



Te Puni Kōkiri
REALISING MĀORI POTENTIAL

Kaiārahi Ritenga Waitohu

Māori and Out of School Services' Research Report



Te Puni Kōkiri commissioned qualitative research to inform the future review of out of school services. These services are a key component of ensuring that families have better access to quality, affordable and age appropriate out of school services for their school age children.

The purpose of the research was to find out how the out of school service sector is working for Māori. The research explored what is important to Māori in accessing out of school services for their children; and the choices that they have available to them when doing so. Opportunities, challenges and improvements were also considered necessary to meet and continue to meet Māori needs and priorities for this sector.

The research focused on Māori with caring responsibilities for children who:

- Are between the ages of five and 13 years
- Attend out of school services before and after school and/or during the school holidays
- Attend out of school services either through service providers who have OSCAR approved programmes, private service providers who run their own programmes or are cared by whānau members or others out of school
- Live in a range of locations which include rural, provincial towns, cities and urban areas.



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa



METHODOLOGY

Children, parents, caregivers, service providers and whānau (both as caregivers and carers) participated in the research. Other participants included representatives from rūnanga who have an interest in out of school services in their rohe and people from organisations who are involved with whānau. These participants have an understanding of issues relating to the provision of out of school services to Māori in their areas.



They participated through 50 individual interviews, 13 focus groups and 17 survey forms, which ran from late June to mid-August 2008. The number of participants in the focus groups ranged from four to 10. Twenty one OSCAR¹-approved and 12 non-OSCAR funded service providers were interviewed either individually or as part of a focus group. Fifty eight parents and caregivers were interviewed either individually or as part of a focus group. Overall, a total number of 92 participants participated in the research.

The interviews were held in Christchurch, Wellington, Wanganui, Wairarapa, Napier, Hastings, Gisborne, Rotorua, Hamilton, Tauranga, Kawerau, Auckland and Northland. Within these areas, participants came from a mix of city, urban, provincial towns and rural locations.

Parent and caregiver participants in the research were representative of both single parent and two parent whānau. Many of these were also part of extended whānau who also participated in the interviews and focus groups.

Service providers interviewed included OSCAR-approved by Child, Youth and Family. They deliver OSCAR programmes and access OSCAR funding. Their parents and caregivers can apply for Work and Income subsidies. Other service providers were non-OSCAR funded. They develop their own programmes and do not access these funding streams and or subsidies for parents and caregivers.

Whānau carers are also participants in the out of school services sector. These include grandparents and other whānau members, friends/neighbours who provide care for mokopuna during out of school services time.

FINDINGS

Māori want out of school services in their areas and more choice of services

The research highlighted that there are some places that do not have out of school services, and therefore presents difficulties for parents and caregivers in making arrangements for their children while they work.

Many Māori who live in rural areas face numerous challenges in accessing out of school services. As these services do not exist locally, children often have to travel considerable distances to access a service. Similar issues arose in Auckland and other urban areas, where Māori are not able to access their service provider of choice who may be located in another part of the city, which can be some distance away.

Parents and caregivers then make decisions about whether to invest what can be considerable time and effort to transport children, or to find alternative care arrangements such as whānau care. In cities, towns and urban areas, where other out of school services are available, they may decide to enrol their children with a service provider that is close by even though the service and programme may not meet all their priorities.

Māori also want more choice of out of school services, particularly for those who want their children to attend tikanga-based programmes. There were very few of these services within the research but many parents and caregivers indicated that they want more of these programmes to be available and easily accessible in all areas.

Māori want out of school services that accommodate their different working circumstances

Māori want out of school services to reflect the flexible nature of the workforce and to keep pace with the changing working environment. The research indicated that many Māori work shifts, are seasonal workers and some commute significant distances to get to and from work. Because of the hours they work, the distances they travel, or the time of year they work, they have difficulty in accessing out of school services that accommodate their circumstances.

Māori want out of school services they can afford

The research highlighted that many parents and caregivers have difficulty paying the cost of out of school services. This applies to parents and caregivers who access OSCAR-approved service providers but do not qualify for Work and Income subsidies because their incomes are above the threshold.

There were also at least 15% of the parents and caregivers interviewed who expressed concern that while they do receive these subsidies, they

1 OSCAR – Out of School Care And Recreation programmes are before school, after school and school holiday programmes, including camps, for children aged 5 to 14. www.oscar.org.nz

still struggle to afford the reduced fees. They are on low incomes often with multiple whānau priorities for each dollar, including the cost of petrol and food.

Māori who access non-OSCAR funded service providers are not Work and Income subsidised also have difficulty in affording the fees.

There are many Māori and mainstream service providers (both OSCAR-approved funded and non-OSCAR funded), who admit children to their programmes when they know that parents and caregivers are not able to pay or may have difficulty with paying fees. These decisions have an ongoing impact on the viability of their businesses.

Māori want quality programmes with Māori content

Māori want their out of school services to connect to and reflect te ao Māori so that their children have familiar and recognisable cultural signposts within the programmes. They want programmes to contain Māori content. The level differs according to the specific needs of parents and caregivers:

- Some want a high level of Māori content generally with children who attend Kura Kaupapa Māori or Māori immersion classes. To complement home and school learning, they prefer programmes that are based in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori
- Some want content to be integrated into the programme, where te reo Māori may be spoken and where tikanga Māori is practiced as a natural part a programme
- Others consider that the level of content provided by mainstream service providers is satisfactory where they have Māori specific activities in their programmes from time to time.

Providing Māori content within programmes presents a challenge for some OSCAR-approved service providers. The research suggests that a core aspect of training for these service providers and staff is to build and increase their understanding and awareness of tikanga Māori and te reo Māori and identify how these can be appropriately reflected into their programmes and their delivery.

Māori want secure service provider funding

Funding out of school services was a concern for all research participants. Security of funding is a specific priority for non-OSCAR funded service providers if their programmes are to continue to operate. Without certainty of funding these service providers and their programmes are at risk and will result in further limiting the choices available to parents and caregivers particularly those who seek more depth of Māori content through tikanga-based programmes.

Whānau have a significant role in enabling Māori to participate in the workforce

For Māori, whānau play a significant role in caring for children before and after school and during school holidays. They enable parents and caregivers to work and accommodate their varied working arrangements. They may be the first choice of care or the only resort when out of school services are not available or accessible. Many research participants considered that whānau carers should be financially recognised for their contribution to the out of school services sector and to the economy by making it possible for members of their whānau to work.

Māori want more information about out of school services

Māori want accessible information about the out of school services in their locations. They seek general information about OSCAR and Work and Income subsidies. They also want local information about all service providers in their areas, both OSCAR-approved and non-OSCAR funded, their programmes and costs.

In terms of OSCAR information, Māori want this information on all relevant websites to be clear and transparent. While information is there, some parents and caregivers say they struggled to navigate their way around the Work and Income website in particular to find out key information about fees and subsidies. They also want staff on 0800 numbers to provide correct information consistent with that posted on the websites.

Māori want to extend OSCAR criteria/Work and Income subsidies

Research participants suggested that children above the age of 13 should continue in out of school services, and that Work and Income subsidies be extended to parents and caregivers with children in this age group. Stopping these subsidies at 13 ignores the reality that parents and caregivers still want their children to participate in structured programmes that are age appropriate and safe.

Many research participants, (parents and caregivers and service providers) considered that older children make a valuable contribution to developing a whānau environment within the programmes. Older children support and encourage younger children through the tuakana/teina relationships and also take on positive leadership responsibility within the programme.

Māori also wanted subsidies to be accessible to all parents and caregivers who have caring responsibilities, regardless of their financial situation and circumstances and irrespective of whether their children attend OSCAR-approved or non-OSCAR funded service providers.





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TE PUNI KŌKIRI'S RESPONSE

Māori want an out of school services sector that provides choice for them whether they access programmes from service providers (either Māori or mainstream) or choose to have their children looked after by whānau. For Māori who do not get their priorities met in whole or in part, the findings of the research identifies opportunities, improvements and key gaps which Māori consider are necessary to accommodate their needs with local service provision as well as at the broader out of school services sector.

In response to the research findings
Te Puni Kōkiri has:

1. **Engage** with relevant agencies and key organisations to help them improve their understanding of Māori priorities to better inform and support their policy advice, programme design, training and development and other related requirements that guide the out of school services sector
2. **Share** the report with research participants in consideration for their contribution so that they can see how their views have been reflected, the findings reached and the next steps
3. **Been keeping** participants, Māori and stakeholders updated and informed about the progress of the action plan and any future reviews of the out of school services sector.



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