

ANNUAL REPORT

2024 – 2025

He Mahi Rangatira



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YOUTH VOYCE



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HEI MIHI

Nau mai raa ngaa reo, tau iho mai ngaa tikanga,

E tau ana e!

Maa te waahi ngaro taatou katoa e manaaki hei ngaa rangi e haere ake nei.

Tangihia te hunga kua riro ki tua o te pae o maumahara.

E kore nei e warewarehia. Moe mai rā!

Tihei Māuri ora!

Nei rā ngā pitopito kōrero o te tau kua hipa nei

e whakaatu ai i te whānui me te whāroa o nga mahi.

Kāti rā e tai mā Titiro mai, Whakarongo mai kia mau, kia ita!

Haumi e! Hui e!

Taiki e!



AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We embrace all languages and cultural identities of the care experienced community,

Welcome!

May the days ahead be filled with generosity and kindness.

We lament for those who have gone beyond the horizon of memories.

Never to be forgotten. May they rest in the eternal slumber!

Behold the breath of life!

Here are a few of the highlights from the past year

To show the breadth and width of the work that we do.

And so to all - observe, listen to understand!

Join and gather together!

It is done!



YOUTH VOYCE: CREATIVE RŌPŪ

The **creative rōpū** is a group of care experienced rangatahi facilitated by the VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai Creative Content and Communications Lead. The rōpū provides an opportunity for young people to get involved with creative projects and share their stories, thoughts and ideas in meaningful ways that work for them. Advocacy is not always about the big events or speaking to the media. For me, being a part of the Creative Rōpū is another way to contribute to systems change through creativity and collaboration.

Our rōpū meets online once a month to discuss different ideas and give feedback on creative initiatives across VOYCE kaupapa. This year the rōpū has helped design t-shirts, input into the new sticker designs, and supported other visual projects.

The rōpū is a space where we get to meet other amazing and talented care experienced rangatahi, work together on creative projects, share ideas and watch them come to life.

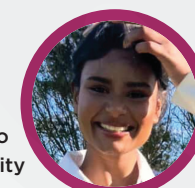
Being a part of the Creative Rōpū is a good example of one of the many ways rangatahi can get involved with VOYCE. You don't have to be good at public speaking or lead a campaign to tell your story or advocate for change. Young people can use their creativity to express and represent the experiences of tamariki and rangatahi in care, in ways that feel empowering to them.

- Ella Thompson



WE ASKED THE CREATIVE RŌPŪ WHAT BEING A PART OF THE GROUP HAS MEANT TO THEM:

“ I'm grateful to be a part of the Creative Rōpū and take great pleasure in all the experiences the group and its members have provided me with. The work we do for the care experienced community is work that I believe is beneficial to both the children still in care and those of us who have also existed in the care of OT. I feel it enables progressive and innovative thinking and simultaneously allows us to act in good faith towards our community. For whom we have a great love for!



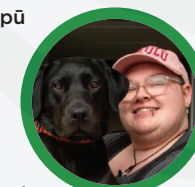
- Abby

“ For me, forming connections with the rōpū has been the most beautiful part of this experience. It created a space where we can be creative together and use that creativity to support, represent and elevate other care experienced young people and their stories. Watching each other grow and getting to celebrate each other's uniqueness and sparkle/light has been so special. Creativity is often overlooked and thought of as nice but not necessary, but it's so important!



- Sara
Photo by
Oliver Stewart

“ Being part of the Creative Rōpū has been an amazing experience. It has given me a place to grow in my confidence and to learn how to be my best in a leadership space. I have felt like I am giving to my community and doing my part. I actually feel like I am participating in a way that makes a difference. So being part of this Rōpū has been life changing!



- Gray

“ Being a part of the VOYCE Creative Rōpū means being part of something bigger. It's a movement where our voices come together to make a real difference for those in the care system and for care experienced young people. It's a space where we can talk, recap, and reconnect each month, building togetherness, support, and creativity as we work to create positive change and be heard.



- Temi



2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai is only able to provide the amazing opportunities and experiences for Aotearoa's care experienced tamariki and rangatahi thanks to the generosity of our community partners. Ngā mihi nui.

PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS



Te Rourou
One Aotearoa Foundation



DONATIONS AND GIFTS IN KIND

QUILTS

Creative Quilters
Te Puke

CUDDLY TOYS



MOVIE TICKETS



RUGBY TICKETS



RUGBY TICKETS



PAID WORK EXPERIENCE



EASTER CARE PACKS



PRODUCTS & TŪHONO EVENTS



TŪHONO EVENTS IN HAWKES BAY



TŪHONO EVENTS IN CANTERBURY



LEGAL ADVICE



VARIOUS SUPPORTS



SMALL GRANTS FOR YOUTH WEEK EVENTS IN HASTINGS & CHRISTCHURCH



SMALL GRANTS HASTINGS FOR MATARIKI WAKA AMA



BAKING FOR EVENTS



3 TŪHONO

Connect children and young people in care with each other and with their significant others.

NUMBER OF CONNECTIONS:

Cumulative # of tamariki/rangatahi 'actively engaged' with a kaiwhakamana around advocacy

1,026

Cumulative # of tamariki/rangatahi 'maintaining relationship' with a kaiwhakamana for connection

1,807

Cumulative # of tamariki/rangatahi 'invite to tūhono' with a kaiwhakamana for connection

994

of tamariki/rangatahi who participated in tūhono connection events

1,538

“ RANGATAHI TOLD US:

“Connect us as children and young people in care together. Reduce the isolation that we can experience in the care system. Help us to establish an identity through fostering a sense of belonging to a wider community of children and young people in care. Demonstrate that we are valued by providing opportunities and experiences that are fun and challenging.”

NUMBER OF EVENTS BY REGION:

Te Tai Tokerau,
Tāmaki Makaurau
(Northland, Auckland)
24

Wairariki,
Waikato me
Ikaroa Rāwhiti
(Midlands)
21

Te Tai Hau-ā-uru
Raukawa Moana
(Lower North Island)
22

Te Waipounamu
(South Island)
36

Total events:
103

ONLINE GROWTH: (AS OF END OF JUNE 2025)



WEBSITE

Page views:
19,975

Most referrals:
This year our top website referrals were all from VOYCE Facebook posts!



FACEBOOK

Reach:
167,945 (+129.7%)

Content interactions:
7,544 (+61.6%)

Followers:
3,877



INSTAGRAM

Reach:
55,937 (+74.9%)

Content interactions:
1,468

Followers:
2,437



LINKEDIN

Reach:
69,398

Content interactions:
6,321

Followers:
1,932



TIKTOK

Reach:
7,614

Video views:
9,731

Followers:
561

HIGHLIGHTS:

Easter Egg Hunt - Tāmaki - April 25

The VOYCE Tāmaki team hosted an Easter-themed event filled with creativity, outdoor fun and heartwarming moments. The day brought together care-experienced tamariki aged 6-12 years old for a gathering designed to spark joy, connection and community spirit. Tamariki enjoyed a mix of indoor (i.e. biscuit decorating, crafting their own Easter baskets) and lively outdoor party games (i.e. three-legged races, bunny hop races and a much-anticipated Easter egg hunt). Each child left with a goodie bag bursting with their handmade creations, chocolate eggs and spot prizes from the day's games. The day was rated 10/10 for fun! This celebration wasn't just about chocolate and games - it was a space where care-experienced children could feel seen, supported and celebrated.



Children's Week Tūhono - Hamilton - March 2025

Children's Day 2025 was celebrated at our Hamilton site with caregivers, rangatahi and other community stakeholders at Te Ara Hau Village. The event was centred around outdoor sports and games, creative craft stations and a shared BBQ lunch cooked by our care-experienced volunteers. This kaupapa created a relaxed and welcoming environment for whānau to come together, connect and celebrate tamariki. It was also an important opportunity to introduce the VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai kaupapa to the wider Hamilton care community. Caregivers were encouraged to attend alongside the rangatahi in their care to strengthen relationships and build peer networks. The event successfully fostered both rangatahi connection and caregiver collaboration, reinforcing the sense of belonging and collective support across the Hamilton community.



Rangatahi Reef Ecology Experience - Tairāwhiti, Ikaroa-Rawhiti - April 2025

Our first event in Tairawhiti and an unforgettable day on the reef. Rangatahi had the opportunity to connect with the tamariki of Tāgaroa - wild stingrays in Tatapouri. Guided by local experts, the group explored the marine ecosystem at low tide, learning about reef ecology while immersing themselves in the rich cultural and natural beauty of the East Coast, where the first light touches Aotearoa. Thanks to the generous support of Eastern and Central Community Trust, VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai was able to create a meaningful experience that blended adventure, learning and connection to te taiao.



Adrenalin Forest - Wellington - August 24

On 17 August, rangatahi spent the day at Adrenalin Forest in Porirua with Kaiwhakamana Jordyn and Beth from Te Whanganui-a-Tara! The rangatahi, who all live with their grandparents, met one another for the first time that day - not that you could tell by the end of the day! The purpose of the event was to offer rangatahi living with their grandparents the opportunity to connect with others in the same situation and welcome these rangatahi into the VOYCE whānau. The rangatahi offered each other so much awhi as they made their way around the course which got increasingly challenging as you went along! Rangatahi highlights included 'pushing myself' and 'meeting other rangatahi living with their grandparents'.



Matariki: Palmerston North - June 2025

On 18 June, VOYCE - partnered with YouthSpace Palmerston North and SuperGrans to host a special Matariki celebration for care-experienced rangatahi. Held at YouthSpace this afternoon of connection and creativity brought together care experienced young people who participated in a range of reflective and empowering activities. One of the highlights of the event was the collective graffiti affirmation canvas, where young people were encouraged to express their hopes, dreams and positive intentions for the year ahead. This Matariki celebration was led by Delia from VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai and Remy from YouthSpace, with support from the team at SuperGrans. It was a real community effort, grounded in aroha, kotahitanga and rangatahi-led energy.



Learn to Surf - Ōtautahi, Christchurch - January 2025

On 24th January, VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai teamed up with Surfwise to give a group of tamariki and rangatahi an unforgettable day of surfing at Waikuku Beach! Thanks to the generous support of Sport Canterbury's Tū Manawa Fund, we created an opportunity for young people in care to connect, challenge themselves and have heaps of fun in the moana. We are so proud of every single person who stepped outside their comfort zone, pushed their limits and celebrated their progress. Some caught their very first waves, while others sharpened their skills. A huge focus of the day was moving our taha tinana (physical bodies), connecting with taha whenua (the moana) and strengthening taha whānau (our VOYCE community).



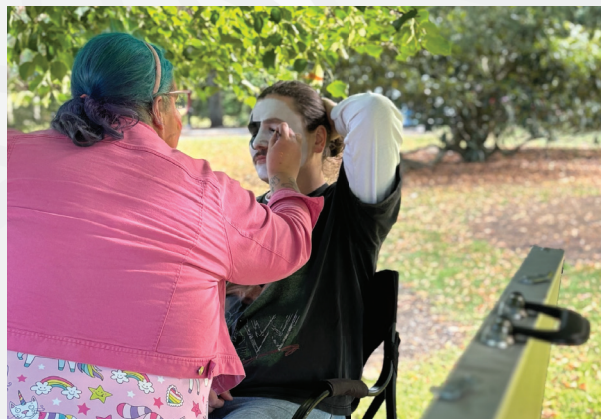
Pool Parties – Ōtautahi, Christchurch – February 25

To kick off the new year and strengthen our connections with whānau in care, VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai hosted two epic Ngā mihi o te Tau Hou pool parties in Canterbury — one at Jellie Park and another at Dudley Park in Kaiapoi. These all-ages, whānau-friendly events were designed to create fun, relaxed spaces where tamariki, rangatahi and caregivers could connect, unwind and simply enjoy being together. At Jellie Park, the energy was sky-high as tamariki hit the hydro slides and showed off their manu skills! Then Kaiapoi took it to the next level. With our biggest turnout so far, we had the entire Dudley Park pool complex to ourselves. The vibe was electric, and once again, our partnership with Caring Families Aotearoa helped create a space where both young people and caregivers could thrive. These events were a powerful reminder of what happens when we create safe, joyful spaces for whānau to come together.



Ashburton Whānau Fun Day – March 2025

Our very first Ashburton Whānau Fun Day was a vibrant celebration of whanaungatanga and community spirit! Held in the stunning Ashburton Domain, this family-friendly afternoon was made possible thanks to an awesome partnership with Caring Families Aotearoa. The event marked an exciting opportunity for us to connect with caregivers and tamariki in a new region where VOYCE hasn't had a strong presence before. With face painting, delicious kai, good tunes and loads of laughter, the vibe was all about fun and connection. A highlight was our VOYCE-led scavenger hunt, which encouraged tamariki to explore the local area, team up and take on fun challenges together. It was a relaxed, feel-good day — a chance to build deeper relationships and spark new ones across Mid-Canterbury.



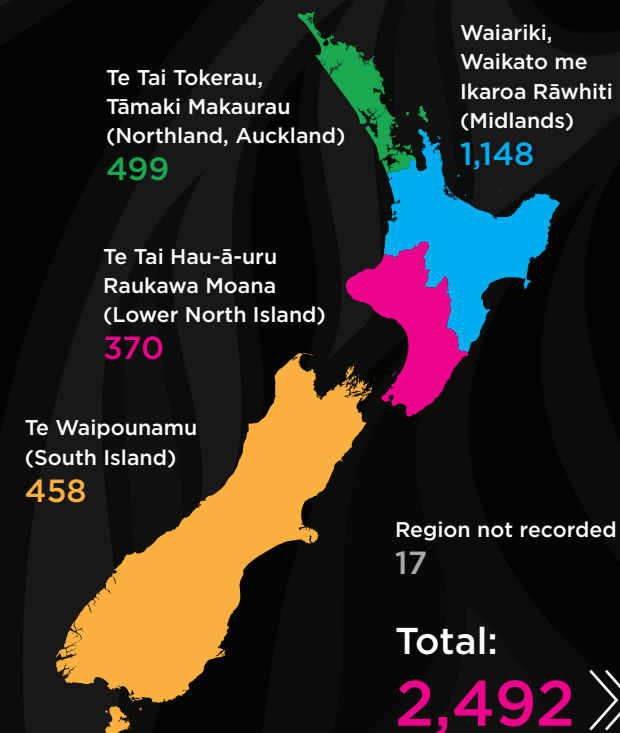
WHAKAMANA

Advocate with children and young people in care.

“RANGATAHI TOLD US:

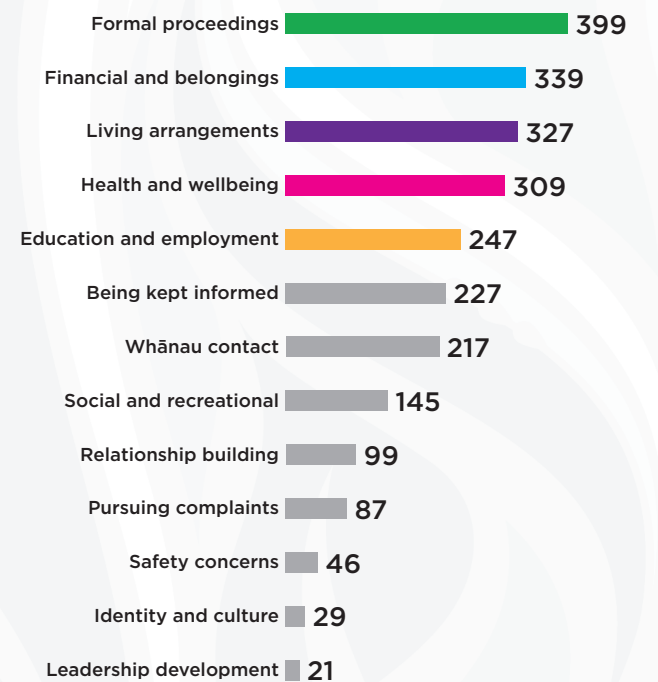
“Advocate with us as individual children and young people in care. Make information about rights and support services available in ways we understand. Support us to advocate for ourselves and others. Support our voice to be heard in decision making and resolution of our concerns. Support our trusted adults to undertake advocacy with us or become that trusted person for us.”

NEW ADVOCACY CASES:

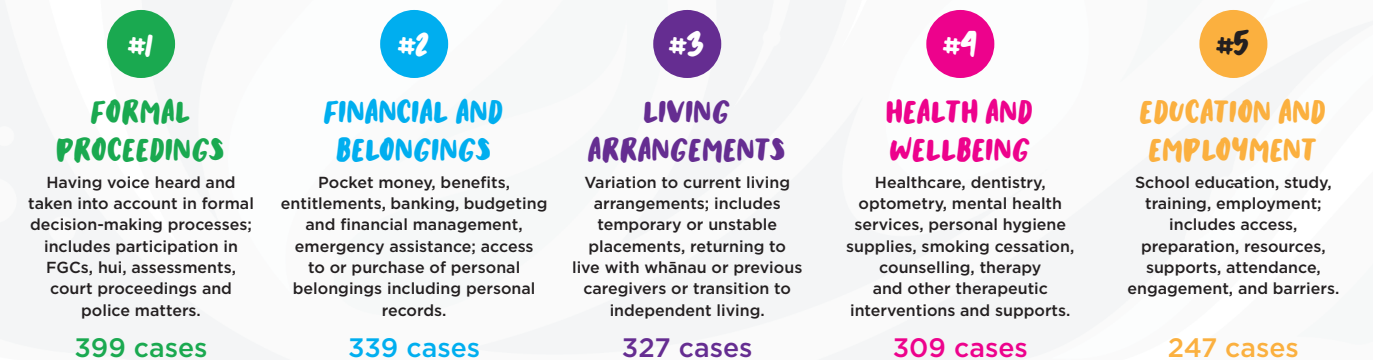


CASE THEMES:

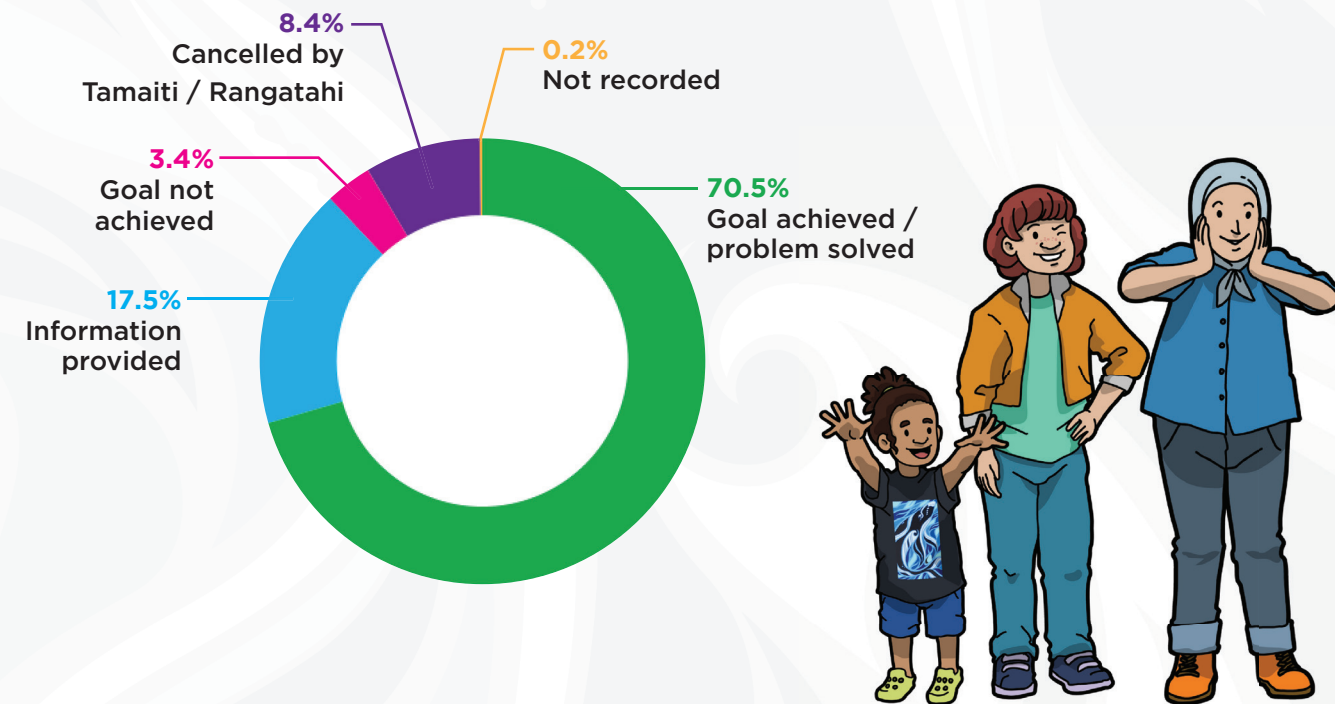
TOTAL: 2,492



TOP 5 THEMES:



ADVOCACY OUTCOMES:



ADVOCACY IMPACT: Whakamana surveys indicated...

How much have we helped you **feel connected** to people you can trust?



How much have we helped you **understand your rights and options?**



How much have we helped you **feel seen and heard** by the adults in your life?



How much have we helped you **have a say in decisions** being made about you?



How much have we helped you **understand decisions** people have made about you and the **reasons** for them?



Overall, how do you feel about the **support you've received** from us?



CASE HIGHLIGHTS:

Advocacy - Removing Barriers to Education

A tamaiti with complex needs longed to experience the everyday life of a “normal kid” - going to school, making friends, and being part of a classroom. However, due to the complexity of their needs and systemic barriers, they were unable to access education. Professionals had previously concluded that mainstream schooling was not an option. Kaimahi advocated ensuring the young person's voice was heard across multiple spaces, including with the Ministry of Education. Through persistent advocacy and collaboration, a youth centred plan was created. As a result, this young person attends school for a few hours a day, three days a week - an achievement once thought impossible. They now enjoy the simple joy of hanging out with peers their own age and participating in the everyday experiences of childhood.

Advocacy - Removing Barriers to Normal Experiences

Two rangatahi in care, both facing cognitive and behavioural challenges due to early trauma, were selected to represent Aotearoa New Zealand in an international basketball tournament. Concerned that their care status might prevent them from travelling, they sought support from their Kaiwhakamana. Through strong advocacy and collaboration across the care system, the necessary documentation was secured, allowing them to participate. This experience removed a significant barrier and enabled them to enjoy a milestone many young people take for granted—travelling overseas for sport. In recognition of their success and perseverance, they were each gifted an Ira, which they proudly described as “the best gift ever”.

He Kōrero Whakamana – A Story of Connection and Courage

A Kaiwhakamana walked alongside a rangatahi transitioning from care into adulthood, responding to their distress with a values-led approach that exemplified our Pou. By initiating a hui that revealed fragmented service communication, the Kaiwhakamana catalysed a new rhythm of collaboration—weekly meetings that kept the rangatahi's voice central. Stepping beyond formal role boundaries, they bridged service silos and championed relational integrity, treating all involved with dignity and respect. This story reflects the transformative power of advocacy, connection, and courageous leadership when rangatahi are truly centred.



Walking Beside Taiohi: A Journey of Advocacy, Healing, and Restoration

Oranga Tamariki and VOYCE worked together over 14 months to support a taiohi through a claims process. The kaupapa was grounded in advocacy and collaboration. Through the process we ensured that the young person's voice was not only heard but deeply valued. The claim has now been finalised and is moving into settlement, representing meaningful recognition. Whilst this cannot erase the maemae; it does create space for healing, restoration of mana and a reaffirmation of the power of taiohi-led change when systems listen and respond with courage and care.

Elevating Rangatahi Voice in Youth Justice

In March 2025, Te Tai Hauāuru Raukawa Moana launched a collaborative initiative between Youth Court Judge Rowe, Te Au Rere (secure youth justice residence) and VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai to ensure rangatahi are heard, seen and meaningfully involved in decisions affecting them. As part of this kaupapa, every secure retention application includes a meeting between the young person and VOYCE, with their feedback sent directly to the Court for judicial consideration. This year, 24 rangatahi have had the opportunity to share their perspectives - often influencing the judge's decisions. This mahi exemplifies the power of constructive, cross-agency advocacy and the impact of elevating youth voice within the justice system.

5 WHAKATAIRANGA

Promote the collective voice of children and young people in care.

66 RANGATAHI TOLD US:

“Promote our collective voice as children and young people in the care system. Help us understand and tell our collective story. Help us to share this story in ways that are safe for us and can influence others. Use the themes and issues we raise to drive system change, by linking to other monitoring and oversight mechanisms in the system.”

KEY WHAKATAIRANGA ACTIVITIES:

7AA Repeal – Oranga Tamariki (Repeal of Section 7AA) Amendment Bill

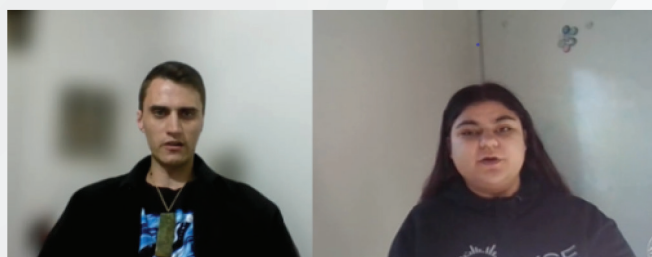
When the government planned to remove Section 7AA, VOYCE and many care-experienced rangatahi spoke out against it, saying that getting rid of 7AA would break the promises made in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, go against tikanga Māori, hurt tamariki and whānau, make Oranga Tamariki less accountable and take away one of the few ways Māori could truly work alongside the Crown in child protection.

VOYCE presented written and oral submissions on this Bill.

In September 2024, Te Tai Tokerau RYC members Bella and Celine presented an oral submission, as well as a National VOYCE team with Lisa McLaren (VOYCE - Te Wai Pounamu Regional Youth Council), Jake Gibbons (VOYCE - Tāmaki Regional Youth Council) and Tupua Ulrich (VOYCE National Care Experienced Lead) bravely stepping up to elevate the collective voice of the care experienced community. All delivered powerful speeches in opposition to the repeal of s7AA.

The Select Committee reported back in November with a majority recommendation that the repeal continue – with opposition parties all disagreeing.

VOYCE continued to fight, creating an open letter style video allowing 12 care experienced rangatira and their tamariki, to speak out on the importance of saving 7AA and urging the public to call their MP’s. Despite all of this, the bill passed its final reading in April and the government went ahead with the section 7AA repeal.

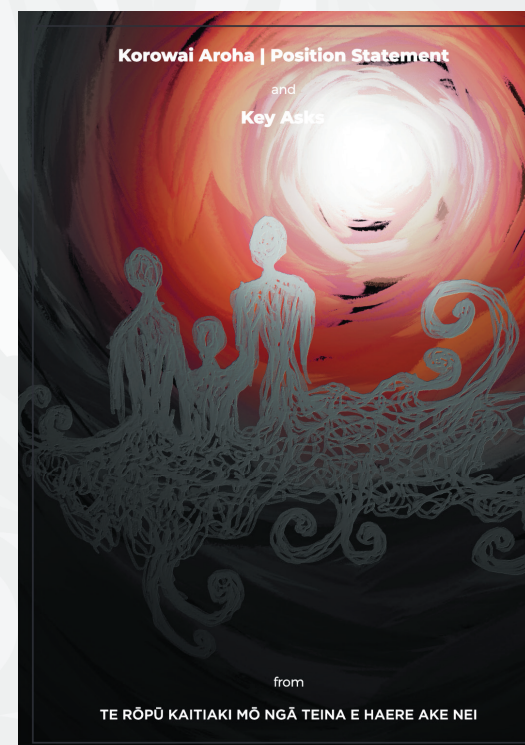


Call your local MP today, and ask them to help #Save7AA

Korowai Aroha – July 2024

Korowai Aroha is an independent submission from VOYCE rangatahi to the Royal Commission into Historical Abuse in State Care. The report details the experiences and key asks of care experienced rangatahi. 11 young people contributed to the now public submission, which outlines 25 key asks and recommendations called the Korowai Aroha Position Statement. Among them was Care Experienced Advocate Ihorangi Reweti Peters who said “Young people shared their experiences of being abused in Oranga Tamariki care, feeling hopeless, alone and scared. The aim of Korowai Aroha is to make sure that the voices of rangatahi are heard and have been acknowledged by the commission”.

The scope of the original inquiry covered the abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults in state and faith-based care from 1950 to 1999, but the investigation also heard from some survivors who were abused since then. VOYCE National Care Experienced Lead Tupua Ulrich says this collective of young voices was formed to help fill the gaps in the original scope set out by the Royal Commission. “The argument was that abuse did not magically stop in 1999, and any recommendations for change to our care and protection, as well as youth justice systems need to be informed by all those who have lived with the effects of it. Instead of care and protection, they received trauma and abuse at the hands of those in positions of trust and authority. Having this submission recognised by the Royal Commission validates the brave mahi of our young people to share their experiences and spark change”.



Government Apology for Abuse in Care – November 2024

Care-experienced young people across Aotearoa witnessed a moment that’s now etched in our history as the Government delivered its public apology to survivors. VOYCE kaimahi supported young people across the motu.

“The national apology wasn’t a day of justice; it was a day of acknowledgement. It was an opportunity for the public to learn about the harsh realities faced by those who spent time in state and faith-based care institutions for several decades. As survivors, we didn’t need to hear the word sorry to know that what we have been through was real, and that the crown was ultimately responsible for it all. For us as advocates, there is no time to stop and take a breath, because we all know that young people are still suffering from the same abuse that the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition apologised for. The apology came as a result of decades of advocacy from survivors, their whānau, community, and advocates. If anything, I hope that day serves as a reminder to ngā whānau morehu – our communities, of the importance of continuing to advocate for positive change.” – Tupua Ulrich, Care Experienced Advocate



Care Experienced Pop-Up Museum – Ōtautahi – January 25

In January 2025, we were thrilled to be part of the very first Care Experienced Pop-Up Museum in Aotearoa – a powerful space for care-experienced rangatira to share their stories and lived experiences. This is just the beginning! As this project grows, look out for more pop-up museums across the motu.



“Whakarongo” Podcast by VOYCE – Amplifying Care-Experienced Voices

By Sydney-anne, VOYCE’s Creative Communications and Content Lead, and podcast host.

When I joined VOYCE in 2020, one of the first things care-experienced young people told me was, “VOYCE needs a podcast.” By 2024, after presenting our 6 Promises Campaign to the Government, I knew the time had come. We filmed six episodes, each with two guests - 12 incredible stories in total. Afterward, we headed into post-production with the team at Crescendo. Since publishing the series, more young people have reached out keen to share their stories. To me, that’s proof that our young people are beginning to believe their voices matter. Separate from my mahi at VOYCE, I’m still just a care-experienced adult navigating life after a childhood that didn’t prepare me for the world. That’s why this podcast means so much to me. If it helps one child in care to feel less alone or motivates one decision-maker to invite care-experienced young people to the decision-making table, then it will all have been worth it.

If you’d like to watch, or listen to Whakarongo, you can do so here:

- [Youtube](#): @VOYCEWhakarongoMai
- [Spotify](#): Whakarongo Podcast
- [Apple Podcast](#): Whakarongo Podcast



Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill

A VOYCE written submission on this Bill was submitted on 7 January. VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai strongly opposed this Bill.

VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai did not support the suggested referendums and advocated for this Bill to be abandoned in its entirety.

Ram Raids Bill (Bill scrapped)

The Ram Raids Bill, that VOYCE strongly opposed, was dropped in early 2025. Voices of rangatahi, including youth justice experienced rangatira, Taumata and Connor, at Select Committee, and our collective organising and public advocacy was heard. This was a win. However, elements of the Ram Raid Bill were taken forward into other Bills.

Challenging the populist tough-on-crime rhetoric and advocating for better interventions and supports for children in conflict with the law continues to be a priority area for VOYCE advocacy.

Oranga Tamariki (Responding to Serious Youth Offending) Ammendment Bill

VOYCE joined with more than 20 other organisations advocating for the rights of children to write an open letter to Prime Minister Christopher Luxon about the risk the Boot Camp Bill poses to children.

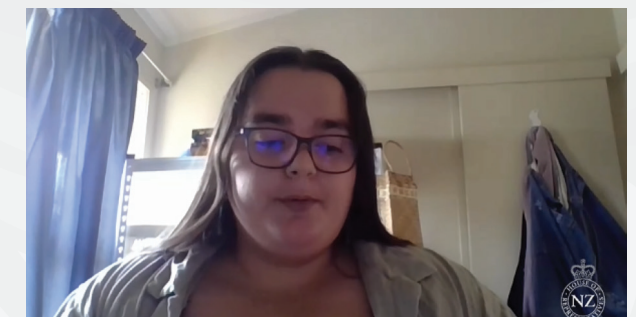
The letter called on the Prime Minister to #KillTheBill

VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai strongly opposed this Bill in our written submission in January.

VOYCE made a total of 15 recommendations, including:

- Redirect the funding for the military-style academy into the existing youth justice and care and protection system to allow earlier broader and more intentional interventions that have a therapeutic, trauma-informed, wrap-around approach.
- Take the time to develop systems, supports and services in consultation with the tamariki and rangatahi this Bill impacts.
- Stop the progress of this Bill through parliament until a full review of the military-style academy pilot has been undertaken and can inform any future programmes of support for young people in conflict with the law.
- Ensure the Bill is child and young people focused and is in the best interest of children.
- Take the time to develop systems, supports and services in consultation with Māori to address the persistent inequities for Māori in the Youth Justice system.

VOYCE Rangatira, Kaia and Abbi, presented an oral submission at Select Committee on 14 February.



SELECT COMMITTEE SUBMISSIONS:



Oversight of Oranga Tamariki System Legislation Amendment Bill

A VOYCE written submission on this bill was submitted in December. VOYCE was largely supportive of the changes proposed.

VOYCE made further recommendations, including: Increasing Māori and care experienced representation on the Board of the ICM; mandating greater co-ordination and collaboration in the oversight system; including a commitment to implementing the Royal Commission’s recommendations; increasing personal accountability for failing to meet standards for the Chief Executives of Oranga Tamariki and other relevant Departments; and allowing the Chief Children’s Commissioner to fulfil their full 5-year term.

Mary-Lynn Huxford and Tupua Urlich delivered VOYCE’s Oral Submission to the Social Services and Community Select Committee on Friday 20 December.

Responding to Abuse in Care Legislation Amendment Bill

A VOYCE written submission on this bill was submitted in December. VOYCE was largely supportive of the changes proposed.

VOYCE made a further 11 recommendations, including: prioritising the Government’s response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care; taking stronger steps to ensure that the grouping of tamariki and rangatahi in Youth Justice residences is relevant to their age cohort, needs and status; fast tracking strategies that reduce the length of time young people are held in remand; stronger regulation of the use of ‘secure care’; prioritising funding of scanners to replace pat-down searches in residences; and mandating recording and public reporting of data regarding the use of force against children in residences.

Tupua Urlich and Ihorangi Reweti-Peters delivered VOYCE’s Oral Submission to the Social Services and Community Select Committee on Wednesday 18 December.



MEDIA:



Korowai Aroha – July 2024

The voices and key asks of 11 rangatahi who experienced abuse while in state care after 1999 were detailed in an independent submission to the Royal Commission and released to the public.

Aroturuki Tamariki Report: Poutasi Recommendations – August 2024

There was deep frustration and concern from those working closely with care experienced tamariki saying the release of a report from Aroturuki Tamariki, the Independent Children’s Monitor, proved there’s a serious lack of protection for our most vulnerable children. The report, which looked at the implementation of the recommendations from Dame Karen Poutasi following the death of 5-year-old Malachi Subecz, revealed tamariki are no safer now than when Malachi died.

Care experienced young people rallied against section 7AA repeal ahead of second reading – December 2024

Care-experienced rangatahi pleaded with the government to reconsider the move to repeal section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act.

Our Kids Need New Boots Not Boot Camps This Xmas – December 2024

VOYCE collaborated on a letter to the Prime Minister appealing for a stop to Boot Camps. “As we approach Christmas, we are sure that you, like many other Kiwis around Aotearoa, are thinking about your kids, your hopes and dreams for them, what joy and love you can share with them on Christmas Day. As many of us enjoy time with our families, there will be children in prison on Christmas Day across New Zealand. The gift we ask for this Christmas is that you kill the Bill – engage with the community, with hāpū, with iwi, to seek further advice and expertise from the sector and wider community so that together we can tackle both the real causes and consequences of child offending.”

Aroturuki Tamariki Report: Care Standards – February 2025

As the fourth Aroturuki Tamariki Independent Children’s Monitor report into National Care Standards was released, there was disappointment and frustration that tamariki and rangatahi in care are still not receiving the bare minimum set out by the regulations.

ABUSE DID NOT MAGICALLY STOP IN 1999, AND ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE TO OUR CARE AND PROTECTION, AS WELL AS YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEMS NEED TO BE INFORMED BY ALL THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED WITH THE EFFECTS OF IT.

"WE CAN'T KEEP RAISING THESE ISSUES AND DOING NOTHING ABOUT THEM."

UPHOLDING 7AA IS ESSENTIAL - NOT ONLY FOR THE PROTECTION OF MĀORI CHILDREN IN THE STATE CARE SYSTEM, BUT ALSO FOR THE RECOGNITION OF THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE EQUITABLE TREATMENT FOR ALL CITIZENS.

IT WILL CRIMINALISE CHILDREN, INCARCERATE MORE OF THEM IN PRISONS, AND KEEP THEM THERE FOR LONGER. AS MANY PEOPLE ENJOY TIME WITH THEIR FAMILIES, THERE WILL BE CHILDREN IN PRISON ON CHRISTMAS DAY ACROSS NEW ZEALAND.

It's not ok to take a child and place them in a system that fails to meet their most basic care needs. So I ask New Zealanders, "Do you think this care system would be good enough for your child to be in?"

7AA Repeal Passes – April 2025

Legislation stripping Treaty provisions from the Oranga Tamariki Act passed its third and final reading in Parliament and was granted royal assent by the Governor General, leaving many concerned about what this will mean for the many young Māori in care.

Government budget announcement – May 2025

The 2025 Budget didn’t prioritise care-experienced tamariki and rangatahi — and that’s not good enough. There was disappointment among care-experienced rangatahi and their advocates that relevant funding from the budget focussed on punishment instead of addressing the underlying cause of youth offending.

Government’s response to the Redress Recommendations in the Royal Commission of Inquiry over abuse in state care – May 2025

There was disappointment among care-experienced rangatahi after the government opted against setting up a new compensation scheme for survivors of abuse in state care – instead choosing to sink more money into the current system.

Aroturuki Tamariki Report: Outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau – June 2025

“How many more reports will it take?” – Advocates call on government to act as Independent Children’s Monitor reveals poorer outcomes for Māori in care. Aroturuki Tamariki shared their report looking into outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori in care. Māori tamariki are being let down by the care system, with overrepresentation in every part of the system. But the facts are clear: early help could change their futures.

Government’s response to the Royal Commission of Inquiry’s recommendations over abuse in state care – June 2025

“15 years is too long to wait for change” – Care-experienced rangatahi concerned response to Royal Commission won’t stop history repeating. There was relief that the government released its full response to the Royal Commission of Inquiry’s recommendations over abuse in state care, but care-experienced advocates say there needs to be more reassurance that the atrocities of the past won’t be repeated. The government responded to the Royal Commission into Abuse in Care - but with less than half the recommendations accepted, care-experienced rangatahi are still waiting for real safety.

“LISTEN AND HEAR US, FOR **WE ARE TIRED OF REPEATING OURSELVES.**”

The system has failed these young people and the agency and community organisations who are trying to support them are being stripped of funding and resources.

“It’s just another broken promise by this government, and I’m really angry that they aren’t following the very clearly mapped out path laid out for them by the Royal Commission.”

“The evidence is clear; address the issues that lead to youth offending in the first place, and stop criminalising traumatised and disenfranchised tamariki.”

“15 YEARS IS TOO LONG TO WAIT FOR CHANGE.”

6 WHAI PŪKENGA

Help equip children and young people in care for their future.

“RANGATAHI TOLD US:

“Equip us for our future. Teach us skills that can promote our wellbeing; our health, our relationships, our recreation, our education and employments. Partner with others so that we can benefit from opportunities and experiences that are fun and challenging.”

VOYCE Rights Charter

VOYCE launched a new Rights Poster designed to help tamariki and rangatahi in care - and their trusted adults - better understand their rights. While many receive a copy of My Rights, My Voice from Oranga Tamariki, we know that these rights are often forgotten or misunderstood. To support better access and lasting awareness, our young people helped us create a visually engaging Rights Poster. Through our Regional Offices and stakeholder networks, VOYCE has been busy distributing and displaying these posters with the aim to have these on display wherever children and young people in care might see them.



Residential Care: Rights Comic Books

VOYCE worked with Oranga Tamariki to create comic books for tamariki and rangatahi in residences to help them better understand their rights while in care.



Media Training

At VOYCE, we believe it's essential that care-experienced young people feel confident sharing their stories - on their terms. We are committed to empowering our youth to tell their stories in ways that uplift their mana and highlight their resilience. Media training helps them to develop the skills to engage with media in a way that protects their mana, empowers their voices and sets clear boundaries on what they choose to share. Huge thanks to Wilhelmina Shrimpton and Sydney-anne Martin for supporting our Regional Youth Councils this year by guiding our rangatahi through media workshops and practice interviews. This hands-on experience helps our young people prepare to share their powerful stories confidently and safely with journalists.



New Website Launched

Our new VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai website launched in the middle of last year with a fresh new look and specific tailored sections for Tamariki and Rangatahi.

Creative Rōpū

VOYCE appointed a Creative Rōpū of 5 care experienced young people who have been meeting monthly as a steering group for creative communications projects from VOYCE. They are helping steer the direction of our creative work. Group members are Gray Williams (Christchurch), Ella Thompson (Dunedin), Sara McLaughlin (Pōneke), Temipara Ngaroroa (Hawkes Bay) and Abbi Bramwell (Hamilton). The Creative Rōpū is being led by Creative Communications and Content Lead, Sydney-anne Martin, with cultural support from Hunia. So far, the group have worked on a diverse range of projects, from new VOYCE Stickers to T-shirts, to the new VOYCE Comic Book and Tamariki and Rangatahi Magazines.

Rangatahi Magazine. Ella and Gray from VOYCE's Creative Rōpū are co-leading the Rangatahi Magazine project. They have been meeting with a rōpū of other care experienced rangatira once a month (online).

Tamariki Magazine. We're working with a group of tamariki in Tāmaki to create a new magazine for tamariki in care. This project is being co-led by Abbi - a member of VOYCE's Creative Rōpū. Abbi has been doing an amazing job at this - and all of the tamariki adore her! We can't wait for the finished product to be enjoyed by all tamariki!

L'Oreal for Youth - September 2024

We're thrilled to be part of L'Oréal for Youth (formerly Face Your Future) with L'Oréal New Zealand and Caring Families Aotearoa.

This event is all about empowering our amazing care-experienced rangatahi, celebrating their strength, and helping them feel beautiful - inside and out.



Foster Youth Museum - USA trip - March 2025

In March, a group of VOYCE kaimahi and rangatira travelled to California, USA, for a unique training opportunity with the Foster Youth Museum. The purpose of the trip was to train up a group of care experienced young adults to host and curate our own Care Experienced Museum in Aotearoa following a successful pilot of a museum pop-up in Ōtautahi, Christchurch - a powerful showcase of stories from rangatahi with lived experience in care. Wanting to build on this momentum, they connected with the team at California Youth Connection, a youth-led NGO that has been empowering foster youth since 2006. With their long-standing expertise in curating the Foster Youth Museum, they were the perfect mentors to guide our Aotearoa Care Experienced Youth Museum Advisory Group. With the support of Tayla Taylor (Kaiārahi - Ōtautahi), Tracie Shipton (VOYCE CEO), and Jamie Lee Evans (VOYCE ally and Executive Director of the Foster Youth Museum), VOYCE rangatira Saron, Jake and Amanda spent a transformative week in California - immersed in learning, storytelling and inspiration.



Saron: “For me, the trip to California was life changing. It was a trip that I never felt like I could, or would do - and I'll be forever grateful for the opportunity. Meeting young people with similar backgrounds, even in another country - feels like you've known them a lifetime and I've made a few friendships that I will carry with me forever, including international mentors.”

Amanda: “Knowing that what we experience in the New Zealand foster system is similar to almost anywhere overseas, and seeing it, hearing it and understanding it, absolutely blew my mind. Having the chance to meet and spend time with such resilient and kind hearted young people is an opportunity I will always be grateful for. I am proud of the organisations who are on the frontline, working for the current young people in the system, and the support provided to those who have 'aged out'.”

Jake: “Travelling from Aotearoa to the United States was more than just a trip; it was a powerful journey of reconnection, learning and pride. As a care-experienced rangatahi and advocate with VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai, being chosen to travel overseas and work alongside the Foster Youth Museum team was a deeply meaningful experience I will carry with me for the rest of my life.”



7 RANGATIRATANGA

Build leadership among children and young people in care.

66 RANGATAHI TOLD US:

“Build our leadership as children and young people in the care system. Invest in our training and development to grow our ability to be leaders in our own lives. Support our role in shaping, evaluating and holding to account services provided to children and young people in care and the wider care system. Involve us increasingly in the leadership, governance and delivery of this service and others.”

PRESENTATIONS:



Presentation of 6 Promises to Child Rights Symposium

Voices Unite To Call For Action On Children's Rights. VOYCE rangatira shared their powerful voices at the Children's Monitoring Group's Children's Rights Symposium in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington on 1 August 2024.

This event brought together children and young people, advocates and decision-makers, to discuss progress needed to improve life for all children in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Youth Justice Conference Presentation – February 2025

In February, our Tāmaki team had the privilege of attending the Youth Justice Conference with Blue Light. It was an incredible opportunity to share the mahi of VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai, presenting powerful insights on our work advocating for tamariki and rangatahi in care.



Kia Tika, Kia Pono – Presentation to SSPA conference – September 2024

Members of the VOYCE team had a fantastic couple of days at the Te Pai Ora o Aotearoa (SSPA) conference in Ōtautahi in September.

They presented on Kia Tika, Kia Pono and VOYCE's mahi in the consultation and co-design process that we undertake with care experienced young people.

You can read more about Kia Tika, Kia Pono here: voyce.org.nz/kia-tika-kia-pono



YOUTH LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Prime Minister's Oranga Tamariki Awards (PMOTA)

VOYCE celebrated four of our care experienced rangatira at the 2025 Prime Minister's Oranga Tamariki Awards ceremony on Tuesday 24 June in Te Whanganui-a-Tara.

- Frances Ratima, Ikaroa-Rāwhiti – Te Rakahinonga Auaha - Creative Entrepreneur award sponsored by Kia Puāwai
- Daniel Nicholas, Ikaroa-Rāwhiti – Te Iho Pūmanawa - Whakamana Tangata: Inspired and Empowered Rangatahi award sponsored by VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai
- Aaliyah Davies, Tāmaki Makaurau – Te Iho Pūmanawa - Whakamana Tangata: Inspired and Empowered Rangatahi award sponsored by William Wallace Trust
- Heyleh Murdoch, Ikaroa-Rāwhiti – Te Mahi ā-Rehe - Skills and Technology Achiever sponsored by William Wallace Trust



Te Tiriti Hīkoi

The hīkoi against the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill brought 100,000 people to Parliament, turning the Capital into a sea of black, white, and red. Among them were VOYCE kaimahi and advocates, standing strong for Te Tiriti.

Child and Youth Strategy

In 2019, the first Child and Youth Strategy was launched by the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction. Why? To improve the lives of kiwi kids, especially those living in poverty and in state care. In November 2024, the 2024-2027 Child and Youth strategy was launched at NZ Parliament. Tupua and Mary-Lynn represented VOYCE.

Identify Reports

Four reports presenting findings from the Identify Survey regarding the experiences of rainbow young people with Oranga Tamariki involvement were published in August 2024. Kat, Gray, Karah and Oliver worked with the University of Auckland to create insights from the survey data, and co-authored the reports. Amazing work!



STATEMENT FROM THE CEO & BOARD CHAIR

Kia ora tātou

It is a privilege to present our eighth annual report, highlighting the incredible work and transformative efforts of care-experienced young people across the motu.

After eight years, we are no longer a new organisation; we are one continually shaped by the evolving experiences of our young people.

Our vision: *“Children in care have a strong voice and live with dignity, hope, and opportunity. Kia eke pānuku te reo o ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi, e ora ai tō rātou mana”* - encapsulates our commitment to the future of our care experienced community. This past year has been one of progress and transformation, deeply influenced by the innovative spirit and unwavering resolve of our remarkable care experienced rangatahi and tamariki. Their dedication to systems advocacy has been crucial in reshaping narratives and driving meaningful change.

We wish to acknowledge the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State and Faith Based Care and the report Whanaketia, tabled this year, with its 138 recommendations aimed at addressing historic wrongs and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of tamariki in the future. To our incredible staff, who have walked alongside young people through the weighty journey of engaging with the Royal Commission and the National Apology, their commitment and support in this process have not only acknowledged past wounds but have also charted a path towards new beginnings and hopeful futures.

Our name, VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai (Voices of the Young and Care Experienced – Listen to me) stands at the heart of our mission; turning the collective voices of the tamariki we support into actionable themes for change. Through strong partnerships with Oranga Tamariki’s Voices Team, Mana Mokopuna, Aroturuki Tamariki and Caring Families Aotearoa, we have ensured that the collective voices of young people echo far and wide, influencing the systems that serve them.

We are incredibly grateful for our staff, whose commitment to our values shines through in every interaction with our care community. Their compassionate engagement through events, advocacy and support exemplifies the beautiful ways we connect and serve.

A special thank you goes to those who sustain our organisation’s financial health. Our philanthropic funders and stakeholders who journey with us are indispensable, providing the foundation for our continued success and impact.

Together, through authentic governance and the active inclusion of care-experienced young people, we are building a future where our community leads with confidence and purpose. Let’s continue this journey, inspired by the strength of our community and our shared vision.

Ngā mihi nui



Jeff Sanders

Jeff Sanders
Board Chair
VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai



Tracie Shipton

Tracie Shipton
Tumu Whakarae
Chief Executive
VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai



FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE REVENUE AND EXPENSES

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
INCOME FROM NON EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS		
Donations and Grants Received	700,704	642,855
INCOME FROM EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS		
Contract Income Government	6,397,500	6,857,474
Gain on Disposal	3	18,649
Interest Received	276,064	254,664
Other Income	-	503
Dividends Received	610	604
Total Income	7,374,880	7,774,749
LESS EXPENSES		
Audit Fees	10,985	10,855
Donations and Koha	51,703	2,623
Employee Expenses	5,153,712	5,007,131
Rents	376,629	385,630
Service Delivery Expenses	1,421,196	1,518,046
Trustees Fees and Expenses	118,017	112,776
Total Expenses	7,132,242	7,037,061
Net Surplus Before Depreciation Adjustments	242,639	737,689
LESS DEPRECIATION ADJUSTMENTS		
Depreciation	166,035	230,834
Loss on Disposal	9,905	7,473
Total Less Depreciation Adjustments	175,941	238,307
NET SURPLUS	66,698	499,381

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2025

CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	5,793,062	5,435,112
Accrued Income	16,597	22,371
Trade and Other Receivables	2,921	23,000
GST Receivable	20,023	31,869
Prepayments	50,132	49,276
Total Current Assets	5,882,736	5,561,629
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, Plant and Equipment	375,939	510,033
TOTAL ASSETS	6,258,675	6,071,662
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	333,683	409,753
Accrued Expenses	35,904	33,323
Accrued Expenses – Employee Entitlements	309,388	268,302
Income in Advance – Current	418,344	265,624
Total Current Liabilities	1,097,319	977,003
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,097,319	977,003
NET ASSETS	5,161,356	5,094,659
EQUITY		
Retained Earnings	5,161,356	5,094,659
TOTAL EQUITY	5,161,356	5,094,659

KIA TOROTIKA TE WHIU O TE KUPU, WHAKATAIRANGA AKE, WHAKATAIRANGA AKE!

Let the **message** be **direct** /
to the point, for all to take heed!

This whakatauki speaks of the **power of the words**
of **young people in care** and the importance of
ensuring their **message reaches** everyone's hearts
and minds.



0800 486 923 | [voyce.org.nz](https://www.voyce.org.nz)



VOYCEWhakarongoMai



VOYCENZ



voyce_whakarongomai



VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai

LOCATION MAP

MAP LEGEND:



Operating offices

