



Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project

IMPROVING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

FACT SHEET

Family and community initiatives

Parents, families and friends have a big role to play in identifying mental health issues in young people and doing something about it. When they are concerned about someone they are close to, they need good access to authoritative information that helps them differentiate between normal adolescent behaviour and mental health problems.

Information for parents, families and friends

- Parents, families and friends have a big role to play in identifying mental health issues for young people, and encouraging them to seek help. When they become concerned about someone they are close to, they need good access to authoritative information.
- A contestable fund will be established that will allow non-government organisations to bid for funding to provide information to parents, families and friends. There will be an annual funding round for interested NGOs.

Whanau Ora approach to Youth Mental Health

- Whanau Ora has the potential to make a strong contribution to improving youth mental health. Maori and Pacific young people have comparatively high rates of mental illness and services are not always working well for these groups.
- As part of the Youth Mental health package, two Whanau Ora providers with mental health expertise will be contracted to work with 40 Maori and Pasifika 12-19 year olds and their whanau/aiga over a two year period.
- The target group for this initiative is 40 Maori or Pacific families in areas where there is a high rate of Maori and Pacific mental health need.
- The young people will be referred by school-based nurses, Child Youth and Family or the Youth Court following a Family Group Conference. Providers will work to address their mental health needs in a culturally appropriate way, within the context of building leadership and capability within the whanau/aiga.

Training for providers working with truants and disengaged young people

- As a group, disengaged young people have very high rates of mild to moderate mental illness. This is compounded when they come from low decile schools. Unaddressed mental health needs put young people at risk of dropping out of school. Once young people have disengaged, mental illness then creates a barrier to reengagement with education or employment.
- Training will be offered to service providers who work alongside disengaged young people so that they can identify mental health needs and know what to do about them. Training and resources will be offered to providers who work with truants and young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- The Ministry of Education is currently reconfiguring the way it contracts truancy services. The Ministry of Social Development is contracting providers to work with NEET 16-17 year olds for the first time this year. This initiative complements the Government's welfare reform programme for young people.

Ensuring young people have a say

- Young people want to access services in a quite different way to adults. They prefer to “snack” on a range of services to meet different needs: for example, seeing their GP for migraines but Family Planning for contraception. Some of the shortcomings in our current system are due to government not paying enough attention to young people's preferences.
- This package has been put together with young people's needs in mind. Young people will also have an opportunity to input into the detailed design of the new programmes and services in this package.
- The Ministry of Youth Development will run a targeted consultation with young people, beginning in May. Young people will be invited to give feedback through focus groups, online surveys and social media.



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Q & A

Family and community initiatives

Information for parents, families and friends

Why is information for parent and families being improved?

Many parents say that they are unsure where to go for advice on their children's behaviour. It can be difficult for parents to tell the difference between normal adolescent behaviour and mild mental illness. It's important that parents and families have access to straightforward, authoritative information that helps them understand what they are seeing and what they can do about it.

What about information for friends?

Young people are highly inclined to turn to their friends for advice and support. Modern technologies such as Facebook mean that teenagers are exposed to broad

advice of varying quality from people who may not even be seeing them in person. It is more important than ever that if young people seek information on which to base their advice to friends, it's good-quality information.

How will better information be provided?

A contestable fund will be established for non-government organisation to bid for funding to provide robust and accessible information to parents, families and friends. There will be an annual funding round for this contestable fund, which will cost \$1 million over four years. NGOs who already provide information to parents, families and friends may wish to access this fund.

Whanau Ora approach to Youth Mental Health

What is the Whanau Ora initiative in the Youth Mental Health project?

Two Whanau Ora providers with mental health expertise will be contracted to work with 40 Maori and Pacific young people and their whanau/aiga over a two year period. The young people will be referred by school-based nurses, Child Youth and Family or the Youth Court following a Family Group Conference. Providers will work with the young people to address their mental health needs, within the context of building leadership and capability within the whanau/aiga.

Why is a Whanau Ora approach important in this context?

Maori and Pacific youth have higher rates of mental illness, and services are not always working well for these

groups. Whanau Ora has the potential to make a strong contribution to improving youth mental health, recognising that the wellbeing of young people's families is critical to their own wellbeing.

Where will this initiative run?

The initiative will run in areas with high levels of M ori and Pacific mental health need. These are likely to be Counties Manukau, the Bay of Plenty and Hawke's Bay. The two successful providers will be confirmed by the end of June 2012.

When will it start and what will it cost?

The initiative will run from July 2012 for a two-year period. The total cost is \$480,000 over two years.

Training for people working with truants and disengaged young people

Why focus on these groups?

Truants and disengaged young people have very high rates of mild to moderate mental illness. This is compounded when they come from low-decile schools.

What role will truancy and engagement services have in youth mental health?

All providers contracted by the Ministries of Education and Social Development to locate and work with truants and disengaged young people will be offered training and information on how to recognise mental health issues,

and where and how to access help. Youth re-engagement services will also support young people with mental health problems during and after they receive any treatment required.

What will happen to young people who have been identified as having mental health needs by these providers?

Young people who have had mental health issues identified will be referred on to appropriate services that can address their mental health needs.

Ensuring young people have a say

Why are you consulting with young people?

Young people who have used - or might need to use - mental health services will be consulted on the detailed design of these initiatives, to ensure they meet young people's needs.

How will young people know they can participate in the consultation?

An online survey will be emailed to over 5,000 young people nationwide who are members of the Aotearoa Youth Voices Network. The consultation will also be

advertised on the Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) Facebook page and promoted to the youth sector by Ara Taiohi. MYD contracted providers will be asked to alert all young people enrolled on their programmes to the opportunity to have a say. There will be focus groups targeting young people who have accessed mental health services, or who have experienced mental health issues.

How long will it take?

The consultation will take five weeks to complete.