

BENNETT, Maia (Ngāti Kahungunu, Te Arawa)

BIO

Maia is from Ngāti Kahungunu and Te Arawa and is a graduate of Victoria University of Wellington. Maia is employed as a Research Assistant at the Health Services Research Centre (HSRC), Victoria University of Wellington, and is currently working on a FRST-funded project exploring Youth Connectedness.

ABSTRACT

Connectedness in Youth: Ngā Whakaaro o ngā Rangatahi i te Ao Hurihuri

‘Connectedness in young New Zealanders: social connectedness, transitions, and wellbeing’ is a four-year project funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST). The study, which focuses on Māori, Pākehā and Pacific youth aged 10-16, has two main objectives: to examine how connectedness supports young people in negotiating the challenges of adolescence; and to identify modifiable factors that foster and enhance connectedness. The project explores young people’s connectedness to families and whānau, schools, and communities.

As well as investigating connectedness and wellbeing, the Māori researchers working within this project are exploring specifically Māori ways of being. The results of this research will aid the positive development of our rangatahi and contribute to the body of Māori knowledge.

The most important Māori participants in the project are our young people. They are our expert advisors on what connectedness and wellbeing means for rangatahi today. We have held discussions with our Māori Youth Advisory Board, focus groups with young people in Wellington and Taranaki and individual interviews with young Māori. These have all contributed to our understanding of what connectedness and wellbeing mean to rangatahi in Te Ao Hurihuri. Their thoughts and experiences are contributing to the development of a large-scale survey and are the focus of this presentation.