



Youth Development

STRATEGY AOTEAROA

The *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* is about how government and society can support young women and men aged 12 to 24 years. It's about how they develop the skills and attitudes they need to take a positive part in society, now and in the future.

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

The Strategy consists of a vision, principles, aims and goals, and also suggests actions that can be taken to support the positive development of young people.



Vision *A country where young people are vibrant and optimistic through being supported and encouraged to take up challenges.*

The Principles of Youth Development

These outline what the youth development approach is all about. They can be used as a checklist and a tool for developing youth policies and programmes and in working alongside young people. The principles are:

1. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IS SHAPED BY THE 'BIG PICTURE'

By the 'big picture' we mean: the values and belief systems; the social, cultural, economic contexts and trends; the Treaty of Waitangi and international obligations such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IS ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE BEING CONNECTED

Healthy development depends on young people having positive connections with others in society. This includes their family and whānau, their community, their school, training institution or workplace and their peers.

3. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IS BASED ON A CONSISTENT STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

There are risk factors that can affect the healthy development of young people and there are also factors that are protective. 'Strengths-based'

policies and programmes will build on young people's capacity to resist risk factors and enhance the protective factors in their lives.

4. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS THROUGH QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS

It is important that everyone is supported and equipped to have successful, quality relationships with young people.

5. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IS TRIGGERED WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE FULLY PARTICIPATE

Young people need to be given opportunities to have greater control over what happens to them, through seeking their advice, participation and engagement.

6. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT NEEDS GOOD INFORMATION

Effective research, evaluation, and information gathering and sharing is crucial.

Together, these six principles can help young people to gain a:

- sense of contributing something of value to society
- feeling of connectedness to others and to society
- belief that they have choices about their future
- feeling of being positive and comfortable with their own identity.



The Aims

AIM 1

All young people should have opportunities to establish positive connections within their key social environments.

AIM 2

Government policy and practice reflect a positive youth development approach.

AIM 3

All young people will have access to a range of youth development opportunities.



The Goals

STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

Goal 1 – Ensuring a consistent strengths-based youth development approach.

QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS

Goal 2 – Developing skilled people to work with young people.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Goal 3 – Creating opportunities for young people to actively participate and engage.

AN INFORMED APPROACH

Goal 4 – Building knowledge about youth development through information and research.

Acknowledging the Diversity of Young People

It is important to involve, acknowledge and consider key issues for specific groups of young people. These groups include: rangatahi (young Māori); Pacific young people; young people from minority ethnic communities; young people with physical, intellectual and learning disabilities; young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual people; isolated rural young people and young parents.

Using the Strategy

The Strategy was launched in February 2002. Public sector agencies are using the Strategy when developing youth policies and delivering services and programmes for young people. It is also a tool for individuals, groups and organisations that work at all levels with young people and deal with the issues facing them.

We encourage you to read and become familiar with the Strategy. Use the vision, principles, aims, goals framework and suggested actions as a guide to applying a youth development approach to your work with young people and when developing youth policies and initiatives.

YOUR COPY

Copies of the full Strategy, plus other resources that support it, are available free-of-charge from the Ministry of Youth Development. **Phone** (04) 916 3645 **Email** info@myd.govt.nz

An electronic copy of the Strategy is also available on the Ministry's website - www.myd.govt.nz

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