



Community-Led Youth Wellbeing Needs Analysis for the Cheviot Area School Catchment and the Wider Hurunui District

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Collaborative Trust for Research and Training in Youth Health and Development,
for Cheviot Area School, and of relevance to Together Hurunui and Tipu

Māia Kāhui Ako

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Executive Summary

Background

With support from Lotteries Community Research Fund, research was undertaken in the latter part of 2020 focused on the strengths and opportunities of young people in the Hurunui district, and how these can be assisted to grow. The research was initiated by Cheviot Area School, and undertaken by Michelle Cole, a Hurunui-based youth mental health specialist and Sarah Wylie, a researcher from The Collaborative Trust for Research and Training in Youth Health and Development. The research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the current and likely future wellbeing needs of children, young people and whānau in Hurunui? (Evidence of service and support needs, barriers to service access, service and support gaps etc.)
2. What model of service delivery and support provision is best-placed to address these wellbeing needs locally? (What services and supports are most needed, how are they best delivered, and what is possible from both a school, community and service provider perspective?)
3. If a wellbeing hub is found to meet with support, what is the best approach to develop a wellbeing hub at Cheviot School in a sustainable manner?

Although commissioned by Cheviot Area School, the research is of relevance to all youth service providers across Hurunui, and is intended as a community resource.

Methodology

In order to effectively meet the project brief and address the research questions, a mixed methods approach was taken to the research.

As delivered, the methodology involved quantitative data analysis for the purpose of community profiling (including 2018 Census findings, school roll data, Oranga Tamariki data, and New Zealand Police, Work and Income and Ministry of Education data via their websites), review of relevant recent local research, interviews and focus groups with local and external stakeholders and consultation with young people, predominantly via focus group.

In total, 52 individuals involved in delivery of education, support and other wellbeing services to young people in Hurunui and 74 young people from across the Hurunui district took part in the research.

Findings

Hurunui District

Hurunui District is situated around a 30 minute drive north of Christchurch, extending up the coast from Leithfield Beach northwards through to the Conway River, south of the Kaikoura Peninsula, and bordered on the west by the Southern Alps. It is predominantly a rural community. The largest towns in Hurunui are Amberley, Cheviot, Culverden and Hanmer Springs, with a number of townships and villages also located through the district: Greta Valley, Motunau Beach, Hawarden, Leithfield, Rotherham, Waiau, Waikari, Waipara. The usual resident population of Hurunui District at the time of the March 2018 Census was 12,558, up 8.9 percent on the population at the previous Census, 11,529.

The population of all areas of the district grew from 2013 to 2018, with strongest growth in the town of Amberley, which grew in population by 30.7 percent. Parnassus Statistical Area, taking in the town of Cheviot, grew by only 1.2 percent over this period. At the time of the 2018 Census, there were 705 0-4 year olds, 720 5-9 year olds, 813 10-14 year olds, 627 15-19 year olds and 357 20-24 year olds



living in Hurunui District. Compared to New Zealand as a whole, Hurunui's population is less ethnically diverse, has lower levels of unemployment and has less extremes in wealth distribution.

In contrast to the rest of New Zealand, youth living in the Hurunui experience some benefits and some unique challenges including the size of the geographic area, distance between townships over which the smaller population is dispersed, however most young people can keep connected via access to phone and internet. The Hurunui is predominantly a district experiencing population growth and has relatively high levels of home ownership and lower availability of rental accommodation (including a small amount of social housing). Some previous rental properties are being purchased by owner-occupiers, further tightening the rental market. Limited access to alternative housing can create pressure for families and young people if their accommodation becomes destabilised.

Compared to many other parts of the country, there is lower unemployment, and a relatively low crime rate. For young people, this may partly reflect the preventative approach local police and youth aid officers take to support youth to reduce the likelihood of driving infringements in an area with no public transport. Overall, there is a higher workforce participation in both full-time and part-time work, yet, the youth job seeker population can be fluid, with people moving in and out of receipt of benefits and there are also higher numbers of Māori in the job seeker group.

Whilst the Hurunui is less ethnically diverse than is the case nationally, it has a considerably younger Māori population which is in part reflected in the higher percentages of Māori young people in some of the local area school rolls. This pattern may also reflect the strong trend of many Hurunui young people attending secondary school outside their own community.

Young people who undertake their schooling locally are less likely than is the case nationally to be stood down or excluded from school and are utilising vocational pathways well. The strong pattern of many young people undertaking their senior education out of the district impacts heavily on the numbers of young people completing their senior years in local schools. Of the students that stay, there are slightly less students attaining NCEA level 3 and over or enrolling in tertiary education within a year of leaving school than is the case nationally. Māori youth in the Hurunui are slightly more likely to be undertaking full-time study than the national average whilst overall Hurunui youth are less likely to be engaged in full-time study.

The current and likely future wellbeing needs of children, young people and whānau in Hurunui

The young people consulted in the present research, who lived in Hurunui, and either were engaged in education or employment locally, identified a range of supportive relationships with various teachers or pastoral care staff in the schools either currently or in the past. Feedback from young people in the present research, and in recent surveys of young people across the district, identify a high level of appreciation of both youth-specific and community-focused events and activities that bring people together to connect and have fun. Events and activities are highly valued when these bring young people together with their peers from across the district. Connection was strongly associated with a sense of positive wellbeing, and there was a clear thirst for more opportunities for young people, and the communities as a whole, to come together.

On the basis of the findings from consultation with both young people and service providers delivering to rangatahi, the most significant needs facing young people currently are about isolation (both geographic and in terms of connectedness), mental health issues – especially depression, anxiety and stress-related, and shortage of opportunities for pro-social recreation. Young people attending school in Hurunui also face a range of challenges associated with being educated in small schools, and in small communities, including lack of subject choice, bullying, a limited array of teachers to “click” with, risk of gaining a “reputation”, a small peer group and a mixing of age groups socially. Some young people



in Hurunui also struggle with needs regarding self-esteem, self-confidence and identity, and there is a lack of opportunities for diverse young people to “find their tribe” through support groups, cultural activities etc.. Poverty, and issues associated with this including poor nutrition and insecure housing were highlighted as needs impacting on some young people and families in Hurunui, and especially concentrated in townships, Cheviot in particular. A need was highlighted by service providers for stronger support for parents in this role; an increasing number of whānau are recent arrivals to the district without a support network around them.

While access to the things needed to uphold positive wellbeing is often a challenge for any young people, Hurunui’s young people find these things especially hard to access. This is due to a range of factors, including geographic isolation, lack/limited accessibility, lack of public transport and costs associated with transport, financial and time-related. The present research identified variation in processes through which young people can access help, and across the Hurunui, the young people had limited knowledge of what services were available to them. This was also reflected in the comments from service providers who thought that there were few services coming to the Hurunui.

The most significant gaps and service access barriers identified by both young people and those working to support them were concerns about confidentiality, difficulties ensuring privacy when young people and their families do access services and support, service navigation needs, and the small town phenomena of everyone knowing everyone. There was strong demand for more initiatives designed to foster career paths and ambitions in young people, a greater recognition of and celebration cultural diversity, and more opportunities for mentorship of young people.

The model of service delivery and support provision best-placed to address these wellbeing needs locally, supporting and developing the strengths and opportunities of rangatahi

Service providers working with young people and their families try to see young people at schools or medical centres and sometimes their homes: there are few appropriate community spaces to offer alternatives. Although schools can provide a convenient base for workers to see a few young people in one visit, there are few designated spaces that afford privacy and comfort. Schools struggle to find available space for visiting services and some students express concerns about the lack of privacy and autonomy they can experience as a result.

The range of services delivered within Hurunui is very much hampered by its relatively small and geographically spread-out population. Service providers described a responsive approach to bridging gaps and shortfalls in the provision of wellbeing services to young people and their families, but in many cases, services are stretched. Unsurprisingly some workers spoke of wanting more full-time equivalent capacity within their own services, unable to meet the level of demand within their current resources.

As with providers, young people also expressed a hope for more diversity of services in the future, that would bring a range of new people to meet with them. Both youth and service providers described the need for natural fabric of supports that addressed the wellbeing needs of young people in tiers that started with nourishing the grass roots of social opportunities, informal learning and fun events at a very local level, and incrementally introducing supports as needed, such as peer support, and peer support groups (like LGBTQI+), mentors and more specialist services. Whilst a variety of supports and services were identified as being needed in this study, service providers were also interested in looking at what changes they could make with what they had to support and develop the strengths of rangatahi.

Service providers considered their existing patterns of networking as being driven by necessity in a rural environment, but many suggested that further improvements could be made. In particular,



workers described the desire to work collectively on cases and co-locate service provision where possible when working in the Hurunui. This was seen to enhance service provision by bolstering their knowledge and resources and work in a more seamless way across individual student and family needs. A holistic and shared service approach with increased tiered naturalistic supports was therefore seen as a potential pathway to improve outcomes.

The service providers believed there was potential for the co-creation of a more youth friendly flexible environments, with more thought to the way existing spaces could be utilised and re-imagined, and that there was potential for services to work together with youth to bring this into reality. It was thought that co-locating practices did not necessarily require a 'fixed' space to work from and the downsides and vulnerabilities of seeing a static wellbeing hub were considered. Potential for a more creative conversation about the provision of youth services resonated with the young people's enthusiasm for co-creating inclusive wellbeing spaces that wove in fun, social opportunities and a variety of supports, in areas where there were very few social and recreational spaces for youth. Both service providers and youth were aware of the role that environment could play in creating or reducing privacy. They agreed that when more services were utilising an appropriate and more ambiguous space, there would be less chance that a young person would feel exposed and stigmatised for seeking help.

Whilst local service delivery was important to both service providers and young people, there was agreement that there was an opportunity to further consider issues related to perceptions of confidentiality that arise when services are provided by local people for local people. There was also some insight into the range of processes that existed for referrals and contact with young people. Process improvements that were reported to work well by both workers and youth included simple changes such as moving appointments to an emails system from a card under the counsellors door system. Providers were also considering how they could work better with technology in a youth friendly way, although there were mixed feelings about whether future service should be restricted to online delivery.

Conclusion

This study identified significant gaps and challenges in service provision in the Hurunui, linked to funding, funding models, geography and awareness. Cheviot Area School, like the other rural Area Schools in the Hurunui, were found to be looked to as unofficial social service providers, although Cheviot Area School appeared to be the most adversely affected by these challenges, attracting the least resources and services. Notably, this study also found a range of people within the communities connecting in informal and formal roles who are doing what they can to provide support and resources, along with a few services who are committed to delivering local support. Additionally, the Hurunui District Council has put youth firmly on their agenda and a number of young people are committed to illuminate and co-create with schools, service providers and community to improve wellbeing outcomes. The youth of the Hurunui, along with the communities and service providers that support them, are well placed to co-design wellbeing approaches that make the most of existing services, resources and events by folding in more wellbeing opportunities in flexible ways that reflect their character.

Recommendations

On the basis of the research findings, the following recommendations are put forward to encourage ongoing kōrero and co-creation of positive youth wellbeing development in the Hurunui, with a strong focus on co-design, collaboration and service provision that is flexible and creative:

1. This research strongly endorses the effort the Hurunui District Council has made in progressing a positive youth development framework with the support and creation of the Youth Council, the



development of the Youth Strategy and the Hurunui Youth Programme (HYP). HYP appears well placed to play a key leadership role in the advancement of recommendations in this report and it is the hope of the researchers that they continue to receive the resources and support to do so.

2. The networking opportunities created by Together Hurunui appear to have had a positive impact on those service providers involved. Together Hurunui's convenors should consider creating a youth workstream for the network that includes the HYP youth development coordinator, youth council representation and service providers. The convenors should set an agenda based on the recommendations in this report and create a firm plan of action (including key review dates) for the development of youth friendly spaces, the expansion of diversity of local youth service providers and increasing the range, frequency and diversity of youth activities.
3. The present research affirms the significant value of collaborative youth wellbeing events such as CASAFest, run by area schools in the Tipu Māia Kāhui Ako. Schools should be encouraged to expand on the range and number of shared wellbeing, learning, sporting and socialising opportunities across the Kāhui Ako (eg. a wellbeing expo, youth activities at the A & P Show etc.), that bring young people together from across the district to learn, connect and be active.
4. Findings highlighted the physical spaces that are working well (including library rooms, medical centres and designated resourced counselling rooms) as well as those that posed challenges for youth wellbeing. Utilising these findings, it is suggested that HYP (or another entity as appropriate) compile a list of suitable spaces for family meetings, therapy, groups, counselling and wellbeing activities in each area, including information on how to book each space. This resource could then be provided to all social agencies and workers delivering face to face services in Hurunui, including Together Hurunui's membership.
5. The area schools of Hurunui are encouraged to work with youth and service providers (including Wellbeing North Canterbury and HYP) to create a positive youth space audit and continue to work on improving designing spaces to support wellbeing.
6. The community should give full consideration to designing culturally inclusive practices, processes and programmes that fully represent the diversity of young people living in the Hurunui. This should start with ensuring diversity in youth consultation and representation and include developing an enduring reciprocal relationship with Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga and with migrant communities.
7. The findings support the development of a LGBTQI+ youth peer-based diversity support group across the Hurunui. HYP are well positioned to support a youth-led approach that would include seeking funding, gathering support from other agencies and helping with transport. This could include travel to the North Canterbury Pride Picnic in March 2021, a visit to Qtopia in Christchurch and encouragement of guest speakers.
8. Together Hurunui, Hurunui District Council, Tipu Māia Kāhui Ako and HYP are encouraged to advocate strongly for expansion of mentoring initiatives, especially for males and for training to support such development. The findings suggest value in actively seeking to understand the barriers to volunteering in mentor roles locally, and creation of opportunities to increase



knowledge and confidence in mentoring roles (e.g. creating time-limited mentoring experiences at Lions Club activities and A & P show events).

9. The research affirms the value of the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs and its positive youth development approach.
10. Members of Together Hurunui should prioritise youth workforce development across the Hurunui by seeking and undertaking regular local core skills training (Gender Diversity, Cultural Safety, Health Relationships, Confidentiality), facilitating local specialist training opportunities (e.g. those delivered by The Collaborative Trust), and sharing professional development opportunities to strengthen mentorship programmes and build capacity in school teams and community workers.
11. With support of HYP, youth groups in Hurunui (eg. Cheviot's youth group) should be empowered and encouraged through resources, advisory support and service provision to grow their appeal, reach and accessibility for young people. They should expand as much as possible towards capacity to connect young people with wellbeing supports in a manner that preserves privacy (eg. pop-up youth one stop shop-type experiences).
12. Service managers should advocate for flexibility in funding to support their workforce to keep "boots on the ground" service delivery for youth and families in the Hurunui. Funders can enhance youth wellbeing by ensuring flexibility in funding models and service design to reflect the nuances of service provision in rural communities.
13. A considerable investment has been made in this study to explore youth wellbeing in the Hurunui community. It is essential that ongoing efforts and outcomes that continue to flow from this research are documented, photographed, videoed and discussed to ensure a feedback loop with youth, services, schools and community. This could be achieved through the co-creation of a living google document that is held by HYP that schools, youth groups, service providers and youth leaders can access and contribute to.

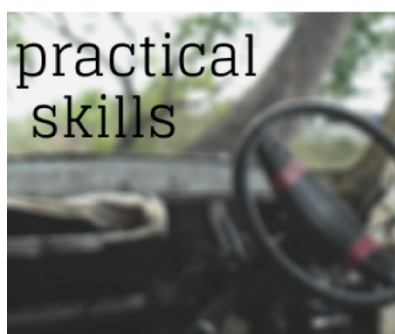
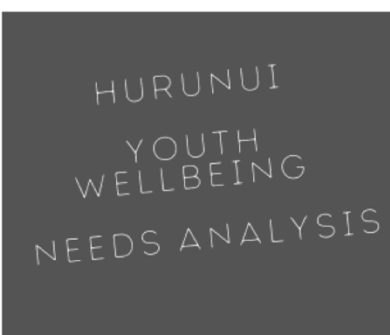


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1. Introduction

Cheviot Area School (CAS) is located in the Hurunui District. It is a decile four school and celebrated its 125th anniversary in October 2019. Cheviot Area School belongs to the Tipu Māia Kāhui Ako.

In recent years, Cheviot and the wider Hurunui District has experienced some challenging events. These include:

- being significantly affected by the 2016 Hurunui Kaikoura earthquake
- being impacted by a significant drought which ended in 2017
- its beef and dairy industry has been recently impacted by M. bovis, and
- the challenges of Covid-19 response.

In addition, Cheviot Area School (CAS) is experiencing a growing trend of children coming to Cheviot either under a statutory response, or an informal response as a result of being removed from or leaving environments where they have experienced multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) including; violence, neglect, abuse, drug use and parental mental illness. Other schools in Hurunui are also experiencing similar needs, with local nuances.

The Hurunui Youth Program (HYP) was established in 2008 by Hurunui District Council (HDC), and since this time, HDC has supported Hurunui youth to grow the HYP program and the Hurunui District Youth Council (HDYC). In 2015, HDYC conducted a survey regarding how Hurunui youth were accessing transport and services. They found that nearly half of those surveyed experienced transport and independence issues when wanting access to services, with many being heavily reliant on others transporting them in order to attend services, various sporting events, activities, social events, school and various appointments. Approximately one third of young people who responded to the survey indicated that they travelled out of the district for health services. However although young people were heavily dependent on their parents for transport, 29 percent of respondents also indicated that their parents were not always willing to take them to these activities (this sitting alongside other barriers such as lack of money, lack of WOF/vehicle registration and business/work commitments), and that isolation also prevented them from attending appointments. Another challenge youth in the Hurunui faced regarding their ability to attend appointments and various activities was having a correct driver licence, as 37 percent of youth stated that they did not possess a restricted driver licence, so could not travel to activities and appointments by themselves.

Although young people rated trust as a minor barrier to accessing services in the 2015 survey, in a follow up facilitated survey discussion session with Michelle Cole (co-researcher on the present study and a youth mental health specialist based in Hurunui), the youth council described their own experience, concerns and anecdotal comments from their peers about a perceived lack of confidentiality of service providers, and service provision environments (for example waiting in a medical centre reception area) and their concerns about their lack of knowledge of what services were available to support mental health and wellbeing. Representatives from the HDYC were invited and attended the Social Services Waimakariri Mental Health and Wellbeing Focus Group to share their concerns with mental health workers. In 2018, the Youth Council released the Hurunui District Youth Strategy after consultation with over 300 local youth over five months. The strategy spanned four domains, Future Focus, Our Environment, Connected Community and Positive Youth Development. When youth were again invited to review the strategy in 2019, they highlighted their desire to increase; mental health support, male mentoring for males, life skills learning and to have more opportunity to meet with other young people across the district.

Cheviot Area School (CAS) students had reiterated similar concerns regarding mental health, social issues, difficulty accessing services and concerns regarding confidentiality when engaging in a wellbeing scoping session in 2017 with the CAS senior leadership team and Michelle Cole, where they



were invited to create their vision of how they would like to engage with wellbeing. The CAS young people described a flexible space where wellbeing was not just about health but about creative life skills development, inspirational mentors and speakers, practical strength-based supports and meaningful activities: an easily accessible space on the school grounds that you could enter for several wellbeing related reasons.

Cheviot Area School has a strong focus on supporting the health and wellbeing of its students and the community within which they live. The school is actively working to develop a set of four capabilities: resilient, persistent, reflective and collaborative, and the current proposal very much aligns with these. With a kaupapa underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, inclusive and student centred education and a positive youth development framework, CAS wanted to explore with relevant stakeholders the possibility of developing initiatives to promote youth health and wellbeing in the Hurunui including the possibility of a Youth Wellbeing Hub. At the time the research was commissioned, the anticipated outcomes from the development of such a hub were as follows:

- Enabling a shift in focus from illness/health to wellbeing, following the student voice to create an authentic sense of whanaungatanga.
- A reduction in the barriers our tamariki and rangitahi see as getting in their way of getting support.
- A reduction of stress in the adults who support our tamariki and rangitahi in schools
- Enhanced student wellbeing
- Enhanced family/whānau and community wellbeing
- Student skill development in relation to the student led and positive youth development approach that will be taken in this initiative
- Value for wellbeing service providers
- Valuable learnings and opportunities for other rural communities as the process and the journey of this initiative is shared with other Area Schools.

CAS recognised that these ideas had largely been generated after consultation with a small team of people within the current school staff and student group. They also recognised that in order for enduring and effective solutions that promote the healthy development of young people aged 12-24 years across the Hurunui district to develop, it was essential that the wider Hurunui community be engaged in this process. CAS recognised that any solution to improve youth health and wellbeing must be a whole-of-community response, and therefore, hearing and addressing the needs and ideas of the Hurunui community was essential in the next steps of development of this initiative.

In order to progress the student's ideas, the school leadership team, local police and a local youth health specialist met with Dr Susan Bagshaw and Dr Ria Schroder in 2018 to discuss securing funding for a needs analysis. In 2019, The Collaborative Trust successfully supported the school to apply for Community Research funding via Lotteries and the research was undertaken in 2020. Huge appreciation is expressed to Lotteries for making this research possible and giving voice to young people in Hurunui and those who work to support and uphold their wellbeing.

The research was led by Michelle Cole, a youth mental health specialist and researcher based in that community, and supported by Sarah Wylie, a researcher with extensive research experience in the community and youth sector.

The Collaborative Trust for Research and Training in Youth Health and Development ("The Collaborative Trust") is a not for profit Trust developed in 2003 under the directorship of Dr, now Dame Sue Bagshaw. The Trust works to achieve a vision of "healthy well-developed young people in Aotearoa, New Zealand" by providing training, conducting research and evaluation and informing and influencing policy and practice. This approach holds young people at the centre as The Collaborative Trust strives to work in partnership with Māori, value cultural diversity and hold a holistic view of

healthy development which includes wellbeing in the physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, social, family, educational and community areas of life.

The scope of the project was to enable community-led, wide consultation with key stakeholders about the need for and design of initiatives to promote the healthy development of Hurunui youth aged 12-24 years. It also sought to provide an opportunity to consult with stakeholders about the possibility and feasibility of developing a Youth Wellbeing Hub that could be located at CAS, along with alternative approaches to meeting wellbeing needs of young people. The project was also designed as an opportunity to further build researcher capacity within the Hurunui District. With The Collaborative Trust providing research expertise and oversight to ensure both rigorous research processes and outputs and providing training and support to Michelle, the project sought to develop the capacity of locals to undertake research in the future and ensure that the information generated in this project is both gathered and analysed through a 'local' and 'outsider' lens.

The research sought to address the following:

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE:

To investigate how the strengths and opportunities of young people in the Hurunui district can be assisted to grow.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the current and likely future wellbeing needs of children, young people and whānau in Hurunui? (Evidence of service and support needs, barriers to service access, service and support gaps etc.)
2. What model of service delivery and support provision is best placed to address these wellbeing needs locally? (What services and supports are most needed, how are they best delivered, and what is possible from both a school, community and service provider perspective?)
3. If a wellbeing hub is found to meet with support, what is the best approach to develop a wellbeing hub at Cheviot Area School in a sustainable manner?



2. Method

In order to effectively meet the project brief and address the research questions, a mixed methods approach was taken to the research, the commencement of which was delayed due to Covid-19 alert levels and response. The research was initially expected to occur in three distinct phases. However some of the planned approaches to data gathering were not possible under Covid-19 conditions, while other opportunities emerged which were usefully pursued instead. Some of the elements of the planned phase two of the project in fact took place alongside the first phase of data collection.

As delivered, the methodology involved the following:

1. Quantitative Data Analysis: Community Profiling

- Available demographic data (including 2013 and 2018 Census findings, school roll data) were analysed to develop a picture of the tamariki, rangatahi and whānau population of the Cheviot Area School catchment and the wider Hurunui area, scoping the size of this population and its characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity, economic wellbeing, household composition and family type, housing).
- Data from Oranga Tamariki for the Hurunui district was obtained via an Official Information Act request, and presented in summary form in a manner that preserved confidentiality of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau.
- Data on Hurunui district was obtained from New Zealand Police, Work and Income and Ministry of Education via their websites.
- Findings of the Hurunui Youth Survey 2020 undertaken by Hurunui Youth Programme were also included for analysis.

2. Qualitative Data Gathering and Analysis: Consultations with local and external stakeholders

Those providers consulted for this needs analysis were invited to participate because they were most likely to be regularly providing services or having consistent connection with young people in the Hurunui both in and out of schools. Those consulted represented services connecting with Hurunui youth in the domains of education, health, social support, school support, whānau support, youth justice, child protection, sport and community engagement. Some service providers were interviewed by phone, some face to face, and others via focus groups. As the number of service providers is limited in the Hurunui, participants were given the option to remain anonymous.

Interviews: Providers

Utilising a semi-structured schedule and with full informed consent, the following service provider interviews were undertaken, some with individuals and others with multiple team members:

- Wellbeing North Canterbury (delivers social work, counselling, youth alcohol and other drug service and school attendance service to Hurunui district)
- Hurunui Youth Programme
- Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga
- Cheviot Area School Pastoral Care/Wellbeing Coordinator
- Cheviot Area School Board of Trustees
- Cheviot Area School Leadership Team
- Cheviot Area School year 7-13 teaching team
- Area school Counsellor/Pastoral Care/Wellbeing Coordinator
- Learning and support advisors
- Māori Advisor, Waitaha Health



- Hurunui School nursing teams (primary & public)
- Oranga Tamariki (Rangiora)
- Work and Income (Rangiora)
- NZ Police (Hurunui)
- Connect Hurunui (Connectors)
- Victim Specialist Integrated Safety Response
- Child and Family support agency
- Sport Canterbury
- Youth Brief Intervention
- Hurunui youth sports coach.

A small number of additional interviews were held with practitioners who preferred for their participation to remain anonymous.

Where service providers were interviewed, as well as addressing the research questions, the interview explored possibilities for on-site service delivery in Cheviot including feasibility of a youth wellbeing hub, and the parameters of this, space requirements and time constraints, and known service access barriers and ways of avoiding these.

Focus group: Providers

A focus group was held with 25 attendees of the Together Hurunui service provider networking group on 9 November, 2020 in Waipara. A mana whenua hui was planned but did not go ahead, at the preference of some representatives of Cheviot's Māori community.

A small number of providers took part in two consultations, being present at the large Together Hurunui focus group session, and also interviewed.

In total, 52 individuals involved in delivery of education, support and other wellbeing services to young people in Hurunui took part in the research.

Youth consultations

A range of youth consultations were held, as follows:

- Three focus groups were held with students at Cheviot Area School: one with year 7-8 students, one with year 9-10 students and one with year 11-13 students.
- Two student focus groups were held at Hurunui College: one with year 7-8 students and one with year 9+ students.
- One large focus group was held at Amuri Area School, with 22 students participating (16 female, 6 male).
- One young person identifying as part of the LGBTQI+ community was interviewed as part of the research.
- A focus group was held with 5 young people aged 18-24 years who lived/worked in the Hurunui District and were out of school. The focus group was held on a Friday night at the Cheviot pub, with non-alcoholic drinks and snacks provided to participants.

In total, 74 young people across the Hurunui District took part in focus groups which formed part of the research. Of the young people who participated, 63 percent were female and 37 percent male.

At the focus group at Amuri Area School and the young adult focus group, only gender information was collected on participants, while at five of the seven focus groups, young people were given a self-completion demographic sheet (see Appendix 1) on which they recorded their age, gender, ethnicity and also asked them if they identify as part of the LBGTQI+ community.

Of the 46 young people who participated in the research and completed the demographic sheet, six indicated that they identified as part of the LBGTQI+ community, while a further five did not want to say.

Of those consulted at schools (n=46), age and ethnicity breakdowns were as follows:

11 years	12 years	13 years	14 years	15 years	16 years	17 years
1	9	6	7	8	9	6

NZ European	NZ Māori	NZ Euro/Māori	NZ Māori/Pasifika	Asian	Middle East/Latin America/Africa
35	4	1	2	1	1

*Two young people did not complete the ethnicity question.

In total, 21 young people were consulted at Hurunui College, 22 at Amuri Area School and 25 at Cheviot Area School. Five school leavers were also consulted, and one further school student from the district was interviewed.

Information sheets (see Appendix 2 for stakeholders and Appendix 3 for young people) and consent forms (see Appendix 4 for focus groups and Appendix 5 for interviews) are shown in the Appendices. All interviews and focus groups were audio recorded with consent and transcribed, except where the venue was not conducive to this (in which case extensive notes were taken). Thematic analysis was undertaken collaboratively by the research team, with input from The Collaborative Trust's research manager.

It is intended that following completion of the present report, a series of workshops will be held to feed the research findings back to each of the schools and to the service provider network, Together Hurunui, and to collaboratively plan and implement a response. These workshops will be held in early 2021. Working groups will be established as appropriate.

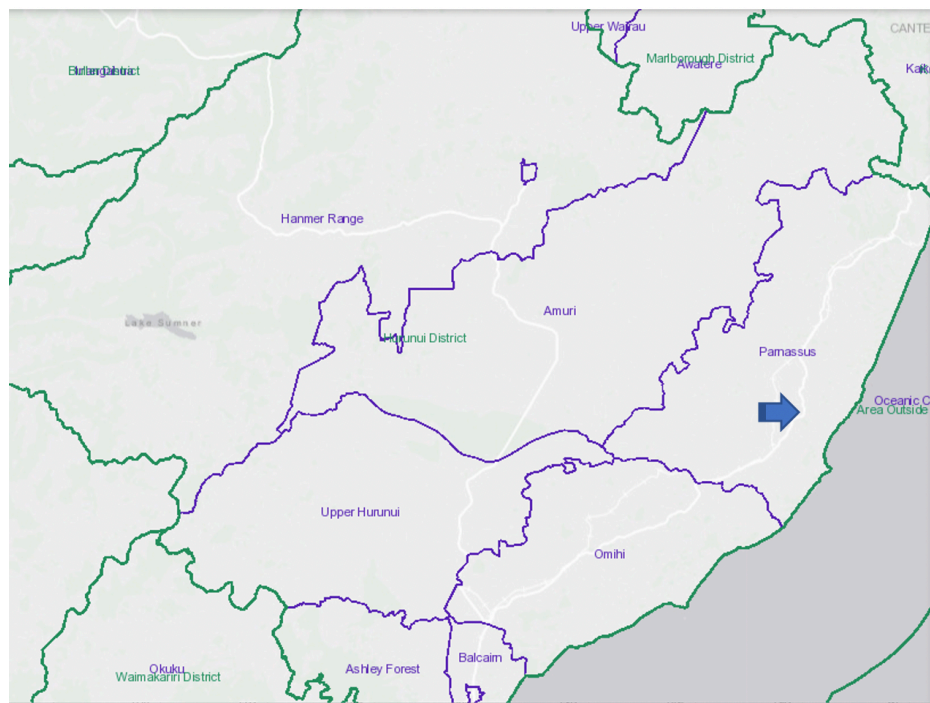
3. Demographic Analysis

The southern end of Hurunui District is situated about 40 Kilometres north of Christchurch, extending up the coast from Leithfield Beach in the south, northwards through to the Conway River, south of the Kaikoura Peninsula. Hurunui District is bordered on the west by the Southern Alps. It is predominantly a rural community. The largest towns in Hurunui are Amberley, Cheviot, Culverden and Hanmer Springs, with a number of townships and villages also located throughout the district: Greta Valley, Motunau Beach, Hawarden, Leithfield, Rotherham, Waiau, Waikari and Waipara.

Population

The usual resident population of Hurunui District at the time of the March 2018 Census was 12,558, up 8.9 percent on the population at the previous 2013 Census, 11,529.

Figure 1: Statistical Areas of Hurunui District



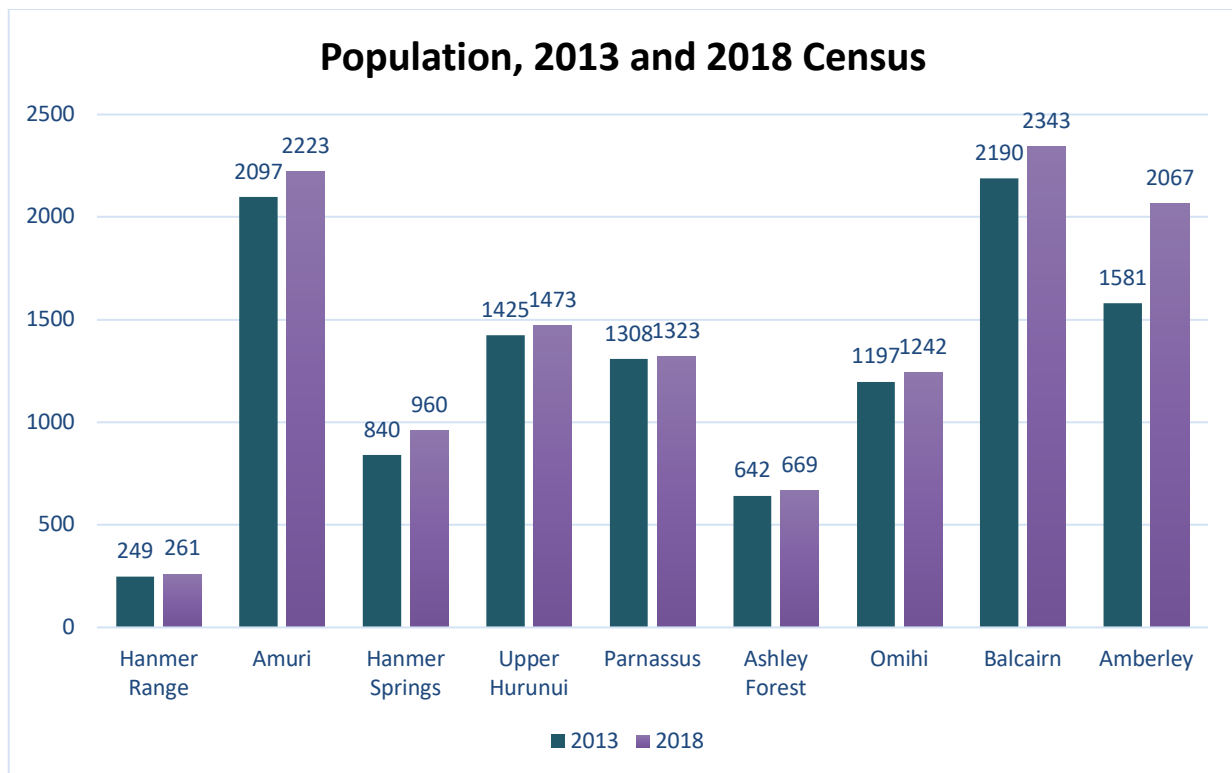
Statistics New Zealand

Statistics New Zealand divides New Zealand into Statistical Areas for reporting of Census data, and Hurunui (see Figure 1) comprises the following:

- Amberley (the town of Amberley)
- Hanmer Springs (the town of Hanmer Springs)
- Hanmer Range (the large rural area to the northwest of the district)
- Amuri (a large rural area central to the district and extending north, taking in Waiau)
- Ashley Forest (rural area to the south of the district)
- Balcairn (rural surrounds of Amberley and extending to the coastline)
- Omihi (rural area to the northeast, taking in Waipara)
- Parnassus (rural area and the town of Cheviot and marked with an arrow in Figure 1)
- Upper Hurunui – large rural area to the southwest of the district, taking in Hawarden and Waikari).

Populations of each of the areas as at Census 2013 and 2018 are presented in Figure 2.

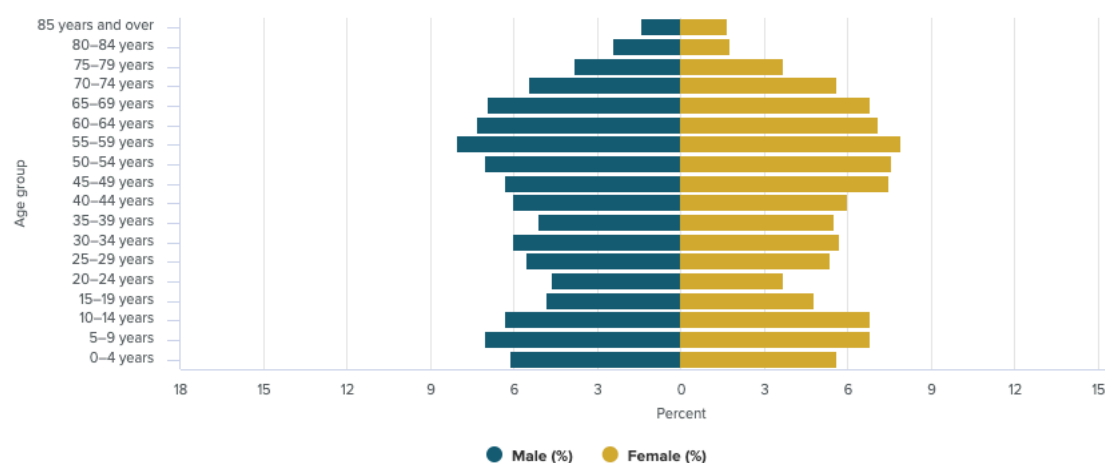
Figure 2: Population, 2013 and 2018 Census



The population of all areas of the district increased between 2013 to 2018, with strongest growth in the town of Amberley, which grew in population by 30.7 percent. Parnassus Statistical Area, taking in the town of Cheviot, grew by only 1.2 percent over this period.

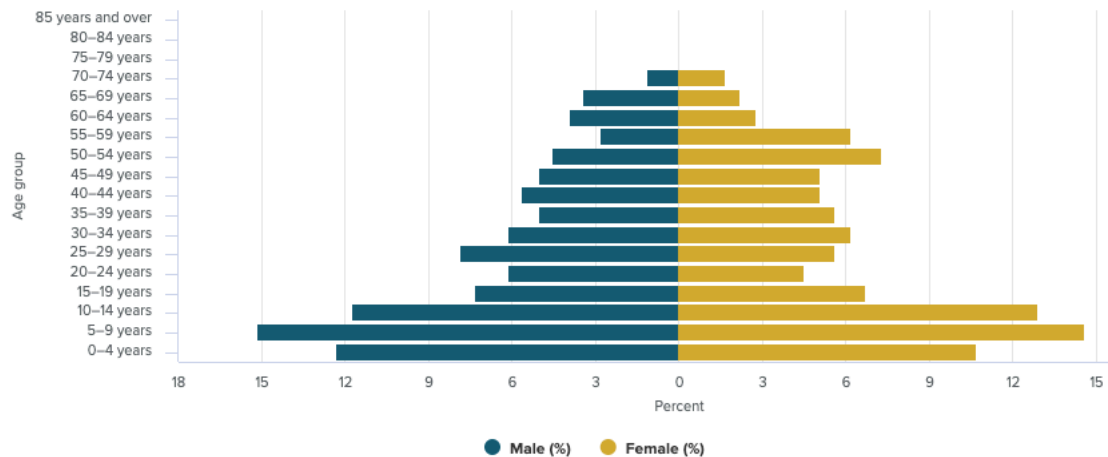
The median age of residents of Hurunui District as at 2018 was 44.4 years. The age structure of the district is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Age and sex of Hurunui usual residents, 2018 Census



Statistics New Zealand (2020) Stats NZ Place Summaries.

Figure 3a: Age and sex of Māori in Hurunui District, 2018 Census



Statistics New Zealand (2020) Stats NZ Place Summaries.

Age structure for Hurunui's Māori population is considerably younger than for the population as a whole. The median age for Māori in Hurunui in 2018 was 24 years.

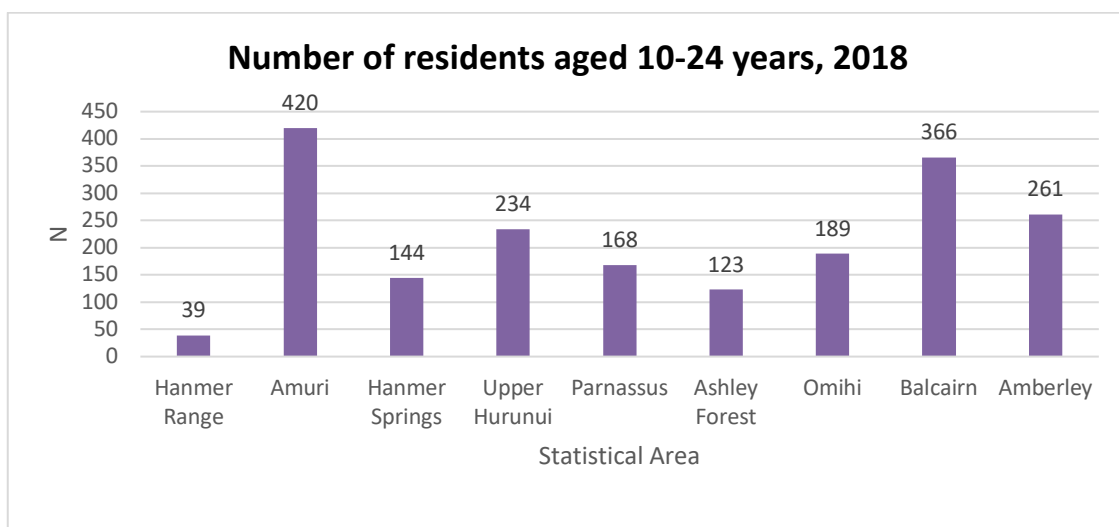
At the time of the 2018 Census, the child and youth population of Hurunui was as follows:

Table 1: Age of children and young people resident in Hurunui

Age group	n
0-4 year olds	705
5-9 year olds	720
10-14 year olds	813
15-19 year olds	627
20-24 year olds	357

The number of 10-24 year olds in each Statistical Area within Hurunui District is depicted in Figure 4.

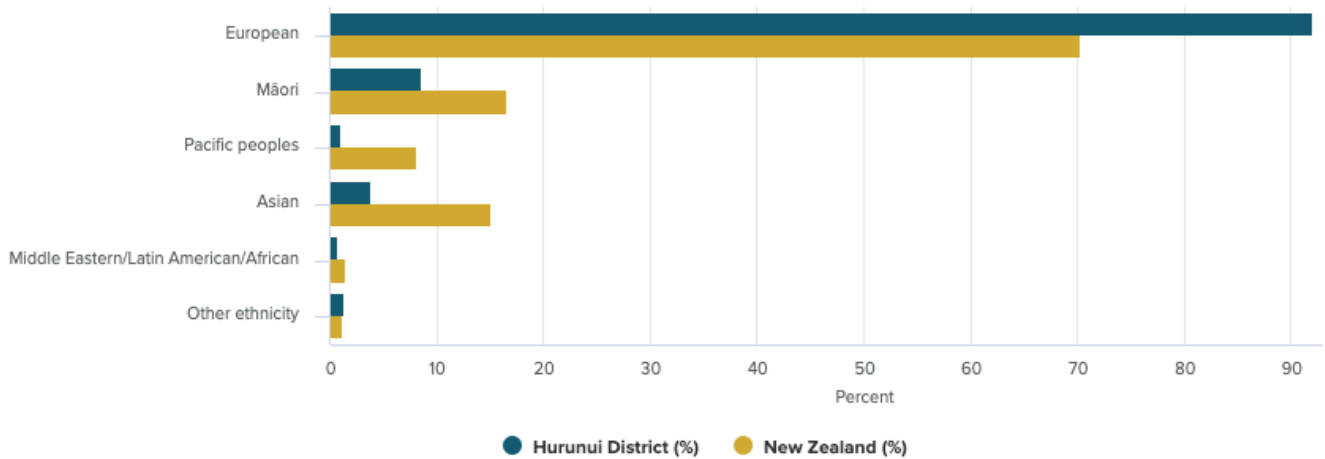
Figure 4: Number of residents aged 10-24 years, 2018



Compared to New Zealand's population, Hurunui is considerably less ethnically diverse (see Figure 5). Ninety-two percent of Hurunui's residents as at 2018 were European, 8.6 percent Māori, 3.9 percent

Asian, 1.1 percent Pasifika, 0.8 percent Middle Eastern, Latin American or African, and 1.4 percent other.

Figure 5: Ethnic groups for people in Hurunui District and New Zealand, 2018 Census



Statistics New Zealand (2020) Stats NZ Place Summaries.

Table 2: Ethnicity for each Statistics New Zealand Statistical Area in Hurunui District

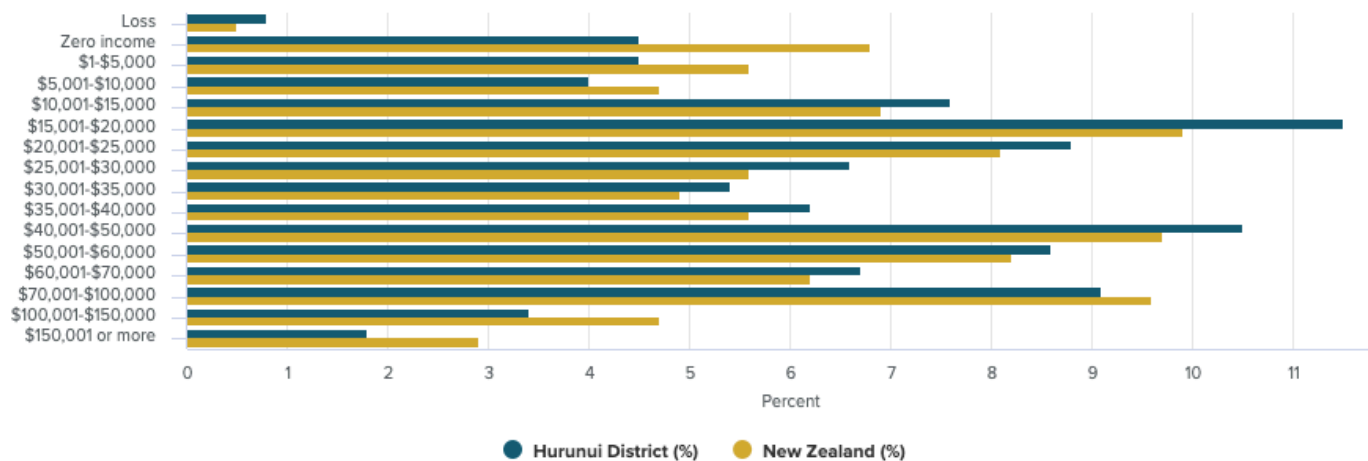
Ethnicity %						
Statistical Area	NZ Euro/Euro	Māori	Asian	Pasifika	MELAA	Other
Hanmer Range	95.4	6.9	2.3	-	-	1.1
Amuri	82.9	10.8	11.3	0.8	2.2	1.2
Hanmer Springs	86.9	5.9	8.8	0.6	2.8	0.6
Upper Hurunui	93.7	6.9	2.2	1.6	0.2	1.4
Parnassus	93.9	11.8	1.1	1.6	0.2	1.6
Ashley Forest	97.3	7.6	1.3	0.4	-	0.4
Omihi	95.2	8.9	1.0	0.7	0.2	1.7
Balcairn	95.5	7.8	1.3	1.3	0.3	1.5
Amberley	93.9	7.4	2.8	1.2	0.1	2.0

Across the population of each area, Amuri (which includes Waiau) is the most ethnically diverse, followed by Hanmer Springs and Parnassus (which includes Cheviot). Ethnicity for each Statistical Area is presented in Table 2.

Work and Income

The median income for residents of Hurunui aged 15 years and over at the time of the 2018 Census was \$31,600. Compared to New Zealand as a whole, income distribution is more even in Hurunui than was the case nationally, with smaller proportions of Hurunui residents reporting incomes at the highest and lowest levels, as shown in Figure 6.

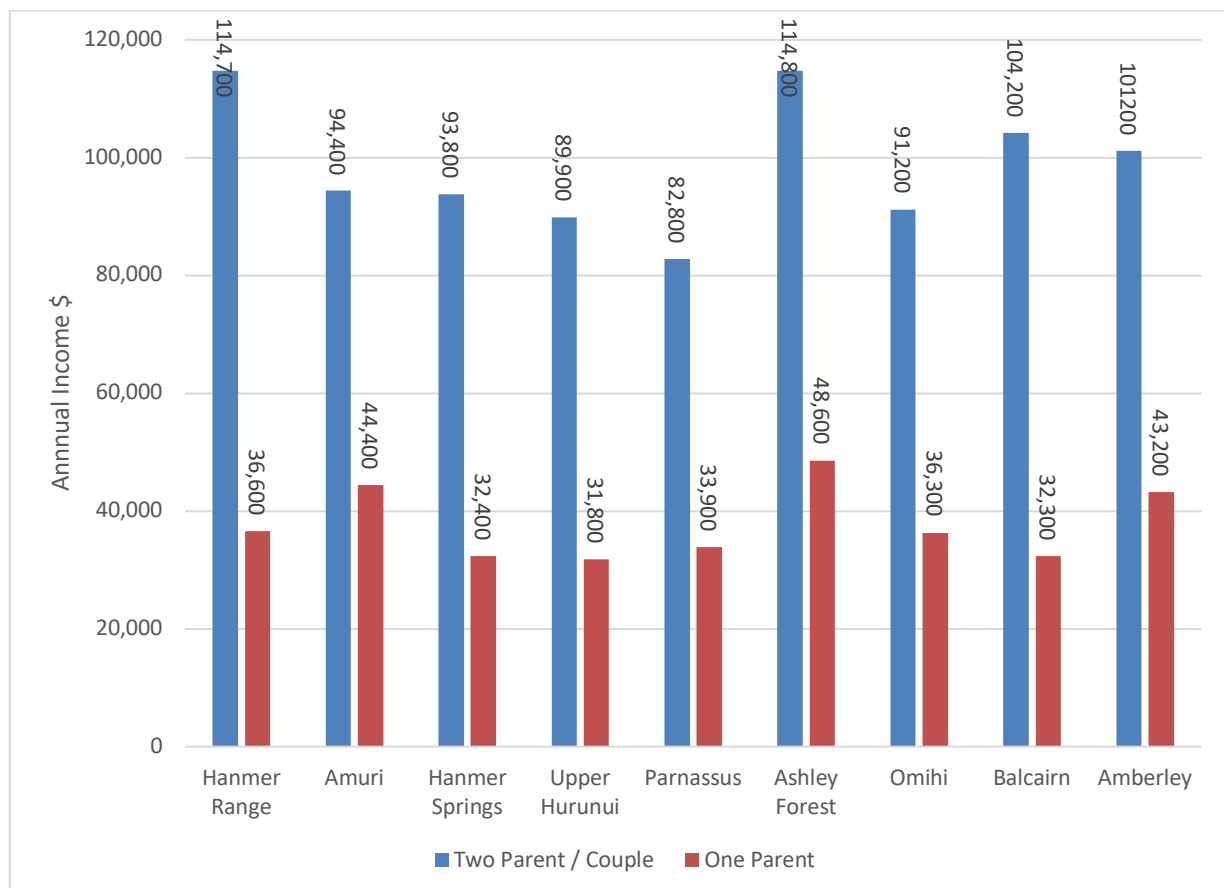
Figure 6: Total personal income for people in Hurunui District and New Zealand, 2018 Census



There were 3,507 families with children in Hurunui in 2018, 1,359 (81.5 percent) of these two parent families and 309 (18.5 percent) one parent families. The median family income for two parent families in Hurunui in 2018 was \$96,400, and for one parent families, \$36,400.

Median family incomes for one parent and two parent/couple families for the Statistical Areas of Hurunui are presented in Figure 7. Findings show Parnassus to be the lowest income area for families in the district.

Figure 7: Family Income for Hurunui, 2018 Census



2018 Census data on work force participation is presented in Table 2. At the time of the 2018 Census, Hurunui District had lower unemployment (1.9 percent compared with 4.0 percent nationally) and higher workforce participation both in full-time (52.1 percent) and part-time work (17.6 percent), with these figures for New Zealand 50.1 and 14.7 percent respectively.

Table 3: Work and labour force status for each geographic sub-area (Statistical Area) of Hurunui, 2018 Census

Statistical Area	Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Unemployed	Not in labour force
Hanmer Range	57.7	18.3	0	22.5
Amuri	57.7	18.3	0	22.5
Hanmer Springs	61.5	18.1	0.7	20.0
Upper Hurunui	50.3	17.5	2.0	30.2
Parnassus	48.0	21.1	1.7	29.1
Ashley Forest	55.9	18.1	4.0	22.6
Omihi	55.5	18.7	1.8	24.0
Balcairn	51.3	17.5	2.0	29.2
Amberley	39.4	14.8	2.1	43.6
Total Hurunui District	52.1	17.6	1.9	28.4

Ministry of Social Development data for the quarter to September 30, 2020 shows that there were 541 people of working age receiving benefits in the three months to September 30, and of these, 249 were receiving the jobseeker benefit, down 10 on the previous quarter. 46.8 percent of jobseekers in the district were male. Māori are over-represented in the job seeker group (15.9 percent of job seekers). In the previous quarter, nearly a fifth of jobseekers were aged 18-24 years, whereas for the September quarter, this age group comprised 11.8 percent of jobseekers, suggesting that the jobseeker population is far from static, with people moving in and out of receipt of benefits (MSD, 2020).

Education

Compared to New Zealand as a whole, residents of Hurunui aged 15 years and over are less likely to be engaged in full-time study (17.4 percent for Hurunui and 21.3 percent nationally) and slightly more likely to be undertaking part-time study (3.5 percent for Hurunui and 3.2 percent nationally). For Māori these patterns are reversed. Māori in Hurunui were slightly more likely to be undertaking full-time study than is the case nationally (31.6 percent of Māori in Hurunui are studying full-time compared with 29.9 percent across New Zealand).

Information regarding highest qualification for the Hurunui population aged 15 and over is presented in Figure 8. Figure 8a shows a sharp growth in the percentage of population with a degree or similar qualification over the three census periods. Māori in Hurunui at the time of the last census were slightly less qualified on average than is the case for Māori nationally. This figure will be influenced by the array of employment opportunities available within Hurunui.

Figure 8: Highest qualification for people in Hurunui District, 2006-18 Census

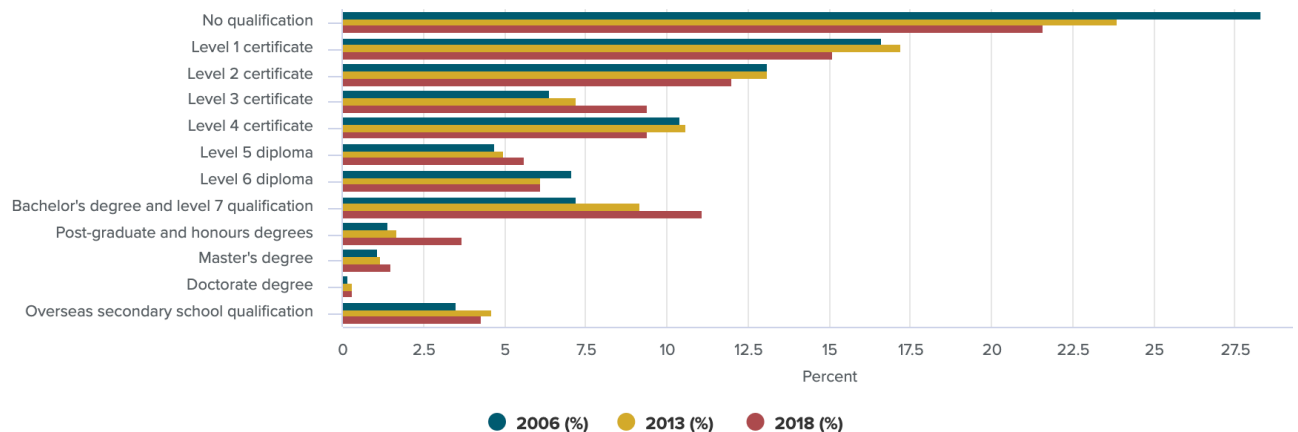


Figure 8a: Highest qualification for Māori in Hurunui District and New Zealand, 2018 Census

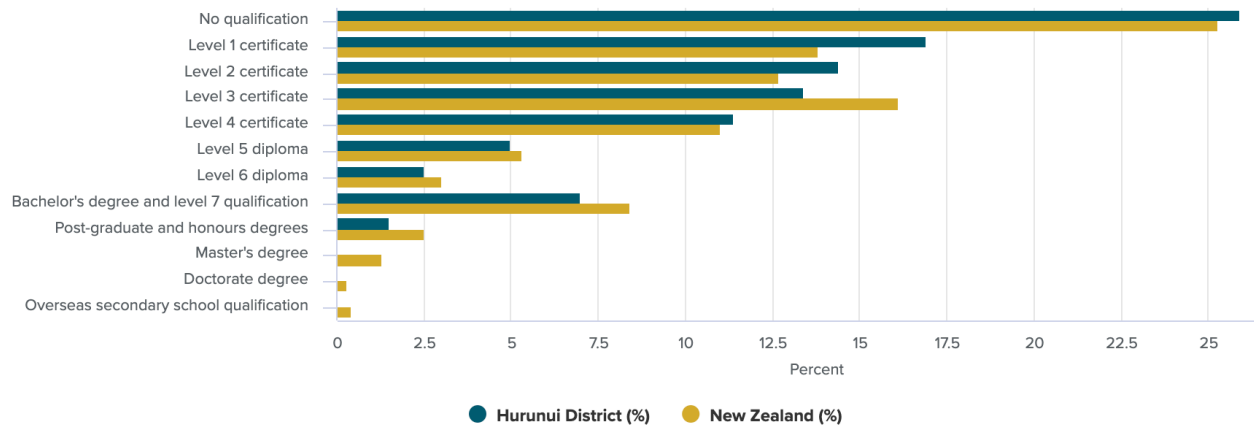


Table 4: Education qualification data for each geographic sub-area (Statistical Area of Hurunui District, 2018 Census

Statistical Area	No qualification (% 15 years + Population)	Bachelor's degree or higher (% 15 years + Population)
Hanmer Range	16.4	13.4
Amuri	20.2	13.7
Hanmer Springs	13.2	14.8
Upper Hurunui	22.7	8.8
Parnassus	22.1	11.8
Ashley Forest	14.6	13.5
Omihi	21.9	11.2
Balcairn	22.7	9.3
Amberley	27.2	8.9
Total Hurunui District	21.6	11.1
New Zealand	18.2	14.6

Secondary education in Hurunui District is served by three Area Schools providing education for years 0-13: Hurunui College in Hawarden, Cheviot Area School and Amuri School, Culverden. There are a

further 10 primary schools in the district, with eight of these being full primary schools (year 0-8) and two being year 0-6 (contributing schools) located in Rotherham and Waiau.

Roll data was obtained from each of the three Area Schools.

Hurunui College

Hurunui College's roll as at 17 September 2020 was 223, and of these, 140 students were in years 7-13 (41 students in years 7-8, 47 in year 9-10, 52 in year 11-12 and 6 in year 13). Of its students in year 7-13, 18.6 percent were New Zealand Māori, 3.6 percent Filipino, 2.8 percent Middle Eastern/Latin American/African, 0.7 percent Pasifika and 0.7 other Asian, three-quarters of the young people in years 7-13 being New Zealand European/European.

Amuri Area School

Amuri Area School's roll as at 6 October 2020 was 370 students, 212 of which were in years 7-13 (78 students in years 7-8, 70 in year 9-10, 58 in year 11-12 and 6 in year 13). Of its students in year 7-13, 14.2 percent were New Zealand Māori, 11.8 percent Filipino, 2.8 percent Middle Eastern/Latin American/African, and 0.9 percent Pasifika. 70.8 percent of the young people in years 7-13 being New Zealand European/European.

Cheviot Area School

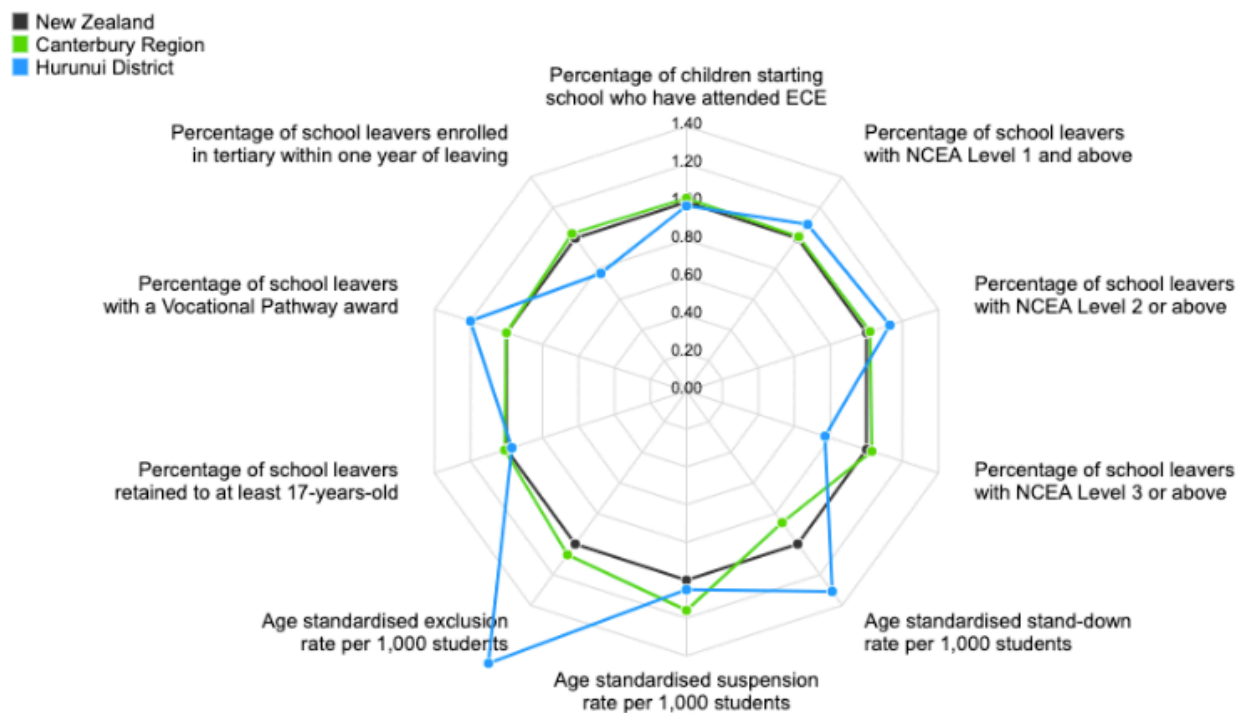
Cheviot Area School's roll as at 17 September was 206, with 71 of these students enrolled in year 7-13. (42 students in years 7-8, 17 in year 9-10, 9 in year 11-12 and 3 in year 13). Of its students in year 7-13, 26.8 percent were New Zealand Māori, 5.6 percent Pasifika, 1.4 percent Middle Eastern/Latin American/African and 1.4 percent Asian, two-thirds of the young people in years 7-13 identifying only as New Zealand European.

In total, 423 students are enrolled in year 7-13 across the three area schools. A number will also be enrolled in year 7 and 8 in the eight full primary schools in the district.

All three schools have a larger female than male rolls, possibly indicating a pattern of greater likelihood that boys move to boarding school out of the district for secondary education compared with girls. Comparison of school rolls to the total population evidences a pattern of relatively high numbers of young people undertaking their schooling outside the district.

The Ministry of Education presents a summary for Hurunui district as a whole as well as for individual schools. Figure 9 presents a number of key measures which can be used to understand education in Hurunui. The measures focus on student achievement. In the diagram, the black line represents the New Zealand performance for each measure; it has been set to one. The blue line shows Hurunui's performance as compared to the rest of New Zealand. Where the blue line is outside the black line, Hurunui has a better performance than the rest of the country. The green line on the diagram shows performance for Canterbury as a whole. Findings show that schools in Hurunui slightly underperform compared with Canterbury and nationally in terms of percentage of students enrolling in tertiary study within a year of leaving school, and attainment of NCEA Level 3 and over, but out-performs the rates for Canterbury and for New Zealand in terms of its achievements of Vocational Pathway awards for school leavers, and stand-down exclusion rates, the latter is notably lower than is the case nationally or regionally.

Figure 9: Education Performance for All Schools in Hurunui District, 2018



Ministry of Education Education Counts website <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/know-your-region/territorial-authority/territorial-authority-summary?district=58®ion=13>

Housing

Of the 4,926 households in Hurunui in 2018, 3,498 (71 percent) either owned/part-owned their home or it was in a Family Trust. This compared with 64.5 percent of homes nationally. In March 2018, there were 1,146 households in rented homes, 23.3 percent of total households in the district. Of these, 91.4 percent (1,147) had private landlords, 3.9 percent (n=45¹) were owned by Hurunui District Council, 2.4 percent (n=27¹) owned by Kāinga Ora, formerly Housing New Zealand Corporation, 2.1 percent (n=24¹) by another government department, state-owned enterprise or ministry, and 0.3 percent (n=3¹) by a community housing provider. Kāinga Ora houses were spread through Amuri, Upper Hurunui, Parnassus, Omihi and Amberley, as were HDC homes, with properties also located in Hanmer Springs.

Telecommunications

Of the 4,926 households across Hurunui District at the time of the 2018 Census, less than one percent had no access to telecommunications of any kind.

- 83.5 percent had access to a cellphone
- 77.2 percent had access to the internet

Oranga Tamariki

Oranga Tamariki reports data according to sites, regions and Youth Justice areas. The Hurunui District sits under the Rangiora site, and Oranga Tamariki, via an Official Information Act request, were able to provide Care and Protection data specific to the Rangiora site, and Youth Justice data for Christchurch East, which Rangiora is covered by.

¹ These figures may be subject to rounding.

As at June 30, 2020, there were 73 distinct children and young people in the care or custody of Oranga Tamariki, across both the Waimakariri and Hurunui districts.

Fifteen distinct children and young people entered the care or custody of Oranga Tamariki in the 2019-20 financial year, but a gender breakdown could not be provided for confidentiality reasons. Of those who entered care or custody across the Rangiora site in the year to June 30 2020:

- 7 were New Zealand European/Other;
- 6 were Māori;
- 1 Māori/Pacific; and
- 1 Pacific.

Seven of the 15 entered under urgent entry, and the remainder under Section 78 or a Care Agreement (numbers suppressed). Age breakdowns were suppressed.

In total, 80 Care and Protection Family Group Conferences were held for the Rangiora site in the financial year to June 30, 2020, Of the children and young people who had a Care and Protection Family Group Conference in the year to June 30, 2020:

- 18 were aged under 2 years;
- 13 aged 2-4 years;
- 21 aged 5-9 years;
- 13 aged 10-13 years; and
- 15 aged 14 years or older.

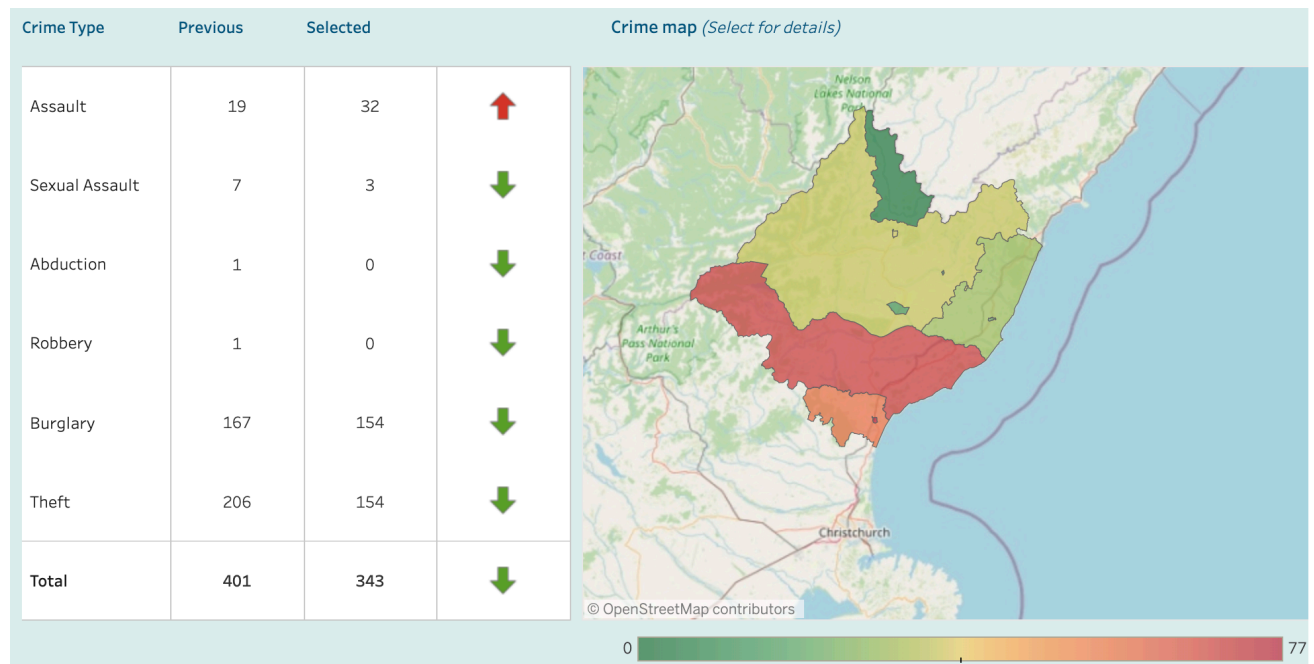
Some youth justice data was obtained from Oranga Tamariki via Official Information Act request, but as this was provided for the whole Christchurch East area, of which Hurunui comprises only a small part, this is of little usefulness for the present study. In total, 131 Youth Justice Family Group Conferences were held for the Christchurch East area over the financial year to June 30, 2020, nearly 80 percent of which were for young males, and over half for rangatahi Māori. None of the Youth Justice Family Group Conferences that year were for young people aged under 14 years.

Crime and Victimisation

Hurunui District is an area characterised by low levels of crime. In the year to 30 June 2020, there were 343 victimisations, down from 401 for the previous year. The majority of offences were property in nature. The map in Figure 10 utilises Statistics New Zealand's old Area Units rather than Statistical Area format. Each are ways of dividing up geographic areas for means of reporting, and the boundaries are not the same. From south to north, the number of victimisations in each area for the year to 30 June 2020 are as follows (red on map depicts highest number of offences, dark green lowest):

Leithfield:	n=59
Amberley town:	n=77
Hurunui:	n=72
Amuri:	n=34
Culverden town:	n=11
Parnassus:	n=28
Lake Tennyson:	n=1

Figure 10: Reported victimisations for year to June 30, 2019 (referred to in figure as “previous”) and 2020 (“selected”)



New Zealand Police

Other Research on Youth Wellbeing

A youth hui, Hurunui Youth Let's Connect was held in mid-2019, attended by 22 young people. The following top priorities were highlighted by the young people:

- Mental Health workers/Services for each of the Area schools/Wellbeing focused event holistic health focus.
- Opportunities for males to mentor young males.
- Annual Camps early in the year to build relationships.

Recently Rebecca Pugh Of Hurunui Youth Programme undertook the Hurunui Youth Survey 2020 of 108 students across the three secondary schools in Hurunui, with 42 respondents from Cheviot Area School, 53 students at Amuri Area School and 13 students at Hurunui College. Students indicated the kinds of events they were most interested in attending (entertainment and sport being most popular, followed by music). Specific ideas for youth events commonly put forward by young people who responded included parties, discos and all-night events, sports tournaments (especially rugby events), and less commonly, formals and games sessions. Thinking about how they wanted the Hurunui Youth Council to advocate for them, they most commonly wanted this to focus on getting more events in place and assisting young people to get to these in the absence of public transport.

Respondents gave a rating out of ten for how “youth friendly” the district is. Ratings were highest for “family friendly” (9/10) and “safe” (8/10), moderate for “affordable” and “connected” (both 7/10) and “inclusive” (6/10) and low for “access to health services” and “youth discounts” (each rated 4/10), “fun”, “accessible” and “opportunities” (all rated 3/10). Overall, they gave Hurunui a youth friendly rating of 5/10.



Key findings from the Hurunui Youth Survey 2020:

- Hurunui has some fun activities available but many are geared to tourists and are quite expensive.
- Young people identified a need for greater inclusivity and celebration of other cultures.
- Discussions about the survey uncovered a feeling that while young people could mostly access their GP type services without issue, services such as counselling, drug and alcohol support, sexual health and support regarding sexuality, mental health, social and financial support were extremely hard to access. It was reported that they felt that for issues they were not comfortable discussing with their GP or issues where their GP was not able to offer them the support they needed, they did not have anywhere to turn to for that help. They felt that there were insufficient services coming into the community and that it was not always financially possible or possible with different family situations to go into town for that support.
- Lack of fun, accessible activities and of opportunities was a big issue for young people surveyed, and they saw Hurunui as poorly served in this regard compared with Christchurch or even Rangiora. Hurunui-schooled young people were seen to miss out on opportunities compared with their peers who board in town. Lack of public transport and difficulties of getting parents to drop them to social and sporting activities, formal and informal was a key issue for those without driver licences. Issues getting to events and activities that are available for young people appeared to be more of an issue than the lack of events and activities itself. Access is a key issue.



4. Findings of Consultations with Young People

Seventy-three young people from across the Hurunui District took part in seven focus groups which formed part of the present research.

In total, 21 young people were consulted from Hurunui College, 22 from Amuri Area School and 25 from Cheviot Area School. Five school leavers were also consulted.

Further, one young person identifying as part of the LGBTQI+ community was interviewed separately to ensure that the young person had a safe means of fully taking part in consultations.

Attempts were made via social media to secure a Zoom focus group with young people from Hurunui District and attending boarding school in Christchurch or elsewhere outside the district, but this did not generate interest despite multiple attempts. A limitation of the present research is that it largely presents the views and perspectives of young people who attend school within the district. The voice of students schooled outside the district, who have dropped out of the school system, who are home schooled or are in alternative education elsewhere was unable to be captured, and the number of informants in the school leaver – young adult age group was limited.

Effective Wellbeing Supports for Hurunui Young People

The following were most commonly identified by the young people consulted as working well to support youth wellbeing in Hurunui:

- **Schools staff who listen/are supportive (all three schools)**

"She (school staff) is so good, she really listens and she responds. ... she is a kind person."

" (Name of teacher) has been the most supportive and caring teacher, we could talk about anything, I feel comfortable and safe."

" Some teachers don't think what you say is dumb, they listen."

"The teachers, they help us through problems."

- **School-based health services** were highlighted as supporting wellbeing by participants at all three schools – **school nurse, school counsellor**

"We have a health counsellor who come(s) into the school, we can talk to her about any problems we have and its kept confidential."

" (Nurse's name), you can talk to her, you can really trust her."

" She is very supportive, easy to talk to"

- **School guidance counsellor**

- **Hurunui Youth Programme competitions, activities and events** – especially where these are geographically accessible and inclusive of different age groups



- **CASAFest** – favourable comments from focus groups at each of the schools

"CASAFest is good, get to hang out with other from other schools, have a quiz night and acting and stuff."

" We have CASAFest sports days, they are not just sport and we do weird stuff like cooking competitions or make up school songs and sing them it's so much fun, you do lip synching, you make so many friends and you keep them for years, you sometimes stay at someone's house."

The following were less commonly identified as working well at supporting wellbeing:

- Cheviot Area School year 9s and 10s having their own new social space in 2020
- The Sticks and Stones bullying programme at Hurunui College
- Pastoral Care (Cheviot Area School)
- Work and Income
- Friendships across the district
- Social contact at school
- School wifi
- Collaborative teachers
- Inter-school sport
- Regular one on one catch ups with the teachers (Hurunui College – year 7-8)
- Top Ten trailer (Sport Canterbury)
- House events and events that bring different year levels together
- Mana Ake worker
- Vibe
- Art
- Sports facilities – eg. hockey turf
- Wellbeing student leaders
- Accessible supports
- Regular wellbeing surveys and talks and a wellbeing system (Amuri Area School)

Young adults identified team sports, work, moving to live independently, socialising with friends, surfing, farming and district life, the natural environment, inclusive communities and parental advice as supporting their wellbeing.

LGBTQI+ young people identified access to LGBTQI+ resources, gender neutral uniforms and supportive teachers as supporting their wellbeing.

Wellbeing Challenges for Young People in Hurunui

The following wellbeing challenges were most commonly identified by young people who took part in the focus groups, across a range of age groups:

- **Bullying** was a strong concern, possibly more commonly highlighted by younger students and by young people identifying as part of the LGBTQI+ community. Bullying was identified as especially an issue in terms of bullying via exclusion and bullying of young people who are “different”, and something that was perceived as not being responded to enough in schools. It was also highlighted as an issue online in social media. The issue was strongly highlighted by students from all three schools, and across different age groups.



"Bullying, there's lots of it."

"Teachers don't actually do anything about it."

"kids get angry if you tell."

"Nothing ever changes, it goes around in a circle."

"Silent meanness, our school is really good at this."

"Even if you get help from (counselling service), you can still feel unsafe at school."

- **Isolation** is a big challenge for many young people in Hurunui District, both geographically (especially those in Cheviot and Waiau) and in terms of a lack of connection. A number of young people identified the distance required to travel to a broad range of activities and opportunities impacted on youth wellbeing, some associating their isolation with depression.

"It's hard if you don't have connections."

"It's so restricted and isolated in a small space."

"A sense of isolation is a consequence of living rurally."

- **School stress** arising from exams and internal assessments was flagged as a common challenge across all three schools.

"Stress and the mental and physical consequences - outbursts, illnesses, headaches."

- **Mental health** was commonly highlighted as a concern for young people in Hurunui, again highlighted by young people of a range of ages from years 7-8 to young adults. This was flagged as a major challenge, and especially for depression and anxiety.

"I know friends who are struggling with family or mental health problems."

"A lot of people have depression."

The following wellbeing challenges were highlighted relatively often by younger (year 7-10) participants:

- **Issues with teachers (variable teaching quality and student engagement)** were highlighted as a major challenge to wellbeing by students in three of the focus groups at Cheviot Area School and one focus group at Hurunui College.

"Teachers are variable, some are approachable, some not. One or two will ask about things that happen at home but mostly talk about school."

"Most wouldn't notice if there was something wrong."

- **Issues with parents** were particularly highlighted by senior students and school leavers consulted.



"It's hard if you don't have supportive parents."

"Parents are too traditional - "When I was a kid", "back in the day", "back in my day", "I didn't have a phone", "I didn't speak to boys.""

"Parents are too obstinate and conventional."

- **Life was seen as harder in the townships** than in rural parts of Hurunui, with **more alcohol and drug issues in the townships** than in more rural areas.
- **Lack of things to do** in Hurunui impacts on wellbeing: lack of shopping centres, no takeaways, lack of youth hangout spaces away from schools, limited options in sports and lack of inter-school competitions.
- **Struggles about self acceptance, identity and self-esteem.**

"Figuring out who they are and being confident in that."

"Trying to find yourself."

- **Condoms are hard to access.**

"Definitely condoms when we were younger, couldn't get any for free, won't walk into Four Square because you know people."

- **It is easy to get a reputation/be seen in a certain way just because of who you are.**
 - A number of young people raised challenges about **friendships and friendship difficulties or changes.**
 - **Gossip is a real issue in a district like Hurunui**

"There can be shit talk about people, but I just ignore it, ignore the gossip, I don't get into it."

"Taking shit about friends."

"Very much the rural gossip, like everyone knows everyone."

Other wellbeing challenges less commonly highlighted included:

- the loss of young people from the area to boarding schools in town at high school age
- lack of cultural safety and acceptance
- lack of motivation
- students not feeling valued at school
- lack of a sense of safety
- lack of opportunity to exercise
- not enough time to be outside at school



- issues of poverty among some people in Cheviot
- young people being put down for going to boarding school
- family difficulties
- communication deficits in learning support provided by teachers to students
- lack of acceptance of gender and sexuality diversity and lack of accommodation of the needs of these young people (unisex toilets, appropriate changing facilities at school etc.)
- expectations putting young people under pressure
- not trusting teachers/others
- Covid-19 and fear of catching it
- suicide and self harm
- anger issues
- difficult relationships between older and younger students (but age groups tend to mix in small communities)
- frustration about starting projects but not finishing them at school, and
- lack of choice in subjects at school due to roll size.

Barriers to Wellbeing Supports

For those young people who do have wellbeing needs which require supports, young people consulted in the present research identified **a range of barriers which can negatively impact on young people's access to support**. The most common were:

- Concerns, real or perceived, about a **lack of confidentiality** were identified as a barrier to support access by participants in almost every consultation. These were more common in relation to support people who live in the local area.

"Scared someone would tell my parents."

"I wanted to get my own (external support), go see someone out of school cos sometimes I get scared of confidentiality and then I'm not sure, since they're a part of the school. I don't know. They could talk to the teachers by accident. I'm not saying definite, I'm just scared something slips."

"Someone has said that the counsellor sometimes does tell other teachers. That's why I was a bit wary of saying anything else in what I've went to say."

"Also some people have lost confidence in telling people."

- **Lack of transport, coupled with the distances commonly required to be travelled** to access support services, recreational and wellbeing opportunities were widely highlighted as significant barriers negatively impacting on wellbeing of young people in Hurunui.

"If you have no car it's hard to get around."

"If we wanted to talk to a therapist at hospital we would need our parents to drive."

- Coupled with lack of transport, **financial barriers** were also highlighted – some young people/their whānau lack the money needed for fuel to get to services, to sport.



- **Lack of locally based/delivered services** was also widely highlighted as a barrier to access.
- **Lack of knowledge** of what services and supports are available to uphold the wellbeing of young people and address challenges was also widely identified as an issue.

"I wouldn't know where to go."

"I don't know how to access them, where are they?"

- **Reluctance to disclose for fear of judgement** was also a barrier to service access quite commonly highlighted.

"People judging or making things difficult if you need help."

"People judging your getting help so they call you weak."

- Accessing services in school was identified as often difficult because **people see where you are going** in the school, and this **lack of privacy** was also identified as a barrier to accessing supports in the focus groups at all three schools.

"People making assumptions about where you went and being on your nerves till you crack."

- **Mental health services** were identified as **especially hard to access** by young people in four of the focus groups, including three at Cheviot Area School. **Having to go through a GP to arrange these, and not being able to access such support within the school setting** were flagged as barriers. Young adults consulted identified this as also a difficulty for those trying to access mental health supports for parents who are struggling.

Less commonly, the following other barriers were highlighted:

- Two groups of young people in their later teens / early 20s identified a **lack of people to talk to** about their struggles. One of these groups also identified that it is more difficult to talk to a stranger about struggles than to someone you know.
- **Lack of confidence** to open up and talk to others about emotions was identified by several focus groups, and this was especially flagged for males.
- Some young people had tried to access the free phone and text mental health supports, but **response times/hold times** were very slow.

Other Supports Needed

Thinking about supports that they would like to be able to access but which are either missing or hard to access, young people consulted in the research most commonly identified a need for:

- more **career planning and a stronger use of visiting career speakers in schools**



- more **community and school fun events**: more opportunities for young people to socialise and gather together in a positive environment, and
- a **greater use of and access to mentors and other adults who are not professionals but that young people can talk to.**

"Someone to talk to that isn't like a therapist so they are more like a friend."

There was also a relatively strong theme of desire for **greater cultural acceptance and celebration of cultural diversity and improved cultural safety.**

Other suggestions young people offered less commonly to support them included:

- a wider range of services
- study periods during the school day
- support for family violence issues
- respite
- support for mental health and depression
- an LGBTQI+ district support group/sexuality support
- more inter-school activities
- access to a wider range of subjects at school
- sports coaching
- ability to access counselling without parents knowing
- driver licensing support
- grief counselling
- special interest arts-based courses
- hard copy support resources
- study support
- much stronger wellbeing support for year 5-8 students
- reassurance concerning confidentiality of services

Service Delivery Preferences

Although the initial idea of a wellbeing hub had come from senior students at Cheviot Area School two years ago, young people from each of the area schools, and those who had left school expressed strong support for the concept of a youth wellbeing hub:

"Having a wellbeing hub at school would be very helpful."

"I think it would be pretty good...pretty cool...something we should look into doing."

"Good idea as long as there is no stigma accessing the hub."

Young people from all age groups who took part in the research were **supportive of wellbeing hubs** as a great vehicle for delivery of services and support to young people, especially if these were in their local area and there was no stigma attached to attending them. For young people from Cheviot who were at school the development of the social space at Cheviot Area School was a step along this path, providing a safe space for young people to connect and relax.



If a wellbeing hub or hubs were developed in Hurunui, young people most commonly wanted to see:

- **privacy and confidentiality ensured**, with safe spaces within them for young people to seek and receive support (ability to book appointments by email, text or online without having to go through a school office or GP etc.)
- **extensive opening hours that ensure accessibility** for as many young people as possible including before, after and during school and weekends
- a **bright, warm and homely feel** that is conducive to relaxation
- **refreshments** available for young people
- **space for confidential zoom consultations**, and support to connect young people with online supports including web-based resources
- presenting a **range of good quality hard copy wellbeing resources** including books, pamphlets and posters, and a **means of connecting to key online resources** and a directory for these
- a **calming environment** utilising music, including instruments that young people can play themselves
- a **range of help services available** including counselling services, physical and sexual health services, therapists, alcohol and drug counselling, tutoring and mentorship delivered by skilled people, but also meeting wider wellbeing needs so seeking help was not the only reason someone would go there
- **support by a manager and/or receptionist(s)** who could be trusted older students in volunteer roles
- **inclusive** of LGBTQI+
- a **sense of youth ownership**
- **offering a range of spaces**, from large open spaces for connecting, relaxing and engaging in exercise, dance, music, watching movies etc. to smaller private meeting spaces
- **creative and wellbeing resources** (yoga mats, art materials, pens etc.) available for young people to utilise to express themselves
- actively addressing needs about **career planning and advice, driver licensing budgeting and general advice**
- offering unisex toilets and showers, providing period products, and
- hosting events where people can come together to share food and find out about support services at the same time.



A large proportion of the young people consulted were keen for such hubs to be developed on the periphery of their school. However, some older young people did not want to have the hubs developed in schools (preferring locations by pools, in domains or in townships). There was a strong message that the hubs needed to be accessible by young people of different ages without having to go through a school office or other processes where they are seen to be asking for help. Some young people wanted youth wellbeing hubs available for everyone, including as a resource for parents, while others felt they should be strictly for young people only.

The reality of developing multiple wellbeing hubs across the different towns of Hurunui could be difficult to achieve, and feedback from young people suggests that development of one hub will not achieve something accessible to young people beyond that school community. However the ideas young people put forward regarding the best approach towards development of a hub also imply favoured modes of service delivery.

It was clear from the discussions that the following were of key importance in appropriate and effective wellbeing support service delivery for young people in Hurunui:

- **Accessible** services in terms of **time** and **space**.
- The **ability to be able to see a support person without peers knowing that they are doing so**. An ability to book appointments online, via text or by email preserved this confidentiality, as did not having to access referrals or appointments via the school office or GP. Spaces where young people see visiting professionals in schools are best located where they are adjacent to spaces they may also visit for other purposes.

"Wouldn't want to be like a place you were going to see a counsellor, it needs to be fun too."

"Don't want people to know why you are going there, ok if lots of different reasons you could be going there."

"To be able to go there and no one know why you are going."

"Don't advertise it as a counselling place."

"Don't want random people walking through it."

- Young people want to be supported in physical spaces that are **comfortable and relaxing** in feel and not in spaces that feel clinical or sterile.

"A space that makes you feel more at home so you don't feel like we are in a mental home."

"A lounge, comfy beanbags."

"A hot chocolate at the door as you walk in."

- Young people want **agencies to work in together** to deliver services for young people.
- Where young people are able to access consultations remotely or require the means away from home to access online wellbeing resources, they need private spaces in which to do so.
- Young people want to be part of **youth-centered solutions** to support wellbeing.



" We could all work together, we can do something for the community."

- There is strong demand for help from **skilled workers** who can support their wellbeing.

"People you can tell and they will do something about it."

"A therapist so you can tell the person what's on your mind and they won't get judgey."

- Young people want to **feel safe** when they do seek support services.
- Young people want **access to hard copy support resources**, and periodic **opportunities to hear about the range of wellbeing supports and opportunities available** to them in a safe, neutral and appealing opportunity such as a BBQ.
- Some young people want opportunities to be active, and to be encouraged to do this.



5. Findings of Consultations with Providers

Service Provision in Hurunui

The Hurunui has small pockets of population, scattered across a large geographic area. Services such as counselling, parent support, social work, Work and Income, budgeting and driver licensing in the Hurunui are predominantly located and delivered by agencies outside of the area. Fewer services that are based in Ōtautahi are provided in Waimakariri, and fewer still of those services travel further to the Hurunui. Additionally, not all services based in the Waimakariri provide outreach to the Hurunui. Whilst funded to provide services to the Hurunui, the research evidence suggest that it is not uncommon for services to provide service only by phone, online or provide limited full-time equivalent to cover the considerable geographic area. Services consulted in the present research described pressures associated with face to face delivery for fewer clients with a higher cost of travel, travel time and responsibilities for worker safety in remote areas with disrupted phone and internet communication. However, the few services that deliver in the Hurunui commonly described flexible approaches like collaboration and a commitment to traveling to see small numbers of clients. The paucity and lack of diversity of services travelling regularly to the Hurunui can be further exacerbated by turnover of staff in these services, disruptions to funding and difficulties forming an integrated approach.

Location of Service Delivery

A high proportion of service providers who were interviewed in the present research reported often delivering services to young people in their homes. In many situations, this seemed to them to work well.

"I don't believe in removing individuals from an environment separately. I believe in dealing with the issues within the environment and empowering people to actually enhance that environment and strengthen it."

However, several providers raised concerns about the safety of home visits for workers in Hurunui, particularly in more rural areas where cellphone coverage is often lacking. In these cases, workers sometimes took Police with them for safety.

"You're quite isolated, you're quite vulnerable. All sorts of guns and dogs, there's lots. Going into an urban street in a house with neighbours and people around you is quite different."

"I don't know exactly what pockets (of phone connectivity issues), but I do know my staff are unreachable in some parts when they go up there, which is difficult."

Schools were also commonly the location for service delivery to young people, with visiting professionals utilising a range of spaces (offices, board rooms, classrooms). Schools were seen as a good place for workers to meet with young people in terms of safety for both parties.

"It's a safer place too isn't it, for the young person and for the staff member probably. There's plenty of other people around even though they're not around."

Workers were asked about the drawbacks of the places where they deliver their services to young people and their families in schools. Quite a high proportion of workers reported that the spaces were often inappropriate for such use or had been in the past (eg. music rooms, administrative offices), that space was hard to secure, or that delivering their service in a multi-use space meant they had to bring a large amount of equipment with them. Lack of access to a landline was an issue for some.



"There was just this fun little school desk and all around us was these small shelves with resources, but it wasn't tidy. It was a store room...There was nothing in that room that was conducive to having a really good conversation."

"The only spaces that we can use in the Hurunui that we've ever really used is the school premises and that is never the same space twice usually. It's just as and when. Generally the principal's or DP's office sometimes...or in the home".

"Sometimes you have to pull the blinds down because there are nosy kids playing or filling up their drink bottles. That route makes it a wee bit darker but you can put your heater on. I have got a telephone if I need to make private calls from it in there, which is good. Anyway, that's the good stuff."

While the spaces available to use in school for meeting with young people were at times less than satisfactory, one of the providers was quick to add that they were fine with this, recognising that schools should take priority in use of their own spaces.

"We wouldn't prioritise ourselves to have a special space because we would always prioritise the school to use every little part of their school for their kids."

Some providers had started off in schools in very unsuitable meeting spaces, but had been able to secure more appropriate spaces for their service delivery over time.

"I had to fight for that space. Anyway, what's good about it is that it is reasonably private because you could be looking as if you were on your way to (common student space) and then do a little quick sidestep. It's a pleasant room and it's bright and it's a nice inviting space. We've got chairs, cushions and blankets and things there and a bookcase full of books for me but as well, there's some for the students to have a wee pick, and look at like, and a think about. It has got a lovely view out the window."

Some of the providers that were consulted indicated that they sometimes meet with young people in community spaces such as halls, or even in open park spaces. Medical centres, and to a lesser extent, Police stations were also reported as utilised for service provision to young people. Both Rotherham Medical Centre and Hanmer Springs Medical Centre were identified as having good spaces, conducive to effective service delivery to young people. The Rotherham space has a hub fee with access to refreshments and to a computer, and Hanmer has a room set up for Skype or Zoom consultations. One worker reported utilising Comcare's office in Rangiora for meetings with Hurunui young people and their whānau. This space required transport to get to it but it worked well, being client friendly with a nice waiting area, a relaxed feel and a good sized room for family sessions. A minority of providers indicated that they had flexibility in where they met with young people in their work.

Effective Wellbeing Supports for Hurunui Young People

The following were most commonly identified by the service providers as working well to support youth wellbeing in Hurunui:

- In terms of style/nature of service delivery, the **capacity to be flexible** about the way services are delivered was most commonly identified as working well. Workers or agencies able to take a flexible, personalised approach to meet the needs of young people and their whānau greatly appreciated being able to work in this manner. During the Covid-19 lockdown, this flexibility extended to moving to delivering more services online, and this had worked well for some.



"One day we could be helping them build a garden, the next day, we could be in court, helping them not to go to jail."

"We can use money from a discretionary fund that we have...it's just to get them across the line".

"We've got the flexibility and I know my team go right, who's going up country, let's go together, and we'll go away for the day just to try and be responsive. But because we can work remotely and there's always administration stuff to do, if a social worker's sitting up in the Hurunui doing that or they're sitting in the office here, for me that probably doesn't make a huge difference."

- **Schools were commonly identified as central to supporting the wellbeing of young people across Hurunui**, in the absence of other locally based supports. The pastoral care role of Hurunui's Area Schools was identified as extending far beyond that of more populated communities. Schools were seen to be holding things together for many young people and their whānau, but at a cost. This work often extended beyond the parameters of the schools' core roles, and weighed heavily on staff at times. Staff burnout was flagged as a risk.

"I'm not quite sure people understand that our schools are like little mini-social service hubs and that how much schools, particularly in their pastoral care systems, particularly schools like (school name), are holding ... managing by themselves on their own doing those jobs of counsellors, social workers, navigators finding money for shoes and clothes and feeding children."

"I'm not up there as much as I could be, because they deal with a lot of that stuff in-house. If we compare (city high school), if there's a fight, they'll call us at the drop of a hat because we've always been there, where in the Hurunui, God, I'd hate to think what they couldn't deal with for them to call me."

"I just believe that more support services are needed for those young people in my summing up. Schools are not in a position to provide them all. They need to be provided by the community".

- The **school nurses, Mana Ake and the links between school nurses and health teachers in schools** were quite commonly flagged as working well.
- **Local Police** were identified as working well to support young people across the district.
- The community was quite commonly identified as one where **people help each other**. Parents are good at supporting other people's young people who are in need, by helping each other with transport to sports or giving other families sports boots and other equipment as their own children outgrow them. Teachers often pay for things students need themselves, and schools fund trips, camps, uniforms and other resources for those students who cannot afford them.

"Normally parents will hand down boots to others, sometimes pay someone's subs."



"This is a great community and what I like about Cheviot is that it's still rural and cos we're so far away from Christchurch, the people here still have rural values".

"People also support themselves and you even get the elderly ladies, the matriarchs over there, looking after people in the community".

- There are **some instances where collaborative practice is working well** or has worked well to support the wellbeing of young people, particularly with regard to networking. However, this was seen as variable and often dependent on who is working in particular roles.

"I guess that hui we had the other day was great. I've since referred one person on for a job to (one of the agencies which presented at the hui about their service). She's been really proactive, so I've got a boy in (town) who wanted a job, so within a day of seeing him, I've referred him for a job".

- The funded youth employment schemes run by Hurunui District Council's **Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs** was highlighted as working well at supporting young people into employment.

"We're giving them a good push along and normally what we're seeing is people need a purpose, a reason to get their license, a job at the other end. We're seeing placements for work experience where it transforms their outlook and their whole purpose, so it's a real key area to focus on. I think most employers or businesses, some of them expect a full license. It puts them that far ahead in their walk into the workforce but it's so positive."

- **Some services are committing to delivering services to young people on the ground in Hurunui.**

"(Worker) gets up there when she can. It's a bit of a hike so even though we may have one client, she still goes up there and meets with them but that's three or four hours out of her day."

The following were less commonly identified as working well at supporting wellbeing:

- Introduction of the Learning Support Coordinator roles through the Kāhui Ako.
- Trust between young people, whānau and some workers is increasing.
- Hurunui Youth Programme is building momentum across the district.
- Hurunui College now has a wellbeing leader in its student council.
- Professional development for wellbeing is occurring in schools.
- Some good one-off initiatives about wellbeing are occurring and being well-received by young people, including Attitude, Netsafe, anti-bullying initiatives and Mates and Dates.

"That youth and emergency services camp that you guys ran was great as well to connect young people into services."

"We've actually been working with Proactive Drive... and they're looking at getting courses up and running. They came to the A&P show the other weekend and there was a lot of interest and names taken. They are looking at going out to the three area

schools where they can provide the courses. We're about to get that coming out very soon."

- Post Lockdown there is more creativity about using technology to connect young people with supports and services. For example, some service providers are using email to set up appointments within the school environment and are finding this a great way of ensuring privacy. Hurunui Library changed to digital delivery of its summer reading programme during lockdown and one local ACC counsellor offered zoom appointments which worked well.
- More young people are involving parents in seeking support than was the case in the past, perhaps demonstrating a reduction in stigma around mental health.
- Young people are reaching out for mental health support with workers that they trust.
- School nurses are liaising with parents.
- School leavers are accessing mental health supports via GPs.
- Text message communication about appointments works well.
- Service providers are effectively advocating and lobbying on behalf of young people.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services ("CAF") and Brief Intervention Counselling ("BIC") are working well for some young people.
- There are more activities on offer for young people now than in the past, and especially for those at the younger end of the scale.
- Sport works well at supporting the wellbeing of some young people.
- Young people are being inclusive of those with special needs.
- Some good examples of young people being consulted and being part of decision making about their own environment are occurring.
- Young people in Hurunui build great friendships.

"What I notice about the students here is their friendships. They bond here when they're young and that seems to go through with them in their elder years too."

- The community cars (North Canterbury Community Vehicle Trust provides low costs vehicle rentals and transport assistance to those in need) are a good initiative which support wellbeing.
- Libraries provide spaces for health and social services to be delivered.

Wellbeing Challenges for Young People in Hurunui

Bullying was the most commonly identified wellbeing challenge reported by young people in Hurunui. Only three of the service providers interviewed identified bullying as a concern. The wellbeing challenges that were most commonly identified by the service providers who took part in the focus groups were:

- **Isolation** was widely highlighted as a challenge for those rurally located in more remote towns including Cheviot, for young people new to the district and for young people whose parents lead more insular, disconnected lives.

"I see a lot of students who just haven't found their people yet. They're isolated and feel like they're lonely and they might be the only one that feels like that."



"You've got to remember that these people have just come to this community, they probably don't know anyone, and they probably feel quite isolated anyway. Plus they've got all this other stuff that they're trying to manage."

"...they're all isolated but for some reason, Cheviot seems a little bit more isolated."

"For some reason, Cheviot seems to be out on a limb. I don't know why. Just the fact that its geographically placed where it is."

- **Mental health, depression and eating disorders** were commonly identified by providers as amongst the biggest wellbeing challenges facing young people in Hurunui, although some saw mental health issues as more common in adults than in the youth population.
- **Lack of recreation and community amenities and local infrastructure** were widely seen to negatively impact on the wellbeing of young people.

"I think the infrastructure is not there for youth"

"...How would a young person go to opening a bank account? They would actually have to go to a bank. They can't just ring up the bank and say, I want to open a bank account. All of these simple things. They're not that simple, but do you know what I mean? I wanna go and buy a new pair of shoes."

- **Transience** both within the district and in and out of the district was quite widely identified as a wellbeing challenge and **associated more strongly with young people from more challenging, complex backgrounds**. This was seen as a particular concern in Cheviot in the context of rental housing shortages in a number of townships, some families being moved into the area in order to obtain social housing or moving from the city (with city expectations) to access cheaper housing. Some young people with high and complex needs relocated into the district without the school and other services being made aware of their needs or having measures put in place to cater for their challenges. Additionally, **some communities were seen to be changing in character** as new people move into the area who are attracted by lower cost housing or better chances of employment, including the expansion of Harris Meats in Cheviot.

"It's a big thing for the school because it's often the school that identifies these challenges and maybe haven't been informed by the family's previous school."

"If these children come unexpectedly, funding's already set, so it's really hard to get more funding for the extra resources that you might need."

"It's like the Ministry of Housing has almost set this poor family up with limited support structure from their destination, which is unfair."

"That becomes a big drain on the teachers, the schools and the resources there. I get a bit annoyed because there are people here that need those services but they're getting swallowed up by people that come in from out of the area. They're bringing their problems here and I get annoyed about that because all of it then falls back on (school)."

"So they're going to bring those social issues into a neighbourhood which isn't prepared for that."

"You've got a high need for metropolitan youth, going into a rural area. He is not going to do well. I think that's something that needs to be addressed as well. Cheviot has changed over the last five years and it will change ever more in the next five. I think that's one thing that really needs to be looked at."

"We are getting metropolitan problems now in a rural place."

"You don't see people set up roots and stay in a house for 40 years now. They'll shift around and move and move and move. That's just the way the world is going...basically the Hurunui is slowly getting caught up by the world and its changing."

- **Drug and/or alcohol use** was quite widely (but by no means universally) identified as a wellbeing challenge facing young people in Hurunui. Low numbers of young people are educated in the district which means that young people often socialise in mixed age groups, potentially exposing more younger people to alcohol and drug use and associated risky behaviours (e.g. drink driving, sex) than might otherwise be the case. Drug and alcohol use at home was also flagged by some as a concern from a youth perspective.

"There'll be drinking or trying a substance and then they'll end up having sex and wish they hadn't."

"We have noticed in the last couple of years that there were parents using P. That caused a big issue... all of a sudden, we had families falling apart."

"Never give an assessment on a Monday - year 7 and 8's drinking and vaping and coming to school stoned."

"Cannabis and I always worry even not just for young people, but for Māori as well. I see Cannabis, and I'm no expert on this but I always think Cannabis doesn't help. When I see young kids, young ones going down that path, I just see it as a barrier to them living a good life, because I always worry about them not being able to get a job and just getting in a rut".

"There's a lot of cannabis up there...a lot of alcohol."

- **Poverty, socioeconomic deprivation and financial pressures on families** were commonly highlighted as wellbeing challenges for young people. These factors make it harder for young people to access activities and opportunities which support wellbeing and also impact on parental capacity to foster a sense of wellbeing in their children.
- **Many young people leave the district to attend high school, creating stigma for those left behind.**

"The more affluent families send their children off into town for education, so that's gotta have an impact."



"The poor cousins are left here."

"They keep having their mates leave."

"You think you can't afford to send your kids away but you can't afford to leave them here."

"They (students) see (school name) as a second rate option."

- **Family violence** is an issue with few supports available to address this.

Other wellbeing challenges less commonly highlighted included:

- There is a **relatively small pool of peers** that young people can connect with.
- Some **parents are less supportive of their young people** than is ideal, and there is a **lack of parenting support, resulting from a range of factors including economic and work pressures, drug and alcohol use and general stress, including that relating to Covid-19 and residual earthquake impacts.**

"I see it in the home, I see it in the parents, whether it be mother or father being a bit selfish and they're just focussing on themselves and drinking. They drink too much, they indulge in drugs too much and don't spend enough time with their children. That's the big thing I see."

"The demands on the family and the family unit is absolutely stretched."

"Parents are too busy now either working on their farm, working two jobs off farm or whatever to actually have time for the kids."

- There is a **lack of recreational opportunities and coordinated, organised social activity**, especially outside organised sport, and the meaningful connection that can come from this. Some recreational facilities were damaged by the Kaikoura earthquake and have not been repaired however, the new indoor sports facility in Amberley was expected to make a positive difference for young people in this regard. Some of this lack of opportunity comes down to a lack of capacity to make such opportunities happen.

"Less things for youth to do, no young farmers clubs like their used to do, not much for them to do."

"We did have St Johns Penguins going and the Cadets. It didn't stop because we didn't have children wanting to be there, it stopped because the leadership were just drained and had no one in to come and help with the running of it. That's why it stopped. It has a huge amount of kids and parental support in that regard, just no one could step up to that plate there either, which is a bit of a shame."

- **Anxiety and stress** are common.
- Some young people have **poor nutrition** and socioeconomic deprivation is a big factor in this.



- **Some challenges span generations**, especially lack of life skills and inter-generational non-sport involvement.
- **Lack of mentors and youth workers**, and especially male role models for young people.

"The young people want young people to work with as well. They want young people. They want young youth workers and they want young counsellors if possible or young people to talk to. I understand that."

"I have actually tried a lot myself to get mentors in all of the Hurunui but the people I've approached usually are too busy and they've got their own grandchildren. They've got their own lives and they haven't got the time."

"There is a need for the mentors. They need something to be doing and something to connect them, so they've actually done that – connected, which I think is great. I think they'll need a lot more of that because of the breakdown in the family unit."

"The male population do not volunteer to become mentors and that's a big issue. There's a need. I see a need, but there's no mentors available."

- **Use of technology** was associated with a number of wellbeing challenges including poor sleep hygiene, sharing of nudes, problematic use of porn and bullying.

"Consumption of online pornography is a big issue and sexting, thinking that its appropriate and quite normal practise to send intimate pictures to each other and share them. Young people just don't mind hitting the share button and sharing everyone else's images."

"The biggest concern I see is a lot of trends at the slipping down age, it's nothing now for me to be aware of and deal with even year sevens and eights. We're talking 11/12 year olds sending intimate nudes, which is mind boggling."

- **The sense of community is stronger in some townships than others, and towns differ in terms of how they are viewed by others** in the district, with Cheviot identified by several informants as looked down upon locally.
- **Loneliness and lack of meaningful connection** is a challenge for some young people.
- Some young people struggle with **boredom**.
- A number of **grandparents are acting as carers**, often under stress.
- 2020 and **Covid-19**, the lockdown response and impacts on employment and travel have created **family stress and conflict** for some, and made school stresses more pronounced for some young people.
- **Difficulties getting driving licence** and **unsafe driving** by young people.

"Getting their driver's licences and working through that process can be pretty challenging for rural kids. We had the learner licence help, but once they get to that



learner's licence and Mum and Dad are working all the time and what have you, it's very hard to find time to actually put them in the car and take them anywhere and actually teach them."

"Yeah, the restricted is the hard one."

"Through the programme we're doing Mayors Task Force for Jobs, we're seeing licences non-existent. They are sitting on a learner's for two years, that sort of thing."

"I do find that the closest place to sit their licence is Rangiora, so that's a whole day. We did one where we carpooled a whole lot of girls and took them in for their learner's licence. I think we had five of them altogether. That was the whole morning of kids going through. That's a tricky one as well. Maybe there's just not the time and distance."

"Two months out for a restricted licence is the wait time. Waimak has a mentor driver programme – Salvation Army. Hurunui youth and adults are eligible for that, but there's the logistical problem with getting them to Rangiora."

- **Housing difficulties** impact on young people.

"Houses are selling quite quickly (Cheviot) and I know there's some families wanting housing and can't get it. We got new families coming in through other ways as well. That creates some unsettled families and whether or not that's gonna get worse."

"You hear them say, 'They're living with such and such', or 'They're living with a...', or 'They're trying to find a house, they're trying to find accommodation. We could put them over the hill to Rotherham or Waiau where there are houses but then you've got the travel."

"I can speak to Waiau and Cheviot being really difficult to find rental properties. We're facing quite a serious problem with that in part of the community response committee that was formed in Waiau after Covid-19. Housing is something that's a real struggle there. We're finding that families are feeling that they need to move away from areas, and we've got a lot of employers and businesses in Waiau that are screaming out and advertising jobs constantly. They're finding people, but they literally have nowhere to place them, so they have had to stop advertising those jobs or things like that. Then, people are also losing a lot of their workers because their houses are being sold or things like that and there's no rentals. It's probably one of the key problems that's really on the forefront of a lot of people's minds."

"Definitely the same in Culverden. There's no rentals. People are waiting up to three years."

"People move, and they have to go and stay in Waiau and they're still at school in Cheviot. Their families have already got a lot of pressure put on them, so we've got big housing issues in Cheviot."

- **Suicide risk and self harm**
- **Early sexual behaviour**



The following needs were also highlighted by individual service providers:

- Nutrition needs.
- Gender and sexuality needs.
- Young people leaving the area in search of employment.
- Changing ability of farms to sustain multiple generations.
- Poor cell phone coverage.
- Drop off in sports opportunities to participate from age 13 onwards.
- Digestive issues.
- Lack of resilience.
- Home schooled children and young people are often disconnected socially.
- Increasing special needs among children and young people, and lack of services to support them.
- “Old school” attitudes at school.
- Stigma for help seeking.
- Self-esteem and confidence deficits.
- Lack of life skills training.
- Drop in supports since the earthquake response.

Looking to the future, issues of inactivity, obesity and mental health needs are expected to increase in prevalence.

For providers, some carry big caseloads with limited capacity to see individual young people, while some raised concerns about the skills, worker capacity and service quality of some of the supports that are available. Staff turnover was also widely highlighted as an issue.

"We have that for four months and then you find that they've moved on. All of a sudden, there's a gap and there's no one. When (worker) left the student that she was working with, they were back with us to hold onto until there was somebody else employed ... that we could then refer to. There's a wee bit of that moving around and not consistency. Then, when that student's back with you it's like help, what now."

With some services only delivered to a limited capacity in Hurunui, it is hard for these services to become known by professionals in the community so more referrals can be made to them. Small school rolls and premises mean there are limited spaces in which services can be delivered. Insecure and/or limited funding, and inconsistent resource provision were widely highlighted as issues impacting on providers and the service they are able to deliver.

School pastoral staff identified high levels of pressure on them in these roles.

Barriers to Wellbeing Supports

For those young people who do have wellbeing needs which require supports, service providers identified **a range of barriers which can negatively impact on young people's access to support**. A key barrier was the **paucity of services** being delivered locally, sexual health services being one example. Sexual health consultations are only free up to age 18 and the family planning clinic is located in Rangiora. Specialist services support for trauma and family violence for children and young people were widely highlighted, especially for those not at the highest level of need but rather at the next tier down. These gaps impact on school staff and others working locally to support young people on the ground.



"I think there is a huge gap between where it ends with us (brief intervention, light touch) and where it begins with specialist (Mental Health) services."

"We've got some CAF referrals and we've got some students working through that system and that's great, but we have students that don't quite fit the bill for CAF. What next? You're limited to the amount of time you can put into someone, that feels that you need to have a backup but then who?"

"I get feedback from school nurses and things, about how weak the service is up there, youth services. There is the demand and it'd be a lot easier for them to be able to link into something more locally. I mentioned that there was a space up there that it would be a little bit of a magnet for youth services and affiliated services to base themselves."

- **Delivering services locally in Hurunui is expensive and time consuming** for providers, and limits the extent to which they are able to do this.

"The challenge was also always trying to get services to come out to us. Often when services did come out to us, they had a full caseload already. It might be that they can fit in one child where we're actually needing five to 10 children on their caseload. By the time you factored in travel, you don't have a full day either. They might not arrive 'til 10 am, they've gotta leave then at 2 pm. They have a lunch break. All those things are really tricky."

"The problem I've faced is that because I'm stretched to where I'm doing so much for one person, I just can't do it all. What I've done is take the group individually into the home, because I just cannot do anymore than what I'm doing and then if children need to go into a group setting, if it's suitable I refer them into the city, but that's not actually always going to work for people who are isolated. Therefore, taking it to the home is actually a better option. I think that young people feel more comfortable in their home. I've just adapted it to work."

"If I think about all that travelling around different environments, trying to find a space or that travel time, all that time wasted"

"If you are not even a small organisation, but if you're relying on funding for your organisation and you need to send somebody to Cheviot, there's an awful lot of downtime in that travel space that how do you actually justify that level of? I get why they don't go. It doesn't make it right but I do get that could be four hours of their day just in travelling alone."

- **Cost** was widely identified as a barrier to access of a range of services and activities supporting wellbeing, including participation in sport, visiting the GP, couriering prescriptions, fuel costs and costs in terms of loss of income due to time spent travelling to appointments in the city.
- Another commonly identified barrier to service access was the fact that **some young people perceive a problem with confidentiality**. This is coupled with a lack of understanding about privacy law or consumer rights. For example, a young person may not see the difference between information being shared with parents versus information shared with another professional. The result is that many young people do not feel comfortable talking to someone at school. Confidentiality concerns were also raised as existing between professionals.



"I've had texts to say, can I talk to you and the comment will be I trust you at the school or you're the adult that I want to come and see. I think there is a perceived lack of confidentiality from some of the youth. I think they forget that all the parents talk rather than actually the professionals are talking but they see it as ... so I guess just installing some of that confidentiality stuff again."

"Even though our nurse is fantastic, my kids are like I don't wanna talk to her because of just knowing that she is (nurse's child's Mum)."

"I've been to one of their meetings, which I found really uncomfortable. I really didn't like it...naming names at the table...It's a small community, and I just felt very uncomfortable at it. They weren't working in the strengths of the whānau, they were working like a deficit."

"There's all sorts of stuff where there's no anonymity of young people in a small community."

"Their concern is that all the parents know each other, so if they're going to the school nurse and I know the school nurse, they're less likely to say anything. Also, they are well aware of the talk that goes on in the staff rooms. They know that the teachers talk about them. I mean they've overheard it walking past the school offices. You wouldn't have much confidence. I mean, I wouldn't, I wouldn't go back to someone like that if that was me. Just knowing that coming from my girls that there is a big issue about confidentiality and being secure, like knowing that they can trust that person not to mention that cos we all know each other so well."

Similarly, **lack of privacy accessing services** was widely identified as a barrier to service access by young people.

"It was supposed to be fill out a wee green slip and put it into the office or I said they could slip it under my door in the office, but it's not private at all because everyone in the office turns around and looks at you if you come and put a green slip in a box. it's such a small school and this is our massive issue, is the privacy. We're such a small school and everybody knows where you're going, when you're heading to the guidance room."

"Just having smaller numbers...If one of them is linking up (for want of a better word) to go and see the school nurse, it's a bit more obvious that they've taken action for themselves."

- **Lack of awareness of services** was noted as a barrier to support access for some young people and their families.
- **Lack of culturally appropriate services**, especially for Māori, was also highlighted as a barrier to service access for some.

Other barriers identified by only one or two informants included the following:

- Not all services work for every young person.
- Some of those making decisions about service provision do not understand the challenges of delivering services in, or accessing services from, a rural environment. For example, dropping



families off their caseload because they miss an appointment without recognising that transport is a huge barrier to service access for some people.

- Zoom consultations do not suit everyone and when these are the only option offered, the support access is also limited.
- Waitlists are long for mentor support services and other supports.
- Lack of alternative education provision locally.
- Not fitting the criteria for those few services which are available locally was also a noted barrier.

Support for the Concept of Wellbeing Hubs

The idea of developing a wellbeing hub at Cheviot Area School, and indeed other locations around the Hurunui district was shared with service providers and their feedback sought on this concept. While some service providers expressed interest and support in the concept of a wellbeing hub, they tended to be more cognisant of the limitations and constraints about this considerable departure from the status quo than were the young people who were surveyed.

For some, the idea of developing wellbeing hubs was more supported if such an initiative was community-led. A number felt that if a hub was developed, it should be led by a governance team which included representation from young people, medical centres, Hurunui District Council as well as the schools. Some wanted hubs managed by young people themselves.

"I think sometimes as providers, we all go, that would be great, but actually the community are saying, that's not what we need. It needs to be community driven, I think."

"It needs community ownership, community needs to be passionate about it too."

"Good idea if it's what youth are asking for."

Some service providers raised concerns regarding whether practicalities could be overcome in the development of a wellbeing hub. In particular, recognising that funding was already very stretched, and it was time consuming and expensive for services to be delivered in Hurunui, especially given that transport is a barrier to service access. Multiple hubs would be needed if they were to meet the needs of young people in the different towns and school communities.

"Good idea but wondered how it could be done with funding in a small area in contrast to areas like Kaiapoi or Rangiora."

"Has to be there when they want it or they might forget about it, has to be the right person in that job that kids find easy to talk to, qualifications aren't everything."

"I'm supportive but unsure how realistic it would be."

"In our experience of when we were doing outreach, we might be there for two hours and sometimes no one would come, and it was the same date and time and everything, like the last Thursday of the month or whatever it is."

"The other thing is when you're talking about the Hurunui, there are so many communities. To have resource to go to all of those communities to provide the service, it's not impossible but it would be incredibly problematic to try and do that all of the time."



Providers were asked whether there was potential for them to increase their service delivery in Hurunui, to make the best use of a wellbeing hub if this was developed in Cheviot or elsewhere in the district. One of the providers had temporarily increased their service provision in Hurunui after lockdown but this was subsequently reduced. Additionally, a role that was youth-specific had not been replaced after a worker left. One provider reported that their service was looking at a satellite delivery service rather than a town-based one but plans were not firmed up. A number of informants reported decline in provision and a tightening up in referral criteria in recent times. The picture painted by the feedback was of services already stretched in the status quo, with little capacity to do more outreach in Hurunui. Hubs would provide an alternative venue for those already seeing young people in schools.

Service providers offered a range of suggestions regarding what a hub should offer. Whether or not a wellbeing hub is developed in Hurunui, these features should be considered and, as far as possible, accommodated in the spaces where providers engage with young people. Most commonly, the following needs were highlighted:

- Refreshments should be available.
- It should have an informal vibe, with a range of seating options.
- Good to have things for young people to do in the space – puzzles, games, art materials etc.
- Hard copy materials and posters should be readily available and displayed.

A large number of service providers interviewed talked about the ideal hub extending its reach beyond young people to also offering support for parents and whānau of other life stages, such as mothers with preschoolers. A number seemed to be referring to a community space rather than a youth space but this feedback was mostly at odds with what young people said they were wanting. It was important to providers that the space offered anonymity. Some wanted the space to be school-run and staffed, and a number felt that someone would need to oversee it.

"Well, you'd need someone to oversee it...to co-ordinate that...somebody that's got their finger on the pulse, that could multi-task really, I suppose. For it to function well, you'd have to have a person that the young person could talk to, to ask for a particular service."

Service Delivery Preferences

Like young people, many service providers expressed the need for more naturalistic supports like mentors. A number wanted to see more creative solutions to support young people towards getting their drivers licence, including group sessions about learner licensing. They also identified a range of areas for service provision improvement:

- **More funding for service delivery in rural areas, more consistency with funding services** and more scrutiny over services that are funded but possibly not delivering. Funding services need to meet the demand and revise the use of funding formulas that don't work for rural area schools.

"We had several primary students who fitted the bill for that (programme) but they were going to have to travel to Rangiora. Not one of the parents had a license, a car or the money to put petrol in the car. We battled and battled and battled and finally, there's someone delivering the programme at school, that takes a bit of battling and (another service) helped us to battle that one."

"There's a lot of other services that are supposed to do what we do but they tend to be based in metro."



"...It's probably not consistent. That's probably my biggest thing, that some families might get it but then that provider's tapped out in their resource to be able to provide that, so the next family might get a more phone based service."

- **Appropriate spaces to deliver services** privately and **confidentially** in environments that are conducive to the type of wellbeing support being provided and the opportunity to **connect with others working in the Hurunui**. A number of spaces were identified in the research which meet such criteria, including the meeting spaces at each of the public libraries and rooms at two of the medical centres, yet only some providers appeared to be either aware of these or making use of them.

"It would be a space that they could feel that they could have some part in as well and have a say on what they wanted in there, a bit more room, so that a bigger group could probably meet or just a support group could meet. I'd like them to be able to make a hot chocolate and grab a bickie from a tin. I think it's good to have different reading material or leaflets there that they can just help themselves to, without having to ask anybody, "Can I take this" or whatever? I'd like them to have things on tap. ... a more anonymous space."

- **A wider range of services being locally delivered**, with **more networking and meaningful collaboration** between professionals.

"You get agencies from near and far coming (to networking events). There's a huge number in the room...I want to say, "Okay, you people come here, what actually are you providing for this area? What physical service are you actually providing or willing to provide and who are you willing to work with" Why is there not a team approach?"

"We're supposed to have a pastoral care meeting...the whole three of them cancelled, 'We will contact you if we need your help'. What's that all about? I'm not really sure. Whether or not it's they're finding it's too disruptive for their day or it's a waste of time because services are not delivering."

"If someone said to me, 'Every second week, I'm going to be working out here and here, working alongside (workers) and someone else,' I'd plan my schedule. I'd do that because some of them (students) just want to have a chat."

"I think it's about working collaboratively with other agencies, so if we just think about clinical time, then you would be teaming up with others. If I think about travelling around different environments, trying to find a space or that travel time, all that time wasted, I find, trying to come back to the office, scratching my head, thinking who might also be helpful and available to be able to support me working with these young people."



6. Discussion and Recommendations

Hurunui and its young people

In contrast to the rest of New Zealand, youth living in the Hurunui experience some benefits and some unique challenges including the size of the geographic area and the distance between townships over which the smaller population is dispersed. However, most young people can keep connected via access to phones and internet. The Hurunui is predominantly a district experiencing population growth and has relatively high levels of home ownership but lower availability of rental accommodation (including a small amount of social housing). Some previous rental properties are being purchased by owner-occupiers, further tightening the rental market. Limited access to alternative housing can create pressure for families and young people if their accommodation becomes destabilised.

Compared to many other parts of the country, there is lower unemployment and a relatively low crime rate. For young people, this may partly reflect the preventative approach local police and youth aid officers take to support youth to reduce the likelihood of driving infringements in an area with no public transport. Overall, there is high workforce participation in both full-time and part-time work, yet, the youth job seeker population can be fluid with people moving in and out of receipt of benefits. There are also higher numbers of Māori in the job seeker group.

The Hurunui is less ethnically diverse when compared to national figures but it has a considerably younger Māori population which is in part reflected in the higher percentages of Māori young people in some of the local area school rolls. This pattern may reflect the strong trend of many Hurunui young people attending secondary school outside their own community. Additionally, some areas within the Hurunui (e.g. Amuri and Waiau) have higher levels of ethnic diversity than others. Young people identified a desire to see stronger recognition of the community's growing cultural diversity and more celebration of different cultures.

For education, those young people who undertake their schooling locally are less likely to be stood down or excluded from school and they utilise vocational pathways well. However, the strong pattern of many young people undertaking their senior education out of the district impacts heavily on the numbers of young people completing their senior years in local schools. Of the students that stay, there are slightly less students attaining NCEA level 3 and over or enrolling in tertiary education within a year of leaving school. Māori youth in the Hurunui are slightly more likely to be undertaking full-time study than the national average, but overall, Hurunui youth are less likely to be engaged in full-time study.

The current and future wellbeing needs of children, young people and whānau in Hurunui

The young people living in Hurunui who were consulted in this research and who were either engaged in education or employment locally, identified a range of supportive relationships with various teachers or pastoral care staff in the schools both currently and in the past. School nurses emerged as supports which appear to be working well at supporting the wellbeing of young people but these services are stretched, partly because they are funded for the schools' secondary-age roll only, yet also support students and their whānau of younger ages. Feedback from young people in the present research and in other recent surveys of young people across the district, identify a high level of appreciation of both youth-specific and community-focused events and activities that bring people together to connect and have fun. Events and activities are highly valued when they bring young people together with their peers from across the district. Events led by HYP were valued, as were CASAFest, other inter-school sporting and cultural events, Top Town competitions, pool parties, the A and P show etc.. Connection was strongly associated with a sense of positive wellbeing, and there was

a clear thirst for more opportunities for young people, and the communities as a whole, to come together.

On the basis of the findings from consultation with both young people and service providers, the most significant needs facing young people are isolation (both geographic and in terms of connectedness), mental health issues (especially depression, anxiety and stress-related) and a shortage of opportunities for pro-social recreation. Young people attending school in Hurunui also face a range of challenges associated with being educated in small schools within small communities. The challenges include lack of subject choice, bullying, a limited array of teachers to “click” with, risk of gaining a “reputation”, a small peer group and a mixing of age groups socially. The latter potentially exposes younger children to more risky behaviours (sex, alcohol, drugs and unsafe vehicle use). Some young people in Hurunui also struggle with needs regarding self-esteem, self-confidence and identity. There are a lack of opportunities for diverse young people to “find their tribe” through support groups, cultural activities etc.. Poverty and issues associated with this, including poor nutrition and insecure housing, were highlighted as needs impacting on some young people and families in Hurunui, and was especially in the townships and Cheviot in particular. A need was highlighted by service providers for stronger support for parents; an increasing number of whānau are recent arrivals to the district without a support network around them.

Young people understandably struggled to identify what the future needs of young people might be. Service providers expected levels of need to increase, especially in relation to mental health, stress and school, financial and family pressures, Covid-19 and its impacts, increasing housing pressures, and a continuing trend of people relocating from cities to more rural areas. Needs relating to poverty and transience were expected to increase over time, driven by affordability of houses in large urban areas such as Christchurch.

Access to the things needed to uphold positive wellbeing including condoms and sexual health information and support, connection to help services and advice is often a challenge for any young people. Hurunui’s young people find these things especially hard to access because of geographic isolation, lack or limited accessibility, lack of public transport, the costs of private transport and other financial and time-related issues. The present research identified variation in processes through which young people can access help and, across the Hurunui, the young people had limited knowledge of what services were available to them; this was also reflected in the comments from service providers who thought that there were few services coming to the Hurunui.

The most significant gaps and service access barriers identified by both young people and those working to support them were concerns about confidentiality, difficulties ensuring privacy when young people and their families do access services and support, service navigation needs, and the small town phenomena of everyone knowing everyone. There was strong demand for more initiatives designed to foster career paths and ambitions in young people, and a greater recognition of and celebration of cultural diversity.

Young people and service providers described a desire for more naturalistic supports like mentors, and saw a need for mentors generally and at key transition points like moving from school to work. They thought more cultural supports might be needed (there are no Kaupapa Māori service providers for youth in the Hurunui aside from Whānau Ora providers). Members of the LGBTQI+ community described difficulties when seeking connection and specialist support. Of note, many young people were seeking a fresh approach to the way adults had been delivering service provision. They wanted to see more choices of services and people who deliver them in a more youth friendly environment that they were involved in creating and that had a holistic wellbeing focus (rather than a medicalised approach) with youth friendly processes being employed.



The model of service delivery and support provision best-placed to address the wellbeing needs locally, supporting and developing the strengths and opportunities of rangatahi

Currently, service providers working with young people and their families (counselling, alcohol and drug, sexual health, child protection) try to see young people at schools or medical centres and sometimes their homes. They reported that there are few appropriate community spaces to offer alternatives. Whilst schools can provide a convenient base for workers to see a few young people in one visit, there are few designated spaces that afford privacy and comfort. Schools struggle to find available space for visiting services and some students express concerns about the lack of privacy and autonomy they can experience as a result.

Service providers described a responsive approach to bridging gaps and shortfalls in the provision of wellbeing services to young people and their families. However where a worker might be able to respond to an issue such as lack of adequate space for groups by running sessions in group formats within families' homes, they cannot ameliorate under-funding of their services, low staffing levels for the level of need to be serviced, or the long waitlists that result from this. Unsurprisingly some workers spoke of wanting more full-time equivalent capacity within their own services because they are unable to meet the level of demand within their current resources. In some cases, where their own service had appropriate capacity for the numbers of young people they served, they sought an increase in the number and type of other services they could work alongside in the Hurunui. The range of services delivered within Hurunui is very much hampered by its relatively small and geographically spread-out population.

As with providers, young people also expressed a hope for more diversity of services in the future, that would bring a range of new people to meet with them. These could range from guest speakers to careers advisors to grief specialists. Both youth and service providers described the need for a natural fabric of supports that addressed the wellbeing needs of young people in tiers. The tiers would start with nourishing the grass roots of social opportunities, informal learning and fun events at a very local level, and incrementally introducing supports as needed, such as peer support, and peer support groups (like LGBTQI+), mentors and more specialist services. Whilst a variety of supports and services were identified as being needed in this study, service providers were also interested in looking at what changes they could make with what they had to support and develop the strengths of rangatahi.

Service providers considered their existing patterns of networking as being driven by necessity in a rural environment, but many suggested that further improvements could be made. In particular, workers described the desire to work collectively on cases and co-locate service provision where possible. This was seen as a chance to enhance service provision by bolstering their knowledge, resources and work in a more seamless way across individual student and family needs. A holistic and shared service approach with increased tiered naturalistic supports was therefore seen as a potential pathway to improve outcomes.

The service providers believed there was potential for the co-creation of a more youth friendly, flexible environments with more thought given to the way existing spaces could be utilised and re-imagined. There was potential for services to work together with youth to bring this into reality. It was thought that co-locating practices did not necessarily require a 'fixed' space to work from and the downsides and vulnerabilities of seeing a static wellbeing hub were considered. The potential of a more creative conversation about the provision of youth services resonated with the young people's enthusiasm for co-creating inclusive wellbeing spaces that wove in fun, social opportunities and a variety of supports, in geographical areas where there were very few social and recreational spaces for youth. Service providers and youth were aware of the role that the environment could play in creating or reducing privacy and agreed that when more services were utilising an appropriate and more ambiguous space,



that there would be less chance that a young person would feel exposed and stigmatised for seeking help.

Whilst local service delivery was important to both service providers and young people, there was agreement that there was an opportunity to further consider issues about perceptions of confidentiality that arise when services are provided by local people for local people. There was also some insight into the range of processes that existed for referrals and contact with young people. Process improvements that were reported to work well by workers and youth included simple changes such as moving appointments to an emails system instead of a card under the counsellors door. Providers were also considering how they could work better with technology in a youth friendly way although there were mixed feelings about if future service should be restricted to online delivery.



7. Conclusion

This study identified significant gaps and challenges in service provision in the Hurunui, linked to funding, funding models, geography, and awareness. Cheviot Area School, like the other rural Area Schools in the Hurunui, were looked on as unofficial social service providers, although Cheviot Area School appeared to be the most adversely affected by these challenges and attracted the least resources and services. Notably, this study also found a range of people within the communities that connect in informal and formal roles to do what they can to provide support and resources, alongside the few services who are committed to delivering local support. Additionally, the Hurunui District Council has put youth firmly on their agenda and there are a number of young people who are committed to assisting and co-creating (with schools, service providers and the community) services to improve wellbeing outcomes. The youth of the Hurunui, along with the communities and service providers that support them, are well placed to co-design wellbeing approaches that make the most of existing services, resources and events by providing more wellbeing opportunities in flexible ways that reflect their character.



8. Recommendations

On the basis of the research findings, the following recommendations are put forward to encourage ongoing kōrero and co-creation of positive youth wellbeing development in the Hurunui, with a strong focus on co-design, collaboration and service provision that is flexible and creative:

1. This research strongly endorses the effort the Hurunui District Council has made in progressing a positive youth development framework with the support and creation of the Youth Council, the development of the Youth Strategy and the Hurunui Youth Programme (HYP). HYP appears well placed to play a key leadership role in the advancement of recommendations in this report and it is the hope of the researchers that they continue to receive the resources and support to do so.
2. The networking opportunities created by Together Hurunui appear to have had a positive impact on those service providers involved. Together Hurunui's convenors should consider creating a youth workstream for the network that includes the HYP youth development coordinator, youth council representation and service providers. The convenors should set an agenda based on the recommendations in this report and create a firm plan of action (including key review dates) for the development of youth friendly spaces, the expansion of diversity of local youth service providers and increasing the range, frequency and diversity of youth activities.
3. The present research affirms the significant value of collaborative youth wellbeing events such as CASAFest, run by area schools in the Tipu Māia Kāhui Ako. Schools should be encouraged to expand on the range and number of shared wellbeing, learning, sporting and socialising opportunities across the Kāhui Ako (eg. a wellbeing expo, youth activities at the A & P Show etc.), that bring young people together from across the district to learn, connect and be active.
4. Findings highlighted the physical spaces that are working well (including library rooms, medical centres, and designated resourced counselling rooms) as well as those that posed challenges for youth wellbeing. Utilising these findings, it is suggested that HYP (or another entity as appropriate) compile a list of suitable spaces for family meetings, therapy, groups, counselling, and wellbeing activities in each area, including information on how to book each space. This resource could then be provided to all social agencies and workers delivering face to face services in Hurunui, including Together Hurunui's membership.
5. The area schools of Hurunui are encouraged to work with youth and service providers (including Wellbeing North Canterbury and HYP) to create a positive youth space audit and continue to work on improving designing spaces to support wellbeing.
6. The community should give full consideration to designing culturally inclusive practices, processes and programmes that fully represent the diversity of young people living in the Hurunui. This should start with ensuring diversity in youth consultation and representation and include developing an enduring reciprocal relationship with Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga and with migrant communities.
7. The findings support the development of a LGBTQI+ youth peer-based diversity support group across the Hurunui. HYP are well positioned to support a youth-led approach that would include seeking funding, gathering support from other agencies and helping with transport. This could

include travel to the North Canterbury Pride Picnic in March 2021, a visit to Qtopia in Christchurch and encouragement of guest speakers.

8. Together Hurunui, Hurunui District Council, Tipu Māia Kāhui Ako and HYP are encouraged to advocate strongly for expansion of mentoring initiatives, especially for males and for training to support such development. The findings suggest value in actively seeking to understand the barriers to volunteering in mentor roles locally, and creation of opportunities to increase knowledge and confidence in mentoring roles (e.g. creating time-limited mentoring experiences at Lions Club activities and A & P show events).
9. The research affirms the value of the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs and its positive youth development approach.
10. Members of Together Hurunui should prioritise youth workforce development across the Hurunui by seeking and undertaking regular local core skills training (Gender Diversity, Cultural Safety, Health Relationships, Confidentiality), facilitating local specialist training opportunities (e.g. those delivered by The Collaborative Trust), and sharing professional development opportunities to strengthen mentorship programmes and build capacity in school teams and community workers.
11. With support of HYP, youth groups in Hurunui (eg. Cheviot's youth group) should be empowered and encouraged through resources, advisory support and service provision to grow their appeal, reach and accessibility for young people. They should expand as much as possible towards capacity to connect young people with wellbeing supports in a manner that preserves privacy (eg. pop-up youth one stop shop-type experiences).
12. Service managers should advocate for flexibility in funding to support their workforce to keep "boots on the ground" service delivery for youth and families in the Hurunui. Funders can enhance youth wellbeing by ensuring flexibility in funding models and service design to reflect the nuances of service provision in rural communities.
13. A considerable investment has been made in this study to explore youth wellbeing in the Hurunui community. It is essential that ongoing efforts and outcomes that continue to flow from this research are documented, photographed, videoed, and discussed to ensure a feedback loop with youth, services, schools and community. This could be achieved through the co-creation of a living google document that is held by HYP that schools, youth groups, service providers and youth leaders can access and contribute to.



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Appendices

Appendix 1

Youth Participants in Hurunui Youth Wellbeing Research

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHEET

This is anonymous but helps us know the range of young people we heard from in the research.

Please complete the following about you:

1. Age: _____
2. Gender (tick): Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐
3. Do you identify as part of the LBGTQI+ community?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Ethnicity: What ethnicity or ethnicities do you identify as (tick all that apply)?

- New Zealand Māori ☐ New Zealand European ☐
Pasifika ☐ Asian ☐
European ☐ Middle East/Latin American/African ☐
Other ☐ (specify) _____



Appendix 2

Hurunui Youth Wellbeing Research

INFORMATION SHEET FOR STAKEHOLDERS

What's this project about?

Research is being conducted to find out what is needed to promote the healthy development of Hurunui young people aged 12-24 years, and how a Youth Wellbeing Hub might work in this community.

If I choose to take part, what will I be doing?

You would take part in an interview or focus group, which is a group discussion, where the researcher asks some questions of the group as a whole. You can choose how much you say in the focus group, answering only those questions that you want to. Focus groups are likely to take around 45 minutes. Likewise, if you agree to be interviewed, the researcher will ask you some questions but you can choose the extent to which you answer these.

How do I become involved?

Read this Information Sheet and let the person who gave it to you know that you are happy to take part. They can answer any questions you have about the research too. If you are keen, they will then let you know when and where the focus group is being held/arrange an interview with you at a time that suits.

At the start of the focus group/interview the researcher will check in with you and go over the information again, and obtain consent by getting you to fill in a consent form (which they will give you) before beginning the focus group/interview. You can change your mind and pull out either before the focus group/interview or at any time during it.

Can I change my mind and pull out from the project?

You can leave the focus group at any time, and even after the focus group, if you decide you do not want your information to be used in the research, you can let the researcher know within the next week and your feedback won't be included in the research.

How will information be collected, and how will it be used.

The researcher will make notes in the focus group/interview and will also audio record the conversation. All of the information gathered in the focus group/interview will be kept in a secure online database that is managed by the researcher. Only they will have access to it for analysis purposes. The researchers will write a report on what is said in the focus groups and interviews. This report will be a summary of what all young people and stakeholders have said. Your name will not be used in this report and other people will not know that you were involved in this research.

Will people know what I have said?

The interview is confidential. You will not be identified in any reports, and any information that could identify you will not be reported. Other people in the focus group with you will hear what you say. While we will remind them to respect each others' confidentiality, we cannot guarantee that they will do this.

Do I have to do this?

No you don't have to take part in the research. It is completely your choice whether or not you do. We really hope you choose to take part because we value what you have to say, but if you choose not to please know that this will not make any difference to the involvement that you have with any services locally.

Will I be paid to do this survey?

No.

Who are the evaluators?

Michelle Cole lives in the Hurunui and is from Meaningful Health Hurunui, she provides supervision, therapy and research services that are focused on young people and their families. If you want to know more about Meaningful Health Hurunui you can visit:

<https://www.meaningfulhealthhurunui.org/research.html>



Sarah Wylie is from the Collaborative Trust for Research and Training in Youth Health and Development. If you want to know more about the Collaborative Trust and what we do check out our website: www.collaborative.org.nz.

Michelle and Sarah will lead this evaluation and look after all the information that is gathered in the interviews and focus groups, and conduct these. They will also make sure that this data is kept safe and private so that others are not able to know that you have participated in this evaluation.

What if I have any questions?

If you have any questions about the project you can contact:

Meaningful Health Hurunui:

Michelle Cole 0273138032

The Collaborative Trust:

Sarah Wylie 021 2884334



Appendix 3

Hurunui Youth Wellbeing Needs Analysis

INFORMATION SHEET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

What's this project about?

Research is being conducted to find out what is needed to promote the healthy development of Hurunui young people aged 12-24 years, and how a Youth Wellbeing Hub might work in this community.

If I choose to take part, what will I be doing?

You would take part in a focus group, which is a group discussion, where the researcher asks some questions of the group as a whole. You can choose how much you say in the focus group, answering only those questions that you want to. Focus groups are likely to take around 45 minutes.

How do I become involved?

Read this Information Sheet and let the person who gave it to you know that you are happy to take part. They can answer any questions you have about the research too. If you are keen, they will then let you know when and where the focus group is being held.

At the start of the focus group the researcher will check in with you and go over the information again, and obtain consent by getting you to fill in a consent form (which they will give you) before beginning the focus group. You can change your mind and pull out either before the focus group or at any time during it.

Can I change my mind and pull out from the project?

You can leave the focus group at any time, and even after the focus group, if you decide you do not want your information to be used in the research, you can let the researcher know within the next week and your feedback won't be included in the research.

How will information be collected, and how will it be used.

The researcher will make notes in the focus group and will also audio record the conversation. All of the information gathered in the focus group will be kept in a secure online database that is managed by the researchers. Only they will have access to it for analysis purposes. Your school will not have access to this information. The researcher will write a report on what is said in the focus groups and interviews. This report will be a summary of what all young people have said. Your name will not be used in this report and other people will not know that you were involved in this research.

Will people know what I have said?

The interview is confidential. You will not be identified in any reports, and any information that could identify you will not be reported. Other people in the focus group with you will hear what you say. While we will remind them to respect each others' confidentiality, we cannot guarantee that they will do this.

Do I have to do this?

No you don't have to take part in the research. It is completely your choice whether or not you do. We really hope you choose to take part because we value what you have to say, but if you choose not to please know that this will not make any difference to the involvement that you have with any support services.

Will I be paid to do this?

No.

Who are the Researchers?

Michelle Cole lives in the Hurunui and is from Meaningful Health Hurunui, she provides supervision, therapy and research services that are focused on young people and their families. If you want to know more about Meaningful Health Hurunui you can visit:

<https://www.meaningfulhealthhurunui.org/research.html>



Sarah Wylie is from the Collaborative Trust for Research and Training in Youth Health and Development. If you want to know more about the Collaborative Trust and what we do check out our website: www.collaborative.org.nz.

Michelle and Sarah will lead this evaluation and look after all the information that is gathered in the interviews and focus groups, and conduct these. They will also make sure that this data is kept safe and private so that others are not able to know that you have participated in this evaluation.

What if I have any questions?

If you have any questions about the project you can contact:

Meaningful Health Hurunui:

Michelle Cole 0273138032

The Collaborative Trust:

Sarah Wylie 021 2884334



Appendix 4

Hurunui Youth Wellbeing Needs Research Consent Form for Participation in Focus Group

To indicate your agreement with each statement below, please tick each box.

- ☐ I have read and understood the information pamphlet about this research and understand what this project is about.
- ☐ I understand the nature of my involvement in this research and that I agree to take part in focus group about youth week.
- ☐ I know my involvement is voluntary and I will not be identified in any report that is written.
- ☐ I agree for the focus group to be audio-recorded and transcribed (written up) so the researcher does not miss anything I say.
- ☐ I understand that other people in the focus group will hear what I have to say.
- ☐ I will respect the confidentiality of others in the focus group, and will not talk about what anyone says in the group.
- ☐ I understand that while group members will be reminded to respect each other's confidentiality, the researcher cannot ensure that everyone abides by this.
- ☐ I know I can withdraw from the project without any negative effect.

Date:

Please write your name and sign here

Name _____

Signed _____

If you would like to receive a summary of the evaluation findings, please write your e-mail address below.

Please return this form to the person who provided you with this consent form.



Appendix 5

Hurunui Youth Wellbeing Needs Research Consent Form for Participation in Interview

To indicate your agreement with each statement below, please tick each box.

- ☐ I have read and understood the information pamphlet about this evaluation and understand what this project is about.
- ☐ I understand the nature of my involvement in this evaluation and that I agree to take part in an interview about youth week.
- ☐ I know my involvement is voluntary and no one will know what I said in any report that is written.
- ☐ I agree for the interview to be audio-recorded and transcribed (written up) so the researcher does not miss anything I say.
- ☐ I know I can withdraw from the project without any negative effect.

Date:

Please write your name and sign here.

Name _____

Signed _____

If you would like to receive a summary of the research findings, please write your e-mail address below.

Please return this form to the person who provided you with this consent form.