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[SQUARE BRACKETS]

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**IN THE FAMILY COURT  
AT CHRISTCHURCH**

**I TE KŌTI WHĀNAU  
KI ŌTAUTAHI**

**FAM-2014-009-001011  
[2021] NZFC 1911**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ORANGA TAMARIKI ACT 1989

BETWEEN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF ORANGA  
TAMARIKI – MINISTRY FOR  
CHILDREN  
Applicant

AND [EA]  
[AM]  
Respondents

AND [RA] born on [date deleted] 2005  
Child or Young Person the application is  
about

Hearing: 2 March 2021

Appearances: M Gifford for the Chief Executive  
No Appearance by or for the Respondents  
J Mehrtens as Lawyer for the Child

Judgment: 2 March 2021

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**ORAL JUDGMENT OF JUDGE S M R LINDSAY**

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[1] [RA], registered at birth as [RA], born [on date deleted] 2005, is [under 16] years old. [RA] is a [senior student] at [name of school deleted]. He has attended [that school ] [for two years]. He commenced at [his school] in February 2019.

[2] [RA] has a good group of friends. [RA] is a talented sportsman. He is a humble boy but I suspect from the warm way he speaks about his sports that he is something of a basketball star. [RA] is on the basketball team at [his school].

[3] In my role as a Family Court Judge and a judicial officer holding a youth designation, I meet a lot of young people and I have met [RA]. [RA] struck me as a nice young man. He is polite, well-spoken and when I had met [RA] along with Mrs Mehrstens, his lawyer for child, he has been able to discuss in a measured way his personal circumstances. [RA] has told me directly that his preference as to his living options are to remain here in Christchurch.

[4] [RA] can identify and clearly articulates the positives about remaining here in Christchurch and these include his continued attendance at [school], remaining connected to his group of friends, doing well at school, maintaining his sporting prowess with basketball and possibly other sports as well. But significant for [RA] is remaining close to his younger brother, [TA].

[5] [RA] does not have a bad word to say about anyone. When he has discussed with me his living circumstances, he seems to enjoy a warm relationship with his social worker and [the social worker] has been his social worker for some time now. [RA] never says anything unkind about the situation he finds himself in.

[6] When we have talked about his mum and dad, [RA] can sometimes seem sad but he also seems somewhat understanding as to why his mother quit New Zealand. [RA]'s father is understood to be in prison and there is no shying away from the fact that [EA] has been in and out of prison over the course of these proceedings and most of his sons' lives.

[7] [RA] has a younger brother, known as [TA], and although, like every sibling relationship, there is an elastic in the time they spend together and apart what remains is their bond as brothers. There was a period of no contact between [TA] and [RA]. This was over 2020. There may have been all sorts of reasons it turned out this way and it is possible [TA] took on the reticence of his caregivers but it must be recognised [RA] never gave up on regaining contact with his younger brother, [TA]. For [RA] their connection remains strong. Regardless of any opposition, if not interference about contact between the brothers, [RA] remained philosophical. [RA] said to me at the very first court appearance that he attended in 2020 that despite not spending time with [TA] from his point-of-view he was “running towards my brother.”

[8] It is undoubtedly an issue for [RA] that he remains living in Ōtautahi, to remain connected to [TA] and, in that wider emotional sense, the place where his father also resides. But actually listening to [RA], he and [TA] were initially raised here in Christchurch. In simple terms around the disconnect in the relationship between [RA] and [TA]’s caregiver he has told me that it has been said his physical appearance reminds his Aunty [KR] of his father.

[9] I begin today talking about [RA] because at [aged under 16] , he is central not only to the proceedings but of course also my decision. As always there are competing interests and other powerfully important considerations, however, [RA] is at the heart of the Court’s decision.

[10] I was asked to confirm the social worker’s plan dated 23 November 2020. At the commencement of the hearing Mrs Gifford sought an adjournment. It was recognised that the plan before the Court was not match fit. I respect the position Mrs Gifford finds herself in, that she today appears quite late in the progression of these proceedings. I also acknowledge and appreciate that she has undertaken important korero, the site manager, social worker and the kairanga about these proceedings with a focus on the reality for [RA] as to his views, his well-being, particularly as a young rangatahi nearing a point where he might transition to independence.

[11] Just to be clear, [RA] requires the support of the Chief Executive who has been now long involved in [RA]'s day-to-day care arrangement and safekeeping, but the job is not yet done. Like any other rangatahi of [under 16] years of age, [RA] is far from being independent. [RA] requires ongoing support, care and guidance, in the same way all young people do.

[12] It is right [RA] expresses his views and puts them before the Court through Mrs Mehrstens, his wishes about his day-to-day care which includes not only placement but school and the supports he needs to maintain powerfully significant whānau relationships.

[13] The plan that was initially before the Court provided for [RA] to return to whānau in [location A]. This plan was opposed on [RA]'s behalf by lawyer for child. Mrs Mehrstens submits the plan flies in the face of not only [RA]'s views but, arguably, is not in his best interests.

[14] [RA] is present in Court. He has been present at almost every court review since it was mooted that he return to whānau in [location A]. [RA], at [under 16] years of age, sees the significance of being present at a hearing, to not only hear what was being said about him but also to speak on his own behalf. It is a powerful statement hearing [RA]'s views first-hand in the courtroom where. It takes courage for [RA] to stand here in the Court and express his unique and personal view as to his preference as to day-to-day care. I am in no doubt [RA] appreciates the significance of the Court proceedings and the need for him to be seen and heard by the Family Court, Oranga Tamariki staff and his whānau.

[15] [RA] has politely challenged decisions by Oranga Tamariki and, although he may not see eye-to-eye with the stance adopted by whānau, he does not present as laying down the wero to whānau. Rather he is maintaining his foothold here in Christchurch to preserve a significant relationship with his brother [TA] and I have been left in no doubt he is respectful of his whānau relationship with his Auntie [KR] and other members of his whānau, his paternal whānau, both here in Ōtautahi and in [location B]. [RA] was once like [TA], also in the care of his Auntie [KR] and her

partner. The breakdown in his placement, but also this relationship, casts a long shadow.

[16] The task of making or declining orders sought and, indeed, considering a plan, must be undertaken by the Family Court, Te Kooti o Whānau, applying the statutory provisions in ss 4A, 5 and 13 of the Act. These principles and other provisions in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 were amended with effect from 1 July 2019<sup>1</sup>.

[17] I am mindful that the stance adopted by social workers in 2020 reflected the voice of the whānau and the enactment of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 created what was intended to be a paradigm shift in the conception of child welfare. What grew out of the enactment of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act was child welfare being viewed within the context of a child's family/whānau, hapū, iwi and family group rather than the child or young person being seen independent from whānau.

[18] The 1986 Wai Te Ata Tu report had been tasked to advise the Minister of Social Welfare on the most appropriate means to achieve a goal that would meet the needs of Māori and policy planning and service delivery. The recommendations were orientated to placement of Māori children and their relationship with whānau, hapū and iwi structures.

[19] The principles then referenced in ss 5 and 13 were subject to the child's welfare and interests as mandated as the first and paramount consideration as contained in s 6 of the Act.

[20] On 1 July 2019, significant amendments were enacted in relation to the Oranga Tamariki Act and those of particular relevance to the issues before the Court today are those pursuant to ss 4, 5 and 13.

#### **4 Purposes**

- (1) The purposes of this Act are to promote the well-being of children, young persons, and their families, whānau, hapū, iwi, and family groups by—

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<sup>1</sup> Children, Young Persons, and Their Families (Oranga Tamariki) Legislation Act 2017.

- (a) establishing, promoting, or co-ordinating services that—
  - (i) are designed to affirm mana tamaiti (tamariki), are centred on children’s and young persons’ rights, promote their best interests, advance their well-being, address their needs, and provide for their participation in decision making that affects them:
  - (ii) advance positive long-term health, educational, social, economic, or other outcomes for children and young persons:
  - (iii) are culturally appropriate and competently provided:
- (b) supporting and protecting children and young persons to—
  - (i) prevent them from suffering harm (including harm to their development and well-being), abuse, neglect, ill treatment, or deprivation or by responding to those things; or
  - (ii) prevent offending or reoffending or respond to offending or reoffending:
- (c) assisting families, whānau, hapū, iwi, and family groups to—
  - (i) prevent their children and young persons from suffering harm, abuse, neglect, ill treatment, or deprivation or by responding to those things; or
  - (ii) prevent their children or young persons from offending or reoffending or respond to offending or reoffending:
- (d) assisting families and whānau, hapū, iwi, and family groups, at the earliest opportunity, to fulfil their responsibility to meet the needs of their children and young persons (including their developmental needs, and the need for a safe, stable, and loving home):
- (e) ensuring that, where children and young persons require care under the Act, they have—
  - (i) a safe, stable, and loving home from the earliest opportunity; and
  - (ii) support to address their needs:
- (f) providing a practical commitment to the principles of the [Treaty of Waitangi](#) (te Tiriti o Waitangi) in the way described in this Act:
- (g) recognising mana tamaiti (tamariki), whakapapa, and the practice of whanaungatanga for children and young persons who come to the attention of the department:

- (h) maintaining and strengthening the relationship between children and young persons who come to the attention of the department and their—
    - (i) family, whānau, hapū, iwi, and family group; and
    - (ii) siblings:
  - (i) responding to alleged offending and offending by children and young persons in a way that—
    - (i) promotes their rights and best interests and acknowledges their needs; and
    - (ii) prevents or reduces offending or future offending; and
    - (iii) recognises the rights and interests of victims; and
    - (iv) holds the children and young persons accountable and encourages them to accept responsibility for their behaviour:
  - (j) assisting young persons who are or have been in care or custody under the Act to successfully transition to adulthood in the ways provided in the Act.
- (2) In subsection (1)(c) and (d), **assisting**, in relation to any person or groups of persons, includes developing the capability of those persons or groups to themselves do the things for which assistance is being provided.

[21] There is a tension between the wider views of the whānau with that of [RA]. However, although the Ministry may have seen an irreconcilable difference or parting of views, I see it otherwise. At the heart of [RA]’s plea to remain living in Christchurch is to support his relationship with [TA] and other close whānau. The fact [RA]’s preference is also intended to support his future independence can still be seen within a whānau context.

## **Background**

[22] In July 2012 at a whānau hui it was agreed to the boys being placed with Mr and Mrs [G] with supports. There was discussion post-hui that if mother returned to New Zealand as to whether she could collect the children and they remain in their mother’s day-to-day care. This has not happened.

[23] In July 2014, Family Court proceedings were commenced by the Chief Executive. The boys, [RA] and [TA], were then, respectively, aged only [under 10] and [under eight] years. They had been raised by their parents but in the short period before the proceedings lived primarily in the care of their aunt and uncle. Allegations were levelled of physical abuse.

[24] By 2 September 2014 the Ministry of Social Development (“MOSD”) sought to discharge a s 78 order that had issued upon the filing of the initial application. Counsel for the MOSD sought to withdraw the application before the Court. The boys were by then already back living with their aunt and uncle. The plan was [RA] and [TA] would transition to their father’s care. The children were described as displaying quite “chaotic” behaviour during the period the boys were in, “substitute care”.<sup>2</sup>

[25] Following the transition in care it was anticipated MOSD were to monitor the boys’ care. A year later almost to the day, and certainly by 4 September 2015, the boys were again subject to a s 78 custody order.

[26] The paternal whānau hail from the deep south. The paternal grandparents live in [location B]. It appears maternal whānau live in and around [location A]. At today’s hearing [RA]’s mother remains living [overseas] but his dad’s whereabouts are unclear, although most likely he is in Christchurch.

[27] The first family group conference held for the boys was 3 February 2010. There was agreement by the attendees of the FGC that care and protection concerns existed for the boys. However, and this is of interest, the whānau did not agree on placement. It is a sad fact there is still disagreement over [RA]’s placement in 2021. Indeed, it has remained an unresolved issue and it has been a complicated issue.

[28] Also, sadly, there is a disconnect that has emerged in the sibling relationship although the bond is strong. There has also been some eroding of the physical and possibly emotional relationship between the children and their parents. However, for [RA], his early childhood experiences were set in Christchurch. His first meaningful

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<sup>2</sup> Judge Murfitt, September 2014.



contact with maternal whānau came about at about age nine when he was placed with whānau caregivers in [location A].

[29] I would observe there has been for [RA] a significant rupture in his whānau relationships and a significant shift in his close emotional relationships as well. [RA]'s placement with whānau in [location A] effectively came at a cost to his relationship with his brother [TA]. As a result the two brothers have lived separate childhoods and different experiences. There needs to be support for recovery to ensure [RA]'s wellbeing but also the preservation of the significant family relationships.

[30] Although there is a wider history of presenting concerns for the boys when they were younger in the day-to-day care of their parents, the notification that triggered these proceedings actually arose out of the concern or presenting care and protection concerns while the boys were with paternal whānau.<sup>3</sup>

[31] On 17 August 2015, the second family group conference was convened and crafted an agreement the children would live with the paternal uncle and their father. However, concerns arose over violence and physical abuse in the home. [EA] was imprisoned and the placement proved unsustainable.

[32] The concerns that arose over the boys' care in Mr and Mrs [G]'s home were not found to be substantiated by social workers. The overall assessment came to the conclusion that the caregivers were shouting and yelling at the boys out of frustration at their behaviours. Caregivers acknowledged or attributed the disclosure due to the boys wanting to return to the care of the parent. It is unclear what supports were given to [RA] and [TA], given the children were acting out, displaying distressed behaviours and were sad about a change in their care from their mum and dad, the boys yearned to be in the care of a parent.

[33] In July 2015, a report of concern was raised involving the boys.<sup>4</sup> Both boys, then aged approximately [under 12] and [under 10], were evidentially interviewed. They were described as presenting as highly-emotionally distressed. Child Mental

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<sup>3</sup> Mr and Mrs [G].

<sup>4</sup> Paragraphs 9 and 10 of the report.

Health Services did not accept [RA] on the programme. [TA] was put on a wait list. Referrals were made for both boys to a specialist therapeutic support agency.

[34] Following a family group conference on 1 September 2015 it was agreed [RA] be moved to live with whānau in [location A]. This occurred on 3 October 2015. [RA] lived in the day-to-day care of his maternal great-aunt, [name deleted], in [location deleted]. The social worker's report dated 2 December 2015 made a reference to comments from [TA]'s school teacher:

[TA] had told [his teacher] that he missed his brother [RA]. [His teacher] stated it was clear [TA] was struggling with his brother's ([RA]) move to [location A].

[35] The social worker crafted plans that provided for the boys to have access with whānau in [location A] or in Christchurch. This was the intention but it did not play out in a full sense. Reading through the reports it seems that [TA]'s time in [location A] dropped away. It is not entirely clear to me whether [RA] spent every holiday in Christchurch or not.

[36] For [RA] this was the first real meaningful time spent with the whānau in [location A]. In various social workers' reports and plans [RA] is referenced as living there for five years but that is not actually accurate. [RA] remained in the care of members of [his maternal great-aunt's] whānau from 3 October 2015 until the end of 2018. The move back to Christchurch came about given his aunty made a decision in January 2019 (while he was on a holiday here in Christchurch) that [RA] would remain on and not return to [location A]. This change in placement being a whānau decision and one that [RA] had little or no input.

[37] The first reference of [RA] developing his talent with sports is found in a social worker's report dated December 2015. It is referenced by one of his school teachers. He is described as "very talented at team sports". He was also identified by his school teachers as needing emotional support. There were no issues at school but teachers were able to discern with clarity that [RA] was struggling emotionally.

[38] On the Family Court file the next plans of significance relating to [RA] and [TA] are dated January 2020 and it best captures the next stage in the boys' lives. In

January 2020, [TA] is now an [under 14] year old boy, very settled in his aunt's care. [TA] describes "loving living with his Aunt [KR]". [TA] reported not having contact with maternal whānau in [location A] and also he did not want any.

[39] Initially, [RA] lived with his brother and his Aunty [KR] here in Christchurch. That is from February 2019. The placement broke down on or about 27 May 2020 when [KR] withdrew her support for [RA] remaining in the whānau home. Thereafter [RA] has resided at a family home here in Christchurch. [RA] is the oldest child in the group home. I mentioned at an earlier point in the hearing that 2020 represented an enormously difficult year for [RA].

[40] In Mrs Mehrtens' October 2020 report, she recorded at paragraph [6]:

At my previous meeting with [RA] and as reported in reports of 20 July 2020 and 15 September 2020 he ([RA]) had expressed views of wanting to remain in Christchurch. He was able clearly to articulate valid reasons why he should stay in Christchurch specifically identified his likes and was doing well at school, his steady friendship group, his sporting skills and his enjoyment of making music with his friends.

[41] In October [RA] spent a period of a couple of weeks with whānau in [location A]. It had been pre-arranged and was perhaps in play to soften [RA]'s view about the possibility of a return home. Following that access with whānau, Mrs Mehrtens again met with [RA]. At paragraph [8] she recorded:

I met [RA] at [Family Home name deleted] on 15 October 2020. [RA] was adamant in his view of wishing to remain in Christchurch. [RA] reported that whilst it was good to catch up with his [whānau] in [location A], he had no wish to live there.

[RA] again confirmed why he should remain living in Christchurch. [RA] said, "School is going good, I like school, there are lots of opportunities here for me here in Christchurch".

[42] At paragraph [12] there was a discussion recorded as to placement options:

[RA] has given thought to his placement. He does not want to stay at [Family Home name deleted]. (counsel noted that the family home is for children aged seven years to 14 years).

[43] [RA] suggested that enquiries be made with his paternal nan [name deleted] who lives in Christchurch. He does not have her contact details but was sure that [KR] would have them.

[44] He further identified another person called [name deleted] from Youth Cultural Development (“YCD”) who he has discussed his situation with and hoped that this may be an option and was his preferred choice. [RA] had clearly thought through the options, not only of alternative placements here in Christchurch but also the positives or otherwise, as he perceived it, of a return to [location A]: “[RA] was clear-headed not wish to live in [location A].” He said, “I hate the system. I am walking off, I will not stay. The system gets to you bro.” [RA] said, he was okay to go to [location A] for some of his holiday time but that is subject to a clear understanding that he not be retained by whānau in [location A] but be permitted to return to Christchurch otherwise he would not stay there.

[45] A consistent theme in the reports filed by Mrs Mehrtens on behalf of [RA] was his clear wish, his preference, to remain and see [TA]. Over 2020 the boys’ access together had broken down. [RA] was hopeful that it could be arranged he could see [TA] over the October school holidays. From [RA]’s point of view he had not seen [TA] and he did not understand the reasons why not.

[46] Lawyer for child invited the Ministry to reflect on [RA]’s views and raised whether an alternative solution as to placement could be explored. It was significant for lawyer for child that [RA] had carefully considered his options and taken the initiative in finding an alternative solution to placement. For one reason or another the placement option of [name of paternal grandmother deleted] but also the staff member from YCD did not materialise.

[47] Mrs Mehrtens submission remains that with the support of Oranga Tamariki if [RA] can remain living in Christchurch he is more likely to remain engaged with his education, his sporting talents and maintaining the positive peer relationships he had established. By remaining in Christchurch there is also the hope of the sibling relationship being repaired and supported. Also, [RA] can maintain contact with his Christchurch-based whānau.

[48] At a fully interactive judicial conference on 16 September 2020, [RA] had identified some of his anxieties about a return to whānau care in [location A]. I recorded it was evident that [RA] may be reluctant to be parted geographically from his brother and he strove to be reconnected with [TA]. I asked whether, through the involvement of the Kairaranga whānau, exploring a placement with hapū and iwi in the Christchurch area might provide a further layer of whānau who could offer a safe placement for [RA] but still maintain proximity to his brother.

[49] In late 2020 I made an access order. It was to support access between [RA] and [TA]. Any reticence on the part of whānau for that access to occur would hopefully diminish with the access being confirmed by Court order. As it transpires the terms of the access order do not fit well for [RA] and [TA] but really it was a bridge, a hope to bring the brothers together. They spent time together, a Christmas visit in December 2020 and they caught up after [TA] returned with whānau from [location B]. There has been no visit in February 2021 but a visit is booked this coming weekend.

[50] As I expressed in a minute of 27 November 2020: “No one is taking away from the love and commitment of whānau.” Some of the whānau dynamics have been a complicated landscape for [RA]. There is undoubtedly a wish for whānau to hold on to [RA] with his return to [location A] but, equally, [RA] remains within reach of whānau here in Christchurch.

[51] It is also understandable that [RA], at his age and given his experiences, wants to hold on to his relationship with his brother. He has already experienced first-hand the whānau making decisions that sometimes did not reflect his wishes. He has also experienced decision-making that, from his point of view, focusses on placement rather than his sibling relationship.

[52] As it stands [RA] did not have the contact with [TA] that was anticipated in [location A]. [RA] has experienced that if his brother does not travel to [location A] or he cannot stay with his brother and Aunty [KR], which seems unlikely here in Christchurch, that this will again prove a disruption to the sibling relationship.

[53] What I observe of [RA] is he is holding on with strength to the option or opportunity of a placement here in Christchurch in the hope he can make a place for himself in the world and remain connected with his brother but also his paternal whānau and, bearing in mind that this is the whānau in his younger years he was most connected with while still in the care of his mum and dad.

[54] Although I do not have available to me a s 178 report, it is a fair observation that the strengths of attachments most likely exist between [RA] and whānau here in Christchurch.

[55] My decision does not take away from the principles of tikanga Māori, whakawhanaungatanga or whakapapa. For [RA] to remain in Christchurch he maintains a pathway of his whakapapa and whanaungatanga. There remains that opportunity for hope, hope of reconnection, hope of a healing of the rupture between [RA] and whānau here in Christchurch.

[56] Moreover, a decision that focuses on [RA]'s views, wellbeing and interests is one that also gives effect and brings to life mana tamaiti, but within the context of his whānau. It also gives effect to [RA]'s rights as reflected and enshrined in Article 12 of UNCROC. It gives an assurance to [RA] that his right to express his view be given weight in accordance with age and maturity of the rangatahi.

[57] I accept the submission of Mrs Mehrtens that [RA] is Gillick competent and his personal attributes include being articulate and capable. As it stands the plan before the Court is not match fit but it is anticipated that [RA]'s current placement in the family home, although he is well connected to the parent caregivers, does not meet in all respects this rangatahi's needs.

[58] Mrs Mehrtens, on behalf of [RA], has made enquiries of the school. They remain positive as to what they say about [RA]. They have suggested supports be in place with the role of [the school counsellor], who could offer some emotional support to [RA] but, additionally, the school has host families that pre-COVID provided a home-base and care of young international students choosing to study here in Christchurch. The families would be in zone, so convenient to school and home. It is

likely that they will have had some experience supporting and providing care of young people.

[59] At the time of the enquiry by Mrs Mehrtens there was a host family who would be available. Of course, the necessary police checks and other steps would need to be undertaken. That is unclear today as an option for [RA] but it may need to be explored.

[60] Accordingly:

- (a) I discharge the previous 2020 access order and in its place I make an access order that provides contact between [TA] and [RA] to occur at least once a month for a period of at least two hours. Two other times can be arranged between social worker, [TA] and [RA].
- (b) I direct a continuation of the s 101 custody order.
- (c) I direct a continuation of the s 110 to the additional guardianship order.

[61] With regards to the plan. A plan is before the Court worked on by the social worker following today's hearing. It provides access between [RA] and [TA]. You will still have contact with your mum – Facetime – and you can contact your dad if you so wish, rather than there being any set arrangement in place. There is provision for holidays in [location A], but only half of the holidays, and that makes sense because you will have things that you want to do here. The plan also provides that you have got sports, basketball camp, all planned arrangements, and the Ministry shall support [RA] with his bus passes, top-up phone, spending money, return flights to Christchurch (access visits).

[62] [RA], the important thing I think that was recognised by Oranga Tamariki and certainly for myself, Mrs Mehrtens and for [the social worker], is that you know where you are going to be staying, that you shall be staying in Christchurch, however, it still needs a bit of sorting out as to where you will be physically living. You have explained very loud and clear you do not want to stay with a boarding placement, but have a talk with [the school counsellor] – not about that just about stuff – and maybe you might

be the sort of boy that will respond really well, you may not want to sit down and talk about your thoughts and feelings [RA], not yet, but maybe there could be some opportunity for adventure therapy – maybe [RA] could go on Outward Bound. You can only go on that once you turn 16 on your own. So maybe when you turn 16 there could be some thought around some planning for that or Spirit of New Zealand. Something where you can have some support of good mentors and people who tend to go and do that work because they have had some experience mentoring and some time out from the worry of this and also some time out where you can reflect with support. Maybe the school will even support with funding, I know some of the schools do, but I think you would be a great candidate for that – you're sporty, able and fit. You have got good people skills and maybe you could go on a programme like that and it is something for you and you make of it what you want and it is another way of some healing.

[63] If nothing else can you talk to [the school counsellor] about connecting with kapa haka, just for that reason. Social worker to explore adventure therapy, Spirit of Adventure (sailing) and can I also record here that [RA] will talk to [the school counsellor] about kapa haka. [RA] to talk with [the school counsellor] about joining kapa haka ([RA]'s responsibility)

[64] Finally, I am going to extend Mrs Mehrstens brief for six months to cover placement, kapa haka, adventure therapy and access. To report in six months, or earlier if necessary.

[65] The plan, as amended in court is approved as adequate. The period of the plan is 12 months.

S M R Lindsay  
Family Court Judge