IMPACT FOR OTAGO YOUTH

A SCOPING REPORT FOR THE OTAGO COMMUNITY TRUST

“I didn’t give up living in paradise for my kids to have a second-rate life.”

Pacific community elder

Foreword

Tēnā koutou katoa, Bula Vinaka, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Fakatalofa atu, Kia orana, Mālō e lelei, Mālō nī, Talofa lava, As-Salaam-Alaikum, Namaste, Da jia hao and Warm Greetings.

It is my great pleasure to present our *Impact for Otago Youth* research report. Otago Community Trust has long identified youth development as a priority funding area for our region. Over time, our focus on youth has developed, refined and evolved, and in 2017 we positioned Youth Health, Wellbeing and Employment as a key Funding for Change strategic priority.

Our new strategic focus was underpinned by our aspiration to become a more strategic grant-maker. In our journey to achieve this, we identified we need to work together with the youth sector to develop more in-depth knowledge about the challenges they face.

In early 2019, we commissioned Mātāwai Consultancy and Gemma Griffin Consultancy to undertake research into the sector. On behalf of Otago Community Trust, I would like to thank everyone across the sector who shared their viewpoints, experiences and hopes for Otago youth. I would also like to acknowledge the wonderful work our consultants did in a short timeframe to produce a high quality and informative report.

We hope our Impact for Otago Youth report provides you with valuable insights into how we may fund change and improve the wellbeing of our youth in the future.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi
Engari taku toa, i te toa takitini
It is not through the strength of one
but of many that we will succeed

Ross McRobie
Chair, Otago Community Trust
June 2019

OTAGO
Community Trust

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Executive summary

OCT background

One of the key strategic priorities for Otago Community Trust funding is youth health, wellbeing and employment. OCT has been moving towards ways to create impact for young people through funding mechanisms. The trustees told us they wanted a clearer understanding of who and what OCT has been funding, and what real outcomes have been generated for the region's young people and their families as a result of this funding. They want OCT to be bolder and more strategic to meet the areas of most need.

Evidence review

In 2013 there were 42,830 young people aged 10–24 in the main territorial local authorities (TLAs) that the OCT covers (Waitaki, Dunedin city, Central Otago, Clutha). Wānaka and Cromwell are seeing extraordinary population growth. The Pacific population in Ōamaru is also growing significantly. There is a growing former refugee population in Dunedin.

The evidence review collates the key research and models for youth development, and maps the national frameworks and strategic directions that will impact on us locally. Three key issues that impact on young people and their families/whānau are alcohol and drug use, youth suicide and digital access/bullying. Two key youth development concepts are positive youth development and Te Whare Tapa Whā (a model of wellbeing).

Sector perspectives

Community leaders in the youth sector told us that relationships make the biggest difference in young people's lives, and that supportive and consistent relationships with both adults and peers give a sense of security, connection and belonging. Investing in community building and the supports that wrap around a young person's life plays a powerful and protective role for young people, but current funding models do not resource or support this work well. Sector representatives gave us as many ideas of what to fund as they did of what would make funding models better.

Services map

Health and wellbeing services for young people range from acute, specialist care to development and peer support programmes. Young people face many stressors and risks — a complex web of services and support is available, but access can be harder for some groups and in some areas.

Employment services and training programmes cover training, mentoring, job skills development, apprenticeships and work placements/connections. The system is complex and likely difficult for young people and their families to navigate. Most services are in Dunedin. Even region-wide services tend to have their main office base in the city.

Signposts

The Signposts chapter draws together the evidence, sector perspectives and services mapping to formulate discussion and make recommendations. Our focus is to signpost areas for further inquiry, recommend transformation of funding in the youth sector, suggest areas where investment could have significant impact, and indicate pathways for developing funding strategy.

Youth peer reviews

Review 1

First, I would like to thank you for the work you have put in this report. There are many points that I would like to bring up again due to their importance in my opinion. I hope the youth sector in Dunedin and New Zealand will address them sooner rather than later.

The first is targeted funding for Māori and Pacific communities — and, if I may add, former refugees. It is very important to recognise the effects colonisation had on this land and the negative outcomes it still has on the Māori community. Issues that are part of the systematic fabric cannot be resolved simply by applying laws or issuing policies that would ensure equality today or even if they were applied years ago. Affirmative action is needed to ensure that these communities/societies that were affected immensely by the inequalities of the past are able to revive themselves in ways that guarantee that they will be able to maintain their cultural heritage, that which was once ignored and neglected, and allow them to reach a level at which they can fairly compete and thrive alongside the rest of society (Pākehā).

Affirmative action should not stop there — former refugee communities, who were invited to come to New Zealand with the promise of better and safer standards of life, need that type of support too. As mentioned in the report, there is big support for former refugee communities from places like the marae, due to the unfortunate similar circumstances. We cannot simply accept refugees if we cannot ensure they will be provided with the proper resources and support to allow them to integrate and strive for an environment that is fair and safe. Former refugee youth are required to enter school if they are under the age of 16 and are expected to compete with young people who have been part of this educational system for years.

The difference here is that most of these former refugees, here in New Zealand and elsewhere, would probably have been deprived of education for a number of years, and some are also illiterate in their mother tongue. The support they are provided with in schools is nowhere near enough to ensure they can communicate in English even at a 50% level by the end of a school year, let alone compete in subjects like biology, chemistry, physics or English literature. So although educational standards are probably a lot better than where former refugees came from, simply allowing them access to these resources is not enough.

One of the risk factors identified by the Treasury for young people in New Zealand was the inability to achieve NCEA level 2 and its consequences. It's worth noting that some former refugees won't reach that goal due to their inability to reach a level of English that allows them to achieve level 2 in time. Others might, but only because they enrolled in school at a young age (i.e. former refugees who arrived in the country at the age of 10 or younger), and not because of the system's ability to support them sufficiently.

NEET (see p.20) is also very relevant to the former refugee community as many young people at the age of 18–20 are not comfortable in school environments and choose to pursue language courses at the Polytechnic or elsewhere. Some then tend to find a job that requires minimal English, or decide to stay at home. If students who do not achieve NCEA level 2 have an unemployment rate 45% higher than those who attain it, former refugee youth will be struggling to find jobs in the future. Former refugee youth arrive with a big disadvantage of not knowing the language, culture and educational system, and are provided with minimal support.

Many may be living with PTSD, anxiety or other undiagnosed mental health issues and be unable to accept treatment due to cultural differences and the stigma around such topics. The data and findings mainly focus on Māori, Pacific and Pākehā young people in New Zealand. Former refugees, however, are individuals and families who survived bullets, shelling, aircraft targeting, corruption, loss of family, and harsh living conditions in camps/host countries before settlement. They have prevailed once and, if given proper resources, will prevail again — and always will.

If research and data are to be collected on these communities, it will need to be undertaken differently to give accurate results and predictions. Cultural, historical and various other aspects must be considered when accounting for their experience. Nonetheless, there is a lot of work to be done and areas to be significantly improved to guarantee an equal and fair standard of life for former refugee youth in New Zealand.

Sakhr Munassar
Youth advisor

Review 2

Evidence review

With regard to the distribution of young people, it may also be worth noting that the high concentration of 15–19 year olds can be explained by community size and prevalence of high schools in Dunedin city compared to other TLAs; while the large number of tertiary students is a contributing factor in the discrepancy between Dunedin and other TLAs, 15–19 year olds are still worth mentioning as this is a cohort many services will be focused on.

There was a 2012 report on the prevalence of trans youth in schools that could also be used in this evidence review. Concern about isolation of rural LGBTQI youth was raised with Rainbow Youth by Dunedin Pride Inc. at their consultation meeting late last year, so this is a persistent issue partly caused by the fragmented and decentralised nature of LGBTQI support services in Otago. Isolation is particularly problematic for LGBTQI youth because, unlike other marginalised groups, community membership is not hereditary; as such, a rainbow young person can end up living in a community with no other rainbow people, and therefore have extremely limited access to support and rainbow culture.

One element that jumped out at me as missing was measurements and analysis related to family violence. It was briefly mentioned in the Treasury risk factors framework and in the section on youth suicide, but nowhere else. Many aspects of family violence fall into the Adverse Childhood Experiences framework (i.e. experiences that are significant risk factors for mental illness later in life), and given the high rates of family violence in New Zealand I think this is an important factor to explore.

Types of services available are also an important aspect of the local mental health landscape. A major criticism of some services is that the focus has moved to brief interventions; as such, many students (and other young people not at the university) with chronic mental health conditions have expressed that it is difficult to get access to long-term supports. I found this to be true for myself.

On alcohol and drug use, something mentioned at Chloe Swarbrick's student mental health forum at Otago University last year was that an over-emphasis on alcohol and drug use, and an assumption that they're the root problem, is a barrier to service use to some people. Young people reported how being screened for alcohol and drug abuse made them feel as though their counsellor had decided that these things were the problem, even if the issue they'd come to the service for was totally different.

Cyberbullying is a complex issue. While this review handles it well, I would also note that many approaches to cyberbullying fall flat because they fail to acknowledge the extent to which social media/tech are enmeshed in our lives; 'just walk away' type approaches are particularly ineffective, because social media is a key communication site and leaving it due to bullying would have significant impacts on the ability of the young person to socialise healthily.

Digital access is also a critical issue, but also one with more to it than it seems. The issue of access is important, and raising internet access in rural areas will likely help youth (especially LGBTQI youth who have no local community). Furthermore, internet access allows the use of auxiliary tools like e-therapies or online counselling, which can help increase access to services in areas where physical services are limited. However, there is a flip side to the digital divide, which is that upper-middle-class Pākehā people also tend to limit use of digital devices, e.g. being able to supervise their children while doing offline activities; this is obviously related to socioeconomic elements, but it has significant implications for mental health. I'm not aware of New Zealand research on this phenomenon, but there was a *New York Times* article that laid out the argument very well. The proposed solutions to this element of the digital divide are to provide better community spaces and support for families so that they can actually spend time together, etc.

Sector perspectives

Emphasis on long-term work is good. The current mental health crisis means that there is pressure to get people out the door as quickly as possible, but this can often lead to issues failing to be properly resolved and lingering. Increasing awareness that young people can return to a service is crucial to this, as it can often seem like we 'should' be better and shouldn't be taking up resources that other people need — i.e. that the mental health system is so overloaded that we shouldn't go back unless we're in crisis.

Social media/email penpals could be a useful tool in the development of cross-regional peer mentoring.

Respite care such as supported days off is a valuable tool, but we should be aware that it can be used as a band-aid to avoid dealing with structural issues and therefore be cautious with its implementation.

Youth-led projects are a good method of youth development, but can run into similar issues as faced by adult volunteer workers. Navigating funding and organisation is challenging, and more so for young people unfamiliar with the existing systems. Care should be taken that these projects are structured so that young people have support and are protected from burnout.

Mental health support in schools may benefit from training around complex cases, particularly those involving long-term

issues outside of depression and anxiety. For example, students with ADHD and/or autism can be passed over by school counselling services — because the staff weren't trained to consider these possible issues, and the forms of support offered were not suitable (since anxiety and depression can often be caused by underlying issues with ADHD rather than the more common social causes, and therefore resolving social causes does not solve the actual problem).

Agreed on funding issues; I would also note that the current focus on projects and needs-based funding is one cause of a lack of support for young people with long-term mental health issues.

I am of the opinion that the effects of social media on young people are highly complex, and are best understood by people who are enmeshed in it and have taken the time to study it. While service providers have legitimate perspectives, it is very difficult to keep up with the shifting landscape of social media and as such conclusions which used to be accurate can quickly become outdated. It is heartening to see service providers emphasising unplugged face-to-face time, however, as this is an element of young people's relationship with technology and the digital divide that is often overlooked.

Signposts

Using social media to disperse information seems like a good idea, but would likely be difficult to keep up with. The best-structured platforms for this (Facebook, Twitter) are also the ones least likely to be used by young people; as such, an investment in social media could lead to a much smaller reach than anticipated.

Regarding driver's licences, it should be noted that the costs involved are not necessarily one-off. Testing for a full licence is seen as stringent, and many young people report failing over trivial things. As such, the costs of (sometimes multiple) re-sits must be taken into account if OCT decides to explore this angle.

Sage Anastasi
Youth advisor

Acknowledgements

It takes courage for an organisation to look closely at its core business. We would like to acknowledge the Otago Community Trust's willingness to ask hard questions, their desire to learn from the evidence and those working in the heart of the sector, and their interest in understanding one of their key strategic priorities in more depth. We hope this report will be a useful foundation for future thinking and work.

We are also immensely grateful for the time, passion and dedication of the sector representatives we interviewed. We were received with warmth and care around the rohe. The insights shared with us are a taonga we have tried to treat with care – we hope we have let your words shine.

And without our families, none of this would be possible. For our children and the generations before us – this change is for you.

Introduction

In late 2018, the Otago Community Trust started a project to gather information on the current situation for youth in Otago, to inform its decision-making and help achieve its strategic priority of improving youth health, wellbeing and employment.

This report was commissioned in December 2018 as the first stage of the project. Its scope is to bring together relevant data and local sector expertise to provide an overview of who young people are, what work is already happening that can be built on, where opportunities exist and where funding is best targeted. Another aim is to identify areas for future research and analysis. Stage one has a narrow scope as it needed to be produced for the Board's strategic meeting in March 2019. Stage one is expected to inform, and be used for, future work by OCT in this strategic area. It will be designed so the work delivered can be built on in future phases, including to inform potential co-design processes with young people in Otago.

We have answered the trust's challenge by gathering material from the following sources:

- historical OCT funding data and interviews with trustees and the OCT chief executive
- a review of the evidence — both demographic data and the latest research
- in-person interviews with 24 key informers from the youth sector across Otago
- databases of health, wellbeing and employment services in Otago

The broad structure of this report sets out the findings from these sources. Our conclusions and recommendations are presented in a conclusion chapter called Signposts.

The project was delivered by Mātāwai Consultancy, in collaboration with Gemma Griffin Consulting. Together, we have context knowledge of the Otago youth sector and specialist skills in research, interviewing, analysis and report writing. Our combined networks across Otago are extensive, spanning multiple sectors and geographic areas. We also brought in people with particular expertise in interviewing, quantitative research, analysis and design. The report has been peer-reviewed by two youth advisors — one with expertise in migrant and former refugee experiences and the other a mental health youth consumer advisor who identifies as transgender and has a particular interest in issues impacting on LGBTQI youth.

The task now is to respond to the challenge, establish new principles for funding in this area, invest in further research and engagement, and support organisations and projects for long-term impact, youth wellbeing and community strength.

Authorship

This report was written by Anna Parker, Gemma Griffin-Dzikiewicz and Mary McLaughlin. Gemma was the lead author for the evidence review, Anna interviewed all our sector representatives and Mary took the lead on the services map. We had invaluable support from Ian Telfer, who interviewed trustees and analysed funding data; Fiona West, who collated some of the services data; and Shelley Darren, our designer. OCT staff supported the process with advice and funding data. Two youth advisors read and commented on the report: Sakhr Munassar and Sage Anastasi.

Anna Parker, Gemma Griffin-Dzikiewicz and Mary McLaughlin
8 March 2019, Ōtepoti Dunedin

Mātāwai CONSULTANCY

Gemma Griffin Consulting

Cover image

Rewa Pene Photography – young people of Te Aho Paihere kapa haka group performing at the opening of the Waitangi Day community concert in the Octagon, 2019.

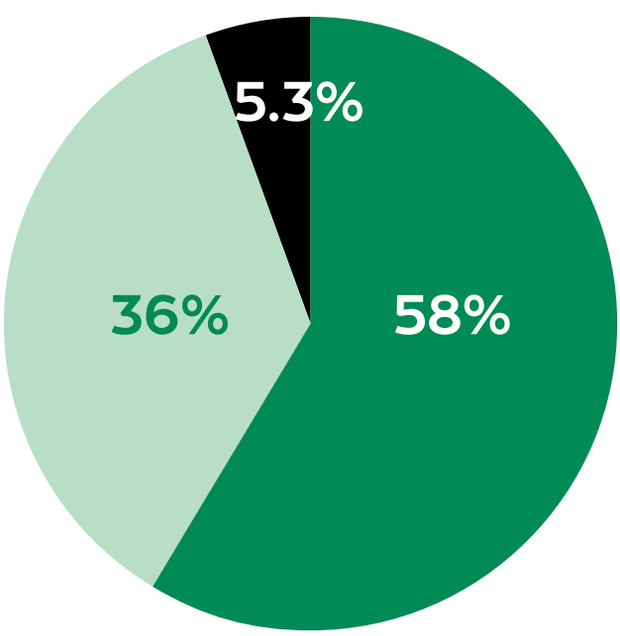
OTAGO COMMUNITY TRUST BACKGROUND

Funding history

Our understanding is that in 2013 OCT decided to commit a percentage of its annual donation budget to pro-actively support initiatives that make a significant difference to the wellbeing of the Otago community. This funding commitment is called the Funding for Change Priorities, and youth health and wellbeing was set as one of the new strategic priorities. In 2014, staff produced a report for the Board recommending that the youth health and wellbeing priority become focused on employment, education and training (Otago Community Trust, 2014). The recommendation was adopted and is still the case, but the actual grants made by OCT over the past four years only partially reflect this decision. The main areas of youth funding are as follows:

OCT youth funding programmes, 2015–2018

SECTOR	FUND	GRANTS	TOTAL	PROPORTION
Education				
	Education Fund Hardship Schools	$327,308		
	Learning Impact Fund	$389,686		
	$ for $ Education Fund	$482,789		
	Other schools & ECE funding	$1,262,827		
Total education			**$2,462,611**	**58.7%**
Wellbeing and Development				
	Youth workshops, events, development	$764,755		
	Child & youth wellbeing services	$710,575		
	Youth other: Chairperson's Fund	$35,550		
Total wellbeing and development			**$1,510,880**	**36.0%**
Employment				
	Community employment programme	$139,325		
	4Trades youth apprenticeship	$82,000		
Total employment			**$221,325**	**5.3%**
TOTAL YOUTH FUNDING 2015 - 2018			**$4,194,816**	**100.0%**

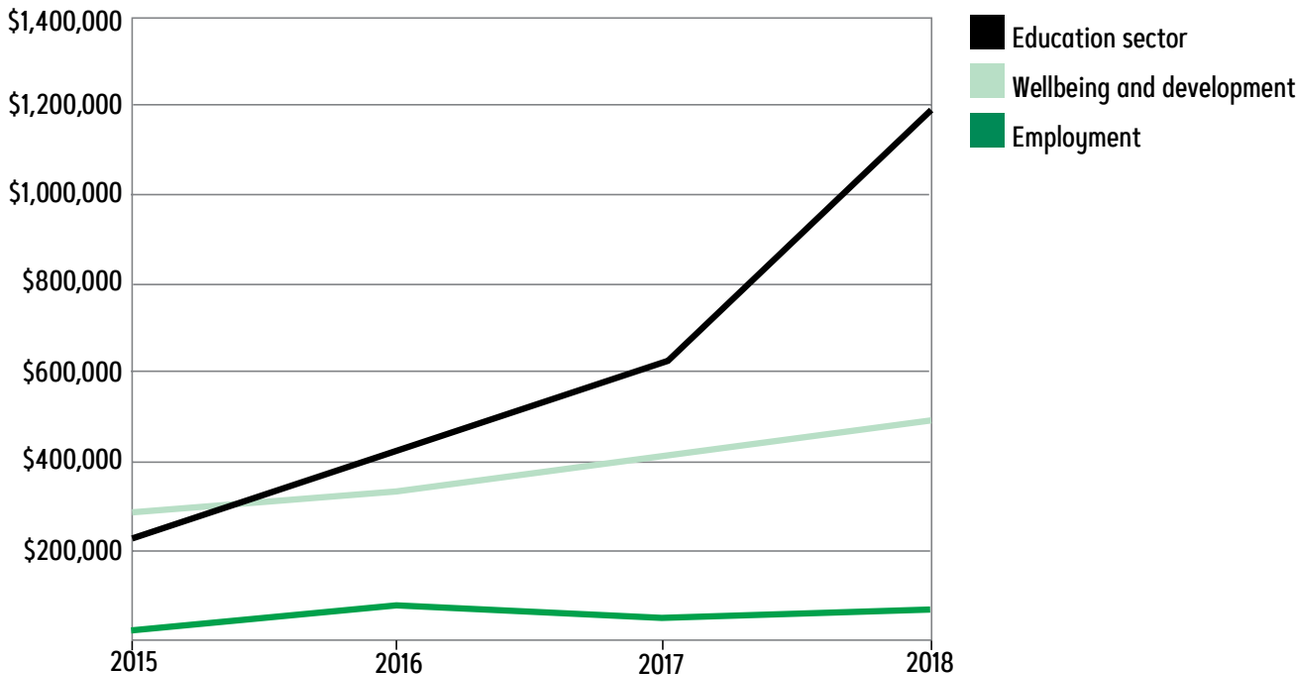


Analysis:

Our analysis of the OCT's grants made in the youth area from 2015 to 2018 shows that a total of $4.2 million was granted and the funding is split unevenly between education (58.7%), wellbeing (36%) and employment (5%).

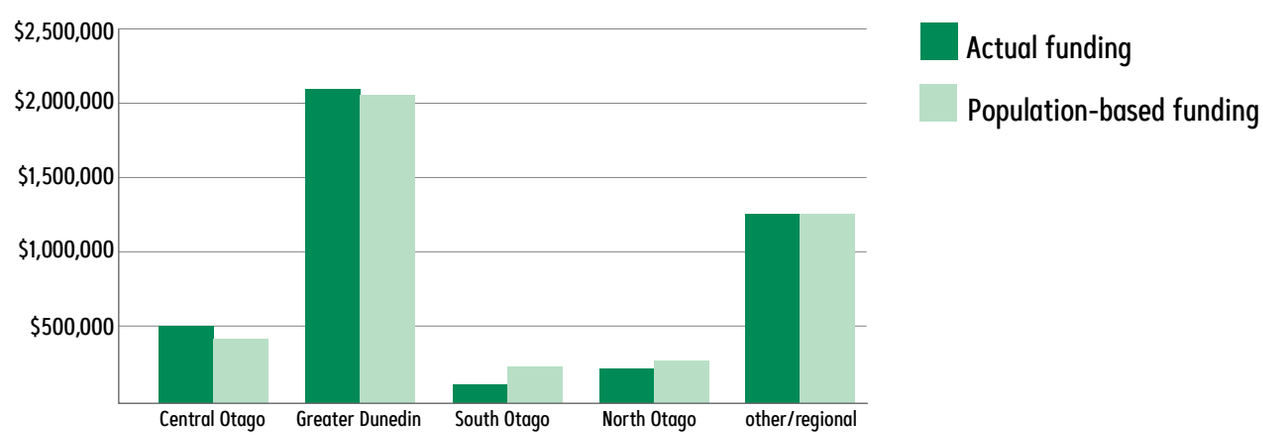
The following graph shows a rapid rise in education spending (which was mainly spending on school programmes), a modest increase in wellbeing spending, and a steady and low spend on employment programmes.

OCT youth funding by sector



Spending varies significantly across the region, mainly in line with where Otago's young people live. The graph below shows that spending in Dunedin is slightly above a population-based allocation, and Central Otago's is well above. In contrast, spending on young people in North Otago is below a population-based level, and South Otago's is well below. Note that the figures are based on population estimates for all young people aged 0–24. Note also that the youth population in Central Otago has risen by around 20% in the past four years.

OCT youth funding: actual vs population-based 2015-18



OCT's five year strategic plan adopted in 2017 created a new funding framework for the whole organisation, with a sliding scale of grants in five categories: community response donations under $10k > community response donations over $10k > capital project donations > partnership donations > strategic donations.

To further strategic grant-making in the youth area, two new education funds were launched in 2017. These have greatly increased the funding for schools right across the Otago region ($1.8 million given to date).

The Learning Impact Fund is to support projects that will lift student achievement but cannot be funded through traditional channels. The Dollar for Dollar Fund matches a dollar of funding for each dollar that a school makes available (up to the allocated amount) to address the learning needs of their students.

We note the distribution of Dollar for Dollar Education Fund grants across deciles aligns closely with the actual distribution of schools — that is, schools across the deciles receive a roughly equal share of the money. An approach aimed at addressing inequity would likely show the greater distribution of funds going to schools in the lower decile bands.

Trustee perspectives

To anchor our report process with an understanding of OCT's context and specific needs, we interviewed all ten current trustees and the trust's chief executive. Interviews were conducted in-person or by phone. Some trustees also sent written comments, as did a recent ex-trustee, Lauren Semple. What follows is a synthesis of your views as trustees.

Background

Around the middle of last year, five new trustees (out of 11) were appointed. The trustees believe OCT is generally in good shape, yet feel they have a responsibility to lead change where needed, rather than just continuing to do things the same way as in the past.

This is particularly true for the youth health, wellbeing and employment priority. The new trustees want a clearer understanding of who and what OCT has been funding, and what real outcomes have been generated for the region's young people and their families as a result of this funding.

The longer-standing trustees largely share these concerns and feel it is time for a renewed focus on Otago's young people as a priority funding area. They want OCT to be bolder and more strategic to meet the areas of most need.

The trustees bring a wide range of experience in the youth area. Three or four trustees have deep experience in the youth sector, but most do not feel they yet have the knowledge or evaluation tools to direct funding to the right places. They would like help to make more informed and conscious decisions.

A few years ago, OCT set what some have called the "big, hairy, audacious goal" of making sure every Otago young person is able to reach their potential.[1] However, the trustees feel that how this will be achieved in practice has not been defined strongly enough. Without a clear kaupapa, OCT tends to assign funded projects into the youth category after the fact, rather than driving towards and prioritising such projects for its backing.

In various ways, all trustees said they need this report to help them understand the major challenges for the region's young people, what could be done to support them and where the service network has gaps.

Clear consensus areas

Some clear areas of consensus emerged from our interviews. As a whole trustees told us:

- They want to do more with OCT's youth priority area — expand the funding, invest more energy and focus, and get a much greater benefit for Otago's young people.
- To do this, they want to find an area or a few areas of specific need and potential where OCT can make a major impact. One person said "you could drive a bus through the youth priority area", referencing the priority's broadness and OCT's reluctance to use the priority to drive its funding decisions.
- OCT has traditionally funded up to 25% of any organisation's project budget. This has been based on the principle of being a part-funder both to reach as many organisations as possible and to reduce reliance on philanthropy. But trustees feel this might have to change to enable youth projects to make a major impact. There is interest in providing multi-year and 75–100% project funding for the right projects and organisations.
- Trustees feel their pictures of the youth sector and OCT funding is too muddy, not tangible enough. They want to make more conscious, informed decisions.
- Trustees want a more robust framework for making grant decisions and evaluating projects' impact. Some feel the board relies too much on the few knowledgeable trustees, and they have too little evidence that the funding given in the past is changing anything. Some want hard measures developed to assess progress, such as indicators of youth poverty in Otago such as the number of children who can't afford a school uniform.
- School-based programmes have been one of the main areas funded under the youth priority in the past few years. Trustees are looking to encourage greater evaluation to assess the impact of this funding.
- Trustees want projects that transform young people's lives, with a focus on building strength and resilience rather than 'band-aids' or 'ambulance work'.
- There is a strong consensus on investing in family/ whānau work, or wider whānau programmes including families, plus early childhood, plus schools — holistic programmes that work with young people and their families together — if the evidence

shows such programmes are effective. Most or all trustees believe the most important grounding for healthy young people is the stability, continuity, identity and love provided by strong, positive family, whether the shape of that is parental or wider whānau support.

• There is quite a lot of consensus that youth wellbeing could become a new core focus. There is strong interest in funding mental health support and resilience building with young people.

• Trustees are deeply concerned about the level of youth suicide in Otago and want to help, but are wary of getting involved in an area seen as primarily a government health responsibility.

• Trustees see OCT's role as an 'enabler' — something more than a traditional funder, but not itself a creator of programmes. A backer for communities to strengthen themselves and organisations making a difference.

• Nearly all trustees emphasised the need to build collaboration between sector players to overcome duplication and competition.

• Trustees emphasised the need to fund projects right across the Otago region (except Queenstown which has its own trust) rather than meeting the needs of Dunedin youth only.

Areas of emerging consensus

Most, though not all, trustees, made the following points:

• The age range targeted by the youth priority should be clarified, and should include children, probably covering a range of 0–24 years. Trustees pointed to growing evidence that the earlier the intervention/support for young people and their families begins, the more effective it is. Some suggested the focus should be 4–13 years. Some think 18 years old should be the upper limit, but others said it should align with the health (and youth suicide) definition to take account of post-school needs.

• Some trustees strongly believe inequality or poverty should be explicit areas of focus; for others, dedicated support for Māori and Pacific youth is key. For some, the focus should be disability and other systemic disadvantages. Some trustees are wary of focusing on any particular communities or groups, or of straying into core government work in health or social welfare.

• Many feel OCT is good at 'bricks and mortar' projects but needs to get better at social projects.

• Some trustees emphasised education as the key for young people, others identity, connectedness and access to opportunities.

Interesting ideas to consider

• Mental health could be set as a specific but time-limited priority in response to the government inquiry. The idea is that it will take the government three to five years to overhaul the sector, and OCT can fund a lot of important work in the area in the interim. (However, this is seen by some trustees as core government health business, not something OCT should get into.)

• To get better, more useful and honest reporting, OCT could fund external people/consultants to evaluate projects during and at the end of them. Evaluators would collect the stories, interviewing staff, volunteers and young people. They would then write up and report back the outcomes and things learnt.

• OCT could employ a youth advisor (potentially a fixed-term position at OCT to develop the priority areas, work with agencies, and carry out or co-ordinate the evaluation process).

1. We're not sure exactly when this goal was set, but it seems to be an aspirational goal rather than directing individual funding decisions.

EVIDENCE REVIEW

This evidence review is intended to provide an overview of what is currently known about youth living in Otago. It brings together demographic data, sector information and key statistics relating to youth wellbeing, health and employment. Where possible, data is interpreted for an Otago context. Key research and documents about youth development are also summarised. Areas needing deeper investigation are highlighted for future consideration.

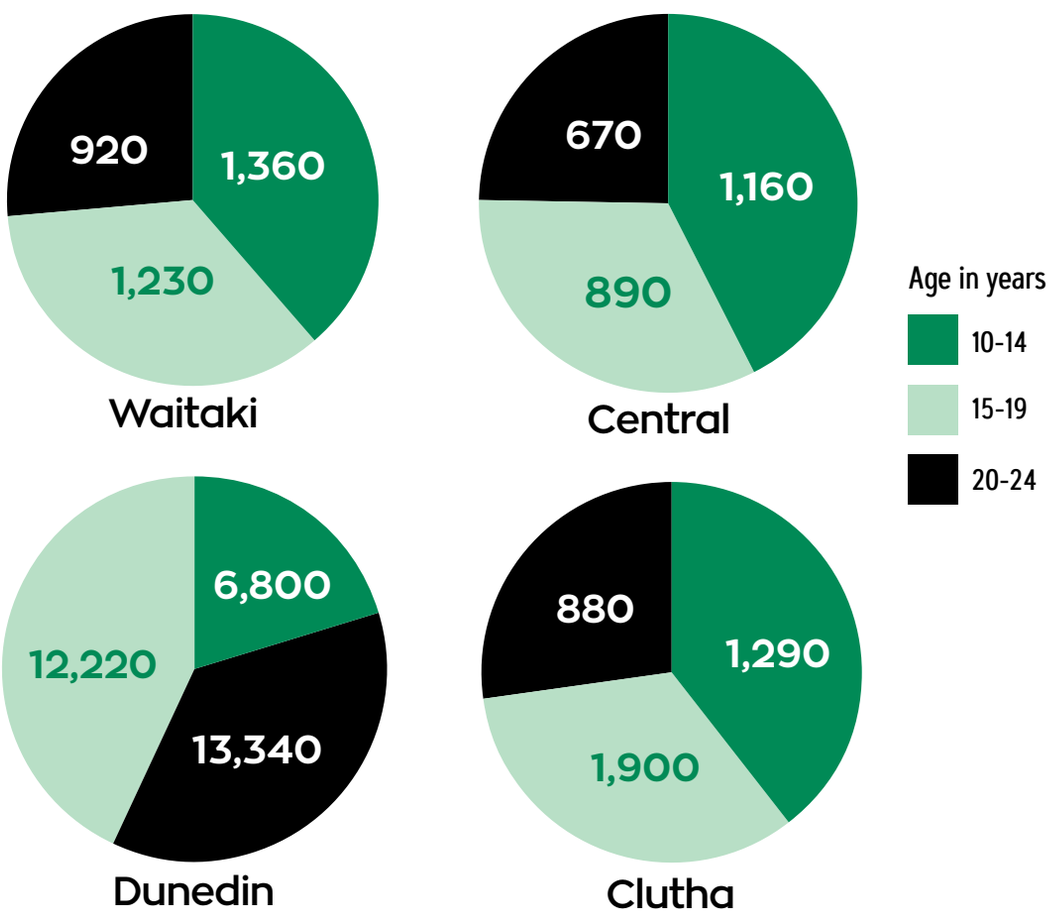
Youth in Otago: what do we know?

In this report, 'youth' is defined as those aged 12–24 — this is the definition most commonly used in the youth development literature. For some key indicators, however, data is only available for a smaller subgroup of youth, for example those who are attending school. Other indicators include people slightly outside the age range. The age range that each indicator covers is clearly indicated throughout the report. While key policy documents in New Zealand define youth as 12–24, national census data does not easily align to this age range. Most published census data uses three age groups: 10–14; 15–19; 20–24, so the census-based indicators used in this report include 10 and 11 year olds.

Number, location and ethnicity of young people

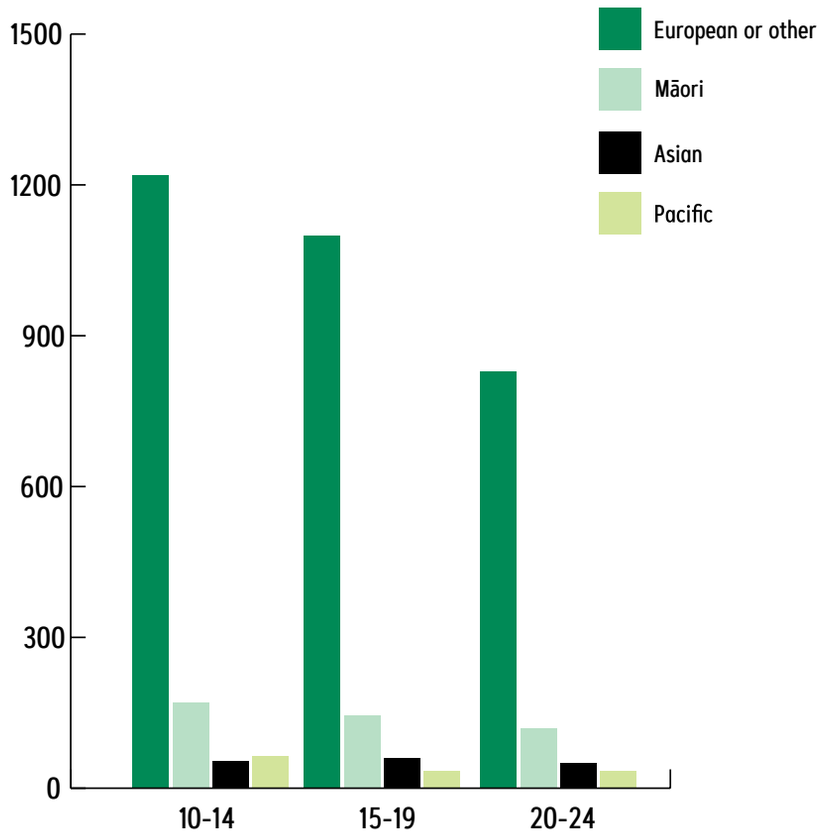
The most recent available data on the total youth population is from the 2013 census. It found that in 2013 there were 42,830 young people aged 10–24 in the main territorial local authorities (TLAs) that the Otago Community Trust covers (Waitaki, Dunedin city, Central Otago, Clutha) (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). See Appendix 2.

Total youth population by TLA and age 2013 (Statistics New Zealand, 2013)

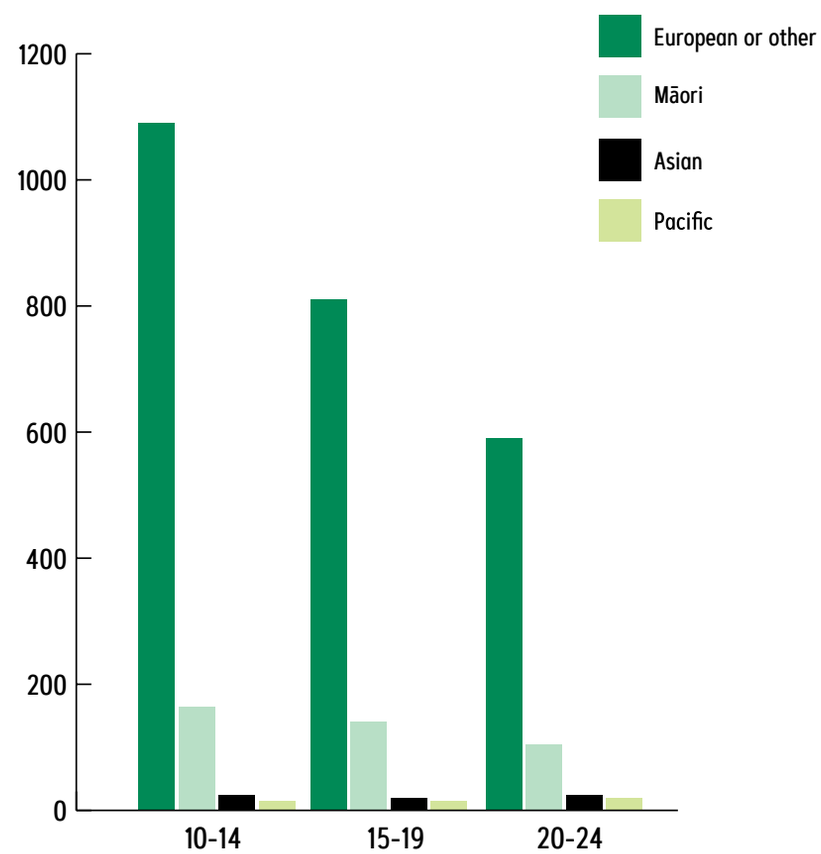


In all of the TLAs except Dunedin city, the largest proportion of the youth population is 10–14 year olds. Dunedin has a very different age distribution. There, 10–14 year olds are the smallest group and a much larger proportion of youth is aged 15–19 and 20–24. This is mostly due to the number of young people who move to Dunedin to study at the University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic. Across all the TLAs, there were 4,980 Māori youth and 1,450 Pacific youth. However, the TLAs do vary considerably in size and in their ethnic diversity, as shown in the tables on the next page.

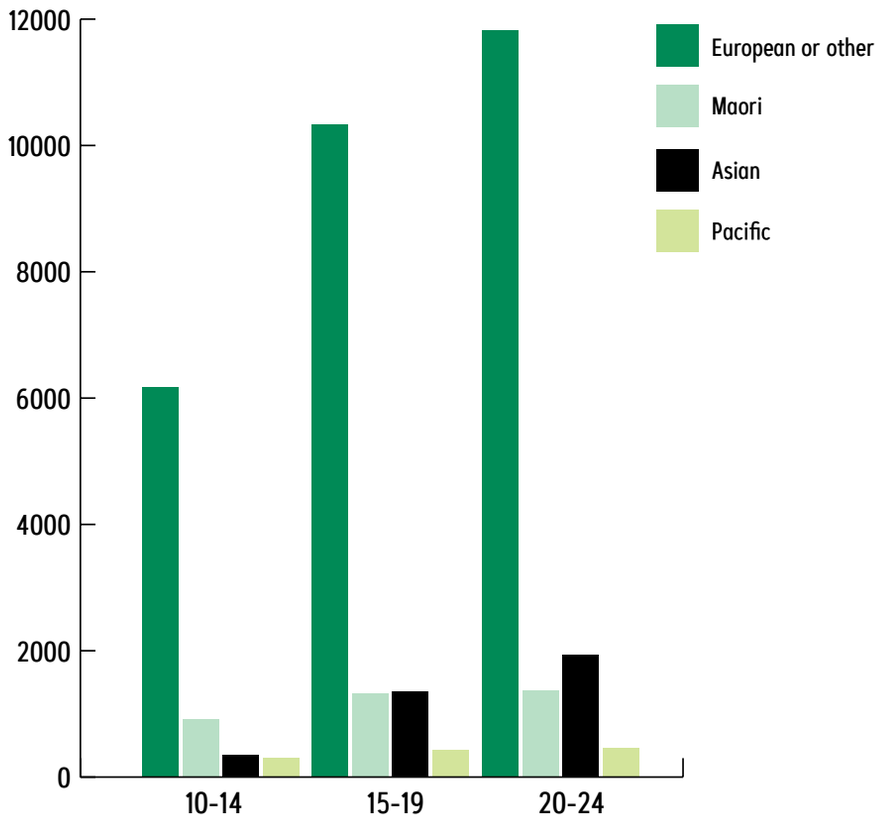
Waitaki youth, 10–24 years old, by ethnicity (Statistics New Zealand, 2013)



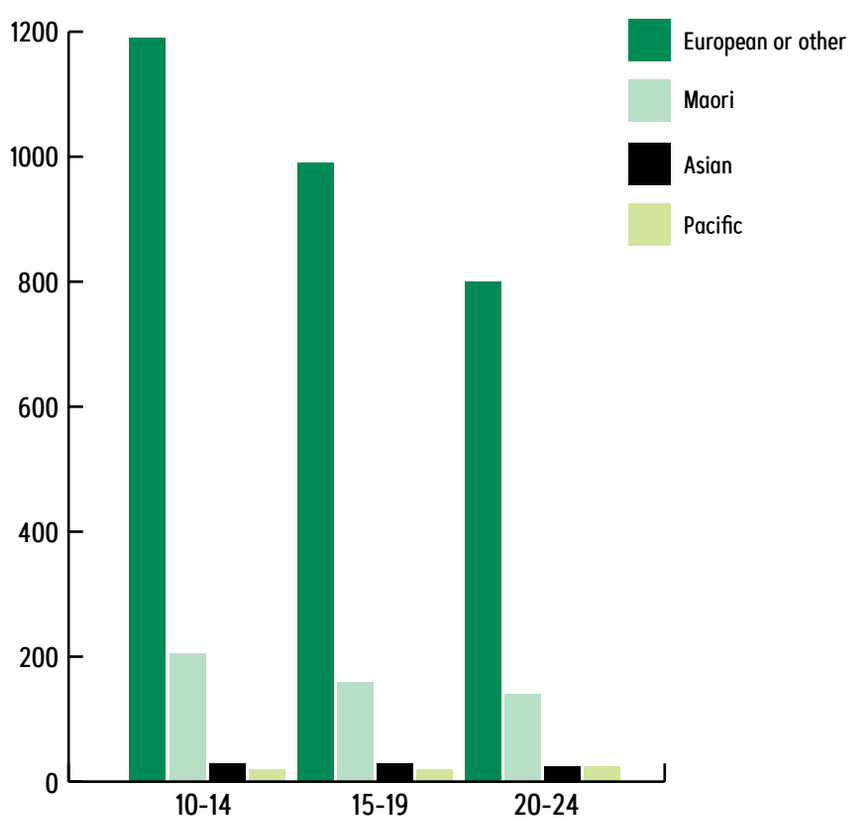
Central youth, 10–24 years old, by ethnicity (Statistics New Zealand, 2013)



Dunedin city youth, 10–24 years old, by ethnicity
(Statistics New Zealand, 2013)



Clutha youth, 10–24 years old, by ethnicity
(Statistics New Zealand, 2013)



Population projections by Statistics New Zealand (2013) indicate that the total youth population in Otago will grow by 270 to 43,130 by 2038. However, projected growth is not even across all TLAs:

- Waitaki is projected to grow from 3,510 to 4,010
- Central Otago will grow from 2,720 to 3,260
- Dunedin city will remain static (33,340 to 33,330)
- Clutha will decline (3,260 to 2,500)

The Dunedin City Council have recently reviewed and updated the population projections that they use in their long term planning. They are projecting growth overall, but not for the youth population. In Dunedin in 2028 they project there will be 33,860 young people aged 10-24, declining to 32,468 by 2048.

Household composition

At the 2013 census for Otago:

Household composition, 10–19 (Statistics New Zealand, 2013a)

	LIVING IN TWO PARENT HOUSEHOLDS	ONE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS
10–14 year olds	8,130	2,380
15–19 year olds	15,670	2,080

2013 census data limitations

All figures above are from the 2013 census. A census was undertaken in 2018, but the results of this are not currently available and their release has been delayed. Not being able to access more recent census data is a limitation of this report. It is clear that there have been some significant population changes in the district in the last six years, which have been reported in media and other sources. It is possible there have been other demographic changes that have not been identified at this time. It is suggested that the OCT review the relevant data from the 2018 census data when it is released.

Significant population changes

Pacific Island migration to Waitaki TLA

The number of Pacific people living in Ōamaru has increased significantly. This has been noted locally and nationally. Assoc Prof Damon Salesa from the University of Auckland has suggested that Ōamaru now has the largest proportion of Pacific people of any town/city in New Zealand, surpassing Auckland (Radio NZ, 2018). He has estimated that one in four people in Ōamaru are Pacific people, and suggests that many of these families have moved from Auckland for the lower cost of living in Ōamaru, and to work in the meatworks or in the horticultural industry.

The population projections for Waitaki from the 2013 census suggested that by 2018 there would be 205 Pacific young people (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). However, school roll information from 2018 shows that there were 284 Pacific young people enrolled in schools (Education Counts, 2018). No information could be found on the current Pacific population who have left school but are still under 24, but it is clear that the actual Pacific youth population is much larger than that suggested by the census projections.

Significant growth in some parts of Central Otago

The 2013 census projected growth in the 10–19 age group in Central Otago (from 2,420 to 2,990 in 2038) (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). However, large increases in school rolls indicate that growth has probably been much higher than projected. Multiple schools in Central Otago have reported recently that they are now at or over capacity.

Cromwell College has 505 students enrolled as of February 2019 – an increase of 48 in the last year. 100 of these students are in year 7, and a media article in February 2019 reported that this is Cromwell College's largest year 7 intake since the 1980s (Conyngham, 2019).

Dunstan College (Alexandra) has reported strong roll growth, with a roll of 585 in 2019, an increase on 559 students in 2018. Notably, the principal has stated this year that "around 35 new students arrived from out of our district. That was quite unexpected." (Burns, 2019).

Mount Aspiring College has grown by over 50% since 2012 and is now over capacity. A $13 million redevelopment has recently started on the campus, which will expand school capacity to 1600 students (Nugent, 2018).

Wānaka Primary School is near capacity with 680 students this year, up from 353 in 2009. Holy Faith Primary School is also near capacity. Recognising the roll growth, the Ministry of Education is developing a new primary school to open in Wānaka in 2020 (Price, 2018).

Pacific Island young people, by Island group, TLA and gender from school rolls

(Education Counts, 2018)

Male Female

	Samoan		Cook Island Maori		Tongan		Niuean		Fijian		Tokelauan		Other PI		
Waitaki	11	13	1	2	103	78	1	-	4	13	2	3	28	25	284
Central Otago	11	10	1	3	6	4	1	3	4	9	-	-	6	2	29
Dunedin city	147	126	69	66	79	69	13	9	35	31	6	17	42	50	759
Clutha	19	17	3	5	-	-	-	-	8	8	-	-	1	1	62
Total	188	166	74	76	188	151	15	12	51	61	8	20	77	78	1,165

Young people attending school

Across the four TLAs, 10,944 students were enrolled in secondary schools 2018. A further 1,185 young people were enrolled in composite schools (schools that include both secondary and primary school aged children). Nearly one-third of secondary students live outside Dunedin.

Alternative education

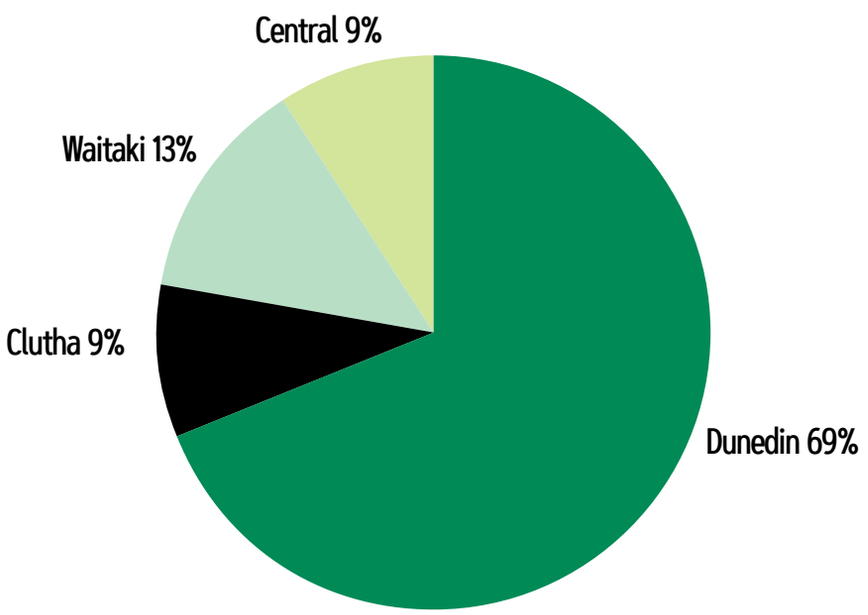
Ministry of Education data suggests that on 1 July 2018 there were 52 students in Otago in alternative education. Clutha had fewer students in alternative education than other TLAs.

School attendance, truancy and transience

It has been reported that the Otago region (including Queenstown Lakes) has the highest percentage (67.5%) of students who attend school regularly, compared to all other regions in New Zealand (Education Counts, 2018c).

School attendance has been similar across all TLAs for the last three years. Attendance in term 2, 2018, ranged from 62.6% (Waitaki) to 70% (Central Otago).

Secondary students by TLA (Education Counts, 2018)



Alternative education as of Term 2, 2018 by TLA and gender
(Education Counts, 2018)

TLA	ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS	
	Male	Female
Waitaki	7	5
Central Otago	6	2
Dunedin	22	8
Clutha	1	1

Students attending school regularly by TLA, term 2, 2011–2018

(Education Counts, 2018d)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Waitaki district	66.5	73.9	55.9	62.8	67.6	69	64	62.5
Central Otago	65.6	66.4	71.9	71.1	69.9	72.6	72	70
Dunedin city	70.5	69.9	67.1	67	67.9	72.6	68	69.2
Clutha district	72.6	71.2	69.6	65.7	75.8	71.5	67.6	67.6

Exclusions, expulsions, suspensions and stand downs

The data available on exclusions, expulsions, suspensions and stand downs includes primary, intermediate and high school students. The rates are age-standardised per 1,000 students, and are similar across TLAs, with the exception of suspensions, where Clutha (15.6) was much higher than all other TLAs (6.6, 1.7, 5.4).

Exclusions, expulsions, suspensions, stand downs – age standardised per 1,000 students, by TLA

(Education Counts 2017a, 2017b, 2017c, 2017d)

	STAND DOWNS	EXCLUSIONS	SUSPENSIONS	EXPULSIONS
Waitaki	25.8	1.8	6.6	0.0
Central Otago	22.9	0.8	1.7	0.0
Dunedin city	28.4	2.3	5.4	1.8
Clutha	27.5	3.8	15.6	2.5

NCEA achievement

Education is considered an important determinant of social and economic wellbeing. In New Zealand, the official secondary school qualification is NCEA (the National Certificate of Educational Achievement). Research has shown that students who do not achieve NCEA level 2 have an unemployment rate 45% higher than students who attain level 2 or higher (Education Counts, 2018e). In 2017, the national average for achieving NCEA level 2 or above was 80.7%. NCEA achievement varied across Otago from 79.4% in Clutha to 87% in Dunedin. Waitaki reported 84.1% and Central Otago 83.6%. (Education Counts, 2017e)

Across New Zealand, there was a 4.9% difference in the percentage of male school leavers achieving level 2 (78.3%) compared to female (83.2%). In Otago differences in achievement by gender were less than the national gender gap in all of the TLAs except Central Otago, which reported a larger difference of 9.8% between male (78.3%) and female (88.1%). Waitaki was the only TLA where the percentage of males leaving with NCEA level 2 or above was higher than females (84.5% compared to 83.7%).

Differences were reported in NCEA achievement between ethnic groups around New Zealand, and these were also seen in Otago, as outlined in the table below. Due to the small numbers of students of some ethnicities in the smaller TLAs, care is needed when interpreting these figures. Of particular note is that the TLA with the largest student population, Dunedin city, reported a significant range in achievement for different ethnic groups, from 62.5% (Pacific) to 95.1% (Asian). *See table on next page. . .*

NCEA level 2 achievement by TLA (Education Counts, 2017e)

TLA	MALE	FEMALE	GAP
Waitaki	84.5	83.7	0.8 (male higher)
Central	78.3	88.1	9.8
Dunedin	85.9	88.1	2.2
Clutha	78.0	80.7	2.7

Percentage of school leavers with NCEA level 2 or above, by TLA and ethnicity, cf New Zealand total (Education Counts, 2017e)

TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY	ETHNIC GROUP					
	Māori	Pacific	Asian	MELAA	Other	European/ Pākehā
Waitaki district	73.5	73.7	92.3	x	x	85.7
Central Otago district	58.6	x	100.0	x	x	85.9
Dunedin city	74.5	62.5	95.1	83.3	100.0	88.0
Clutha district	80.6	100.0	88.9	x	x	77.8
New Zealand total	67.9	75.9	91.7	82.2	80.7	83.8

Tertiary students

Otago has a large number of tertiary students, the majority of whom are aged 18–24 and attend the University of Otago or Otago Polytechnic.

The presence of these institutions may also partly explain why the percentage of Otago school leavers enrolled in tertiary study within one year of leaving school (64.7%) is higher than the national average (60.3%) (Education Counts, 2016). It also influences the age distribution of young people in Dunedin, which is different from the rest of the Otago population, with a larger proportion of young people aged 20–24 than aged 15–19.

Number of youth attending the University of Otago or Otago Polytechnic in 2017, by age group (Education Counts, 2017f)

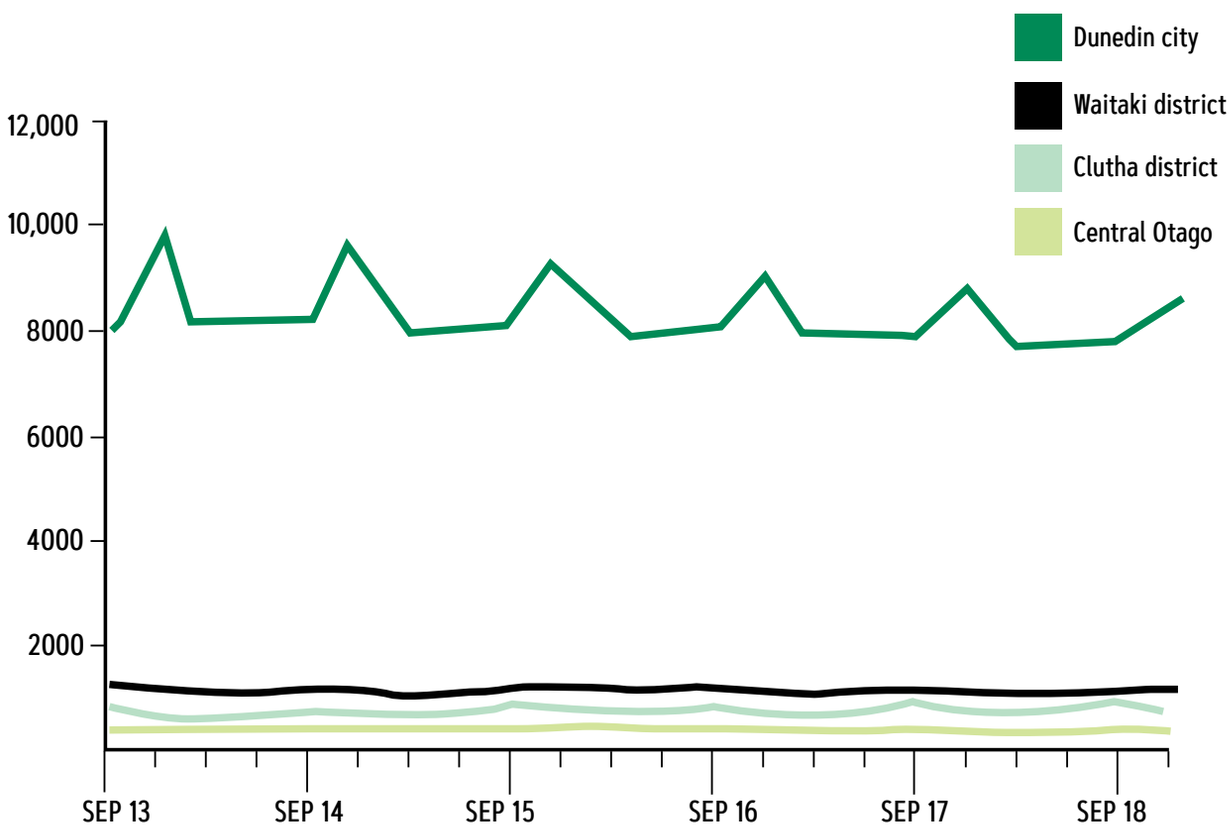
	UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO	OTAGO POLYTECHNIC
Under 18	30	175
19-20	3,950	805
20-24	9,470	1,780

Youth employment

As at December 2018, 2,196 Otago young people aged 18–24 were receiving jobseeker, solo parent or supported living benefits (Ministry of Social Development, 2019). Most were in Dunedin (1,849), with 143 in each of Clutha and Waitaki, and 61 in Central.

The graph below shows youth unemployment over the last 5 years — the spikes in the December quarter are mostly due to seasonal work and school leavers moving on to benefits.

Youth unemployment, 18-24, Sep 13 – Dec 2018 (Ministry of Social Development, 2019).



Median income, 15–19, 20-24

According to 2016 data, annual median income is $8,900 for 15–19 year olds in Otago, and $24,700 for 20–24 year olds. Income for both age groups is slightly under the national median for that age group. (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2016)

Young people not in employment, education or training (the 'NEET' population)

Young people who are not engaged in employment, education or training are often referred to as the 'NEET' population. A comprehensive report has already been developed by Statistics New Zealand and the Dunedin Methodist Mission, describing the Otago NEET population (Statistics New Zealand, 2017). This report was developed using 2015 data from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI). The IDI is available to Statistics New Zealand and combines current information from multiple government agencies, so much of the information in the Otago NEET report is more up-to-date than the 2013 census figures. *It is recommended that trustees review the 2015 Otago NEET report for full information on this group — considered a priority population due to their higher risk of adverse outcomes.*

Key findings included:

- Otago had the lowest proportion of NEET youth (8.4%, 2,800 young people) in New Zealand, much lower than the national average (13.5%). This is likely partly influenced by the large tertiary student population.
- NEET youth were more likely to use mental health services (54% compared to 29% of those in employment and 24% of those in education).
- Most NEET youth have previously been in paid employment (55% of 15–19 year olds, 78% of 20–24 year olds).
- Most NEET youth live in Dunedin. Within Dunedin, the highest NEET rates were in Caversham, Brockville, Fernhill and Mornington.

Young mothers

Young mothers are often recorded in the NEET population, although the Otago NEET report does acknowledge that "the unpaid work of raising children is a socially and economically valuable activity". (Statistics New Zealand, 2017)

In 2015, there were 80 teenage mothers (aged 15–19) in Otago. Most (59%) were NEET, 31% were engaged in education and 10% in employment. For the 800 mothers in the 20–24 group, the proportion of NEET was very similar (56%) but more were engaged in employment (32%) and 12% were engaged in education. Both age groups were more likely than non-mothers to be NEET — only 4% of non-mothers aged 15–19 were NEET, and 6% of non-mothers aged 20–24.

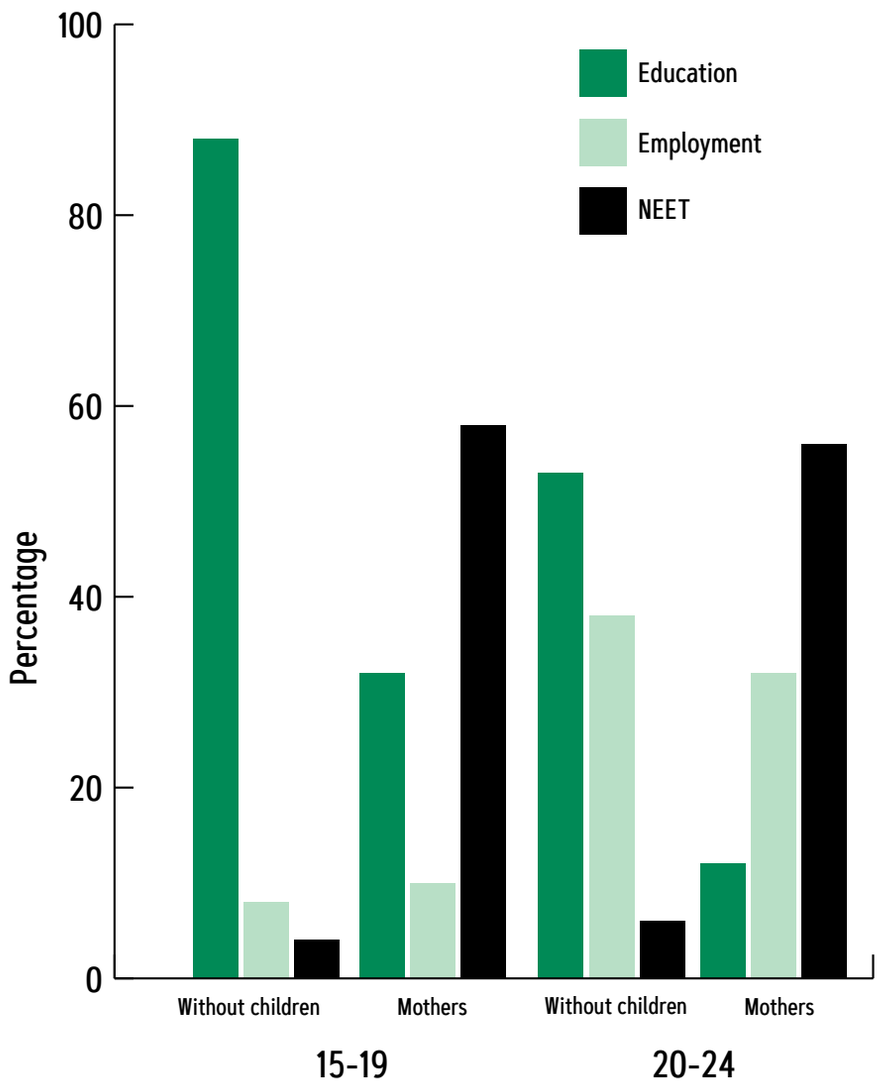
Young people at risk

The report on NEET youth in Otago identified a group of young people "of greater concern due to multiple poor outcomes". They defined this group as young people who:

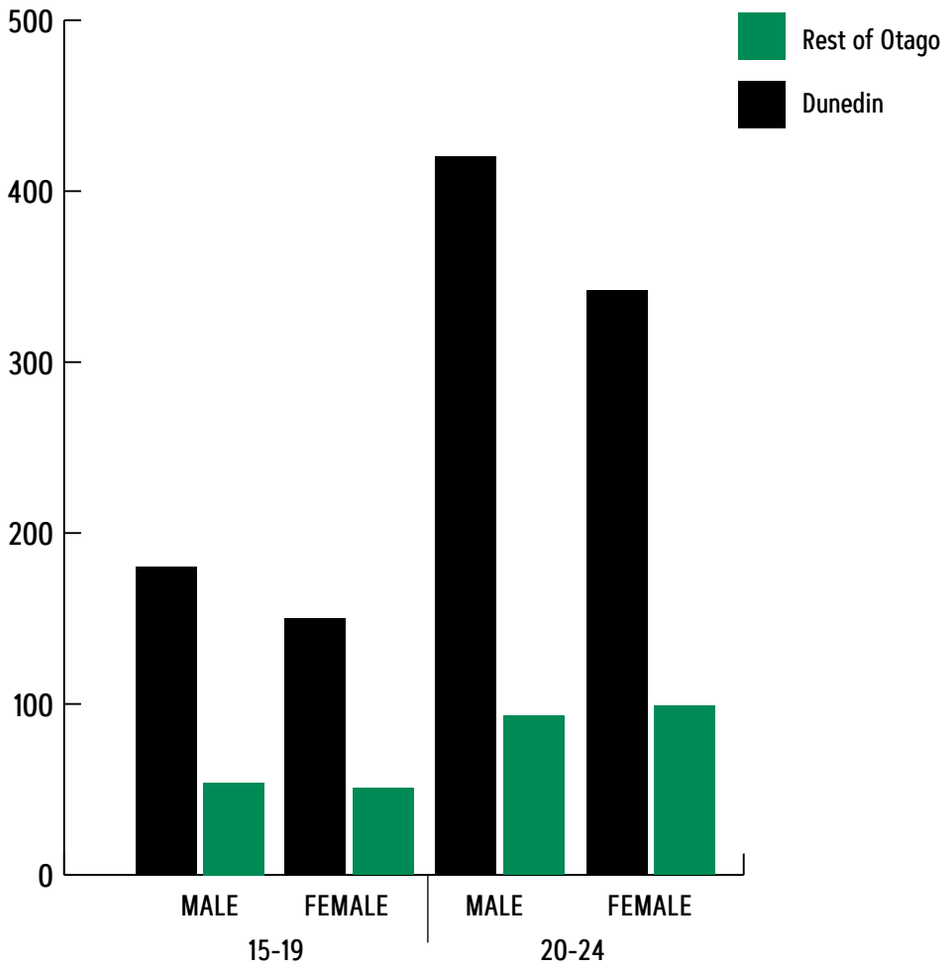
- were NEET for six months or more in 2015
- had no NCEA level 2 qualifications
- had at least one behavioural intervention at school and/or had ever used mental health services or treatments.

1,090 young people in Otago were identified as meeting these criteria — 3.3% of the 15–24 year old population in Otago. Most lived in Dunedin and were aged 20–24.

Main activity for 15–24 year old females by motherhood status and age. Otago region and NZ, %, (2015) (Statistics New Zealand, 2017)



Number of young people "of concern" (Statistics New Zealand, 2017)



Treasury risk factors

The New Zealand Treasury has used the Integrated Data Infrastructure to analyse administrative data from multiple agencies. Their analysis suggests some characteristics of children place them at greater risk for poor outcomes as adults (McLeod et al., 2015). They suggest that this information can be used to target services more effectively.

The risk factor framework focuses on four risks:

- having a Child Youth & Family finding of abuse or neglect
- being mostly supported by benefits since birth
- having a parent with a prison or community sentence
- having a mother with no formal qualifications.

It also suggests that there is a group of children, those with multiple risk factors, who are at highest risk. In 2015, 2,380 young people in Otago were considered to be in the highest risk category.

Specific focus communities

Former refugees

"Refugee children are part of Aotearoa New Zealand's future. They have the right to the best possible start to life in their new country" —The Office of the Children's Commissioner (2012)

Dunedin was designated a refugee resettlement location in 2015, and began receiving former refugees in 2016. Since then over 500 former refugees have settled in Dunedin, the majority being Syrian, with smaller numbers from Palestine and Jordan. Over half of the former refugees are children. It is expected that Dunedin will continue to welcome approximately 180 former refugees each year.

By the time they arrive in Dunedin, former refugees have faced multiple significant stressors and most will have experienced trauma. Resettlement is a social and cultural upheaval and can affect all family members. Parents often experience language barriers, isolation and difficulties finding work, which can increase family stress. The Children's Commissioner has noted that former refugee children are at higher risk for physical and mental health problems, and may experience social, educational and psychological/adjustment difficulties for a long period after their arrival (Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2012). Adolescents in particular are often faced with navigating the different social norms and expectations of their home country and of New Zealand society.

The Commissioner also suggests that children born in New Zealand to former refugee parents can experience many of the same difficulties.

> "We need better support for refugees and New Zealand citizens living in poverty to be provided the tools and education to better their situation without bureaucratic hoops and financial band-aids."
> **Dani, 23, female, Dunedin (Action Station, 2018)**

LGBTQI young people

The importance of supporting LGBTQI young people has been expressed in the Dunedin Diversity Strategy, and is also a growing focus area for the Ministry of Social Development.

Research suggests that young people who identify as LGBTQI are at higher risk of bullying, social exclusion, discrimination and poor mental health (Ministry of Social Development, 2015). A 2008 report commissioned by the Otago University Students Association on the safety and inclusiveness of Otago secondary schools surveyed students across the region. It confirmed that all of these issues were impacting on local youth, particularly bullying. Staff members also shared these concerns, especially for students in rural schools:

Staff at rural Otago schools... felt that queer students suffer from greater prejudice and harassment than students in larger towns and cities, as well as a sense of isolation from their classmates and from the queer community, which is largely situated in more urban areas. (Otago University Students Association, 2008)

Unfortunately there is limited recent information available about the views of LGBTQI youth in Otago. It is recommended that further engagement occur with LGBTQI young people to inform any future work.

> "... queer people are most vulnerable in their youth, when they are coming to terms with their identity. This means that the support to our Dunedin communities needs to have a strong focus on our youth."
> **Introduction to the Dunedin Diversity Strategy, 2014–2019**

Youth voice: what do young people say about what is important to them

"When young people discover they can be agents of change, wonderful things happen. They start to serve in the neighbourhoods, learn about public issues, create innovative solutions to tough public challenges and eventually become the voters, community project builders and leaders in our communities and nation." — Alma Powell

Due to the constraints of this project, it has not been possible to engage extensively with young people to identify their views and priorities. It is suggested that any future work consider including engagement with youth and using co-design methodology. However, we have reviewed key documents that have previously documented what young people say is important to them.

Dunedin Youth Charter (2018)

In 2018, young people co-designed a Youth Charter for Dunedin city with representatives from other stakeholders. Their shared vision for Dunedin was:

In Ōtepoti (Dunedin) young people are valued, accepted and empowered to lead fulfilled lives, and wellbeing is nurtured.

Key goals to achieve this vision were described as below.

- Communities and organisations are welcoming of all young people
- Young people feel safe, are being nurtured, accepted and empowered
- The unique capabilities and contributions of youth are being valued and celebrated
- Participation and leadership by youth is being encouraged and fostered
- Pathways, spaces, services and activities are promoted and accessible for all youth so they can achieve their potential

Ministry of Youth Development Youth Survey (2010)

A national survey of young people was completed by the Ministry of Youth Development in 2010. Key findings are listed below.

- 45% of young people stated that their family was the most important thing in their life. A similar amount (42%) said that education/studying was the most important thing for them, and 29% named their friends.[1]
- Succeeding in study/passing exams was the most common stressor mentioned by young people — 18% stated that it caused them to worry/be anxious. Other common stressors included lack of money (13%), family getting hurt (8%), personal issues (7%), crime (6%) and getting a job (6%).
- Teenage drinking was of concern to young people, with 28% suggesting it is the biggest problem facing New Zealand teenagers. This was followed by drug use (14%), unemployment (14%), education/passing exams (11%), social life (10%), peer pressure/fitting in (9%).

Youthline State of a Generation (2014)

Youthline surveyed over 400 young people in 2014. Young people identified alcohol as the biggest issue facing young people today, as they did in the 2010 Ministry of Youth Development survey.

Tama-te-rā Ariki: voices of tamariki and rangatahi Māori (2018)

In 2018 the Office of the Children's Commissioner engaged with 155 Māori young people (4–18 years old). They were proud to be Māori, valued stable adults in their lives, and wanted the best for themselves and their families. Five key insights/messages from rangatahi and tamariki were identified:

- My cultural identity is my journey
- I need to feel safe and belong so I can reach my potential
- I need adults who care about me
- I want to take away Mum's stress
- I travel the digital world

Ngā Kōrero Hauora o Ngā Taiohi (Action Station youth wellbeing report) (2018)

In 2018, the Government announced it was developing New Zealand's first child and youth wellbeing strategy and would be undertaking public consultation. In response to this, Ara Taiohi (a national youth development association) collaborated with ActionStation (an online campaign/social action platform) and obtained the views of over 1,000 New Zealand young people (12–24) about their understanding of wellbeing. Wellbeing was acknowledged as "a culturally specific concept that can be and is interpreted in different ways", but key themes are listed below:

- Young people would like more accessible mental health services, education and support
- Many young people talked of needing a kinder, fairer economy and meaningful secure work; some young people felt that economic insecurity, unaffordable housing, student debt and insecure low-paid work were contributing to their anxiety/stress
- Nearly half of the young people surveyed were very concerned about their "body image"
- Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and ableism concerned many young people — they want a New Zealand where this behaviour is not tolerated
- Many young people expressed strong appreciation/aroha for Aotearoa New Zealand's natural environment, and were concerned it isn't being adequately protected
- Accessible and affordable education was highly valued; some young people were concerned that their education isn't equipping them with the skills needed to flourish in the future
- Young people appreciate and desire community and communal spaces
- More great role models for young people are needed — in all parts of life/society
- More youth engagement is needed at all levels, and young people need to be supported to develop the skills to engage and make change in their communities.

What makes a good life? Children and young people's views on wellbeing (2019)

In 2019 Oranga Tamariki and the Office for the Children's Commissioner released a report based on submissions from over 6,000 young New Zealanders, about their views on wellbeing and what 'a good life' means to them.

Five key messages were identified from their feedback:

- Accept us for who we are and who we want to be
- Life is really hard for some of us
- To help us, help our whānau and our support crew
- We all deserve more than just the basics
- How you support us matters just as much as what you do

In reflecting on what had been learnt from the submissions and what needed to change, the authors emphasised the importance of relationships:

> "Efforts to support children and young people will not be effective if the sole focus is on what services and supports need to be delivered. How supports are delivered matters just as much. Services need to accept children and young people for who they are and recognise their critical relationships."
>
> **Office of the Children's Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki, 2019**

Otago youth sector: what do we know from documents previously published about the Otago youth sector?

The current Otago youth sector is described in the service mapping section of this report. This section reviews existing literature that has previously considered the strengths and opportunities in the sector.

An evaluation of a social sector trial, "BASE", that started in South Dunedin in 2013 considered wider sector issues (BASE, 2016). Many strengths of the youth sector in Dunedin were identified, including: compassionate staff working tirelessly for young people, young people reporting that service providers "have their back", strong relationships and trust between some organisations, and some well-established and high-quality services.

Some local examples of positive models of coordination and innovation were identified, including (but not limited to):

- Community Advisory Panel
- Family Violence Collaborative
- Otago Youth Wellness Trust
- North East Valley Project

continued on next page...

- Strengthening Families
- Youth Alcohol and Drug Multi-Agency Group
- Youth Employment Strategy

After evaluating the BASE trial, the advisory group for the trial suggested that "massive" systemic changes were needed to improve outcomes for young people, and that these needed to focus on the entire system not on individual organisations. They suggested that achieving this would require local government and sector leaders to come together, to commit to put youth and whānau at the centre of planning, and to develop meaningful engagement and partnerships that recognise the resources and knowledge that young people and whānau can contribute. They emphasised the need for a local long-term plan, and the importance of "a theory of change process that illustrates data-driven outcomes and leads to the development of coordinated strategies across the government and social sectors" (BASE, 2016).

At a local hui focused on "collaborating for youth success", local stakeholders also considered what had to happen to achieve this in Dunedin. One stakeholder explained the need for more collaboration, with a similarly strong focus on the need to support communities and families:

> "It is clear that we don't need any more services. We do need to be clear what the problem is that we are trying to solve, and how to come together to support communities and families to be strong and identify their own solutions — if they are not strong, then an institutional response is often, unfortunately, the only way. Co-construction of solutions with families and young people is crucial. As a city we need to identify what we want our young people to look like — we want them to be educated, to feel that they belong, and to have choices."
>
> **Attendee, Collaborating on Youth Success Hui, Dunedin**

Improving outcomes: what should we do to improve the lives of young people?

This section considers the national context for youth development in New Zealand, and likely future priority areas. It provides some introductory information on youth development models/ frameworks, and highlights key research findings on what can be done to help improve the health, employment and wellbeing of young people.

National policy context

Youth development in New Zealand is led by the Ministry for Youth Development. A universal approach is taken, with the Minister for Youth Development working alongside the Ministers for Children, Social Development, Education, etc. Policy generally takes a strengths-based approach, aiming to build capability and resilience (Ministry of Youth Development, 2017).

The New Zealand government is increasingly expressing a strong interest in wellbeing. A Child Wellbeing Unit was established in 2018 to lead the development of New Zealand's first Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. The government's growing focus on wellbeing has extended to the national budget, with the 2019 Budget being described as "the Wellbeing Budget". It is suggested that this budget will use the Treasury's Living Standards Framework (based on OECD indicators) to inform funding decisions, and to monitor progress (Budget 2019). Further, the government has stated it wishes to embed wellbeing throughout New Zealand public policy.

Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy: proposed outcomes framework

The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy has recently undergone public consultation and is currently being finalised (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018). The overall vision of the strategy is for New Zealand to be the best place in the world for children and young people. This is underpinned by five domains (shown in circles in the graphic below):

New Zealand is the best place in the world for children and young people — this will be achieved when children and young people:

Supporting this vision are seven underlying principles:

• The inherent dignity and value of children and young people

• The wellbeing of children and young people is interwoven with the wellbeing of the family and whānau

• That networks of loving, trusting, caring relationships are at the heart of children's and young people's wellbeing

• The foundational role of the Treaty of Waitangi and the importance of the Crown-Māori partnership in work to promote the wellbeing of New Zealand's children and young people

• That children's and young people's voices and views should be taken into account in developing and implementing the Strategy and in important decisions affecting them

• The rights contained in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which New Zealand has ratified

• We have collective responsibility to nurture the children and young people in our communities, and to support and value the adults who are caring for them

It appears that there was a high level of engagement in the public consultation, and it is possible there may be some changes to the strategy, which should be announced in the coming months. However, it is likely that the principles will remain, and that government will continue to view wellbeing as a high priority for all children and youth in New Zealand, and will seek broad cooperation across agencies and communities to achieve this. It is recommended that trustees review the final strategy when it is released.

He Ara Oranga: a report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction

In 2018, a government inquiry was established to review the mental health and addiction system. The inquiry involved an extensive public consultation, and its findings were delivered in late 2018. Key observations/comments from the inquiry, relevant to youth, included:

• That increasing levels of distress and anxiety are being identified among youth, particularly in school settings, and that this is overwhelming teachers and schools.

"Children and young people are exhibiting high levels of behavioural distress leading to deliberate self-harm, risk-taking, anxiety and other troubling behaviours. Parents are concerned about the harms of bullying and misuse of the internet and social media. School counsellors and teachers are overwhelmed by the number of students in distress. New Zealand's high rates of youth suicide are a national shame. Students and teachers highlighted the importance of learning about mental health as part of the health curriculum and helping young children develop resilience and learn how to regulate their emotions."

• The Ministry of Education advised the inquiry that *"the education sector as a whole is seeing increased violent and uncontrolled behaviour at younger ages, high rates of youth suicide and deliberate self-harm among teenagers and young adults, and increased anxiety among young people about their educational performance and academic testing."*

• That young people identify multiple sources/causes of stress and anxiety:

A survey of 1,000 young people and rangatahi (run by ActionStation and Ara Taiohi and submitted to the Inquiry) highlighted multiple sources of stress and anxiety for youth, including:

- economic insecurity
- unaffordable housing
- student debt
- insecure, low-paid work
- body image
- oppression of various kinds (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism)
- concern about damage to the natural environment
- concern that they lack the life skills and knowledge to flourish in the 21st century
- loss of community and communal spaces
- That young people are experiencing barriers to accessing existing services, and some groups appear not to be accessing help at the same rate as others:

"While a range of targeted mental health services is available for young people, barriers to access include internal factors, such as privacy concerns, lack of knowledge about where to go and concerns about the attitudes of clinicians, and external factors, such as the cost and geographical location of services. Some groups are particularly at risk (including Māori, Pacific, and Rainbow young people and disabled young people) but are not seeking help or accessing services at the same rates as their peers."

• That New Zealand's youth suicide rate remains very high:

"Our suicide rate for young people is among the worst in the OECD...every suicide creates significant, far-reaching impacts on the person's friends, family and whānau, and the wider community."

• That responding to mental illness, and promoting mental health, is not just a health system responsibility:

"Strengthening protective factors is not a role that is best led by health services alone, but by whānau, hapū and iwi, Pacific peoples, Rainbow and other communities, universities and tertiary providers, schools and early childhood education providers, workplaces, sports groups, faith centres, social services, organisations that support positive parenting, youth development, and positive ageing, and a range of other community sectors."

Key relevant recommendations included:

- To take a whole-of-government approach to wellbeing, prevention and social determinants
- To agree to significantly increase access to publicly funded mental health and addiction services for people with mild to moderate and moderate to severe mental health and addiction needs
- To take stricter regulatory approach to the sale and supply of alcohol
- To establish a suicide prevention office to provide stronger and sustained leadership on action to prevent suicide
- To set a target of 20% reduction in suicide rates by 2030

It is recommended that trustees consider the relevant sections of the government's response to the inquiry.

Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa

The Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA) was developed by the Ministry of Youth Development in 2002. The strategy outlines a vision of "a country where young people are vibrant and optimistic through being supported and encouraged to take up challenges".

It suggests six key principles:

1. Youth development is shaped by 'the big picture'
2. Youth development is about young people being connected
3. Youth development is based on a consistent strengths-based approach
4. Youth development happens through quality relationships
5. Youth development is triggered when young people fully participate
6. Youth development needs good information

The Ministry of Youth Development (MYD), in partnership with Ara Taiohi and the Vodafone Foundation, is currently undertaking a project to review and strengthen the YDSA as a framework for national youth strategy and practice (Centre for Social Impact, 2018).

Childhood risk factors

The New Zealand Treasury risk indicators have been discussed earlier in this report. Policy-makers are increasingly using frameworks such as these and focusing on identifying risk factors that may predict later outcomes. This policy direction has an evidence base to support it, based on both international and local research. The Dunedin Health and Multidisciplinary Study considered four decades of comprehensive medical information collected on a cohort of children born in Dunedin in 1972/73. They found that a group comprising just 22% of the study participants went on to account for:

- 36% of the injury claims across the entire cohort
- 40% of excess obese kilograms
- 54% of cigarettes smoked
- 57% of hospital nights
- 66% of welfare benefits
- 77% of fatherless child-rearing
- 78% of prescription fills
- 81% of criminal convictions (Caspi et al., 2016)

They suggested that there were childhood risk factors, some of which could be identified from infancy, that predicted who ended up in this group in adulthood.

It is important to note that all of the discussion about risk factors throughout this report is not intended to focus on deficits/problems among particular youth. It is intended to encourage discussion around how such knowledge can be used to make an impact for our future youth. The authors who analysed over 40 years of information gathered through the Dunedin study argue that "early interventions that are effective for this population segment could yield very large returns on investment." (Caspi et al., 2016)

Central government investment

Multiple government departments invest in programmes that benefit youth, but the lead agency for youth development initiatives is the Ministry for Youth Development (MYD).

Their funding decisions are guided by the **Youth Investment Strategy (2016).** The strategy aims to:

- increase the number of youth development opportunities overall, including those that provide leadership, volunteering and mentoring experiences
- pursue partnerships with corporate, iwi, philanthropic and other government organisations to invest jointly in shared outcomes
- increase the proportion of funding targeted to youth from disadvantaged backgrounds
- encourage recognition of young people's community and voluntary participation and contributions.

They aim to do this by:

- maximising resources through partnering with corporate, iwi, philanthropic and other government organisations
- targeting investment to where it will have the most impact
- being clear about the outcomes MYD wants to achieve
- improving data collection and analysis so that MYD funding is based on knowledge of what works for which young people.

Funding to support this strategy is allocated under the Vote Social Development – Partnering for Youth Development appropriation. In the 2018/19 budget, this appropriation was $12.64 million, 30% of which was prioritised for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds (New Zealand House of Representatives, 2018). A partnership fund is also included for **co-investing in youth development opportunities with business and philanthropic partners**. In 2017/18, $1.78 million was allocated for such co-investment (Ministry of Youth Development, 2017).

Social, economic and cultural context

Young people are influenced by the environment around them, and this environment is important to consider when developing/evaluating interventions to improve youth outcomes. It is not possible within the constraints of this report to fully consider the social, economic and cultural context of Otago/New Zealand in detail, but some key considerations are highlighted below.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The community sector has obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi to honour the tino rangatiratanga (often understood as self-determination) of rangatahi Māori and to build relationships with hapū and rūnaka in their own rohe.

Article Two of Te Tiriti ensures that hapū retain control of delivery of youth services. Article Three guarantees that outcomes for rangatahi Māori should be comparable to outcomes for Pākeka youth. This encompasses comparable levels of wellbeing and employment opportunities, and the protection of culture and customs.

Article Four recognises that culture and identity affect wellbeing — this upholds the special standing and the need for kaupapa Māori organisations to work within the youth space. As a bottom line, it requires those working with rangatahi Māori and general youth services to use culturally safe practices and to have culturally competent practitioners (Treaty Resource Centre, 2012).

A key resource for community organisations is Ngā Rerenga o Te Tiriti, which provides reflections from community organisations and resources to guide organisations in their engagement with Te Tiriti (Treaty Resource Centre, 2016).

Sociological and technological change

Significant sociological and technological change has occurred in recent years. A review by the Chief Science Advisor, Prof Peter Gluckman, noted that:

- family structure, childrearing practices and levels of parental engagement have changed in many families
- technology has significantly changed social networks and communication
- youth face more choices at an earlier age
- youth may have less clarity about their future, including future careers
- the role of some traditional community supports (sports, churches, community groups) has declined
- youth have more access to credit cards and money, and associated freedoms. (Gluckman, 2017).

Gluckman suggests that the "pace of these sociological and technological changes is unprecedented and it is not surprising that for many young people, particularly those with less psychological resilience, it can leave them with a growing sense of dislocation." (Gluckman, 2017).

Similar observations were made by the Education Review Office (2015) when they reviewed wellbeing in schools around New Zealand. They noted:

- friends, bullies and marketers can influence the thinking and actions of young people more, due to social media; some parents feel they have less influence
- the transition from childhood to adulthood is complex and becoming longer (some children start puberty earlier, and adult roles may not be taken on until the mid-twenties or later).

Significant economic change is also taking place, or is expected to take place, that may impact on the way today's young people work, compared to previous generations. As well as advances in technology, globalisation may transform our future careers. Young people are more likely to be working remotely with people in other locations, to have multiple careers, and are likely to need skills such as resilience, wellbeing, enterprise and critical thinking to succeed (Ministry of Youth Development, 2017).

The New Zealand workforce is getting older, reflecting demographic changes and an aging population. In 2026, for the first time in New Zealand history, there will be more people aged 65 and over than under 14. The Sustainable Business Council has projected that youth unemployment will become critical in future years, and that New Zealand will face skilled labour shortages.

> "Over time there will be fewer young people in the labour market to support an increasingly dependent older population. We need to start looking for solutions to cover [our] future needs."
> **Sustainable Business Council, 2013**

Selected key issues

Throughout the literature, many issues are identified that impact on young people and their families/whānau. Three key issues have been selected for further consideration here: alcohol and drug use, youth suicide and digital access/bullying.

Alcohol and drug use

Alcohol was named as the single biggest issue facing young people when Youthline completed a national survey of young people in 2014 (Colmar Brunton, 2014). High levels of alcohol use and associated harm have been recorded in the literature. Alcohol use contributes to road deaths and injuries, assaults and poor mental health outcomes. It is a common behaviour among New Zealand youth, but it appears that the reasons for alcohol use may be complex.

continued on next page. . .

While many young people drink because they believe they will have fun, or because of peer pressure, it has been reported that alcohol is being used as a coping strategy for family/academic anxiety, especially by older youth aged 20–24. It has been suggested that no one intervention is likely to be effective to address alcohol use by youth, and that a range of approaches targeted to specific groups/communities is needed (Carter, Filoche & McKenzie, 2017).

Youth suicide

Youth suicide has been described as "the most extreme indicator of negative wellbeing" (Education Counts, nd). New Zealand has the highest rate of youth suicide for 15–19 year olds of all OECD and EU countries, and particularly high rates for young Māori and Pacific Island men.

The Chief Science Advisor, Professor Peter Gluckman, released a discussion paper in 2017 on youth suicide in New Zealand (Gluckman, 2017). The paper reviewed local and international literature, and suggests that youth suicide attempts are associated with a number of factors, including:

- socio-demographic factors and restricted educational achievement
- family discord and poor family relationships
- the tendency to being impulsive
- externalising behaviour (anti-social behaviours, and alcohol problems)
- depression
- self-esteem
- hopelessness, loneliness
- drug and alcohol misuse
- a history of suicidal behaviour among family and friends
- partner- or family-violence exposure in adolescence.

Locally, a surge in student suicides at Otago University was reported in 2017 (Telfer, 2017), and the university's mental health services were significantly restructured to meet rising demand. Media reports suggest growing numbers of young people in Otago are expressing suicidal thoughts. An *Otago Daily Times* article in 2018 described rising demand for mental health support at both tertiary institutions and schools (McPhee 2018). The Otago representative of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors, Jean Andrews, explained that "in the past two years there had been an increase in mental health problems in the region including suicidal thoughts in children as early as year 7." Youthline Otago manager, Brian Lowe, also reported an increase in demand for services.

Preventing youth suicide is currently the topic of much public attention and debate. Professor Gluckman noted that "while much is spoken and argued about its prevention, it remains a complex and contentious area with much advocacy for unproven interventions" (Gluckman, 2017). He did, however, make a strong point that "youth suicide is more than simply a mental health issue" and argued for a focus on primary prevention from a very early age, which he explained as:

> *"This means promoting resilience to the inevitable exposure to emotional stresses and building self-control skills in early childhood and primary school years, by using approaches that we already know about. It means promoting mental health awareness and ensuring that there are competent and adequate adult and peer support systems in secondary schools. This must be backed up by a capacity to find and rapidly support those children and young adults who are in mental distress and ensuring that the needed interventions and therapy are early and effective." (Gluckman, 2017).*

Gluckman suggests that this primary prevention approach requires "social investment. . .particularly focusing on those communities with low resilience and self-esteem."

It is recommended that trustees review the 2017 discussion paper by Prof Gluckman if further information is required on the complex issues of youth suicide and suicide prevention.

Digital access/bullying

Rapid developments in technology have changed the way that young people access information, interact with others, and connect with communities. Such change brings opportunities for young people, and their communities, but also raises challenges and concerns for some. These concerns were recently highlighted through the national mental health inquiry:

"Parents spoke of their deep concerns... about the misuse of the internet, including pornography and harmful sexual images, and about social media, also linked to bullying and poor social skills development." (Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction, 2018).

Cyberbullying

A 2018 report estimated that the societal cost of cyberbullying in New Zealand is $444m/year (Sense Partners, 2018). While this figure includes adults affected by cyberbullying, the report acknowledged that youth are disproportionately affected.

The most effective cyberbullying programmes are long-term (6 months or more) and involve teachers, parents and peers. They include training in media literacy, self control and social skills, and seek cultural change across the entire school (Gluckman, 2017).

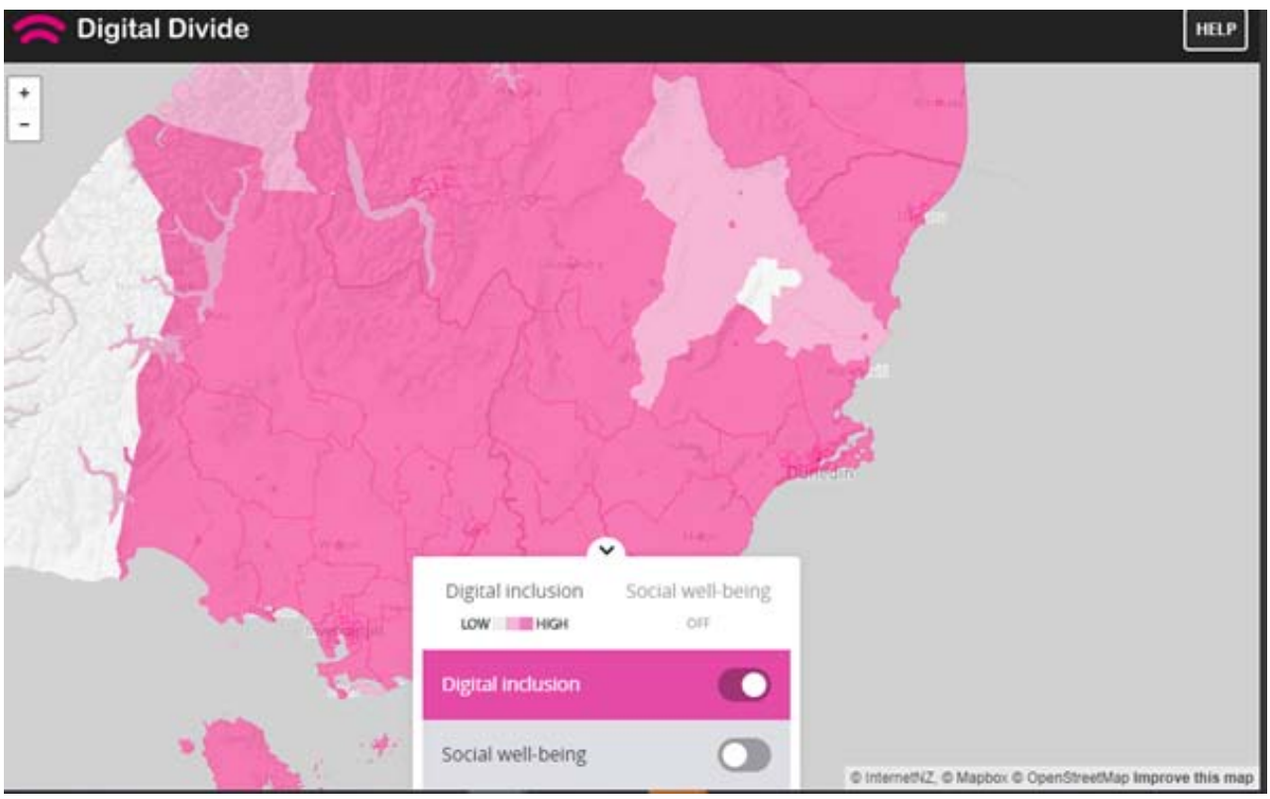
"The impact on wellbeing is more intense in cyberbullying than social [face to face] bullying... it follows you home, there's no respite." Shamubeel Eaqub (Sense Partners, 2018).

Digital access

Digital access is important for many young people. The inability to access the internet/digital resources not only impacts a young person's access to information, but potentially to their social networks, increasing their risk of isolation.

Digital access is high in Dunedin, partly due to recent infrastructure developments. Dunedin has the fastest free city wi-fi network in the Southern Hemisphere — in 2018 the network was being used by more than 50,000 users per month (GigCity Dunedin, 2018). Digital access is not even across Otago, however. The Digital Divide project maps digital access, using data on infrastructure (from the National Broadband Map), on access to telecommunications (from the 2013 census), and on IT skills (from the OECD-PIAAC survey). The most recent map for Otago shows that while there are high levels of digital access across most of Otago (the dark pink areas), there are still rural areas where digital access is much lower (the light pink areas).

Digital divide and social inclusion maps for Otago (Digital Divide, nd)



Key youth development models and concepts

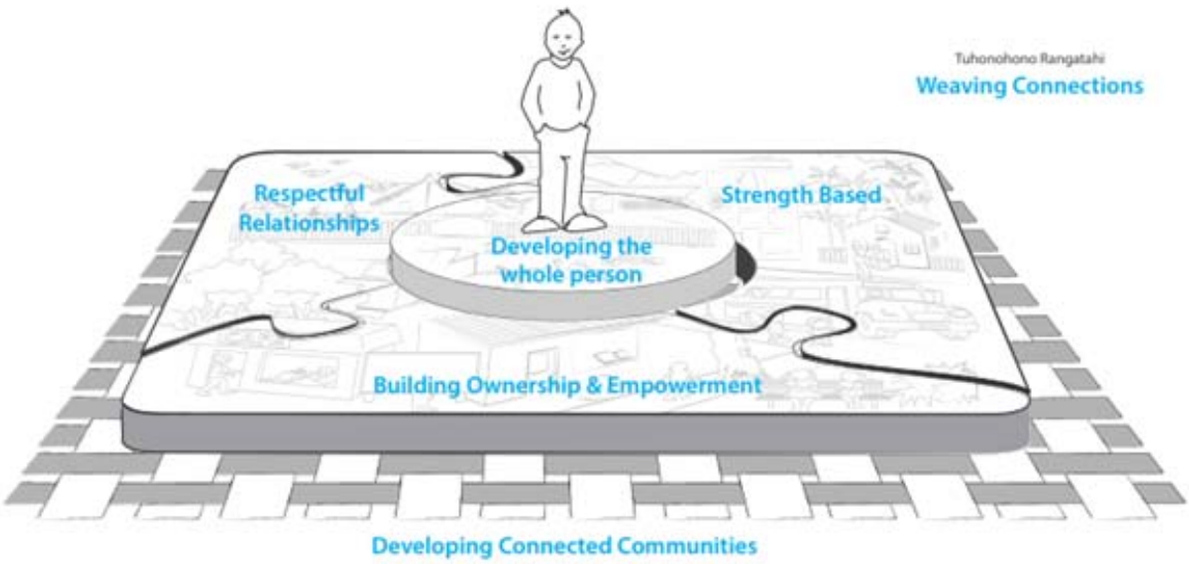
There are many approaches and frameworks for youth development. Key youth development models and concepts are summarised below.

A review by the Centre for Social Impact (2018) considered multiple approaches and suggested that key characteristics of effective youth approaches/programmes included:

- Early intervention approaches
- Youth mentoring approaches, especially if structured and part of a wraparound service
- More intensive support for young people at greater risks
- Approaches that involve family/whānau and the community, and that build community connectivity and collaboration
- Approaches that respond to individuals' strengths and aspirations and develop the whole person
- Youth development practice that draws on appropriate cultural frameworks, particularly for Māori and Pacific youth
- Integrated social service design that reduces fragmentation, is sufficiently funded and offers flexible service design

Improving the health and wellbeing of young people should involve strengthening protective factors, rather than only focusing on addressing risks/'problems'. Key protective factors include:

- High quality, consistent, supportive relationships with adults and/or peers
- Healthy attachment to parent/s, developed as an infant
- Connectedness to school
- Positive school environment
- Cultural efficacy



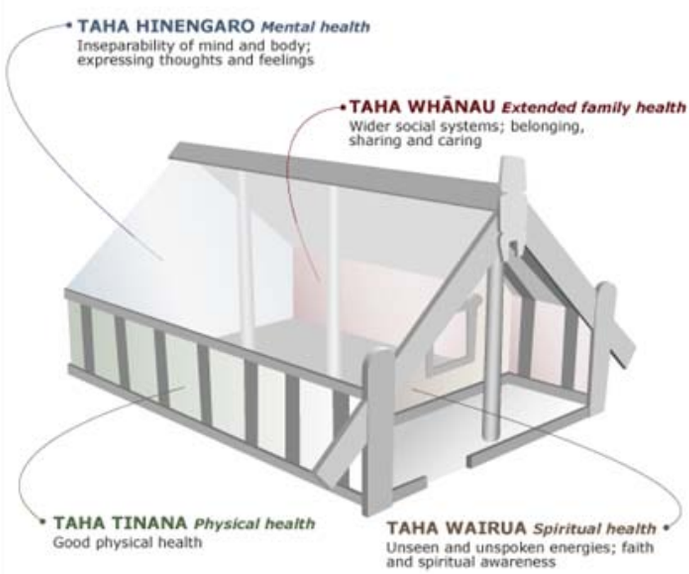
Positive Youth Development

A key framework for youth development in New Zealand is the Positive Youth Development framework. The framework is outlined in the Positive Youth Development Aotearoa (Wayne Francis Charitable Trust, 2012) report, which also provides a useful introduction to other models of youth development. The PYD framework was developed by considering a range of models/practices reported in literature, and the "grassroots experiences" of young people and youth workers in New Zealand. It is intended to be used for both formal and informal activities and suggests that youth development activities should seek two key outcomes:

1. **Developing the whole person**
2. **Developing connected communities**

To achieve these outcomes, three key approaches are suggested:

1. **Strengths-based**
2. **Respectful relationships**
3. **Building ownership and empowerment**



Te Whare Tapa Whā

Te Whare Tapa Whā was developed by Dr Mason Durie. It is a holistic model that explains Māori understandings of wellbeing. Four key dimensions are included: Taha Hinengaro (mental health); Taha Wairua (spiritual health); Taha Tinana (physical health); and Taha Whānau (family health).

The 5 C's of Positive Youth Development

This model suggests that young people with lower levels of the "5 C's" **(Competence, Character, Connection, Confidence, Caring/Compassion)** are at higher risk for adverse outcomes. It suggests that priority should be given to focusing on these areas/characteristics to develop and strengthen young people.

1. These add to more than 100% because multiple responses were allowed

SECTOR PERSPECTIVES

Methodology

For the purpose of this research, we defined the Otago youth sector as those organisations with a youth development focus. To create a full picture of the ecosystem, we also harnessed employment, health, community development, alternative education, kaupapa Māori and Pacific perspectives.

We concentrated on groups and organisations directly involved in the youth sector, and we targeted Māori and Pacific representation. We also focused on selecting key sector perspectives from Central Otago (3), Clutha (1) and Ōamaru/Waitaki (3). It's worth noting the timeframe for contacting people and conducting interviews was tight and came on top of the school holidays — these constraints had an impact on who could be interviewed.

We were contracted to interview up to 10 sector representatives for this report, but were not able to achieve regional representation and a diversity of perspectives with this number. We extended the number of interviews to 17 (within the agreed budget).

This is still definitely a snapshot of the sector — gaps include perspectives from the LGBTQI community, people with disabilities, migrant and former refugee communities, tertiary students and the large number of faith-based youth groups. A thorough process of gathering a perspective from mana whenua should be a priority for OCT.

All interviews were conducted in person, and were based on a semi-structured, open-ended interview format. Most were individual interviews and six were group interviews capturing several perspectives within an organisation. In total, we captured the perspectives of 24 sector representatives. Some interviews went for an hour, others for up to three hours. Interviewees commented on how much they appreciated the opportunity to meet in person — particularly those from the regions.

A summary of the interview was written — with key themes highlighted — and was returned to each participant for editing. The summaries were then analysed using a thematic narrative approach to discern common themes, and the grouping of themes has formed the basis of this chapter.

Themes

Relationships — connections and a sense of belonging

Across the sector, interviewees emphasised that connections and a sense of belonging are key protective factors for young people. Having places to belong is crucial for young people — these can be physical places, groups or events in which a young person feels valued, safe, free to be themselves, and where they are given opportunities to stretch, learn and try new things.

A common thread was that stable, supportive and consistent relationships with both adults and peers give a sense of security, role models and connections to place and the wider community.

> "Supportive relationships make the biggest difference in a young person's life."
> **Youth worker, Clutha**

Good relationships are transformational, and this is often a long-term, deep commitment. People who work with youth recognise that in many cases investing in relationships for the long term is necessary to build the trust that enables young people to make change. As we will discuss later, there is a call for a shift in funding models to better acknowledge and support such long-term investments in young people.

"Invest in long-term caring relationships and you won't get the crisis callouts."
(Māori service manager, Dunedin)

"The figures for Māori youth continue to get worse. Māori youth are sick of filling in surveys! They want a relationship! And it may be a long time between when you begin a therapeutic relationship to when a young person is ready for change."
(Māori mental health worker, Dunedin)

"It takes time to build closer and deeper relationships with young people, to drill down into the relationship and to support the surfacing of their value. In a relationship with funders, it is difficult to justify the time and resources needed to do this work. The role of holding the hope for youth — not creating the hope, but holding the hope — and healing insecure attachments by building relationships is vital."
(Service manager, Dunedin)

"Many years of relationship building are needed for some young people to find success. They may need to keep coming back in the context of a trusting relationship, where privacy is respected."
(Service manager, Dunedin)

Both family and community relationships were identified as crucial, and for many organisations, working alongside or led by family is the baseline. Particularly for Māori and Pacific organisations, working in ways that wrap in the whole whānau and draw on intergenerational relationships is integral to the kaupapa that drives programmes and services. Connecting with whakapapa and learning tikanga anchor a sense of

belonging and identity for Māori young people.

"Young people need security, stability, belief and to feel connected to their community. They need mana motuhake, confidence. This is somewhere they can belong. Young people will often return at different times in their life."
(Māori service manager, Dunedin)

Positive mentoring and peer relationships are also important. A number of people emphasised the influence of peers and the need to build peer relationships and connect young people with each other. This can be a particular issue in regions where there is only one local high school — fostering peer mentoring across a region was one approach discussed.

"Peers are very influential, so fostering youth leadership — rangatahi with strong tikanga — when we support youth leadership, these young people make a significant difference with their peers."
(Māori service manager, Dunedin)

Some services also look outwards to see what support might be needed in a whānau. One example was working with the siblings of children who have offended and gone through Youth Justice. The siblings have a relationship with a youth worker and opportunities to do some fun activities. Funding for this work is often minimal. Another example is given in the following case study.

Another way of doing respite care

Māori caregivers who are caring for their grandchildren can experience isolation and exhaustion. We recently facilitated an opportunity for a group of grandmothers to experience a day of respite that was about care and connection, rather than just having some time free of caregiving. Their moko were looked after by a team of youth workers and given a really fun day out at the beach while the nannies were treated to manicures, hair-styling and lunch at a restaurant by the sea. Given the level of care they provide, it was a small investment to give them a day of care and nurturing.

Māori and Pacific youth workers talked about the value of events such as sports tournaments that bring young people together, foster belonging and connectedness and build cross-cultural relationships. One example given was basketball games where the kids of former refugee families are invited to come and play against Māori kids.

Some providers noted that young people need a range of options to build community and connect, and that low-cost activities give young people more equitable access to opportunities and experiences. In the regions, a common and related issue was that there are good opportunities for young people to play sport at an elite level, but fewer options for kids who just want to be active, have outdoor adventures and try new things.

Another perspective was that relationship-based interventions are important at certain developmental ages, but young people also need to be empowered with tools and resources to activate change in their own lives.

"We are developing technology-based tools where youth can collate their experiences, expertise and capability. This approach supports young people with tools for self-management and to engage in an ever complex world."
Group manager, Dunedin

Security for young people is also about having the basics in life. Many organisations emphasised the importance of providing food, comfortable environments, warmth, laundry and bathroom facilities, somewhere to rest and play. When these needs are met, it is easier for young people to make connections and feel they belong.

Community building

Many of the people we spoke to emphasised the value of investing in community development and local community building. For young people, belonging to their neighbourhood is vital, and it also creates opportunities to leverage the connections local people and organisations have to their young people and the ways they can support them. Place-based community-led development projects are a valuable resource in building community and linking young people in. Some youth organisations have also made a conscious choice to work in their local community, rather than offering their services more widely.

> We need to do more to nurture and support the fabric of local communities. Approaching problems as a neighbour builds up young people. Neighbours are invested in each other's wellbeing and their support is based on a relationship. Working in this way encourages grassroots, local responses to young people. A community development approach is a much cheaper model than developing high and complex needs plans for young people in crisis. We need to move away from a service delivery approach to a community development approach."
> **Service manager, Dunedin**

The people we spoke to from kaupapa Māori and Pacific-led groups see community building as intrinsically linked to youth development and wellbeing. For example, a kaupapa Māori lens brings into focus the links between colonisation and vulnerable youth; it also sees the answers that lie in intergenerational relationships and support (see case study).

Colonisation and vulnerable youth

Young people do not want to come to a hui on "how not to take their own lives"— they want to come and experience "how good is it to be alive". They need to feel connected, to be a part of something, to have a sense of community.

The data does not reflect what we know — that our young people move from home, they couch surf, they move from flat to flat, there is overcrowding, there is no security of 'home'.

Our people have been colonised and have lost their land, but in the past at least there was a state home. This security is now gone. For our youth, living in these horrendous situations is devastating. The standard of living for our young people is below what our ancestors would have considered acceptable.

There can be philanthropy in our communities, but people need the personal relationship.

If we only target our vulnerable at-risk youth, they only socialise with each other. They need the option to be part of the community — to socialise and connect with others — this is how we all learn.

This is about creating social justice for our people. If our young people don't have loving and caring relationships, we need to build these relationships around them. It is so important to have our kaumatua on the marae, to be giving this support.

Intergenerational relationships are so important as protective factors in suicide prevention — they show vulnerability and the struggle it takes to overcome. This is about normalising struggles, letting young people see they are not alone in their journey — others have been there before. It is about our own stories of hardship and vulnerability, perseverance and achievement, keeping this real. Knowing the stories and more context gives examples which help our young people.

People from kaupapa Māori organisations spoke of the diversity in Te Ao Māori, of the need to connect in new Maata Waka, and of manaakitanga and initiatives to build relationships with former refugee families newly arrived in Dunedin.

"The marae is involved with the manaaki of former refugee whānau — this is an emerging issue — we are working to build positive relationships with these new families. In part, this is because it is part of our beautiful cultural practice to do so, but also because there is the potential for prejudice. These new families can become the face of the social injustice our Māori whānau experience. It is important that we be at the forefront of positive cross-cultural engagement. Our whānau know what trauma looks like."

(Māori mental health worker, Dunedin)

For Pacific-led groups, community building is the source of support for young people to build capacity, grow confidence and have access to opportunities. Pacific-led parenting support can help prepare Pacific parents to look after their young people, who are engaging in an ever-changing world. Isolation can be an issue for Pacific people in larger centres like Dunedin, and initiatives such as sports tournaments are a valued way to bring people together, support identity and connect with Māori and other communities. Again, these initiatives rely on volunteer funding and short-term funding, and they are missed when the funding ends and the event doesn't happen.

> "This sort of event makes Dunedin feel like a place for the Pacific community. It is really important for those Pacific families who do not associate with Pacific church groups or Pacific ethnic groups to have a way to connect."
> **Pacific community development facilitator, Dunedin**

Some of the organisations we spoke to were taking innovative approaches to connecting and building capacity in the community. For example, the Safer Waitaki role is funded by the local council, but all projects that come under the role are externally funded. This sees a large number of local organisations working together, creating a high level of community engagement with programmes.

Community- and youth-led programmes were widely acknowledged as a way to create impact and find opportunities for partnership and investment. We were given many examples of existing or potential initiatives in the interviews, and some are listed below to give a sense of the range of work being done and the creativity of community- and youth-led responses to local issues.

- A community-led programme involving Pacific parents in their children's education
- Youth week — youth-led workshops, where youth are the educators for the whole community
- Social enterprises such as a coffee van — a youth team have been selected to develop a business plan, research products, do barista and food handling training, and run the coffee van at local events; they also want to purchase an outdoor movie screen to complement the enterprise
- A youth innovation and technology hub
- A locally owned movie theatre

It's worth noting that while community building work embellishes and supports other practice, it is often poorly resourced and acknowledged — particularly when it is done by volunteers.

"Our volunteers become so exhausted — it is always the same people who keep doing the work and we risk burning them out."

(Māori mental health worker, Dunedin)

The concept of funding the role of youth workers/navigators/connectors in high schools was discussed with enthusiasm across the region. The role would be a point of connection for young people with the wider community — seeing young people and schools as part of the fabric of a community. The navigator would also build community within schools.

"The 'window schools' concept of a community school is a really interesting model — a community that the school is part of, not bringing the community into the school."
(Service manager, Dunedin)

Part of this role would be to leverage the assets that already exist in communities to support and connect young people, and to make those assets inclusive of young people.

"There is potential for investment in a youth worker scheme through secondary schools. A role that would support, liaise and build connections with services and community. Such a scheme would need to be developed through a hui and consultation process with the sector."
(Service director, Dunedin)

The role would also help young people connect with agencies and services and access information. A youth expo has been run in the past and a possibility for future investment would be a mini expo that travels to schools. Māori and Pacific organisations particularly identified the value of a youth worker/advocate role to support young people to navigate between worlds and to access career paths — this is discussed in more detail at the end of the chapter.

Youth development

People across the sector reference best practice models, and Positive Youth Development informs much of the sector's theory, practice and ways of talking about their work. Some organisations are using this lens to inform a comprehensive review of their policies and procedures.

The sector generally agrees that a strengths-based approach is the best practice model for working with young people. Some expressed concern that how to embed this approach in practice is not always well understood.

Youth-led processes have been embraced in the regions. Work and action plans are often developed from youth consultation and engagement, and organisations are innovative about finding opportunities for young people to explore their leadership potential within supportive frameworks.

"Our AGM was youth-led — the young people facilitated our AGM and all the adults had to listen to them. This centered their voice and importance, while they were also learning new skills."
(Youth service manager, Alexandra)

Youth councils — as a mechanism to amplify the voice of young people in local government decision-making — are active around the region. In some places, the youth council is actively embraced by the local council and given the status of a council committee. Clutha is a notable example. There is also concern in some regions that the youth council model does not represent diverse or vulnerable young people well.

"The youth council has been built up over a number of years — the group now leads this process. They run the youth volunteering awards and are developing their relationship with council and increasing the youth voice in local governance."
(Youth worker, Wanaka)

Young people discover their leadership potential in myriad ways, and people in the sector take a wide view when thinking about how to offer opportunities and investment for youth leadership, rather than concentrating solely on our young high achievers.

"Pacific youth need opportunities to build capacity and grow confidence. Transferring the leadership qualities they may develop in church into school is a real struggle."
Pacific community worker, Ōamaru

"Most scholarships are for the top students, but there are other forms of leadership."
Tuvaluan community, Ōamaru

"The classroom does not fit everyone's needs, young people need the option of alternative pathways — creative pathways."
(Youth worker, Dunedin)

Strengthening the sector

Many interviewees talked about work that could be done to strengthen the youth sector. At the core of this is a recognition that resources should be invested in the people who do relationships. Organisations that are committed to a strengths-based practice with their young people recognise the need to model that with their own team, working with strengths and building a solid team culture.

> "There is strength in working collaboratively in well-resourced organisations that can support their people to do their work well. There is hospitality and generosity in youth work — giving more so that people can give more of themselves."
> **Service manager, Dunedin**

One of the people we spoke to noted the importance of building in time for reflection rather than just focusing on the doing work. To do this properly, an organisation might offer supervision for its youth workers, recognising that administrative spending on supervision and other support is needed to enable good practice.

Strengthening youth work as a profession was highlighted as a priority by a number of interviewees. Interviewees were careful to distinguish between youth workers and counsellors, with youth workers seen as having a much stronger role in building community and walking alongside young people. As relationships develop over time, young people build trust and can disclose very intense issues — the youth worker's role is to advocate, support and connect young people to services.

"There needs to be more understanding about the difference between youth workers and counsellors — the youth worker relationship is about empowerment and working together, advocacy, support, building connections."
(Youth worker, Cromwell)

Interviewees recognised that youth work is a specialised profession, with ongoing training needed to understand and support more complex needs such as trauma-informed work. While there is a youth worker training scheme, it does not fund ongoing training, just one-off events and workshops.

> "We need to strengthen youth work as a professional practice to create an exemplar of 'how to' work with young people."
> **Service manager, Dunedin**

Youth workers tend to be spread thinly across the region, with scant national support. In discussing professional development, it needs to be recognised that accessing this can require travel to a bigger centre for regional youth workers. In an undervalued profession with low pay rates, professional development is limited by funding or is done on a shoestring. For example, the Central Otago Youth Workers Network meets every three months — it is not resourced, but the support, professional development and connecting are highly valued.

Interviewees also called for initiatives to connect and develop the sector. There was some interest in an annual youth work conference and some organisations are looking to expand their services to neighbouring areas to give isolated youth workers an infrastructure of support and a team approach while remaining responsive to local communities.

"We need to link the sector in a way that maintains the special character of organisations, but builds a culture of collaboration, shared evidence-based practice and good governance."
(Group manager, Dunedin)

"Bringing the youth sector together — to share resources and work on joint projects — is important. Connecting, sharing information, best practice, knowing where people are, the sharing of policies."
(Youth co-ordinator, Dunedin)

Governance and the structures needed to run an effective organisation were other areas identified as needing attention and investment. Providing support to organisations to strengthen their governance would flow on to well-managed organisations.

The importance of, and difficulties with, evaluation of youth work were discussed by a number of interviewees. Many of the people we spoke to want high quality data and evidence to support their practice. In particular, they want to see evaluative work done to assess the impact of services, approaches, programmes and initiatives on youth wellbeing. Evaluation also needs to be culturally responsive — to measure effectiveness well, it is crucial to be clear about the desired or needed outcomes.

Finding meaningful quantitative measures of success is difficult, but some suggested that tracking long-term patterns of where young people are succeeding despite risk factors could be a productive line of analysis. The sector is also rich in qualitative evidence — again, long-term research is key to gathering meaningful data that can lead to robust conclusions.

"Evaluative work needs to be grounded in wellbeing and the stories that emerge from young people's lives. Evaluative measures of services are important, but what is often wanted is quantitative — the numbers don't tell the quality of the relationships and the hours and time spent. Stories are very important in terms of evaluative work — it depends on how it is done — and who it is for. We have an open door policy — you only need to listen in to a few conversations to understand the value of connecting and belonging."
(Youth worker, Cromwell)

Youth spaces

Making public spaces youth-friendly was highlighted by a number of interviewees as a way to improve wellbeing. They saw that young people need to feel they belong and are safe in the community, and that this can be fostered in public places.

Accessibility is a core component of making cities, towns and spaces youth-friendly. Careful attention to design of streetscapes and community hubs is needed if they are to work well and be inclusive. Areas also become much more friendly when young people can move around them. It is hard for young people to access opportunities in rural areas as they have few transport options, and in Dunedin the cost is prohibitive.

"It is really important that we are encouraging our youth to be active and engaged — that we make recreational opportunities accessible to all young people. Our youth should feel welcome and their needs should be met in our public spaces. There would be significant impact if the pool was free,

continued on next page. . .

if the buses were free for youth, the library and Toitū had spaces that invited youth into them. Many of our rangatahi can't afford a bus fare — or to get around the city."
(Māori service manager, Dunedin)

Alongside youth-friendly public spaces, interviewees see the value in youth-owned spaces, and a number of the organisations we talked to had such a space, were looking to expand their space, or were keen to develop a space. In these spaces, young people have a sense of belonging and ownership, they feel included and are able to be themselves, build relationships and find support.

"This is a second home — a safe space — where youth are comfortable to talk about the issues in their lives, build connections with others. The culture of the space is open — the tracks of what is allowed are much wider than at school or home."
(Youth worker, Wānaka)

Māori and Pacific young people also need spaces where their cultures are the norm.

"It is really important that rangatahi have the spaces where Māori language and kaupapa is the norm. It is not a one size fits all — no one space is right for everyone."
(Māori service manager, Dunedin)

Youth-owned spaces can provide a wide range of activities or facilities, energised and driven by what young people are interested in or want access to. Ideas included a free gym, a tech hub, a recording studio. They can also provide basic necessities in a positive, community-building way. Cooking and sharing food fosters community and looks after hungry kids. It's also important to consider the timing of services — kids don't work on a 9–5 schedule.
Events and community projects are another way to celebrate young people and knit them into their communities.

"Matariki is a good example of a community event that fosters youth leadership development. The event has grown and grown — youth lead many of the roles and much of the organising."
(Youth worker, Wānaka)

"We need to get kids in community projects where young people feel they are giving back — for example, planting fruit trees. Too often in our communities, youth are pushed to the fringes."
(Māori youth worker, Dunedin)

Access to mental health services

Access to mental health services is an issue across the youth sector and throughout Otago. Young people need easy access to services no matter where they live or what level of service they need. Young people lead very busy lives and deal with a lot of stress and multiple demands on their time. Mental health, anxiety, youth suicide and self-harming are pressing issues and young people can experience a significant delay in accessing mental health services.
Access is a particular issue in the regions, with Wānaka highlighted as an area where growing population and need are not matched by adequate service provision. In this environment, youth services are oversubscribed and stretched thin, with more staff desperately needed. Under-provision can also mean practices are not ideal, such as bringing young people who need one-to-one contact into group contexts.
Access is also about providing targeted and culturally competent services. Māori are over-represented in youth suicide statistics and interviewees reflected on the disengagement of rangatahi Māori — either existing services need to be improved or different services that are more responsive to Māori youth need to be developed.

> "In general young people don't want to come to a group workshop on depression or anxiety, but Māori youth do — they are more likely to engage in the group experience than individual sessions. It is a different model for Māori youth — and because it is a different model we need to measure the outcomes differently. "
> **Māori mental health worker, Dunedin**

A number of people commented that young people need access to support before they reach the critical end, and there was a general feeling that much more could be done in the early intervention space.
One service has been setting up therapy groups where young people are supported to come up with their own solutions and resolve their own issues.

"All young people should have three people they can turn to for help and three things they can do that make them feel good. It's about supporting people with emotional intelligence and normalising emotions. It's also about having support to do day-to-day life stuff, navigating how to do life."
(Service manager, Dunedin)

Some noted that more help and support is needed in schools to address mental health issues and school counsellors struggle to deal with really complex cases.

Funding

Frustration with funding models is widespread in the youth sector. Many felt strongly that partial and project-based funding support neither the wellbeing of organisations nor the ongoing supportive relationships that make a difference in young people's lives. Instead, they advocated for models,

processes and levels of investment that could shift the status of the youth sector from precarious to secure.

"Partial funding of budgets indicates a distrust between the funder and organisations and reshapes an organisation's priorities. The project may be grounded in the young people's direct needs, but when the budget only receives partial funding, the funder's priorities supersede the needs of young people. The adults distort the process and the funder shapes the practice and the kids get lost. Project funding negates the ongoing relationships that are so important for young people."
(Service manager, Dunedin)

"The thing that makes the most difference for young people is relationships and experiences of success. Current funding models do not encourage relationships."
(Service manager, Dunedin)

Current funding models — "the patchwork of partial funding for needs-based projects" (Service manager, Dunedin) — also cause exhaustion; this is particularly acute for volunteer-led organisations, which are stretched for time and resources. Even in paid roles, there's a tendency for people to give over and above what is sustainable or resourced.

> "Volunteer-led initiatives require a huge investment from the community — coordination of the project and all the funding and charitable requirements often result in burn out."
> **Pacific community development facilitator, Dunedin**

> "Accessing funding and the reporting requirements are a barrier to doing more community building with our own community."
> **Pacific community worker, Ōamaru**

The inconsistency of project funding puts pressure on organisations to be always starting new programmes from scratch; it can also leave the profession vulnerable, with a lack of security for trusts and workers. While many interviewees talked about the need for consistent, ongoing funding and commitment, it's important to note that some interviewees acknowledged the value of project funding in keeping organisations and services accountable and innovative. Alternative models proposed include resourcing for community-led events, funding for people and operations, long-term funding and discretionary funding with a quick turnaround. Community funding is often only a small part of a larger organisation's budget, but is valuable because it creates the flexibility to build relationships and take time to have the conversations that need to happen. Particularly for Māori providers, investment must be intergenerational — investing in whole families and communities — to have real impact.

"Alongside a community development approach, look at strengthening the organisations that already exist and are working with our most vulnerable. Many organisations are thinly stretched and need more funding to make their services more effective. OCT could create environments where really good people get to do really good work."
(Service manager, Dunedin)

Seedling funding was another model suggested to acknowledge and resource the community building done by whānau and informal groups that don't have charitable status or a bank account.

A mechanism of support that is working well in Central Otago and could be trialled in other areas is the resourcing of a part-time fundraiser who is available to write grant applications and reports for all the local youth trusts. Recognising that report writing can be another barrier to accessing funds, one suggestion was that relationship models could be a positive alternative to written evaluation and accountability processes.

A common thread was a desire for a stronger relationship with funding organisations, and some interviewees invited OCT to work more closely with them to achieve outcomes for young people. Organisations want feedback and engagement; they want a relationship with OCT.

> "Young people are such a diverse group – in so many niches. Where and with whom will OCT focus its energy to have impact? Once we know what area you want to work in, we can partner with you to achieve this, to have the conversation."
> **Māori service manager, Dunedin**

We asked interviewees where targeted funding could create impact and make a real difference to youth wellbeing. Some of the ideas they shared have been collated in Appendix 5.

Specific challenges and opportunities

Young people are navigating a world alive with challenges and opportunities. While these challenges and opportunities are multiple, some common themes emerged through the sector, regionally or specific to certain groups.

A major issue for interviewees from kaupapa Māori and Pacific-led organisations is the cost for Māori and Pacific kids of navigating the cross-cultural contexts and different worlds in their lives. The people we spoke to identified a lack of cultural competency in the education system as a priority for investment.

> "There is an urgent need for schools and teachers to upskill and develop cultural competency to better serve their students. Our educators really underestimate how much work it is for young people to navigate the education system."
> **Pacific community worker, Ōamaru**

As identified in the evidence review and discussed widely by sector representatives, the Pacific community in Ōamaru is growing rapidly. As discussed above, a mentoring/navigating role was seen as a promising potential intervention to help Pacific young people navigate the cross-cultural. The right person would be a translator of both worlds, a community builder who can also work alongside parents. Change is also needed to transform attitudes and create inclusive communities. Resourcing an advocacy role to support Pacific families was another proposal.

"Tuvaluan young people have to navigate between two worlds — they do not fully belong in either. Supporting their identity, belonging and connectedness is vital to their wellbeing."
(Tuvaluan community member, Ōamaru)

The transitions that young people need to make from primary to intermediate, intermediate to secondary, and into tertiary study or the workplace were identified as times of vulnerability, where extra wraparound support and clarity about pathways is needed. Our interviewees suggested targeting support for young people who are at high school or transitioning between different stages.

A significant barrier for our regional communities is that few tertiary opportunities are offered outside Dunedin. Young people must leave their home places to pursue further study — for some this was identified as an opportunity, for others a real barrier to discovering their potential. Limited courses are offered by Telford and by the Ara Institute of Canterbury in Ōamaru. Communities also celebrated the investment Otago Polytechnic is making in Cromwell.

The sector identified the dramatic population growth in both Cromwell and Wānaka. Issues that are dramatically affecting young people and their families are housing affordability and growing disparity — the divide between rich and poor. As health and social services have not kept pace with the rapid growth, services are stretched.

Evidence suggests that alcohol and drug use are significant issues for young people. Some interviewees discussed these issues, but more in relation to parents than young people. Methamphetamine use was identified as an issue in communities — and possibly becoming more prevalent. Locally, communities such as Clutha and Ōamaru are responding: in Clutha, the youth council is coordinating a programme, and there is an initiative to garner a whole-of-community coordinated response in Ōamaru.

The digital divide and cyber-bullying are flagged as significant issues for young people in the evidence. Some sector interviewees discussed unequal access to technology, and social media, bullying/cyberbullying and the need to engage in an ever complex world were significant threads through the sector. Different regions are engaging in different programmes — of note is the Sticks and Stones programme, based in Central Otago, which has attracted significant investment from the Vodafone Foundation. While older interviewees tended to see technology as a problem, younger interviewees focused more on the use of social media as a platform. The importance of unplugged and face-to-face time was emphasised by some interviewees.

Another issue that emerged from the sector interviewees was the lack of opportunities for young people in more rural communities who are not interested in sport. The narrowing of arts options in Dunedin with the closing of the Fortune Theatre was also mentioned.

A significant barrier for many young people is the cost of getting a drivers license, which can limit their ability to work, take part in recreation, and engage with the community — interestingly, several in the sector suggested an investment in this area would make a significant difference to equity of opportunity.

The sector identified the hospital rebuild as a significant emerging opportunity to expand options for local youth employment, although there was also caution about what this might look like both for young people and for the role services will play.

"The hospital rebuild poses an opportunity for youth employment, but it needs to be an integrated, city-wide collaboration that builds in pathways and pastoral care. There are other local opportunities that could also be leveraged in this way."
(Youth service manager, Dunedin)

There is extraordinary energy and commitment in the youth sector. We hope that by distilling and showcasing these voices, we can offer OCT a clearer perspective on one of its key strategic priorities and how its role as a funder could resource a sector that is at the heart of our communities..

We also hope that by ampliying the voices of the sector other funding mechanisms will have the opportunity to become more responsive.

SERVICES MAPPING

Health and wellbeing

"'Rangatahi' means 'many days standing alone' and this is why giving young people opportunities for leadership and involvement is so important."
(Māori service manager, Dunedin)

Health and wellbeing services for young people range from acute, specialist healthcare to development and peer support programmes. As we have seen in the evidence review and sector perspectives, young people face many stressors and risks — a complex web of services and support is available, but access can be harder for some groups and in some areas. We focus on community-level services in this report.

The table below lists many of the services available for young people in the Otago region. Collating data about some areas was outside the scope of this report, and we discuss some of the gaps after the table.

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Kaupapa Māori and Pacific services						
Akamarama Advocacy Inc	No	advocacy for sight-impaired Māori and Pacific Island people	x			
Arai Te Uru Whare Hauora	No	holistic health and education service, incl Well Child/Tamariki Ora	x			
He Ara Hou Whānau Service	No	holistic support and service coordination for Māori whānau	x		x	
Kokiri Training Centre	No	wraparound services for students, whānau	x			
Mataora, Te Kāika (Caversham Forbury and Brockville)	No	health and holistic services for Māori, Pacific and low income families	x			
Moana House	No	residential community and holistic drug and alcohol services for male reformed offenders	x			
Oamaru Pacific Island Community Group	No	pan-Pacific community group			x	
Pacific Island Centre, University of Otago	Yes	support, advocacy and pastoral care for Pacific Island tertiary students	x			
Pacific Trust Otago	No	health promotion and advice whānau navigators, education services (playgroup)	x		x	
Te Kākano Health Clinic	No	primary health care services	x		x	

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Kaupapa Māori and Pacific services						
Te Hou Ora Ōtepoti	Yes	after school, cultural programmes and family support for Māori whānau				
Te Oranga Tonu Tanga	No	Māori mental health support	x			
Te Roopu Tautoko ki Te Tonga Inc	No	stopping violence education and health promotion	x			
Te Wānanga o Aotearoa	No	wraparound services for students, whānau	x	x		
Tokomairiro Waiora Inc	No	health services and service coordination for Māori				x
Tumai Ora Whānau Services	No	whānau ora services for the community	x		x	
Uruuruwhenua Health Inc	No	health service and health promotion		x		
WhaiAIO	Yes	mentoring programme/service	x			
Whānau Arohanui Trust	No	wananga and learning space	x			
Health and wellness services for people with disabilities						
Access Ability	No	needs assessment and service coordination for people with disabilities	x	x	x	x
CCS Disability Action	No	support, advocacy and service information for people with disabilities	x		x	
Connections Education & Development Centre	No	day activity centre for people with disabilities	x			
Corstorphine Baptist Community Trust	No	mental health service, disability and community support	x			
Disability Information Service	No	support and information for people with disabilities	x	x	x	x
Health and Disability Advocacy Service	No	advocacy for people with disabilities	x	x	x	x

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Health and wellness services for people with disabilities						
IHC	No	advocacy for people with disabilities	x			
Isis Centre	No	rehabilitation service for people with disabilities	x			
Parent to Parent	No	peer support for parents of children with disabilities and/or health impairments	x	x	x	x
Riding for the Disabled	Yes	horse riding for people with disabilities and health impairments	x	x	x	x
The Personal Advocacy Trust Inc	No	advocacy for people with disabilities who do not have able or living parents	x	x	x	x
Vera Hayward Child Development Services	Yes	developmental programmes and assessments for children with a disability	x		x	x
Education and support services						
Able	No	support groups for children and teens affected by a family member's mental illness	x			
Alateen	Yes	support for young people affected by someone else's drinking	x			
Artsenta	No	art-based support programme for people with mental illness	x			
Jigsaw Central Lakes	No	youth counselling, advocacy, education, support programmes		x		
Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust	No	support for survivors and their significant others	x		x	
New Zealand Prostitutes Collective	No	support, advocacy and education for sex workers	x			
Oamaru Mental Health Support Trust	No	support for people with mental illness			x	
Otago Mental Health Support Trust	No	peer support, information and advocacy for people with mental illness	x			
Pregnancy Counselling Services	No	pregnancy and abortion counselling				

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Education and support services						
Pregnancy Help, Inc	Yes	support service, education and resources	x			
Quitline	No	support services incl phone, text, online and resources eg patches	x	x	x	x
Rape Crisis Dunedin	No	services for women survivors of rape and sexual abuse and their supporters	x	x		
Sophie Elliot Foundation	Yes	education about abusive relationships	x			
Stop	Yes	assessment and intervention for children and youth who have engaged in harmful or concerning sexual behaviour	x	x	x	x
Stopping Violence Dunedin	No	education for men to stop violence	x			
Victim Support	No	support and advocacy for victims of crime and trauma	x	x	x	x
Victims Information	No	support, education and advocacy for victims of crime and trauma	x	x	x	x
Women's Self Defence Network - Wāhine Toa	No	self defence education for girls and women	x			
Health providers						
Adventure Development	Yes	mental health service, alcohol and drug service	x	x	x	x
Dunedin Sexual Health Clinic	No	sexual health services	x	x	x	x
Early Intervention in Psychosis Service	No	intensive early intervention for people who may be experiencing psychosis	X			
Family Mental Health Service	No	mental health service	x			
Family Planning	No	sexual health services	x			
Mirror Services	Yes	mental health service, alcohol and drug service	x		x	x
Public Health Nurses	Yes	healthcare for children and young people, incl sexual health clinics	x	x	x	x

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Health providers						
Public Health South	No	health services and health education	x			
School of Dentistry, University of Otago	No	dental services	x			
Servants Health Centre	No	health services (incl. mental health)	x			
Southern DHB Adult Community Mental Health Teams	No	mental health service	x	x	x	x
Southern DHB Child and Youth Mental Health Services (CAFMHS and YSS)	Yes	mental health service for people aged 0-19	x	x	x	x
Southern DHB Mental Health Emergency Service (EPS)	No	emergency mental health service	x	x	x	x
Southern Support Eating Disorder Service (Ashburn Clinic)	No	health services for people with eating disorders	x			
Student Health Services (Otago Polytechnic)	Yes	health services	x	x		
Student Health Services (University of Otago)	Yes	health services (incl. mental health)	x			
Te Kāika	No	health and holistic services for Māori, Pacific and low income families	x			
Synergy Wellness	No	mental health needs assessment and service coordination	x		x	x
Youth Health Clinic	Yes	sexual health clinic		x		
Social services						
Catholic Social Services	No	counselling and social services	x	x		
Community Networks Wanaka	No	holistic social service		x		
Dunedin Methodist Mission	No	holistic social service and social justice	x	x	x	x
Family Start (Anglican Family Care)	Yes	home visits, family support and development	x	x	x	x
Family Works (Presbyterian Support)	Yes	holistic support service for families	x	x	x	x
Koputai Lodge Trust	No	community support and respite care for people with mental illness	x			

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Social services						
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren	No	holistic support service for grandparents with children in their full-time care	x		x	
Salvation Army	No	social service	x	x	x	x
Stand Children's Services	Yes	holistic support services for children including residential care	x	x	x	x
Strengthening Families	Yes	holistic support service and access to other agencies	x	x	x	x
Super Grans	No	one-on-one mentoring and development	x			
The Hub	Yes	holistic support service and access to other agencies	x			
Residential care						
Carroll St Trust	No	residential care for people with mental illness	x			
Corstorphine Baptist Community Trust	No	residential and respite care for youth with mental illness or disability	x			
Moana House	No	residential community and holistic drug and alcohol services for male reformed offenders	x			
Mount Cargill Trust	No	residential care for children with special needs	x			
PACT	No	residential care for people with mental illness	x	x	x	x
Social services for young parents						
Playcentre Association	Yes	family-centered daycare	x	x	x	x
Plunket Society	Yes	support service for young children and parents, incl Well Child visits	x	x	x	x
The Family Network Inc	Yes	support, information and advocacy for families with a child with disabilities or special needs	x	x	x	x

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Social services for young parents						
Upper Clutha Children's Medical Trust	Yes	financial service to help families in financial difficulty due to their child's health issues		x		
Youth development						
Alexandra and Districts Youth Trust	Yes	education, social space and empowerment		x		
CromYouth	Yes	programmes, events and physical space		x		
Kahu Youth	Yes	programmes, events and physical space		x		
Malcam Trust	Yes	youth development programmes & hub	x			x
Otago Access Radio	No	youth development through broadcasting	x			
Otago Youth Wellness Trust	Yes	wraparound support	x			
ReFocus Youth Support	Yes	service to empower young people to combat bullying	x			
Rock Solid Youth	Yes	community and recreational programmes, mentoring	x			
Sport Otago	No	sport and activity promotion, education and facilities	x			
Sticks and Stones	Yes	youth-led anti-bullying programme	x	x	x	x
Youthtown	Yes	programmes and physical space, focused on after-school and holidays			x	

General and specialist health services are not covered in the table. General health services are provided through general practitioners across the region. Youth mental health inpatient beds and regional services (like the Youth Ward or the Eating Disorder Unit in Christchurch) are highly specialised and only accessed by small numbers of young people.

The region has a number of support and education services focusing on particular health issues such as diabetes or cancer. We have not listed all these services, and a thorough breakdown of disability services is likewise outside the scope of this report. The regional head office for these services tends to be in Dunedin. We have also not listed national telephone helplines such as Youthline and Lifeline, but it should be noted that these are another important service for young people in the region.

As discussed elsewhere, comprehensive engagement with mana whenua is a recommended next step. An understanding of local Māori perspectives on health and wellbeing would greatly enrich this work.

The community and relationship building work of many organisations nourishes wellbeing. Dunedin offers many options for sport and cultural activities — from rugby to scouts, from music lessons to dance, parkour or chess — but time, money and transport can be barriers to equitable access to these activities. There is less provision for activities other than sport in the regions and, again, transport can be a barrier to access.

We have been unable to canvas the range of organisations dedicated to building community and wellbeing for different cultural groups (for example, the Otago Southland Chinese Association, the Dunedin-Edinburgh Sister City Society and the Cedars of Lebanon Club). Support for former refugees is

continued on next page. . .

another area where further research is needed.
The work of place-based community groups in fostering community wellbeing is widely acknowledged in the sector. Groups vary significantly in size, scope, the area they serve and the services they offer. An overview of this sector would be a useful contribution to understanding the full ecosystem of community support for young people.
There are also many youth-based church trusts in the region — we have not attempted to collate information about these.
Local councils have a mandate to promote wellbeing and this will only increase with the current government's wellbeing budget and focus. Councils support youth wellbeing and leadership in a number of ways.
The Clutha District Youth Council is a standing committee of the full council, giving young people a strong voice in local decision-making and governance, and the Clutha District Council has a number of funds directed at young people, including the Youth Development Fund, the Sport NZ Rural Travel Fund, and study bursaries.[1] Waitaki, Dunedin and Central Otago have youth councils and committees that advise the local council, advocate for the interests of young people and organise and support events for young people.
Much council work can support youth wellbeing, particularly if the processes and decision-making are youth-led. Library and community facilities, parks, recreation facilities, streetscapes and basic infrastructure are all areas that have a big impact on young people and their wellbeing.

Employment

> "For Tuvaluan youth in Ōamaru, the trend is often to finish high school and go into factory work. But there is potential in Tuvaluan young people that has not been tapped into yet."
> **Pacific community worker, Ōamaru**

The transition from education into the workplace is one of the big shifts young people may make as they move into adulthood. Learning who they are and what their goals are is an important part of this process. Young people need support to identify what direction they want to go in and the tools they will need to get there.
Through this transition, young people need to learn specific skills, learn about the field they want to work in and develop the foundational skills they will need in a workplace. The first steps for many may be doing work around the home, helping out on the marae, working for neighbours or getting an after-school job in a local business. A combination of study and part-time work may continue for many years or a young person may start vocational training while at school. Volunteering is another way young people can connect with their local community and do work with others that is meaningful and formative. Activism, too, can be a pathway for young people to find their way in the world and learn what their strengths are and how to use them.
If these opportunities and stepping stones are missing in a young person's life, the path is harder, the way less clear. And sometimes there is simply not enough work in an area — meaning young people need to move away to find employment — or the options are narrow, constricting a young person's world before it has a chance to open up.
Many of the services for youth employment aim to meet these gaps, but much is also to be gained from building strong, well-connected, sustainable communities that can nurture young people, build their skills and give them a place to stand as leaders of the future.
To better understand the youth economy, work is being driven by the Prince's Trust New Zealand, which talked to young people across New Zealand in late 2018 about their lives, communities and aspirations. The study is part of work to position young people to drive positive change in our economy and communities.

"Young people told us they want to have meaningful work and career pathways, and that they want to contribute value to their communities and the economy. Young people we spoke to see economic participation — meaningful work that sustains them in their life — as a fundamental component of their own wellbeing, and the wellbeing of their families and communities. They told us about the changes that they would like to see in their worlds, including to housing, their physical and digital safety, and having work that enables them to stay connected to family, community and place."
(Prince's Trust New Zealand, 2019)
A draft strategy has been created, and this will be a highly significant area to watch.

The national system

Mainstream education is provided through the school, university and polytechnic systems. A comprehensive restructuring of the polytechnic sector has been announced recently, with a proposal to combine 16 polytechnics and technology institutes into a single entity.
It is not yet clear what this will mean for Otago Polytechnic and the region's young people, but local commentary on the proposal has been largely critical, with many noting Otago

Polytechnic's ability to innovate and respond to local needs, as well as the crucial role it will play in significant developments planned for the city in coming years, such as the new hospital build, central city upgrades and increased housing demand.

Some schools and private providers offer alternative education — a short-term intervention for 13–15 year olds who have been alienated from mainstream education. Programmes are tailored to individuals and help them transition back to mainstream school, further education, training or employment.

Māori providers deliver Māori subjects in te ao Māori environments. Wānanga are teaching and research institutions that specialise in āhuatanga Māori (Māori tradition) and tikanga Māori.

Industry training organisations (ITOs) set curriculum and design courses for industry training, which is often delivered through private training establishments (PTEs) or employers. Under the polytechnic restructuring proposal, ITOs would set standards and qualifications, but the merged single tertiary institution would organise and provide work-based industry training.

A number of national schemes are designed to support young people's path to employment.

A set of Youth Guarantee initiatives are designed to make the transition from school to further study, work or training easier for young people aged 16–19. In Youth Guarantee partnerships, education providers, communities, iwi and employers come together to deliver vocational education.

Vocational pathways are a framework for engaging learners and helping them to progress. The Achievement Retention Transition (ART) programme provides strategies to support young people to achieve at least NCEA level 2 and transition successfully to the next stage. Secondary-Tertiary Programmes (STPs) create partnerships to blend learning from the school curriculum, industry training and tertiary provision.

The Youth Guarantee Fund, STAR and Gateway provide funding to support learners and education organisations. The Youth Guarantee Fund allows students who don't have NCEA level 2 to do foundation-level tertiary study without paying fees. The Secondary-Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) is operational funding for schools to give young people access to tertiary and industry-related learning not covered in the school curriculum. Schools can access the Gateway fund to give young people industry-based work experiences and placements.

The Youth Service aims to get young people aged 16–17 into education, training or work-based learning. Young people work with community-based providers who give guidance, support and encouragement to help them find the education, training or work-based learning that works. The Otago provider is the Community College in Dunedin.

The Mainstream Employment Programme provides subsidies, training and support to employ people with disabilities in positions created or adapted to fit their skills the needs of the employer.

Employers can also apply for Skills for Industry funding and support to provide short-term training to meet skills shortages.

Count Me In is a phone line run by the Ministry of Education to support Māori and Pacific young people to get NCEA level 2. The Careers NZ website offers career planning, a jobs database, course options and job search tools. People can also access a training organisation database through the NZQA website.

Local government and communities

TLAs through Otago have various programmes to support youth employment.

The Clutha District Economic Development Strategy 2015 sees supporting young people into leadership roles as one of the key actions to grow a pool of talented people to lead the district and also has a set of actions to attract and retain skilled and talented people in the district and to build strong relationships between the business and education sectors (Clutha District Council, 2015).

The Mayors Taskforce for Jobs[2] is a national network of mayors working to see all young people (under 25) engaged in appropriate education, training, work or other positive activity in their communities. Work in this area has been particularly strong in Clutha, where the Mayor of the Clutha District Council led a collaboration between the community and agencies that identified 450 jobs, brought youth unemployment figures into the single digits and ran the Ready, Steady, Work! programme, a five week course to prepare young people for work and connect them with employers, which expanded to Dunedin in 2014.

The Central Otago District Council's Economic Development Strategy 2018–2023 discusses the need to attract and retain young people in the area and increase their participation in the workforce.[3]

In Dunedin, the South Dunedin Social Sector Trial (BASE) began in 2013 as part of a central government initiative to pull local organisations together to improve outcomes for young people. Initially government-led, BASE began transitioning to a community-led model in 2016, with two streams of work. The first focused on youth employment and this has been picked up by Youth Employment Success, a web-based service funded by the Ministry of Social Development, which encourages Dunedin employers to offer work and training opportunities to young people and provides resources and tips to youth employers and young employees.[4]

A Dunedin City Council summer internship programme began in 2009. The programme links University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic students with local businesses, focusing on high-growth sectors such as ICT, biotech and health technologies, education and research, creative, design, primary production, engineering and niche manufacturing. The DCC also takes a number of interns each year, and there are several other internship programmes in the city.

Many young people also volunteer, intern or do paid work with place-based community groups, drawing on the support of, and giving back to, their local community.

Otago services and programmes

An overview of employment services and training programmes in the Otago region is provided below. These programmes cover training, mentoring, job skills development, apprenticeships and work placements/connections. This list is based on existing directories and is unlikely to be fully comprehensive, but should give a good sense of the main programmes and services through the region.

The system is complex and likely difficult for young people and their families to navigate. Most services are in Dunedin. Even region-wide services tend to have their main office base in the city.

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Main education providers						
Schools	Yes	education	x	x	x	x
Otago Polytechnic	No	vocational training	x	x		
University of Otago	No	education	x			
School-based training providers						
FarmHand (Malcam Trust)	Yes	vocational training/foundation skills	x			
Otago Secondary Tertiary College	Yes	day release/vocational training	x	x		
Tokomairiro Training	Yes	vocational training/foundation skills				x
Training providers						
Arai te Uru Kokiri Centre	Yes	vocational training/foundation skills te ao Māori	x			
Community College Dunedin	Yes	vocational training/foundation skills	x			
Dunedin Training Centre	No	vocational training/foundation skills	x			
Harrington Vaughan Academy of Hairdressing	No	vocational training	x			
Literacy Aotearoa	No	literacy training/foundation skills	x	x	x	
Master Drive School	No	vocational training	x			
Next Step Training	No	vocational training/foundation skills	x			
NZ School of Tourism	No	vocational training/foundation skills	x			
Salvation Army Education and Employment	No	vocational training/prisoner and probation employment support	x		x	

SERVICE NAME	YOUTH FOCUS	SERVICE FOCUS	DN	CTL	NTH	STH
Talent International Institute	No	English in the workplace training	x			
Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood NZ	No	vocational training	x			
Te Wānanga o Aotearoa	No	vocational training/foundation skills te ao Māori	x	x		
The Learning Place	No	vocational training/school courses foundation skills	x			
Tree House	No	vocational training/foundation skills	x			
Wellcare NZ	No	vocational training	x	x	x	
Youth Grow	Yes	vocational training/foundation skills	x			
Work placements						
4Trades Apprenticeship Scheme	Yes	apprenticeship scheme	x	x	x	x
Cargill Enterprises	No	business employing people with disabilities vocational training/foundation skills	x			
CCS Disability Action	No	employment support for people with disabilities vocational training/ foundation skills	x			
Community Employment Youth Initiative	yes	six-month project-based work placement for young people	x	x	x	x
IDEA Services (IHC)	no	employment support for people with intellectual disabilities/vocational training foundation skills	x	x	x	x
Mainstream Employment Programme	Yes	work placements for people with disabilities	x	x	x	x
Volunteering Otago	No	volunteer agency/includes a specific volunteering programme for people with mental illness	x	x		
Workbridge	No	employment service for people with disabilities	x		x	
Youth Employment Service (YES)	Yes	connecting young people with employers	x			

OCT's funding in this area

Employment has been a key focus of the Trust's strategic goal since 2014. This section gives some notes on specific programmes.

The 4Trades Apprenticeship Training Trust was established in 2002 under the Malcam Trust. It is now an independent trust and the Otago Chamber of Commerce is contracted to run its operation. OCT grants provide funding for initial start-up costs for an apprenticeship, including first aid training, Site Safe passports and basic personal protection equipment.

In the past 15 years, the completion rate has been 85%. The 4Trades Trust is aiming to get 10 young people and long-term job seekers into apprenticeships in 2018–19, and has attracted three or four new employers in the same financial year.

The OCT supports the Community Employment Youth Initiative, a six-month project-based work placement for young jobseekers with a not-for-profit community group, government department, local authority or business. The placement is funded by OCT and Work and Income.

1. www.cluthadc.govt.nz/your-district/funding-schemes
2. www.lgnz.co.nz/nzs-local-government/mayors-taskforce-for-jobs/
3. www.codc.govt.nz/
4. https://youthemployer.nz

> "Young people thrive when they are connected with people, with mentors, and when they have supportive relationships. Young people need a sense of belonging and of being valued."
>
> **Youth worker, Dunedin**

SIGNPOSTS

In this chapter we pull together our analysis from the evidence review, sector perspectives and service mapping chapters. Our aim here is to discuss and recommend ways to improve young people's wellbeing through funding structures and priorities, sector initiatives and collaborations.

Investment in community building

Young people are a barometer of the wellbeing of their community. The evidence review highlights alcohol use, suicide/mental health, and digital access/technology as three key issues our young people face, and these were also raised in the sector interviews. It is also clear from both the evidence and the sector interviews that strengthening communities is critical to making an impact on these issues — connected communities are a powerful protective factor for young people.

Funders could have a profound impact on youth wellbeing by investing in work that builds community and gives young people the security of close, supportive, trusting relationships. Community building activities could also be emphasised in funding criteria, such as OCT's youth strategic priority.

A richer understanding of the youth sector could be gained by doing further research in a number of areas — we would particularly like to highlight the need for a comprehensive study of youth perspectives, co-designed with young people, and a thorough process of gathering perspectives from mana whenua. Further research on the impact of community building on youth wellbeing, again prioritising youth and mana whenua perspectives, would be valuable. The evidence review highlighted the need/benefits of early intervention, and this is another area where further research could lead to some significant reframing of the youth priority and funding criteria.

Community development initiatives such as the Dunedin City Council's place-based funding and initiatives in central, south and north Otago also open up possibilities to deepen the impact of investments by partnering with other funders. OCT already has a good track record of partnership funding — examples include Warm Homes for Otago and the Arts and Culture Capability Fund. With a secure base of investment in community building, young people can thrive and be the beacons that guide us into the future.

Targeted funding for Māori and Pacific communities

The evidence review and sector interviews highlight the injustices and inequality experienced by Māori and Pacific communities — for funders to create impact for young people, this inequality must be addressed.

The sector interviewees identified the importance for Māori and Pacific young people of having tikanga and cultural immersion experiences that foster their sense of identity and belonging. Kaupapa Māori and Pacific-led services are best placed to provide these experiences and programmes. A significant portion of the youth funding spend could be dedicated to this work, and a significant, targeted, committed funding pool created to directly invest in Māori and Pacific communities and organisations.

The proportion of youth funding that goes to Māori and Pacific services is not always clearly identified. Categorising data to show what funding has been given to kaupapa Māori and Pacific-led organisations would help track how funding supports those communities.

A significant theme that emerged in the sector interviews was the exhaustion experienced by Māori and Pacific youth, who need to navigate the expectations of dominant culture and interact with culturally incompetent services. Capability funding could target cultural competency training for people who work closely with young people.

In addition, Māori and Pacific communities all identified that it would be beneficial to be able to access small amounts of funding in a short timeframe for initiatives and opportunities as they arise. Funders could explore mechanisms to create and promote a seedling fund to support small or less formal groups and initiatives to access funding and respond quickly to community opportunities and enthusiasm. This fund could be open to all communities.

As many of the initiatives that create real impact in communities are informal and run by volunteers, targeted support to make the process as simple, equitable and accessible as possible is recommended. There are many opportunities here to make a big difference with relatively small resources, and some of these are listed in the appendices.

Best practice models

Positive youth development is a practice model discussed in the evidence review and widely held as best practice in the sector. If funders are looking to sharpen their criteria for funding that supports young people, one option would be to direct funding to services that work with this practice model. Funding criteria and decision-making should recognise best practice models, policy and strategy development in the youth sector, and use this understanding to develop criteria for funding applications.

A number of people noted that measuring the impact of projects on wellbeing is possible, but hard to quantify. The sector is not well resourced to develop innovative and thorough evaluation processes, nor to implement their use. There is potential to invest in research to find and develop best practice evaluation processes — with a particular focus on wellbeing — and consider resourcing their implementation with youth organisations. This investment would help the sector deepen its understanding of what works well, why it works and what doesn't work.

Strengthening the sector

Many interviewees spoke of the potential for greater collaboration and support across the sector. There are few formal connections in the Dunedin youth sector, and this has been exacerbated by the loss of Connect South, formerly the Dunedin Council of Social Services. Funders could play a role in bringing the Dunedin sector together, perhaps by sponsoring a Dunedin youth workers' hui.

There are also opportunities to fund the youth worker networks that already exist in Otago. The Central Lakes Trust has played a significant role in partnering with the region's youth trusts, for example by resourcing a funding person who writes funding applications for the local trusts. We recommend funders explore the CLT model and develop strategic partnerships with youth organisations that could achieve a more stable and sustainable sector.

An annual regional youth workers' gathering has been called for, and this would be an opportunity to connect and chart practice, giving organisations room to move out of their silos of operation. Funding could be extended to resource a broker to connect the sector.

Many people want more opportunities and resourcing for professional development. Specific requests were for regional workshops in central and north Otago and for training on trauma-informed practice.

It's worth noting that the peak youth development body, Ara Taiohi, has a very low level of membership across Otago, with only three members in the region.

Funding models and processes

It was clear from the interviews that parts of the sector are thinly stretched and scraping by. Partial and project funding takes a toll, particularly on smaller organisations or those that rely heavily on volunteer work. Many interviewees spoke of the value of longer term funding in supporting organisational development and wellbeing and in giving a break from the pressure to keep generating new tailored programmes.

Partial funding creates a need to piece together funding from different organisations. This consumes valuable time in the application process and in managing funds received. Partial funding can also distort the kaupapa and values of a project — when a project is not fully funded, the bits that get dropped are the bits that don't meet funders' criteria and priorities. Initiatives that start out shaped by young people can, in the end, be diluted or take on the framework of an external organisation.

Project-based funding does not adequately resource the operational and staffing costs of an organisation — and particularly penalises smaller groups working with rural or in minority communities. As one interviewee pointed out "it is people who do relationships — not things".

We recommend partnership funding be extended to community-based organisations in the youth sector, with an emphasis on the impact of their work rather than the size of the organisation. This would be longer term funding with allowance for overheads and organisational/staffing needs as well as project work.

Competitive funding models have the potential to pit organisations against each other, meaning organisations are less likely to share ideas or create opportunities to work together. The need for one agency to hold the funds for a project can create uncertainty or a loss of control for other partners in the project. Despite this environment, many interviewees talked about the need for greater collaboration across the sector, as noted above.

Several interviewees spoke of a desire for a stronger relationship with OCT to be able to work more closely together and collaborate on projects. Trustees also expressed interest in understanding the sector better. For example, when a project is assessed at the initial stage as fitting under the youth priority, OCT could work closely with the organisation to develop their application and track projects through to evaluation. OCT could also build closer relationships with the sector and engage more deeply with organisations. One option for doing this would be for OCT to employ a staff member to implement the youth strategic priority, including relationship building, community engagement and facilitating a youth advisory group. This role could include an evaluative element.

To track and evaluate impact for young people, good data is needed. Data collection and analysis could be strengthened to give a clearer understanding of who is being funded and how funding relates to the youth strategic priority.

OCT could review the focus and target age range for the youth strategic priority, taking into account the information on early intervention provided in the evidence section. OCT could also review the framing of the youth strategic priority, translate this into clear criteria and guidelines for funding applicants, and develop mechanisms for applicants to demonstrate how their work aligns with the youth strategic priority. A higher level of funding and multi-year funding could be considered for projects that align with this priority.

As noted in the trustee interviews, OCT could also strengthen the way it evaluates projects and their impact on youth wellbeing. One proposal was for OCT to support organisations by evaluating projects through interviews and written reports, and then making the data available to the sector.

Youth navigators

Across the sector, enthusiasm for the youth worker/connectors/navigator role was strong. Various models for this could be considered. One possibility would be to fund a youth navigator in every high school in Otago (around 22 schools).
Other options would be to fund a set number of navigators or to establish navigators to work in geographic clusters. The concept would also work for kaupapa Māori and Pacific-led youth organisations. Many people wanted to start the process with a hui to explore the concept and start charting the model that would work best for Otago, and the sector could be brought together for this. Further funding possibilities might arise from this work.

Innovation in the youth space — ideas to consider

Youth leadership and innovation fund

Recognising that peer relationships and youth leadership are important, funders could consider creating a youth leadership and innovation fund to target investment in initiatives to foster youth potential and develop young leaders. OCT already does significant work in this area — this investment could be collated, extended and marketed in a cohesive and youth-friendly way.

Youth advisory group

The sector has suggested that OCT forms a youth advisory group to give direction to the youth strategic priority. This group could bring together youth sector representatives and young people to support and advise OCT on implementation of the strategy.
OCT could also look at opportunities to better connect with the Dunedin Youth Council, Youth Action Committee, Clutha Youth Council, Central Otago Youth Council, Upper Clutha Youth Council and the Waitaki Youth Council. Strong connections with these youth councils could inform OCT decision-making and provide a vehicle for a youth voice.

Youth voice

To deepen the impact and authority of this report, OCT could partner with local councils across Otago to resource a substantive youth voice research project that explores what the priorities are from the perspective of young people in Otago. We recommend this project be co-designed and co-led with young people.

Youth hubs and spaces

Many organisations spoke of work coming up around buildings or physical spaces for young people. Funding in this area would help provide the environments in which projects happen and relationships are built and sustained. Significant investments could be made in future youth spaces — these forthcoming requests will be of particular importance for regions outside Dunedin.

Using social media for navigation

Options to help young people access information might include the creation of resources, using social media to share ideas, and helping young people navigate databases and systems. The DCC may develop a summary webpage with links to a range of local databases — OCT could partner with this work by resourcing a role in a youth-led organisation to support young people in accessing and navigating information.

Drivers licence investment

As elsewhere, the sector identified that the cost of gaining a drivers licence is a significant barrier for young people. Funding for young people to gain their drivers licence could be a targeted investment to establish equity of opportunity.

Free public transport

The city is often inaccessible for young people who do not have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport in Dunedin is prohibitive for many. It was also noted that in many regional parts of Otago, young people do not have access to public transport options, and a lack of transportation is a barrier to engaging in community activities for a significant number of young people who live rurally. To foster a youth-friendly region, funding could be targeted at providing free bus travel to young people and at expanding public or community transport options in the regions.

Emerging issues and opportunities

Youth population growth in Wānaka and Cromwell

The data and sector interviews both identified the extraordinary population growth in Wānaka and Cromwell — services are stretched and disparity is growing. Coordinated investment between philanthropy and government will be necessary to meet these demands.

Pacific population growth in Ōamaru

One in four residents of Ōamaru are Pacific peoples. The needs of the Pacific community range from cultural competency in schools to the need to leverage from Pacific-led initiatives. Funders need to be aware of this emerging need and target resources appropriately.

Leveraging off local opportunities — e.g. hospital rebuild

The hospital rebuild in Dunedin will have a profound impact on the city and the region. It has the potential to change the way health services are delivered and the build itself creates opportunities for employment. If youth employment remains a significant priority for OCT, partnering for impact should be considered. Particular care and focus should be given to creating pathways to employment and the pastoral care of young workers.

Otago Polytechnic

Otago Polytechnic has been an innovative and responsive organisation serving the Otago community and business sector both in Dunedin and in Cromwell. If the proposal to merge polytechnics and technology institutes into a single entity goes ahead, the implications of these changes for Otago youth and the Otago youth economy will need to be explored.

There is a strong call from the Otago youth sector to re-examine funding structures and priorities to improve wellbeing for our young people and our communities. It is time to hear this call and to hold young people at the centre of decision-making.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Trustee interview questions

What do you think makes the biggest difference in a young person's life?

What do you see as your role in improving youth health, wellbeing and employment in Otago?

What are your key priorities for funding in this area?

What do you want to know about youth health, wellbeing and employment services in Otago?

Where do you see opportunities for investment that would have a meaningful impact?

Where do you think there are gaps in the picture?

What emerging issues do you see on the horizon?

Appendix 2: Data definitions and limitations

This report uses information from multiple sources, all of which are listed in the references section. Key issues relating to data definitions and limitations are discussed below.

Age ranges

In this report, 'youth' is defined as those aged 12–24. For some indicators, however, data was only available for a smaller subgroup of youth, for example those who are attending school. Other indicators included people slightly outside the age range. Throughout the report, the age range that an indicator covers is explained.

While key policy documents in New Zealand also define youth as 12–24, national census data does not easily align to this age range. Most published census data uses three age groups: 10–14; 15–19; 20–24, so the census-based indicators used in this report include 10 and 11 year olds.

Geographic boundaries

Throughout this report, the focus area is the boundary of the OCT. This area is indicated in the following map:

www.oct.org.nz/about-us/our-funding-area

The OCT boundary closely aligns with the Otago regional boundary, but it does not align exactly. Queenstown and Arrowtown are not included within the trust boundary, but they are within the Otago regional boundary. The trust area also extends into some areas of Southland, through to Milford Sound.

Most of the data sources used for this report present information at an Otago regional level, or by territorial local authority. The difference in regional and territorial local authority boundaries is shown in the following map:

www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/cb21cca965/South-Island-PNG.PNG

The key implications for this report are that:

• information presented at a regional level (Otago) includes Queenstown, but Queenstown is not within the OCT boundary

• information presented by the territorial local authorities of Clutha, Central Otago, Dunedin city and Waitaki does not include Wānaka, which is within the Queenstown Lakes TLA

• limited information is included on the area of Southland that is within the OCT boundary.

National census data

The most recent national census data available is from 2013.

A census was completed in 2018, but the results of this have been delayed.

Appendix 3: Schools in the Otago region

The tables below show school rolls across Otago, as at 2018. Secondary schools teach students in years 9–15, and students within these schools are likely to fit within the 12–24-year-old youth age range. Relevant composite schools (years 7–15) and area schools (years 1–15) throughout the Otago region are also included — the number given for these schools is the total school roll and will include some students younger than 12 years old.

Dunedin schools

SCHOOL	AGE RANGE OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DECILE
Bayfield High School	Year 9–15	560	7
Columba College	Year 1–15	603	10
John McGlashan College	Year 7–15	548	10
Kaikorai Valley College	Year 7–15	535	5
Kavanagh College	Year 7–15	778	8
King's High School	Year 9–15	1041	7
Logan Park High School	Year 9–15	577	7
Otago Boys' High School	Year 9–15	792	9
Otago Girls' High School	Year 9–15	837	8
Queen's High School	Year 9–15	358	5
Sara Cohen School	Year 1–15	37	5
St. Hilda's Collegiate	Year 7–15	462	10
Taieri College	Year 7–15	1065	7

Schools in wider region

SCHOOL	AGE RANGE OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DECILE
Blue Mountain College (Tapanui)	Year 7–15	236	9
Cromwell College (Cromwell)	Year 7–15	457	8
Dunstan High School (Alexandra)	Year 9–15	543 7	8
East Otago High School (Palmerston)	Year 7–15	142	6
Fiordland College (Milford Sound)	Year 7–15	218	9
Lawrence Area School (Lawrence)	Year 1–15	140	6
Maniototo Area School (Ranfurly)	Year 1–15	167	8
Mount Aspiring College (Wānaka)	Year 7–15	984	10
Roxburgh Area School (Roxburgh)	Year 1–15	168	7
South Otago High School (Balclutha)	Year 9–15	472	6
St. Kevin's College (Oamaru)	Year 9–15	453	7
The Catlins Area School (Ōwaka)	Year 1–15	102	7
Tokomairiro High School (Milton)	Year 7–15	251	4
Waitaki Boys' High School (Oamaru)	Year 9–15	431	6
Waitaki Girls' High School (Oamaru)	Year 9–15	406	6

Appendices

Appendix 4: Sector interview questions

What do you think makes the biggest difference in a young person's life?
What do you see as the key issues for Otago youth/the young people you serve?
What is your role/work in this area?
What should be the priorities for improving youth wellbeing, health and employment in Otago?
Where do you see opportunities for investment that would have a meaningful impact?
Where do you think there are gaps in the picture?
What emerging issues do you see on the horizon?

Appendix 5: Funding for impact

We asked interviewees where funding could be targeted to create impact and make a real difference to youth wellbeing. This is what they told us.

- There is scope to invest in young people who can access alternative education. Currently the Dunedin Consortium is funded for 48 places, but at any one time only 10 (20%) can be 'discretionary', which means this option is not available for some students who would benefit, but don't meet the other strict criteria. Kids who are not at the extreme end tend to fall through the gaps. With extra funding, the discretionary allocation could be expanded to 40%.
- Access to youth mental health services and support for the safe use of digital technology are both areas for investment.
- In Christchurch, there is a model of a 24/7 worker — a liaison youth worker who works with kids in schools, their families and the community. It is a model of brokering and support that worked well post-earthquake and there's a gap here in Dunedin where such a role and investment in Dunedin schools could work.
- Resourcing local innovation should be a focus for investment.
- The Pacific Trust used to run Pacific Youth Camps — these were amazing for Pacific youth, connecting them with services, career advisors and the community, and identifying those with leadership potential. The camps demanded a huge amount of work and the funding has finished. There is a real opportunity to pick up this initiative.
- Parents need to be supported with how to deal with their children in a different and changing world before bottom-of-the-cliff funding is needed.
- Language barriers and comprehension in schools are a real issue. Accessing language fosters pride — invest in making language accessible in schools.
- The Crib — vital to Kahu Youth services — is being evicted because land values are so high and the landlord wants the building back. The new site needs to be in the centre of town, and it needs to be a purpose-built facility with a shared community space downstairs and a youth-owned space upstairs. There is lots of local support and in-kind donations to make this happen. OCT watch this space!
- An investment for homeless youth could be made by funding a project to hire Araiteuru Marae every Thursday for homeless/couch-surfing youth to come and have a meal, a shower, to wash their clothes. It would be a time for the young people to feel cared for and connected, and to be able to give something back by getting involved in the community garden. These young people know what it is like to not have anything — if they can give back, they do not have to feel embarrassed.
- A focus group of key youth organisations, DCC and OCT would be a great tool. That group could meet four to six times a year and act as an advisory for the youth priority.

Appendix 6: Communities and groups that could be engaged with further

OCT could engage directly with mana whenua through Ngāi Tahu Papatipu Rūnanga within the rohe.

- Awarua Rūnanga
- Hokonui Rūnanga
- Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki
- Ōraka Aparima Rūnanga
- Te Rūnanga o Moeraki
- Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou
- Waihōpai Rūnanga

The following perspectives would also strengthen OCT's understanding of the youth sector:

- LGBTQI perspective
- Disability perspective (including learning disabilities)
- Migrant and former refugee perspective
- University and Polytechnic student associations
- Gifted and talented perspective