

New Zealand Indigenous Tamariki Voices

THEMATIC REPORT: CRC Report 2022_ 93rd Pre-session New Zealand

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HĀPAI TE HAUORA TĀPUI | NGĀA RANGATAHI AA IWI

“He Tāonga te Tamaiti, Whakatipu, Arohaina”

With the birth of every child is the opportunity to
redefine humanity.

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CRC THEMATIC REPORT 2022

93rd Pre-Session – New Zealand Indigenous Tamariki Voices

Jointly submitted by Hāpai te Hauora Tāpui and Ngaa Rangatahi aa Iwi

INTRODUCTION

The primary focus is to centralize the voices of tamariki and rangatahi Māori (Indigenous children and young people of New Zealand), as is pertinent to their rights under the United Nations Convention on the rights of Indigenous peoples. For simplicity of synthesizing the voices included in this report (more than 800 Māori children and Young people across Aotearoa), the theming follows the 5 key areas that are a priority to indigenous rangatahi and children, and these have been placed categorically under each of their relevant clusters of the convention on the rights of the child.

We recognise at the outset that this report is not as comprehensive as we had envisioned, but still felt it important to include as an alternative report which directly includes the voices of children and young people in New Zealand. Our roopu have worked collectively with children and young people over the past 5 years, hosting workshops and wānanga (cultural engagements), as well as through conducting a COVID-19 “wellbeing census”. We take this opportunity to convey areas where tamariki and rangatahi want to see New Zealand do better in meeting its obligations to all children in New Zealand, which includes tamariki Māori.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Re-affirm the priorities for indigenous children in Aotearoa, building on those outlined in our submission for the List of Issues Prior to reporting.
- Outline the main areas of concern, key issues, and challenges for indigenous children and young people in New Zealand.
- Compliment the alternative thematic report of the Aotearoa New Zealand Centre for Indigenous Peoples and the Law and that of the Childs Rights Alliance of Aotearoa.

We premise this report by echoing the core rights of Tamariki Māori under the CRC, as laid out by NZ Centre for indigenous peoples and the law, where we hold that core rights for tamariki Māori include:

1. Tamariki Māori, as children, enjoy all the rights guaranteed under the CRC in addition to their rights as Indigenous children.
2. Tamariki Māori, as Indigenous children, have the right to enjoy their culture, religion or language in community with other members of their group. This right must be a primary

consideration when determining what is in the best interests of Indigenous children and designing and implementing social services, health and education programmes affecting Indigenous children.

3. Tamariki Māori, as Indigenous children, have the right to be brought up and develop within their Indigenous community and for the integrity of their family unit to be safeguarded and maintained. If an Indigenous child is placed outside of their family environment, their right to maintain their cultural identity must be supported. The State must take proactive measures to reduce the number of Indigenous children who are removed from their family environment.
4. Tamariki Māori, as Indigenous children, who experience inequality or discrimination, have the right to expect the State will take proactive measures to address these issues in a way that gives effect to their rights both as children and Indigenous peoples.
5. Tamariki Māori, as Indigenous children, have the right to expect that their Indigenous communities will be involved in the design and delivery of services, policies and programmes that affect them.
6. Tamariki Māori, as Indigenous children, have the right to express their views and participate in decision-making processes that affect them. Their capacity to effectively participate in such processes as Indigenous children must be supported

TE TIRITI O WAITANGI AND INDIGENOUS CHILDRENS RIGHTS

We recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of the bicultural Aotearoa that our ancestors had envisaged. Te Tiriti centralizes relationships and affirms the mana and rangatiratanga (absolute power and autonomy) of hapū. *Tino rangatiratanga* as affirmed in Te Tiriti o Waitangi is about an inherent right of Māori to exist as *tāngata whenua*. Indeed, this applies to the whānau, hapū, iwi and at a national level. *Tino rangatiratanga* is a dynamic thing that intertwines past, present and future Māori generations. The notion of tino rangatiratanga allows Māori to control their own culture, aspirations and destiny. Unpacking the levels to which *tino rangatiratanga* operates is therefore key to our people's survival as much as it is useful within the context of policy, strategies, research learning and evaluation.

In recognizing Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of New Zealand, we are therefore respected in the view that, within a te āo Māori lens, the child is the greatest treasure, and the everyday opportunity for whānau, hapū, and iwi is to achieve ultimate wellbeing for our tamariki (children). Te Āo Māori further recognises that the wellbeing of any child can only be achieved collectively within the context of their whānau (extended family), hapū and iwi. Historically, the eco-systemic interdependence of whānau, hapū and iwi, whereby, their ancestors lived and worked with and for each other was critical to the wellbeing of the child. In today's state, interdependence and interconnectedness of everyone under the mantle of kotahitanga (togetherness) and whakapapa (genealogical connection and systems science) are recognized as important in the envisioning of thriving nations, drawing on traditional mediums of knowledge transmission to sustain and maintain wellbeing. As we look to quantify the rights upheld by the New Zealand state in regards to UNCROc, Māori children have affirmed the synergistic and interdependent relationship between humanity and all aspects of the environment that raised them, physically, socially and geopolitically.

GENERAL MEASURES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Protection against discrimination

Māori children continue to experience discrimination in health settings, education settings and social settings. Key examples of this are the findings of MOE report “He Whakaaro¹, which shows that Māori children are more likely to face discrimination from teachers than their non-Māori counterparts. Within health settings, indigenous children are less likely to receive adequate care, more likely to receive inadequate treatment and most likely to face discrimination within the health system. The damning reports such as Hāhā-uri, Hāhā-tea², have highlighted how successive governments have enacted racist policies which have discriminated against Māori families and failed Māori children, and despite this being a historical account, the realities for Māori children in 2022 are no different.

Legislative compliance

In response to the newly ratified Oranga Tamariki Act (2017), Hāpai te hauora and Ngāa Rangatahi aa Iwi are concerned about the state of Oranga Tamariki. It looks as though the government has failed to meet its obligations under 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act, and in recent times, issues such as footage surfacing of a child being abused (tackled) whilst in state care have been made public, putting significant pressure on Oranga Tamariki, but also highlighting the entrenched practices of OT.

One of the key ways for notifications of abuse to be highlighted has been through teachers. The impact of COVID-19 lockdowns meant that notifications decreased, with no system in place to support those families. Evidence shows that COVID-19 will have proportionate and lasting impact on Tamariki Māori, and there is currently no clear plan of how these psychosocial stressors will be addressed and mitigated.

Given the overwhelming representation of Māori Children within all spheres of poor outcomes across health, education, justice, and poverty, NRAI and Hāpai te Hauora believes that there needs to be urgent and comprehensive action to implement legislation to the benefit of Māori children, as well as to ensure full compliance with both UNCRC and domestic legislations.

¹ Alexandra McGregor, Andrew Webber (2019) He Whakaaro: *What do we know about discrimination in schools?*
https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/195909/He-Whakaaro-Discrimination-in-Schools.pdf

² Desolate day desolate night: Māori involvement in State Care 1950-1999.
<https://www.abuseincare.org.nz/library/v/340/haha-uri-haha-tea-maori-involvement-in-state-care-1950-1999>

GENERAL PRINCIPLES – INCLUDING NON-DISCRIMINATION

In New Zealand, there are several layers of unconscious bias. Gray³, argued that identifying as Māori or Pasifika can have consequences in relation to accessing welfare entitlements and that ethnicity may negatively influence interactions within welfare offices in Aotearoa New Zealand. Policies implemented in recent years have seen mothers of children having welfare support withheld unless mother's name the father on the birth certificate. Placing this into the context of the multiple complexities of domestic violence and the legal rights of partners when names on birth certificates, it can be ascertained that this practice is punitive, archaic and not in the best interest of the child.

In our discussion with young people over the past two years, the sentiments of our Matike Mai report have been echoed and reiterated. There were strong references from rangatahi to the struggle of living, schooling and working in Aotearoa, many recognising that either they were urbanised as a part of the 'urban migration', and that their parents had moved to the cities for whānau benefit. Rangatahi felt the impacts of racism and discrimination as well as the disparity of health and social outcomes as reflected anecdotally, but did not express it as a systemic issue. Rangatahi could identify that it was *"because I am brown"* but did not specifically identify structural or institutional determinants of poor health and social outcomes. Rangatahi acknowledged mental health issues within their whānau but did not detail these issues. This highlights the need for a reframing of the mental health conversation so that it is open and accessible. Rangatahi felt strongly about the implementation and development of Māori health models like Te Whare Tapawhā and the recognition of hauora as encompassing aspects such as wairuatanga and mental health. They also dreamt of the revitalization of traditional systems of hauora like rongoā and that these systems can be relied upon by our people to maintain their health.

³ GRAY, Claire. "You look a little bit dark for my liking": Māori and Pasifika women's experiences of welfare receipt in Aotearoa New Zealand. **Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work**, [S.l.], v. 31, n. 1, p. 5-16, apr. 2019. ISSN 2463-4131.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO IDENTITY

Language, Identity and legislative tools

The Native Schools Act has had far reaching implications on Māori identity and Māori relationships with their own language and knowledge systems. Our survey of almost 300 Indigenous young people found that more than half of those surveyed had a tension in their relationship with their language and their identity. Māori children and young people continue to feel disconnected to their language, and by default of that, their culture. The under-resourcing of Kohanga Reo (Māori language nests), has created a ripple effect whereby, from the outset, tamariki Māori are forced into mainstream early childhood, and precluded from full immersion education.

The right to identity has been a huge piece of work undertaken by Ngaa Rangatahi aa Iwi and the Pou Tikanga of the National iwi Chairs Forum, with a current work program underway to understand the impacts of closed adoptions under New Zealand's 1955 legislation, which persists today, and continues to take tamariki Māori away from their whakapapa and disenfranchise them from their lands, language and culture.

We believe that not enough is being done to prioritise cultural competence among state employees, with programs only extending as far as MOE, but not being permeated across spaces such as health and social services.

Te Mātāwai

The establishment of Te Mātāwai – Māori Language Commission - has been critical in advancing the language revitalization aspirations of indigenous peoples, and should be recognized.

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Royal Commission of Inquiry

In 2018, the New Zealand Government established The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions confirmed that the government intrinsically acknowledges that children have been subjected to abuse and neglect whilst in State Care, which is to say, whilst children were in the custody of the state.

Abuse in State Care

Whilst historical abuse in state care impacts adults today, there continues to be current abuse and neglect within State care, particularly for tamariki Māori. Numerous reports show that Tamariki Māori are more likely to be abused in state care. Māori children make up 59 percent of all children in care. Oranga Tamariki shows more than 220 children placed in state care were abused in 2018 and 70 percent of those children were Māori.

State Uplifts of Children

Given that Māori children are uplifted by the state at a disproportionate rate, with 45 children taken at birth, more than half of whom were Māori (3 Māori babies per week), it is important that the actions of the state are congruent with the Convention, particularly with the right for the child to have decisions made in their best interest. Strong advocates for the rights of whānau have noted that Oranga Tamariki prioritises the removal of children from the whānau unit without sufficient investigation, and also fails to form any meaningful partnership with whānau, hapū or iwi. We continue to be concerned with the rates of state uplifts, and the ongoing impacts on tamariki Māori. The ongoing impacts of Māori children in “home for life” is also concerning, where these children have no opportunity to connect culturally to their whānau, hapū and iwi⁴. Current policy in Oranga Tamariki promotes that primary responsibility for caring for and nurturing the Oranga (wellbeing) and development of tamariki lies with their family, whānau, hapū, iwi and family group, however, in practice there is strong deviation from this policy. This should not discount the priority to centralise the wellbeing of the child, however, we hold that they are one and the same, whereby consideration for the wellbeing of the child is all-encompassing of the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of the child. Examples such as the ruling by in the Napier Family Court are primary examples of how the child’s needs can be centralised whilst also accounting for the rights of the child to their culture.

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<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/126334548/judge-dismisses-oranga-tamarikis-bid-to-remove-mori-girl-from-pkeh-couple>

Tamaiti Whāngai & Māori Adoptees

Traditional Māori systems of wellbeing recognise the collective role of the family system and wider community in raising children. The practice is similar to both adoption and fostering, as a Whāngai placement may be permanent or temporary, though its status within the legal system has varied over time. Whilst Whāngai has relative clarity across issues such as land law, the notion of Whāngai has been so strongly assimilated to western notions of fostering and adoption that the core essence of Whāngai is somewhat lost.

The adoption legislation in New Zealand fails to account for the construct of Whāngai, nor to address the complexity of adoption whilst maintaining a connection to whakapapa. The current review is scoped to continue into the drafting of legislation, although we as Māori communities know that there needs to be more discussion and more consultation.

Māori children who are adopted out through closed adoption mechanisms continue to have their whakapapa severed, with no pathway to reconnect to their culture and therefore to their wellbeing. The impacts of this are far reaching and need an urgent response to ensure that New Zealand is upholding its obligation to the rights of tamariki Māori.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

Alarming Poverty Rates

One in four New Zealand children are living in poverty, and actions have been taken by the state - including the development of 9 measures of poverty – to redress the harms of child poverty for many New Zealander's, it is of great concern that Māori children are over-represented across all statistical measures for poverty. Given this, we recommend that the committee seek information on measures taken to reduce child poverty in New Zealand, and particularly, actions taken to address each of the 9 measures of Child-poverty.

The impacts of COVID-19 and the current inflation rates have had severe impacts on families who have already been struggling to get by. In our 2020 report, rangatahi highlighted that safety was an issue, with references to drugs, alcohol and violence etc. The cost of living coupled with enhanced access to alcohol (alcohol delivery services), removal of support systems (such as food in schools, as children were at home), and promotion of working for teenagers into minimum wage full-time roles in lieu of education had intense and detrimental impacts on tamariki, particularly financially disadvantaged families. These impacts on those in poverty was perfectly depicted by a South Auckland teenagers spoken word statement⁵

Children and Young people often noted current stressors and contributors to inequities in resource for Māori whānau and recognised 'modernising' traditional practices as a tool to aid whānau, hapū and Iwi wellbeing.

"Strong connections. Oranga wairua, oranga tangata, oranga taiao. Living with purpose with intention and with integrity. Effective/meaningful communication, having fun, learning, empowering/supporting each other.

Resource sustainability extended to employment, housing and financial stability. There were strong impressions for the need to recognise "having enough", an altruistic view of only acquiring what you need, and nothing more – a value embedded within the natural law of the koha system. In the view of Rangatahi, housing should be "affordable, adequate, warm, dry, and supported". Lack of financial freedoms were identified as restricting our whānau, and acted as the compass point from which their perspective on the importance of ensuring systems of sustainability:

"All have enough to get by / live their dreams in terms of pūtea, awhi, housing etc."

⁵ <https://www.instagram.com/p/CAUvntwnQ3H/>

Commendation to Pae Ora

We are hoping to see how the incoming health reforms, through the Pae ora legislation recognises the rights of the child, and in particular look forward to seeing how the Pae Ora reforms prioritise child health, given its recourse and precursor for lifetime outcomes. The establishment of a Māori Health Authority is exciting, but once again, this needs to truly recognise the role and place of maintaining wellbeing of children, not merely preventing disease.

To date, we have not seen adequate headway towards a Child health strategy, which promotes the rights of children to world-class healthcare, no matter where you live in New Zealand. We hope to see a response from the Government within Pae Ora which develops an integrated, progressive and responsive Child health system at primary, secondary and tertiary care, building on the work of Starship Child Health through the Starship Foundation (New Zealand's only Childrens hospital).

Breastfeeding

The Ministry of Health states that Breastfeeding practices in New Zealand Aotearoa have been compromised by various external influences. Colonisation, medicalisation, sexualisation of breasts, and the commercialisation of breast milk substitutes have contributed to environments that have undermined breastfeeding as a normal cultural practice.

Before colonisation, all Māori infants were breastfed (Papakura 1938). In pre-colonised New Zealand Aotearoa, breastfeeding was viewed as an imperative in maintaining and sustaining a child's development and wellbeing. A well-fed child was reflective of the health status of the whānau, hapū and iwi, and ensured the continuance of future generations. Breastfeeding was so valued that its benefits were recognized through normalised practices such as wet nursing (Lusk et al 2000). If the birth parent was unavailable or could not breastfeed, the baby would be breastfed by another woman in the whānau or hapū (Glover et al 2008). Post-colonisation policies and culture saw the unjust loss of many Māori practices and the introduction of, often detrimental, westernised practices into Māori society. Lower breastfeeding rates are one of the indicators that Māori health and wellbeing has declined as a result of colonisation.

Today we know that Māori mother and baby breastfeed shorter, and have lesser access to breastfeeding support than their non-Māori counterparts, which sets the course for "one less protective barrier" in the first 1000 days and beyond.

Smokefree Generation Policy

New Zealand is working towards the implementation of its Smokefree Action Plan. Despite the course having been set with a 2025 goal towards a 5% prevalence of smoking in 2011, aggressive

action has only begun in the past 20 months. We do however, hold hope that the current progressive action such as Smokefree Generation Policy will contribute significantly towards reducing the impact of tobacco harm on indigenous children, including via second-hand smoke. We are now seeing the prevalence of vaping in young people increase and are increasingly concerned about this.

Climate Change

Climate change has been a critical issue for rangatahi, and action on climate change in New Zealand continues to be led by tamariki and rangatahi.

Rangatahi see themselves as kaitiaki of the land and not owners. Rangatahi advocated for the use of Maramataka in everyday lives, as this was something that would allow alignment to Te Āo Māori. There is an inherent connection to the land and waters for Rangatahi Māori, and the denigration of such aspects of Aotearoa is hurtful to our current and future generations. The lack of respect for cultural protocols of prohibition to protect the environment concerned Rangatahi (such as observing a prohibition on the sea after the white island explosion). Equally, the prohibition of using the resources of the land to sustain families during COVID lockdown was concerning to rangatahi and harmful for tamariki. They also mentioned the importance of the ability to live self-sustainably from the whenua, in synergy with the taiao. Rangatahi called for stronger environmental sustainability mechanisms and saw the vitality of the environment as inextricably linked to their own personal vitality and wellbeing- *“Oranga Whenua, Oranga Tangata.”*

A majority of Rangatahi saw the integral relationship between the sustenance of whenua systems, and the wellbeing of indigenous nations. Rangatahi recognise climate change and environmental consciousness in many ways, and this manifests in the physical and built environment (lands, mountains, oceans, rivers as well as the urban built environment) and an interdependent relationship with these systems of sustenance, looking to “Live off the Whenua (land)”, “have sovereignty over the Whenua (land) as kaitiaki (guardians)”, and recognizing the importance of Whenua taurikura – “land which sustains”.

*“Living of our whenua (land), of our awa (River), of our moana (ocean) without
fear of pollution in our wai (water) or poison in our hua (plants)”*

*“Strategic rāhui (prohibition) on our whenua (land) and in our moana (oceans),
maara kai (gardens), our own court system where the effects of colonization and
generational trauma are taken into account”*

EDUCATION, LEISURE AND CULTURE

Te Reo Māori in the Education system

According to 2019 data⁶ there were 21,489 students enrolled in Māori medium education, representing 2.6% of the total school population; a 0.1 percentage point increase on 2018. In recognising the breadth of the journey that has been taken since the inception of the Native Schools Act, and the aggressive efforts of education activists to revitalise Te Reo Māori. Whilst Te Reo has continued to grow organically over the past decade, there continues to be structural disablers which limit the ability of the Māori language to grow and thrive.

Access to Early Childhood Education

The early childhood education model is one which is founded on notions of capitalism, with severe disparities in access to funding between early childhood education medium. New Zealand currently exists in a catch 22, whereby Kohanga are underfunded (due to low ratio of qualified teachers), but equally, there are not enough Reo speaking Kaiako available to keep Kohanga operating without “unqualified support”. Whilst other mediums are available, and whilst they support the early childhood education space, it creates a disparity between mediums, with Kohanga fundraising to pay the power, and other centres operating off business models, overall making access to Māori medium early childhood educations more difficult for tamariki Māori.

Whilst the quality of Early Childhood education is excellent here in New Zealand, it is somewhat unaffordable, placing a double burden on low-income families. To quote one Mama who interacts with Early Education services “ECE is really pretty much set up around the sort of white Pākehā well-off life. It still costs money, quite a lot of money to send your kids to ECE. Despite the number of subsidies in place, those subsidies are quite difficult to navigate your way through and get access to all of them.”

Access to Te Reo Māori

Te Reo Māori in New Zealand as it pertains to its revitalisation story is at a theoretical crossroads. Māori children and young people exhibit a strong willingness to both speak, learn, teach and spread Te Reo Māori. Further to this, rangatahi do not see Te Reo Māori as language alone, but recognise the existential duality of Te Reo Māori, apace with Tikanga Māori. There were many different references to the perceived status of Te Reo, whether it is an extinct language, dying, surviving,

⁶ <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/maori-education>

revitalised or flourishing. This calls for a more concerted analysis of the state of Te Reo, and a need to ensure that it is a flourishing language, prevalent and visible in the landscape of Aotearoa. Rangatahi showed a strong commitment to ensuring the continued revitalisation of Te Reo Māori and furthermore, see Te Reo not only as a spoken language but as the expression of our Māori worldview.

“...Thriving in our Reo, culture and tikanga”

“An eco-friendly lifestyle built around Whakaaro Māori (Māori paradigm), Revival of Reo (language) and Tikanga (lore)”

Significantly, and imperative in gaining an understanding of the impacts of connection, belonging and culture on the wellbeing of an individual was the observation of pride in those who were able to speak Te Reo, and simultaneously, the presence of shame in those who were unable to speak Te Reo, and furthermore, a yearning to learn their language. They dream of a future where we, as Māori all speak te Reo Māori and that it is our primary language of communication. Rangatahi from Kura Kaupapa saw Te Aho Matua (Māori language curriculum) as central to their learning, their academic success and to the vitality of Te Reo Māori.

“I want my whānau to acquire Te Reo Māori. The stigmatisation of Te Reo Māori, the inter-generational trauma, historical legislation and unacknowledged grievances by the Crown go largely unheard.”

Matauranga is an expression of our worldview, and Rangatahi yearned to succeed in both worlds, and contrasting to previous generations, see success in both worlds a possibility for themselves.

“Having a good & healthy relationship with our whenua, decolonizing our whakaaro, normalising all that is Māori as this is our kainga (Home), and learning how to live in both Te Ao Māori & Te Ao Pākehā”

“Traditional ways of living are revitalised and Te Ao Māori is given the same mana as Te Ao Pākehā. Respecting our Taiao”

“For my whānau: A good life would look like our kids embracing tikanga Māori fully, eventually learning the importance of it and then passing it down to the next generation.”

Rangatahi highly valued their education and saw their ability to work hard and study hard as a key contributor to their future success. Many rangatahi had strong and clear career aspirations and wanted to pursue tertiary education. These aspirations often linked back to being able to advance

Te Ao Māori in some aspect. Learning from the environment was a resonating point for rangatahi, seeing success as being able to dive, hunt, gather etc. This was expressed in relation to a responsibility that rangatahi believed they had to the Taiao. Mahi whenua was seen as Mātauranga - practicing on the land. Many rangatahi saw their learning journey as a process of self-development and self-awareness. This manifested in rangatahi wanting to be nurturers, teachers and future Māori leaders.

Rangatahi also yearned for traditional Mātauranga Māori and traditional methods and frameworks of learning like wānanga be given, at least the same recognition as Pākehā methods of learning. They noted that Mātauranga Māori is not valued by wider New Zealand and is often seen as subordinate to Pākehā methods of learning. However, as we can appreciate, systems of transmitting knowledge that have existed for hundreds of years and sustained us as Māori have immense value to us as Māori, and to wider New Zealand.

Teaching Aotearoa history

New Zealand has a long and fraught history with its Indigenous people, a lot of which informs the current systemic issues, such as racism and discrimination, as well as inequitable access to health, social and educational services in modern New Zealand. The New Zealand Land Wars saw Indigenous people slaughtered on their own lands at the hand of their treaty partner – the British Crown. Equally, legislative tools such as the Native Schools Act (1867), the West Coast Peace preservation Act (1882) and the Tohunga suppression Act (1907) have been harmful to our Indigenous systems of education, harmful to or expression of culture and harmful to our way of life. Many Indigenous children today continue to be affected by the impacts of what happened within New Zealand's history, with the trauma of colonisation entrenching itself into the cellular memory of today's generation of New Zealander's. In not teaching New Zealand's history, New Zealand fails to reconcile with its own history and therefore fails to provide all children an equal platform upon which to understand the multiple complexities of institutional inequities. The impacts of a colonial controlled narrative of New Zealand's history are severe when it comes to Indigenous children. It affects current statistics, and reinforces stereotypes which in turn affect identity, and affects the ability of these children to grown into active and contributing citizens. Equally, non-Indigenous children are not provided the opportunity to encounter any such critical learnings which may assist in better understanding race-relations in New Zealand.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Ultimately, Hāpai te Hauora collectively with all of the children and young people within Ngāa Rangatahi aa Iwi see that there is a lot more work to be done for New Zealand to meet its obligations under UNCRC.

We know that tamariki Māori rights as tāngata whenua, Tiriti partners and Indigenous children are unique, and that getting it right for New Zealand's indigenous children will set the course for an easy pathway towards meeting the states obligations to all children.

We echo the recommendations laid out by the submission of the NZ Centre for indigenous peoples and the law, which denotes the following:

- assesses the New Zealand Government's performance in respecting and upholding *all* rights of tamariki Māori, recognising tamariki Māori rights in te ao Māori, under te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Indigenous Declaration, and the CRC (as set out in the rights framework attached to this report);
- calls upon the New Zealand Government to develop a mechanism, like the framework put forward in this report, in partnership with Māori, including tamariki Māori, to ensure that all the rights of tamariki Māori are recognised and provided for in government-led action going forward. This mechanism will also provide a way to monitor whether the New Zealand Government is meeting its specific obligations to tamariki Māori; and
- calls upon the New Zealand Government to recognise and protect Māori tino rangatiratanga, as guaranteed by Te Tiriti and protected under the Indigenous Declaration. Tamariki Māori will not enjoy the full benefit of their rights unless they are living in healthy, strong Māori communities that are able to fully exercise their right to tino rangatiratanga.

We thank the committee for receiving this alternative thematic report and hope that it is of some use. We would welcome the opportunity for children and young people from our collective to participate in the pre-session should the opportunity arise.