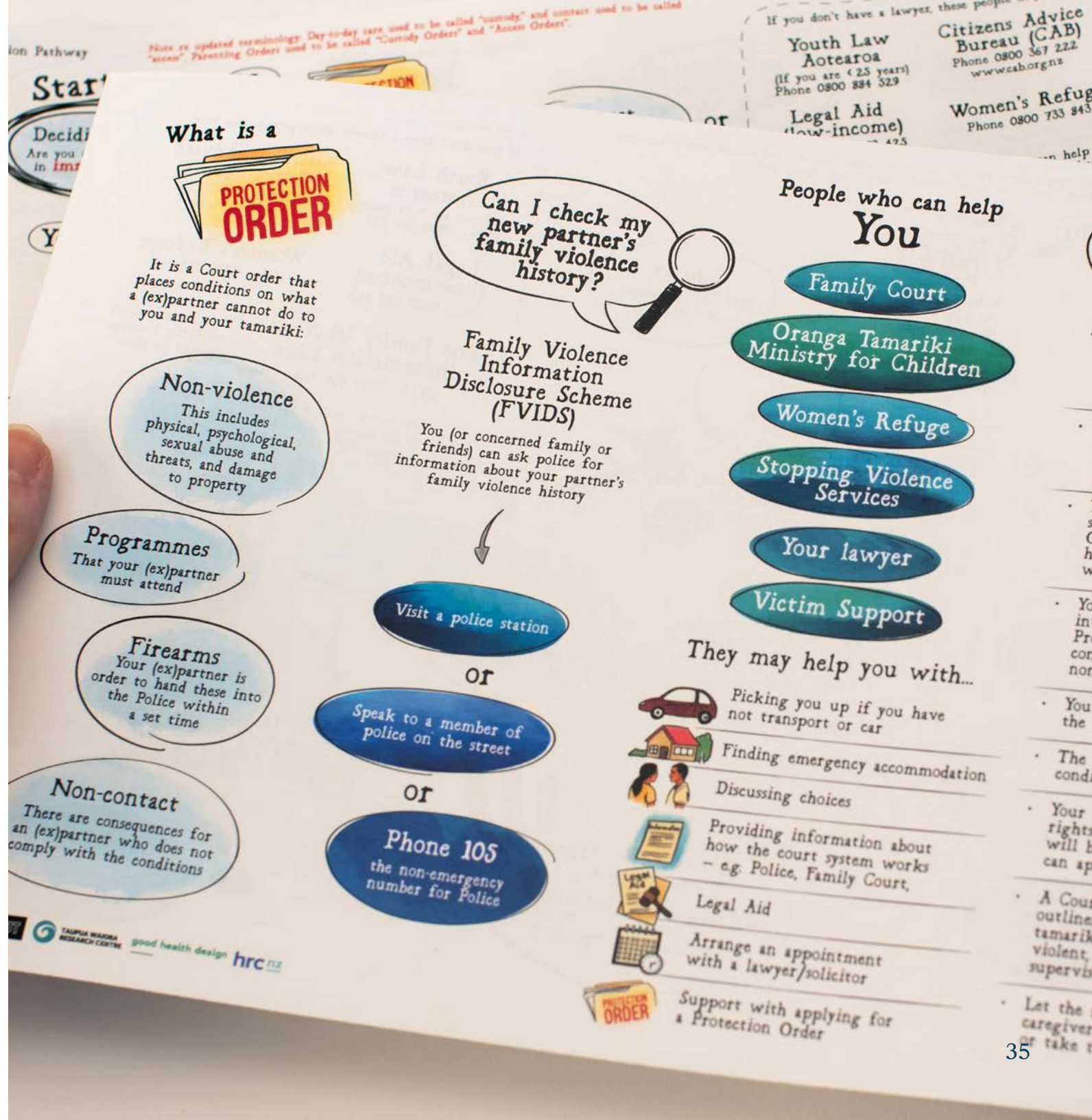
Uplift and Protection order Pathways

Uplift Pathway and **Protection Order Pathway** are two journey maps designed to help whānau understand complex legal processes—tamariki uplift and protection orders.

These clear, accessible resources support whānau to navigate stressful systems, know their rights, and take informed steps toward safety, clarity, and empowerment.

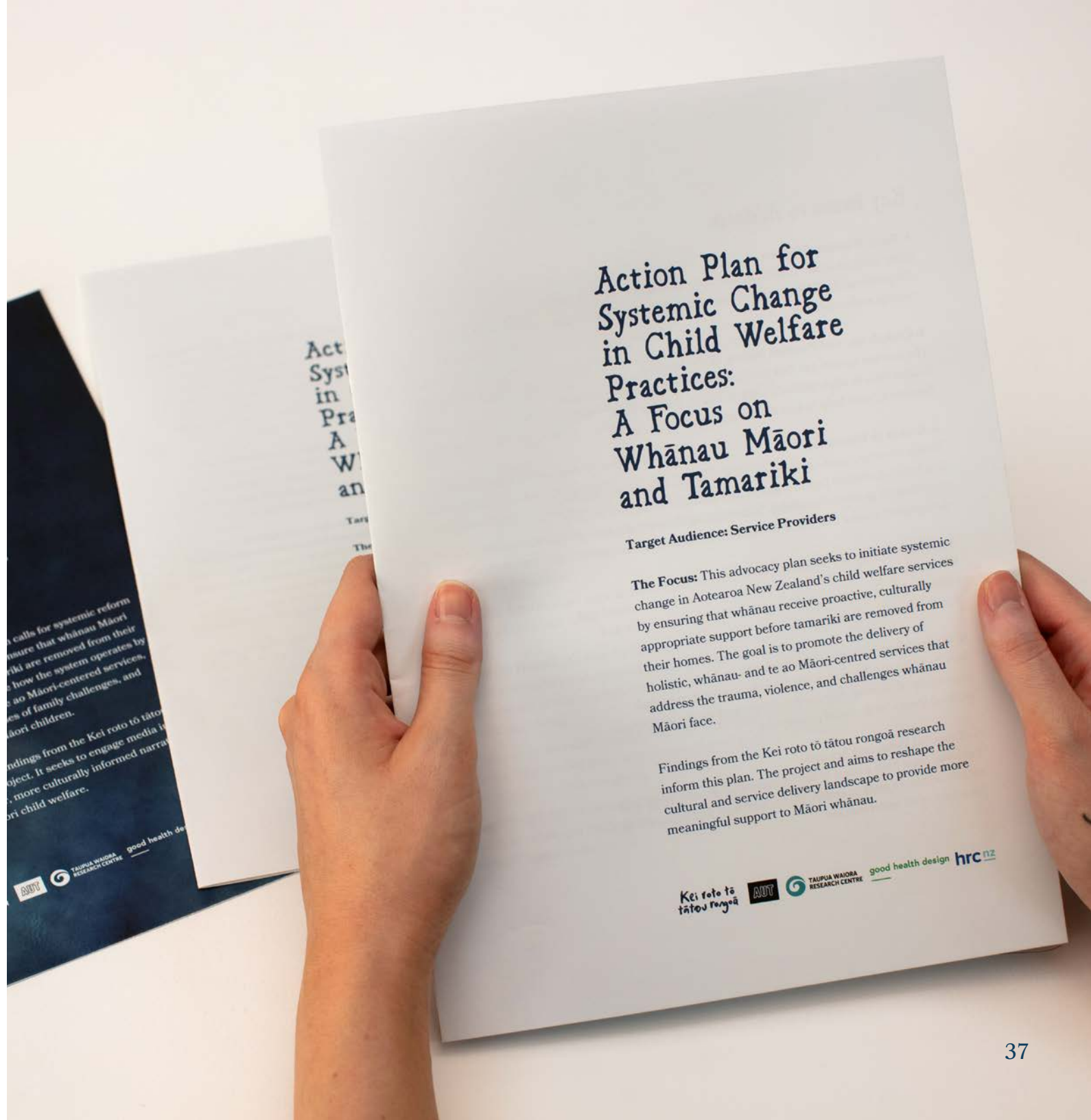
Uplift Pathway designed by Emma Marie Buitenhek and illustrated by Jordan Tane.

Protection Order Pathway illustrated by Jordan Tane.



Advocacy Plans

Action Plans targeting Service Providers, Media and Government and Policymakers have been produced to initiate, create and call for systemic change in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Action Plan for Systemic Change in Child Welfare Practices: A Focus on Whānau Māori and Tamariki

Target Audience: Service Providers

The Focus: This advocacy plan seeks to initiate systemic change in Aotearoa New Zealand's child welfare services by ensuring that whānau receive proactive, culturally appropriate support before tamariki are removed from their homes. The goal is to promote the delivery of holistic, whānau- and te ao Māori-centred services that address the trauma, violence, and challenges whānau Māori face.

Findings from the Kei roto tō tātou rongoā research inform this plan. The project and aims to reshape the cultural and service delivery landscape to provide more meaningful support to Māori whānau.

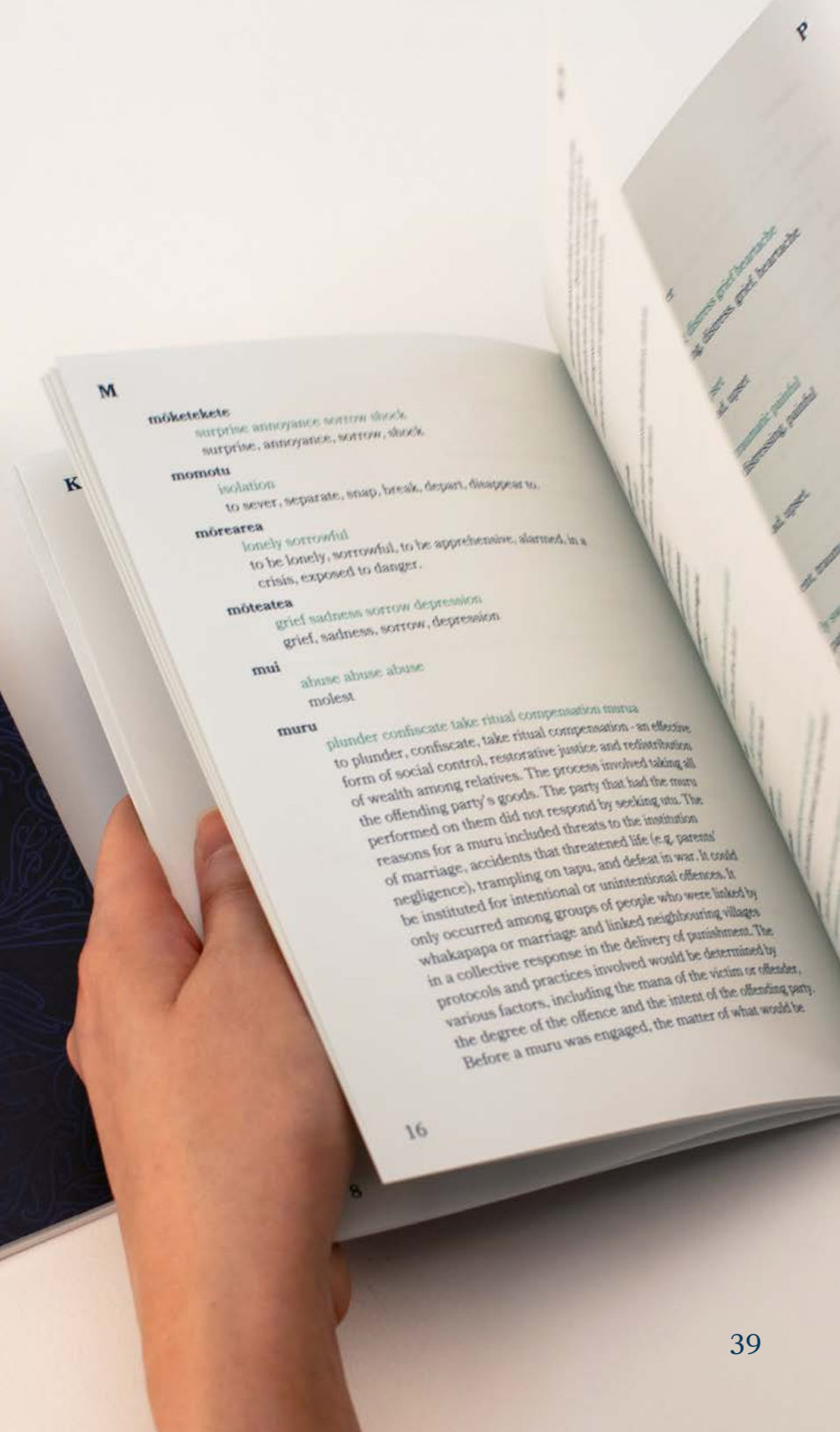
He Kohinga kupu o te Mamae me te Oranga

The glossary of terms resource helps to support whānau to find language for their experiences of whānau violence, resilience, and healing.

It is presented as a glossary of everyday and sacred terms in te reo Māori, designed to empower whānau and service providers with shared, culturally grounded language.

Kupu can be used in kōrero, wānanga, or personal reflection, offering a starting point for deeper understanding, connection, and transformation.

Kupu provided and defined by Tania Ka'ai.
Designed by Jordan Tane.



Shifting Perspectives

'Shifting Perspectives: Whānau Violence' is a set of cards that outline the journey of Marama, a wahine Māori experiencing whānau violence.

Shifting Perspectives: Whānau Healing continues Marama and Jack's journey, offering two card decks that explore whānau violence and healing from both perspectives. Developed from real experiences, the resource invites reflection on assumptions and highlights the power of reaching out, reconnecting, and imagining hopeful pathways forward.

Shifting Perspectives designed by Good Health Design. Illustrations by Janette Ng and Jordan Tane.



Ahi The Fire Within

This resource tells the pūrākau of Mahuika, goddess of fire, which has been passed down through generations in many tribal narratives.

While details may vary across hapū and iwi, this pūrākau honours the essence of Mahuika's teachings, her fire, her rage, her sacrifice, and her enduring gift of transformation.

Written by Alayne Mikahere-Hall, Huri (Jude) Campbell and Denise Wilson. Illustrated by Jordan Tane.

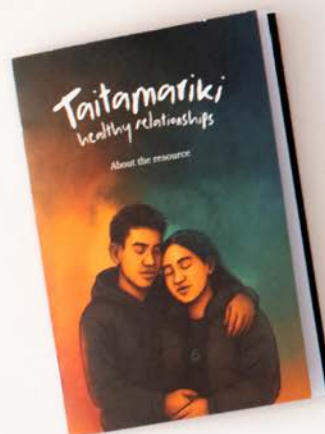


Taitamariki Healthy Relationships

These value cards were developed from kōrero with taitamariki who participated in a healthy relationships project called Harmonised. It is designed to support taitamariki and their understanding of what a healthy relationship can be.

It uses values cards and the Te Whare Tapa Whā model to facilitate reflection on what is important in a healthy relationship.

Taitamariki Healthy Relationships resource adapted from the project Harmonised. Illustrations by Jordan Tane.



Aroha

Aroha is a storytelling resource that communicates the complex layers of whānau violence. It has been reimagined as a flat pack set that whānau and kaimahi can build for themselves to use as a learning tool and healing taonga.



Designed by Bryre Dowling.

Ka mua, Ka muri

Ka mua, ka muri is an educational tool in the form of a tactile interactive story that can be read to whānau members by whānau members to help educate and restore the traditional meaning of whānau.

This tells the story of a Māori tamariki and her life in Aotearoa, long before pākehā arrived. It narrates what and who were important to her, and the interaction between herself and her whānau.



Designed by Jordan Tane.

What Whānau told us they need

To thrive

Staying safe

Healing

Advocacy

Taitamariki voice

Resources

Prevention

Solutions

Strong connections



