

Nelson - Tasman *Connections*

Wednesday 23 April 2025, 10.30am
Greenmeadows Centre, Stoke

Present

Sharnade McGregor (Whakatu Marae), Bill Huppler (Nelson City Council), Sally Mottram (Nelson City Council), Olivia Magee (Real, Pathways), Miranda Warner (Hikitia - RISE), Gordon Oldfield (Volunteer Nelson), Kim Holmes (Nayland College), Logan Blake (The Spot, Motueka Community Development Trust), D Lukitau (Hikitia RISE), Barney Aupaau (Whakatu Marae), Hilary Genet (Te Whatu Ora), Ramiesha Perera (Multicultural Nelson Tasman), Maria Phillips (Health Action Trust), Amy Thompson (Health Action Trust), Tana Komere (Youth Nelson), Trudi (Youth Nelson), Ruby Watson (Youth Nelson), Paul McConachie (Nelson Tasman Youth Workers Collective)

Notices

- Sally informed the group of the disability forum taking place next week which will be focusing on discussions around young people who have fallen through the gaps.
- Paul informed the group of a training coming up on the 5 June that was focused around engaging with trauma impacted young people, titled 'Tough as Nails'. He also advised that the next Connections Hui, was taking place on Thursday 10 July, and was being hosted at Multicultural Nelson Tasman HQ on Waimea road.

Speed Networking Activity

The group participated in a Speed Networking activity where they undertook a series of very brief 'meet and greets' with others in the room.

Youth Sector Service Provider Activity

The group reviewed lists of local and nationally based agencies providing services to young people across the Nelson Tasman Region.

Kim Holmes | Nayland College

- Kim provided an overview of the emerging needs being presented by students at Nayland College. She outlined some of the support services provided to students to assist them into further training, education and employment and discussed the challenges they are facing to get NEET young people work and life ready as they transition from school.
- Kim holds the role at Nayland College as the Kaimahi youth support worker. She has been in the role for 3 years, which is drawing to a close end of term two.
- The position is strength and relationship based, that draws on a best practice models to connect with and support young people aged 14-18 years at risk of becoming NEET. It fills a void before a young person reaches the age of 18 when they can access other support services.

- Kim reflects on her mahi as being part of a beautiful journey that connects young people with whanau, schools, and the community.
- The role has been part of a regional approach to support young people at risk of becoming NEET, and has been a collaboration between Ministry of Education, Te Taihū Councils (TDC, NCC, MDC), and local high schools, that has placed community connectors in other secondary schools including; Motueka, Golden Bay, Nelson Girls College, Marlborough Girls College, Queen Charlotte College, Kaikoura High School. In some of these areas the kaimahi's role has dissolved into and continued on under the host schools.
- The pilot program launched with no real policy or procedures, which have since been developed as the program evolved.
- The emerging needs being presented/witnessed by students at Nayland College are by no means new or unexpected. They include; a sense of uncertainty about what the future holds, perceived hopelessness and associated anxiety. Food, house and job insecurity are also common themes being presented by student, with young people commonly out competed by experience workers in a competitive job market.
- Kim also referenced the challenges young people face with safely navigating the online digital space, their ability to take breaks from social media, knowing what information is safe to share and distinguishing misinformation as areas of concern.
- Kim highlighted that the NEET stats are distortionally represented by Maori and Pasifika students, along with LGBT and those with a disability, either diagnosed or yet to be diagnosed. These young people are disengaged because the school system isn't providing for neuro-diverse learning among these minority groups. The one size fits all model doesn't work here.
- Employment challenges they are seeing are not solely limited to the competitive job market. More young people are leaving school without NCEA level 1 or 2.
- There is increased competition for young people to get into Nelson Technical Institute's youth guarantees courses, along with NMIT's Foundation course. More of these courses should be available to meet the demand.
- Problems arise when young people access a student loan and get into debt before entering into the workforce. An extension of youth guarantees so that young people don't incur more debt for upskilling themselves in level 3 qualifications and beyond would help to mitigate the debt challenge.
- When a young person is disengaged at school and their attendance record looks poor, then in some instances they are encouraged to leave. Their ability to return to Nayland College has implications due to school zoning, as they might not be able to re enroll.
- A drivers license is required for most entry level jobs. PSUSI used to offer a drivers license course for young people, but this is no longer available.
- Collaboration of agencies. In some instance, young people work with multiple agencies, however communication between agencies is sometimes lacking. Information sharing among agencies needs to be improved.
- Support services provided to students at Nayland College include;
 - Integrated school counselling cottage

- Whanake youth nurses providing school visits
 - Youth Workers
 - A passionate team of deans, providing pastoral care,
 - Foundation course providing numeracy and literacy support via a more practical and meaningful learning framework
 - Strong working relationships with other support agency, such as Tapitomata, PSUSI, and REAL.
- Kim shared statistics from Youth Employability Aotearoa, which report that;
 - One in five school leavers only achieve NCEA level 1 or lower
 - 60% of school leavers transition without University Entrance
 - 82% of school leavers have work or caring responsibilities
 - 70% of jobs require at least a restricted drivers licence but only 24% of young job seekers aged 18-24 years have a restricted or full licence
 - A lack of understanding how to navigate career pathways contributes to nearly one in four youth suffering from high levels of anxiety, fatigue and depression
 - The NEET rate increased in 2023 to 12.1%
 - Only 40.3% of high school students met the criteria for regular attendance at school
- At this point in the presentation, Kim requested the group identify what is working well with supporting young people in Whakatu. The group highlighted;
 - FASD worker at Te Kowhai Trust working directly with young people. This provides targeted support for young people who may otherwise end up in the justice system.
 - Resources available to support students at Youth Nelson including basic provisions, e.g vans provided by Nelson City Council for transport and Kai Rescue providing food for nourishment.
 - Collaboration among youth agencies to holistically support young peoples needs resulting in a more tailored approach that is youth led. This gives young people options and empowers them to make their own decisions that is culturally responsive.
 - 'Hey Whanake' about to extend their service for young people in Nelson. A horticultural youth guarantees course that includes life coaching, employment skills numeracy and literacy support is about to launch.

Meeting closed at 12.06