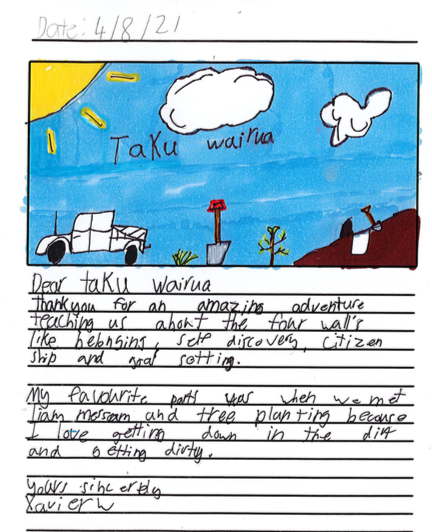
10/1/2021

Fiona Budge

Independent Consultant

Taku Wairua Evaluation



****

If Taku Wairua would be an object what would it be?

*“A bird because Taku Wairua helps you to fly and go higher”*

(Child Participant)

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# Executive Summary

Introduction

This report outlines steps taken and findings of the Taku Wairua Programme evaluation, this programme was delivered to six schools in the Waikato region. The report presents methods used in the evaluation, a description of the analysis, findings, a discussion and the conclusion.

The programme aims to empower, assist and advance children’s confidence and pride. It is delivered fortnightly, in ten sessions, within two school terms. A variety of approaches were adopted in the programme, including high profile guest speakers, interactive activities, games, discussions and an excursion. All children were given a Taku Wairua workbook to record their impressions and progress. Each session had two facilitators to deliver the content and support the interactive activities.

Background

The Taku Wairua Programme evolved from the WaterBoy Project, a project aiming to open opportunities for children from under resourced backgrounds, to participate in sport, by providing financial and moral support. Sport is recognised by the WaterBoy as being an integral part of growing up in New Zealand, and an area where everyone is on an equal playing field, a space where cultural, racial, language or social inequities are minimised. Furthermore, sport was perceived as a test of character, humility, preparation, cooperation and skill. After few years into the project, however, it became apparent a more diverse programme was required to support children needing direction.

The programme centres around four pillars, *belonging and identity*, *self-discovery*, *goal setting* and *citizenship.* An underlying concept of all pillars is ‘growth mindset’. Dweck, a proponent of this concept claims “… the view you adopt for yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life” (2007, p. 1). Contrasting a growth mindset with a fixed mindset, she highlights how people with fixed mindsets tend to believe inherent qualities are set in stone and subject themselves to considerable pressure by creating an urgency to prove oneself over and over. What more, Dweck, cautions fixed mindsets may lead to inaccurate perceptions of self, are demotivating and often result in people accepting inappropriate and unproductive situations. A growth mindset, however, is driven by the belief, basic qualities we possess can be nurtured by exerting some effort, developing strategies and accepting assistance from others (*ibid*). The Taku Wairua rogramme has embraced this concept and integrated it into their activities with the children.

Significantly, the four pillarscentral to the Taku Wairua programme, closely align with principals in Kaupapa Māori, a New Zealand Ministry of Education concept, where children are viewed within a complex context of rich traditions, encompassing, whānau, hapū, iwi, history, whakapapa and identity.

Emphasis is purposefully given to Māori cultural concepts. One of the central tenets of the programme is knowledge of one’s own whakapapa, with the understanding children having knowledge of their whakapapa will help meet the aims of programme. Whakapapa embraces values of connectedness, relationships, responsibility and reciprocity, values the programme aims to nurture.

Purpose and aims of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the Taku Wairua Programme. As the programme is at the end of its inception phase, and given the interest in the programme by other schools, it was important to evaluate it. A timely evaluation was expected to increase the impact of the programme for future participants. The findings will be used to support funding applications for delivery of the programme to other schools. Primarily, qualitative methods were used to explore the programme’s intended and unintended effects at individual participant levels, and effects inside and outside the school environment.

## Main Objective of the Programme

To provide learning opportunities for children to acquire knowledge, skills, techniques and practices that will contribute to serving them well in today’s world and help set them up for the future. These learning opportunities should be complementary to, but not duplicating learnings in their own curriculum.

## Specific Objectives

Children will:

* Have fun
* Gain a stronger sense of belonging
* Gain a stronger sense of personal and family identity
* Gain an increased sense of pride in themselves
* Gain an increased self-awareness
* Gain an increased sense of gratitude
* Gain an increased awareness into the benefits of giving and volunteering
* Gain an increased sense of pro-social behaviour
* Learn and implement growth mindset principles
* Increase knowledge and awareness of goal setting principles

Methodology

The evaluation used a mixed methods design to capture experiences and subjective understandings of participating students and a range of key informants with insight into the effects of the programme.

The quantitative component comprised a *simple survey* completed before the program (*pre-survey*) and repeated after the program (*post-survey*). A ranking exercise, regarding activities in the programme, was done with 14 children in the final set of interviews.

The qualitative component consisted of *semi-structured interviews* with two sets of participants: school children who participated in the programme, and key informants within the school context. A *Focus Group Discussion* was held with team members of the Taku Wairua Programme. An online questionnaire, with open ended questions, was delivered to parents and teachers.

Findings

The programme was enthusiastically received by the children, parents and schools in which it was delivered. A number of attributing factors were identified to account for it being so well received and considered successful, among others these included: firstly, it was fun, and this ensured children were enthusiastic and were highly engaged in the activities; secondly, it afforded the children a welcome measure of freedom, it was not infrequently mentioned by children that the Taku Wairua facilitators were not strict and for many children this was a positive aspect of the programme; thirdly, it was well-run, the organisation of the programme was considered to be smooth and complementary and this was highly valued by the children and schools, in particular the positive and proactive responsiveness of the Taku Wairua team to feedback.

There was some discrepancy about how challenging the programme was. Some children found this a positive aspect of the programme and enjoyed being ‘stretched’ for others it was too difficult at times, especially for children with reading and writing difficulties.

The guest speakers coming in to meet and talk with the children was a big hit for the children and for many this was the highlight of the programme. Some teachers and indeed some of the Taku Wairua team acknowledged some changes may be needed here. It was suggested some more diversity among guest speakers, especially in regard to their skill sets may be needed.

The emphasis on Māori culture and its embracing Kaupapa Māori principles was valued, by almost all respondents. ﻿These principles promote self-determination of all participants within non-dominating, power-sharing relations of interdependence, where culture is central, learning is interactive, family- type relationships are foundational, and participants (both in and beyond the school) are connected and committed to one another through the establishment of a common vision for what constitutes educational excellence[[1]](#footnote-1). A concern mentioned by some parents and a member of the Taku Wairua team, was that this emphasis could have excluded some children as some concepts were thought to be a little difficult for non-Māori children to relate to. Findings in the literature, however, pointed to the benefits of these principals for children of all ethnicities. The benefits of Kaupapa Māori are deemed to outweigh any potential negative impacts.

Aspects of the programme considered in a more negative light included the perceived academic complexity of the programme for some children, where some concepts were thought to be too difficult for some children to grasp. More communication with teachers and parents, especially in the early stages of the programme, could have been better. This has, however, been addressed and to some extent negated as there were several positive comments about the responsiveness of the Taku Wairua team to feedback from teachers. Some parents felt they were in the dark about the programme and would appreciate more information being given to them. Finally, the most frequently mentioned critique concerned the sedentary nature of a number of activities with the thought that there was, at times, too much talking and bookwork, with kids sitting for too long on mats.

Overall, however, findings in this evaluation were overwhelmingly positive about the programme and its effectiveness in terms of positively impacting on the children’s sense of belonging, connectedness and pride.

Conclusions

The Taku Wairua Programme aimed to support and provide direction to young children by advancing their sense of belonging and identity, self-discovery, goal setting abilities and their awareness of citizenship. It was designed in response to a perceived need, of its architects, to support children from vulnerable backgrounds searching for direction. Taku Wairua translates, to My Spirit, in English, and is rooted in Māori cosmology and spirituality. It embraces the sanctity of people by positioning them in time, space and place, and acknowledges the formative impact of current and past contexts that shape them.

Ten specific objectives were formulated for the project and there is no doubt this programme achieved these aims. It has been enthusiastically welcomed and highly valued by the all groups involved in this evaluation. A few areas of improvement are needed, however, none that suggest this programme should not be funded. It should continue and be delivered to more school

Recommendations

This programme should continue and be fully funded. Recommendations from respondents in this evaluation, would more accurately be described as ‘tweaks’ to the programme to make even better a programme that has received high praise from all stakeholders. The programme needs tweaking in terms of using more energizers to keep children engaged, ensure more child-friendly terms and concepts are used and collaborate with teachers to ensure children know what to expect in upcoming sessions.

Make use of Māori games and cultural activities to reinforce the Kaupapa lens the programme already adopts. Ensure guest speakers and facilitators on the programme are relatable to targeted children, by recruiting a diverse team in terms of skills, gender and ethnicity. Communicate more with teachers and parents to ensure ‘buy-in’ for the programme. The final recommendation, from participants, was to adjust time management to ensure the pace suits as many children as possible. Both teachers and parents recommended the programme be delivered weekly, not fortnightly, to maintain enthusiasm levels and continuity of the programme.

As an evaluator, I strongly recommend this programme continue and receive enough funding to ensure it is delivered as effectively and efficiently as possible. This can be achieved by increasing delivery frequency, recruiting appropriate staff and guest speakers with whom the children can relate and ensuring supplies for the programme are available. Furthermore, I recommend it assume an even more participatory nature for the programme. Children are agents of change and their voice needs to be heard and valued. This can be accomplished by several means, including participatory action research methods, such as photovoice and participatory video. These methods have received considerable attention in social science and are recognised as effective research methods when aiming to facilitate social change[[2]](#footnote-2).

# Introduction

The WaterBoy, a Waikato-wide Project supported by Te Tamawai[[3]](#footnote-3) Trust, has a core focus on sport and creating opportunities for children, from under resourced backgrounds, to participate in a sport of their choice. Since its inception in 2019, their programmes have been delivered to individuals and primary schools in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions by the Te Tamawai Trust staff members and representatives of community partners from various sporting bodies, businesses and organisations.

Four years into the project it became apparent that, in addition to sport, there are other ways to support children searching for direction. This realisation led to the development of the Taku Wairua[[4]](#footnote-4) Programme. Wairua originates in Māori cosmology and is connected to spirituality and the sanctity of people, their inherent attributes which help define them in time, space and locality (Ministry of Education, 2009). The Taku Wairua programme centres around the following four pillars reflecting principles outlined in the New Zealand Ministry of Education Kaupapa[[5]](#footnote-5) Māori document, namely that “Kaupapa Māori does not view the child in isolation. It recognises that the child emerges from rich traditions, surrounded by whānau, both visible and invisible, living and dead. It recognises that the child is strongly linked with his or her whānau [[6]](#footnote-6), hapū[[7]](#footnote-7), iwi[[8]](#footnote-8), history, whakapapa[[9]](#footnote-9), and identity” (Hemara, cited in Ministry of Education, 2009, p.4). In line with this philosophy, the Taku Wairua Programme team reached out to schools in the Waikato District, where they could deliver a programme aiming to assist young people and advance their sense of belonging and identity, self-discovery, goal setting, and citizenship.

This evaluation took place primarily in the school context with regular encounters with the evaluator/s over the course of the evaluation. In the first two terms of 2021, the programme was delivered to students between the ages of eight and eleven years in six schools in the Waikato. The programme was delivered in ten one-hour sessions.

The relationship with many schools and students is longstanding and precedes the programme, and will be maintained beyond the programme and the evaluation. Some students and schools have already received and/or could go on to receive other support from Te Tamawai Trust through its sponsorships, such as Ara ki te Mahi,[[10]](#footnote-10) Equine Days and The WaterBoy run activities: Dabble Days and Everybody’s Game. These programmes were developed in response to needs in the community, identified by the Te Tamawai Trust, such as a low sense of self and belonging, a low level of support at the household level.

## I.I Ethical Issues

The evaluation study design was submitted to and approved[[11]](#footnote-11) by the New Zealand Ethics Committee (Te Roopu Rapu I te Tika). The application adhered to the “Request for Ethics Review” (Version 6, Sept. 2019).

The ethics process was explained to participants and a signed consent form was collected. Roles, rights, and responsibilities of the evaluator/s and potential participants was explained (i.e., the right to withdraw, right to stop a research activity and other rights), and participant information sheets and consent forms were made available. Child participants and their caregivers were given time to consider participation and ask any questions. At the beginning of the programme, the evaluation, ethics process and roles, rights, and responsibilities of the researchers and potential participants was explained again.

Throughout the delivery of the programme key informants, with insight into the effect of the programme, were identified and interviewed at the end of the programme. Participant information sheets and consent forms were distributed (Annexes, 1 and 2), time was given to consider participation and ask any questions. School leadership was asked not to influence the decisions of children, caregivers, and school staff regarding participation in the evaluation.

## I.II. Areas of value or concern for Māori

Some children who participated in the programme and involved in the evaluation were Māori. The evaluation will be used to understand their experiences and ensure it is culturally appropriate when delivered in the future. This evaluation could, therefore, be seen by Māori individuals and organisations as important.

Appropriate cultural protocols were followed when engaging participants. The principles of manaaki[[12]](#footnote-12), kanohi kitea[[13]](#footnote-13) and other protocols, for example, were followed when engaging Māori participants (Pipi, Cram, & Tuuta, 2004).

**

## I.III. *Taku Wairua Team*

During the course of Taku Wairua there have been some changes in staffing, as seen below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Brittany Frew  Initial Manager | Nina Wollaston.jpg  *Nina Wollaston*  *New Manager* | Nat Brownlie.jpg  *Natalie Brownlee*  *Assistant Manager* |

Assisted by WaterBoy team members:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Piringakaanau Elkington* | *Thomas Nabbs* | *Dwayne Sweeny* | *Stacey Bond* | *Chris Swanson* |

## I.IV. *Guest Speakers*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sky Sports presenter Honey Hireme-Smiler in a league of her own |  Stuff.co.nz  Honey Hireme | In my beauty bag: Silver Fern Leana de Bruin | Stuff.co.nz  Leana de Bruin | 43 Laghlan Mcwhannell Photos and Premium High Res Pictures - Getty Images  Laughlan McWheeler | Rickus Wielham |
| Liam Meesam | Kiwi elites fail to fire but Jessie Smith wins junior title at BMX world  champs | Stuff.co.nz  Jessie Smith | Elite Team  Jessie Hodges | How rich is Ross Taylor? Net Worth ⋆ Net Worth Roll  Ross Taylor |

# II. Evaluation Purpose

The main purpose of this evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the Taku Wairua Programme, in reaching its objectives. It has been, primarily, a qualitative evaluation and aimed to explore intended and unintended effects at individual participant levels and as well as effects inside and outside the school environment.

As the programme is at the end of its inception phase, and given the interest in the programme by other schools, it was important to evaluate it. A timely evaluation was expected to increase the impact of the programme for future participants. Findings in this evaluation will be used to support funding applications for delivery of the programme to other schools.

# III. Programme Objectives

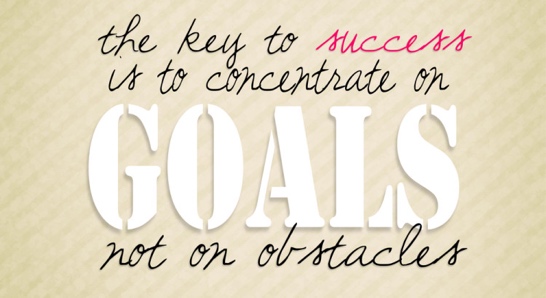
## III.I. Main Objective

To provide learning opportunities for children to acquire knowledge, skills, techniques and practices that will contribute to serving them well in today’s world and help set them up for the future. These learning opportunities should be complementary to, but not duplicating learnings in their own curriculum.

## III.II. Specific Objectives

Children will:

* Have fun
* Gain a stronger sense of belonging
* Gain a stronger sense of personal and family identity
* Gain an increased sense of pride in themselves
* Gain an increased self-awareness
* Gain an increased sense of gratitude
* Gain an increased awareness into the benefits of giving and volunteering
* Gain an increased sense of pro-social behaviour
* Learn and implement growth mindset principles
* Increase knowledge and awareness of goal setting principles



# IV. Methods

The evaluation used a mixed methods design to capture experiences and subjective understandings of participating students and a range of key informants, with insight into the effects of the programme. The quantitative component comprised a *simple survey* completed before the program (*pre-survey*) and repeated after the program (*post-survey*). It needs to be noted there are concerns about the validity of this survey. There were problems with student identifiers and a disparate number of respondents between first and the second survey. To enable a comparison, the same students needed to have responded to both surveys. Matching was done through comparing what identification numbers were available, also age, gender and ethnicity. In total only 67 students could be matched (Annex 3, Table 1).

Additionally, the survey was not pre-tested with the children, weakening the validity of this survey. The importance of pre-testing is observed by Platt “Cognitive testing and quantitative pre-testing are critical parts of the development of good survey instruments” (2016, p. 14). It Is important to recognise, surveys tend to overlook children as active agents and engage them more as passive subjects (*ibid*). Furthermore, the survey took place in the school, it has been noted although most children agree to participate, many interpret participation in research as ‘school work’ and frequently perceive researchers in a ‘teacher role’ (Fargas-Malet, McSherry, Larkin, & Robinson, 2010). Despite the concerns about the survey and the insignificance of the majority of results, as the response rate was relatively high, the results are presented in this report (Annex 3, Survey Summary).

A brief *ranking exercise* was conducted in the final interviews with eleven children, five males and six females. They were asked to rank the pillars of the programme in order of favourite to least favourite. This was clearly not conducted with enough children for it to hold much significance, however, results may give a glimpse in terms of how pillars were prioritised by males and females.

An *online questionnaire* for parents and teachers was posted on interactive websites of the involved schools. The response rate was low, however, as with the ranking exercise, despite a low number of responses, comments captured in the survey are worthy of note, as they complemented many of the interview findings and the impressions gained from the FGD.

The qualitative component consisted of *semi-structured interviews* with two sets of participants: school children who participated in the programme, and a range of key informants within the school context (See Annex 4, 5, 6). One *Focus Group Discussion* was held with team members of the Taku Wairua Programme (see Annex 7).

47 interviews were conducted with children who participated in the programme and took place in two of the involved schools. Selection of the schools was determined by ease of access. Interviews were conducted during school hours and lasted anywhere from 20 mins to 45 minutes. As students, at times were taken from the classroom, selection of the students was made by the teachers, who were asked to distribute according to gender and ethnicity, if possible.

*Summary Child Participant Interviews*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | School | Total Students | Male | Female | Ages |
|  | 1 | 24 | 10 | 14 | 8-11 |
|  | 2 | 21 | 14 | 7 | 8-11 |
| TOTAL | **2** | **45** | **24** | **21** |  |

*Summary Key Informant Interviews*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | School No. | Position | Male | Female |
|  | 2 | Assistant Principal |  | 1 |
|  |  | Principal | 2 |  |
|  |  | Teacher | 1 |  |
| TOTAL | **2** |  | **3** | **1** |

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted with the Taku Wairua team, consisting of 4 people who identified as female, 3 as male and 1 as other.

## IV.I. Literature Search

A brief literature search was conducted, it was guided by the codes used in the data analysis and key words related to the aims and objectives of the Taku Wairua Programme. Articles between 2011 and 2021 were searched, using google scholar and the Leiden University Library, making use of multiple search engines. Selection of articles was determined by perceived relevance in relation to the goals of the Taku Wairua programme. All retrieved articles were from peer reviewed sources, other sources consisted of grey literature, mostly NZ government sources.

# V. Analysis

## VI. *Qualitative Analysis*

Data collected from the interviews and online questionnaires was analysed in relation to the purpose of the evaluation and data validity was via triangulation (comparing and contrasting answers from various respondents and the mixed-methods approach and comparing and contrasting results from the literature search, online questionnaires and primary data). This use of multiple methods enhances rich interpretation, unable to be achieved by one approach only.

All interviews and the FGD were recorded and transcribed verbatim, questionnaire results and letters from the children letters to Taku Wairua, were collated and uploaded into a software package, MAXQDA 12. The data was analysed using content analysis (examination, classification and analysis of the content or themes), guided by themes mentioned in the programme aims. Coding of the uploaded

data took place, by creating summaries of emergent themes. Initial themes were identified by reviewing the data and grouping the coded information.

The following considerations were taking into account during this process and were in line with the interview and questionnaire guidelines: (1) likes and dislikes of the programme; (2) how has the programme helped; (3) strengths and weaknesses of the programme; (4) what needs changing; (5) what should be retained; (6) main outcomes; (7) three associative words with the project; (8) if Taku Wairua were an object, what would it be? Findings of this qualitative component are presented in the next chapter of this report.

## VI. *Quantitative Analysis*

The survey was analysed using StatCalc from EpiInfo[[14]](#footnote-14). Several questions had too many possible answer categories to enable statistical analysis, when this was the case, categories were merged.

The analysis compares responses at the beginning of the project and approximately six months later. As numbering of the responses had not been organised in a consequent manner (many of the respondents were given a different number in the second round), only the responses of about half the participants could be used for comparison, reducing the usability of the survey.

Results of the ranking exercise were uploaded to an excel sheet and converted to graphs.

# VI. Findings

## VI.I. *Quantitative Findings*

### Survey

Results of the child participant survey are in Annex 3. The survey of students was taken twice (at the beginning of the Taku Wairua program and approximately months later) to look for perceived changes. The majority of results are statistically insignificant, with the exception of two questions, namely, “How happy do you feel about who you are?” and “Do you know your strengths and abilities?”.

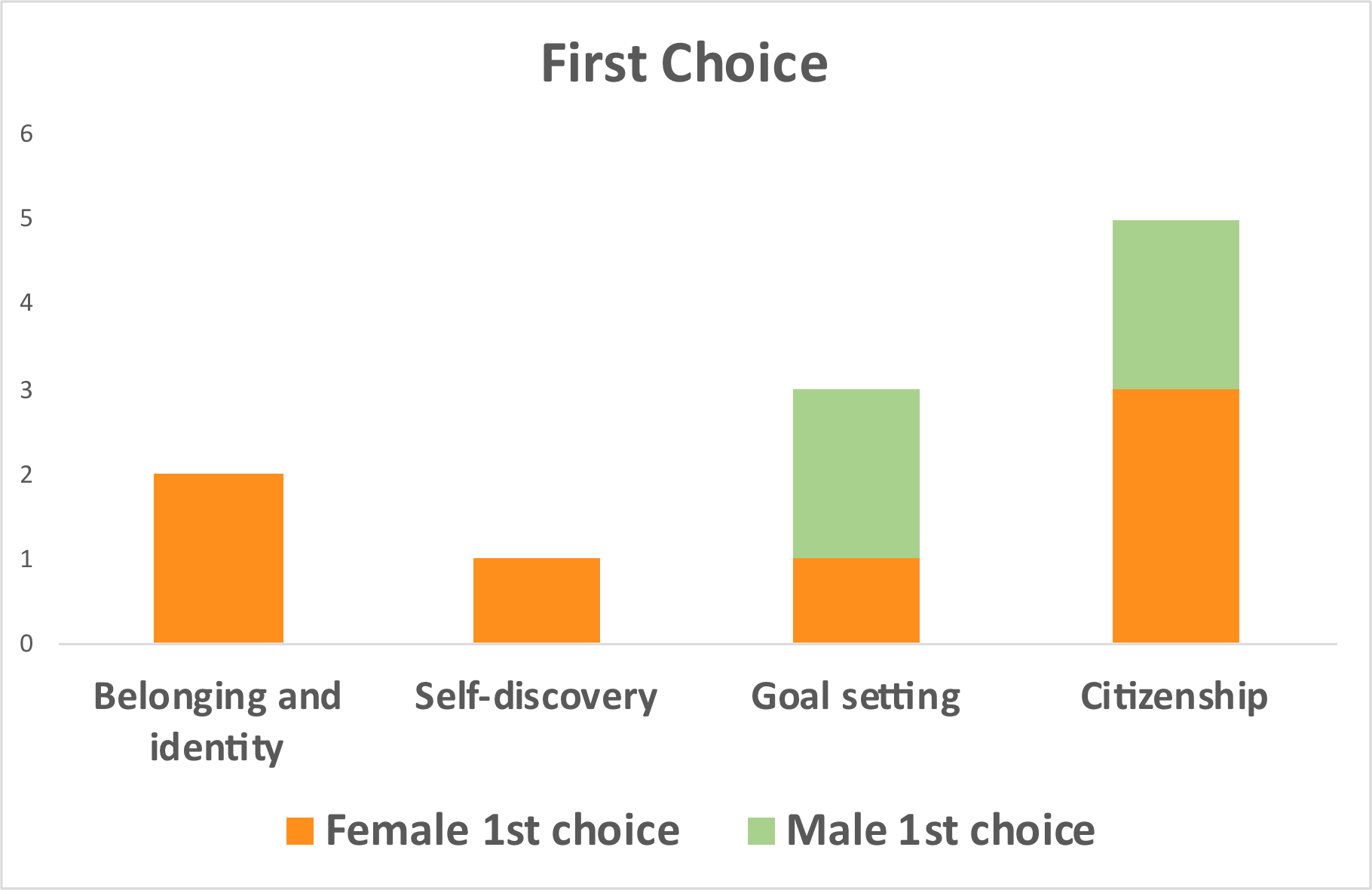
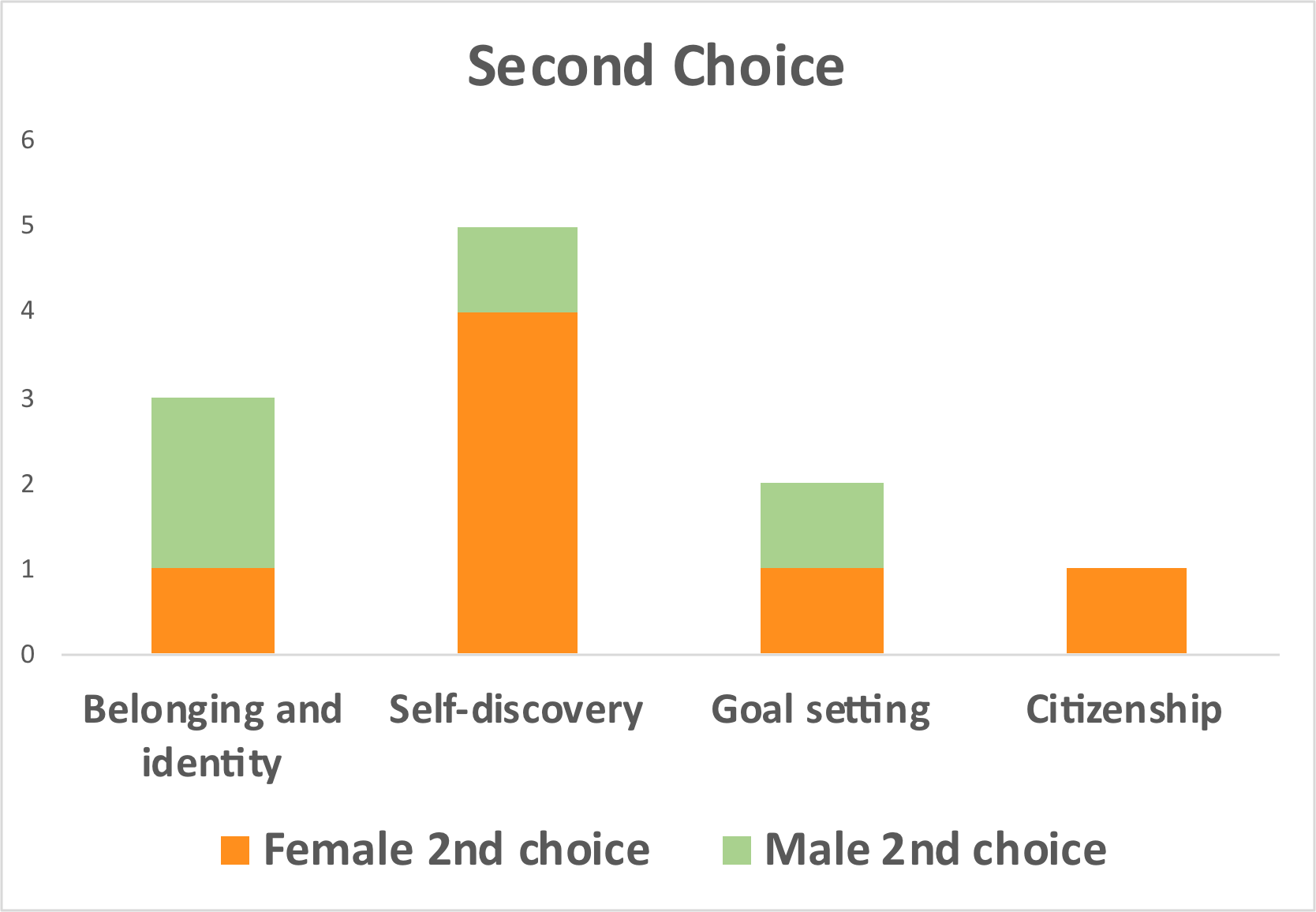
SurveyMonkey® was used to deliver the survey. This was delivered to two schools (Survey 1 and Survey 2). Demographic data was gathered and information, from the children about the four pillars of the Taku Wairua programme, was used:

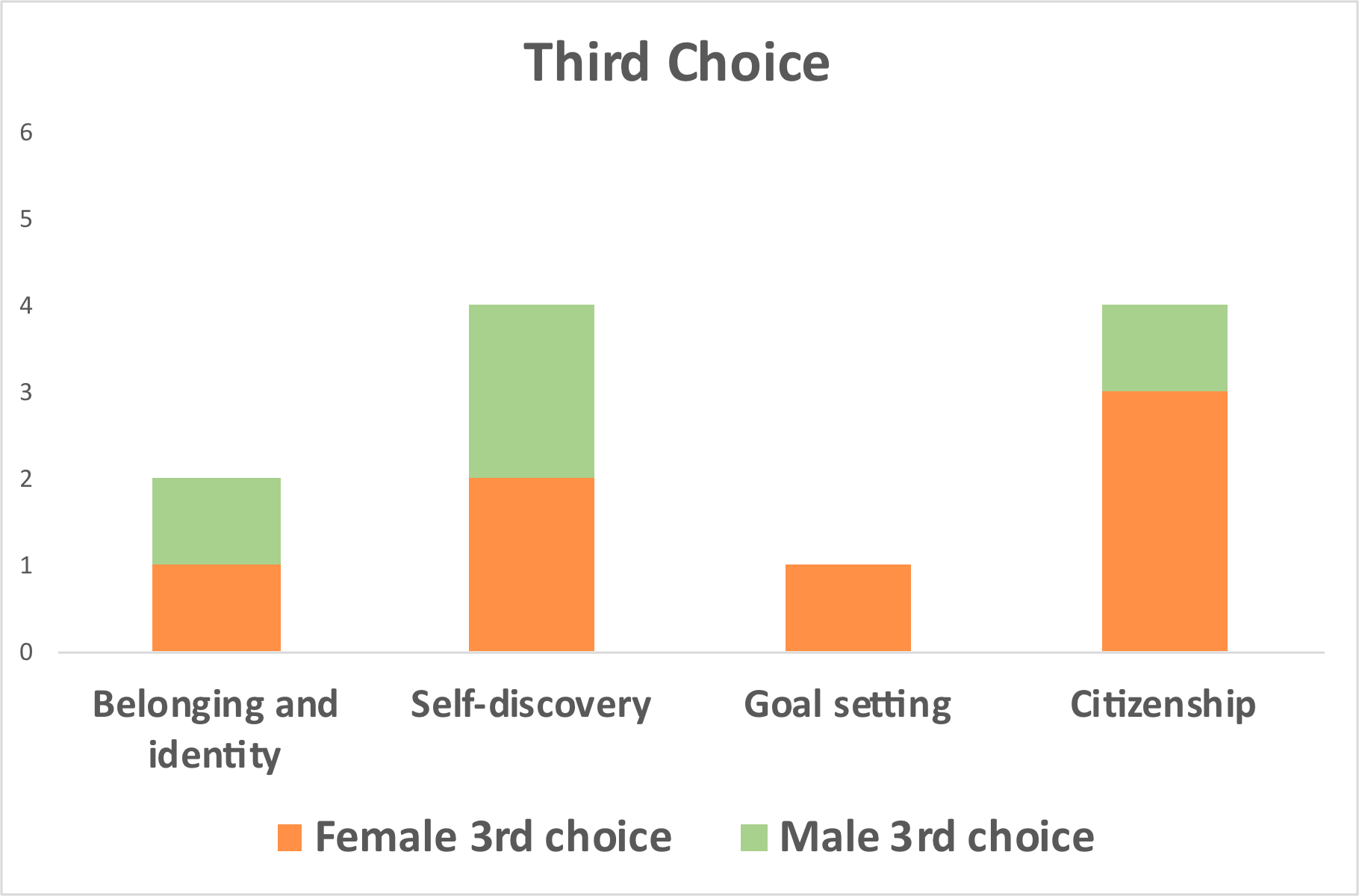
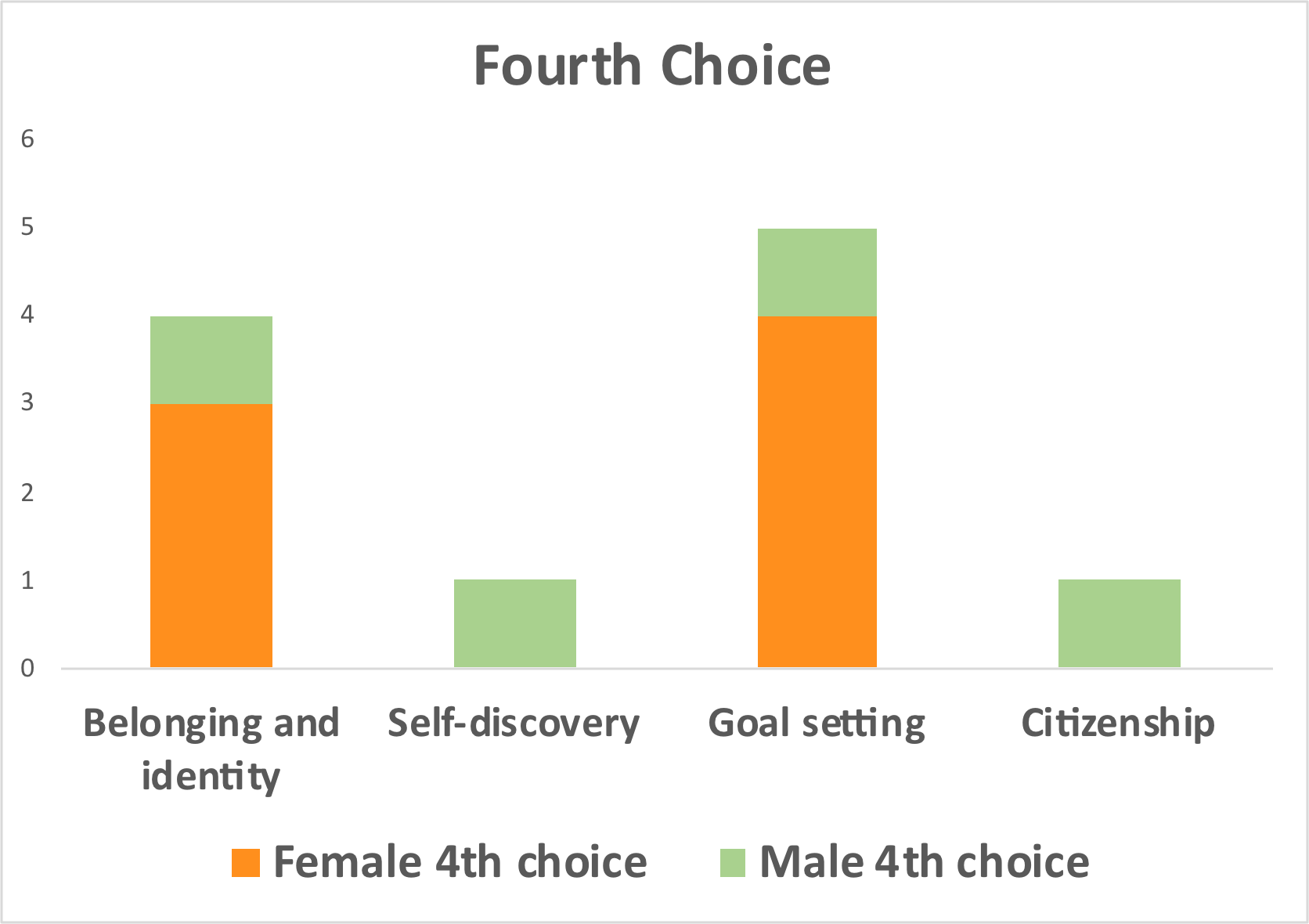
*Survey Summary*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Question | X2 value | p-value | Comment |
| *Identity and belonging* | | | |
| How connected do you feel to the place you call home? (N=60) | 1.19 | 0.55 | 7 respondents only answered survey 2 |
| How well do you know your family history? (N=60) | 4.95 | 0.18 | *idem[[15]](#footnote-15)* |
| How easy or hard would it be to find someone to help you learn about your family history? (N=60) | 3.74 | 0.44 | *idem* |
| *Self-discovery* | | | |
| How happy do you feel about who you are? (N=56) | 8.30 | 0.04 | 10 respondents only answered survey 2;  1 respondent only answered survey 1 |
| Do you know your strengths and abilities? (N=56) | 8.79 | 0.03 | *idem* |
| *Goal setting* | | | |
| How important do you think goal setting is? (N=56) | 2.19 | 0.33 | *idem* |
| How often do you set goals for yourself? (N=56) | 2.53 | 0.47 | *idem* |
| How often do you write down your goals? (N=56) | 3.12 | 0.53 | *idem* |
| *Citizenship* | | | |
| How often do you volunteer? (N=54) | 3.67 | 0.45 | 11 respondents only answered survey 2;  only 2 respondents answered survey 1 |
| How important is volunteering to your personal happiness? (N=54) | 4.20 | 0.38 | *idem* |

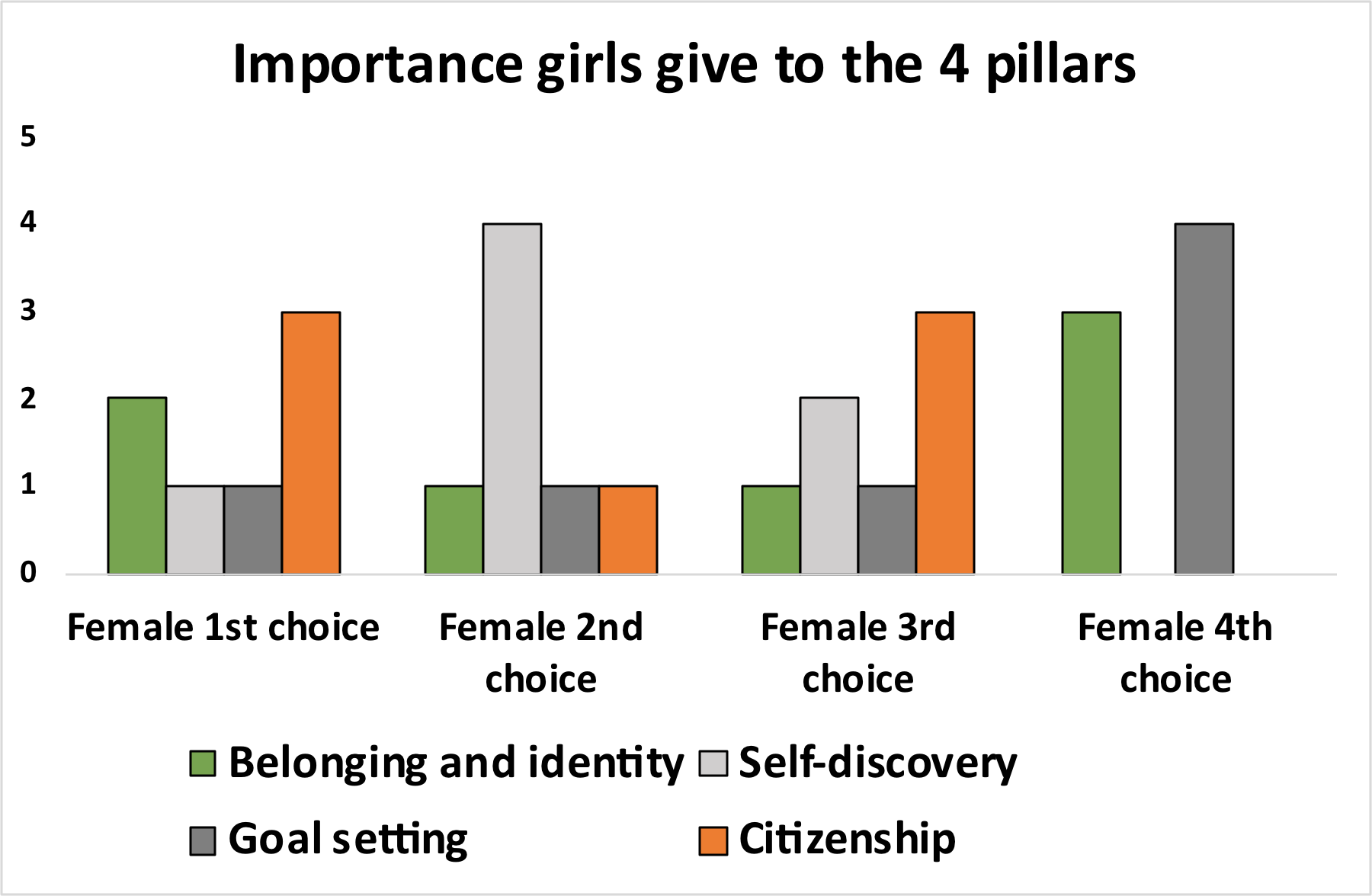
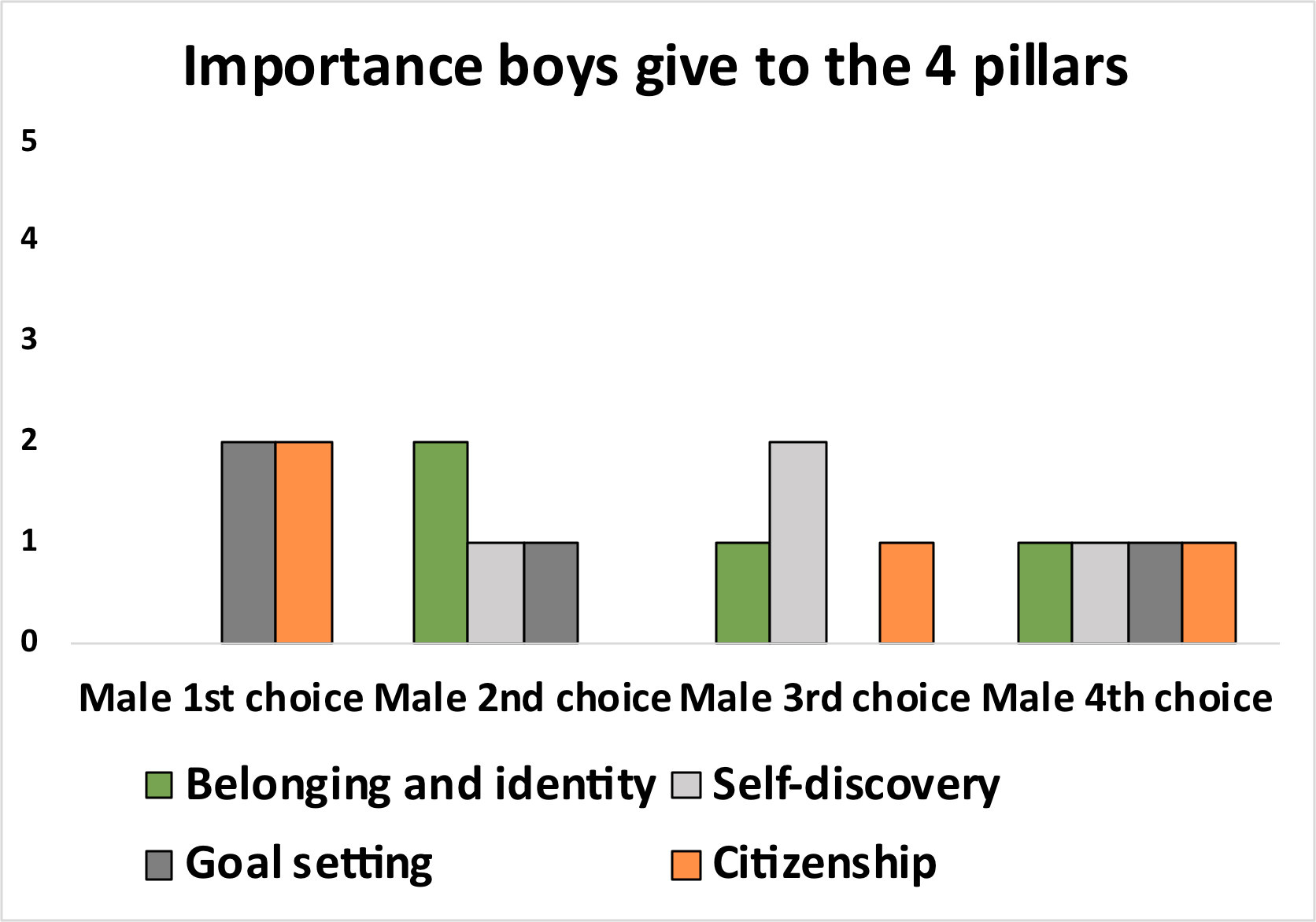
### Ranking Exercise

At the end of the final interview with child participants, children were asked to rank their favourite pillar in the programme. Titles of the pillars were written on A4 paper and children were asked to place mentos (coloured sweets) on each pillar, 4 for the favourite, 3 and 2 respectively for the next favourites and 1 for the least favourite. Results are summarised in tables the below:

### Summary Ranking Exercise

## VI.II. Qualitative Findings

Findings from the qualitative component of this evaluation are presented in the following way. Firstly, findings from the child participant and key stakeholder interviews, are presented under headings related to each of the programme pillars[[16]](#footnote-16) and are supported by findings in literature. To reinforce learning, when each of these pillars was introduced to the children, games were played, excursions taken and visits from a well-known guest speaker took place. Findings related to the games and guest speakers follow this section. After this, a selection of comments capturing responses from the online survey, with parents and teachers regarding their perceptions of the programme, is given.

Two conceptual frameworks are used to help analyse the findings, namely *Kaupapa Māori* (Government, 2009) and *Power and Empowerment* (VeneKlasen, Miller, Budlender, & Clark, 2002). A New Zealand Government, Ministry of Education document, highlights principles embodied in the

Kaupapa Māori framework. The document refers to a tauparapara[[17]](#footnote-17) where three generic phases and concepts of learning and growing are identified, namely, Mōhiotanga[[18]](#footnote-18), Mātauranga[[19]](#footnote-19) and Māramatanga[[20]](#footnote-20). A tauparapara usually contains genealogical references or links to whakapapa[[21]](#footnote-21) (Rewi, cited in Ministry of Education, 2009). The aims of the Taku Wairua Programme closely align with these principles. The Kaupapa Māori concepts, identified in the tauparapara, are said to “continue throughout a person’s life. They are not static nor linear but fluid and transformative” (p. 3, Government, 2009). The concepts are explained as follows:

* *Mōhiotanga* refers to what a child already knows and what they bring with them, highlights new beginnings, new knowledge, new discoveries.
* *Mātauranga* denotes a phase of increasing potential, negotiation, challenge and apprehension when dealing with new ideas.
* *Māramatanga* refers to the time a child comes to understand new knowledge: a phase of enlightenment, realisation, and clarification (*ibid*).

As Cram asserts, “… the term Kaupapa Māori captures Māori desires to affirm Māori cultural philosophies and practices. In short Kaupapa Māori is about being “fully Maori” (2002, p. 1). An integral concept in Māori cultural philosophies is that of whakapapa. Kruger, et al. claim, “Whakapapa establishes and maintains connections and relationships and brings responsibility, reciprocity and obligation to those relationships...” (p.16). Familiarising children with their whakapapa is a central tenet of the Taku Wairua Programme.

The Power and Enlightenment framework (VeneKlasen et al., 2002), facilitates understanding of changes related to empowerment. It acknowledges, empowerment maybe a continuous complex process involving several layers and is neither straightforward nor linear. It involves individual discovery and change. Three forms of power are referred to in this framework: ‘power to’, ‘power with’ and ‘power within’.

* ‘Power to’ is about being able to act. It can begin with the awareness that it is possible to act, and can grow in the process of taking action, developing skills and capacities, and realising that one can effect change.
* ‘Power with’ describes collective action or agency and includes both the psychological and political power that comes from being united. ‘Power with’ is often used to describe how those faced with overt or covert domination can act to address their situation: from joining together with others, through building shared understandings, to planning and taking collective action.
* ‘Power within’ describes the sense of confidence, dignity and self-esteem that comes from gaining awareness of one’s situation and realising the possibility of doing something about it.

The Taku Wairua Programme embraced many of the concepts outlined in these frameworks, as will be evident in the findings described below. Initially, findings are presented in relation to the four pillars of the programme, followed by findings relating to themes of specific questions in the interviews.

Findings from the literature review affirm the relevance of the growth mindset concept for this programme. Considerable research has been undertaken about the impact of a growth mindset and evidence affirms much of what Dweck asserts. Most research links the positive effects of growth mindset, among children, with positive academic outcomes (E.M. Datteri-Saboski, 2020; E. Jaffe, 2020; E. Hargreaves, L. Quick & D. Buchanan, 2021; K. Meindl, P, Yu, A., Galla, B.., Haeck, C., Goyer, J. P., Duckworth, A.L.; S. Polirstok, 2017; A. Rattan, K. Savani, & C.S. Dweck, 2015).

Other research on this topic has a broader view of the positive impacts in children, however, usually these are not focused on growth mindset alone, rather in combination with other principles such as fairness, trust, predictability of systems, self-efficacy and grit (Jacquez et al., 2020; K. L. Froedge, 2017; Slone, 2020). Clearly, for the authors of these studies’ growth mindset has significant impact on children’s development, however, usually when embraced with other concepts such as ‘grit’ and ‘optimistic thinking’ to reinforce the impact. Findings reveal growth mindset positively affects the amount of effort that is exerted, motivation, perseverance and resiliency. Another finding in these studies, and relevant for the Taku Wairua programme, is the observation that when children develop optimism, linked strongly to a growth mindset, they experience a sense of accomplishment and develop driving passion, and appreciation for hard work. Also relevant for the programme is the finding that a growth mindset has been recognised for promoting self-regulation strategies (Ommundsen, Y, 2003).

Conclusions, in these studies, also highlight a gap in mainstream educational practices as it is believed there is limited focus on instilling hope and optimism and cultivating dreams among children, an essential component for social-emotional development (F. Jacquez, et.al., 2020). Several studies reveal strong social-emotional skills among children leads to, in addition to improved academic performance, positive peer and adult relationships, emotional and mental health and fewer behavioural problems (*ibid*). Taku Wairua, by embracing this concept and encouraging children to cultivate a growth mindset, as opposed to a fixed mindset, are helping address this gap.

## Interview and FGD results

### Belonging and Identity

This pillar focused on children highlighting and discussing their pepeha[[22]](#footnote-22) and whakapapa. Activities conducted in these sessions encouraged children, among other things, to identify with a significant geographical feature such as an awa[[23]](#footnote-23), a maunga[[24]](#footnote-24), an ocean and/or beach or a tribal affiliation such as a waka[[25]](#footnote-25) or iwi[[26]](#footnote-26). This was done a couple of ways. One was the creation of a pepeha page, where they named geographical features significant to them. Children were then encouraged to discuss who they are, where they belong to and who and what they connect to. The other activity was a ‘post it’ activity, where children were asked to write one aspect of their pepeha on a post-it, and then to identify one of the geographical features, pasted on the classroom wall, and stick their post-it next to the picture. Children were gathered together around the various wall pictures and encouraged to discuss their identified feature and acknowledge differences or find connections.

Findings from interviews about this pillar, revealed a number of children felt a sense of pride about where they came from, a connectedness, and for some this activity stimulated significant memories. This aspect was voiced positively by children who recently moved to New Zealand. Furthermore, discussions were stimulated at home and, for many children, a broadening of their world. These findings were reported, not only by children but, also by teachers, parents and the Taku Wairua team. The following excerpts from the interviews, affirm these findings, the first interview is taken from a 10-year-old girl who emigrated to New Zealand from Colombia, an interpreter was used to assist with the conversation:

***M:*** *I know that I am from Columbia and now I’m here. I used to live in a forest and I only had one, one sister and after we moved to Ecuador and I have a brother … when we started to talk about … the photos that was nice, I enjoyed to talk to them about my country and about where I used to live … this programme made me understand, or make me to show people where I come from … and to make me understand where I come from and to let everybody know about myself … It’s really fun as well.*

**Interviewer:** *This activity* [making a collage of their pepeha]*, what was your experience of it? Did you enjoy it?*

***M:*** *I really enjoyed because it helped me to remember [about] where I used to live, everything I could see and find this in the books … there are the real people, the real locals they live there … because sometimes they used to take photos of them so this is real people and they can see the houses, they can see the guitars, they can see everything where I used to live in the forest … I really like to be here because I really enjoy to tell people about where I used to live, where is Colombia, what can I say about Colombia, the people, the food, the songs, the music. I really enjoy to tell where I used to live so everybody knows.*

There is some indication, in this excerpt, the young girl felt empowered by engaging in this activity, the opportunity to share with classmates was a positive experience, engendering a sense of pride and increased understanding of herself and her background. The power and enlightenment framework would attribute what was taking place here, to ‘power within’ where a sense of confidence was gained from the increased awareness of self and taking the opportunity to share this with others (VeneKlasen et al., 2002) .

The following interview excerpts reflect how this form of power, ‘power within’ was tapped:

**Interviewer:** *Were there any other activities that you liked about the self-discovery classes?*

**S:** *… the last one we did, we had to like write something ... on a sticky note of one of these and … we had to go up on a table and then find like, a picture that is related to this, and I did … Arabic and Islam because that's three things about my culture and country and stuff*

**Interviewer:** [talking about geographical features in the pictures] *how do all these different places relate to you learning about yourself?*

**S:** *Like... it makes me remember more things that I thought I ... forgot about.*

**C:** *Before then, I thought that my pepeha was different ‘cause I was always used to believing that Waikato was my only awa but I have an awa on my dad’s side too which makes sense because he grew up in the Bay of Plenty.*

**Interviewer:** *Do you remember the name of that awa?*

**C:** *I think it starts with a ‘T’ but I forgot.*

**Interviewer:** *What did it mean for you to learn that?*

**C:** *It changed all of my belief I guess and ‘cause I knew a little bit of my dad’s side but not a lot. And so, it really helped me learn my dad’s side.*

(Boy, 11 years)

One young girl, when asked why the belonging and identity pillar meant so much for her, had this to say:

**B:** *I didn’t know much about my pepeha before we started Taku Wairua.*

**Interviewer:** *What kinds of things did you learn?*

**B:** *I learnt about other people in my group and I learned more about myself.*

**Interviewer:** *Who helped you to learn these things about your pepeha?*

**B:** *My friends and the Taku Wairua teachers.*

**Interviewer:** *Did you talk to you anyone at home to learn more about your pepeha?*

**B:** *I talked to my mum about it … We talked about heaps of my pepeha and what’s in it and that’s type of stuff.*

The above quotes illustrate the kaupapa concept of Māramatanga where children referred to the learning and new realisations about their lives. Another integral aspect of kaupapa is the notion of connectedness, particularly in relation to whakapapa. Some children, affirmed how the Belonging and Identity pillar, helped with this notion of connectedness, as is illustrated in the quotes below:

**L:** *Well, like, I always knew a lot of my Mums side, but I didn't know much about Dad's side.*

**Interviewer:***And did that help, what did it do for you?*

**L:** *Well, it … expanded my knowledge of family*

**Interviewer:***Yeah. Why was that helpful?*

**L:** *Also, like, I know who people are so when we go over there, so if I see them, I actually know who they are …*

(Boy, 11 years)

**Z:** *… it’s cool that I know where I come from and where I can go in the future to like visit … and I’ve figured out that other people* [are] *Cook Islanders in my class and have the same last names as some of my family.*

**Interviewer:***What was it like for you to like know all these things about yourself and about your history and … get to share that?*

**Z:** *It’s actually fun because some people don’t know how much things that other people can have* [in common].

(Boy, 10 years)

**A:** *Like when we were writing our names down for like our pepeha and we had to put it on a picture and then we had to call out like what our, what the name of like, place is. I learned like a lot more stuff about other people’s pepeha and all that, yeah.*

**Interviewer:***Why is this significant to you? Why is it important for you to know that?*

**A:** *So, I can communicate better with my classmates and yeah …*

(Boy, 11 years)

Another strength of this pillar is that it was seen as complementing what was happening in the school curriculum.

*“I found it good that it fitted in with what we were doing at the time, at school anyway, with the kids learning about who they are … their pepeha and ... it meshed quite nicely into our localised curriculum … which is about belonging and connectedness and things like their identity and with our school pepeha. So, then the kids knowing their pepeha and where they come from. And then the teachers elaborating it … was really good.”*

(Teacher)

Findings about the learning that took place in this pillar, affirm much of what is found in literature regarding the benefits of ensuring children have a solid grounding in their sense of identity and belonging. Most content in this pillar, was based on Māori principles and in particular resonated with concepts inherent to Kaupapa Māori. Perceived benefits and the associated learning, however, were widely felt among children identifying with other ethnicities. This is likely related to the conceptual bases of kaupapa. *Kau* designates a process of emergence and disclosure, and *papa* designates a foundational base (Taki, 1996). Taki asserts, together these capture “…a basic foundation consisting of rules, customs and the right way of doing things” (1996, p. 16). Knowledge of whakapapa helps determine identities and clarification of self and relationships with others. Enabling people to appreciate their position in relation whanau and the wider community and in doing so acknowledge their roles and responsibilities.

Empowerment is a concept coming into play here, and although the conceptual framework of VeneKlasen and Miller primarily applies to a broader political context, it is useful for this evaluation. They observe how power is frequently seen as sinister and unchanging, yet “in reality it is dynamic, multidimensional, changing according to context, circumstance and interest” (2002, p. 43). Accounts from children and talk of connecting with others aligns also with the framework’s description about ‘power with’. It is recognised as a space where common ground is identified and facilitates the building of bridges and collective strength. Findings from the interviews above allude to this feeling of connectedness and the building of bridges as the children discovered common ground with fellow classmates.

A significant aspect of for belonging and identity formation, pertains to the breaking down of barriers, as one of the Taku Wairua team said in the FGD,

*“.. a lot here at the WaterBoy,* [is] *about breaking down barriers to participation … one can't survive without the other … what Taku Wairua does is prove that there is … no barriers through the way it's delivered. And … the way you treat other people … teaching those kids that there isn't a barrier and you can be who you want to be and you can live any way you want to or choose to. And you're not going to get put into like a little box.”*

This is observation affirms much of what was taking place in this pillar, encouragement was given through the emphasis on connecting with others, to break barriers. Furthermore, children were indeed encouraged to be themselves and not submit to being put in a box and affirms the empowering process of the ‘power to’ form of power and in the empowerment framework and demonstrates the significance of māramatanga, as the child realises and clarifies their inherent strengths.

Findings in literature uphold the importance of establishing a solid sense of self-identity and belonging, and as Slone highlights, “Positive aspects of their identity, such as familial support, pushed them forward, while negative aspects such as stereotypes and poverty pushed back” (p. 7, 2020). Another finding in literature, which supports the importance of this pillar, pertains to evidence that students from low-income backgrounds that develop a positive and self-assured mindset, outperform their fixed mindset peers from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (Slone, 2020).

The following prayer[[27]](#footnote-27) captures much of what takes place in this pillar:

*Help us to see ourselves as others see us.*

*Buddy, that’s not a prayer we want to pray.  
I believe we ought to pray:  
Lord, help us to see ourselves—and no more.*

*Or maybe:*

*Help us to see ourselves,  
help us to be ourselves  
help us to free ourselves  
from seeing ourselves  
as others see us.*

--Jim Wayne Miller, “The Brier Sermon”

### Self-Discovery

This pillar encouraged children to identify their achievements, values, and descriptive terms they would use for themselves. Activities involved the creation of a self-collage by using pictures cut out from magazines. In another, children were asked to describe their Dream Day, a day where they could do whatever they want, with whomever they want, without any limitations. As one of the Taku Wairua team explained, the purpose of the Dream Day activity was to have children dream big and recognise what made them happy. In response to questions about the Dream Day activity, they said the following:

***G:*** *“… we got to like, dream, like draw pictures about things ... of like … where we get to do anything we want.”*

(Girl, 11 years)

**Interviewer:** *Oh, what is your dream day?*

**J:***To wake up at eight o'clock and to wake up in an anime world … and, and to have hangi[[28]](#footnote-28) for breakfast? With my friends and my family and to go on a submarine* ***…*** *I love to do my dream day.*

(Girl, 10 years)

**Interviewer:** *So, what did you dream about? What was what is your dream day look like?*

**O:** *Getting all the stuff in the IP Shop* …*iPad ... iPhone, ProMax and an iPhone watch*

**Interviewer:** *And what would you do with all that stuff?*

**O:** *I'll share it with my family.*

**Interviewer:** *... Is there anything else that you do on your dream day?*

**O:** *Go and see Rainbows End* (Girl, 9 years)

A participant in the Taku Wairua Team Focus Group Discussion elaborated on the dream day exercise with this observation:

*“Before we go on to SMART … we try and … get them to, to have dreams about what they want to do in* [their] *life, because if we go straight to SMART goals, then we're basically quashing dreams, because a part of smart is realistic and, in a timeframe, ... as long as we're putting the SMART goals into the context of reaching to achieve their dream, then … we're giving them a framework toward chasing those dreams. And as one of the kids identified. The most important part is not necessarily reaching those dreams, but giving it your all to reach those dreams … Hopefully it's those concepts that we're getting through to them.”*

Implied in this comment, is how the Taku Wairua programme honed in on efforts of the children and embraced the effort per se, not necessarily the outcome, as this in itself has an impact on the child’s sense of self and identity. Erikson echoes, the appreciation of the impact the effort alone affords, when describing processes involved when a child learns to walk. He notes how, aside from enjoying the walking itself the child also “becomes aware of the new status and stature of ‘one who can walk’ …” (Erikson, 1968, p. 49).

Educational scholars pay attention to the importance of valuing children’s attributes. The attributes need not only be cognitive, but other skills, values and traits the child may possess, and there is support for the idea that by attending to these, it will likely have a positive impact on the course of their lives and who they eventually become.

In this pillar, children were introduced to the Myers-Briggs personality test. This test was initially developed in 1943, to support workforce recruitment during the war. It later evolved into a personality test that attributes personality traits to people and its use has extended beyond the workforce to personal lives. Some people have considered it to be quite revolutionary, as is reflected in the following statement, “As an insecure teenager, finding out my type online was like being handed an instruction manual … even a decade later I still catch myself reaching for Myers Briggs terms – talking about ‘thinkers vs feelers, or having mostly ‘intuitive’ friends” (Hunt, 2019). It is found to be a useful way of enabling people to not only know themselves better, but to express themselves better, as reported in the following account, “From there, he was able to better understand how his mind worked. ‘I need to do something repeatedly before I feel comfortable, and I’ve always been that way … ‘Now, when I am trying something new and I don’t get it right away – I know that’s OK’ …” (Winters, cited in Hunt, 2019). Other reports of the Myers-Briggs test discuss how it facilitates improved relationships “You see two people who don’t get along – suddenly, they understand each other” (Oglesby, cited in Hunt, 2019).

For children in this project, reactions to the test varied, some children clearly enjoyed it and reported learning something about themselves. Two boys had the following to say:

**Interviewer:** *What will you take away from the classes on self-discovery? Like what did you learn about yourself that you might not have known before?*

**A:** *Well actually in one lesson we learned about Myers Briggs so I went home and did the test and yeah so if I didn’t learn about that thing, I wouldn’t know what my test results are.*

**Interviewer:** *Tell me about the test, what was that like for you?*

**A:** *It was kind of comfortable ‘cause I do a lot of tests like zodiac signs or stuff like that.*

**Interviewer:**  *What did you learn about yourself through doing that test?*

**A:** *Like a lot of things about my personality and yeah and how I process stuff and all that yeah.*

(Boy, 11 years)

**Interviewer:** *What will you take away from the classes on self-discovery? Like what did you learn about yourself that you might not have known before?*

**A:** *Well actually one lesson we learned about Myers Briggs so I went home and did the test and yeah so if I didn’t learn about that I wouldn’t know what my test results are.*

**Interviewer:** *… what did you learn about yourself through doing that test?*

**A:** *Like a lot of things about my personality and yeah and how I process stuff and all that yeah.*

**Interviewer:** *Can you tell me a bit more about those things?*

**A:** *So, I will tell my sign. I got the ENFJ which is the protagonist and basically the protagonist they really love to like lead and help others and yeah.*

**Interviewer:** *Wow. Did you know this about yourself before you did the test?*

**A:** *Kind of ‘cause at school I’m the manutaki[[29]](#footnote-29).* (Boy, 11 years)

Not all children embraced the Myers Briggs test enthusiastically, as some found it a little confusing or were not so enthusiastic about it. This test was an area where the feedback given to teachers had an impact. When teachers voiced concerns about the first version of the test, the Taku Wairua team adopted the recommended more child friendly version:

*“…there was a section on personalities and they used the Myers-Briggs test … and our teachers sourced a different model that we thought would be a little bit more children-friendly.”*

(Principal)

The “Big Wind Blows” game complemented results of the Myers-Briggs test. The game, as described by a Taku Wairua facilitator, encouraged children to begin using descriptive words about themselves. This was a physically active game where children stood in a circle and when descriptive terms, they identified with were read out, they ran to a marker. They were acknowledged when running to the markers allowing them to identify with that descriptive word and feel confident. Interviews with the children affirmed many enjoyed this exercise and found it helpful:

**Interviewer:** *… we were talking about “the big wind blows”, tell me about that.*

**A:** *… you could all have somebody choose something and you could move if you were like that, and I liked when I got to be the chooser.*

**Interviewer:** *What were some of the words you chose when you were in the middle?*

**A:** *Naughty.*

**Interviewer:** *What are some of the words that other people called out that you thought, “yup, that’s me I’m gonna move around”*

**A:** *Funny, creative …* (Girl, 11 years)

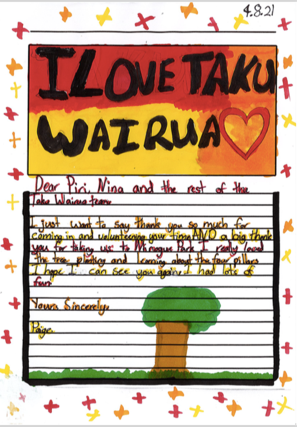
The importance of the self-discovery pillar and people having firmer understanding of themselves is affirmed by Dobbs and Eruera, in their claim, “Whakapapa establishes the identity of an individual and assists them to clarify themselves and their relationships with others. It enables the individual to understand their position in relation to their whānau, community and society and as such their roles and responsibilities”(2014, p. 11).

Much of what took place in this pillar was transformative for children, increasing their sense of confidence and assisting them with ‘sense-making’ and connecting them with others, spaces and places. This notion of connectedness is recognised in literature as being culturally responsive, (Bishop, 2003;

Dobbs & Eruera, 2014; Schachter & Rich, 2011; Tocker, 2015) facilitating a conscientisation process and triggering a reciprocal impact on learning.

The ‘power within’, mentioned in the Power and Empowerment Framework, was evident in reports of outcomes of this self-discovery pillar. As the name suggests, focus was on encouraging children to be self-reflective and activities children participated in facilitated a sense of confidence, dignity and self-esteem and opened for them the opportunity to do something with this newly gained form of power.

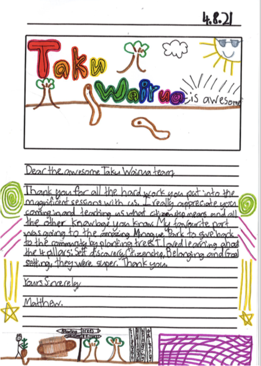
The following messages, in letters to the Taku Wairua team, capture this outcome:

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*“Thank you for teaching me lots about myself and how to be a really great person! My favourite part was playing the wind blows on whoever has something and planting the trees. I really hope I can complete my goal to go to Paris! I’m also really excited to see our trees grow. This has been an amazing time with you guys!”* (Boy, 10 years)

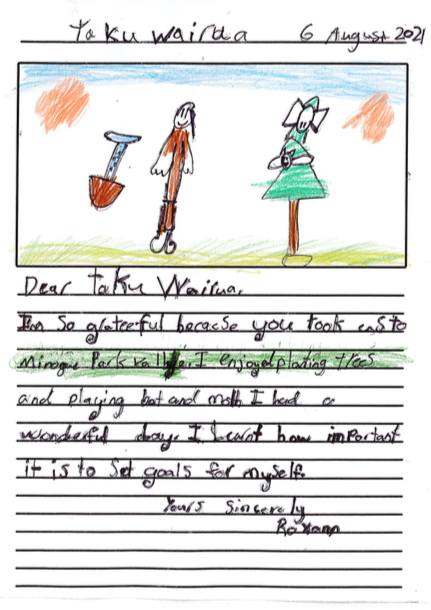
**

*“… I learnt something about myself, that I need to spend more time in nature and take time to listen to the sound around me …”* (Boy, 11 years)



*“Thank you for taking us on this journey but oddly really fun … my goal was to learn Māori but I couldn’t because my Mum is having another baby … I really thank you for taking time to and showing interest in our Puāwai books …* (Name not visible)

Evidence suggests, opening opportunities for children to embark on self-discovery is an effective means to counter structures that contribute to social inequities. These opportunities provide children with skills to become more resilient and value their desired identities, rather than being subject to societal attempts to enforce identities that diminish self-worth and respect (Schachter & Rich, 2011). This impact was noted by one of the Taku Wairua team, when talking about a young hijab wearing girl, in the programme. This girl mentioned to a team member how she used to feel embarrassed about her surname, as she felt the New Zealand society judged her negatively. Now, after her participation in Taku Wairua, and learning more about her ancestry that she reported feeling proud of her surname.

Goal Setting

Vishen Lakhiani[[30]](#footnote-30), an entrepreneur, author and motivational speaker, coined the concept the three ‘Most Important Questions’ (MIQ). A considerable portion of what took place in this pillar was influenced by his teaching of this concept. Children were not only taught the importance of setting goals but they were taught to frame these as ‘end goals’ rather than ‘means goals’ to enhance chances of success. The children were introduced to the following three MIQ questions:

1. What *experiences* do I want in my life?
2. How do I want to *grow*?
3. How do I want to *contribute* to the world?

These three questions were integrated into the children’s Taku Wairua workbook and they were encouraged to list the answers under the three headings, experience, growth and contribution. Vishen claims, answering these three questions sets people on a path to achieving their end goals.

The MIQ concept complements the Māori principle of Whakapapa and in particular the need to establish and maintain connections. As Vishen stated, “While we are here to have experiences, we're also here to grow … [t]hat's… [the] wonderful thing about being human. And the final one is to contribute. I believe we're all connected … us, and nature, and the oceans, and the atmosphere, and the

seas. We are all connected”[[31]](#footnote-31)

This approach to goal setting challenges conventional goal setting theory which places emphasis on task performance and being optimally efficient and productive (Lock and Latham, cited in Tosi, 1991). It asserts the importance of setting difficult goals, that are specific and measurable, in the belief this stimulates cognitive resources and motivation. In essence, it rubbishes the idea of ‘do your best’. Embracing the MIQ concept, positions this approach to goal setting in line with sustainable goal setting theory which emphasizes a holistic outcome, and values a balanced approach, stipulating productivity and efficiency alone will not contribute to people's sense of well-being and community (Neubert & Dyck, 2016). Sustainable goal setting embraces the need for people to have fulfilling relationships, contribute positively to their communities, encourage social justice, environmental well-being and generally to improve the world (Giacalone, 2004).

Vishen emphasises the importance of dreaming big when setting goals, and the Taku Wairua team incorporated this idea into the programme. One of the Taku Wairua team observed, the programme was designed specifically to ensure the ‘dream day’ activity happened before introducing the concept of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound (SMART) goals, as “if we go straight to SMART goals, then we're basically quashing any dreams, because a part of SMART is Realistic and Timebound, etc. So as long as we're putting the SMART goals into the context of reaching to achieve their dream, then that's, I think, teaching a really good framework, because we're allowing them to dream big and actually giving them a framework toward chasing those dreams”. This team member stressed the learning taken place by the children, citing one of the children as saying:

*“The most important part is not reaching the goal, but giving your all to reach those dreams.”*

This notion of the importance of ‘striving’ in the process of goal setting was affirmed by other children, as is evident in the following interview quotes:

*“… it made me realise, like that I can achieve a goal and like I can set it and it’s not always something that you can achieve, but like you could try to ...”*

(Girl, 11 years)

*“… like normally I just overestimate sometimes and in Taku Wairua I learned that even if you don’t achieve your goal in the time that you want it, then it's not the end of the world, you can still extend your time and achieve it there.*

(Girl, 12 years)

Inherent in what is reported here concerns mindsets. Scholarly work on the issue of mindset affirms how nurturing a ‘growth mindset’ has positive outcomes, not only in areas of physical and academic performance, classroom motivation, but also on self-esteem (O’Brien & Lomas, 2017). In an article, exploring the benefits of symbiotically integrating outdoor activity programmes with growth mindset activities, O’Brien and Lomas claim: “If participants are explicitly encouraged towards the belief that they have personal control over their development, gain an understanding of the utility of effort when facing challenges and have built up a bank of transferable strategies to use when facing setbacks, they are more likely to feel resilient and display resilient behaviours in future situations. In this respect, Mindset may offer outdoor practitioners a well-researched and logical framework to use when processing challenging experiences with young people, which can contribute to enhancing resilience” (2017, p. 142).

Integral in the aims of this pillar, is the notion of persistence when setting goals. Recognition of and the value attributed to persistence was appreciated by teachers, as the principal of one school stated:

*“… one of the things that I've picked up from the Taku Wairua Programme, and it's really cool is around persistence … our value for this term, is persistence. And I was really pleased to see that coming through in Taku Wairua, because I think that's major for children. So, I think one of the biggest skills that we can give children is when things aren't easy for them ... that persistence is a massive thing.”*

The pillar previous to this was self-discovery, where children were encouraged to reflect on their personality traits and values. In the goal setting pillar children were reminded of their agency and their ability to change particular traits if they want. One of the Taku Wairua team stated:

*“… learning these values and describing words* [the children attributed to themselves] *are only them at the moment … with hard work, focus, and drive they can choose to become less or more of any particular word or trait.”*

Aims of this pillar merged well with the preceding ‘dream day activity’ where children were encouraged to aim high when dreaming. They were challenged to think about what they would love to experience and then guided through processes needed to accomplish that.

A game the children participated in, to reinforce learning about goal setting, was a soccer game. Not long into the game, the goals were discreetly removed. This highlighted, in a fun way, the importance of having goals. Overall, a considerable amount of learning appeared to take place in this pillar, as is noted in the following excerpts from interviews with children:

*“And you're going to be more like organised at different points. Like … set different time limits for what you want to achieve … and I used to be really serious about goals … at Taku Wairua you learn that you don't have to be serious about it … you* [can] *still chill out.”*

(Girl, 11 years)

*“I'd say I didn't used to be organised but now I feel like I am pretty organised … and I finally knew how to goal set and I usually just sit on a tablet all day.”*

(Boy, 12 years)

*“…* [a] *goal is something that needs to be done and when you achieve it you feel really good yourself … so you set that goal in a time limit and then you achieve that goal in the time available and even if you go over the time limit … it is something that you can be really proud of … and something that you can always remember and you can tell other people …”*

(Girl, 11 years)

The games used and fun experienced by children in this programme, and in particular this pillar, should not be underestimated. Cavanagh discusses a comparative study where the concept of ‘gamification’ is considered and its impact on students goal setting, he observes, “students who experienced the gamified model were more likely to think about their goals … and more likely reach out to others for social support … they were also less scared and upset …” (2019, p. vii). This notion of the importance of games and fun is supported by others. Three important requirements for effective goal setting have been identified as, firstly, a sustained effort, secondly, it needs to be a joyful and exciting and finally, diverse conditions should exist (Boyatzis & Howard, 2015).

In the Kaupapa Māori framework, the value of seeking goals is stressed, particularly in relation to Tino Rangatiratanga[[32]](#footnote-32), a pivotal principle honoured in the Te Tiriti o Waitangi[[33]](#footnote-33). In the Māori version of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi this principle, among others, is embodied and goes straight to the heart of Kaupapa Māori (Pihama et al., 2002). Pihama highlights how this principle reinforces “… the goal of seeking more meaningful control over one’s own life and well-being (2002, p. 34).”

Finally, one of the Taku Wairua team during the FGD, mentioned:

*“I don't think we perfect get in the way of progress. So as long as something's good on wanting to move it forward, because if you're always waiting for something to be perfect, you just, you're going nowhere*.”

This principle emerged also in the goal setting pillar and aside from affording them some relief, provided the motive for them to keep striving to achieve their goals.

### Citizenship

Teaching in this pillar centred on the concept of citizenship and becoming a good citizen. Activities involved a brainstorm session and children were encouraged to write or draw, using colours, or whatever they wanted, to express: a good citizen; a role model; how they would like to be described. Discussions were about specific examples of being a good citizen, how to implement being a good citizen and talking about who benefits from being a good citizen. Another activity involved ‘rock painting’ where children were invited to decorate small rocks to be given to children in need. The children were also taken on excursions, involving various activities such as cleaning up rubbish, taking bush walks and tree planting. The concept, about being good a good citizen, promoted not only care for other people, but caring for the physical environment.

When children were asked to rank their most popular pillar, citizenship was ranked the highest by both girls and boys. In particular the tree planting excursion generated a lot of enthusiasm.

Accounts from children, about this pillar, stressed how they learned the importance of kindness and a readiness to do things for others without an expectation to be rewarded. Perhaps it is worth noting, this programme took place during the COVID pandemic and the New Zealand government have persistently sent the message ‘be kind’, so possibly messages in this pillar have been reinforced by what is happening outside of school. The following accounts, from interviews with children, affirm the learning about kindness:

**M:***… it has helped me because I know what to do. Like citizenship means be like more helpful and kind to other people …*

(Girl, 10 years)

**Interviewer:** *What did you learn about citizenship*

**L:** *Helping the environment and don’t just do stuff for pay*

*(Boy, 11 years)*

**Interviewer:***... what did you find out about learning to give?*

**Ar:** *...* [give] *so the world's a better ... a positive place ... there's less poverty, there's happiness in the world. Because there should be more happiness than negativeness.*

**Interviewer:***…**what things do you remember that make a good citizen?*

**J:***Picking up rubbish*

**Ar:***Helping the community … It's simple things like … someone coming behind you and you open a door and you leave it open for them*

**J:***And like, just easy stuff that won't take won't take a lot of your time.*

**Ar:***… giving stuff but not expecting anything to be given back to you.*

(Boy 11 years, Girl 12 years)

**O:***So, we painted stones to give to some kids that aren’t as lucky as we are*

**Interviewer:***… doing that rock painting, what did it do for you?*

***O:*** *I felt good that I was helping other people with that*

(Girl, 11 years)

Teachers observations about this pillar affirm learning had taken place and some behavioural changes were witnessed among the children.

*“However, we have also seen children use some of the tools* [that] *Taku Wairua promotes, speaking the language of goal setting, and particularly, I know for children involved in the initial program, the citizenship pillar really sunk in. That really had an impact on them. The enjoyment that they gained from seeing, making a positive difference with the people they are working with, was quite special for us. They shared that as being one of their highlights of their year.”*

(Principal)

*“… it enables our kids to see someone who's Maori Pacifica, you know, because we've 40% Maori and a high Pacific population … you know,* [they] *can aspire to be like them. So that's really positive …I would be interested moving forward about seeing … what other outside people they get … lots of other different people …”*

(Principal)

When asked about the extent changes to which would be sustained, one teacher responded:

*“Ahm ... I definitely think the connectedness ... liked I said it meshed really well with what we're doing in the school. So, it definitely can be sustained in the classroom around talking about where they come from, and the connectedness ... the citizenship part, you know, going out and doing things …”*

(Assistant Principal)

Findings related to this pillar also revealed the significance of role models for children and inherent here was the notion of reciprocity. The potential for a replication effect when being a good citizen was raised in the interviews, as the following quote reveals:

**A:** *… they respect us and we respect them … it's like a loop around the world ... that's just giving out and then it just sets more loops and then more loops and then more loops and then more loops ... it just carries on but even if you do something positive and then the person that you've done that positive thing to ... will give back to other people … then they'll just keep going on and on and then soon the world will be a good place ... It was really good because it was just giving back ...*

**J:** *they don't need and they don’t want us to give that to them. But we do it anyway.*

**A:***Even like, it could take a lot of your time. But that's giving stuff but not expecting anything to being give back to you.*

(Boy 12, Girl 11)

***K:*** *I've really enjoyed them* [activities in the citizenship pillar]*. Yeah. I can't complain. Like,* [they] *didn't actually have any wrong stuff.*

**I:** *Yeah.*

**Interviewer:** *Why do you think that is? Why do you think there was nothing that you just didn't like?*

**I:** *Because basically, all of the stuff that we did was very fun. And we got to learn a lot of stuff that would really help with the future.*

(Boys, 10 and 11 years)

**Interviewer:** *If you think about the citizenship pillar, what did you like and dislike about that?*

**J:** *Well, there was nothing really disliked about it. But the thing I like about it is like, the way they programme it, and how they take their time and effort*

**Interviewer:** *right, okay …*

**Ar:** *Yeah, because they are showing citizenship to us.*

**Interviewer:** so, *they set by example, are you saying that?*

**Ar:** *Yeah so, it's kind of like, it takes a village to raise a child. Like you're like giving, you're giving others the privilege to give.*

(Boy 12, Girl 11)

A number of recurrent themes emerged in interviews about this pillar, including kindness, respect, helpful, fun and freedom. Numerous children spoke of how much they enjoyed the tree planting excursion and how this taught them not only to respect others but the environment. Notable, in children’s feedback given to Taku Wairua staff was their level of appreciation. Several children thanked Taku Wairua staff not only for the fun they had, but thanked them for their time, effort and going out of their way to come to the schools.

*“The things that I like about it is that it’s kind of fun”*

(Boy, 11 years)

The fun children experienced during the sessions here is holds considerable meaning. Without exception all interviewed children spoke of the fun they had during this programme and in particular during excursions related to the citizenship pillar. The tree planting was the most spoken of activity and highly rated amongst the children, because it was ‘fun’. The importance and significance of the element of fun was noted by one of the teachers, as is reflected in the following response regarding what made them aware of the main impact of the programme:

*“it’s just fun as you get to learn more about ourself and like we learn how to be a better person”*

(Girl, 10 years)

*“We could see the children's excitement knowing that each Taku Wairua session was coming up. They often spoke about the sessions or pulled their books out in between sessions to work on. For some, it was clearly evident to see that their Taku Wairua books were a source of pride. It was also evident hearing their comments or discussions about aspects of the programme, like the tree planting - they felt really good about this”.*

*It’s like, when I hear we are going to Taku Wairua, I’m like, “yay I get a rest off work”. No offence to teachers. I like work but it’s funner we don’t get to play*

*games in work. Yeah, Taku Wairua is sort of work but it’s fun, not boring old work*

(Boy, 10 years)

Findings in literature support the importance of fun when engaging children in activities, Visek, et al. cite fun as the primary motivating factor when aiming to engage and retain children in sporting activities, “behavioral economics posits that physical activities framed as fun, choice-driven, and rewarding are most likely to be sustained versus those of perceived drudgery and duty” (2015, p. 2). The significance and need to take fun seriously when engaging children extends beyond efforts in education

and sport, as evident Houghton’s article addressing situations of child abuse, “Young participants need to enjoy participation: ‘not like work or school’. Fun activities should be [engaged in] … ‘without the hard work’ … This is *not a frivolous principle* – enjoyment and trust emerged as key to young experts feeling able to talk about abuse” (Houghton, 2015).

Additionally, the importance of Taku Wairua’s citizenship pillar is significant, in regard to the world’s urgent need for environmental awareness and responsibility for human actions contributing to the climate change crisis. Scholars have identified reasons for involving children as agents of change, in what is termed as ‘citizen science’ and assert encouraging experiences with the environment as a child leads to adults holding positive attitudes toward the environment (Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Wells & Lekies, 2006). Makuch and Aczel assert, “If children find their participation on a nature-focused citizen science project exciting, and the experience of the outdoors stimulating, it could help develop self-confidence, connection to the environment and responsibility and empathy for nature and others” (2019, p. 394). The experiences children have in the Taku Wairua have benefits that may contribute to environmental science as was evident in levels of enthusiasm about nature. The European Citizen Science Association (ESCA) formulated ten principles of citizen science, and one of which states the following, in regard to engaging children in citizen science activities, “learning opportunities, personal enjoyment, social benefits, satisfaction through contributing to scientific evidence … may be some of the gains of participation in citizen science projects, and this is very much aligned to the work of

environmentalism” (cited in Makuch & Aczel, 2019).(cited in Makuch & Aczel, 2019)(cited in Makuch & Aczel, 2019)(cited in Makuch & Aczel, 2019)(cited in Makuch & Aczel, 2019)(cited in Makuch & Aczel, 2019)(cited in Makuch & Aczel, 2019)(cited in Makuch & Aczel, 2019)

Specific Interview and FGD Questions.

#### *What did you like and dislike about the programme?*

Dislikes

All interviewees were asked what they liked and disliked about the programme. Eliciting responses about aspects of the programme they disliked, from among the children, took quite some probing, and the majority could not cite any dislikes. Most comments about dislikes related to commonplace issues, not specific to the programme, such as disliking the groups they were placed in or their position in games, having to play games with the ‘boys’ or ‘girls’, and cancellation of planned activities, due to poor weather conditions. One young girl mentioned, in a tongue in cheek way, that her only dislike of the programme was having to leave sessions early. There were, however, some explanations offered as to aspects they disliked, these included struggles with noise levels and struggling to find somewhere to concentrate. Another reason cited by one of the children, a young girl, was that sometimes she felt she had to talk about things she didn’t want to talk about. The quotes below, from children, capture some of these dislikes:

*“I liked being asked to describe stuff about me and what I didn’t like was that sometimes I had things that I didn’t really want to talk about or anything.”*

*(Girl, 11 years)*

**K:** *It was kind of hard to learn*

**Interviewer:** *In what ways?*

**K:** *Trying to like focus when everyone is loud. It makes it harder to learn ... I just had to find a quiet spot*

(Boy, 11)

**G:** *… what I didn’t like was people were just yelling throughout the sessions.*

**Interviewer:** *Why did that bother you?*

**G:** *Because I couldn’t really work.*

(Girl, 9)

Some children implied the noise levels of some activities interfered with their ability to focus, as the previous quote indicates, others indicated they felt some sessions were too difficult to grasp altogether due to the reading and writing required:

**Interviewer:** *So, what was it like doing that activity?*

**R:** *Hard*

**Interviewer:** *That was hard? Why is that?*

**R:** *Cause, I had to think ~ and cause I'm not good at reading and writing*

(Boy, 10 years)

There was discrepancy about this aspect, as other children indicated they enjoyed it when sessions were intellectually challenging, as is reflected in the comments below from two young girls:

**“***What I liked was there was a lot of learning. You got to know other people and views as well.”*

*“I really liked it because they will challenge us to actually find out some more stuff and use our brain to find ... like work together and create more bonds. Right. And still doing our work.”*

Other children indicated they felt at times the sessions were a little too sedentary, and for some there was not enough time allocated for some activities, as suggested by one child in the quote below:

**Interviewer:** *So, if I was to say to you M, next year, you're the boss of Taku Wairua and you have to run the* [programme] *... is there anything you would change or do different.*

**M:** *Kind of speed it up a little bit …*

**Interviewer:** *So, you might speed it up a wee bit was it a wee bit slow dragged on a bit? Any other activities you would do?*

**M:** *Not really it was just kind of cool …*

(Girl, 11 years)

**Interviewer:** *How do you think the sessions could have been better?*

**B:** *I think a little bit more time to stop and think about some things that we are writing down and stuff.*

**Interviewer:** *Did you feel like sometimes there wasn’t enough time to do that?*

**B:** *Yup.*

**Interviewer:** *How often did you feel that way?*

**B:** *Not too often. It was just I’m not that much of a fast writer so it stopped me from doing stuff like that.*

(Boy, 10 years)

Dislikes mentioned about the programme, by the children, were supported by a few comment’s teachers made, particularly the sedentary level of some sessions. Some teachers also raised concerns about the level of comprehension, believing the vocabulary was, at times, a little too difficult for some children to follow, as is evident in the following excerpts from interviews:

*“Maybe some getting out and about or something like that you know, like just breaking it up with some … games or something like that, or some energizers ... it doesn't have to be huge … just to break it up a wee bit ... And then do the game but the game somehow links to what they're learning and complements what they're doing, rather than just sitting there for 15 minutes going through a workbook and talking … That would basically be the only biggest thing that I would change”*

(Assistant Principal)

**Principal:** *So,* [in this] *school ... there are high levels of diversity and language … understanding of words, so we don't we don't assume anything … front loading[[34]](#footnote-34) is really important … before they learn certain concepts, it's like, they gain an understanding of actually what the concept is*

**Teacher:***… some concepts that the kids didn't quite get. And I think if you gave them a little bit of pre loading information and a few examples, then they might have picked it up a wee bit easier, right? … for the top academic kids, it is fine.*

**Principal:***So, like, even, you know, the concept of respect, we wouldn't assume that, that children knew what respect actually meant …*

**Interviewer:** *So, I think that is quite a significant message coming through … not to take anything for granted.*

(Principal and Teacher)

Likes

Reasons cited about the likes of the programme, by the children, teachers and parents as well as the Taku Wairua team, were varied including, among others, aspects such as the amount of freedom the programme afforded the children, the high level of engagement of the children, the responsiveness of the Taku Wairua team to feedback given by schools and the variety and diversity of the Taku Wairua team.

By far the main reason cited, by children, for liking the programme was attributed to the level of fun experienced. Analysis, of the interviews with children, reveals the word ‘fun’ was mentioned in relation to the programme, no less than 101 times, this was taken from 41 interviews with 47 children. Some of the following quotes give an indication as to the level of enthusiasm among the children about the programme and the fun they reported.

**Interviewer:***So, what did you like and not like about those sessions?*

**J:** *Oh, everything really? It was pretty fun.*

**Interviewer:***Yeah. Did you find it fun ... generally speaking … are there specific things that you found really fun? ... Can you give me an example of something... that you found really fun?*

**J:** *Um to be honest I can't even I can't. I can't explain because they're all probably because they're all my favourites. Really? Just can't explain.*

(Boy, 10)

**Interviewer:** *Tell me about which of these activities you liked and disliked*

**B:** *I didn’t dislike any of them*

**Interviewer:**  *Uh hm, why didn’t you dislike them, why is that do you think?*

**B:** *Because it was fun*

*(Boy, 10 years)*

**Interviewer:** *And of all the programme of all the things that you did, which was your favourite activity or excursion?*

**O:** *Probably the one that we did yesterday, because it was fun*

**Interviewer:** *It was fun yesterday wasn't it ... what did you enjoy about that so much?*

**O:** *You got to help other people and weeded. And that was fun while we were doing that*

*(Girl, 9)*

**Interviewer:** *What did you like and dislike about the program?*

**M:** *I liked that, it was all like it was all in a fun way so like how we, did the Myer Briggs it was fun and fun questions and when we played the game …*

**Interviewer:** *What was fun about that for you?*

**M:** *It was fun that like we had to keep moving and everyone that was like close to me that I could go to was like, easy. Lots of people near me had to move a lot so I could move easily and not get stuck in the middle.*

(Boy, 11)

An interesting observation emerging from the literature review, about the impact of games and fun, is that learning is at the core and through these experiences, opportunities open up for people to learn more about themselves and their aspirations (Cavanagh, 2019). This observation, resonates with the self-realisation aspect of the programme that was liked so much:

**J:** *I know that I can be more proud of myself now.*

**Interviewer:** *Oh, that's great. What sorts of things about yourself, are you proud about?*

**J:** *My family and my strengths ….* [Like] *Running and sport and singing*

**Interviewer:** *What does it mean for you to learn more about your family?*

**J:** *Ahm it helps me to know where I'm from.*

(Girl, 10 years)

Other reasons offered for the programme being liked so much, were that it opened an opportunity to meet guest speakers, who were often well-known sports people and the time and effort the Taku Wairua team put into the programme was appreciated, as reflected below:

**“***What I really like about this last session is the people who visited us at the school …I really liked them because they were playing rugby and I always watch rugby on TV.*

(Girl, 10 years)

*“Well, there was nothing really disliked about it. But the thing I like about it is … the way they programme it, and how they take their time and effort”.*

(Girl, 11 years)

The perceived increased self-awareness, respect, pride and mana the programme helped engender in students, was appreciated by teachers:

**Interviewer:** *How did you as a teacher, experience the programme?*

**J:** *Generally, the things that I liked, I would say is, it taught the kids to become more self-aware, and to learn things about themselves. And generally, in my classroom, I try to teach the kids like the most important thing, above everything else is respect. And obviously, in my opinion, it's hard to have respect for other people, if you don't have respect for yourself … So, I think it was good for teaching them by mana. And being proud of who they are, where they come from* [their] *ethnicity …*

Another appreciated and perhaps less obvious component of the programme, appreciated by teachers, was relatability of the guest speakers, and the impact of an outside voice:

*“The teaching profession often is struggling to have diverse teachers for our diverse children and that was another way where children could see their language and culture being reflected in the speakers. The power of an outside voice that isn’t the teacher or the principle, or mum and dad or koro was also really powerful, and slightly frustrating you know, we talk about goal setting and then all of a sudden Ross Taylor chimes into our goal setting and it becomes important* [ha ha]*.”*

(Principal)

Finally, in respect to what was liked about the programme, one of the teachers talked about how much she valued the way the programme supported their curriculum and in particular the belonging and identity pillar:

*“I found that good it fitted in with what we were doing at the time, at school anyway, with the kids learning about who they … their Pepeha and ... it meshed quite nicely into our localised curriculum that we're developing at the moment as well, which is about belonging and connectedness and things like their identity and with our school Pepeha. So, then the kids knowing their Pepeha and where they come from. And then the teachers elaborating it was really good”.*

#### *How has the programme helped you?*

Interviewees were asked to describe how they believed the programme helped them. A number of different helpful and behaviour changing impacts were raised. Some of these impacts, such as being kind and helpful, and caring for the environment are evident in the following comments from the children:

**M:** *… it has helped me because I know what to do. Like citizenship means be like more helpful and kind to other people* (Girl, 11 years)

**Interviewer:** *So, in what way? Is it changed you at all? Do you think Taku Wairua or has it helped you?*

**O:** *I don't know? It has liked helped me to be better … and like pick up rubbish and like be a better citizen.*

(Girl, 11 years)

**Interviewer:** *So, what did you get out of the tree planting? What did that do for you?*

**L:** *I learned about like, different trees and like, how long they'll last for and how important they are to be in our planet.*

**Interviewer:** *Why is that so important*

**L:** *Well like, first, they are beautiful and like bring life, berries and for the birds. The birds spread the seeds and make more trees. And they also reduce the amount of carbon in the air. And they sort of like clean the air so we can breathe.*

(Boy, 10 years)

**Ar:** *I actually wasn't, I wasn't the best .... I like learned a lot in that programme*

**Interviewer:** *Really?*

**J:** *I mean, like, you can't be the best at everything*

**Ar:** *I wasn't the person who likes to share really*

**Interviewer:**  *So, in Taku Wairua you think you really learned ...*

**Ar:** *It helped me a lot*

**Interviewer:** *Yeah. And how is it now for you to share?*

**Ar:** *Ahm better than before.*

**Interviewer:** *Why do you think that is? Why is it easier now than before?*

**Ar:** *I think it's Taku Wairua … like, they gave kindness to me so I'm giving kindness to other people.*

**J:** *It's about others … and to like ... take care of each other.*

(Boy, 11 and Girl, 11)

Other aspects of the programme that were found to be helpful included the calming effect of some the activities, the impact it had on self-confidence and a sense of self and belonging:

**Interviewer:***How do you think the sessions have helped your sense of self?*

**K:** *It’s been good, a lot of stuff and doing a little bit of work, which is kind of fun. And it’s just helping me calm down and a lot of stuff.*

(Boy, 11 years)

**Interviewer:** *So, in terms of the whole programme … how has it helped you?*

**M:***It just made me a lot calmer.*

(Girl, 9 years)

Observations about the helpfulness of the programme, included the notion of learning how to be a role model:

**A:** *Well, it teaches you how to be a nice person to help people they need it*

**L:** *teaches us how to discover ourselves and it challenges us to like, discover new things*

**Interviewer:** *And why is that important do you think was an important first of all, to be nice to other people and to know more about yourself?*

**A:** *Well, so people can copy so they can do the same. And so, and so and everyone became really nice to each other.*

**L:** *… [it] keeps on continuing and passing on from generation to generation.*

(Boy, 10 & Girl 11)

**Interviewer:**  *What did you learn about yourself that you didn't know before Taku Wairua*

**L:** *Well, I never knew pretty much of my pepeha*

**Interviewer:**  *And what was so good about learning about your Pepeha*

**L:** *Learning about our ancestors*

**A:** *Learning about .... your mountain and river, awa or iwi.*

**Interviewer:** *And what did that do for you learning about your mountain or your river or your waka or your iwi or your mountain? What did that mean for you when you learned about that?*

**A:** *Well, it's fun if you like telling your other family members who are even younger than me. So, they understand the story can go on forever.*

(Girl, 11 and Boy, 11 years)

The final helpful aspect of the programme to be mentioned here, was mentioned less, but was certainly implied in the manner of speaking from a number of children, namely the freedom to be a child:

*“… it's taught me all the different kinds of pillars that you can be whoever you want to be, you don't have to be a citizen when you grow up ... like a good one ... or ... You can just be one kid as well”.*

(Girl, 10 years)

The above excerpts, from conversations with the children, leave little doubt as to the significantly positive impact the programme had on the children. There were several complementing reports about the programme, other impacts were voiced less, however, were implied in most accounts.

#### *How could the programme be better?*

When asked about how the programme could have been better, there was little input, the vast majority, struggled to give any indication about how the programme could be improved, most answers from the children are reflected this comment:

**J:** *They don't need to be better … they are already perfect.*

**Interviewer:** *What makes them perfect?*

**J:** *Just how everything runs smoothly*

Teachers were slightly more forthcoming with ideas as to how the programme could be improved, although all teachers qualified their answers, by stating there was nothing much at all. The few potential areas for improvement, were described as follows:

*“…* [the Taku Wairua team] *could have consulted a little more with teachers in the beginning to get some tips”*

(Principal)

*“I think a bit more of a mixture of activity games, but I think also like with connectedness and … because it's coming from a Maori perspective … would be maybe to look at bringing in some more Maori activities and Maori games”*

(Assistant Principal)

**J:** *I would be interested moving forward about seeing who else what other outside people they get. I'm a sports fan myself. I love sports. But I'm aware that in New Zealand we often you know, it's just sports people that lots of other different people … that's why I thought I was quite cool that they bought in ... I'm struggling to think of his name off the top of my head*

**Interviewer:** … *an App Designer?*

**J:** *Yeah, he'd developed multiple apps. And then so the kids are obviously tech sav ... pretty tech savvy, so they were quite interested in that, especially. Because he didn't have the easiest time at school either.*

**Interviewer:** *So, kids could really identify with him … So, it's really so from both of you, it seems quite important that that sort of outsider ... the guest person that comes in as someone who the kids can identify with on an ethnic sort of level.*

**J:** *it enables our kids to see someone who's Maori Pacifica, you know, because we've 40% Maori and a high Pacific population Well, you know, I can aspire to be like them. So that's really positive. So yeah, I would be interested moving forward about seeing who else what other outside people they get … I love sports. But I'm aware that in New Zealand we often you know [there’s] lots of other different people …*

**D:** *I believe one area that the program can definitely make improvements on, would be in the way of the citizenship experience, the final pillar … I think the challenge for the facilitators and the program coordinators is to find real opportunity for citizenship and service … Cause that is hard to fake, you can’t fake that … I think it is actually really important that kids see the direct impact of what they do during that time. That the element of service is really lost to many generations and I think that it is the piece that ‘binds’ the whole program together.*

(Principal and Teacher)

#### *Questionnaire results (Open ended questions)*

Two questionnaires were created, one for parents and one for teachers. Responses were very low. Of the four participating schools, responses were only received from two schools, comprising five teachers and ten parents. It is difficult to know why the response rate was so low, however, the questionnaires were sent out initially during a nationwide lockdown, and one can only assume this had a negative impact on motivation levels to participate in such a questionnaire. Teachers and school staff in general,

reported high stress levels over this period and gave accounts of high levels of anxiety among students returning after lockdown. Another possibility is one of the participating schools has the second highest number of refugee families in the country. It is quite possible, there were language barriers or lack of confidence regarding language skills.

What follows is a selection of some questions and responses from teachers and parents that capture their general impressions. Most responses were overwhelmingly positive, with some constructive criticism for areas of perceived needed improvement:

1. How did you as a teacher/parent experience the programme?

*“Overall, it was good to have the students introduced to things such as goal setting and pepeha. It allowed a connection to be made within the classroom outside of sessions, where we could work on finding the relevant information and research about certain student’s whakapapa and such.”*

(Teacher)

*“Some of our children continue to talk about their citizenship without being prompted by us and seek ways to express their own citizenship, for example, picking up rubbish.”*

(Teacher)

*“Fantastic, a great opportunity for our kids.”*

(Parent)

*“It is a positive programme that helps to build children’s self-identity and self-confidence.”*

(Parent)

1. What impact do you think the programme had on your students/child?

*“The children looked forward to the Taku Wairua facilitators coming in. They felt affirmed and accepted as themselves. I am sure that looking back on this programme, even when they are much older, they will remember the positive way of how the facilitators made them feel.”*

(Teacher)

*“The main impact I feel was the stronger connection that they made towards their pepeha and ancestors. Many of the students hadn't really thought about things such as where they come from, or who their ancestors are, and the way Taku Wairua presented it was in a nice, organised fashion.”*

(Teacher)

*“…I think the impact is, amidst all the other things, …it contributes to their overall development and aspirations at this age, and knowledge of wellbeing, exposing them to different themes, and also inspiring them to be their best, use their passions and strengths. Joseph will never forget meeting Ross Taylor and hearing about his journey, Joseph is cricket crazy and wants to be a black cap, it makes it real that they can aim for the stars.”*

(Parent)

“[For] *my own child in the class, the 'goal setting' part of the programme really stood out to him. He really enjoyed the guest speakers and their messages, and contributing to the special tree-planting day (cooking sausages.) He felt really special about this. As teachers, we were able to follow up with the children after the sessions, reinforcing positive messages and also contributions the children had made, thoughts they had shared, knowledge they were gaining etc.”*

(Parent)

1. What do you think the main results of the programme have been?

*“By participating in the tree planting day and learning from the facilitators, the children developed a deep understanding of 'citizenship.' We still have children who refer back to citizenship and volunteer to pick up rubbish. Taku Wairua also helped to build their self-esteem. For example, some children still talk about how they helped with the sausages at the tree planting day (my own son included,) and how they will be able to revisit the trees in the future. They feel like contributors. Taku Wairua helped to build confidence in aspects of Tikanga Māori, such as delivering pepeha. The children also enjoyed connecting to themselves, such as by finding pictures in magazines of places they could relate to. In our own classroom programme, we found that Taku Wairua went hand in hand with the learning we've been doing in class about Hauora and Whare Tapa Wha, which has been great...”*

(Teacher)

*“A better understanding around pepeha and how it is an effect way for students to connect with their peers and staff of the school. Students feeling more confident in presenting their pepeha in front of the classroom, as they are understanding that everyone has one.”*

(Teacher)

*“I think the mains results of the programme are to teach the kids about their origin and respect to what belongs to them.”*

(Parent)

*“Confidence, learning about themselves in more detail and making more connections within their communities.”*

(Parent)

1. What made you aware of these results?

*“We could see the children's excitement knowing that each Taku Wairua session was coming up. They often spoke about the sessions or pulled their books out in between sessions to work on. For some, it was clearly evident to see that their Taku Wairua books were a source of pride. It was also evident hearing their comments or discussions about aspects of the programme, like the tree planting - they felt really good about this. There have also been children who have continued to discuss the 'citizenship' part of their learning and make ongoing links to how they can contribute as citizens, such as by actively picking up rubbish.”*

(Teacher)

*“In class, students have a "weekly wellbeing" block - this is once a week and occurs on a Friday - this time is used to select an activity that they have identified which will help boost up one of their four walls of Hauora. The learning from the programme has come through clearly during this block - students have been selecting activities such as: picking up rubbish around the school. These students have been able to link this activity not only to their Taha Hinengaro[[35]](#footnote-35) and Taha Wairua but also can clearly communicate their thinking and make explicit links back to their learning around citizenship - mentioning that this act is for their "school community". This act of citizenship and the explicit links that the learners are making are strong and powerful.”*

(Teacher)

*“He was talking a lot about where he came from and who he wants to be when he grew up.”*

(Parent)

*“Our child would come home raving about his sessions especially with the guest speakers.”*

(Parent)

1. How do you think the programme might be improved?

*“I think there are opportunities for improvement through some of the in-class deliveries. At times it was clear that the students would become less engaged. This was due to a "talk to" approach. I think an improvement here could be to use different strategies - think, pair, share for example, to ensure students are engaging in all the aspects - sharing back was an opportunity presented to learners but often the same ones would answer questions or share their thinking - providing opportunities for learners to work in small groups and have each group share back might be an approach to ensure more engagement with those who are often shy or less involved.”*

(Teacher)

*“Some more time on their whakapapa might be good, or something that is sent home in advance that families could potentially fill out. We found this tricky because some of the children did not know things like their grandparent's names. For those children who did ask at home and received family support, it was very positive as they learned little stories … that became special to them.”*

(Teacher)

*“I think over time it is improving, our son was part of the pilot, by the time he got to redo it now, the awesome written booklet about the programme has been produced , without this I think it was a little weak as we didn’t hear much , now we can read what the programme is looking at and chat with him about it, think for the kids at this age to follow through on things it’s also great when we get to see the work book they write in and use session to session but appreciate often sending things home can mean they don’t make it back to school!”* (Parent)

*“We don’t actually know what activities the kids are doing during the programme. We need some kinds of information about this.”*

(Parent)

1. Which parts would you do differently?

*“Presuming every child has a mountain or river was really hard. My NZ Euro son didn't know how to answer questions specific to this and made him feel it wasn't targeted to all ethnicity. Maybe broaden the question?”*

(Parent)

*“Maybe more home communication about the programme to help see changes at home. maybe broken up into chunks- e.g., if the focus for the next 2 weeks is belonging...what types of messages could parents support with at home and help the kids apply this learning at home too.”*

(Parent)

*“The community day felt slightly disorganized. There was a lot of down time, which for our students meant that many would get restless and then issues would begin to rise. There also was a disparity between opportunities between the different activities, such as tree planting, with some barely planting one while other students doing several, again, causing issues amongst student’s themselves.”*

(Teacher)

*“I thought the programme was effective as it was, with maybe those small tweaks for incorporating some more movement-based learning.”*

(Teacher)

1. Please add any other comments you think maybe helpful for the evaluation.

*“Make sure everyone knows the capabilities of students literacy ability to some extent.”*

(Teacher)

*“A huge thank you to the facilitators for the positive way they affirmed and supported the children with their learning. It was also really great how the facilitators would recap on prior lessons to reinforce the learning - this was really effective.”*

(Teacher)

*“Keep reaching out. These programmes are a huge contribution to our community.”*

(Parent)

*“The children developed great relationships with the facilitators through their positive and warm approach. They felt special and comfortable sharing their thoughts etc. It was also awesome how the facilitators would recap on previous sessions before moving on - it really helped to reinforce prior learning. The facilitator's warmth, positivity and accepting ways really helped the children feel special. My own son still thinks of Taku Wairua in a really positive way. Thank you*

(Parent)

*“I wish they had this programme in all school levels”.* (Parent)

1. What three words come to mind when you think of the Taku Wairua Programme:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *WORDS FROM PARENTS* | |
| Kind, Helpful, Respectful | Confidence, Self-Awareness, Connections |
| Inspiring, Motivating, Positive | Positive Mindset, Well-being |
| Well-being, Role Models | Organise, Mystery, Vehicle |
| Kind, Helpful, Respectful | Positive, Respectful, Affirming |
| Fun, Encouraging, Growth | Togetherness, Support, Pride |
| Thoughtful, Connecting, Service | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *WORDS FROM TEACHERS* | |
| Affirming, Respectful, Fun | Pillars, Connection, Community  Pepeha, Solid, Encouraging |
| Fun, Memorable, Relevant |
| Awareness, Tairongo, Āhua  (Tairongo – sense; Āhua – shape; form) |
|  |  |

1. If Taku Wairua was an object what would it be? Relate to changes you have seen in your child:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *OBJECT* | *COMMENT* |
| Tropical Plant Pictures: Swietenia mahagoni & macrophylla ... | *Tree – Branching outwards and expanding mindset*  *(Parent)* |
|  | *Compass – Shows different points, gives aid finding direction*  (Parent) |
| Free Images : landscape, nature, blossom, petal, bloom ... | *Poppy – Wanting to be more active, trying new things like skateboarding*  (Parent) |
| Flying Eagle Vector file image - Free stock photo - Public ... | *Bird – Because Taku Wairua helps you to fly and go higher*  (Parent asked child) |
| Free photo: Bonsai, Tree, Green, Plant, Small - Free Image ... | *Bonsai Plant –* no explanation given  (Parent) |
| candy, color, colorful, colors, snacks, sweet, sweets ... | *Candy –* no explanation given  (Parent) |
| NASA GOES-13 Full Disk view of Earth August 3, 2010 | Flickr | *Earth – Understanding more about who you are*  (Parent) |
| File:Dais 002.png - The Work of God's Children | *Dais –* no explanation given  (Parent) |
| Plastiquem: DISSENY KORU | *Koru – as it represents strength and growth – I think throughout this programme students’ strengths in terms of knowledge of themselves and who they are has increased. The growth has been evident through the language and communication between their peers. They have the ability to make explicit links between the programme and their other in class with little or no prompting or support. This shows the growth they have had as learners and individuals.*  (Parent) |
|  | *Whanaungatanga – as one family*  (Parent) |

# VII. Summary of Findings

The programme was enthusiastically received by the children and schools in which it was delivered. Accounts from other people involved in one way or another in the programme, including the programme facilitators, teachers and parents, were also affirmative and positive.

A number of attributing factors, identified in this evaluation, account for it being so well received and considered successful. First and foremost, it was fun, and as the literature review findings asserted, this aspect of the programme should not be underestimated nor perceived as frivolous. By ensuring the programme was fun, children were enthusiastic about the programme and were highly engaged in the activities. Another aspect of the programme, highly valued by children, was the freedom it afforded them, it was not infrequently mentioned by children that the Taku Wairua facilitators were not strict and for many children this was a positive aspect of the programme. Related to this finding were accounts from a few children that the programme exceeded expectations, they expected it would be boring, but it was fun.

Another appreciated aspect of the programme, by both children and teachers, was that it was perceived as being well-run, the organisation of the programme was considered to be smooth and complementary. Complementary in terms of the content of the programme fitting the activities and strengthening learning, but also in terms of the curriculum and school mission statements.

There was some discrepancy about how challenging the programme was. Some children embraced this and welcomed this aspect of the programme, saying it was good for them and encouraged them to use their brains. Other children and teachers commented they thought programme was too difficult at times, especially for children with reading and writing difficulties.

The guest speakers coming in to meet and talk with the children was spoken of highly by parents and children, although with some advice offered to change this aspect a little. For some children this was the highlight of the programme and was referred to in the interviews as their favourite part of the programme. The teachers, however, and also members of the Taku Wairua team, talked about the need to ensure there was more diversity among guest speakers, this related especially to their skill sets, with the impression, with the exception of one guest they were all sports people. Teachers advised and the Taku Wairua team also felt guests should be brought in from a wider skill background. One guest speaker, Rickus Wielham, was an app developer and mentioned about the struggles he experienced in school. For many children and teachers, this was significant as it was an area a number of children could related to and felt inspired by his achievements.

The emphasis on Māori culture was mostly valued, by all groups, however, for some parents and as mentioned by the Taku Wairua team, it was felt this emphasis could have excluded some children as some of the pepeha and whakapapa concepts were a little difficult for non-Māori children to relate to. Findings in the literature, however, pointed to the benefits of these principals for children of all ethnicities, as knowledge of one’s whakapapa facilitates determining identify and assists in clarifying self and relationships with others. Another point raised here by the Taku Wairua team, is that there was some indication that perhaps the emphasis on Māori culture and the number of activities taking place on Maraes actually helped reduce some barriers between non- Māori and Māori children.

Aspects of the programme considered in a more negative light included a number of points already raised, namely the need for more diversity among guest speakers, the complexity of the programme for some children proved too challenging, particularly in terms of vocabulary used. There was a critique that more communication was needed with teachers and parents. This has, however, been addressed to some extent as comments about the responsiveness of the Taku Wairua team to feedback from teachers, negates this to some extent. It was, however, mentioned that more communication with teachers, particularly at the inception of the programme would have been welcome. This was also evident in the comment from one of the principals about the need to ‘pre-load/front-load’ children about some vocabulary and concepts. Some parents also felt they were in the dark about the programme and would appreciate more information about the programme being given them.

Finally, the most frequently mentioned critique concerned the sedentary nature of a number of activities with the thought that there was, at times too much talking and bookwork, with kids sitting for too long on mats.

# VIII. Discussion

This evaluation, aimed to assess the effectiveness of the Taku Wairua programme. This programme falls under the umbrella of the WaterBoy Project, a project focussing on creating opportunities, for children form under resourced backgrounds, to participate in sport. A few years into this programme, it became apparent that more than the creation of sporting opportunities was needed to provide support and direction for these vulnerable children, many of whom are of Māori descent.

Over thirty years ago, kaupapa Māori was developed and introduced into New Zealand schools, initially in Māori medium settings, however, the vast majority of Māori children continue to be educated in mainstream schools, and disparities persist with academic achievements (Bishop, 2003). The kaupapa Māori reform project was introduced into mainstream schools to help address these disparities, but has not been easy to implement (*ibid*). Important to note, is the disparity exists well beyond borders of schools. It is well known, Māori are over-represented in family violence statistics, both as victims and perpetrators, are overrepresented in prisons and psychiatric hospitals and have lower health outcomes and a lower socioeconomic status than the majority of Pakeha New Zealanders (Al-Busaidi, Huria, Pitama, & Lacey, 2018; Bishop, 2003; Chin et al., 2018; Oxley, 2016; Zambas & Wright, 2016). Dobbs ad Eruera assert, “The use of cultural imperatives, for example, whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri, and mana, has the potential to transform behaviours and … can also be seen as protective factors within whānau, hapū and iwi” (2014, p. 1). The Taku Wairua Programme and its central four pillars embrace and reflect these cultural imperatives and the findings from this evaluation in the early stages of its inception, clearly indicate it is having a positive impact on the lives of the children it is targeting.

Children, parents and teachers reported an increased sense of pride, much of this pride related to the cultural heritage of the children. Despite the overtly Māori cultural emphasis in the programme, benefits were widely felt among children from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Observations regarding the fun and excitement experienced by the children when engaging in the programme activities help affirm this. Furthermore, the programme contributed to an increased awareness and concern for the environment, both physical and non-physical. Children’s accounts of activities conducted in the citizenship pillar were littered with comments about concern for the natural environment as well as concern for less privileged people.

Findings in literature affirm the design and direction of the programme is well-informed by evidence-based research supporting the needs of vulnerable children, affirming their strengths and stimulating motivations to aim high. The programme, the four pillars clearly indicate, has a strong emphasis on self-identity and relationship building. Findings in literature affirm the positive impact of such a focus. In an analysis of relationships with others, a distinction exists between ‘alongsideness’ and ‘being with’. ‘Alongsideness’ implies being in a place where connections are intermittent and partial, whereas ‘being with’ is more encompassing and helps the building of relationships (Latimer 2013, cited in Budge & Wels, 2016). Additionally, research indicates exposure to different groups of people is important for substantiating identities (Latimer, 2013). The Taku Wairua Programme and the invitation of guest speakers and diverse facilitators of the programme is opening the door for such exposures and in so doing is affirming the formation of self-identities.

Children targeted in this programme are children from less resourced backgrounds, and as findings in the literature revealed, Māori are overly represented among this group as a result are rendered more vulnerable. This programme embraces Kaupapa Māori principals and as Bishop observes, Kaupapa Māori is the struggle by Māori for control over how Māori children and young people are educated. It is perceived as a sense making and knowledge-generating process of marginalised children, and as such is a Māori response to the dominance of the majority culture (Pihama et al, cited in Murfitt, 2019). Bishop claims Kaupapa Māori principals ﻿“promote self-determination of all participants within non-dominating, power-sharing relations of interdependence, where culture is central, learning is interactive, family- type relationships are foundational, and participants (both in and beyond the school) are connected and committed to one another through the establishment of a common vision for what constitutes educational excellence” (2012, p. 47). Bishop, however, has drawn attention to the difficulties encountered when trying to implement Kaupapa Māori principals in mainstream educational settings, citing confusion about the culture of the Māori child; its uneven implementation and difficulties measuring student progress, as the reasons (Bishop, 2012). Reports of the success of this Taku Wairua programme suggest it will go a long way in addressing this concern, by supporting and complementing the efforts of Kaupapa Māori principals in mainstream schools.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing disruptions in school, recreational and sporting activities is having an impact on children and school life. Teachers reported higher levels of anxiety among the children, when returning to school after lockdown, and related this not only the interruption in school work and opportunities to socialise with others, but to concerns about parents’ loss of income and stable work. This programme has been timely in helping address a number of needs arising at the time of this pandemic.

The programme needs some tweaking, especially in regard to ensuring children are more engaged, either by ensuring activities are less sedentary or vocabulary and concepts used are more child friendly, however, positive comments about the responsiveness of the Taku Wairua team to feedback from teachers, assures these issues will be addressed.

# IX. Conclusion

The Taku Wairua Programme was designed in response to a perceived need, of its architects, to support children from vulnerable backgrounds searching for direction. Taku Wairua translates, to My Spirit, in English, and is rooted in Māori cosmology and spirituality. It embraces the sanctity of people by positioning them in time, space and place, and acknowledges the formative impact of current and past contexts that shape them. The programme aimed to support and provide direction to young children by advancing their sense of belonging and identity, self-discovery, goal setting abilities and their awareness of citizenship.

This evaluation had 10 main objectives, all relating to the experiences and impacts of the children who participated. The *first objective*, was that children would *have fun*. Child participants, parents and teachers, all strongly indicated this objective was met. This is evident in comments emerging from the children in both the interviews and letters sent to Taku Wairua, where the term fun was used unanimously by all children interviewed, when describing their experience of the programme. Teachers and parents also reported witnessing the fun children had, this was evident in their enthusiasm when returning from programme activities and the levels of excitement when the Taku Wairua team would be arriving in then schools. Children’s talk amongst themselves and reports to the family was littered with high praise and words indicating their eager anticipation.

The *second objective*, was that children would *gain a stronger sense of belonging*. Accounts from the interviews indicate children did indeed gain a stronger sense of belonging. This was evident in children identifying with geographical landmarks and exploring with family about ancestors and events in their family histories. Furthermore, exploration of their pepeha and whakapapa reportedly for some children facilitated better communication with classmates and friends. There was some concern, among parents, that perhaps children who are not of Māori descent, would struggle with identifying an awa, maunga, iwi or waka, however, only one child mentioned this was a little confusing, the majority of children reported finding, activities connected to these activities, interesting and helpful.

The *third objective*, was that children would *have a stronger sense of personal and family identity*, this too was a successfully reached, as evident in numerous descriptions from the children regarding finding out about their family and roots. A significant finding here pertains to comments from a few children, where it was implied their personal worlds had expanded. A number of children, reported with pride stories of parents and grandparents and for immigrant children pride when sharing with classmates about their countries of origin and cultures.

The *fourth objective*, was that childrenwould *gain an increased sense of pride in themselves*. Not all, but certainly the majority of children spoke with pride about how their achievements and accomplishments. This pride was not only referred to in terms of personal accomplishments, but in terms of their ethnic background and achievements of family members, current and past. Furthermore, from some children there was some indication changes had occurred in regard to feeling proud of their heritage as was evident in one report where the respondent asserted, she was no longer ashamed of her Islamic surname.

The *fifth objective*, was for children *to gain an increased self-awareness.* This links closely with the increased sense of pride and personal identity, and was indeed met. This was evident in children stating openly how they felt they knew themselves better and were more aware of their personality traits and skills. Certainly, here the Myers Briggs test assisted with this objective being accomplished. Teachers also referred to changes in children’s self-awareness and learning more about themselves and their heritage.

The *sixth objective*, was for children *to gain an increased sense of gratitude*. Explanations regarding the impact of children’s engagement in the citizenship pillar affirm some positive changes occurred here. Numerous children spoke of the gratitude they felt toward the Taku Wairua team and the time and effort put into the delivering the programme. Letters from the children, sent to the Taku Wairua team, were full of praise for the programme and the facilitators. What more, a number of accounts from the children, specified of how much better off they were than others. This was particularly evident in the rock painting activity and their eagerness to make gifts for less fortunate children.

The *seventh objective*, was for children to have *an increased awareness into the benefits of giving and volunteering.* It was more difficult to ascertain how this objective was achieved, as there was little opportunity for children to ‘volunteer’ as programme activities, that could indicate a willingness to give and volunteer, were organised by the Taku Wairua team, so by definition the children’s involvement, was not voluntary per se. When children described the tree planting days and the rock painting activity. The most popular activity in the programme was the tree planting day, but it is difficult to know if the pleasure here was related to the volunteering aspect or the fact that they could be outside and get away from the school grounds. There were, however, several notable comments in the interviews regarding children appreciating the value in giving, without expecting anything back.

The *eighth objective*, was for children to *gain an increased sense of pro-social behaviour*. This was perhaps the most tangible result of the evaluation, as both parents and teachers referred to changes noted in children cleaning up their classroom spaces and picking up rubbish around the school, without being prompted. Some children spoke of how much they appreciated how inclusive the programme was, indicating an increased awareness of embracing people different from themselves. A couple of reports from the teachers, also spoke of how much they valued the programmes, emphasis on respect, not only for others but the environment.

The *ninth objective*, was for children *to learn and implement growth mindset principles*. This is a particularly difficult objective to assess in terms of its success, as it requires more time. There were, however, positive signs from some descriptions about the goal setting pillar, that indicated some positive changes were taking place here. This was evident when children talked about the importance of trying hard, and not being disappointed when not reaching a goal, so long as they had given it their best shot.

The *tenth and final objective* was for children *to gain an Increase knowledge and awareness of goal setting principles*. Several accounts from the children indicated that indeed they had gained an appreciation for goal setting principals. A couple of children spoke of how the learning that took place here, enabled them to be better organised and also that when a goal is achieved it is a source of pride. Notable here, was the impact the guest speakers and learning about their early aspirations and the goal setting strategies steps they took to reach their current position. Parents affirmed the positive impact these guest speakers had on the children and how motivating it had been to learn about the goals they had set and accomplished.

This report, unapologetically, contains numerous quotes and descriptive accounts from all stakeholders of the programme. The evaluator has taken inspiration from bell hooks[[36]](#footnote-36), a black American feminist and social activist familiar with processes of power and influence. She poignantly addresses concerns about this, by somewhat sarcastically stating, “no need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice … I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own. Re-writing you, I rewrite myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still the colonizer, the speaking subject, and you now are the centre of my talk” (cited in, F. Budge, Schippers, Kool, Miranda-Galarza, & Van Hove, 2016, p. 28). It is important the voice of children and other stakeholders take a central place in this evaluation, it is their story, not the evaluators’.

There is no doubt this programme achieved its aims and has been enthusiastically welcomed and highly valued by the all groups involved in this evaluation. A few areas of improvement are needed, however, none that suggest this programme should not be funded. It should continue and be delivered to more schools.

# X. Challenges and Recommendations

During this evaluation it was difficult to elicit recommendations from the children, the majority were reluctant to say much, it seemed apparent they were afraid they would be seen as criticising the programme. When framing the question another way, however, some suggestions were forthcoming:

**Interviewer:***Now if I was to say to you, next year, you're going to be the boss of Taku Wairua and you have to take control ... would you do anything different?*

**C:***Maybe to do some like, fitness outside the classroom with people ... like ... maybe one day off at the gym and teaching us new games. Yeah, I love that … and to get more healthy and fit*

**Interviewer:** *Why is it important to be healthy and fit?*

**C:** *Cause if you're not healthy fit you won't live for as long … but if you're healthy then it's good for you... but if you are not healthy, they ... you might get sick or something.*

(Boy, 11 years)

Another child was more specific in her comment regarding the bookwork:

**Interviewer:***So, how could the classes … have been better?*

**S:***If they taught us more games? Cause I like games … they only taught us one game ... try to stop the book and add more games ...*

As is evident from these quotes, most recommendations from the children related to the need for the programme to inject some more energizers into sessions implying this would cater to the needs of children struggling with the book work. Several children recommended more time be allocated to the programme activities, and gave accounts of feeling they were too rushed at times.

Recommendations for the programme were forthcoming from the teachers and reflected much of what the children suggested, with some additional ideas, especially in regard to ensuring activities were less sedentary. Another recommendation supported the notion mentioned earlier about the need for more diversity among the guest speakers, not only in terms of skill set but in terms of ethnic background:

**Interviewer:***...**in summary, that you both seem to really place quite a lot of emphasis on the significance of having outsiders coming in and particularly well-known people. Is it correct that these role models are serving … an important role in the programme?*

**D:** *Yeah, … it's just someone different. It's a different voice … you automatically get that engagement … I think, too … particularly with H, I think … she's Pacifica …*

**J:** Maori

**D:** *… it enables our kids to see someone who's Maori Pacifica, you know, because we've 40% Maori and a high Pacific population [they] can aspire to be like them. So that's really positive. So yeah, I would be interested moving forward about seeing who else what other outside people they get*

Another recommendation coming forth from a teacher, concerned Māori culture, she felt as the programme already has a strong Māori emphasis it would be helpful to include some Māori activities such as poi work and taiaha. The comment was this would reinforce connectedness to Māori culture for some kids. This teacher also recommended the continuation of Māori facilitators, fluent in te reo Māori, for the programme, but not at the exclusion of Pakeha facilitators.

**V:** *I also think when you're leading a programme like Taku Wairua ... because it does come from a bit of a Maori lens, having someone who, is Maori as well who will be able to lead them and ... I'm not saying that anyone that's not ... that is Pakeha can't lead our ... because they can … but it is quite nice that our Rumaki[[37]](#footnote-37) students could have a fluent Maori speaker*

Another recommendation from this teacher was that she felt the programme should also be delivered to a younger age group. This recommendation came with the observation the following observation:

*“Because they start being influenced by a lot of outside things and how to change their minds. So, … they may see is the right path”.*

A recommendation came forward about the nature of sessions involving work on whakapapa, from a teacher and was echoed by one of the children, namely that the activity be presented in something akin to a story:

**“***Sort of, like you pick a sort of someone like an ancestor like someone that’s great something and like learn, starting with what their achievements were like when did they grow up, where did they grow up, stuff like that.”*

This idea was echoed somewhat by a teacher, suggesting:

*“I just think elaborating more would be really good. Or maybe … you know, when they are talking about the Waikato ... the Awa through their Pepeha maybe tell story about that and show a few videos about that story or something like that …”*

Finally, teachers, parents and the Taku Wairua team themselves, recommended communication be improved, particularly with teachers to ensure ‘buy-in’ and to support teachers to prepare the children for upcoming sessions. Parents also recommended they be communicated with more, so they have knowledge of the programme and can support the children at home in learning relevant to the programme. The importance of this triangle of child, parent, teacher communication was mentioned by a principal who cited research in support of this stating it increases chances of success.

Finally, the principal of one of the schools strongly recommended this programme be supported by external funders, and significantly to be seen as a preventative measure against potential problems children may face later in life:

*“It’s [the programme] obviously been appreciated and* [we see] *the benefits for our children … I would like to think that external funders would really consider this is an opportunity to make a positive difference to a large number of children. And again, early intervention, and the earlier we talk to children about these important life skills, the less issue will money have or spend in later years.”*

## Summary of Recommendations

Content

* Ensure vocabulary used in the programme is child-friendly
* Communicate with teaching staff about upcoming guest speakers, concepts or words that will be used in the sessions, so they can up-load the children.
* Include more messages about healthy eating and fitness in the sessions
* Include more Māori activities and games
* Ensure the programme involves a Māori facilitator, fluent in te Reo Māori

Non-Content

* Reduce sedentary activity – lessen ‘mat time’ periods
* Introduce more ‘energisers’ and physical activities to break sessions
* Ensure children are keeping up with sessions – time management may need adjusting to cater for children with reading and writing challenges
* Broaden selection of guest speakers to encourage more diversity in skills set and ethnicity
* Increase frequency of programme – weekly not fortnightly
* Increase the child, teacher, parent triangle of communication

# XI. Limitations

The initial evaluator of this programme designed the evaluation and collected initial data, however, due to unforeseen circumstances, was unable to complete the evaluation. A replacement evaluator stepped in to pick up from where the first evaluator left off. This posed some difficulty for the follow-up evaluator as certain aspects of the design of and collection of data would have been approached differently. As directed by the WaterBoy Director, however, and to honour the ethics review process the replacement evaluator adhered to the design and methodology proposed by the initial evaluator.

Furthermore, the replacement evaluator became involved relatively late in the programme and as a result only had limited opportunity to observe programme activities in person.

Efforts to conduct Focus Group Discussions with other stakeholders, such as school staff and family members of children involved in the programme were unsuccessful. Reasons for this are unclear, but very likely influenced by additional stresses teachers and families were dealing with as a result of tight lockdown restrictions. To elicit as much information as possible from these groups, online questionnaires were uploaded on the internet, again responses were quite limited. Only eleven parents and five teachers responded, despite the questionnaire being posted on interactive internet platforms used by the schools.

There is no doubt the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the evaluation and restricted planned activities, such as Focus Group Discussions and in-depth interviews. Schools are under considerable pressure as a result of lockdowns. Teachers involved in this evaluation reported high levels of anxiety among the children when returning from the first lockdown, and the need for adaptations to facilitate learning during lockdowns, places considerable stress on teachers and school staff.

# XII. Acknowledgements

First and foremost a huge thank you to the children who so willingly participated in this evaluation, the enthusiasm and excitement about the programme was contagious, facilitating easy interviews. Of course, a huge thank you to school administrative staff, especially teachers whose class activities were at times interrupted by the interviews, but you readily helped out and enabled access to children. To the principals and teachers involved in the interviews, again a big thank you. This evaluation was conducted at a time when your pressures and time restraints at work were prevalent due to the lockdowns you had to deal with. The time you did spare for the interviews were much appreciated and the observations you shared were insightful and valuable.

Many thanks to the NZ Lotteries Board, without their significant support this research project could not have taken place, this has been much appreciated, thank you!

A very big thank you to the whole Taku Wairua team, although not a lot of time was spent with you in person, the times we had together were warm and welcoming and helpfully responsive. The lack of time spent with you was important, as it is better not to be too close and influenced by project members whose project is being evaluated, but I would have loved more opportunity to spend time together.

*Nga mihi maioha!*

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# Annex 1: Key Informant Consent Form

**Key Informant Consent Form**

This consent form is to be signed by the Key Informant Participant.

Please tick to indicate the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I have read, and I understand the Key Informant Information Sheet and have been given enough time to consider whether to participate in this study, including time to talk to others.  I have been given a copy of this consent form and information sheet and understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and that I may choose not to participate at any time.  I understand that participation in this study is **confidential** and that no material, which could identify me personally, will be used in any reports on this study without my consent.  I know who to contact if I have any questions about the study.  I consent to the research staff collecting and processing my interview information. | Yes           No |
| I agree to my interview being **recorded**. | Yes           No |
| I wish to receive a copy of my **interview transcript**. | Yes           No |
| I wish to receive a **summary** of the results from the study. | Yes           No |

**Declaration by the Key Informant Participant:** I consent to take part in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Key Informant Participant name                                 Signature

Date:

**Declaration by the Researcher:** I have given a verbal explanation of the study to the participant, and parent or guardian and have answered their questions.

I believe the participant understands the study and has given informed consent to participate.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher’s name                                                        Signature

Date:

# Annex 2: Care Giver Information Sheet

**Evaluation of the Taku Wairua Program**

**Caregiver Information Sheet**



***Purpose of this study***

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of the Taku Wairua program, and identify areas for improvement.

Taku Wairua is a personal development program that focuses on four main themes: Belonging and identity, self-discovery, goal setting, and citizenship. The program uses a mix of activities to encourage participants to learn about themselves, their family, what they are good at, what is important to them, how to set goals, and participate in a community project.

The Taku Wairua program is designed by Te Tamawai Trust with school staff members and is delivered with community partners, such as Waikato Bay of Plenty Magic.

***What you are being asked to do***

The Te Tamawai Trust request your child’s participation in the study.

Participation in the study is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time. You do not have to provide a reason or explanation, and any information collected about your child will be destroyed.

Your child will be asked to complete a survey at the beginning and end of the program, and up to two audio recorded interviews: one interview about one theme in the program and another interview at the end of the program. The survey will take about ten minutes to complete and covers the following four topics: identity, self-discovery, goal setting, and citizenship. The interviews will take about ten minutes each. Your child’s interviews will be audio recorded. The key questions are: How has the program helped you? How could the program be better?

***What will happen to the information your child provides?***

The information your child provides will contribute to an evaluation of the Taku Wairua program. This report will be distributed to funders, partners, and schools who supported the program and Te Tamawai Trust. The data may also be used in future research, and you and the child under your care will be contacted if this is the case. No future research will occur without your consent. Anonymising devices will be used to protect your child’s identity in any written material. Ethics approval was granted from the New Zealand Ethics Committee.

***Who can you speak to about your participation in this study?***

If you have any questions about your participation in the study, you are encouraged to contact the Te Tamawai Trust Manager or the researcher.

Brittany Frew - Taku Wairua Manager - [brittany@takuwairua.co.nz](mailto:brittany@takuwairua.co.nz) - 022 1580 415

Lynley Uerata - Researcher - [lmuerata@gmail.com](mailto:lmuerata@gmail.com) - 027 520 4328

If you are open to you child taking part in this study, you will need to sign a consent form.

Ngā mihi,

Te Tamawai Trust

**The Taku Wairua program and study is supported by**



# Annex 3: Survey results

The tables align with the survey questions:

**List of tables:**

[Table 1: Respondents to both surveys 1](#_Toc80802055)

[Table 2: Age of students 1](#_Toc80802056)

[Table 3: Gender 2](#_Toc80802057)

[Table 4: Ethnicities 2](#_Toc80802058)

[Table 5: Where are you and your family from? 4](#_Toc80802059)

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[Table 20: How important is volunteering to your personal happiness? 10](#_Toc80802074)

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Survey Response Tables

Response rate was high, however, there were major problems with student identifiers and difference in number of respondents in the first and the second survey, compromising ability to compare results. Matching was done through comparing what identification numbers were available, and also on age, gender and ethnicity. In total only 67 students could be matched (Table 1).

Table 1: Number of respondents to each survey

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Survey | Total respondents |
| **1** | 134 |
| **2** | 154 |
| **Matching Surveys** | 67 |

Demographics

Age

Table 2: Age of students

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Survey | Age | | | | |
|  | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | Grand Total |
| **Survey 1** | 7 | 38 | 22 |  | 67 |
| **Survey 2** |  | 25 | 35 | 7 | 67 |

The age of the participants ranged between 8-10 in survey 1, and between 9-11 in survey 2. This is as expected with a gap of 6 months between survey 1 and survey 2.

Gender

Table 3: Gender

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Female | Male | Other | Grand Total |
| **Survey 1** | 33 | 33 | 1 | 67 |
| **Survey 2** | 33 | 34 |  | 67 |

In response to the gender identification question, one student identifying as “other” in survey 1, and identified as “male” in survey 2.

Ethnicity

Table 4: Ethnicities

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | European | Maori | Other | Mixed | Total |
| Survey 1 | 15 | 15 | 25 | 12 | 67 |
| Survey 2 | 17 | 10 | 24 | 16 | 67 |

In response to the ethnicity identification question, a wide range of ethnicities were identified. For ease of presentation, ethnicities are grouped in four main categories: European, Maori, Asian, Other, and Mixed. The distribution in both surveys was similar, with seemingly a shift from “Maori” to “mixed”.

Pillars

Identity and Belonging

Table 5: Where are you and your family from?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Changed | Same | Grand Total |
| Survey 2 compared to Survey 1 | 30 | 37 | 67 |

Out of 67 students, 30 students (45%) changed their answer in survey 2 to “where are you and your family from?” as compared to survey 1. This might indicate a changed perception of their understanding of the concept ‘home’.

Table 6: Where do you call home?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Changed | Same | Grand Total |
| Survey 2 compared to Survey 1 | 51 | 16 | 67 |

In survey 2, 16 students (76%) changed their answer to “where do you call home?” as compared to survey 1. This might be indicative of the number of children that move between households, and have more than one home.

Table 7: How connected do you feel to the place you call home?

0 - Not connected at all. I don't belong here  
1 - Not very connected  
2 - A little bit connected. I feel okay here  
3 - Connected  
4 - Very connected. I feel like I really belong here

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0, 1, 2 | 3 | 4 | Total |
| Survey 1 | 11 | 14 | 35 | 60 |
| Survey 2 | 7 | 17 | 36 | 60 |

\*Seven respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis.

There was no significant difference between responses in survey 1 and 2 concerning the question “How connected do you feel to the place you call home?” (X2= 1.19, p=0.55)

Table 8:How well do you know your family history?

0 - I don't know anything about my family history

1 - I don't know much about my family history

2 - I know their names but not about their lives

3 - I know quite a bit about my family history

4 - I know all their names and about each person's life

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0, 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total\* |
| Survey 1 | 18 | 16 | 14 | 12 | 60 |
| Survey 2 | 16 | 11 | 25 | 8 | 60 |

\*Seven respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis.

Likewise, there was no significant difference between responses in survey 1 and 2 concerning the question “How well do you know your family history?” (X2= 4.95, p=0.18).

Table 9:How easy or hard would it be to find someone to help you learn about your family history?

0 – No one helps me learn about my family history

1 - Very hard

2 - Hard

3 - Sometimes easy, sometimes hard

4 - Easy

5 - Very easy to ask someone to help me

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0, 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total\* |
| Survey 1 | 5 | 8 | 24 | 11 | 12 | 60 |
| Survey 2 | 8 | 3 | 27 | 13 | 9 | 60 |

\*Seven respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis.

There was no significant difference in responses to the question “How easy or hard would it be to find someone to help you learn about your family history?” (X2= 3.74, p=0.44).

Table 10: Name of mountain identified with

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Changed Mountain | None | None to mountain | Same mountain | Total |
| Survey 2 compared to Survey 1 | 12 | 12 | 30 | 13 | 67 |

12 students (18%) did not identify with any mountain in both surveys, and 30 students (45%) didn’t in the first survey but did so in the second survey. Twelve (12) students changed the name of the mountain they identified with. This might indicate an increased awareness of their whakapapa and wanting to connect with other children in their class.

Table 11: Name of river, lake, beach, ocean

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Changed | None | None to something | Same | Something to none | Grand Total |
| Survey 2 compared to Survey 1 | 24 | 3 | 21 | 14 | 5 | 67 |

Students changed in 24 cases (36%) the name of the river, lake, ocean, or beach they identified with. Another 21 (31%) identified with some environmental feature in survey 2, while not identifying with anything in survey 1. As with the above question, this may indicate an increased awareness of their whakapapa and wanting to connect with other children in their class.

Self-discovery

Table 12: Who do you talk to, ask questions and get advice?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Another adult I trust (please explain) | Caregiver | Friend | No support person | Other family member | Sports Coach | Teacher | | Blank | Grand Total |
| Survey 1 | 6 | 12 | 12 | 3 | 19 |  | 5 | 10 | | 67 |
| Survey 2 | 6 | 17 | 10 | 2 | 27 | 1 | 4 |  | | 67 |

Table 13: Change in answer about who the student can talk to, ask questions, and ask advice

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Family or caregiver | Other to family  /caregiver | Family/  caregiver to other | Other | None to somebody | None | Grand total |
| Survey 2 compared to Survey 1 | 26 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 11 | 2 | 67 |

Who students could talk to, ask questions and get advice from was answered similarly in both surveys.

Table 14: How happy do you feel about who you are?

1 - I don't like myself. I'd like to change a lot about me.

2 - I'm okay with who I am. I'd like to improve some things about me.

3 - I'm happy with who I am. I like most things about me.

4 - I love who I am. I love being me!

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total\* |
| Survey 1 | 7 | 5 | 26 | 18 | 56 |
| Survey 2 | 9 | 16 | 19 | 12 | 56 |

\*Eleven respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis.

Ten respondents only gave an answer in the second survey: 1 responded –"I don't like myself. I'd like to change a lot about me"; 4 responded –"I'm okay with who I am. I'd like to improve some things about me"; 2 responded –"I'm happy with who I am. I like most things about me"; 3 responded –"I love who I am. I love being me!"; One respondent only answered the first survey –"I'm happy with who I am. I like most things about me"

When asked “how happy do you feel about who you are”, a statistically lower number of students felt significantly less happy during survey 2 (X2=8.30, p=0.04). There is not enough information to determine the reason for this, however, findings from interviews contradict this result as the vast majority of children reported feeling an increased sense of self-esteem.

Table 15: Do you know your strengths and abilities?

1 - Still learning my strengths and abilities

2 - I know some of my strengths and abilities

3 - I know most of my strengths and abilities

4 - I know my strengths and abilities well

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total\* |
| Survey 1 | 12 | 16 | 15 | 13 | 56 |
| Survey 2 | 4 | 13 | 13 | 26 | 56 |

\*Eleven respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis.

Ten respondents only gave an answer in the second survey: 2 responded "I'm still learning about my strengths and abilities"; 1 responded – “I know some of my strengths and abilities"; 2 responded – “I know most of my strengths and abilities"; 5 responded – “I know my strengths and abilities well"; One respondent only answered the first survey – “I know most of my strengths and abilities"

At the time of the second survey, a statistically higher number of students indicated to know their strengths and abilities better than during survey 1 (X2=8.79, p=0.03). This result was confirmed in interview findings.

Goalsetting

Table 16: How important do you think goal setting is?

Categories 0+1+2 are combined

0 - Not important at all

1 - Not very important

2 - Sometimes important

3 - Important

4 - Very important

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0 / 1 / 2 | 3 | 4 | Total\* |
| Survey 1 | 15 | 14 | 27 | 56 |
| Survey 2 | 11 | 21 | 24 | 56 |

\*Eleven respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis.

Ten respondents only gave an answer in the second survey: 1 responded "Sometimes important"; 4 responded –"Important"; 5 responded –"Very important"; One respondent only answered the first survey –" Sometimes important".

No difference in importance given to it by the students between survey 1 and 2 (X2=2.19, p=0.33).

Table 17: How often do you set goals for yourself?

0+1 and 4+5 combined

0 - I never set goals

1 - Rarely. 1 to 2 times a year

2 - Not very often. 3 to 5 times a year

3 - Sometimes. 6 to 8 times a year

4 - Often. 9 to 11 times a year

5 - Very often. 12 or more times a year

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0 / 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 / 5 | Total |
| Survey 1 | 21 | 9 | 13 | 13 | 56 |
| Survey 2 | 21 | 11 | 17 | 7 | 56 |

\*Eleven respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis.

Ten respondents only gave an answer in the second survey: 2 responded "Rarely. 1 to 2 times a year"; 2 responded –"Not very often. 3 to 5 times a year";

2 responded –"Sometimes. 6 to 8 times a year"; 2 responded – "Often. 9 to 11 times a year"; 2 responded –"Very often. 12 or more times a year"; One respondent only answered the first survey – "Sometimes. 6 to 8 times a year".

Neither did students increase the frequency of goalsetting (X2=2.53, p=0.47).

Table 18: How often do you write down your goals?

Categories 0+1 were combined

0 - I never set goals

1 - Rarely. 1 or 2 times a year

2 - Not very often. 3 to 5 times a year

3 - Sometimes. 6 to 8 times a year

4 - Often. 9 to 11 times a gear

5 - Very often. 12 or more times a year

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0 / 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Survey 1 | 21 | 9 | 13 | 5 | 8 | 56 |
| Survey 2 | 21 | 11 | 17 | 4 | 3 | 56 |

\*Eleven respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis.

Ten respondents only gave an answer in the second survey: 3 responded "Rarely. 1 or 2 times a year"; 2 responded – "Not very often. 3 to 5 times a year"; 2 responded –"Sometimes. 6 to 8 times a year"; 2 responded – "Often. 9 to 11 times a year"; 1 responded –"Very often. 12 or more times a year"; One respondent only answered the first survey – "Rarely. 1 or 2 times a year"

In addition, there was no change concerning writing goals down (X2=3.12, p=0.53

Citizenship

Table 19: How often do you volunteer?

0+1 combined to enable analysis

0 - I never volunteer

1 - Rarely. 1 or 2 times a year

2 - Not very often. 3 to 5 times a year

3 - Sometimes. 6 to 8 times a year

4 - Often. 9 to 11 times a gear

5 - Very often. 12 or more times a year

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0 / 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total\* |
| Survey 1 | 12 | 5 | 19 | 10 | 8 | 54 |
| Survey 2 | 12 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 54 |

\*Thirteen respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis

Eleven respondents only gave an answer in the second survey: 2 responded – "Rarely. 1 or 2 times a year"; 2 responded – "Not very often. 3 to 5 times a year"; 4 responded – "Sometimes. 6 to 8 times a year"; 2 responded – "Often. 9 to 11 times a year"; 1 responded – "Very often. 12 or more times a year"; Two respondents only answered the first survey – "Rarely. 1 or 2 times a year" and "4 - Often. 9 to 11 times a year".

There was no significant difference between survey 1 and 2 concerning the frequency of volunteering (X2=3.67, p=0.45), nor concerning the importance of volunteering to students’ personal happiness (X2=4.20, p=0.38).

Table 20: How important is volunteering to your personal happiness?

Categories:

0 - Not important at all

1 - Not very important

2 - Sometimes important

3 – Important

4 - Very important

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total |
| Survey 1 | 0 | 5 | 14 | 19 | 18 | 54 |
| Survey 2 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 17 | 19 | 54 |

Thirteen respondents did not fill in both surveys and are excluded from the analysis

Eleven respondents only gave an answer in the second survey: 1 responded "Not very important"; 2 responded – "Sometimes important"; 7 responded – "Important"; 1 responded – "Very important"; Two respondents only answered the first survey – "Important".

Students indicated the reasons for volunteering. There is an increase in the number of reasons given from 111 in survey 1 to 144 in survey 2.

Table 21: Reasons for volunteering

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reasons for volunteering | Survey 1 | Survey 2 |
| I wanted to improve things or help people | 25 | 32 |
| I wanted to meet people or make friends | 17 | 20 |
| The reason was really important to me | 4 | 11 |
| My friends or family did it | 12 | 12 |
| My school or place of work did it | 5 | 6 |
| I felt there was a need in my community | 4 | 10 |
| I thought it would give me a chance to use my existing skills | 7 | 10 |
| I thought it would give me a chance to learn new skills | 15 | 23 |
| I had spare time to do it | 9 | 9 |
| I felt there was no one else to do it | 3 | 5 |
| None of these | 10 | 6 |
| Grand total | **111** | **144** |

# Annex 4: Student Interview Guide: Four Pillars

This guide is designed for the interviews with students and will be conducted at the end of each pillar. Apply the set of questions relevant to each pillar in the interview.

**Pre-interview checks**

The interviewer must observe the following issues and tasks before the interviews begin and each interview begins.

* Be flexible and accommodate the constraints of the school environment as much as possible.
* Negotiate with relevant school staff a range of times and places to undertake the interviews. A quiet place is preferred.
* Where possible, enable the student to determine the place of the interview.
* Give the participants the choice of doing the interview on their own or with another person.
* Check if the caregiver who gave consent remains the same. If they have changed, gain consent from new caregiver.
* Remind the participant of their rights prior to commencing any interview.
* Ensure the student has their Taku Wairua workbook, and other discussion prompts, such as drawing material, play dough and so on.
* Explain the interview will take up to 10 minutes.
* Have food ready for the interview.
* Ensure recording equipment is on.
* Ensure the koha and forms acknowledging receipt of koha are organised.

**Interview Reminders**

The interviewer is reminded of the following before each interview begins.

* Try to make the interview as informal and fun as possible.
* Tune into the child’s style of communication, such as gesturing, pretending and so on.
* The role of the interviewer is to pose the question and follow the conversation. The following questioning devices can be used to encourage the conversation.
  + Clarification: "What do you mean...?"
  + Amplification: "Tell me more about..."
  + Explanation: "Why?"
  + Significance: "How did you feel about...?"
  + Prompts - Verbal or non-verbal signals to show that I am following, and encourages participants to elaborate. These can include a nod, a smile, "hmmm", "oh really", "go on", "Yes?" or "I see".
  + Checks: Summaries to make sure that I have understood the interviewee. Such as, "If I were to summarise your experiences it would be...", "So what you are saying is..." or "When you say they, who are you referring to?
* Check aloud with the student to see if your understanding is right or not. “Am I getting the right idea, or not really?”
* Avoid comments which suggest there is a right answer, such as “Good answer”. Instead say, “That helps me to understand. Thanks”.
* Avoid telling the student to speak up. If the student articulates unclearly, seek clarification with, “My ears are very slow today and I can’t hear very well. Can you tell me that again, maybe a little louder?”
* When seeking clarification, the interviewer should confess that need to the student, rather than leave the student thinking their explanation was faulty. “I’m not sure I understand, you said [inset phrase]?”
* Suggest nonverbal ways to signal an opinion, by asking the student to spread their arms apart as wide as appropriate to show a response (wide = good; narrow = bad). Another nonverbal approach is to gesture thumbs up or down. These gestured points can be followed up with questions or clarifications.

**Interview guide**

#### I’m going to have a chat with you about your experience of the [belonging and identity, self-discovery, goal setting, citizenship] theme of the Taku Wairua program. I have some questions to ask you and there are many things here for you to use to tell me about your experience. The interview will take about 10 minutes, depending on how much you want to talk about your experience. Tell me right away if you think I am starting to get the wrong idea about something. Interrupt me at any time, if you remember something else I should know.

#### *First pillar - Belonging and identity*

* The theme of the first few sessions was belonging and identity, what did you like or dislike about the sessions?
* How have the sessions helped you? What will you take away from them?
* How could the sessions have been better?

#### *Second pillar - Self-discovery*

* The theme of the last few sessions was self-discovery, what did you like or dislike about the sessions?
* How do you want to be known by your friends and family?
  + How have the sessions changed this?
* How have the sessions helped you? What will you take away from them?
* How could the sessions have been better?

#### *Third pillar - Goal setting*

* The theme of the last few sessions was goal setting, what did you like or dislike about the sessions?
* How have the sessions helped you? What will you take away from them?
* How could the sessions have been better?

#### *Fourth pillar - Citizenship*

* The theme of the last few sessions was citizenship, what did you like or dislike about the sessions?
* How have the sessions helped you? What will you take away from them?
* How could the sessions have been better?

#### *Ending*

The aim of these interviews is for me to understand your experience of the [belonging and identity, self-discovery, goal setting, citizenship] pillar. Do you have anything to add that we have not covered?

# Annex 5: Student Interview Guide: Overall program

**Pre-interview checks**

The interviewer must observe the following issues and tasks before the interviews begin and each interview begins.

* Be flexible and accommodate the constraints of the school environment as much as possible.
* Negotiate with relevant school staff a range of times and places to undertake the interviews. A quiet place is preferred.
* Where possible, enable the student to determine place of the interview.
* Give the participants the choice of doing the interview on their own or with another person.
* Check if the caregiver who gave consent remains the same. If they have changed, gain consent from new caregiver.
* Remind the participant of their rights prior to commencing any interview.
* Ensure the student has their Taku Wairua workbook, and other discussion prompts, such as drawing material, play dough and so on.
* For the final interview with participating students, ensure there are counters and a chart with all the activities grouped under the pillars.
* Explain the interview will take up to 15 minutes.
* Have food ready for the interview.
* Ensure recording equipment is on.
* Ensure the koha and forms acknowledging receipt of koha are organised.

**Interview reminders**

The interviewer is reminded of the following before each interview begins.

* Try to make the interview as informal and fun as possible.
* Tune into the child’s style of communication, such as gesturing, pretending and so on.
* The role of the interviewer is to pose the question and follow the conversation. The following questioning devices can be used to encourage the conversation.
  + Clarification: "What do you mean...?"
  + Amplification: "Tell me more about..."
  + Explanation: "Why?"
  + Significance: "How did you feel about...?"
  + Prompts - Verbal or non-verbal signals to show that I am following, and encourages participants to elaborate. These can include a nod, a smile, "hmmm", "oh really", "go on", "Yes?" or "I see".
  + Checks: Summaries to make sure that I have understood the interviewee. Such as, "If I were to summarise your experiences it would be...", "So what you are saying is..." or "When you say they, who are you referring to?
* Check aloud with the student to see if your understanding is right or not. “Am I getting the right idea, or not really?”
* Avoid comments which suggest there is a right answer, such as “Good answer”. Instead say, “That helps me to understand. Thanks”.
* Avoid telling the student to speak up. If the student articulates unclearly, seek clarification with, “My ears are very slow today and I can’t hear very well. Can you tell me that again, maybe a little louder?”
* When seeking clarification, the interviewer should confess that need to the student, rather than leave the student thinking their explanation was faulty. “I’m not sure I understand, you said [inset phrase]?”
* Suggest nonverbal ways to signal an opinion, by asking the student to spread their arms apart as wide as appropriate to show a response (wide = good; narrow = bad). Another nonverbal approach is to gesture thumbs up or down. These gestured points can be followed up with questions or clarifications.

**Interview guide**

We have talked a bit about some of the pillars of the Taku Wairua program. Now I’d like to chat with you about your experience of the program as a whole. I have some questions to ask you and there are many things here for you to use to tell me about your experience. The interview will take about 15 minutes, depending on how much you want to talk about your experience. Tell me right away if you think I am starting to get the wrong idea about something. Interrupt me at any time, if you remember something else I should know. Please help yourself to food and drinks.

#### *Theme one – experience*

1. Tell me about your experience of the Taku Wairua program and how it has helped you.

#### *Theme two – program elements*

1. Place a counter on your favourite pillar and tell me the reason you chose that pillar.
2. Place a counter on your favourite activity and tell me the reason you chose that activity.
3. What did you like about the program?
4. What did you not like about the program?

#### *Theme three – change*

1. How has the program helped you?
2. How could the program be better?

#### *Ending*

The aim of these interviews is for me to understand your experience of the Taku Wairua program. Do you have anything to add that we have not covered?

# Annex 6: Key Informant Interview Guide: Principal and Teachers

**Pre-interview checks and reminders**

* Provide the interview guide to the participant before the interview.
* Remind the participant of their rights prior to commencing any interview.
* Allow the participant to determine the time and place of the interview.
* Explain the interview will take up to 60 minutes.
* Have food ready for the interview.
* Ensure recording equipment is on.
* Ensure the koha (small gift) and forms acknowledging receipt of koha are organised.

**Interview guide**

In the first part of the interview, I will ask you a very general question which lets you talk about your experience in your own way. I have then prepared a list of questions about the specific issues for the evaluation. The interview will take up to 60 minutes, depending on how much you want to talk about the different issues. Please help yourself to food and drinks.

#### *Theme one – your experience*

1. Tell me about your experience of the program and how you came to learn about the program?
   1. Why did you want the program delivered to students in your school?

#### *Theme two – outcomes*

1. What do you feel have been the outcomes of the program and how did you become aware of them?
2. Prompts
   1. How common is that outcome?
   2. What do you feel have been the outcomes for the students?
   3. What do you feel have been the outcomes for the wider school environment?
   4. What do you feel have been the outcomes beyond the school?
   5. Which of those outcomes were unexpected?
   6. To what extent do you think these outcomes might be sustained?

#### *Theme three – program improvements*

One of the purposes of the evaluation is to improve the program.

1. How do you think the program might be improved? What elements of the program need to be retained and encouraged, and which elements can we do differently?
2. Prompts
   1. How could the structure of the program be improved?
   2. How could the content of the program be improved?
   3. How could the delivery of the program be improved?
   4. How have you found the people on the program?
   5. How could the relationship with Te Tamawai Trust be improved?

#### *Theme four – constraints*

1. What constrains the program and its intended effects, and how might these be addressed?

#### *Ending*

The aim of the interview is for me to understand your experience of the Taku Wairua program. Do you have anything to add that we have not covered?

# Annex 7: Focus Group Discussion Guide – Taku Wairua Team

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**TAKU WAIRUA PROGRAMME**



1. **Welcome**Thanks for agreeing to meet today. The goal of today’s meeting is to gather information about the impact of the Taku Wairua Programme and identify areas for improvement. There are only a few basic rules to keep in mind while participating today:

* Everyone is expected to be an active participant.
* There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.
* Speak freely but remember not to interrupt others while they are talking.
* Note taking is for reporting purposes only and will be used for analysis. Names will not be attached to the notes.
* An audio recording will be made to assist me with the transcription of this meeting
* Other FGDs will be held with teachers and family of children involved in the programme. All information gathered will be analysed to determine significant impacts, any potential gaps in the programme and identify areas for improvement. Recommendations will be made and included in the report for supporters of the programme.
* All feedback today will remain anonymous. In order to maintain anonymity, I just ask that anything that is said during our session is not repeated outside of our session.

1. **Introductions** *(2 Minutes)*Although I have met most of you, I would like to ask everyone to introduce themselves and tell me what your position is and how long you’ve worked in the programme.
2. **Interactive Exercise** *(10 minutes)*Think about the different pillars and activities of the programme and find an object in this room or in your possession, that describes your impression of the different pillars. After this, write the first two or three words that come to mind when you think of them. How would you describe the impact of these activities on the children?
3. **Discussion** (60minutes)

**Theme One: Your experience**

1. How did you experience the programme?
2. What do you think the programme delivered to the children?

**Theme Two: Outcomes**

What do you think the main outcomes of the programme have been and how did you become aware of them?

**Theme Three: Programme Improvements**

One of the purposes of this evaluation is to improve the programme

1. How do you think the programme might be improved?
2. What elements of the programme need to be retained and encouraged?
3. Which elements would you do differently?

VI. **Closing**Thank you for taking the time to participate today. Your feedback will be collected and included in the evaluation report (all feedback is reported anonymously). Your insights will help your team understand the impact of the Taku Wairua programme on targeted children and identify any areas for improvement. Again, thanks for your time!

1. Bishop, R. (2012). Pretty difficult: Implementing kaupapa Maori theory in English-medium secondary schools. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, *47*(2), 38-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Abma, T. A., & Schrijver, J. (2020). ‘Are we famous or something? ’Participatory Health Research with children using photovoice. *Educational Action Research*, *28*(3), 405-426. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Tama wai – Water Boy [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Taku Wairua – My spirit [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Kaupapa – principles and ideas which act as a base or foundation for action. A kaupapa is a set of values, principles and plans which people have agreed on as a foundation for their actions. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Whānau – often translated as 'family', but its meaning is more complex. It includes physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions and is based on whakapapa. Whānau can be multi-layered, flexible and dynamic. Whānau is based on a Māori and a tribal world view. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Hapu - subtribe [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Iwi - tribe [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Whakapapa – a line of descent from one’s ancestors; genealogy [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ara ki te mahi – essentially a trial day for work [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. NZEC Application 2020\_39 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Manaaki - to support, take care of, give hospitality, protect, look out for – show respect, generosity and care for others [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Kanohi kitea – to have physical presence, be seen, represent – to express importance of meeting people face to face, and to be a face that is known to and seen within a community and at important gatherings. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. <https://www.cdc.gov/epiinfo/user-guide/statcalc/statcalcintro.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Idem – in this context, essentially means, ‘as above’. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Belonging and Identity; Self-Discovery; Goal Setting and Citizenship [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. A tauparapara – is the first utterance by an opening speaker. It is a tribal poetic chant containing traditional or philosophical statements [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Mōhiotanga – knowledge, knowing, understanding, comprehension, intelligence, awareness, insight, perception. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Mātauranga – knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill. In this context it refers to a time of growth for the child. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Māramatanga – enlightenment, insight, understanding, light, meaning, significance, brainwave. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Whakapapa – genealogy, cultural identity. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Pepeha – a way of introducing oneself. Using a set structure, it identifies who we are, where we are from and where we belong. Everyone has a pepeha which links them to their ancestors. It’s like a story that connects you to your waka, hapū and iwi. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Awa - River [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Maunga - Mountain [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Waka – canoe [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Iwi - tribe [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. (Source: Slone, A. (2020). *To See Ourselves: A Mixed Methods Study of the Relationship Between Place, Mindset, and Grit in Appalachian First Year College Students* (Doctoral dissertation, Northwest Nazarene University). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Hāngi – food cooked in an earth oven [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Manutaki – equivalent to a student leader [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. https://youtu.be/N6XkvoBhhLI [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Tino Rangatiratanga – Self-determination [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Te Tiriti o Waitangi – The Treaty of Waitangi. A formal agreement, first signed in 1840 by British representatives of the crown and by various iwi (tribes) and hapu (sub-tribes). Essentially, the treaty guaranteed protection of Māori authority over estates and assets and extended the rights of British citizenship [to Māori]. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Preparing children about certain concepts in advance of a session [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Hinengaro - mind, thought, intellect, consciousness, awareness. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. ﻿The use of bel hooks in lower case is in keeping with her self- proclaimed desire to “to construct a writer-identity that would challenge and subdue all impulses leading me away from speech into silence” (1990:9) [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Rumaki – full emersion programme [↑](#footnote-ref-37)