

# Court in the Act

Issue 77

TE KŌTI TAIOHI O AOTEAROA • THE YOUTH COURT OF NEW ZEALAND

## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>Editorial:</b> community mobilisation (Judge Walker)	1
A response to the last edition's article on communication assistance (Barbara Matthews, Lay Advocate)	3
<b>Youth Justice News</b>	
OCC Media Release: State of Care Report	4
Specialist Foster Care for Children and Young People on Remand (Oranga Tamariki)	5
Interview with Allan Boreham - the new DCE Youth Justice Services (Oranga Tamariki)	6
<b>SPECIAL REPORT:</b> An Introduction to the Youth Offending Risk Assessment Tool (YORST)	8
<b>SPECIAL REPORT:</b> Positive Behaviour For Learning (PB4L) - Restorative Practice in Schools (Ministry of Education)	9
World first tool getting youth on the right PARTH (Massey University School of Social Work)	12
An introduction to Ngā Taiohi, the secure inpatient mental health unit (Ministry of Health)	13
Neurodisability Tendencies Checklist (Dyslexia Foundation)	15
<b>Youth Justice Research and Publications</b>	19

## EDITORIAL: Mobilising New Zealand communities to address the causes of youth offending

### Principal Youth Court Judge John Walker



Young people committing serious crimes, including aggravated robbery and violence, is a matter of serious concern to everyone. Media reports reflect how in some communities such offending is becoming increasingly common. Those who feel targeted, the small business owners in South Auckland, for example, are justifiably fearful and angry, and are looking for ways to stop the offending. The Youth Court intervenes at a very late stage in the process. The aggravated robbery has already occurred and we are trying, in our responses, to ensure that we hold the young person to account while endeavouring to ensure that the offending does not happen again.

The Youth Court and its multi disciplinary team must identify the underlying causes of the offending and put in place interventions to address those causes. Sometimes the offending is so serious that the court must give immediate priority to public safety and interventions need to take place in a custodial setting.

It is clear, however, that the underlying causes have been in the young person's life for many years, sometimes since birth. The underlying causes have been identifiable at a much earlier stage than when offences are committed. The challenge for us all is to identify the existence of risk factors predictive of future offending behaviour and to ensure that early intervention takes place.

This is not just the role of social workers, police, and courts. It requires a whole of community response. And each community has its own social issues, needs and strengths and resources. Communities know their neighbourhoods better than anyone else. Communities need to be assisted to develop

**Court in the Act is a national newsletter dealing with youth justice issues, coordinated by the Research Counsel to the Principal Youth Court Judge.**

**We welcome your suggestions, feedback and contributions. Please email:**

**[Kate.Peirse-O'Byrne@justice.govt.nz](mailto:Kate.Peirse-O'Byrne@justice.govt.nz)**

responses to youth offending that fit individual communities. I have recently become aware of the term “community mobilisation”, which is used to describe the process of a community building local leadership and ownership around an issue, enabling community members to change attitudes and behaviours in ways that work for them. Importantly, “only the active involvement of a broad range of community members will help to create meaningful change around complex ‘wicked’ problems” such as serious youth offending (*see reference below*).

I see the Youth Court as having an important role in community mobilisation. Judges are exposed to the life stories of the young offenders who come before the court. They see the patterns, they see the impact of trauma, exposure to family violence, head injury, neurodisabilities. Judges see the difference that engagement in education can make, the difference that a job can make in the lives of young people. Judges see the opportunities that have existed for intervention. Judges can share this experience in engaging with communities served by the courts.

In my time at the Porirua District Court, the adult jurisdiction, I saw how the Court could move from one that was working in isolation and was not seen as part of the community to a court which was highly connected with its community and gathered the support and resources of the community to operate in a solution-focused way. It was only by creating connections with the many excellent operators in the community, who had previously been distanced from the Court process, that the Court began to be part of the community. This reflected what happens as a matter of course in our Youth Courts where the coming together of social workers, education officers, youth forensic experts, youth workers, and the regular court players – such as youth advocates, Police Youth Aid and judges – makes for a much more powerful team than the

court ever could working in isolation. In my view the Youth Court can be even more effective when it engages with the wider community and assists the community in formulating solutions and addressing the causes of offending before the young person commits a crime in the first place.

Many of the crimes being committed are appalling. When we look at the circumstances of the young people who commit those crimes, they too are very sobering. The YORST, a world-leading youth risk assessment tool designed and implemented by New Zealand Police Youth Aid, has shown that around 80% of children and young people who offend have experienced family violence (either directly or indirectly). Almost 50% of young people who offend are not enrolled, excluded, suspended or simply not attending school. These are complex problems bred of complex circumstances, and they are not easy to fix. They are also not an “excuse” for offending. However, they indicate the sorts of circumstances that lead to offending, and therefore the issues communities need to target in order to ensure their children grow up to be healthy, contributing members of the community.

I am of the firm belief that the solutions to these problems lie within local communities. However, communities cannot respond if they are not resourced; they need to be supported in their efforts to address some of the most complex issues we face in society. There needs to be encouragement for communities to come together.

Community mobilisation is not a quick-fix solution to the problem of youth offending but is a long term strategy. Unless the underlying causes of offending are effectively addressed then young offenders will continue to be made, more victims will be created, and the cycle of offending will continue, at great cost. ■

Community mobilisation is...	Community mobilisation is not...
Systematic and long-term programming	Ad hoc, one-off activities in short-term projects
Fostering alternative social norms	Transferring information and facts
Complex and multifaceted	A singular strategy
A struggle for social justice	A technical quick-fix
About fostering activism	About implementing activities or training
Involving a critical mass of individuals, groups and institutions	Possible with few individuals or groups
Stimulating critical thinking	Transmitting simple messages
Holistic and inclusive	Limited to specific individuals or groups
Benefits-based	Punitive
Focused on core drivers	Focused on manifestations of violence
Iterative and organic	Linear and predictable
Community-led	Organisation and expert focused

Source: Sheryl Hann and Cristy Trewartha *Creating Change: Mobilising New Zealand Communities to Prevent Family Violence* (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, Auckland, May 2015)

# SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT READING... Barbara Matthews, lay advocate, responds to Mark Stephenson's article on communication assistance.

Barbara Matthews | Lay Advocate

I was very interested in the article by Mark Stephenson in the latest CIA (*about communication assistance for young people going through the youth justice process*).

There has been a lot of emphasis, recently, on the developing brain and this is adding to the body of research available to those working with youth. This has generated a lot of interest. What may be less known about is the huge body of language research available, perhaps currently not given attention in relation to Youth Justice.

I have observed the language use of youth and their families in my role as a Lay Advocate in the Youth Justice jurisdiction. I have observed the barriers this presents to those working with youth and their whānau.

Misunderstandings by all involved parties occur often and are challenging to address. At the very least, limited English, te Reo, Samoan or other first languages may leave the youth unable to self advocate or represent themselves correctly in time.

When I did my Masters degree in Applied Linguistics an area we examined was the effects of restricted codes of language on language populations. One area examined in depth was the restricted code of Gullah speakers. Gullah is a Creole originating in Africa and spoken by speech populations who settled off the coast of Florida. Gullah speakers use the present tense and the present continuous almost exclusively. The Gullah



Young boy reading. Image from [www.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.natlib.govt.nz).

studies found that Gullah speakers entering High School on the USA Mainland after leaving their islands of origin were not able to access much of the curriculum. To access and develop understanding of science at high school level more than the use of the present tense is required.

Language use is not just about vocabulary, important as vocabulary is. What is needed for science is the use of the conditional to hypothesise and predict. To study history one needs the past and the past perfect tenses. What the research seemed to be saying was that the sole use of the present and present continuous tenses may severely limit cognitive development.

If young people speak very limited forms of their mother tongue they do not develop cognitively in some respects. They therefore cannot perhaps predict the implications and results of their actions or regret that those actions have even occurred. We

do see and it is often commented on that there is a lack of understanding, remorse or empathy exhibited by some young people in the YJ jurisdiction. Sometimes this is attributable to the effects of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. If there are other contributing causes, such as language limitation, this should surely be

examined. Putting interventions in place early is critical.

What is happening in my experience of the Youth Court is that often programmes are repeatedly tried and continued for long periods with no obvious success. New social workers may be appointed and the same programmes set in place beginning a repetitive cycle. Of course no one in Youth Justice can make radical transformations of already language-limited youth, but initiatives to support language acquisition and its positive implementation into therapeutic programmes should be commended and encouraged. This is not about vocabulary and grammar (which have probably been heartily resisted at school) but empowerment through language - probably most effectively through reading. Alan Duff, Kim Workman, the late Peter Williams and Mike Williams have all shown us the rehabilitative power of reading and print literacy in their respective work in schools and prisons.

Many restorative and rehabilitative programmes for youth focus on the physical and to a minor extent

**We see a lack of understanding, remorse or empathy in some young people in the YJ system... If there are contributing causes such as language limitation this should surely be examined.**

the arts. Physical activities are very beneficial to many adolescents enabling the channelling of their energies through the motivation provided by sports, martial and cultural arts and other activities. However, how can we add to this a language component? Many youth have been ‘turned off’ at school for a range of complex reasons so getting them into books is a real challenge.

This is not just about improved reading ability. Research suggests that developing literacy helps a student to navigate the world in broader terms. Reading is often regarded as a gateway, which it is, but the Gullah studies suggest it is far more than this: it also enhances cognitive ability. If literacy programmes were part of an FGC plan, such as being read to in Maori, Samoan, English, this could send the message ‘you are not being punished here, you are being given something that is your birthright’. Young children like being read to, many children have missed out on this experience. Reading to younger children has been successful in schools where limited ability older students have read to younger or less able readers. Is it inappropriate to have being read to as a compulsory part of an FGC in some cases? There may well be other ways of addressing this that are suitable for young people. An interesting study was done some years ago of migrant Kmer mothers in Dunedin learning to read by reading to their preschool children. This is just not about reading literacy and fluency - it is its connection with cognition that is significant. ■

## YOUTH JUSTICE NEWS

### OCC MEDIA RELEASE:

## Time to start moving on outdated children’s residences

Office of the Children’s Commissioner | 15  
May 2017

The conditions for children in many of New Zealand’s secure residences are prison-like, dated and bleak, and it’s time to move on better alternatives, Children’s Commissioner Andrew Becroft says.

A new report from the Office of the Children’s Commissioner shows the care of young people in



Oranga Tamariki residences is improving but fundamental changes are needed.

Judge Becroft says *State of Care: A focus on Oranga Tamariki’s secure residences* shows the standard of care and conditions across the country’s five care and protection and four youth justice residences is far too variable.

“There’s no doubt staff are trying their best but the truth is that the children and young people in care and protection residences have committed no crimes and they should not be locked up in large institutions which are unsuitable settings for young people’s needs.

“The report shows the overall performance of both care and protection and youth justice residences is middling and there’s room for significant improvement. There are some pockets of excellent practice but also sub-standard practice.”

The report covers July 2016 until March 2017 and includes monitoring of seven of the nine Oranga Tamariki residences with a total of 174 beds. It includes monitoring of the treatment of young people, protection, material conditions, medical services, activities, personnel, and responsiveness to young Māori, Judge Becroft says.

“These are our children and young people with the most complex behaviours. Bringing them together in

secure institutions, and in the case of the youth justice residences effectively in prisons, makes positive interventions difficult. While I have no doubt that Oranga Tamariki wants to do its best by these young people, I hope this report will be a platform for significant change. It should be the catalyst for developing new models.

“We need to have most of these young people securely supervised. However their lives are not set in stone and the current model and conditions don’t give them the best chance of becoming productive adults as the mothers and fathers of tomorrow. Most would be much better off in small, community-based centres with proper therapeutic supervision and programmes.”

The report found no evidence of systemic abuse in the residences. “However, given the bullying and all-too-common undercurrent of violence, we need more funding to visit each of these residences more often.”

The Office of the Children’s Commissioner monitors the residences under the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture, and the Children’s Commissioner Act 2003. ■

# INNOVATION IN THE SECTOR: Specialist Foster Care for Children and Young People on Remand

## Report from Oranga Tamariki

Reducing custodial remands and providing safe alternatives to custodial remand is one of the key early enhancement priorities of Oranga Tamariki through the Investing in Children (IIC) programme. Along with developing additional remand options through the expansion of small group remand homes, we’re also designing a specialist foster care option for remand.

These short term specialist foster care placements will offer a direct alternative to a custodial placement within a youth justice residence. They’ll provide an experience of safe care, nurturing relationships, boundaries and structured caregiving, while children and young people await a Youth Court resolution.

Including the voices of those involved in the youth justice sector is an important step in the design of specialist foster care for remand. This includes



Images from the Oranga Tamariki consultation process regarding specialist foster care for children and young people on remand.

experts, practitioners, caregivers, whānau and importantly young people in its design, so that we understand how we can meet the needs of young people while also managing the safety of the community.

In partnership with Creative Learning Scheme and Kingslea School, we involved 114 young people at five of our residences, in a project to get their ideas about what specialist foster care might look like. This included identifying the attributes of caregivers, what the physical environment would look like and what support is needed pre, during and post placement.

The young people presented their design work using a wide variety of mediums to tell their story, including PowerPoint presentations, displays, posters and models of their ideal foster care home (see previous page). Without exception, young people were resoundingly honest, frank and insightful throughout this process.

Key themes:

Their ideas generated five strong themes that will be central to the design:

- **Future** - Young people want to change from their current path towards one that provided a better future. They were forthcoming about their aspirations: to continue studying, enter training or employment. They need support to achieve these goals and looked toward Oranga Tamariki and their caregivers to provide this. They told us that they want strong role models who could connect with them and provide structure, as well as being empathetic and understanding.
- **Stability** - Being able to have structure and routine gives a sense of grounding, and enables involvement with schools and communities.
- **Connection** - Young people want a connection with their caregivers and community and have mixed views regarding the extent of involvement and connection between their caregiver and their whānau. Connection with their culture is critical and young people feel this can help give them a sense of stability.
- **Trust** - Young people want honest relationships with caregivers they can trust.
- **Just being a young person** - Overall, young people want to be recognised as a young person first and foremost. They want to be listened to; they want access to things like activities, structure

to their day and they want to engage in sport and be part of the community.

Next steps:

We will complete our engagement with whānau, caregivers, practitioners and experts and the insights from this engagement will help us develop the operating model for specialist foster care for remand.

This model, along with training packages, will then be tested and piloted. ■

---

## PEOPLE IN THE SECTOR: Interview with Allan Boreham - the new Deputy Chief Executive, Youth Justice Services at Oranga Tamariki

**From Oranga Tamariki:** Allan Boreham shares his insights into how Youth Justice is changing within the Ministry, and how it will contribute to the wider sector.



**Allan Boreham, former Assistant Police Commissioner, is now the Deputy Chief Executive Youth Justice Services (OT)**

When the opportunity arose to be a part of New Zealand's newest public service agency, Allan says he knew it was something he wanted to be involved in. After 30 years with Police, including in the role of Assistant Commissioner, Allan says "it was a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform how we do our business and improve outcomes for young people."

Within the vision and purpose of the Ministry, Allan says he clearly sees the task ahead for Youth Justice.

"Our mission is that all young people will be heard and understood; that we will protect them as we hold them to account; that we will connect them to their community; and that we will support them to be independently successful," he says.

Allan has not previously specialised in youth justice, and says he has been well supported since coming

into the role. “The agency is full of really good experience, which has been impressive,” he says.

“I’m learning a lot of new technical knowledge I didn’t need before, and I’m really enjoying that aspect.

“I’m also seeing some similarities with Police, in that we’re public facing and widespread and dispersed across the country.

“We’re a people business, which means we need to engage all New Zealanders, and we’ll only be as good as the community that supports us to succeed.”

Looking ahead, the Ministry will be establishing a number of initiatives to make a difference in the lives of youth offenders.

One currently being explored is increasing the continuum of options for dealing with young offenders at the serious end, “those that are normally having to be remanded in Police cells or in our residences,” says Allan.

“Many end up in residences due to a lack of confidence that the Ministry can provide living arrangements where young people will adhere to their bail conditions.”

Initiatives currently underway include providing safe alternatives to custody involves the expansion of smaller group remand homes and developing specialist foster care options for remand (see the specialist foster care for remand article for more detail).

“There’s already work underway across the country to get these smaller specialist group homes to meet the needs of youth offenders in Dunedin, in Palmerston North, in Whangarei and hopefully in the Waikato in the next few months,” says Allan.

“Working with the communities around the development of these homes is really important, and in most cases, they want specialist accommodation options to be localised.

“When a young person is sent to one of our four youth justice residences, they’re often disconnected

from whatever support they might have, even if it might come from a struggling family, and then clustered with young people with similar challenges.

“Getting the right proportionate response is what’s needed, and that’s about having more options.”

The second part of protecting them while holding them account involves developing a risk based tool for assessing the trauma the young offender has experienced and how the remand options will impact them. This information will then be provide to the Judge to help inform their decisions.

“There’s evidence that many young people who’ve offending have experienced trauma in their upbringing, and the more additional trauma you add to them, the harder it will be to steer them away from negative outcomes,” says Allan.

The work on this tool has been supported by Prof. Ian Lambie, alongside Dr. Karmyn Billing and Dr. Julia Ioane and in consultation with Hinemoa Elder.

“We also know Oranga Tamariki on its own will not prevent youth offending, so we’re looking at the system’s approach we should be taking longer term,” says Allan.

“From my early observations, I think youth justice have already done that quite well. The Youth Crime Action Plan and the joined up approach with Police, Courts, Education and Health has seen a halving of the youth apprehensions over the past few years.

“However, every year some 20,000 young people are being apprehended and there is some 2,000 young people going through Youth Court and there still is some 400 young people going through our custodial facilities.

“So we’ve still got a significant way to go. And we’ll only get there by working together, within a system that allows us to do this effectively, backed by whānau and communities that are there to support these kids.” ■

**“When a young person is sent to one of our four youth justice residences, they’re often disconnected from whatever support they might have, even if it might come from a struggling family, and then clustered with young people with similar challenges.” - Allan Boreham**

## **SPECIAL REPORT : New Zealand's Youth Offending Risk Assessment Tool (YORST) – competes with the best**

Youth Aid's updated Youth Offending Risk Assessment Tool, otherwise known as YORST, has been evaluated and found to predict risk of re-offending as well as, or better than the other established, more comprehensive youth risk assessment tools used around the world.

New Zealand Police began work to develop a risk screening tool in 2003, resulting in the development and piloting of the YORST in 2007. The YORST was rolled out nationally in July 2009 following a favourable evaluation of the pilot, and a programme of research was initiated in 2009 to evaluate the performance of YORST.

Following promising results from phase I and II, the YORST was revised to maximise its predictive accuracy and improve its usability. This final phase of research subjected the now finalised YORST (version 2) to a battery of standard psychometric tests.

A range of indicators suggest that revisions made to the YORST(v2) have further enhanced the tool's predictive accuracy. The YORST(v2) produces accurate risk assessments that now compare even more favourably to other well established more comprehensive youth risk assessment tools.

Key findings included:

- YORST(v2) accurately predicted 71% of those young offenders who were re-apprehended within 12 months, and 78% of those that were re-apprehended within 24 months
- young offenders with higher YORST(v2) risk scores offended at a greater rate and sooner than those with lower scores,
- the tool performed well across all demographic sub-groups. The current tool now performs well for both male and female young offenders, those aged from 10 years

through to 16 years, and for all major ethnic groups in New Zealand including European, Māori and Pacific. This was an important improvement on the original YORST(v1).

Reliable, evidence-based risk assessment tools are an essential component of work to ensure effective case management of the most at risk young offenders. This contributes to the confidence that can be placed in the integrity of the tool and its use by New Zealand Police.

The YORST consists of 14 questions which enquire about the prevalence of risk factors in the child or young person's life, including the nature of the offending, peers, education/employment, family violence, and drug and alcohol use. Five questions are now completed automatically using information Police already has at its disposal. The other nine questions are answered in consultation with the young person's school and Oranga Tamariki.

The "mini YORST", which was also favourably evaluated, is a shortened version of three questions to help officers conduct a quick, objective risk assessment on the front line.

Police National Youth Manager Inspector Ross Lienert says that the challenge is in using the YORST, and the mini-YORST, more consistently and rigorously. Current policy is that

the YORST be used at the second apprehension of a child and for every young person referred for FGC. Due to the positive results of the evaluation it is intended that the YORST will be used for a wider group of children and young persons in future.

The information can be used to determine what pathway Police should take, but the information would also be invaluable at Family Group Conferences and in the Youth Court, in determining the risk factors that need addressing.

"It's about getting the right intervention at the right time, and this is part of the toolkit," says Inspector Lienert. ■

SEE: Dr Elaine Mossman *Research to validate the New Zealand Police Youth Offending Risk Screening Tool (YORST) – Phase III* (24 May 2016)

<http://thehub.superu.govt.nz/publication/research-validate-new-zealand-police-youth-offending-risk-screening-tool-yorst-%E2%80%93-phase>

## SPECIAL REPORT

# Using Restorative Practice in Schools: “Positive Behaviour For Learning” (PB4L)

### Ministry of Education

In 2009, sector representatives came together to hold a summit because of concerns about escalating problems with student behaviour. The Taumata Whanonga behaviour summit agreed on a new, more positive approach to managing behaviour in schools, an approach now known as Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L).

Restorative practice is part of that approach, and comes out of a strong research and evidence base.

Now eight years on, 174 schools are involved in the Ministry’s restorative practice initiative having received or due to receive training from the Ministry’s partner, Waikato University’s Institute of Professional Learning.

New Zealand schools have been using restorative practice approaches in varying forms since family group conferences were introduced in 1989 as part of the Children, Young Persons and Families Act. Restorative practice in its initial stages was a response to the huge increase in the numbers of students who were being suspended or excluded from schools and, in particular, to the large ethnic disparity in suspension rates across a range of deciles.

In 2001, the Ministry of Education launched the Student Engagement Initiative to encourage schools to find ways to reduce suspensions. The PB4L action plan was then developed in 2009 at the Taumata Whanonga behaviour summit in response to concerns about student behaviour. The plan included various programmes and practice based initiatives for whānau, staff, and schools to encourage pro-social behaviour in all students in New Zealand schools.

““Restorative practice allows students to tell their stories – we’re allowing them the dignity of hearing what they have to say and respecting the unique individuality of everyone” . - Murray Lucas, Principal of Tawa College

PB4L is built on the foundation that positive behaviour can be learnt and that environments can be changed to improve behaviour and support effective teaching and learning. It also reflects the belief that schools play a major role in creating safe, healthy societies.

## Restorative practice – the basics

The PB4L Restorative Practice model encourages and supports schools to analyse their existing values and practice and evaluate how effective their current strategies are for building and managing relationships and resolving differences and conflict. It then offers school staff a set of best practice tools and techniques to support a consistent and sustainable approach to managing positive, respectful relationships within the school and for restoring relationships when things go wrong.

Four principles underpin the model:

- Positive interpersonal relationships are a major influence on behaviour.
- A culture of care supports the mana of all individuals in the school community.
- Cultural responsiveness is key to creating learning communities of mutual respect and inclusion.
- A restorative approach leads to individuals taking responsibility for their behaviour.

The model has three interrelated components: Restorative Essentials; Restorative Circles;

Restorative Conferences. Restorative Essentials is about the everyday, informal actions that emphasise relationships, respect, empathy, social responsibility and self-regulation.

**Restorative Essentials** supports teachers and adults within the school community to approach problems in a restorative way and equip staff

with the skills needed to de-escalate situations successfully, enabling all staff to ‘keep the small things small’. Restorative Conversations use a scripted set of questions to explore a problem in a respectful way. Using a script reduces the risk of the conversation wandering off track.

**Restorative Circles** support all staff and students to develop and manage relationships and create opportunities for effective teaching and learning time. They are a semi-formal practice requiring a degree of preparation. They provide teachers with a range of processes to build relationships with and between all people in a school community, maintain those relationships, and enhance positive communication. Restorative Circles also provide learning opportunities and strategies to repair relationships and support ongoing positive connections. They operate on a continuum from low-level community building and promotion of mutual understanding all the way to healing or conflict resolution circles that can be used to repair serious situations among people.

**Restorative Conferences:** There are three types of Restorative Conferences in PB4L Restorative Practice: Mini Conferences, Classroom Conferences and Formal Restorative Conferences. Although they differ in formality, numbers participating and the severity of the related incident, all three types require preparation, participation and follow up, and all three use Restorative Scripts and fair process.

Restorative Conferencing is a process that provides schools with ways to repair harm and restore relationships. It uses the stories of those involved in an incident and the people close to it – such as students, staff and whānau – to:

- explore what has happened and who has been affected
- hold those who have caused harm accountable for their actions
- provide support to those who have been harmed, and others involved.

Conferencing is most often used by a school's senior leadership, syndicate leaders, heads of department, and pastoral staff.

## **Restorative practice is all about relationships**

At heart, restorative practice is a relational approach to school life grounded in beliefs about equality, dignity, mana and the potential of all people.

The PB4L Restorative Practice model focuses on building and maintaining positive, respectful relationships across the school community and offers school staff best practice tools and techniques

**“The critical basis is building a culture where you work with people and don’t do things to them. It’s about a mana-enhancing approach where you are building people up, not chopping them down.”** Andy Fraser, Otaki College Principal

to restore relationships when things go wrong. By building and maintaining positive, respectful relationships within a school, staff to staff, staff to student and student to student, issues are more easily managed.

Andy Fraser, Otaki College Principal, knows that this relational approach is the key to the success of restorative practice. Otaki College is one of 24 secondary schools that piloted the Ministry's approach to restorative practice in 2013/14 across the North Island and came on board already grounded in an understanding of the approach.

Andy describes a watershed moment during his time as deputy principal at Porirua College when dealing with exclusions. The principal reminded him that his job was ‘to keep kids in schools, not to keep them out’. This led him to think about what being a restorative school really meant.

“To be a restorative school means having a culture based on really strong relationships – between students and students, teachers and students, the school and whānau and community. The critical basis is building a culture where you work with people and don’t do things to them. It’s about a mana-enhancing approach where you are building people up, not chopping them down.”

This emphasis on positive and respectful relationships that is at the heart of restorative practice is echoed by Murray Lucas, Tawa College Principal, another of the pilot schools. Not only is the school a calmer learning environment with restorative practice in place that benefits everyone, but also more students are staying at school.

“Students learn that it’s OK to fail the first time – you can make a bad decision, learn from it, move on and still have a place at the school. And there’s an awareness that teachers and even principals sometimes get it wrong – we all have some vulnerability we need to show.”

## Restoring relationships, repairing harm

Internationally, restorative practice has its origins in restorative justice, a formalised, relational response to offending and victimisation in the criminal justice system. Restorative justice is a movement away from a traditional retributive focus (on wrongdoing and punishment) towards a restorative approach that seeks to repair the harm caused by crime through coordinated conferencing. Processes such as family group conferences came about as an alternative response to the exponential increase in the number of people being imprisoned for recidivist offending.

For people used to a traditional retributive focus, there can be a misunderstanding that restorative practice approaches offer an easy way out. However, in restorative practice, the most serious behavioural incidents are dealt with through holding a formal restorative conference. In this setting, the young person comes face to face with the person who has been harmed, and sometimes this will be in the presence of the police as well.

Naenae College began using restorative practice in 2008 as one of a number of approaches to deal with what had become an unsafe environment. The principal, John Russell, wanted to change the whole school culture rather than just deal with the consequences of problem behaviour.

His response to the view that restorative practice offers an easy way out is that “Most kids find conferences a much harder path because it requires taking ownership of your behaviour and impact on others and requiring changing at a deeper level.” More importantly, it reduces the potential for issues to reoccur – “You can have a punitive disciplinary system but if you leave things unresolved, the problem will come back”.

## What it means for youth justice

For Andy Fraser, creating and nurturing restorative practice’s ‘culture of care’ means school attendance and retention rates are up. In simple terms, kids aren’t out running around on Otaki’s streets – they are in school.

It’s a view echoed by John Russell who recognises that restorative practice enables a deep and lasting change for young people, particularly boys. “The reality is that a lot of kids have lived their lives in a

**“Most kids find conferences a much harder path because it requires taking ownership of your behaviour and impact on others and requiring changing at a deeper level.” John Russell, Naenae College Principal**

fight/flight mode and in a fear/punishment model. We teach them to move beyond that into empathy to working under a social control model – you minimise rules, you just talk what behaviour should look like all the time and encourage it”.

## Where to next for PB4L

The Ministry has partnered with Martin Jenkins and Associates to evaluate PB4L Restorative Practice. The evaluation covers schools that joined the initiative in 2015 and finishes in 2018 but we already know from the pilot schools that restorative practice makes a difference.

Those schools reported positive outcomes such as:

- a calmer school environment, with improved classroom behaviour and more time for teaching
- improved engagement and learning for students in the classroom
- growth in relational and problem-solving skills across the whole school community, for both adults and students
- improvements in attitudes and relationships across the whole school community
- a consistent best-practice approach that aligns with the school’s shared values.

## Where to find out more

Schools that want to know more about how to introduce Restorative Practice can download Books 1-3 of the PB4L Restorative Practice Kete from the Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI) website: [www.tki.org.nz](http://www.tki.org.nz). The kete provides schools with tools and resources to support them to implement the PB4L Restorative Practice model. Book 4 of the kete deals with Restorative Conferences and at present is only available to schools that have received formal training in the PB4L Restorative Practice model. Schools can contact the Ministry of Education through the TKI website for further information about training opportunities. ■

# World first tool getting youth on the right PARTH

## Massey University School of Social Work

A new online tool for people working with vulnerable youth, based on research and expertise from Massey University's School of Social Work, was launched in Auckland in March this year.

The Massey University PARTH model is a set of practice orientations identified in the Youth Transitions project, carried out by Professor Robyn Munford and Professor Jackie Sanders.

The online module has been developed by Massey in partnership with Youthline. It is designed to guide interactions with young people on immediate issues, as well as their long-term goals. If successful, it is hoped the module will be rolled out nationwide, and potentially around the world.

Professor Sanders says it focuses on how practitioners work with young people. "It's youth centered, meaning the young people are at the centre of decision making. The interventions build on the resources and capacities they bring to the support relationship. It helps workers put into practice the skills needed to listen and act in ways that meet a young person's needs."

The PARTH model focuses on five principles key to supporting youth:

P – Passion, Perseverance, Persistence, Perspective

A – Adaptability, Agility, Agency, Action-oriented

R – Relationships, Respect, Reciprocity, Relevant, Responsive

T – Time, Trust, Transparency, Thresholds, Transitions

H – Honesty, Humility, Hopeful-orientation

Professor Munford says practitioners using the model say they are able to make better decisions about how to support vulnerable youth with young people more likely to feel their support is relevant and meaningful. This leads to youth being more engaged in interventions and to better outcomes, she says.

**Practitioners using the model say they are able to make better decisions about how to support vulnerable youth.**

"Leaving school, furthering your education, joining the workforce, establishing an independent base and making identity and lifestyle choices are all part of growing up, yet a significant proportion of young New Zealanders between the ages of 13 and 17 find they have insufficient support to help them to successfully make these changes," Professor Munford says.

"Until now, there has been no clear evidence of how education, health, welfare, youth justice and community services can best support young people

to move forward with their lives, or why they fall through the cracks at this critical stage. Our 10-year longitudinal study seeks to investigate the linkages and make major contributions to policy and practice," she says.

### Hearing youth and youth workers

Pivotal to the research are the voices of young people receiving care from multiple social services. A total of 593 young people have participated in three annual surveys, and detailed case studies on 107 of these youth are underway. Professor Sanders says these voices provide powerful testimony about keeping them engaged, even when the circumstances of their lives and their sometimes challenging behaviours make this difficult. This work led to the development of the PARTH model, now developed into a training tool for youth workers such as those at Youthline.

The research also builds on and significantly extends an international study led by Professor Michael Ungar of Dalhousie University in Canada. Professor



Professors Jackie Sanders and Robyn Munford

Ungar says because the New Zealand team collected a huge amount of data, over multiple points of time with the same young people, there is now a two-country data set which we can use to understand children's changing patterns of service use and resilience over time.

"This is extremely valuable, as this is the first study in the world like it. We are already in the process of developing new theories to explain resilience in ways never before discussed," Professor Ungar says. "Even better, the New Zealand data captured a national sample of young people. That has meant that even on its own, it has provided valuable insights into how children in one country can follow very different pathways to resilience."

The New Zealand research team also helped Professor Ungar develop several of the qualitative methodologies used in other studies around the world. "Their research group is among the best there is when working with vulnerable young people," he says.

### Partnering with Youthline

Youthline PARTH project lead Robyn Lentell says creating the module has been a very rewarding and creative journey. "In the beginning I read all of Professor Munford and Sanders' journal publications and spent weeks analysing what content would be the most important to convey to youth workers and professionals working with young people. After a few edits and rewrites I brought Youthline's youth workers on board. They were the ones who completely brought the content to life by providing practical examples of where they have used and applied the findings."

Youthline chief executive Stephen Bell says, "Massey University is to be commended for having the foresight to form community partnerships in the development of the PARTH model. Youthline is proud to be a part of the solution. Good intentions alone are not good enough. This longitudinal research will equip those working with young people to effectively change lives.

"Engagement is the key to building an environment where young people reach their potential. A skilled workforce providing consistent and meaningful contact with young people can change their life trajectory with flow on benefits for their families and communities," he says. ■

For more information on Professor Munford and Professor Sander's work, see XXX

## An Introduction to Ngā Taiohi - the National Youth Forensic Mental Health Inpatient Unit

Ministry of Health



A view of Ngā Taiohi

Nga Taiohi (meaning "our youth"), the national secure youth forensic mental health inpatient unit, was opened in April 2016. The unit is part of the continuum of youth forensic mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services for children and young people who are involved with the Youth Justice system and who have mental health (or mental health and AOD) problems. Most youth forensic services are community based and provide a range of screening, assessment and treatment services in youth courts, youth justice residences and community settings nationwide. It is important to provide interventions in the least intrusive way and as close to home as possible, consistent with maintaining community safety. Effective community youth forensic services reduce the need for inpatient interventions.

Each year a small number of young people in the youth justice system with severe and acute mental health needs will require admission to Nga Taiohi. Such admissions will be arranged by the local community youth forensic service. Youth requiring admission to the unit will meet criteria for admission under the provisions of the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992.

In order to manage and coordinate admissions to and discharges from Nga Taiohi, a 'virtual team' has been established comprising a representative from each of the five regional youth forensic teams and the unit. This team will prioritise admissions if there are capacity issues at Nga Taiohi, arrange admissions to alternative inpatient facilities if required and

coordinate transport arrangements.

On rare occasions, it is anticipated that the youth forensic court liaison clinician may identify a young person who requires an immediate inpatient admission on the day of their court appearance. The court liaison clinician will provide the court with advice about the admission options and arrange for the young person to be assessed by a psychiatrist and admitted under the MH(CAT) Act. It will not be necessary for the court to make a separate order to facilitate the admission.

To date most admissions to Nga Taiohi have involved transfers from youth justice residences with a lesser number from youth units at Corrections facilities. There have been no admissions required for young people identified prior to their court appearance.

### **Where is the Nga Taiohi Youth Forensic Unit located?**

It is situated at the back of Kenepuru Hospital and is co-located with the existing youth facilities Rangatahi (acute admission unit), and Hikitia Te Wairua (youth intellectual disability secure services). The co-location of these services will provide the best clinical, operational and developmental synergy for a “Centre of Excellence”.

### **Why do we need a Youth Forensic Service?**

Over recent years there has been a growing trend in the presentation of young people with underlying mental health disorders, who present to the police or courts. Often these disorders have been undiagnosed and untreated by the time rangatahi have come into conflict with the law. The admission of the rangatahi to this service will enable us to identify and treat the underlying mental health and addiction issues prior to their discharge from the unit.

### **Who will be admitted to Nga Taiohi?**

Young people/rangatahi who are charged with/or guilty of an offence; where there is a likely or confirmed diagnosis of a mental illness as defined by the ICD10; who are aged between 13 and their 18th birthday, who are in CYF Youth Justice residences or Prison Youth Units, or where the court requires a specific level of assessment. Admission will be under the Mental Health Act.

### **What areas will rangatahi be admitted from, and how will admissions be arranged?**

This is a national service and admission will be from around the country. A representative from each of the five Regional Youth Forensic Services and a resource coordinator who is based on the unit will comprise Mauri-Tu, a virtual team. Mauri-Tu will meet regularly via web based conferencing to discuss and coordinate referrals, admissions as well as discharges from the unit.

### **How many beds are available?**

Nga Taiohi is a 10 bed unit: two admission/assessment beds, two female beds, and six male beds. Once the rangatahi are assessed and become more settled they will be transitioned from the admission/assessment area to the main area.

### **How many staff do we have?**

We have a total of 43 staff:

- Registered Nurses
- Support Workers
- Psychologist
- Resource Coordinators
- Occupational Therapist
- Occupational Therapy Assistant
- Alcohol & Drug Clinician
- Maori Clinician
- Psychiatrist
- Cultural Programme Assistants (Pasifika and Maori)
- There is also a Team Leader, an Administrator and a Clinical Nurse Specialist.

### **What programmes or treatment will be offered to the clients?**

Our philosophy or model of care is based on the Te Whare Tapa Wha model which is a holistic Maori model of health. We are a bicultural unit and have the principles of Te Whare Tapa Wha embedded in our practice. Staff are trained to utilize a Trauma Informed Care approach in delivering care and treatment to the rangatahi. The service provides mental health assessment and treatment focusing on programmes. Programmes include cultural, psychological, occupational, recreational groups and many others. Also provided are assessment and treatment programmes and groups for addiction issues. ■

# NEURODISABILITY TENDENCIES CHECKLIST

One in four New Zealanders is limited by a physical, sensory, learning, mental health or other impairment (1). Neurodisabilities, which are often invisible at first glance, range from learning differences such as dyslexia and communication disorders through to attention deficit hyperactive disorder, autism, traumatic brain injury, epilepsy and foetal alcohol syndrome disorder. There are some marked commonalities in how individuals with neurodisabilities may present in the justice context. These create vulnerability and often give rise to misunderstandings in terms of what these characteristics and behaviours mean. In the justice system, where all procedures are essentially word-based, a person’s inability to quickly process and comprehend information (written or verbal) leaves them open to manipulation and entrapment. Propensities to take statements literally, to become confused by information and sensory overload, to act impulsively and to speak before thinking make it difficult to navigate the complexities and nuances of the legal process.

Common to a range of neurodisabilities are different degrees of comprehension and (dis)comfort in social situations, along with behaviours that might be perceived as hostility, acting out or evidence of guilt. In reality, these are often coping mechanisms for the individual with neurodisabilities and have no pejorative meaning. For example, young people with neurodisabilities are highly prone to false or exaggerated confessions due to propensity to say ‘yes’ in order to bring an uncomfortable situation to an end. Lack of eye contact is another common characteristic of neurodisabilities. While this is indicative of anxiety or nervousness in the individual, it can be misinterpreted as guilt, disinterest or belligerence.

The below checklist (2) sets out some of the common characteristics of neurodisabilities, and how different the interpretation of these might be from the young person’s reality. Importantly it outlines simple steps that can make a big difference in addressing misunderstandings across the points of intersection with the justice system – from first police contact to caregiver engagement, legal representation, the court process and so on.

Overall, keeping questions short and simple; addressing one issue at a time; and making sure a trusted support person is always present are simple changes that can make a big difference. In order to ensure an individual has full understanding and comprehension of the situation, it is also recommended that a court appointed Communication Assistant (3) be engaged where required.

1 2013 Disability Survey, conducted by Statistics New Zealand following the 2013 Census. 2 This checklist has been compiled by Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand, in consultation with 2016 Neurodisabilities Forum stakeholders and Rose Blackett, Chair of the NZ Institute for Educational and Developmental Psychologists. 30 May 2016. 3 See <https://talkingtroublenz.org/specialised-communication-assistance-in-justice-contexts/> for more detail.

<b>CHARACTERISTIC: Can’t hold eye contact or is easily distracted</b>		
<b>HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY</b>	<b>POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON</b>	<b>SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE</b>
Guilt, belligerence, disinterest.	<p>Eye contact is very unpleasant and very confronting at a deep level. Eye contact creates anxiety, nervousness, and overwhelm.</p> <p>There are also cultural considerations in that while eye contact is considered important in Western culture; for many others – including Maori, Pasifika, Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American cultures – significant eye contact can be seen as inappropriate, be subject to gender rules and in some cases be considered intensely disrespectful. More information on Maori protocols can be found at <a href="https://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News-and-Publications/Statements/Best-health-outcomes-for-Maori.pdf">https://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News-and-Publications/Statements/Best-health-outcomes-for-Maori.pdf</a> (see p21).</p>	<p>Don't expect eye contact.</p> <p>Ensure an appropriate trusted support person who is familiar to the young person is present.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Answering 'yes' quickly & frequently to questions.**

<b>HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY</b>	<b>POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON</b>	<b>SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE</b>
Guilt.	A typical well practised coping strategy to bring an uncomfortable situation to an end.	<p>Be alert for rapid, repetitive 'yes'. Lower your voice and try to sound non-confrontational. Frame questions as open-ended questions. Keep questions short.</p> <p>Avoid the use of double negatives – they are very confusing.</p> <p>Allow time for the individual to process what it is they are being asked.</p> <p>Ensure an appropriate trusted support person who is familiar to the young person is present.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Individual appears 'shut down'. May also display tics or put clothing or hands over eyes, ears, or nose.**

<b>HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY</b>	<b>POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON</b>	<b>SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE</b>
Uncooperative and uninterested in proceedings, sullen, moody.	<p>'Sensory overload'.</p> <p>Unable to cope with any more sensory input or visual, auditory, or olfactory stimuli, e.g. bright long run/fluorescent lights, loud noises, small spaces.</p> <p>A coping/survival strategy to block out light, noise, and smell.</p>	<p>Aim for a calm, ordered, and stable environment without strong smells (including perfume and body odour).</p> <p>If possible, move to quieter surroundings.</p> <p>Minimise outside noise and dim lights if possible.</p> <p>Give 'rest breaks' – this can mean the difference between a situation escalating to a 'fight' or 'flight' response from client. Offer food/drink.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Appears to be 'daydreaming' during conversations. Cannot follow explanations. Cannot follow instructions and gets lost after one or two instructional commands. Can't recall what he/she is supposed to do next. Doesn't appear to be listening when you explain the process they are about to go through. Withdrawn. May get 'lippy', swear, or become physically aggressive.**

<b>HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY</b>	<b>POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON</b>	<b>SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE</b>
<p>Obstructive.</p> <p>Not engaged in the process.</p> <p>Suspicious behaviour, belligerence, disinterest.</p>	<p>Feels embarrassed, inferior or inadequate. Will do anything to avoid admitting to literacy/comprehension difficulties.</p> <p>This is just 'school experience' happening again.</p>	<p>Break information into bite-size chunks. Scaffold and support each step/don't presume comprehension. Allow frequent breaks to restore concentration.</p> <p>Refer to key events chronologically (rather than moving backwards and forwards).</p> <p>Read out statements and other documentation to the interviewee as necessary. Use visuals if possible/available to structure conversation – can be used as a memory aid.</p> <p>A court-appointed Communication Assistant can assess and recommend strategies where comprehension difficulties preclude effective communication.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Struggles to speak and express themselves. Slow or blank responses. Gives a statement which is 'unbelievable'; a story which has holes in it, and/or is generally evasiveness on details.**

<b>HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY</b>	<b>POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON</b>	<b>SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE</b>
<p>Guilt.</p> <p>Shifting conversation to avoid telling the truth.</p> <p>Acting stupid.</p>	<p>Confused. Overwhelmed.</p> <p>Has no idea what's going on.</p> <p>Has trouble expressing ideas, finding the right word, sharing what they know and supporting an argument or getting to the point. Has difficulty with correct sequence of events. Doesn't understand hidden messages or connotative language or sarcasm, has difficulty understanding proverbs and idioms.</p>	<p>Break information into bite-size chunks. Use simple language. Don't presume comprehension. Allow plenty of time.</p> <p>Refer to key events chronologically (rather than moving backwards and forwards).</p> <p>Allow the person being questioned to jot down notes – or make a rough sketch if this is more helpful – and then refer back to check details.</p> <p>A court-appointed Communication Assistant can assess and recommend strategies where communication difficulties preclude effective communication.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Appears to be unaffected by the impact of the crime on the victim and/or others. May appear nonchalant when you are speaking (e.g. particularly if you tell anecdotal stories of another youth's crime and resulting consequences).**

<b>HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY</b>	<b>POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON</b>	<b>SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE</b>
<p>Lack of remorse or empathy.</p> <p>Suspicious behaviour.</p> <p>Not taking the matter seriously.</p>	<p>Unable to link cause and effect or comprehend impacts of actions on others.</p> <p>Confusion. No idea what you're talking about.</p> <p>Confronted.</p>	<p>Extra time required for processing information and making connections between actions and consequence.</p> <p>The time between the incident/situation and the consequence may mean the client does not link the consequence itself to the incident. It therefore is NOT likely to act as a deterrent for the client engaging in this behaviour/action/choice again in the future.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Displays inappropriate emotional responses. Poor control of emotions and behaviours, especially anger.**

<b>HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY</b>	<b>POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON</b>	<b>SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE</b>
<p>Guilt, rudeness, aggression, belligerence.</p> <p>Needs to be taught a lesson.</p>	<p>Scared and threatened.</p> <p>Feeling anxious, trapped, attacked and/or isolated.</p>	<p>Give verbal/visual reminders about expected behavior.</p> <p>Model positive communication skills in the way you interact with the individual.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Non-compliant, poor time keeping: Doesn't arrive on time, arrives at wrong place, forgets important documents, ignores police summons, struggles with following instructions.**

HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY	POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON	SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE
<p>Lack of respect, deliberate non-cooperation.</p> <p>Doesn't care.</p>	<p>Poor short-term memory, concentration, spatial awareness.</p> <p>Struggles with anything requiring 'executive function'.</p>	<p>Refer to key events chronologically (rather than moving backwards and forwards).</p> <p>Allow the person being questioned to jot down notes – or make a rough sketch if this is more helpful – and then refer back to check details.</p> <p>Scaffold and support each step/don't presume comprehension.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Pulling clothing over head, banging head or kicking surfaces, hitting self.**

HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY	POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON	SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE
<p>Shame, rudeness, aggression.</p>	<p>Calming technique to escape visual and auditory stimuli. Coping / survival strategy.</p> <p>Self soothing – through firm or repetitive deep pressure contact on body.</p> <p>Sense of claustrophobia – too many people.</p>	<p>Offer a 'rest break' in a low stimulation environment.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Fidgeting or tapping, often with an object such as a pen, phone or clothing**

HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY	POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON	SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE
<p>Disinterest, rudeness, suspicious behaviour.</p>	<p>Calming repetitive action that is a necessary tool to aid concentration and focus.</p> <p>If unable to do this, the individual will have to exert considerable energy trying NOT to fidget or tap, making them unable to focus or prone to shutting down.</p>	<p>Allow client to have the pen or similar object of their interest to assist with their need to actively process information.</p> <p>(It is acknowledged that pens and similar can be used as a weapon, so this risk factor needs to be taken into account on a case-by-case basis.)</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: Jittery, sweaty, anxious, slurred or rapid speech, hyperactive, aggressive, jerky movements or seizures.**

HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY	POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON	SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE
<p>Disruptive and suspicious behaviour.</p>	<p>Experiencing the symptoms of an alcohol or drug addiction OR medical condition for example diabetes, traumatic head injury or epilepsy.</p>	<p>Recognise that their addiction may be doing the talking. Health nurse or medical support person available to assess. Offer food/drink.</p>

**CHARACTERISTIC: *Absence seizures:* Non-responsive individual, may not answer to their name or may seem unable to focus eyes or hear.**

<b>HOW THIS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY AUTHORITY</b>	<b>POSSIBLE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PERSON</b>	<b>SIMPLE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE</b>
<p>Ignoring the situation.</p> <p>Uncooperative.</p>	<p>The YP may be experiencing an <i>absence seizure</i> - a recognised medical condition. If undiagnosed, the individual may have no idea what happened. Afterwards may be tired but have no memory of the incident.</p>	<p>Recognise that this is a medical condition. Rapid breathing (hyperventilation) can trigger an absence seizure. Usually begin and end abruptly, sometimes lasting only a few seconds.</p> <p>Signs and symptoms of absence seizures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sudden stop in motion without falling</li> <li>• Lip smacking</li> <li>• Eyelid flutters</li> <li>• Chewing motions</li> <li>• Finger rubbing</li> <li>• Small movements of both hands</li> </ul> <p>Recognise individual will be tired afterwards, seek medical help.</p>

## RECENT RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS

### NEW ZEALAND

*Putting Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) on the Map in New Zealand: A Review of Health, Social, Political, Justice and Cultural Developments*

**Authors:** Anita Gibbs & Kesia Sherwood

**Available:** Psychiatry, Psychology and Law 24(1) (2017) 1

**Abstract:** : In the mid-1990s, New Zealand began to acknowledge the distinct set of impairments that result from prenatal alcohol exposure that is now known as fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), which affects all facets of an individual's life. In New Zealand, a collaborative, multidisciplinary and multiagency approach has been necessary in order to offer the best support for individuals and families who are living with FASD. In this article, the developments within New Zealand's relevant sectors are traced and the work of many individual

trailblazers who have put FASD on the map is acknowledged.

*State of Children and Young People in Porirua: Porirua City Council Report*

**Available:** <http://www.pcc.govt.nz>

**Abstract:** The Porirua City Council has released a report on the status of children and young people in their area. A number of wellbeing indicators are covered for 0-24 year olds in the report, including: health, education, employment, engagement, recreation, satisfaction with living in Porirua, housing, and safety. In some areas it also includes ethnic breakdowns and national comparisons.

*Journeys of resilience: From adverse childhoods to achieving adulthood*

**Authors:** Sue Carswell, Hector Kaiwai, Moana-o-Hinerangi, Michele Lennan, Judy Paulin

**Available:** <http://www.superu.govt.nz/publication/journeys-resilience-adverse-childhoods-achieving-adulthood-o>

**Abstract:** The Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (Superu) commissioned this project to answer the following two research questions:

2. What are the key factors that influence the achievement of those positive outcomes?

Data was used to analyse the potential relationship between some identified risk factors in families and outcomes in education and employment. face-to-face interviews were conducted with 49 people who had achieved positive education and/or employment outcomes despite experiencing adversity during their childhood. Based on these interviews, Superu identified a number of actions to better support children and families, both to avoid adversity and build resilience when facing adversity

---

## AUSTRALIA

### *Does Mental Illness Impact the Incidence of Crime and Victimisation among Young People?*

**Authors:** Emma L Cashman and Stuart DM Thomas

**Available:** *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 24(1) (2017) 33

**Abstract:** While the high prevalence of offending and victimisation among young people is well established, no study to date has compared official crime records of young people with mental illness with those without mental illness. This case linkage study sought to determine whether young people with a formal history of mental illness were more likely to have official histories of offending and victimisation than young people who had no recorded histories of mental illness. Results suggested that young people with a history of mental illness are particularly vulnerable to violence. While a weak association was established between violent offending and mental illness, a stronger relationship was found between victimisation and mental illness, especially violent victimisation. Consistent with literature regarding the victim-offender overlap, a history of offending placed young people at a substantially higher risk

of victimisation. Implications of these results are discussed in the context of how public mental health services could better protect these vulnerable young people.

### *The Feelings of Others Don't Impress Me Much – Effects of Living Group Climate on Empathy in Adolescent Male Offenders*

**Authors:** E. J. E. Heynen, G. H. P. van der Helm, M. J. Cima, G. J. J. M. Stams & A. M. Korebrits

**Available:** *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 24(1) (2017) 118

**Abstract:** The present study is a replication in Germany of a study originally performed in the Netherlands regarding the association between a positive living group climate and self-reported empathy in incarcerated adolescent male offenders (n = 49). A structural equation model was fitted to the data and showed a relation between a positive living group climate and increased empathy after six months. The discussion focuses on group dynamics in youth prisons. The present results open the way to further research into the importance of group processes in residential youth care. A positive living group climate could turn out to be an important factor contributing to the effectiveness of secure institutional treatment.

### *Young and unaffected by road policing strategies: Using deterrence theory to explain provisional drivers' (non) compliance*

**Authors:** Lyndel Bates, Millie J Darvell and Barry Watson

**Available:** *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 50(1) (2017) 23

**Abstract:** Newly licenced drivers are disproportionately represented in traffic injuries and crash statistics. Despite the implementation of countermeasures designed to improve safety, such as graduated driver licencing (GDL) schemes, many young drivers do not comply with road rules. This study used a reconceptualised deterrence theory framework to investigate young drivers' perceptions of the enforcement of road rules in general and those more specifically related to GDL. A total of 236 drivers aged 17–24 completed a questionnaire assessing their perceptions of various deterrence mechanisms (personal and vicarious) and their compliance with both GDL-specific and general road rules. Hierarchical multiple regressions conducted to explore noncompliant behaviour

revealed that, contrary to theoretical expectations, neither personal nor vicarious punishment experiences affected compliance in the expected direction. Instead, the most influential factors contributing to noncompliance were licence type (P2) and, counterintuitively, having previously been exposed to enforcement. Parental enforcement was also significant in the prediction of transient rule violations, but not fixed rule violations or overall noncompliance. Findings are discussed in light of several possibilities, including an increase in violations due to more time spent on the road, an ‘emboldening effect’ noted in prior studies and possible conceptual constraints regarding the deterrence variables examined in this study.

### *Youth Justice in Victoria*

**Author:** Caitlin Grover

**Available:** Research paper; 2. Parliamentary Library and Information Service, Department of Parliamentary Services, Parliament of Victoria

**Abstract:** This paper provides an overview of the changing nature of youth offenders and youth offending and the pressures that these have placed on the youth justice system, as well as the related policy developments of the Victorian Government.

---

## UNITED KINGDOM

### *Holding the child (and practitioner) in mind? Youth justice practitioners’ experiences supervising young people displaying sexually harmful behaviour*

**Author:** Andrew Myles-Wright | Claire Nee

**Available:** Journal of Interpersonal Violence online 5 April 2017

**Abstract:** This qualitative study explores the experiences of youth justice practitioners supervising young people (below 18 years old) displaying sexually harmful behavior within the Youth Justice System (YJS) in the United Kingdom. The analysis identified an overarching theme of “systemic unease,” which contained two subthemes surrounding “unease with the self and wider YJS personnel” and “unease working with partner agencies.” The “dual relationship problem” involving tension between risk management and

therapeutic alliance is explored in relation to this group.

---

## UNITED STATES

### *Acceptability of aggression among children who reside with substance-abusing parents: The influence of behavioral dysregulation, exposure to neighbourhood violence, and interparental violence*

**Authors:** Michelle L. Kelley, Abby L. Braitman, Robert J. Millettich, Brittany F. Hollis, Rachel E. Parsons, Tyler D. White, Cassie A. Patterson, Brianna N. Haislip & James M. Henson

**Available:** Journal of Child Custody 13(4) (2016) 250

**Abstract:** The present study examined how interparental violence, neighbourhood violence, behavioral regulation during parental conflict, and age predicted beliefs about the acceptability of aggression and the acceptance of retaliation against an aggressive peer among youths. Participants were 110 families (mothers, fathers, and children) in which one or both parents met criteria for substance use disorder. Results of a bootstrapped multivariate regression model revealed higher exposure to neighbourhood violence predicted greater acceptability of general aggression, whereas higher father-to-mother violence perpetration predicted lower acceptability of general aggression. Higher exposure to neighborhood violence, behavioral dysregulation during parental conflict, and older child age predicted greater approval of retaliation toward an aggressive peer. Findings are interpreted as related to the cognitive-contextual framework. ■

### STATISTICS: DID YOU KNOW?

Statistics New Zealand publishes Child and Youth Prosecution Tables online, which provide information on the number, age, gender and ethnicity of children and young people prosecuted (and the outcome of this prosecution) in the New Zealand court system. Tables can be customised according to your requirements. Try the tool at: [http://www.stats.govt.nz/tools\\_and\\_services/nzdotstat/tables-by-subject/child-youth-prosecution-tables-calendar-year.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/tools_and_services/nzdotstat/tables-by-subject/child-youth-prosecution-tables-calendar-year.aspx)