

Taiohi Ora Youth Wellness



Our service is evolving

Since launching Taiohi Ora Youth Wellness late last year, it's been clear there is need for a service like ours that works with young people and whānau.

Alongside the Pilot In-School programme, offered over the first half of this year, the demand for ongoing community support is high. It's important that we respond where the need is greatest, so we are continuing to develop the service within the team's clinical capacity.

Taiohi Ora is a primary care service for those experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues before they escalate into more serious problems. We use a whānau-centric approach, recognising that a person's health and wellbeing are influenced by many factors. Our team starts by meeting with the young person and their whānau for a whānau snapshot that will look at what other stresses may exist in their lives.

We take a view of shared expertise. This means focusing on the existing competency, skills, resources and strengths of a person and whānau - in other words, what things are going well and how this can be built on to increase resiliency. It means working on strategies and strengthening natural networks to best support the young person, as well as setting realistic goals for their future.

We may offer a single session family consultation (SSFC) or other short-term group or individual support. This doesn't preclude us from stepping in again to support whānau - but ongoing, long term counselling is not what our service is able to provide, and community counsellors and other organisations would need to be approached for this. Our remit is to concentrate on Māori and Pasifika youth and those who are at high risk of entering the mental health system.

Mastering social connections

Kelsi Field is an applied masters' student in social work, studying through Massey University. We are fortunate to have her involved in the Taiohi Ora service until November 2018.

Kelsi, who hails from Taranaki, is supporting the team with the referral processes. "I have been making contact with clients, and given them a grounding in terms of understanding where and how they can get help."

She says many whānau are grateful for help and direction for the young person in their family. There is a range of issues they're dealing with such as anxiety, depression, anger and family separation. The intervention from Taiohi Ora may take place over a period of weeks and there is a chance to refer on if the service doesn't meet their needs. "We're providing information on a direction...it's about giving a hand up rather than being interfering or overbearing."

She says her best tip for whānau and schools is: Don't be afraid to ask for help. Support is available and while people may not get all the answers at once, the service will work in partnership with families and young people.

To refer to the Taiohi Ora Service please contact Tui Ora on 06 759 4064 and ask for a referral form. Completed forms should be forwarded to intake@tuiora.co.nz

Introducing a new member of the team



Taiohi Ora Service newbie Katie Lancaster (pictured right) has had a busy year.

She and her husband, a school teacher at Devon Intermediate, moved with their two daughters from the North Shore in June. Last month Katie took up her new role at Tui Ora as a Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Clinician, within the Taiohi Ora service.

And while the job title might be a bit of a mouthful Katie describes it as acting as a conduit between the Taranaki District Health Board (TDHB) and the Taiohi Ora team.

“What we are trying to provide is a continuum of care between primary and secondary health services and ensuring that no one slips through the gaps.

“For me the whānau-centric, holistic approach to health is really appealing and one of the main reasons I wanted to work at Tui Ora. It’s what makes us different, and it works.”

Katie has 20 years’ experience working in mental health and with young people. Originally trained as an occupational therapist, Katie previously worked at CAMHS (Child Adolescent Mental Health) at the Waitemata DHB (New Zealand’s largest DHB).

“It’s cool being a part of a smaller team. Even

though my role is going to be different than the other clinicians I’ve been lending a hand and working on some whānau snapshots, getting a better idea about their work and their clients.”

Katie says that young people today have different pressures from previous generations:

“The impact of social media is having far reaching consequences on young people. They live in a society of instant communication that is 24/7, and instant gratification. It creates unrealistic expectations and disappointment.

“There is also a huge amount of pressure on families to survive. Both parents work, they aren’t available at home and kids are growing up on their own.”

It’s a problem Katie can relate to. Her 13km drive to work in Auckland could frequently take an hour each way. It was one of the reasons she and her husband decided to move to Taranaki.

“We love the natural environment here, the bush and the mountain, and how easy it is to get to. It’s great to be able to give that upbringing to our own children and to take some of the pressure off ourselves as well.”

INCLUSION CRITERIA:

- ✓ Taiohi aged between 12 and 18 years old and residing in Taranaki
- ✓ Taiohi experiencing mild-moderate mental health, eg. Low mood, anxiousness, anger
- ✓ Taiohi experiencing a level of distress as a result of difficult life experiences and circumstances, eg. bullying, relationship difficulties, stress
- ✓ Taiohi requiring support with managing emotions and associated behaviours, to increase their level of wellbeing and resilience

EXCLUSION CRITERIA:

- ✗ Taiohi requiring urgent crisis intervention, eg. serious risk to self and/or others
- ✗ Taiohi who meet specialist service criteria, such as severe mental health, trauma or substance use issues, complex developmental/behavioural difficulties, or require a diagnosis
- ✗ Taiohi already receiving support from a ‘like’ service
- ✗ Taiohi under 16 years old if legal guardians do not consent
- ✗ Taiohi who do not consent

Steering through schools

As part of our pilot, we ran group programmes at four schools over term one and two. One high school programme called Taiohi Tū, run in collaboration with Tui Ora public health staff (Oranga Hāpori), encouraged resiliency, explored strengths and armed taiohi with knowledge to help them make decisions from a holistic, kaupapa Māori approach.

Programmes in intermediate schools were developed and responsive to the needs identified for those groups, such as components of anxiety, anger management and confidence building. Alongside the programmes, clinicians provided and continue to offer consultation to school pastoral care meetings.

We are reviewing what groups we can offer over the next two terms, as the current focus of the service is to address existing community demand.