

THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

# connecting with young New Zealanders



TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO TAIOHI



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YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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*Administered by the Ministry of Social Development*

The Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) promotes the interests of young people aged 12 to 24 years. We also encourage and assist the involvement of young people in the social, educational, economic and cultural development of New Zealand.

By listening and responding to young people, we actively seek ways to ensure that young people are valued, nurtured and challenged to realise their full potential.

## background

Our objective is to provide leadership, co-ordination and facilitation for youth development.

The three areas that underpin our work are social inclusion and citizenship, young people's development and sector development.

MYD sits within the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). We receive administrative support from MSD and have access to MSD's policy, research and evaluation resources as well as its regional networks.

MYD was established in 2003 to continue and enhance the work of the former Ministry of Youth Affairs, which was set up in 1988.

We use a youth development approach ... that's about how government and society can support young people to develop the skills and attitudes they need to take a positive part in society both now and in the future.



# our work

Our work programme is structured to:

- provide a regional presence to enable responsiveness to local needs
- build a research base on youth development
- provide policy advice on issues affecting young people
- manage funding and contracts for youth development services
- promote youth engagement.



## regional development

From 2005 we have developed a small regional presence.

This enables us to support and achieve positive outcomes for young people at a local, regional and national level, and to contribute to whole of government initiatives in support of young people.



Our regional teams are based in MSD regional offices in:

- Auckland (covering Auckland and Northland)
- Christchurch (covering the South Island)
- Rotorua (covering Bay of Plenty Waikato)
- Wellington (covering the lower North Island including the East Coast).

## research and evaluation

We are committed to building the knowledge base for youth development in partnership with MSD's Centre for Social Research and Evaluation.

## policy advice

Our specialised understanding of the youth sector allows us to provide advice on ways to accommodate youth interests and improve policies that impact on young people.

We do this by monitoring and researching issues and trends and using this knowledge to:

- advise our Minister on policies, services and legislation affecting young people
- work with other government agencies and the youth sector to keep them informed about key issues that affect young people
- provide advice and/or lead initiatives to provide improved outcomes for young people in New Zealand.

We also lead and co-ordinate the Government's work on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC).



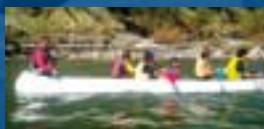
# youth development services

We provide government funding and manage contracts for selected youth development services that deliver local initiatives for identified needs.

We specifically seek to fund innovative services that work across sectors to make a positive difference to the lives of vulnerable young people. To support our wider work in developing the youth services sector we seek projects and services that demonstrate young people's participation, inclusion and engagement.

We also administer the **Youth Development Partnership Fund** to enable us to respond to emerging needs and opportunities for young people through partnerships with territorial authorities (city and district councils).

The fund aims to attract and encourage young people to get involved in their communities, through inventive, youth-friendly projects that teach valuable work, life and learning skills. Each project must demonstrate clear and measurable outcomes for young people, and be supported by other agencies in the community.



# youth engagement

We work to ensure that effective youth participation is happening in schools, communities, local councils and in government around the country.

We believe that by increasing the ways young people are involved in decision making, they can be a part of making a real difference in New Zealand today.

**Aotearoa Youth Voices** is the brand that houses our youth participation projects, and our website: [www.youthvoices.govt.nz](http://www.youthvoices.govt.nz) provides information and resources of particular interest to young people, as well as a discussion forum and opinion polls.

Projects include:

- **PROVOKE** – supports young people as youth voice advocates to get their voices heard in different ways in their schools, organisations, communities and government.
- **Activate Youth Advisory Group** – gets young people's input on our projects and their perspectives on the important issues for different youth cultures and communities.
- **Youth parliament** – gives youth representatives an opportunity to voice youth issues and concerns in a real parliamentary setting.
- **Local government** – supporting local councils in youth participation in relation to lots of different kinds of council work and services.

We are also involved in programmes that assist young people to think, speak and be heard internationally including the Commonwealth Youth Programme.

# Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA)

The YDSA promotes the application of a “youth development” approach as a way of understanding what needs to happen for, around and with young people in New Zealand.

Launched in 2002 as a long-term direction for supporting and developing young people, the YDSA aims to shift thinking from a focus on youth problems to seeing young people as partners and contributors in all sectors of society.

This approach:

- enhances the protective factors in young people’s lives, as well as addressing risk factors
- supports a sense of belonging to and connecting with key social environments (families, schools, training, work, communities and peer groups)
- ensures young people have safe, caring relationships
- promotes young people’s active participation in all areas of their lives.

The Government’s vision for young people is presented in the *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*:

a country where young people are vibrant and optimistic through being supported and encouraged to take up challenges

To make this vision a reality, we believe that all individuals, groups and organisations that work with young people need to be aware of youth issues and interests and also need to understand and apply a youth development approach in their work.



## more information

We have a wide range of publications on policies and issues that affect young people, the *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* and our Aotearoa Youth Voices projects, which are all also available on our website. We can provide information about our youth development services and put you in touch with a local organisation providing a programme.

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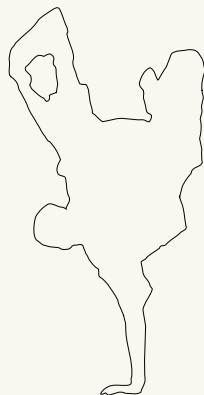
**AOTEAROA**  
*'youth voices'*



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Our four regional offices are located in MSD offices at Auckland, Christchurch, Rotorua and Wellington. Contact our national office for local details.