

# Te Puna A Rona, Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa, Kirikiriroa (Hamilton)

## ***Background***

### **Project Need**

Hamilton City (Kirikiriroa) has a population of 108,429 people (Statistics New Zealand, 1997), of which 17.5 percent identify themselves as Māori, 2.1 percent as Pacific Island, and approximately 42.4 percent are aged under 25 years.

Following identification of Hamilton as an area of high youth offending and at risk behaviours, the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) undertook an assessment of youth needs and services in the region. In consultation with community organisations and government agencies, DIA Community Advisors identified a range of issues facing young people in Hamilton. These included:

- high levels of young people not succeeding in the school system
- links between lack of education and youth crime<sup>1</sup>
- lack of linkage and co-ordination between current intervention and project providers
- limited community capacity to effectively and/or consciously develop interventions and projects for youth at risk

As part of this assessment, the DIA community advisor approached a range of organisations which she had identified as potentially able to meet the requirements of the crime prevention package. In 1998, a project proposal was received from Mātua Whangai, a community service provider. This proposal identified additional trends of relevance to local crime prevention. In particular it recognised that young Māori lead both local and national statistics in terms of:

- leaving school without qualifications
- being suspended and/or expelled from school
- appearances in the youth court

These factors were perceived to contribute to a range of behavioural and cognitive problems, including:

- pro-social deficiencies
- antisocial behaviour
- juvenile delinquency
- chronic aggressiveness
- truancy
- gang involvement
- drug and alcohol abuse
- manipulative behaviours
- antagonistic behaviours
- fighting
- bullying
- teasing
- running away

It was also established that several Hamilton based projects and services effectively catered to low and medium risk young people, but that none served those identified as being high risk (i.e. long history of

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<sup>1</sup> According to Judge David Carruthers (National Youth Justice Conference, 1996), over 80% of young people who appear in youth courts have in some way missed out on educational opportunities (suspended, never enrolled, nebulous correspondence outcomes, extended waiting period for a course, etc.)

offending and anti-social behaviour, seldom attend school, have experienced many “failed” interventions, and may demonstrate marked cognitive deficiencies). Furthermore, more and more young people referred to established services were being identified in the high risk category, and a large proportion of these suffered serious drug, alcohol and/or solvent abuse.

## **Consultation with Stakeholders**

In March 1998, a plan was developed to consult with key service providers, especially those in the drug and alcohol field, regarding the development of a block course for high risk youth. A planning hui was attended by eight representatives from community organisations (including one anger and violence prevention educator, and four staff from Mātua Whangai youth services). It resulted in the confirmation of fifteen adult educators/therapists willing to contribute time and expertise to the development of a block course (Te Puna A Rona) to be run by Mātua Whangai youth services. Those offering their time included three adult student placements.

Participants in the planning hui considered aims, objectives and outcomes of the block course, taking into account the time frame and dynamics of the pilot group. Responsibility for documenting, planning, implementation and evaluation was also discussed, as was ongoing care for each young person attending the programme.

## **Agency History and Status**

Mātua Whangai is a charitable Trust, established in 1985 to provide social justice services that advocate for Māori in a manner consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi.

The introduction of Mātua Whangai projects and services stems from the tripac agreement between (what was then) the Ministry of Māori Affairs, the Department of Social Welfare and the Department of Justice. As a result of this agreement, Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa has developed projects and services to meet government requirements, whilst strengthening its rights as a Māori provider to operate services that endorse the kaupapa of Tino Rangatiratanga.

Services currently provided by Mātua Whangai in Hamilton include:

- whānau based social work
- counselling and therapy
- health services
- court advocacy
- case management
- youth services (diversion, youth crime prevention, and CPWS)
- probation supervision and community sentences

## **Youth Worker**

The project worker identified, by Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa, for the CPWS position is a male Māori with iwi affiliation to Waikato/Tuhoe. He has several years experience working with youth and/or families and possesses skills, training and transferable life experience gained through employment as a youth diversion worker, Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa Group Facilitator, and alternative education provider.

## **Management**

Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa is governed by a trust of six trustees who meet on a monthly basis. Trustees include a Kaumātua, lawyer, administrator/secretary, manager, probation officer and one other. The trust oversees the overall administration of staff and projects and ensures the Kaupapa, aims and objectives are upheld.

The day to day running of Mātua Whangai is overseen by a co-ordinator, with staff responsible for the management of their own services. The CPWS worker is managed and supported by Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa Trust and staff. Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa retains its management link with the iwi of Tainui via recognition of the roles of Te Rūnanga O Kirikiriroa and the Tainui Māori Trust Board.

The CPWS worker receives regular group and individual supervision from both the co-ordinator and other staff, including a practising counsellor trained in both Māori healing and mainstream counselling techniques.

## **Responsiveness to Māori**

Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa is a Māori service provider - providing services for Māori by Māori. Service provision aims toward an ideal of proactively strengthening individuals, whānau, hapū, and iwi so that they may, in the long term, care totally for their own. Mātua Whangai O Kirikiriroa provides services that endorse the kaupapa of Tino Rangatiratanga, and advocate for Māori in a manner consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi.

## **Responsiveness to Pacific Island Peoples**

The project specifically targets Māori youth.

## ***Evaluation Methods***

The information about the Te Puna A Rona project was obtained from four main sources: the annual evaluation reports completed by the CPWS worker and agency, contact between the CPWS worker, agency and the local DIA community advisor, visits by a DIA research analyst, and project and administration records including project proposals and application information.

## **Annual Evaluation Reports**

Following the first year of operation (1998), Mātua Whangai completed an evaluation report. This report was produced by an internal employee who worked with the CPWS worker to obtain information regarding the Te Puna A Rona Project. Data focused on process and was collected using a range of methods including:

- risk assessment questionnaires conducted with project participants prior to and immediately after their involvement in Te Puna A Rona (Appendix C)
- “What’s Hot and What’s Not” questionnaires administered to participants daily during their involvement in the pilot block course (Appendix D)
- questionnaires for block course module facilitators (Appendix E)
- client records (Appendix F)
- observation reports from support staff
- impact report from CPWS worker (as block course co-ordinator/lead facilitator)
- letters from the community
- pilot project plan

In addition, the evaluator interviewed project participants (clients) and the primary caregiver/s of each participant (client). Client interview schedules are provided in Appendix G and the schedules for caregiver interviews are provided in Appendix H. All interviews were conducted in the home of the interviewee and manually recorded. No interviews lasted longer than 30 minutes.

During the second year of operation (1999), Mātua Whangai contracted an external evaluator who had extensive experience evaluating crime prevention and intervention projects. He conducted an

evaluation of the 1999 block courses using information obtained from a range of documents and interviews.

Documentation included observations, records and perceptions written by staff, participants, volunteers and stakeholders during the course of the programme. In addition, the evaluator compared risk factor assessments (Appendix I) collected prior to the participants' entry onto the Te Puna A Rona course, with risk factor assessments collected after the participants' exit from the course. Risk assessments were completed by the course co-ordinator using a semi-structured interview method. Also, the evaluator obtained information regarding participants' offence histories before, during and after participation in the block course from Hamilton Police (Appendix J).

Interviews were conducted with 15 individuals identified as project stakeholders. These included project staff, volunteers, representatives from the community and referring agencies, whānau and participants.

Most of the interviews took approximately 40-60 minutes and were held at the Mātua Whangai office in the presence of the CPWS worker. In addition, five interviews (with referral agency representatives) were conducted by telephone. The evaluator indicated that there was no apparent difference between the interview responses collected when the CPWS worker was present and those conducted in his absence. Interview data was transcribed directly onto a portable computer as the interviewees spoke. A copy of the interview schedule is provided in Appendix K.

References in support of the Mātua Whangai Te Puna a Rona programme include written correspondence from:

- Orini Combined School
- Waipuna O Te Horowai Aroha Holistic Resource Service
- Te Kohao Health Ltd
- DCYFS
- Fairfield Intermediate
- Police
- Alternatives to Violence Project, A.V.P. Waikato
- Participants and whānau

## **Department of Internal Affairs Visits**

Throughout the duration of the CPWS project, the Te Puna A Rona CPWS worker maintained ongoing contact with his local DIA community advisor. In addition, the community advisor provided input into the data collection and administration of the annual evaluation reports. She also provided feedback to the department regarding the CPWS worker's progress towards meeting Te Puna A Rona project objectives.

A research analyst from the Department of Internal Affairs visited the Te Puna A Rona project annually. On the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of May, 1999 the researcher used this visit to access additional information for the project evaluations. The research analyst attended half a day of one of the follow up courses, participating in the course activities, engaging with course participants and their parents, and observing course facilitators and staff.

The researcher also met with a range of individuals associated with Te Puna A Rona, including:

- Mātua Whangai Justice Services Officer
- Mātua Whangai youth and whānau workers (including youth diversion and dusk 'til dawn co-ordinators)
- Mātua Whangai co-ordinator
- Mātua Whangai analyst/funding officer
- Mātua Whangai counsellor/therapist
- Te Puna A Rona volunteer workers
- Alternatives to Violence Project facilitators

- DCYFS social worker
- Tainui Iwi Authority health worker and representative

These meetings included discussion regarding the project's contribution to meeting each of the outcomes identified under the Crime Prevention Package. Obstacles, difficulties and process issues were also reviewed.

## ***The CPWS Project***

According to the original project proposal, the Te Puna A Rona project aims to:

- empower, inform, and nurture young Māori who are alienated from mainstream institutions, to reduce their recidivist offending and encourage their positive development and autonomy.

The project target group comprised of 12-17 year old Māori youth experiencing school failure and/or criminal offending. As such, Te Puna A Rona aimed to work with those youth most likely to offend against their whānau, themselves, and wider society. In doing so it intended to:

- keep tamariki out of the youth justice system
- encourage whānau to be responsible for their tamariki
- make rangatahi accountable for their actions
- make rangatahi aware of the effects their actions have on victims and their families, and their own whānau
- change behavioural patterns through positive initiatives and actions

To meet these aims the project proposal identified the following objectives for the CPWS worker:

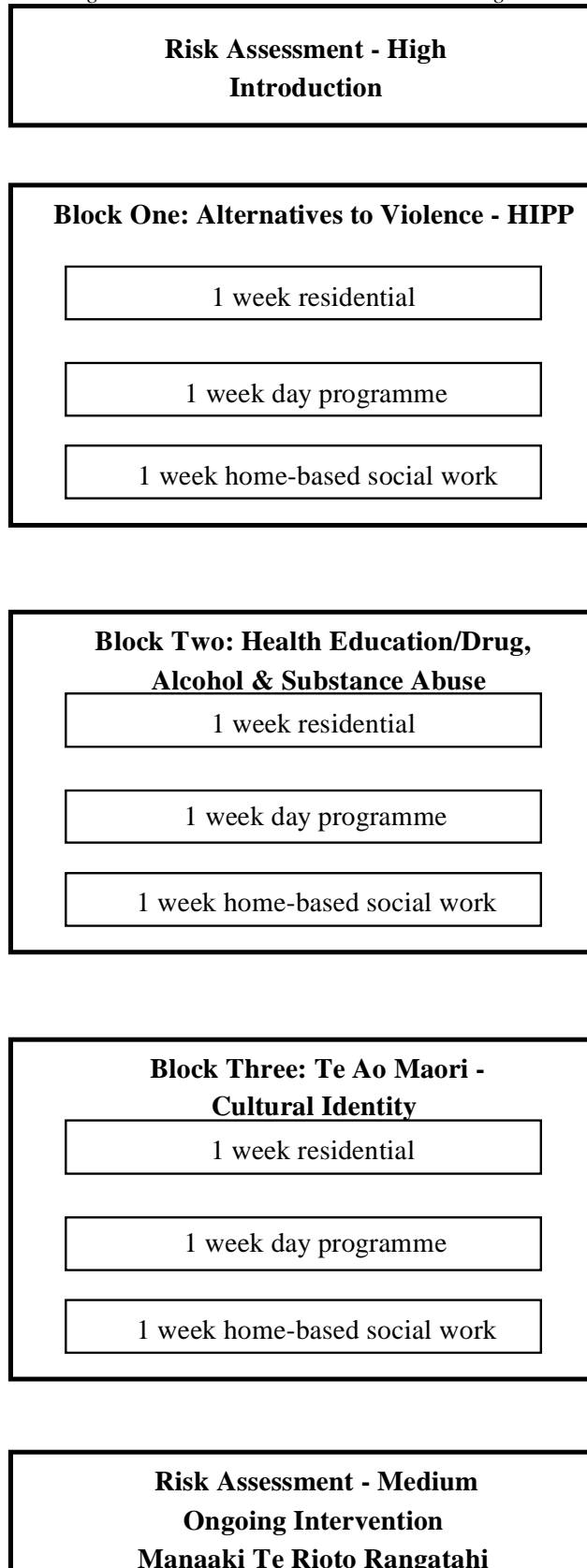
- designing and implementing effective and informative evaluation and assessment processes with the overall aim of continual improvement in service provision and/or the development of appropriate alternative interventions.
- development and co-ordination of services targeted at Māori at risk youth that work toward positive outcomes for young people, their families, and the community (includes self-reliance and strategic development or resources and strengths).
- building and maintaining open communication and partnership between all Māori youth service providers.

## **Nature of the Project**

### ***Project outline and content***

The Te Puna A Rona project began in 1998 with funding identified for three years, until 2001. It consists of a series of three block courses, delivered over a period of sixteen weeks (Figure 2). All participants are required to attend all three block courses. Prior to the block courses, each participant and their whānau receives an orientation to the programme.

Figure 2: Te Puna A Rona Block Course diagram



Each block course focuses on a different issue. Block One deals with “Alternatives to Violence” incorporating the Quaker-derived Alternatives to Violence (AVP) training package, adapted for youth and renamed HIPP (Help Increase the Peace Project). The AVP package is facilitated by specialist AVP training providers and aims to explore violence and help participants to move towards non-violence, and pro-social behaviour, through practising new beliefs, ideas and skills in a motivational group process.

Block Two focuses on health education, including the issues associated with drug, alcohol and substance abuse. With the assistance of community and social workers skilled in this area, the programme explores reasons for and the effects of substance abuse, including methods for facilitating reduction. It also includes a wider focus on health and wellness, spiritual and alternative healing, sexuality education and holistic balance of taha wairua, taha tinana, taha hinengaro and taha whānau.

Block Three is entitled HIPP Intermediate. It extends the pro-social training from the Alternatives to Violence package to focus on the young peoples’ “place in the world”. This includes discussion and training in Te Ao Māori and exploration of the issues surrounding cultural alienation and decolonisation. As such, facilitators, community workers and volunteers aim to strengthen Māori identity by reinforcing connections between whānau, hapū and iwi, increasing awareness about how these connections have been damaged by colonisation, and identifying ways to rebuild strong identity and goals.

Each block course begins with a five day intensive residential programme, including evening work and marae styled seating and sleeping arrangements. The learning programme is group based with a range of presentations, interactive activities, games, personal testimonies and informal discussion. In addition, rangatahi participate in food preparation and clean up activities, shared meals, and informal interaction with each other and the course facilitators.

The second week of each block involves a five-day programme, operating from 9.00am until 2.30pm, and based at a school marae. This period focuses on following up the themes of the residential component, and exploring ways to implement associated learning in the young people’s day to day lives. It also serves as a supportive transition period from the residential component to the home environment.

The third week of each block is described as “home based social work”. No group programmes are offered during this time and participants are expected to attend either their school or an alternative learning centre. Home based social work involves the course co-ordinator, and other staff, following up the needs of each participant’s whānau. This includes meeting with whānau members, usually at their homes, discussing the activities and information provided to their rangatahi during the preceding weeks, and exploring ways to reinforce behavioural changes within the home environment. Whānau are also assisted to access help and resources to address any of their own issues.

Prior to entering the project, the CPWS worker conducts preliminary interviews with each young person to enable accurate risk and needs assessment. Assessment of risk is determined according to the following behaviours and cognitive variables identified in Table 6:

*Table 6: Te Puna A Rona Risk Assessment Tool (1999)*

<u>Risk factors</u>	<u>Score</u>
Age of first criminal incident	
• 16 or older	0
• 14 or 15	3
• 13 or younger	5
Prior criminal behaviour	
• No prior arrests	1
• Prior police alternative action, no formal sanctions	2

• Prior F.G.C <sup>2</sup> s held: youth justice/non assault	3
• Assault offence/criminal conviction	5
Drug/chemical abuse	
• No known abuse or interfering with functioning	0
• Occasional abuse, some disruption in functioning	1
• Chronic abuse, serious disruption in functioning	3
Parental control	
• Generally effective	0
• Inconsistent and ineffective	2
• Little or none	4
School disciplinary problems	
• Attending/demonstrating success	0
• Problems handled at school level	1
• Severe truancy or behavioural problems	3
• Not attending/unspecified suspension	5
Peer relationships	
• Good support and influence	0
• Negative influence, companions in delinquent behaviour	2
• Gang affiliation/membership	4
Cultural identity	
• Demonstrates knowledge and acceptance	0
• Minimal awareness	2
• Unable to identify/alienated/denial	4
Self control (anger and violence)	
• Generally in control	0
• Occasional loss of control	2
• No control (victim/abused and/or abusive/bully)	5
Self harm	
• No self harm	0
• Occasional self abuse (thoughts)	3
• Severe self harm/suicidal tendencies	5

Using these variables, a score of 15 or under is considered low risk, a score of 16 - 27 is considered medium risk, and a score of 28 or over is considered high risk. Scores concerning risk of drug and alcohol abuse are considered both within and separate from the overall risk score.

The information accessed from the risk assessment tool is used to determine whether the project is suitable for the young people referred. It is also used as a baseline measure which can be compared with the results of another assessment conducted after they have finished the programme (using the same criteria). In addition, participants are given a needs assessment upon entering the project (Appendix L) and this, together with the risk assessment information, is considered by the project facilitator when developing ongoing interventions to follow up the young peoples' involvement with Te Puna A Rona.

### ***Number of participants and referring agencies***

During the first year of the project (1998), ten (10) young people were referred to participate in the pilot block course. Of these, eight (8) were identified as fitting the project criteria. All of these referrals were made internally, by the Mātua Whangai Youth Diversion Service. This service receives its referrals from Police, DCYFS, youth and their whānau.

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<sup>2</sup> FGC: Family Group Conference

In the July 1999 intake to the Te Puna A Rona block course, twenty (20) referrals were received. Of these, ten (10) were accepted on to the block courses. Referrals were received from a school (1), an alternative education learning centre (2), DCYFS (1) and Mātua Whangai Youth Diversion Service (6).

### ***Participation***

Of the eight (8) young people who participated in the 1998 pilot block course, seven (7) completed all of the components of the programme, including the pre and post risk assessments. In 1999, nine (9) of the ten (10) block course participants completed all of the components of the programme, and all ten (10) completed both pre and post risk assessments.

### ***Ethnic identity***

All of the young people accepted onto the courses were Māori. During the course of their involvement with the CPWS worker, these young people were encouraged to identify their iwi affiliation.

Of those participating in the 1998 pilot course, four (4) identified themselves as Tainui iwi with one of these also indicating links to Ngāti Haua and another to Te Aupouri. Two (2) other Rangitahi identified themselves as Maniapoto iwi with one of these indicating a link to Ngāti Rereahu. Finally, one (1) rangitahi was identified as Ngāti Porou and one (1) as Ngāi Tuhoe.

In the July 1999 intake, three (3) young people identified themselves as Ngāti Haua, one (1) as Maniapoto, one (1) as Te Arawa and one (1) as Taranaki iwi. One (1) young person identified with both Te Arawa and Ngāti Mahanga, one (1) with both Waikato and Cook Island Māori, and one (1) young person's iwi affiliation remained unknown. The other young person did not complete the block courses and his iwi affiliation was not recorded.

### ***Age and gender***

Three (3) of the rangatahi who completed the 1998 pilot block course were female and five (5) were male. Two (2) of these rangatahi were aged 14 years, three (3) were aged 13 years, two (2) were 12 years old and one (1) was eleven (Table 7).

In 1999, only male participants were accepted onto the project. Of those who completed the block courses, three (3) were aged 13 years, two (2) were aged 14 years, and one (1) each were aged 11, 12, 15 and 16 years. The other young person did not complete the block courses and his age was not recorded.

*Table 7: Gender and age for Te Puna A Rona participants, 1998 and 1999*

Gender	1998	1999
Male	5	9
Female	3	0

Age	1998	1999
13 years and under	6	5
14-16 years	2	4
17-21 years	0	0

### ***Background information and presenting issues***

All of the rangatahi accepted onto Te Puna A Rona had previously offended and whānau make-up consisted mainly of a single mother and siblings (more than half of the participants in each block course).

For those who participated in the 1998 pilot course, five (5) of the young people were assessed as being at high risk in terms of demonstrated behavioural and cognitive variables. These included age when first crime committed, prior criminal behaviour, negative peer relationships, school disciplinary problems, and poor parental control. Another two (2) were classified as being of medium risk in terms of behavioural and cognitive variables, and one (1) as being of low risk. The young person identified as being of low cognitive and behavioural risk, demonstrated high risk in terms of drug and/or solvent abuse.

In 1999, police records were obtained for nine (9) of the participants in the block courses. These records showed an average of seventeen contacts per young person. All but one (8) of these young people had been involved in theft related activities, two thirds (6) had been apprehended for violence related offences and the same number (6) for wilful damage. More than half (5) had been involved in burglaries.

Risk assessment measures indicated that all of the 1999 participants demonstrated high levels of overall risk (cognitive and behavioural measures combined with drug and alcohol abuse).

## **Process**

As a new project, Te Puna A Rona has been continually evolving throughout the two and a half years since its inception.

In October 1998, the project was piloted as a single block course. The first week of this course was residential, with young people spending the duration at the Kōkiri Centre in Whaingaroa (Raglan). Over this time they participated in a series of modules delivered from 9.00am until 7.00pm. These included discussion, education, training and experiences in:

- anger and violence control
- goals and expectations
- team building
- mana rangatahi
- drug, alcohol and solvent effects
- drug, alcohol and solvent group therapy
- sport and recreation
- wairuatanga
- decolonisation
- history
- Te Rito O Te Whānau
- changing behaviours
- role-playing

The second week of the pilot block course consisted of a series of day courses, running from 9.00am until 2.30pm at Fairfield Intermediate wharenuī. The classes followed directly on from the modules delivered in the first week.

Following delivery of the pilot course in 1998, a number of issues were identified for improvement. Specifically, staff, whānau, facilitators and volunteers indicated:

- the range of topics that the block course attempted to address was too wide, placing significant pressure on staff, time and resources and contributing to an information overload for some participants
- the need for caregivers to provide more support for rangatahi, especially in terms of modelling and reinforcing the changes they are making
- problematic and disruptive behaviours by rangatahi suffering drug and/or alcohol withdrawal during the course
- concerns that the block course operated in isolation, with no appropriate follow on interventions

Comparison between the pre and post participation risk assessments revealed individual differences in the degree to which the project influenced drug related behaviour. Those young people who had demonstrated a medium or high risk of drug abuse prior to participating in the project either reduced or maintained their risk level, but the one (1) rangatahi who presented as a low risk of drug abuse, actually moved to high risk by the end of the block course. It was also established that female and male rangatahi had different needs. Mixing the two in a residential programme created significant distraction for both groups resulting in increased staff workload.

In response to these issues, the project was modified to incorporate the following features:

- a series of three block courses with each focusing on a separate issue: alternatives to violence, health education, and Te Ao Māori
- putting systems in place to relieve staff fatigue and overload, including the provision of relief staff, ensuring that staff took time to recuperate while facilitators were delivering modules, and delegating and delineating on site tasks appropriately
- making whānau involvement implicit in the programme with entry conditional on a contract bonding the young person's parent to attend the parent/whānau component
- recommending that clients consult General Practitioners and other health workers regarding workable alternatives to withdrawal, and that a harm minimisation period be developed 1-2 weeks prior to block course attendance
- providing an option of programme exclusion for rangatahi demonstrating extreme reluctance, or withdrawal type behaviour
- limiting programme participants to males who had been assessed as high risk, either in terms of cognitive behavioural measures, or drug abuse, or both
- development of a co-ordinated and sequential programme of follow up interventions for each individual, based on the pre-programme needs assessments
- adding cultural identity, self control and self harm categories to the risk assessment measure

These changes were tested for the 1999 Te Puna A Rona intake. While the majority appear to have been effective in addressing the issues identified, information generated both during and after the programme suggested that there was still insufficient whānau support. This may or may not have contributed to the perceived ineffectiveness of some of the individual interventions as a long term follow through method. These interventions typically included one or more of the following:

- referrals to the "Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi Alternative Learning Centre" in Fairfield,
- "in-school intervention" with a dual role of reintroducing students back to school and catching other students before they leave school,
- effective and realistic tracking and monitoring of a student's progress
- community investment and involvement enabling a deepening of community partnership and ownership.

It was also indicated that the single block course was too short to develop and reinforce pro-social behaviours as alternatives to violence.

Te Puna A Rona was further modified in 2000. Changes included:

- fully integrating Te Puna A Rona into Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi (the alternative learning centre operating in Fairfield intermediate school) such that students complete Te Puna A Rona at entry to the centre and then continue for the rest of the year in the Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi learning programme
- refocusing the last block course on alternatives to violence, incorporating Māori cultural issues and understanding into this theme
- only offering the programme to participants whose whānau are considered unlikely to move out of the Hamilton area within the next year (based on previous addresses, life circumstances, and history of transience)
- contracting parents to support their rangatahi in specific ways such as: assisting with homework, spending time talking with and listening to them, actively participating in the programme and its development (e.g. attending with their rangatahi)

In order to accommodate these changes, additional funding was accessed from the Ministry of Education, as part of the resource package for Fairfield Intermediate School. This funding meant that from 2000 Te Puna A Rona could only receive referrals from either Fairfield Intermediate School or NETZ, the community truancy agency. Fairfield Intermediate emphasised school non attendance for two or more terms as one of its referral criteria. However, school staff indicated a willingness to make referrals on the recommendation of other agencies, such as DCYFS and the Police, both of which the principal and deputy principal maintain frequent contact with.

Data collected in early 2000 indicates that the new referral system has had little effect on programme accessibility. Fairfield Intermediate is a decile one school, located in a particularly disadvantaged area of Hamilton, and is often the last port of call for young people who have been suspended or expelled from other schools. With the exception of a lower average age, programme participants demonstrate similar attributes (prior offending, drug and alcohol abuse, and at risk behaviours), to those who participated in previous years.

Integration of Te Puna A Rona and Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi has meant that the alternative education facility no longer caters to female students or those assessed as medium risk. Mātua Whangai believes that medium risk students could be catered to within the mainstream school environment. However, there is still a need for programmes for young Māori women.

## **Achievement of Project Objectives**

### ***Designing and implementing effective and informative evaluation and assessment processes with the overall aim of continual improvement in service provision and/or the development of appropriate interventions.***

During the two years since its inception, Te Puna A Rona has effectively implemented evaluation and assessment processes to achieve continual improvement in service provision. In achieving this objective, the project has also developed an easy to use risk assessment questionnaire (Table 6). Although still in need of objective testing, this questionnaire has the potential to contribute significantly both to the measurement and evaluation of risk factors and their reduction.

Prior to introducing the project, Mātua Whangai undertook a significant amount of research to assess how best to address the issues of concern within the crime prevention package. This research showed the following factors are particularly promising when working with at risk young people:

- training or coaching in “thinking” skills
- use of techniques which encourage young people to learn new skills and ways of thinking, and then practising them, transferring them to other environments, and maintaining them
- residential training programmes targeting risk factors
- intensive supervision and aftercare

(Sherman et al., 1998)

The Te Puna A Rona project was designed with these factors in mind. It was then piloted and a process evaluation was conducted. The evaluation included interview and feedback data from programme participants, their families, school staff, and programme facilitators. In addition, participant progress was measured by comparing pre and post programme risk assessments.

Mātua Whangai continued to review relevant literature to identify additional features which could add value to Te Puna A Rona. They found evidence of crime prevention benefit from the following programme features:

- communities having a range of needed services and agencies working effectively together
- parents, children/young people and schools working together to provide information and to develop a good plan
- parents willing to have their child/young person enrolled and to collaborate with providers in implementing a plan
- caseworkers forming a trusting relationship with the child/young person and parents

- caseworkers being reliable, liaising with schools and other agencies, reviewing plans regularly, encouraging all parties to be responsible decision makers, and providing regular feedback to parents and referring agencies  
(Shepard, P. and Maxwell, G., 1999)

The information collected during the evaluation of the 1998 block course led to a number of modifications in the way the Te Puna A Rona programme was delivered in 1999 (See process section). At the end of 1999, the modified version of the Te Puna A Rona project was tested and evaluated. This second evaluation was conducted by an external evaluator and focused much more on outcomes than the initial evaluation. Once again, recommendations arising from the evaluation were taken on board and implemented in the 2000 version of the programme.

### ***Development and co-ordination of services targeted at Māori at risk youth that work towards positive outcomes for young people***

The Te Puna A Rona project targets young Māori who have already committed offences and pose a high risk of re-offending. Significantly, Mātua Whangai staff, and many of the facilitators, are also Māori, and have experienced a number of issues in common with the project participants. As indicated in the 1999 evaluation report (Barnes, 1999; pp 18-19), Te Puna A Rona staff and facilitators believe that they separate themselves less from the participants than other programmes they have experienced:

*Partly this is because there is a generally shared experience of being Māori, being disadvantaged within a colonised society that devalues indigenous peoples. This alienation and injustice is something that all those facilitators still may feel at times, not forgetting the power of that experience when they were youth themselves.*

*However, the experience of alienation is not enough to create a good course. The facilitators must also have moved on from the sense of alienation, resentment and powerlessness to a new place where they are stronger in their own identity through deconstructing the colonised experience and, in turn, rebuilding a new identity for themselves. This process of change may not be complete, but it is under way, and they must share that journey with the participants so they can in turn make their own journey. By sharing that story, they also gain strength from the participants to continue the journey. Together, they are partners, ....gaining strength from each other and sharing a common vision.*

*When that connection is in place sufficiently, the facilitators can draw on knowledge skills and activities that these youth have had thrust at them before, but have mostly not been able to receive then because the learning process was not open.*

*In that sense the content of this programme is similar to many others offered to high risk youth, but the learning environment and shared purpose enables the participants (and facilitators, visitors, whānau, and volunteers) to grasp the knowledge with passion.*

This belief also appears to have been shared by project participants:

*The reason I talked to you is because I want others to do this course. Stuff I learnt from it I've heard before, but the way they done it, it just brainwashed me. But we were all volunteers. We could walk if you want, but I never wanted to leave. They gave us many options but I didn't take it. Only one boy left.*

*At first we had heaps of different gangs - Mob, Black, East West South. At first it was hard but then it didn't matter anymore, we just dropped it. In the first week we were all coloured up, but at the end there were no colours, there was more of a family unit.*

*We're more prepared than what we were before. We have the tools to know what's right and wrong. They weren't speaking like doctors. They came down to our level instead of us going up to them. We understood them word for word instead of bits and pieces here and there.*

The positive outcomes associated with participation in Te Puna A Rona were evident in comments made by the participants' parents:

Participant's father, a volunteer:

*Before that, not even my son would come and talk about what he needed to do. They're asking for help, but it's more macho not to ask for help.*

*The language got better by about the third week. You seldom heard them swearing. When they did come up with something, they disciplined each other and they accepted that.*

*Smoking cigarettes cut down a lot. Most of them were getting into sniffing and drinking - those that put something into the programme cut down on drugs, alcohol, and burglaries.*

Participant's mother:

*The programme has been really good. Before he went on that programme he was flaring up. He's being honest with me now, and not flaring off the handle....really wish the same thing was around for my older boy when he was here. [My son] has had a chance.*

Both participants and whānau frequently commented on the fact that Te Puna A Rona was targeted at Māori, by Māori and included a significant cultural development component.

Participant

*Going out to camp, doing a lot of different things and a lot of different people coming in. Getting out of the city and being in the country as Māoris, there was less temptation.*

Participant's father, a volunteer

*A lot of changes. There were ones who wouldn't even open their mouths, and then they were able to stand up and give their whakapapa. It built up their self-esteem. They could open up and talk.*

Implicit in the fact that the Te Puna A Rona project targeted Māori was the marae setting. As indicated in the research compiled by Mātua Whangai, programmes with a residential component appear to be more effective than those without. For Māori, the sharing of living space, food and sleeping quarters is inherent in their cultural traditions. Therefore, the residential component served a dual purpose. The communal nature of the sleeping arrangements during the residential phase also provided a unique opportunity to observe and identify the changes that were taking place for the participants.

Facilitator

*There was a high quality of volunteers and supervisors which complemented the marae setting, and the Māori component. We were getting a lot of people talking in their sleep like "don't punch him in the nose", "think before reacting". They were processing in their sleep.*

***Development and co-ordination of services targeted at Māori at risk youth that work towards positive outcomes for their families.***

The 1999 evaluation report indicates engagement with whānau as a key factor in maintaining the changes made by rangatahi. Such engagement was identified as being of particular importance to Māori as it reinforces the ties to hapū and iwi through the extended family structure.

Data collected during the second evaluation (in particular, comments made by parents and caregivers) suggests that participants in Te Puna A Rona transmitted their sense of enthusiasm and commitment about the programme to whānau members.

Social worker:

*The parents were taking it in. It was a major for parents to see their kids getting up in front of the audience. It was good to be able to speak about it. Some kids had been involved in some vicious pieces. A lot of really sad life stories were shared, but there was a good level of experience to handle it. People come from that life experience, not learnt from a book. It was reality for the presenters. It brought up other stuff for supporters, who could also participate.*

Furthermore, stakeholders observed that those whānau members, volunteers, and facilitators who participated in the programme applied what they learned, not only to their tamariki, but also to themselves. Similarly, stakeholder feedback suggests that whānau benefited from the programme through the development of more harmonious relationships between parents and rangatahi. This is made clear in comments from parents and support workers:

Volunteer

*It was one of the most awesome experiences I have ever had. It meant I could go home and share with my whānau.*

Participant's father, a volunteer

*I try to stick to what the programme taught me as well. How me and [my son] communicate. At least now I can sit down, and if he's got something to say, I can listen and compromise with things. That's what I done last week - and I was thinking before reacting.*

Facilitator

*They brought out a new attitude that's been hidden by fear or what's happened in their past. The feeling is warm, pleasurable. Noticeable reduction in negative behaviours. I got kai from everybody. It's those young people that give me lessons not to run away from the past.*

However, despite these positive achievements, increased whānau involvement was identified as a major aspect of the project requiring improvement in both the 1998 and 1999 evaluation reports, and during interviews conducted in 2000. Specifically, volunteers, staff and facilitators observed that those whānau members who did not participate were unable to support the changes made by the rangatahi.

Participant's father, a volunteer

*We needed to bring the whānau in more, instead of just once a week. We got these youth together, we taught them as much as we could, but cause their whānau haven't been, they go back to the same rut. They try and show the parents, this is how we do it. If we got the parents a bit more involved, they can learn what the youth are learning.*

*The parents thought it was for the kids to learn. Let parents know it's there for them to know. When the whānau were coming out on the Thursday the parents were acknowledging that it wasn't just the kids who needed to change - it was they too.*

*Follow - up: get kids into activities, invite the whole whānau to participate in some sort of sports or even going to the beach. I go around, pick them up and we go swim. Horse riding, that sort of thing. If they are at home getting bored they got to do something.*

Staff members

*Right at the start there needs to be more commitment from parents. The level of risk varied between family situations. With some kids there is a good home role model. Other kids come from homes with alcohol, gambling issues, lack of parenting skills.*

*We need to change the mindset of caregivers. A programme for them too. Every Thursday was the whānau day and they'd run over things but I don't think it was enough. Like the young person, awareness is the first step towards change.*

Since 1999, Mātua Whangai has taken an active role in contracting whānau/caregivers to support their young people by assisting with homework, catering to basic needs and supervision, participating actively in the development of the parent programme, and coming along to other parts of the course to learn with their rangatahi. This has facilitated increased involvement on the part of some whānau members, but others continue to resist participation, especially in terms of committing time.

***Development and co-ordination of services targeted at Māori at risk youth that work towards positive outcomes for their community***

In terms of facilitating positive outcomes for the community, the evaluation data indicates that all those who were involved in the project, either as facilitators, volunteers, whānau or participants, gained significant insight from their involvement and, went on to share this insight with others. However, the way in which the courses were delivered also contributed towards increasing recognition of the need and impact of community and youth development methods.

Te Puna A Rona facilitators focused on viewing youth issues through the eyes of the young people, and facilitating direct links between them, community agencies and government groups. This was indicated as a key aspect of effective youth intervention by many of the individuals who either observed or became involved in this development process:

Volunteer facilitator:

*Government organisations are trying to do what's right but they need to get more of a closer look and go down to where the youth are coming from. They say they know what the youth are doing, but really society is totally different now. There's more influences out there - more crime and way more stuff to put you down and put you out. Influences of suicide, alcohol, drugs are way more out there. Getting a tinny these days is easy for an eleven year old whereas ten years ago you couldn't.*

Evaluator

*A community development approach aims to create a community where youth (including Māori) feel a sense of belonging and common purpose which enables them to contribute to society rather than scare, attack and destroy it. Mātua Whangai aims to use Māori processes to rebuild whānau and provide opportunity for Māori to contribute positively to a community that they feel a part of. In order to do this they build relationships with government and other community agencies, as well as providing services to their target group.*

This method contrasts sharply with the criminal justice response which tends to take “a hard line on street thugs” (Barnes, 1999; p 22). Given the high levels of offending by young Māori males, such an approach, characterised by removing offenders from the community, may actually weaken the cultural ties which support community cohesiveness and identity. In turn, weak community ties have been shown to contribute to increased crime levels resulting from social alienation (Sherman, 1998). For young Māori, this sense of alienation may be enhanced by the statistics of the time such that they are forced to either take on the negative cultural identity inferred by these, or abandon their cultural identity altogether.

By facilitating community involvement, rather than removing individuals from the community, the Te Puna A Rona project encourages social responsibility as well as a sense of interdependence between both the young people and those who encounter them.

In addition, the CPWS worker has extended his role to assist young people, their families and other community agencies and groups, with court assessment, advocacy, and referral. This includes encouraging co-operation, and formation of effective partnerships with other agencies and providers of youth service.

### ***Building and maintaining open communication and partnership between all Māori service providers***

Development of the block course involved liaison with a number of community and government agencies involved in providing services to Māori. These included providers of youth services (including the City Council and DCYFS), schools, Youth Aid, Youth Court, vocational training providers, the Safer Community Council, health providers, and marae. Furthermore, community service providers and representatives actively participated in Te Puna A Rona, both in identifying and referring young people to the block course, and delivering different modules in it.

Liaison undertaken by the CPWS worker contributed towards the objective of building and maintaining open communication and partnership between all Māori youth service providers, as well as developing community links and networks, and building community capacity. Indeed, the project evaluation data showed evidence of substantial community support for the block course, from direct stakeholders to more removed members of the community.

Interviews with referring staff from Waikato police, DCYFS, Safer Hamilton, and teachers from Fairfield Intermediate and Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi (a kaupapa Māori alternative learning centre), all affirmed the approach taken by Te Puna A Rona. They identified the value of concurrent whānau and youth intervention, as well as the combination of sanctions, support, statutory and community interventions. It was indicated that working individually with youth, and even at a wider whānau level, needs to be backed up by a community that doesn't tolerate violence, holds offenders accountable, and provides opportunities for disadvantaged groups to help themselves.

However, despite this affirmation, community connectedness and support did not appear to be as readily practised as it was advocated. In particular, Te Puna A Rona workers have been dissatisfied with the minimal or nil involvement of DCYFS social workers and Youth Aid Officers. This dissatisfaction was expressed in both the 1998 and 1999 evaluation reports, as well as the 2000 interviews.

Mātua Whangai staff indicated that government agencies and iwi authorities appeared unwilling to provide resources for young peoples' participation in Te Puna A Rona. There have been exceptions to this claim, with at least one DCYFS social worker advocating for, and achieving, the provision of a minder and koha to support a young person referred to the programme.

Mātua Whangai indicate that such exceptions result from the development of proactive relationships with individuals working for these agencies, rather than recognition from the agencies themselves, or changes in organisational mindset. The high turnover and significant workloads of government agency staff means that Mātua Whangai must frequently spend valuable time and energy re-establishing these connections. While the CPWS worker has challenged government agency workers and iwi authorities to actively participate in the healing process, and has involved them in the ongoing development and sharing of effective risk assessment and evaluation tools, there does not appear to be a significant reciprocal effort from the agencies identified.

## Outcomes

### Achievement of CPWS Outcomes

In addition to the objectives set for the project, each CP-CPWS project was also required to contribute to the CPWS outcomes identified in the 1997 Youth at Risk Crime Prevention Package (pp. 11-12). These outcomes were designed to address the needs of both individual participants and communities.

#### *Individual objectives included:*

##### *Positive behavioural change*

Evaluation of the pilot block course held in 1998 was primarily focused on process, with the results being used to modify the way in which the programme was delivered. However, comparison of pre and post project risk assessment scores did provide evidence that two of the four rangatahi assessed as high drug/substance abuse risk<sup>3</sup> prior to the block course had reduced their risk levels after the block course. In addition, one had maintained his drug/substance abuse risk level, and one did not complete the post course assessment.

Comparison of risk categories (excluding those relating to drug, alcohol and substance abuse) indicated that rangatahi (and their parents) had also modified their behaviours in other areas. All but one of the rangatahi demonstrated decreased levels of risk<sup>4</sup> across crime, convictions, parental control, school disciplinary problems and peer relationships. The one rangatahi who did not decrease in risk, maintained a medium risk level.

Overall of the risk measures, rangatahi showed a 22% decrease in risk factors (from 142 to 111) after the programme (Table 8). Despite the fact that a number of the risk factors measured were non changeable by nature (i.e. age at first conviction and prior criminal behaviour), this result achieved slight significance ( $2.315 = 0.10$ , t test),

*Table 8: Overall pre and post course risk assessment data for 1998 (shaded areas indicate high risk young people)*

Rangatahi	Pre-course risk assessment	Post-course risk assessment
Rangatahi 2	10	15
Rangatahi 7	14	13
Rangatahi 1	18	8
Rangatahi 3	22	18
Rangatahi 5	25	23
Rangatahi 6	26	17
Rangatahi 4	27	17
	142	111

In addition to risk assessment information, all of the participants' primary caregivers reported positive changes in their rangatahi post block course. Those specifically noted were:

- [Rangatahi has] a sense of value
- [Rangatahi are] understanding about their feelings
- doesn't swear or answer back
- we can talk to one another better
- very talkative and more open

<sup>3</sup> High risk for individual measures (such as drug/substance abuse) was indicated by a score of 5 on the risk assessment measure.

<sup>4</sup> In 1998 the risk assessment measure did not include categories for cultural identity, self control or self harm. Therefore, high risk was indicated by a score of 15 and above, a medium risk as a score between 10 and 15, and low risk as a score of 10 or under.

- *works well on his own and there is more sharing*
- *[Rangatahi] now showers*
- *he doesn't go out at night and he helps around the house*

The 1998 evaluation report also indicated that as of 23 December 1998 (two months after the conclusion of the pilot block course) none of the rangatahi involved with the project had re-offended. This conclusion was based on zero notification rate from both the police and DCYFS as well as information obtained from post programme whānau and rangatahi visits.

In 1999, comparisons between the Te Puna A Rona pre and post course risk assessment measures revealed 47% reduction in risk during the course of the programme. At the beginning of Te Puna A Rona, participants total risk score was 236 and at completion it was 126 (Table 9). These results are significant ( $t = 7.13$ ,  $p = 0.01$ , t test).

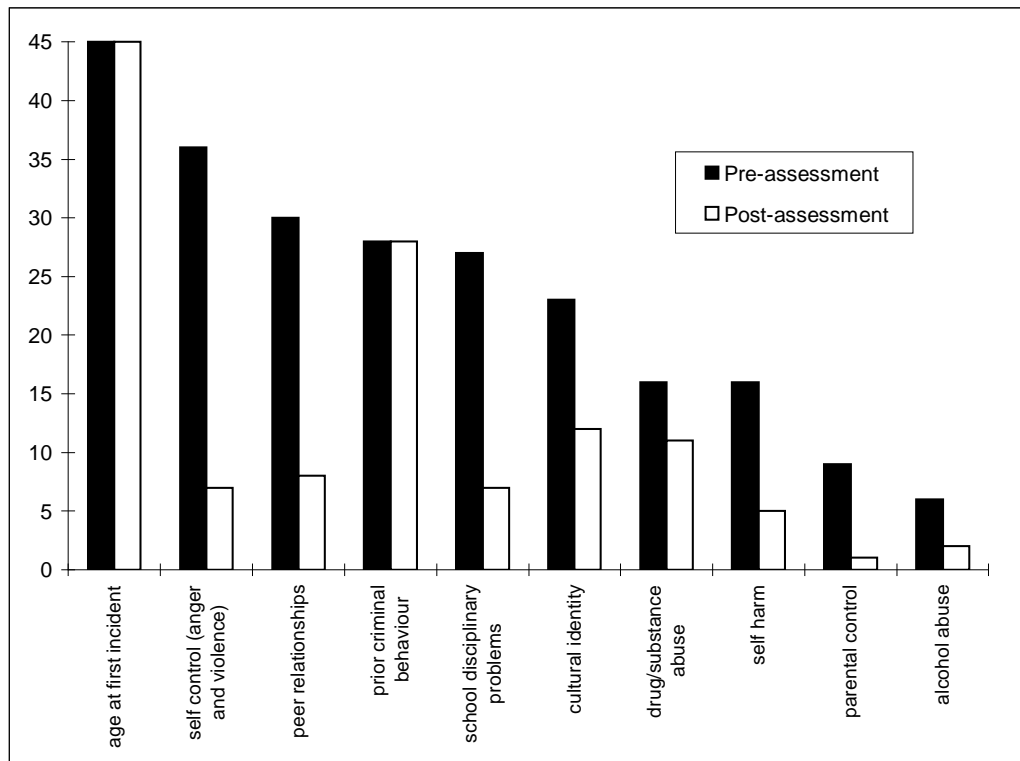
*Table 9: Overall pre and post course risk assessment data for 1999*

Rangatahi	Pre course risk assessment	Post course risk assessment
Rangatahi 1	24	20
Rangatahi 2	27	13
Rangatahi 3	31	17
Rangatahi 4	18	11
Rangatahi 5	29	12
Rangatahi 6	32	15
Rangatahi 7	26	12
Rangatahi 8	29	12
Rangatahi 9	20	14
Rangatahi 10	25	25*

\*(did not complete)

Once again, this reduction in risk is particularly creditable given that two of the risk criteria (age at first incident and prior criminal behaviour), with an overall combined score of 73, were fixed and non mutable. All of the other risk criteria reduced (Figure 3). The most notable changes occurred for school disciplinary problems (- 20), negative peer relationships and associations (- 22), and self control including demonstrations of anger and violence (- 29). Also of note was a reduction in self harming activities (-11). In comparison, the participant who did not complete the courses did not demonstrate any reduction in at risk behaviours.

*Figure 3: Te Puna A Rona Participants changes in overall risk assessment measures 1999*



Feedback from participants, facilitators, staff, whānau and volunteers all indicated noticeable changes in participant behaviour:

#### Mātua Whangai Dusk 'til Dawn Co-ordinator

*Being more open, in a sense that they were more open talking about what was happening. They were talking more in depth, practising some of the stuff outside the course.*

*There would be a confrontation, and [a participant] would say "Come on guys let's try another way". At a bakery, one boy told the lady to get stuffed. She came out to clip their ears and [a participant] tried to find an alternative solution with his friend. They got closer to each other, there were no major blow ups to cause fighting.*

#### Facilitator

*The swearing stopped, there was a lot of mediating. When a conflict went down, someone would get involved to defuse it. Also the youth brought conflict to our attention, showing they trusted our involvement. At the end of the programme they blame less and judge less.*

*They did begin addressing their offending towards the victims. In a session after the residential, one guy decided to write apology letters to his victims. On the following week, a victim of one of his offences turned up and he was forthright in his apology. Another time two students owned up to incidents. There was no tagging, graffiti and nothing was stolen. They expressed respect for the marae.*

In 1999 the evaluation report was much more outcome oriented than in 1998 and included comparison of police records for each of the programme participants. These records identified the number of contacts between project participants and police. They included all contacts, including those in which participants were contacted as witnesses or victims of offences, or for information.

Participant police records were compiled for the 88 days prior to their involvement with Te Puna A Rona, during their involvement in the block courses (61 days), and for the 88 days following their completion of the block courses. Comparison across these periods failed to show any significant reduction in participant - police contact after the block course. However, it did indicate a slight reduction during the course.

No reduction in police - participant contact over such a short time frame does not necessarily indicate an unsuccessful programme. Contact may have occurred for any number of reasons other than participant offending. Given the increased salience of young people following their participation in the programme, it is very likely that they were noticed and noted more frequently than if they had not participated. Indeed, one of the outcomes of the project was improved monitoring of young people's activities and progress (*see later*: Improved co-ordination between groups involved with youth at risk of offending).

In addition, even if offending behaviours did not reduce immediately, Barnes (1999) suggests that it is reasonable to expect that change in behaviour lags behind changes in attitudes, values and increased knowledge. This suggestion is supported by research examining the effects of attitude change on behaviour (Regan and Fazio, 1977; Calder and Ross, 1973; Fazio, 1986: cited in Vaughan, 1991). These researchers showed that attitudes are more likely to influence behaviour when they are formed through frequent, direct experience, and when they have been thought about frequently. Fazio (1986) also showed that situational factors can cause people to act in a manner inconsistent with their attitudes.

The feedback and interview data collected during the second evaluation indicated that for many of the young people involved in the programme, recognition of their capacity for change was a frightening thing. It required them to completely modify their concept of themselves. In order to redefine this concept, the data suggests that a period of role testing was needed. This involved practising new behaviours and comparing them with old. As indicated by one of the volunteers working with the young people:

*I was looking after [name of participant], and for him it seemed the best things were the sharing. He would see people open up and share and come into a safety zone and express himself without being scared.*

*He was so good, he was scared of being good. But to feel normal he has to be naughty. He'd be good and then he'd do something bad to make himself normal. [One of the facilitators] describes it as a blackness. He was free but he was scared of it. He loved it.*

Similarly, from a participant:

*I remember the whole thing, its just putting it into practice - but the main thing I like is the anger management stuff - the (AVP) Mandala. I'm not saying that I've found the whole thing, I haven't, but I've got pieces. I never used to stop and think, whatever was in my way, I'd just bash. I learnt heaps, but putting it into practice is hard. Stopping and thinking would help me put it into practice.*

It is interesting to note the following comment regarding the participant referred to above:

Facilitator:

*A lot of people who knew [name of participant], they thought nothing would help him, and yet he was the highlight on Te Puna A Rona.*

Another issue which may have impeded changes in offending behaviour was the differential support received from parents. As indicated by a government agency manager:

*Any effort put into kids alone doesn't achieve anything. Currently working with police, it's not that there are insufficient resources but that we target the wrong end. The hard core kids are committing the crimes for adults. Until we target the adults and use*

*common-sense approaches such as surveillance, the kids will be out of control because the adults will allow it.*

Indeed, there was concern that rather than reducing crime, the programme might create a strongly bonded network of criminals. In the words of one staff member:

*They all come from different areas. There was potential for them to learn each others tricks. There were incidents outside the programme once it had finished, they'd bike all the way to each others place and get involved in crime.*

The fear of fostering criminal collectives was not limited to the programme participants. There was also concern that some of the volunteers had not sufficiently resolved their own issues and motivations to effectively discourage those with whom they were working. However, the changes in attitudes of the volunteers which resulted from participating in the project suggests that this was not the case. If anything, the volunteers appeared even more aware of their behaviour than the participants.

Similarly, participant feedback suggests that any networks formed were more conducive to preventing crime than encouraging it:

Participant:

*We ended up hanging together after the course. We were keeping each other out of trouble, like if one started derailing off the track the other would help. After we got accused of doing a burglary, then we stopped hanging out together.*

Unfortunately, the data suggests that although the young people's attitudes may have changed, some community attitudes towards them did not. Furthermore, the fact that the project facilitated more diligent monitoring of participants may actually have impeded this process. These processes are likely to have increased the ability of outside agencies to identify rangatahi.

Lawrence et al (1998) indicate that a significant component to preventing crime involves police showing greater respect to arrested offenders. Similarly, much of the feedback from participants, whānau, and volunteers revealed the powerful effect that labelling an individual can have on their actions.

Participant's father, a volunteer

*So you're not judging the youth. A lot of youth at risk have a label put on them. They need to not feel judged.*

They identified one of the main advantages of the programme as its effect in reducing labels and judgements, such that young people were seen as individuals rather than "at risk", and Māori were seen as a culture rather than a social ill. The worth that young people place on such distinctions is also identified in Karabanow (1999). It is also evident in the effects that lack of such distinction can have.

File note, May 2000

*I met with the CPWS worker, project participants, volunteers and whānau, other Mātua Whangai staff and representatives from other community and government agencies between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of May, 2000. During this time it was revealed that one of the young people on the 1999 block course had recently committed suicide. This young person had made significant progress during and after his participation in Te Puna A Rona, as had his family. At the time of entering the programme he was a very high risk recidivist offender. He had numerous charges against him, many for assault. He was alienated from his family and living with a DCYFS appointed caregiver. DCYFS had also appointed a full time minder to track his activities (including full participation in Te Puna A Rona) and enrolled him in a supervised correspondence course.*

*During the course of his involvement with Te Puna A Rona, the young person became a much better communicator. He learned to talk about himself and feel comfortable doing so. These*

*skills were actively demonstrated throughout and after his participation. Furthermore, the relationship between this young person and his whānau developed significantly. On the third whānau day the young person's father also became involved with the programme. As his involvement increased, the father was able to share his own experiences of gang culture, and drug and alcohol abuse, with programme participants. He also chose to publicly present his son's whakapapa to the group. On graduation day, this man stood up and gave testimony of his own journey, including his role in the abuse of his children.*

*At the end of the programme, the young person went to live with his father. In turn, his father reconciled with his ex partner and enrolled in further education. The young person also went back to school, at a marae based education programme. His hygiene and personal care improved, he worked towards completing his community hours, finished his first carving, gained an award for completing homework and achieving educational success, and began working towards the bronze level of the Duke of Edinburgh award.*

*In April 2000, this young person committed suicide. At the time, he was experiencing relationship difficulties with his girlfriend and had been picked up by the police on a number of occasions. On one of these occasions he was accused of a crime which he was not directly responsible for. His ability to communicate this inconsistency did not change the way he was treated by the juvenile justice system.*

*Clearly, a significant issue is that even though the programme may assist young people and their whānau to change, these changes are not necessarily recognised by statutory agencies such as the police. Indeed, the changes themselves may even compound the difficulties in young peoples interactions with these agencies, such that direct communication and assertion are judged as "being smart".*

Despite, an apparent lack of change in police behaviour towards Te Puna A Rona participants, there is evidence that the police supported the Te Puna A Rona project. In October 1999, a representative from the East Hamilton Police Projects, Taiohi Toa - Strengthening Youth project provided a written recommendation for Te Puna A Rona. This recommendation argued that Te Puna A Rona encourages youth to develop "self discipline, ownership and responsibility for their actions", as well as fostering a general philosophy of "what do I do to change?".

### *Increased personal strength and self reliance*

Apart from the data concerning reductions in drug and substance abuse, most of the evidence for increased personal strength and self reliance was qualitative in nature. Specifically, Mātua Whangai staff, block course facilitators, volunteers and parents, observed the following changes which they attributed to the project:

- improved communication abilities, including a willingness to sit down and talk about issues, plans and ideas
- completion of community work
- identifying and fulfilling personal goals

Evidence of these changes presented itself in the form of young people planning for a future which they believed they could achieve, and taking action to make that happen. For instance, during the health education block course, one young male set a goal to "not have a baby in his teens". He also asked project staff for condoms.

Other young people appeared to be particularly influenced by self healing practices, and the power of safe touching in the form of massage. They learned meditation and frequently asked for time to practice the art. Similarly, staff observed rangatahi rehearsing what could only be described as their own personal mantra "don't say yes when you mean no".

As indicated by project staff, one of the key aspects of Te Puna A Rona is that it encourages young people to use their imagination to creatively solve problems. In particular, it emphasises replacing old habits which have frequently developed as a result of circumstance, with new behaviours which they have designed themselves. Specifically, it helps them to discover what they like. Young people

participating in the block courses were observed asking “very deep” questions, recognising that they could find the answers themselves, and working collectively to do so.

In addition, project participants became much more open during the course of their participation. They were willing to talk about how they felt about things, and to take ownership of their feelings. As they became more in touch with themselves, staff noted “less attitude”; rather than imitating others, they were being themselves. Furthermore, participants actively demonstrated pride in their identity and self control by:

- choosing to become involved in Te Rapa programme learning about self and culture
- learning and practising Shaolin shadow boxing and passing grade within the first year
- becoming involved in learning Māori martial arts

### *Increased positive participation in communities*

Young people’s participation in their communities increased by way of referrals and re-entry into education, or increased participation in educational activities. Indeed, seven (7) of those who participated in 1999<sup>5</sup>, and two (2) of those who participated in 1998<sup>6</sup>, returned to some form of education or training following involvement with Te Puna A Rona. Only, one (1) of the 1998 participants, and three (3) of the 1999 participants, had been involved in educational activities during the time immediately preceding their entry to the programme.

Furthermore, for those who were already attending an educational programme, participation in the Te Puna A Rona project was shown to facilitate increased commitment and focus (Appendix M):

A teacher

*[Name of participant] was here before the programme, but when he came back he was much more focused. [He] concentrated on getting back into doing his schoolwork.*

*In the third term he went on Te Puna A Rona, and then he was able to articulate his ideas and points of view. He had more confidence; he was more open and engaged.*

*[Name of participant] was a heavy marijuana smoker, and that’s been reduced, perhaps from several smokes a day down to just a few a week. [He’s] very placid, easygoing, but he’ll engage more in class time, listening more attentively, his attention span increased. You could tell by how he wrote he was using more complex ideas, deeper thought.*

Much of the increased educational activity occurred via referrals to, or increased involvement in, the Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi Alternative Learning Centre in Fairfield. Now that Te Puna A Rona is implicitly bound with Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi alternative learning centre, this form of increased participation looks likely to continue.

Indeed, as indicated by a referring social worker, the relationship with Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi may actually facilitate more appropriate educational opportunities for the young people involved:

*It’s dumb to put some of these kids back into the mainstream when we know they won’t get what they need there. Some of them will do well in an alternative setting, with small groups where Māori identity is strengthened, but mainstream schools can’t usually provide this.*

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<sup>5</sup> It is not known whether the other two participants who completed the 1999 block courses are involved in education or training activities. One of these has left town and the other lost touch with Mātua Whangai after the project.

<sup>6</sup> Of the other participants who completed the pilot course, the ongoing educational status of three remained unknown (two left town and one lost touch). In addition, one went on to a residential detox programme and one became a full-time mother.

In addition, the project fostered greater understanding of the participants' cultural identity and, subsequently, a greater respect for their cultural community.

Participant

*Te Ao Māori side was enjoyable, it just opened up that door for us. I felt proud of my friends, that's stayed with them. It will stay with them for life - it opened the doors for them.*

For many, the Te Ao Māori component provided a sense of belonging that they had not previously felt and with this, a sense of shared purpose. This sense of belonging and purpose fostered participants' ability to work together rather than as individuals.

Facilitator

*Learning to work together, they start to realise that their neighbour is also their friend rather than "I'd like to punch his lights out".*

The increased sense of community facilitated by the project was also evident in the pilot project participants' desires to learn more and become more actively involved in kapa haka, tikanga Māori and to spend more time at the whare.

As indicated by a facilitator:

*[Te Puna A Rona is] done very well - I wish it was around in the early sixties. I don't see it as a band-aid like some programmes. It's building bridges to their identity.*

## **Community Objectives**

### *Increased community capacity to effectively deliver programmes and projects targeted to at risk young people*

The development of the Te Puna A Rona programme has provided a point of referral for young high risk Māori males. This population is not specifically served by any other agency in the area, yet its needs are recognised as extremely specific. The need and value of having such a service has been recognised by a range of community and government agencies.

In particular, these agencies indicate that effectively intervening with this high risk group has the potential to greatly enhance the work of, and reduce the strain on, agencies working with other youth populations.

Alternatives to Violence Project (Waikato)

*...the Mātua Whangai, Hamilton, programme is a very important link in the development of young people experiencing positive lifestyles and [I] recommend that they continue to receive support from the community so they can provide support systems for rangatahi.*

Children, Young Persons and their Families Agency

*I have been fortunate to participate in various stages of the programme and can only express how relevant and necessary a course of this quality is to those working in the field of "Youth at Risk".*

*I have seen the progress in the young person I have been working with, his relationship in his current living situation has improved and a closer relationship with his father has eventuated.*

Taiohi Toa: East Hamilton Police Projects

*The programme .... works in 3 areas. Firstly it targets youth where they are at, in their solvent abuse, domestic violence, anger problems. Secondly in their relationships with their parents, and lastly in their peer groups and the pressure they find themselves in.*

Fairfield Intermediate School

*That many of the young people gained confidence and succeeded in making appropriate decisions regarding their future is testament to the effectiveness of the Te Puna A Rona programme [the CPWS worker] presented.*

*I wish to thank Don for his commitment to assisting young people at risk and sincerely hope that this invaluable programme can continue to be made available in our community.*

Te Kohao Health Limited

*We strongly support the continuation of this programme as we also work with “at risk” children and teenagers and know the need is great. The staff of the Te Puna Rona programme are diligent and highly organised and more importantly they interact well with the Rōpu involved. It is plain to see the respect and trust of these Rangatahi toward the staff and, that in itself promotes a positive learning environment.*

Waipuna O Te Horowai Aroha

*It is through my observation of such a group that I am able to see how effective Community Groups are with instilling positive thoughts, attitudes and actions.*

In addition, a significant part of the Te Puna A Rona project has been the assessment and evaluation of process, outcomes and the nature of the target population. The information collected for this purpose provides significant insight into the means by which such efforts can best meet the needs of at risk Māori youth in Kirikiriroa/Hamilton. As such, it contributes to the information available to the community.

Specifically, evaluation data appeared to confirm the results of previous research that programmes with a residential component worked particularly well (Sherman et al, 1998). As indicated in the process review presented earlier, this aspect was also of particular relevance to the Māori kaupapa of the programme.

Staff members

*The residential part of all the segments were the best. It was a safe environment, clear boundaries, three meals a day, not having to deal with everything else and someone focusing on them only.*

Facilitator

*The residential segments. The weeks they're together at the centre, major shifts are made, and for me the cultural identity is a big one.*

Participant

*The difference between this course is we lived in and we stayed with the facilitators and that made the main difference. The tutors were down to earth. The ones before were “look at the book” types and think they know it all. These ones had been there and done that - they knew what it feels like, whereas other tutors, they were just keeping the discipline.*

However, it was also significant that the residential component was not run along correctional boot camp/scared straight lines. Rather, participants valued the fact that they were treated as individuals and given respect. In this way, they gave respect back and learned to take responsibility as individuals. As such, the changes made during the residential component are much more likely to be

transferred to the outside world than if they had been based around the group culture, and the commands of site specific superiors.

Participant

*We were having fun; it didn't feel like a boot camp. They'd come down on us hard but there was always a reason, you could speak your mind, you could talk how you usually talk - you could talk.*

In addition, the evaluations supported the value of whānau involvement. At least one participant had a parent who acted as a volunteer on the programme. This involvement appeared to be particularly beneficial.

*Working with my father was quite good, because when we worked in a circle he got to know what I was really thinking. At first we were always down each others throats, since we were both there it made it a whole lot better.*

In terms of what worked well, specific credit was given to the structured components of the programme, especially Alternatives to Violence Project. A number of comments were made about how these components were complemented by the informal nature of the environment:

Facilitator:

*There was an equality, and all were participating freely in the programme. The gatherings and some of the exercises were powerful too. Discussing situations they were involved in and reflecting on the victims' experience - building empathy. The trust we showed them was tested, we had a minder for every group of three participants, remaining firm and consistent. There were chores and rules (stay in your group, etc.) and we maintained it.*

Although this knowledge was already available in relevant literature, and actually formed the basis for the project, it was important that those involved were able to test it in their own environment.

Furthermore, although it was Mātua Whangai that originally investigated the criteria for running an effective crime prevention project, the information obtained was spread throughout all of the agencies, volunteers and participants involved in the project and, through them, into the wider community.

Facilitator

*The value of the residential is so profound in comparison to working in schools.*

Staff and volunteers also commented that a special feature of the project was the way in which they were able to learn from the young people involved. By adopting the attitude that "we are all teachers and we are all students", the capacity for learning became greatly increased. Similarly, the enthusiasm generated by course participants, parents and volunteers was frequently transmitted outside the immediate whānau environment such that information was shared with friends, work-mates, and acquaintances. Many of these were also physically brought to, or hooked up with, the project.

*Improved co-ordination between groups involved with youth at risk of offending*

Development and facilitation of the block courses has involved a range of agencies and groups concerned with youth at risk of offending. As a result of this involvement, these groups are not only more aware of what the others are doing, but are actively working together towards a common end.

In both the first and second annual evaluation reports, community agencies directly involved in the block course expressed overall satisfaction with the project, as did referring agencies. These agencies included:

- Alternatives to Violence Project Waikato
- DCYFS
- Taiohi Toa: East Hamilton Police Projects

- Waikato Police Staff
- Safer Hamilton (Safer Community Council)
- Fairfield Intermediate School
- Te Kohao Health Limited
- Orini Combined School
- Waipuna O Te Horowai Aroha: Holistic Resource Centre

Evidence of improved co-ordination between these agencies and groups is demonstrated through increased sharing of information and resources. This has been undertaken both as a means of assisting with programme development and facilitation, and as part of the participant monitoring processes.

Improved co-ordination and information sharing is also of benefit to participants. With individuals known to a range of agencies they are much less likely to “fall through the cracks”. This monitoring system is complemented by the fact that most of the young people who have come in contact with Te Puna A Rona have voluntarily stayed in touch even after completing the block courses. The introduction of the risk assessment tool, and the exchange of information produced by it, mean that other agencies are better able to respond appropriately to these and other high risk young people.

As the project has developed it has become increasingly involved in the activities of other groups and projects. It has employed facilitators from a wider range of agencies and, in 2000, became part of Manāki Te Rito Rangatahi alternative learning centre.

Sharing information and tools has been a significant contributor to the formation of effective community relationships involving Mātua Whangai. In particular, the development of its own client assessment tools has provided both Mātua Whangai, and other agencies, with the means to determine best practice in terms of referrals and case management. Use of this tool and the information gained as a result of effective evaluation practices has demonstrated a need for other programmes, specifically those that cater to young, high risk, Māori women as well as high risk Pākehā youth. The current Te Puna A Rona programme cannot meet the needs of these populations. However, identifying this need has created opportunities to work with other agencies to develop suitable responses.

#### Volunteer

*Māori youth spark well with these ideas but I find it much more difficult with Pakeha.  
How do we get them to spark?*

The Te Puna A Rona Project has contributed towards increased co-ordination between the different services offered by Mātua Whangai. Other youth diversion workers employed by Mātua Whangai actively refer their higher risk young people to Te Puna A Rona, either directly, or through Fairfield Intermediate.

Where the CPWS worker believes that participants’ parents and/or whānau might benefit from involvement in Mātua Whangai adult programmes, or community based sentences, he is able to share information with the case workers and co-ordinators responsible for these activities. Similarly, where participants’ whānau come to the attention of other Mātua Whangai staff, information is shared with the CPWS worker.

In all cases, participants and their whānau are able to access Mātua Whangai healing and counselling services through referral from the CPWS worker. In turn, the counsellor is able to make recommendations for improvements to the programme based on her insight into the needs of its clients.

## **Conclusions**

All of the young people who completed the Te Puna A Rona block courses demonstrated reduced levels of at risk behaviours following their involvement with the CPWS worker. The majority of these

were identified as high risk prior to participating in the project and all had come to the notice of Hamilton law enforcement authorities. Specifically, completion of the project was associated with:

- reduced school disciplinary, truancy and attendance problems,
- reduced levels of gang affiliation and association with negative peer groups,
- reduced drug and substance abuse,
- increased self control, including reduced incidence of violence and victimisation.

In addition, programme participants demonstrated increased community participation, particularly in terms of education, training and cultural activities, following involvement in Te Puna A Rona.

The Te Puna A Rona project employed a range of methods which have proven effective in crime prevention projects overseas. These included cognitive behavioural interventions in which programme participants learn a range of social competency skills, as well as acquiring the ability to identify high risk situations and appropriate responses to them. Participants were given time and space to practise these skills in the safety of a residential environment, away from negative peer and family influences. They were then supported in transferring these skills, and applying them in their day to day lives through follow-up day classes. The families of participants were assisted to access information and resources which would enable them to reinforce and model the acquired skills, thus maintaining the young people's behavioural changes.

These processes were reinforced by the fact that they were ongoing over a 16 week period with appropriate follow on interventions aimed at keeping young people in the educational system. Furthermore, they were complemented by the development of a multi-dimensional assessment tool designed to accurately identify, and classify, at risk behaviour. The development of this tool (by Mātua Whangai) has contributed to the continuous improvement of the project by way of effective monitoring and evaluation of outcomes and processes.

It has also facilitated increased co-ordination and capacity between and within a range of community agencies in and around Hamilton. In particular, Te Puna A Rona has provided an effective referral option for high risk Māori young people. It has facilitated community knowledge regarding practical intervention methods, increased information sharing, and allowed more accurate identification of resource needs. The project has also resulted in more effective monitoring of young people and their families such that they are less likely to "fall through the cracks".

### ***Recommendations***

1. Test the effectiveness and validity of the risk assessment tool developed by Mātua Whangai. Specifically, it needs to be established that:
  - individual rangatahi would receive the same risk assessment rating regardless of who completed the form
  - the way in which data is collected accurately represents the behaviours it intends to represent.
2. Continue monitoring individual rangatahi so that post course offending can be tracked across a period of at least one year.
3. Implement strategies to ensure that rangatahi are not discriminated against because of their higher profile as a participant on the course. In particular, monitoring needs to acknowledge positive behaviours, as well as any that are less desirable. Encouraging external agencies to record positive changes may encourage greater community acceptance of the young people involved.
4. Specify and reinforce criteria for referrals from government agencies. This is particularly important now that project referrals must be processed via Fairfield Intermediate School. However, it is also essential that these agencies provide appropriate resources to support the young people they refer.