



***New Zealand's
Voice of the Young and
Care Experienced***

September 2017



Who we are

- Our name VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai stands for **‘Voice of the Young and Care Experienced - Listen to me’**.
- We are an independent connection and advocacy service, for children and young people with care experience in New Zealand.
- We formally launched on **1 April 2017**.

How we came to be

The call from Young People

"no one asked me how I was feeling or what I thought about the situation"

"you need to know it's about me, it's about her, it's about him. It's about our needs, our life and our future"

"a child's voice can be done by an adult if they love enough"

"I have the right to develop my talents and to do the things that are important to me"

The Journey

Voices of children in care hui articulates the need for advocacy and connection service

A philanthropy sponsored proposal is presented to the Expert Panel

Expert panel recommends an independent advocacy service

Minister of Social Development announces the establishment of an advocacy service

Design and establishment of service

Service launches on 1 April

Some questions for you

- Who believes it is important to understand how your clients experience your service?
- What percentage of time and resource would go to gathering the lived experience of your clients?

**How have the voices and stories of children in
care and those who have experience of care
shaped
VOYCE Whakarongo Mai?**

What to expect in care



Story Telling – the power of personal stories

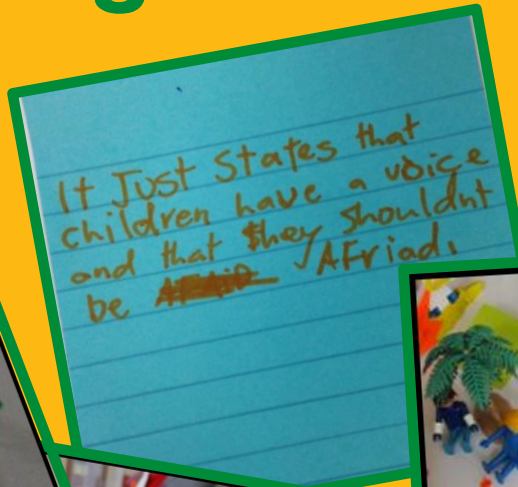
- 2013 – Voices of Children in Care
- Influencing the decision makers
- Raising the age of leaving care
- Establishment of independent advocacy service

How do you design a service that is informed by the voice of those you serve?

- First – hear the stories
- Embark on the co-design journey



Co-designing



Our name, our brand



Learnings from co-design workshops

What we've learned:

- Make it fun, icebreakers
- Food
- Demonstrate you are listening
- Timing
- Recognition
- Feedback

Key insights from young people

What we've learned:

- Trusted, meaningful relationships
- Know someone will have our back
- Involve us in the big decisions
- Empower us to stand up for ourselves and help others
- Understand what to expect
- Keep us in the loop

What we're here to do

Our **five functions** are to:

- **build** young people's leadership
- **connect** children and young people together
- **promote** the collective voice of care experience
- **advocate** with children and young people as individuals
- help **equip** children and young people for the future.

Connection events



Connection events



Connection Events

What we've learned:

- Connection enhanced through stories
- More fun equals more feedback
- Relationships through connection helps build trust
- Do not make assumptions.

Interviewing with children and youth

What we've learned:

- Set limits of responsibility
- More than one and balance the proceedings
- Feedback decision making.

Youth Council

What we've learned:

- Session structure (Engagement, Ice Breakers, Variation)
- Development plans – individual supports
- Sufficient staff support.
- Terms of reference – go at their pace

VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai Board members

What we've learned:

- Equipping for the role to ensure full participation
- Payment
- Planning and logistics to accommodate youth
- Individually supported.

Get in touch

Please get in touch at contactus@voyce.org.nz



@VOYCEWhakarongoMai



#voycenx

Visit us at voyce.org.nz



Thank you

