Me mahi tahi tātou

*Let us work as one*

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### REALISING MĀORI POTENTIAL

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The framework above identifies three key enablers that are fundamental to Māori achieving Te Ira Tangata (improved life quality) and realising their potential. All our written information has been organised within these three key enablers or Te Ira Tangata.

1. Mātauranga – Building of knowledge and skills. This area acknowledges the importance of knowledge to building confidence and identity, growing skills and talents and generating innovation and creativity. Knowledge and skills are considered as a key enabler of Māori potential as they underpin choice and the power to act to improve life quality.

2. Whakamana – Strengthening of leadership and decision-making.


4. Te Ira Tangata – The quality of life to realise potential.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2006 the Government launched its Effective Interventions (EI) policy package, which was established to identify and support options for reducing offending and the prison population, and thereby reducing the costs and impact of crime on New Zealand society. An important component of EI was the need to enhance justice sector responsiveness to Māori. Under the Effective Interventions Initiatives, Cabinet directed Te Puni Kōkiri and the Ministry of Justice to report to Cabinet Policy Committee with a programme of action relating to Māori [CAB Min (06) 27/3A refers]. As a result Te Puni Kōkiri and the Ministry of Justice developed the Programme of Action for Māori (PoAfM).

This evaluation report looks at an initiative provided by Taonga Education Centre Charitable Trust. It is a programme offering educational opportunities and life skills to young mothers in the Counties Manukau region, Auckland.

The success of a programme can be measured by the positive changes that the young mothers are able to make in their lives.

Taonga Education Centre offers a comprehensive range of services including health and social services, an early childcare education centre and secondary schooling.

The evaluation shows that the role of the Whānau Support Workers is enabling the young mothers to deal with social challenges such as housing, and financial budgeting. By dealing with everyday challenges, they are able to focus more clearly on learning and in turn are exhibiting knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about how to improve their lives.
INTRODUCTION

The aim of this evaluation is to provide detailed information on how the funding provided by Te Puni Kōkiri has assisted Taonga Education Centre. This will be illustrated by:

- the outcomes achieved throughout the duration of the contract; and
- how the initiative achieved the strategic outcomes of the Justice Sector framework and other Ministries’ frameworks.

This report is broken into two sections: Section (1) provides an overview of the Effective Interventions PoAfM six practical initiatives, background on Taonga Education Centre and the proposal for this initiative. Section (2) details the evaluation methodology and findings; a discussion of the findings associated with the framework, and provides a brief conclusion associated with the report.

The framework process has been designed so that agencies can see what outcomes were met as a result of Te Puni Kōkiri funding the six practical initiatives, and in this case Taonga Education Centre.
EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR MĀORI INITIATIVES

The Effective Interventions (EI) Initiatives is a suite of six practical initiatives that were part of the EI Programme of Action for Māori (PoAfM).

Under the Effective Interventions Strategy, Cabinet directed Te Puni Kōkiri and the Ministry of Justice to report to Cabinet Policy Committee with a programme of action relating to Māori. In May 2007 Te Puni Kōkiri and the Ministry of Justice presented the Programme of Action for Māori for consideration. The Programme of Action for Māori aimed to inform policies, programmes and services to reduce offending, re-offending and imprisonment rates among Māori. This included investment in a suite of practical initiatives designed, developed and delivered by Māori, and identifying ongoing sustainable funding options for these initiatives.

On 10 December 2007, the Cabinet Business Committee (CBC):

a. directed Te Puni Kōkiri to continue to fund the six initiatives until 30 June 2008;

b. noted that Te Puni Kōkiri will have completed formative evaluations for each of the six initiatives by 31 May 2008 and the findings will be provided to relevant agencies;

c. directed the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Department of Corrections to identify appropriate funding from existing baseline resources to fund the six initiatives from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010, subject to appropriate monitoring and evaluation results;

The Programme of Action for Māori sought to enhance existing knowledge of the factors that influence Māori offending and imprisonment, and what works to reduce both, as well as build on existing programmes and services delivering criminal justice outcomes for Māori.

Under the Programme of Action for Māori, Te Puni Kōkiri invested in a small number of interventions (up to June 2008), designed, developed and delivered by Māori providers to identify and test facilitators of success for Māori in the justice sector. This was intended to contribute to an initial platform for developing an empirical evidence base about ‘what works’ for Māori, while agencies developed options for sustainable funding streams.

At the direction of the Minister of Māori Affairs, Te Puni Kōkiri had to identify several promising providers whose programmes had the potential to impact on reducing Māori rates of offending, reoffending and imprisonment. As a part of this process, all six initiatives were required to undertake a more detailed case study evaluation at the end of the funding period.

The six providers selected were:

- Te Whakaruruhau Māori Women’s Refuge (Hamilton), which supports women and children affected by domestic violence;
• Hoani Waititi Marae (West Auckland), who are delivering an initiative related to identifying the factors that strengthen whānau affected by the negative effects of Methamphetamine use and abuse;

• Mana Social Services Trust (Rotorua), which delivers a restorative justice programme for children and young people who are at ‘high risk’ of disengaging from the education system;

• Taonga Education Trust (Auckland - Manurewa), which provides alternative education to teenage mothers in Clendon;

• Te Whare Ruruhau o Meri (Auckland – Ōtahuhu), who deliver a programme aimed at reducing re-offending among 20 of Auckland’s top recidivist offenders and their whānau referred by Police; and,

• Consultancy Advocacy and Research Trust (Wellington), who (among other things) work to facilitate access to services for hard to reach whānau.

This report evaluates the initiative relating to Taonga Education Centre, which is based in Auckland.
Taonga Education Centre is a relatively new organisation. It was established on 10 May 2004 and is governed by a Trust. Members of this Trust are largely made up of respected Māori women from the Māori Women’s Welfare League (MWWL). The Trust provides the governance function and supports the management of the organisation, as well as providing additional support for staff and students. The main aim of this organisation is to assist teen mothers to continue with secondary education whilst incorporating practical and theory-based parenting support. The organisation aims to provide their students with the necessary skills to raise healthy, confident children and has a childcare centre onsite.

The main activities of Taonga Education Centre are:

- secondary alternative education provider;
- an early childcare education centre;
- to provide a healthy environment for students and tamariki while they are in the organisation’s care;
- to assist mothers to seek tertiary education; and
- providing after hours supports for teen mothers and their children.

The day to day operation of the centre is managed by a co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is responsible for after hours support for the students as well as managing the staff. There are a number of employees that work in the onsite early childcare centre. Support staff, some of whom are voluntary workers, assist by preparing food and other tasks where required. In the past three years Taonga Education Centre has received funding from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD); Child Youth and Family (CYF); Ministry of Education (MoE); Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK); Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB); Land Transport Safety Authority; Manukau City Council; and philanthropic groups. Te Puni Kōkiri has funded this organisation through the whānau development action research fund in the 2006 financial year for the amount of $30,000. $60,000 of Capacity Building funding in the 2006 financial year supported ‘Project Tautoko’. Capacity Building funding for the amount of $1,100 in the 2003 financial year allowed Taonga Education Centre to gain legal status.

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1 Staff numbers comply with adult: child ratios
2 Unspecified – but can be accessed
3 Whanau health and cultural identity programme.
THE PROPOSAL

The proposal was for funding a programme to raise the level of support and self esteem of student teen mothers. It aimed to do this by helping them to achieve their own personal goals. The funding was to provide capacity to employ two full time whānau support workers. These workers would also create relationships with external support agencies and key stakeholders. The intervention logic was that students who are empowered to assist themselves by seeking appropriate assistance will be psychologically equipped to cope with the demands of being both a mother and a student. Teen pregnancy rates in the Clendon and Manurewa areas were the highest in the Counties Manukau Region. The proposal was aligned with the organisation’s strategic direction which states that the focus of Taonga Education Centre is to ‘provide’. Taonga Education Centre is firmly supported by its Trust. The current staff had demonstrated the necessary qualities to manage the delivery of this programme effectively but Taonga Education Centre identified the need for further support. The staffing levels did not allow the students the essential individual support. The organisation was committed to the success of all their students, which was evident through their academic achievements.

Te Puni Kōkiri officials proposed that the initiative be funded for the duration of one year, with a contract price of $139,040 (GST excl). However, in 2007, Te Puni Kōkiri decided to extend the contract up until the end of the 2007/2008 financial year. This was to allow Government agencies appropriate time to find funding for a contract from 1 July 2008 until 30 June 2010. The total amount funded was $173,800 (GST excl).

Taonga Education Centre’s proposal outlined the following short-term outcomes:

- specific needs, aspirations are identified and outlined in whānau plans;
- aspirations outlined by students are achievable;
- students set goals that are attainable;
- students are able to complement their base level skills learnt in class with additional life skills courses;
- students are able to utilise their skills learnt in the class to enable them to have positive relationships at home;
- whānau are engaged in positive relationships with students;
- students have positive relationships with external support agencies/whānau;
- students feel empowered to make informed decisions about ‘how to improve their lives’ by obtaining appropriate skills; and

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4 To assist students with matters relating to their whānau and provide increased support for students from external support agencies
5 Taonga Education Students were achieving at a higher rate than their peers at the parent mainstream school. (James Cook High)
students’ long term visions are assisted by the implementation of their whānau plans. The intervention logic identified that if students have appropriate skills and relationships, they will be able to access the resources they need to confidently raise children. If they are able to achieve the goals of their whānau plans then they will be better equipped to raise healthy whānau as well as succeeding in their academic goals.

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6 Therefore increasing employment opportunities later in life.
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Data was collected from many sources including the funding proposal, the contracts, the progress reports and other written material produced by Taonga Education Centre.

Interviews were undertaken with the Manager of the service and one of the two Whānau Support Workers. In addition an interview with two of the teen mothers was undertaken. Two officials from Te Puni Kōkiri, one Auckland based and one national office based, provided background information and clarification as required.

The interviews took place on site at Taonga Education Trust in Clendon. Interview questions (attached as Appendix One) were asked of participants where relevant. Much of the information required was able to be obtained from the progress reports provided by Taonga Education Centre.

Analysis of the interview feedback and progress reports was undertaken to identify success factors of the project, limitations and develop an understanding of best practice of a Māori designed, developed and delivered programme.
EVALUATION FINDINGS

SPECIFIC FEEDBACK (AS PER APPENDIX ONE)

Question 1: Brief description of the intervention, including process

This is detailed earlier in the report.

Question 2: Who designed the initiative/came up with the idea?

The Manager and the Trust developed the idea based on identified gaps in their service. In order to provide a comprehensive and holistic service for teenage mothers it was identified that health and social services were required. Through relationships with a local Primary Health Organisation (PHO) and Counties Manukau DHB, the provision of nursing services has been achieved on site. The placement of a student social worker in 2006 encouraged the Trust to explore this provision as a permanent role. Te Puni Kōkiri was approached at this stage.

Providing teenage mothers with support and advocacy for housing and Work and Income benefits and services have been the main areas of focus for the Whānau Support Workers.

Question 3: Who 'owns' the initiative? Who governs it?

As described earlier the Trust holds the overarching governing responsibilities. There appears to be a good relationship between the Trust and management and the Trust supports management to get on with the day to day delivery of services.

The teenage mothers do not feel they ‘own’ the initiative. They very much view it as a service.

Question 4: Why was the initiative developed?

Refer to the response above under question two.

The belief held by Taonga Education Centre is that if the social issues encountered by teenage mothers can be addressed or eliminated, it allows them to focus on learning. While some other teen parenting initiatives in Aotearoa have the added benefit of a social worker service, Taonga Education Centre is the only initiative of its kind with a health team attached to the Centre. The health team and the Whānau Support Worker team are both involved in the delivery of the education programme provided by James Cook High School Teen Parent Unit.

Question 5: Who delivers/delivered the initiative?

Taonga Education Centre is the overarching body through which a collective of services is delivered to teenage mothers. The Effective Interventions contract with Te Puni Kōkiri enabled Taonga to employ two FTE Whānau Support Workers. Both workers are qualified Social Workers.
Question 6: To whom are they accountable (apart from Te Puni Kōkiri) and how?

Taonga Education Centre has a commitment and accountability back to the teenage mothers and their whānau through the Whānau Development Plans. This is where the whānau set goals and needs are identified.

In addition to the contract with Te Puni Kōkiri, Taonga Education Centre has contracts with Ministry of Social Development; Child Youth and Family; Ministry of Education; Counties Manukau DHB; Land Transport Safety Authority; Manukau City Council; and philanthropic groups. These contracts support Taonga Education Centre to provide a comprehensive service to teenage mothers supporting their wider needs.

The health services are provided via contracts with Te Kupenga o Hoturoa, the local PHO. A community health worker is contracted via Counties Manukau DHB. The Early Childhood Centre is funded via Ministry of Education. There is a social worker who works offsite with teens in the community. That position is funded via a Ministry of Social Development contract. There are some other smaller additional contracts.

Question 7: To what extent has the provider delivered the outcomes Te Puni Kōkiri contracted for? Learnings?

The young mothers are exhibiting knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about how to improve their lives. One young woman described coming into the programme with ‘nothing’ and having ‘no options’. As a result of the programme she is now licensed to drive her motor vehicle and understands the importance of vehicle safety to transport her child around town. She successfully developed a budget to ensure she could cope financially with taking on the lease of a home. With the support of the Whānau Support Worker, she has successfully negotiated a lease with a private landlord and feels confident that she can maintain her modern home on her own with her child. This particular young woman will leave the programme shortly as she turns 19 and is undertaking further study at the Manukau Institute of Technology. She has a great support network of peers from the course and intends to remain in contact with a number of them. The young woman is clearly exhibiting the benefits of the life skills course and from being fully engaged in the programmes Taonga Education Centre offers.

This young woman recently demonstrated courage and wisdom in a sensitive situation. Staff were notified by her as she was concerned about a child’s welfare. The child belonged to a peer from the programme. Staff were already on to the situation and initiated CFYS involvement.
Question 8: Describe any additional outcomes produced by this initiative, and the benefits of those outcomes (added value)

A number of additional outcomes were cited by the staff and the teenage mothers. These include:

- lasting, trusting and supportive friendships between staff and whānau and between mothers;
- community support for Taonga Education Centre through donations of food, infant feeding formula, baby and children’s clothing; and
- advocacy for benefit entitlements.

Many of the teenage mothers enjoy and appreciate the friendships they develop with their peers at Taonga Education Centre as they are able to relate to each other as young mothers. A good support network has established amongst the young mothers. Many of the young mothers feel pressured by their ‘outside’ peers who don’t have children, to party and stay out late. A lot of the teenage mothers no longer hang out with those ‘outside’ peers.

Many of the teenage mothers struggle financially as they are ineligible for any welfare support. Some do not have the support of whānau. Any donations to Taonga Education Centre are gratefully accepted and distributed to the teenage mothers.

Many of the girls have experienced discrimination when trying to access benefits from Work and Income NZ. They feel they are being judged because of their situation. Many of the young mothers don’t have the ability to articulate their needs and as a result have not received their correct entitlements. The Whānau Support Workers have in many cases been able to advocate for them to receive their entitlements. This improves the standard of living for them and their whānau.

There is a delicate balance between support and reliance. Many of the teenage mothers turn directly to the Whānau Support Workers when in crisis. Staff described a recent situation where one of the teenage mothers gave birth to a premature baby. There were many challenges as the parents were under the age of 16 years and not able to stay together in the hospital without an adult present. This meant that the grandmother of the baby needed to be present and she had a family to support as well as a job. This resulted in many trips to and from the hospital. The financial burden resulting from the hospital stay was enormous and much support was required.

Question 9: Elaborate the links between initiative outcomes (including those that were not contracted for) & the cross-agency macro outcomes framework (Appendix 2).

At a strategic level Taonga Education Charitable Trust has contractual relationships with many government agencies. The funding of a variety of initiatives contributes to a holistic framework for young women and their children.

On the ground there appear to be very good linkages between agencies who work together to provide the best outcomes for the young mothers and their children. Many of these make significant contributions to achieving whānau ora, young mothers enjoying educational success, more inclusive families and a safer community.
Examples given were:

- CYFS - liaison officers coming to Taonga Education Centre every four weeks;

- Housing NZ - good relationships have developed between Whānau Support Workers and Housing NZ officers enabling young mothers to provide safe and warm homes for their children;

- Community Law Centre – working in collaboration provides assistance to the young mothers with the process of applications to the courts for paternity orders;

- LTSA – getting the young mothers correctly licensed so they are no longer driving illegally;

- WINZ – good relationships have developed between Whānau Support Workers and the local branch of WINZ. However as the young mothers are required to see the WINZ office in the area in which they reside, they have often not been able to establish good relationships which are essential for ensuring entitlements are received;

- MSD – Teen Parent Service Coordinator – works with teen parents in the community;

- Counties Manukau DHB – contractual relationships enable a comprehensive health service on site; and

- MOE – a contractual relationship with James Cook High School Teen Parent Unit enables on site education for the young mothers;

**Question 10: Which outputs/throughputs produced the contracted outcomes, and how?**

*Whānau Support Workers* - The employment of two Whānau Support Workers has been integral in achieving the outcomes Taonga Education Centre sought to achieve with teenage mothers. Both workers are fully accredited social workers and are committed to the kaupapa.

*Whānau Plans* - The development of Whānau Plans has not been achieved successfully. The intention was to get young mothers into the programme and then develop these with their whānau. For a number of reasons this has not been achieved. Dealing with crisis management on a day to day basis has meant the Whānau Support Workers are not available to put time into this important part of the programme. Taonga Education Centre has identified the need to change this and ensure that Whānau Plans are developed prior to enrolment in the programme.

*Life Skills Course* – The Life Skills Course is implemented through the daily education received by James Cook High School Teen Parent Unit. This is reported to be successful.
Question 11: To what extent did the provider deliver the outputs Te Puni Kōkiri contracted for?

All outputs have been delivered except for the appointment of an evaluator\(^7\), and Whānau plans (see Q.10).

Question 12: Output costs (the sum of the actual outputs or throughputs divided by total contract cost)

The general feeling from Taonga Education Centre is that the contract with Te Puni Kōkiri has allowed them to employ more staff to cover their previous capacity issues. As a result they have managed to financially break even. However there are a few points to note:

- there is no provision for overtime within the current contract. Whānau Support Workers are committed to the kaupapa and therefore provide support and advocacy outside of their usual working hours. They state that it’s simply not a 9.00am to 5.00pm job;

- there is no provision for professional or clinical supervision for the Whānau Support Workers. The case work with the young mothers is often complex and is work that the Child, Youth and Families Service would usually deal with. As the Whānau Support Workers are fully accredited Social Workers they pick up this mahi. It is important that Whānau Support Workers have the opportunity for supervision;

- the original proposal didn’t account in the staffing budget for the social workers being fully qualified. They now are. Taonga Education Centre wants to acknowledge this through remuneration; and

- currently one vehicle is shared between the community health worker and the two Whānau Support Workers. Ideally they would like another vehicle.

Taonga Education Centre is clear that they do not wish to provide after hours services, however they acknowledge that part of the role they provide sometimes requires staff to go the extra mile.

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\(^7\) Te Puni Kōkiri Head Office has contracted independent evaluators to evaluate all six practical initiatives.
Question 13: To what extent has or will this initiative ‘work(ed) for Māori’?

From interviews with the staff of Taonga Education Centre and the teenage mothers it is evident that this initiative has been effective for young Māori mothers and their babies. The Whānau Support Workers’ style of delivery is kaupapa Māori. The young mothers report they feel confident and supported in the company of the Whānau Support Workers.

There is an opportunity for Taonga Education Centre to work more closely with whānau in the home environment as some young mothers report challenges when trying to implement skills they have learnt through the Centre in their home environment. The ‘Modern versus Old School’ parenting styles create a struggle between the young mothers and their parents or grandparents at times. There is an opportunity for Taonga to build relationships, share ideas, educate and gain a greater understanding of values by working more closely with the whānau. It is hoped that whānau will always be there and be part of the young mothers’ and their children’s lives, well after their time at Taonga Education Centre is over.

Young mothers and their whānau who are non-Māori report they enjoy the kaupapa Māori service delivery and appreciated the supportive whānau environment.

Question 14: Has/will it work(ed) better than anything else?

The fact that the young mothers are engaged in the programme, come each day and see clear benefits in being there is an indication that this initiative is a success.

Certainly the provision of a holistic service incorporating health and social services delivery is a huge benefit of this initiative. The young women interviewed were proud of their academic achievements and had a vision for their future with plans to go to the Manakau Institute of Technology for further education and training. When enquiry was made into what other young mothers do when they leave, the response was generally further education and training.

Many young mothers have been helped into independent living situations through Taonga Education Centre. This provides a platform for independent growth and personal achievements.

When young mothers leave the Centre they feel sad to have reached that point, but are confident and equipped to move forward with their lives. Many return to keep in touch with staff and discuss how they are getting on with work, study and life.

Taonga Education Centre feels they have been successful in the delivery of this initiative. As they strongly believe in the kaupapa, they are confident they can continue to deliver this programme.
OTHER ISSUES

- Taonga Education Centre advise that they focus on the mother and child. In many cases there is no engagement with the wider whānau as part of the programme. If there are care and protection issues they will of course engage the wider whānau.

- Taonga acknowledge it’s essential for them to develop relationships with the wider whānau pre-enrolment. There would be better understanding from whānau about what is provided for the young mothers and their children through the programme.

- Crisis management often means the broader programme initiatives are put on hold until the crisis is sorted.

- There is no safe house for teenage mothers in Auckland or the rest of New Zealand. Women’s Refuge has an age restriction of 18 years. Taonga Education Centre has been involved in developing a proposal for the establishment of a safe house for teenage mothers, and is keen to see this happen.

- There are to be some organisational changes at Taonga Education Centre in the near future. The Manager of the service, who has been there since its establishment, is stepping down but remaining in a less involved role.

- Supervisors will be in each of the divisions of the Centre and responsible for their teams and reporting from each division. No problems are anticipated with the continued delivery of this initiative. Taonga Education Centre is confident they can continue to deliver a successful programme to young mothers and their children.
CONCLUSION

The contract with Te Puni Kōkiri has enabled the services offered by Taonga Education Centre to be significantly enhanced. The employment of two Whānau Support Workers provides substantial additional support to young women who are in need. Receiving daily support to deal with the additional stressors in life enables them to focus and concentrate on learning.

Taonga Education Centre has a proven ability to deliver well. The commitment of the individuals employed by the Trust contributes to the success. The initiative by Taonga Education Centre has been able to make a positive impact on the lives of young mothers and their children. This initiative has made significant improvements in the area and further funding would provide a greater ability for this initiative to be tested and for other young mothers and their children to benefit.
APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE

- Brief description of the intervention, including process
- Who designed the initiative/came up with the idea?
- Who 'owns' the initiative? Who governs it?
- Why was the initiative developed?
- Who delivers/delivered the initiative?
- To whom are they accountable (apart from TPK) and how?
- To what extent has the provider delivered the outcomes TPK contracted for? Learnings?
- Describe any additional outcomes produced by this initiative, and the benefits of those outcomes (added value)
- Elaborate the links between initiative outcomes (including those that were not contracted for) & this cross-agency outcomes framework
- Which outputs/throughputs produced the contracted outcomes, and how?
- To what extent did the provider deliver the outputs TPK contracted for?
- Output costs (the sum of the actual outputs or throughputs divided by total contract cost)
- To what extent has or will this initiative 'work(ed) for Maori'?
- Has/will it work(ed) better than anything else?
- Stipulate the methods used to elicit the answers to all of these questions?