

## **Executive Summary**

The Incredible Years® Parent Programme (IYP) aims to support positive relationships and assist parents in managing children's difficult behaviour, to promote positive social and educational outcomes for children. The IYP was developed in the United States and has been widely used in over 20 countries, including the United States, Canada, Europe and the United Kingdom. The programme was introduced to New Zealand in 2006.

Within New Zealand (NZ), Werry Workforce Whāraurau delivers IYP group leader training and workforce development services, including tailored support for Māori and Pacific group leaders. This project was undertaken to identify how Werry Workforce Whāraurau (Werry Workforce) can further enhance its support for the Māori and Pacific group leader workforce. The project investigated the barriers and enablers of Māori and Pacific group leader accreditation, programme and cultural fidelity in IYP delivery, and sustainability of the Māori and Pacific workforce.

The methodology included consultation by survey and interviews with group leaders, and a literature review to provide context for the data and evidence to support recommendations. Mauri Ora Associates employed a flexible approach to consultation with face to face meetings, scheduled hui and fono, individual telephone calls, and an online survey. Despite this outreach and flexibility, engagement was difficult, and the proportion of the workforce that participated was relatively low compared to the total number of Māori and Pacific group leaders who are trained. Those that participated were predominantly the most committed and qualified Māori and Pacific group leaders. This suggests there is a large pool of basic trained group leaders who are not currently engaged with Werry Workforce. Uncertainty around IYP contract continuity is likely to be impacting on this part of the workforce and their ability to work and stay engaged within the IYP system.

Key themes extracted from the Māori and Pacific group leader feedback include organisational barriers to group leader development, feelings of isolation, and a desire to collaborate with other group leaders. The lack of a cultural framework alongside the programme framework, and issues of cultural safety within the IYP training and practice environment were raised by the group leaders and the Advisory Groups. Other themes include a lack recognition and career empowerment, and a genuine desire to be able to reach and meet the needs of the most disadvantaged families/whānau in IYP delivery.

The key themes together with the literature review enable recommendations for how Werry Workforce can refine and evaluate its support for Māori and Pacific IYP group leaders into the future. Some recommendations will be able to be directly actioned by Werry Workforce, others will require dialogue and collaboration with others within the IYP system, including the programme developer in Seattle. Werry Workforce could also provide an advocacy role with current funders in regard to recommendations outside the scope of their current workforce support contract. For Werry Workforce to holistically support the Māori and Pacific IYP workforce, it needs to advocate for them within the whole IYP

system. Acknowledgement by Māori and Pacific group leaders was made of the cultural enhancements and workforce initiatives already developed by Werry Workforce, and of the opportunity to provide feedback through this consultation project to how these could be further developed.

To address organisational barriers to group leader development Werry Workforce need to engage with managers who hold the contracts for IYP delivery and who support the group leaders on a day to day basis. Managers need a greater understanding of the practicalities of IYP planning and delivery, and of group leader support and development needs. Managers also need the right funding and directives in place within the contract to facilitate group leader release for training and development.

With regards to group leaders' feelings of isolation and desire to collaborate, Werry Workforce needs to enable systems whereby Māori and Pacific group leaders can identify other group leaders in their region, and a platform for discussion of professional and personal challenges in IYP delivery. There is also a rich resource of experienced Māori and Pacific group leaders who should be empowered to share their practice tips and strategies.

Werry Workforce training, networking and accreditation events should be increasingly regionalised with options for remote participation. The overall coordination, training, linking and support of the Māori and Pacific group leaders would be greatly enhanced by the employment of Māori and Pacific mentors within Werry Workforce, as appropriately experienced and skilled group leaders progress to this level.

There are a number of recommendations for how Werry Workforce can support Māori and Pacific group leaders to deliver IYP in a culturally appropriate way, as well as creating a culturally safe training and practice environment for the group leaders. Cultural appropriateness and safety are critical not only because of Māori indigeneity and obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi, but also because they are related to the sustainability of the Māori and Pacific group leader workforce. Māori and Pacific group leaders are more likely to continue with IYP delivery if they believe the IYP is effective for Māori/Pacific, that the IYP training and practice environment is free from implicit bias and cultural stereotypes, and that their cultural skills are valued. Strong Māori and Pacific advisory groups that have clear Terms of Reference, clear roles and responsibilities, and adequate resourcing will assist in addressing these issues.

Part of supporting the Māori and Pacific workforce, and boosting workforce satisfaction and retention is ensuring that group leaders' IYP journey is linked with overall career development and empowerment. It is recommended that Werry Workforce explore how IYP qualifications can be linked to the NZ qualifications framework, and how leadership and professional development for group leaders can be integrated in Werry Workforce's programme.

To reach and meet the needs of the most disadvantaged families in New Zealand (disproportionately Māori and Pacific within the historical context of colonisation and migration), group leaders need support in the recruitment of parents, flexibility in programme delivery, and practical support around participating

parents. Group leaders need to feel they are safe if health and social issues arise (e.g. having clear referral protocols), and to have the opportunity to emotionally debrief.

It is also recommended that resources be focused on retaining and developing the existing trained group leaders rather than continuing to train new group leaders because of poor retention. This means that Werry Workforce need to reconnect with the pool of basic trained group leaders who have disengaged and find out why they no longer use the IYP training they received.

Finally, to promote positive social and educational outcomes for Māori and Pacific children in New Zealand it is critical that Werry Workforce and the entire IYP system address the holistic needs of its Māori and Pacific group leader workforce. These workforces are taonga (treasures) as they bring the right mix of expertise across both programme and cultural domains, and have a passion for transformative change within their whānau and communities.