

Youth – Concurrent Session

Thursday 19 September
2.00 – 3.00pm

‘From good ideas to great services’ – a co-produced peer/clinical venture into the youth addiction space

Kimberley van Groenewoud, Senior Peer Support Specialist, Emerge Aotearoa

Supriya Maharaj, Service Manager, Emerge Aotearoa

Emerge Aotearoa’s vision is Realising Potential ‘Tautokohia te mana tangata’. We are an organisation that seeks to build deep wellbeing and resilience in vulnerable communities. Our Board of Trustees identified a gap for rangatahi (young people) with alcohol and drug challenges and decided to invest in a two-year pilot.

Applying learning from the successful Phoenix addiction service for adults in Counties Manukau, Emerge Aotearoa set about exploring how the model could be adapted for rangatahi. Drawing inspiration from co-production, and collaborating with various stakeholders led to the establishment of EaseUp.

EaseUp offers an assertive outreach, community-based, peer/clinical addiction service for rangatahi aged 13-20 years and their whānau. EaseUp endeavours to explore and co-construct recovery in holistic, culturally and developmentally appropriate ways, incorporating both harm minimisation and abstinence.

The service model focuses on earlier and appropriately resourced interventions delivered as and when trauma occurs. Ultimately, EaseUp is about providing rangatahi and their whānau with skills and resources to enable them to live their best life and make positive choices.

As the pilot is self-funded, Emerge Aotearoa has the creative freedom to see how the programme evolves, with curiosity and innovation actively encouraged. The journey of the pilot and what has been learned so far will be shared and reflected on with the audience.

Biographies of presenting authors

Kimberley is a Senior Peer Support Specialist for EaseUp. She is in recovery and has lived experience of methamphetamine addiction, the criminal justice system and grief and loss. Kimberley has worked in peer support alongside adults and youth.

Supriya Maharaj is Service Manager for EaseUp and formerly managed the Phoenix Centre, which EaseUp drew inspiration from. Supriya was involved in the development of EaseUp from concept testing through to inception. Supriya has over a decade of experience working in

addiction, health and social services settings with qualifications in public health, addiction treatment and clinical supervision.

Wasted education: Role of youth voice in school drug policy implementation

Annabel Prescott, Manager – Anamata CAFÉ YOSS
PhD Candidate, University of Auckland

As schools become increasingly pressured by market constraints, principles of youth development appear to be compromised. In New Zealand, the third most common reason for suspension from school is alcohol and/or drug violations. Current wisdom regarding school's alcohol and drug policy recommends the employment of two theoretical perspectives: harm minimisation and youth development.

Current research regarding school drug policy is limited to alcohol and drug-based theory and practice rather than youth development. This presentation will explore the role of 'youth voice' in the development and implementation of drug policy in secondary schools in New Zealand. The presentation will discuss how, from a research perspective, youth participation has been addressed. Using case study methodology and drawing on qualitative interviews, the tensions between traditional alcohol and drug theory and Positive Youth Development will be examined.

The key findings from this research will be presented as they relate to drug policy and education, the role of specialist interventions and teachers, and the importance of a clear understanding between the link to the social determinants of health and our post-colonial context.

The presentation will conclude with a discussion about where schools are being effective in their responses, and possible areas for development.

Biography of presenting author

Annabel is a Youth Development and Education Specialist with over 15 years' experience in management, academic and leadership roles. She has been Senior Academic and Programme Leader working in mental health, addictions, health promotion and youth development. Currently she runs a not-for-profit organisation in Taupo responsible for delivering youth health and development programmes and services across the Taupo and Turangi district. Her doctoral thesis has explored how schools develop and implement school drug policy, with a focus on youth voice.

My past has made me who I am today: Odyssey School

Kristen Evans, Lead Teacher, Youth Odyssey School
Ed Kitchin, Operations Manager, Youth Odyssey

Rangatahi coming into Youth Odyssey School have often come from a background of trauma. We personalise learning programmes for our rangatahi, focusing on their strengths and passions, acknowledging where they have come from, and working to move forward and build belief in themselves and their own ability. Rangatahi learn to look back on what they have been through and identify their own resilience and strength.

In this presentation, we will share examples of our approach to support our students' personal development and wellbeing as well as educational achievement. We will describe how we adapt the New Zealand curriculum to suit the lived experience and learning styles of our students, and we will give examples of some of the projects which have resonated with them.

These include a visual whakapapa assessment, an opportunity for rangatahi to explore their story. Focused on tuakiri, or identity, the project encourages rangatahi to explore connection to their whenua, whānau, outside influences, strengths and aspirations for the future.

The assignment stresses an individual's ahurei/uniqueness. Some stunning designs have been created. They reflect a growing interest in tā moko as a form of self-expression. We will also share examples of the descriptive pieces rangatahi produce to accompany this design that explain the symbolism used and how their past has made them who they are today.

Biographies of presenting authors

Kristen has worked as a primary school teacher for over 20 years and has always had a passion for working with those 'out of the box' students who often do not conform to mainstream education. She has been Lead Educator at Youth Odyssey School for three years and has been instrumental in creating an inclusive and strengths-based learning environment and culture for rangatahi within the Odyssey Youth residential programme. Kristen has a passion for connecting with rangatahi who need someone to believe in them.

Ed has over 12 years' experience operating AOD services, initially working in the UK on the innovative Drug Intervention Programme (DIP). Moving to New Zealand in 2010, he worked in the drug treatment programmes in prisons for seven years. Ed joined Odyssey in 2016 to project-manage several service implementations. He took up the Youth Operations Manager role in January 2017, working across the Odyssey School, community and school outreach team and residential youth service. Ed is passionate about building capacity for services to instil hope and connect tāngata whai ora into a pathway towards wellness and reconnection.