

# What Youth Want in Tāmaki 2016



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# Introduction

In December 2015 two focus groups were conducted by GIFC staff members with two different groupings of youth from Tāmaki. These focus groups were to:

- Investigate the complex issues our young people face
- What support they feel that they need
- How we as a community service can help them.

The first group consisted of young people aged 11 -14 who had recently participated in Our Mana Rangatahi Youth Group Programme, and the second were a group of older teens aged 13 - 18 who are involved in a local touch team with a local community volunteer worker - Josephine Bartley. Both focus groups had a mix of boys and girls, and both discussions were held on GIFC premises. To help provide a safe space for both us the community workers and the young people, The community workers set the environment to be as open and positive focused as possible, so the young people could speak freely without feeling criticized or judged.

The information that we gathered from these young people and community workers who attended was invaluable in the creation of The Glen Innes Family Centre's programme and shows some true insights into what can help support our local young people. Below, is detail on what our young people have asked for support around. We have analysed and themed the youth voices into four sections; programme content, programme style, individual work and macro level requests.

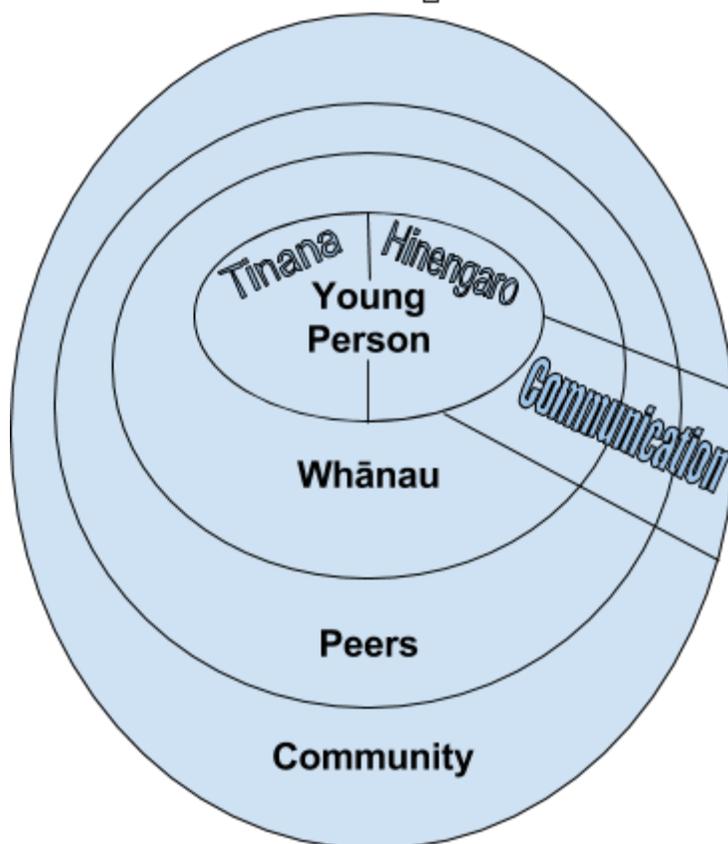
An appendix has also been added to include the actual data that was collected.

# Outcomes

## Programme Content

One key aspect of the feedback that the young people reiterated in a number of ways was how important relationships were to them. Almost everything returned to how their relationship was with different groups of people in the Tāmaki community. So we have used an ecological model system that we can place our programme outcomes within.

## Relationships with...



Each circle identifies key groupings in a young person's life, as identified by them. Below are the outcomes that the young people have expressed that they would like to see in a youth programme catered to their needs.

## Young Person

### Tinana

- Understanding the impact of drugs and alcohol
- Strengthening physical health
- Learning about personal and physical safety

### Hinengaro

- Understanding respect
- Learning about culture
- Learning about values
- Developing disciplinary skills
- Learning about setting and maintaining boundaries

## Whānau

- Building on the understanding on the importance of whānau
- Helping to develop whānau relationships (especially parents and siblings)
- Involving the whānau in the young person's journey
- Supporting home life troubles

## Peers

- Developing a supportive and positive peer group
- Understanding what healthy, positive friendships look like
- Creating positive friendships with peers that are good decision makers
- Learning about what healthy partner relationships look like
- Learning about sexual activity and what having a healthy sexual relationship looks like

## Community

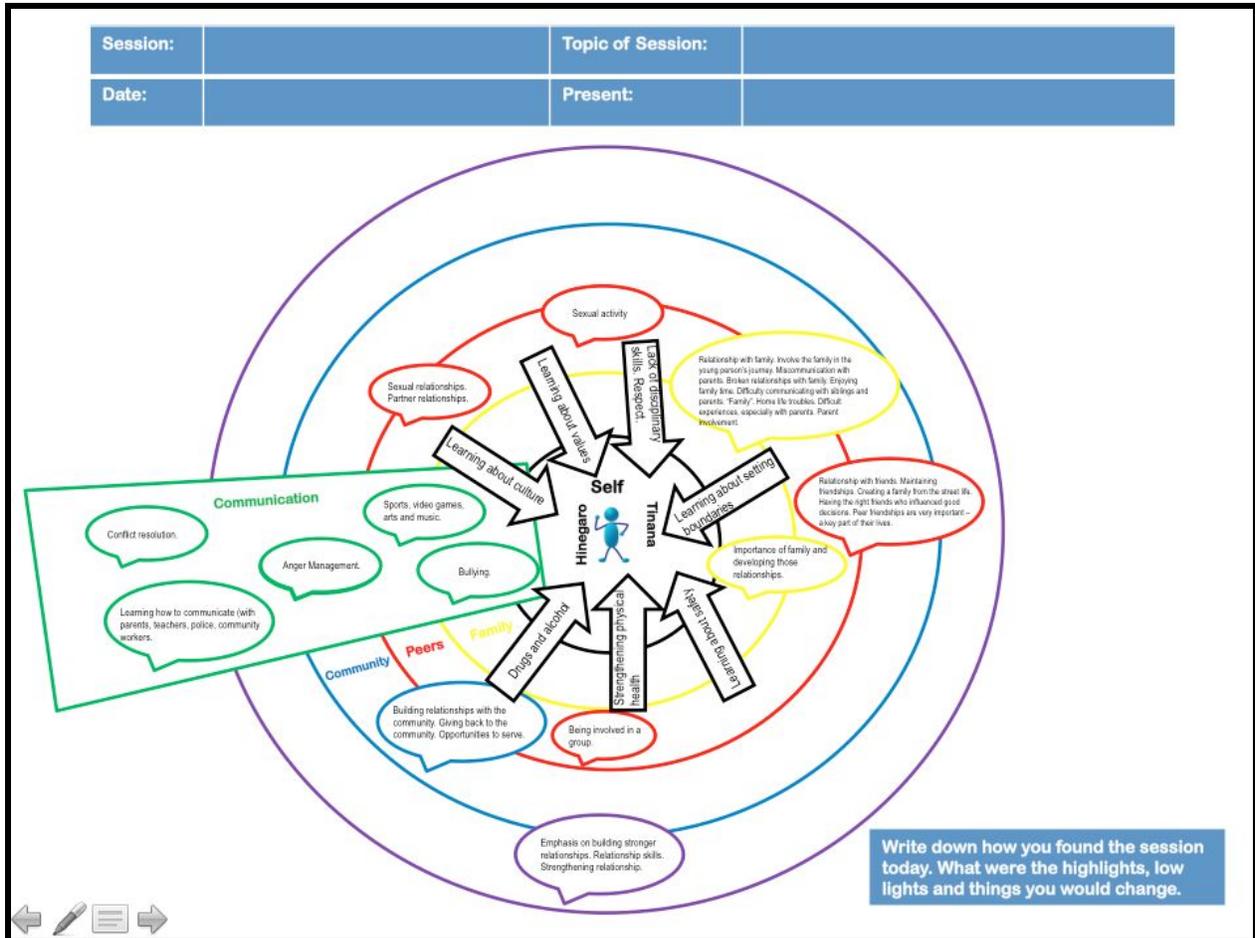
- Building positive relationships within the community (including school)
- Having the opportunity to serve/ give back to the community

## Communication

It was identified by the community workers that this theme overlaid all of the groups.

- Learning about conflict resolution and how to achieve it
- Learning how to communicate with adults (parents, teachers, community workers)
- Learning how to identify bullying behaviour, avoid it, and deal with it when confronted
- Learning what to do with anger and other big emotions

With these five key themes, The Glen Innes Family Centre Youth Social Worker has been able to develop an outcome template that will enable her to identify what is being covered within each session, tracking how well their programme is achieving according to the young people's identified needs.



## Programme Style

These young people in Tāmaki are enthusiastic about having the opportunity to be a part of a programme that is focused on what they want to learn and develop. They want the programme to be run in a particular style.

- Have a large group size
- Have a mix of ages
- Keep it relaxed
- Include creative learning
- Include a reward system to keep motivation up and progress going
- Include confidence building activities
- Food is always a highlight and keeps youth coming
- Build positive relationships
- Keep it active learning/ action focused
- Include a mentoring system
- Have mentors that can be trusted and stick around for a long time
- Include basic skills around learning and teach them simply
- Support the maintenance of optimism
- Learn about respect
- Separate the group by gender/ make the programmes gender specific
- Socialising/ Keep it a youth group
- Learn about consequences
- One on one sessions would be good



## Individual Work/ One on One Sessions

Tāmaki young people acknowledged readily that not everything could be achieved within group work and that some things would be better achieved one on one with a mentor or social worker that they could create a relationship with. Out of the support that the young people requested, these have been highlighted as better within a one on one situation.

- Conscious reflection on their life and what they can do to develop personally
- Coping mechanisms for school life/ develop better teacher relationships
- Build up confidence to step up to challenges
- Support through conflict resolution that is happening in their life currently
- Learning how to set and keep to meaningful goals
- Building up of self esteem
- Working on raising self worth
- Learning how to develop personal restraint
- Building resilience in peer pressure situations
- Time management skills to maintain personal responsibilities
- Support in coping with new situations and emotions associated
- Mentoring through high levels of emotions around self worth
- Learning how to keep to rules and boundaries
- Working on building motivation
- Additional academic support
- Recognising and celebrating individual efforts



## Macro Level

Some of the requests for support from the young people were outside of the level of work that the social workers and counsellors of The Glen Innes Family Centre could achieve. The main reasons for this is because they are rooted in larger systemic problems or outside of the realm of being achievable within a short timeframe of intervention. Those requests are listed below. Some of these requests could be taken on by other organisations or government entities.

- Gang rivalries
- Young people not disciplined enough to be involved
- Lack of opportunities available in the community
- Achieving car licenses
- The difficulty of working with government officials and within government systems
- The public system overall being a problem
- Gangs and Street life taking over young people
- Overcrowded housing
- Lack of overall support from the community
- Not enough programmes for youth that are homebound (Tāmaki bound)
- Lack of family commitment to their young person
- Too many responsibilities put onto young people
- Ongoing misconduct at school
- Having less drama in life



# Conclusion

These focus groups and the reflection we have done over 3 sessions has given us a great insight into the lives of our Tāmaki young people and how we can best support them in their journeys through a difficult part of their lives.

We originally held these focus groups and gathered our own reflections as community workers to help develop a specific youth programme for The Glen Innes Family Centre. However this document has become so much more than that. It shows the hopes and dreams of our Tāmaki young people and gives The Glen Innes Family Centre, and indeed the Tāmaki Community overall, the opportunity to respond to those dreams of support. The Glen Innes Family Centre will respond with a set programme that includes 10 sessions for 8 young people including one on one support for each of the participants. But after learning about their aspirations of support - is this enough? We call to the whole of the Tāmaki Community to step up and respond with their own actions. If we each take on one part of what our young people are asking for, our community will become better for it.

Specific to the development of The Glen Innes Family Centre Youth Programme, it is obvious that the initiative will need to be robust in nature, have a high level of support for our youth and incorporate best practice when working with high risk youth. Our aim remains to strengthen our youth's personal self development with the aim to prevent the young people we work with from escalating into 'at risk' or 'deviant youth'. The first group of youth will begin on our programme in February 2016, they will be a strong influential factor in the development of the programme - helping to test out and feedback their thoughts throughout their participation. We hope to continue to reflect and alter the programme with each group of youth - enabling the programme to be as responsive to our current youth as possible.

One major concern that remains for us from these focus groups is; who is able to address the needs of our older young people? They all had to grow up fast and with the choices that they chose in the past, it has affected the way they look at life and how life looks at them. Majority have desires to make a change but lack the support in the community to help them. We would love to see additional support in the community gathered to help respond to all of the needs of our young people.

# Appendix 1.

## Youth Feedback

The first discussion involved youth participants from 2015 Mana Rangatahi programme. The age of the group ranged from 11 - 13yrs with 3 girls and 4 boys. The facilitators involved in the focus groups were Tara Moala, Futa Ofa'mo'oni, and Lily Tarawa. All youth invited were eager to participate and discuss the design of the programme. The majority of the feedback was positive. Below are the main key questions discussed along with the youths answers.

### **What does life look like for you?**

This question is broken into 3 sections - The good, bad, and the challenges, This made it simple and easy for the young people to address.

#### **The Good**

- Relationship with family and friends
- Roaming the streets
- Creative learning
- Active learning
- Being involved in a group

#### **The Bad**

- thoughts of inadequacy "I'm not good at sports"
- Anxiety of starting college
- Miscommunication with parents
- Misconduct at school and home
- Lack of motivation
- Overcrowded housing
- Fear of failure
- Immense amount of responsibilities
- deliberately breaking rules
- Not feeling important, needed, understood

#### **Challenges**

- Struggling to learn at school
- Difficulty communicating with siblings and parents
- Low self esteem
- Controlling their behavior and actions

#### **What are my interests?**

- Building positive relationships
- Being active
- Relaxing
- Enjoying family time
- Sports, video games, arts, music

#### **If a programme was created for youth, what should be considered?**

- Separate the programme by gender

- Activity based
- Increase in group size
- Mix of age
- Emphasis on building stronger relationships
- Building self esteem
- Managing behaviors
- Building relationships with the community
- Giving back to the community
- Confidence workshops
- Opportunities to serve
- strengthening physical health
- Learning about culture, respect, safety, values, self worth
- "One on one sessions will be good so that the youth worker can see our point of view"
- Suggestions for names were given but the name of the programme will be decided further on in the programme

The second discussion involved a group of teens aged 13 - 18yrs who were involved in a local touch team. They were referred to us by Josephine Bartley - a community volunteer in Tamaki and member on the Tamaki-Maungakiekie Local Board. The facilitators involved were Tara Moala and Lily Tarawa, with the accompany of Chris Makoare GIFC Manager and Josephine Bartley. With the youth being older in age the vibe was intense and challenging. What I observed with the older lot was their lack of discipline and boundaries if any at that. It did take greater effort on our part as the facilitators to conduct the discussion, however, once momentum kicked in the feedback given was priceless. Below is their feedback.

#### **What does life look like for you?**

The young people had to reflect back to when they were 11-13 and identify the good, bad, and the interesting. (note: feedback with quotation marks indicates most important)

#### **The Good**

- Socializing
- Maintaining friendships
- "Gangs and street life"
- "Family"
- No boundaries
- Burning rubber
- No responsibilities "having to do nothing"
- "Less drama"

#### **The Bad**

- Bullying
- "Government officials"
- Lack of opportunities for young offenders
- Broken relationships with family
- Public system
- Gang rivalries
- Teachers
- "John Keys"
- "Not disciplined"

### **The Interesting**

- “Sexual activity”
- “youth groups”
- drugs and alcohol
- raised in the streets
- “Family”
- creating a family from the street life

### **Reflecting back to when you were 11- 13, What support would you have liked?**

- Having the right friends who influenced good decisions
- community support
- programmes for youth homebound
- Learning how to communicate with parents, teachers, police, community workers
- Workshops on how to deal with peer pressure
- How to cope with school as duration is long and homework is hard to understand
- Conflict Resolution
- Mentoring system

### **If a programme was created for youth, what should be considered:**

- Include a reward system - one youth stated, giving a reward is motivating and helps them progress
- Recognize individual efforts
- Involve the family in the young person’s journey
- additional academic support but not too much that it feels like they are at school
- Mentors who they can trust and talk to
- One on one sessions is a good idea and it will help the SW understand the youth’s perspective

## **Community Workers Feedback**

The feedback provided at this stage of programme development is based on the focus groups and what we the facilitators and support team observed and articulated from the young people as well as information that we collected from interview sessions with parents of some of the young participants involved in the focus groups. Below are some key questions asked and our responses.

### **1. When the youth first arrived, what were your thoughts about them?**

- Some I knew so it was nothing new for me
- For the younger ones, that they were good kids. they seemed eager to connect and share, but also that they were eager to please.
- For the older ones, that life had not been good for them. They had probably experienced more in their short lives than most of us in twice their time. They were defensive and struggled to not be aggressive.
- Curiosity of their life journeys. 4 I knew but the other 3 I did not. They seemed reserved and divided between gender. I did notice who was confident vs insecure.
- Second crew were rowdy and lack of disciplinary skills was visible. They had trouble with setting boundaries and I had a challenge connecting at first. Possibly because they didn’t know me.

### **2. How did you find them warming to the exercises? Did they?**

- Most did, the ones that didn't were the ones that didn't know the centre or us
- The younger ones wanted to warm up - eager and ready to connect. The only concern that they had was what the opposite gender thought of them.
- The older ones were much harder to engage and get involved. They were comfortable being uncomfortable. After quite a while and a shift in plan however, they warmed and were jumping around as much as the younger ones were.
- The younger group was obedient to instructions and the older group questioned and didn't know their boundaries. They struggled to follow instructions and needed more encouragement than the younger group.

### **3. What key aspects of their life did they struggle to share with us on the day?**

- I thought the stuff we wanted from them was the hardest info to get, they found it hard to reflect what we were trying to get from them
- Both groups struggled to share their home life I feel. They would just shrug and say either that it was good or bad. It took a lot of digging to get them to share more than that. The korero that we got when they did finally open up, was difficult experiences. Their relationships with their parents was almost not talked about.
- The girls of older youth were extremely open in discussion, no filter. They were educating me on jargon that I had ever heard of.

### **4. What key aspects of their life came easily for them to share?**

- The boys I spoke with they eventually found it easy to share their mistakes and where they went wrong in their lives
- For both groups - their friendships. This appeared to be a key part of their lives. The younger ones also talked freely about their schooling.

### **5. After your chats with the youth, how do you think the programme should look like? What should definitely be in the programme and what could be left out of it?**

- After what I heard a strong component on consequences, I know this could be hard to deliver but on reflection if we could prevent some of their mistakes we may end up with different outcomes, also providing a pathway to getting their car license.
- Self Esteem was huge for both groups. It was something that the youth identified as well as a visible need.
- There is something about being gender specific that needs to be further explored. The dynamics between the genders was obvious. The younger group verbally expressed a desire to be split. The older groups boys acted very uncomfortable in the setting.
- A problematic dynamic for the programme is that the youth want to be together with their friends, however they also freely admitted that they were influenced negatively by them as well.
- It appears that long periods of positive role modeling and mentoring is really important.
- Active approach that will strengthen the youth's personal development and relationship skills
- One on one session being an important aspect
- What should definitely be in the programme and what could be left out of it?

### **6. Have we got the age group right for the programme? Why?**

- Just because of my last comment I would prefer the group to be 14-16 years, one because trying to teach consequences outcomes at a young age may be too hard whereas teaching this at this older

group may be more beneficial because they may be able to reflect on their situations where recent mistakes were made. Also pathways to licences may help get buy in from the youth towards the program.

- I don't know. I think yes, because of how eager the young group was. They are ready and eager to be involved in a group of learning.
- However, the older group - need help. Desperately. So who is going to respond to that cry for help?
- I cannot say. All I know is that we have chosen 12 -14 on the basis of this being a preventive programme. Furthermore, we wont know if the age is right until we have completed the first intake of the new programme.

**7. Were there any key conversations or moments with any of the youth that you would like to share? There may be key points to consider for the programme creation or not.**

- Just one where the youth shared about his mistake and the shame he brought on his family, I felt his story was so powerful that his own journey of growth could be seen as successful because he was kicked out of home and the time it took him to be reconnected to his family obviously helped him grow personally, he matured with the shame of hurting his family but in the end it was his most important goal to get back to his family.
- The guys weren't comfortable talking to the female facilitators. Important point when creating a programme, however they may warm up.
- Action-focused activities were more accepted than sitting down lengthy activities.
- It would be really good to connect with parents of these youth. I think it would be interesting to get their view.
- I had a good chat with one of the girls who holds a lot of responsibility within her house hold. She touched base on what she thought would be beneficial for our young people
- Reward system
- Conflict Resolution
- Basic skills to learning, teach with simplicity
- Knowing their self worth

**8. Are there any other aspects or points that you would like to note down now?**

- The small things I noticed were \*\*\*\*\* being top dog
- \*\*\*\*\* showing her natural loving maternal instinct to the child
- The age of the couple and how much of life they are not ready for, relationship and parenting, how vulnerable the boy was in sense of they are a couple, he takes on the role of daddy, the consequence for him if the relationship breaks down and they separate- could he handle that separation
- \*\*\*\*\* having no manners
- Food was a highlight and draw card. Might be good in the programme to bring it to the beginning.
- The older youth need some support

**9. What differences did you recognize between the groups? Were they similar? If so, how?**

- Self esteem conflicts ran through both groups - just showed up differently.
- I think we can't really compare the groups - the younger group is def. more socially onto it than the other older group.
- The younger group could possibly hold more optimism and hope for the future. Something that the older group has lost over their battles in life.

## Parent Feedback

Futa and Lily were able to conduct a few parent interviews and their feedback was positive and informative. A couple of the parents gave suggestions of what they'd like to see in the programme

- Building self esteem
- Anger Management
- Learning how to set meaningful goals
- Strengthening relationship
- Self development
- Opportunities to serve
- Awareness of youths rights
- How to cope with bullying
- Developing healthy habits (physical & mental)
- Learn discipline (code of behavior)