

Evaluation of Parent Pack Resources

September 2007

Prepared for ALAC by Denise Bijoux and Carmen Collie

ALCOHOL ADVISORY COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND
Kaunihera Whakatupato Waipiro o Aotearoa

PO Box 5023
Wellington
New Zealand

www.alac.org.nz and www.waipiro.org.nz

CONTENTS

- Executive Summary2
- Section One: Context and Methodology4
 - 1.1 Introduction and Background.....4
 - 1.2 Purpose of the Project6
 - 1.3 Methods6
- Section Two: Evaluation Findings.....8
 - 2.1 Introduction8
 - 2.2 Description of Parent Pack Resource in each Case Study Area.8
 - 2.3 Motivations and intended outcomes.....9
 - 2.4 Resource Development: content, process and target audience11
 - 2.5 Distribution.....15
- Section Three: Perceived Impact And Strategies For The Future20
 - 3.1 Introduction20
 - 3.2 Perceived Impact.....20
 - 3.3 Strategies for the Future.....31
- Section Four: Discussion of Findings.....37
- Section Five: Overall Conclusions and Implications for Future Activities42
- References44
- Appendix One: Evaluation Tools.....45

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Families are widely recognized to be one of the most influential contributors to the environments experience by young people as they grow up. Interventions which can strengthen and support young people's positive connections with their families, key adults and their communities and increase other resiliency factors may enhance young people's healthy development and wellbeing. Reflecting the aim of enhancing positive connections between young people and their parents, Parent Pack resources (Parent Packs) are a paper based health promotion resource that aim to assist parents and caregivers to manage a range of issues, including alcohol and other drugs, for their young people. Parent Pack resources are designed to give parents the tools and guidelines to deal with issues faced by their teenage children, particularly alcohol and drug issues.

The goals and objectives of the Parent Packs are:

- To provide information resources on managing alcohol issues for parents of young people
- To raise awareness of the issues faced by young people
- To provide the tools which parents can use for communicating successfully with their young people
- To facilitate discussion between parents and their children on their respective roles, expectations and responsibilities
- To arrive at limits that are reasonable and negotiated around the use of alcohol
- To reduce the harm that comes from alcohol misuse and to ensure that young people enjoy safe and informative teenage years.

Little formal evaluation has been undertaken of the impact of Parent Packs on communities. With approximately 25 Parent Pack Resources in use and more likely to be produced, in mid-2007 ALAC commissioned Bijoux Research to undertake an evaluation of the resource, to examine:

- perceptions of the impact of Parent Pack resources on attitudes and behaviour, and
- perceptions of the impact of the resource in communities, particularly in relation to reducing alcohol related harms and promoting a positive and safe environment for young people.

Data collection was undertaken using a case study approach and a combination of key informant interviews and focus groups. A case frame was developed in partnership with ALAC to select three communities which had already developed and disseminated a Parent Pack, and where significant proportions of Maori and Pacific peoples live, and represented a range of urban, provincial and rural communities. The resultant three case study communities included in this evaluation were Waitakere City, Eastern Bays and Taranaki. In both Eastern Bays and Taranaki, the wider YATA group was consulted before participation was agreed.

Across each of the case study communities, findings from this evaluation confirm that the Parent Pack is perceived as a valuable health promotion resource, which aims to empower parents by raising their awareness of a range of social issues that may challenge their teenagers. Information within the Parent Pack is considered to be appropriately scoped to provide a voice of authority, independent from any one organization, on key facts on alcohol and other drugs as well as other social issues. The resource is considered to be delivering on its key aim of providing advice for adults (particularly parents, but

including other adults) to communicate with teenagers and goes beyond awareness-raising by providing some solutions and strategies as well as offering a reason to initiate such conversations. As such, and within the limitations of this research, the resource appears to be a broadly acceptable tool to both parents and the organizations who have developed Parent Pack resources to support families to support and build the wellbeing of young people. Positive assessments were made by key stakeholder groups about the tone, style and content of the Parent Pack resources across the three stakeholder communities.

Evaluation findings from this research highlight that the content of the Parent Pack resources was essentially similar across the case study communities, and in other Parent Pack resources which had been used as models for the development of the resources within the case study communities. However, important differences were observed in relation to the inclusion of te reo Maori in the resource. Amongst the case study communities, a clear need emerged for the development of specific strategies for reaching out to Maori and Pacific communities in particular.

Recommendations to improve the Parent Pack resource:

- Develop a template to identify and document the phases of development, production and dissemination of the Parent Pack resource, including roles, responsibilities, time, financial and other commitments from partner agencies, and timelines of key deliverables. This will facilitate clarity of expectations around the project, and will also serve as means of monitoring the project against expectations.
- Develop a template of information that could be included in the Parent Pack resource, to ensure accurate information and to facilitate regular updating of information. The template should be sufficiently flexible to be adapted to fit the needs of local communities.
- Identify effective means of working with mana whenua and Pacific communities to examine if the Parent Pack is an appropriate resource for Maori and Pacific parents. This could be undertaken either by the supporting agencies, or by the community stakeholders involved in the development of Parent Pack resources. Informed by the above, develop options to increase the relevance of the resource for Maori and Pacific parents, including the use of te reo Maori.
- Develop a template of supporting activities that could be developed and delivered alongside the dissemination of the Parent Pack resource. The template should be sufficiently flexible to be adapted to fit the needs of local communities.
- Develop a template to assess the reach and impact of the Parent Pack resource on the target audience(s). The template should be sufficiently flexible to be adapted to fit the needs of local communities, and efforts should be made to ensure ease of use and maximum response rates. This could be informed by a current evaluation of the Eastern Bays resource, being undertaken by Toi Te Ora Public Health Unit, and by the tools used in this evaluation.[1]

SECTION ONE: CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction and Background

Evidence suggests that while many young people in New Zealand will experience challenges in adolescence, and emerge resiliently from facing difficulties, others will struggle and experience outcomes that may be detrimental to their health and wellbeing. International research indicates that comprehensive interventions at a range of levels including government, community, family, school and individual are required to make a difference[2]. Furthermore, interventions that incorporate a focus on positive youth development are proven to be effective in improving young people's health and wellbeing.

Families are widely recognized to be one of the most influential contributors to the environments experience by young people as they grow up[3]. Supporting families and communities to enhance the health and wellbeing of young people has been an area of interest for many community and government agencies in New Zealand since the mid 1990's[4]. For example, preventing or delaying the uptake of tobacco, alcohol, illegal and other drug use, particularly in young people, is a key objective of the New Zealand National Drug Policy framework[5]. Strategies to reduce demand for alcohol and other drugs include a wide array of activities, initiatives and resources delivered by a range of stakeholders which aim to delay or prevent uptake, encourage drug-free lifestyles or create awareness of the risk involved with drug use.

In New Zealand, many young people have positive connections with family and school, however some do not. Interventions which can strengthen and support young people's positive connections with their families, key adults and their communities and increase other resiliency factors may enhance young people's healthy development and wellbeing[6]. Reflecting the aim of enhancing positive connections between young people and their parents, Parent Packs are a paper based health promotion resource, which aims to assist parents and caregivers to manage a range of issues, including alcohol and other drugs, for their young people. The Packs are designed to give parents the tools and guidelines to deal with issues faced by their teenage children, particularly alcohol and drug issues.

The goals and objectives of the Parent Packs are:

- To provide information resources on managing alcohol issues for parents of young people
- To raise awareness of the issues faced by young people
- To provide the tools which parents can use for communicating successfully with their young people
- To facilitate discussion between parents and their children on their respective roles, expectations and responsibilities
- To arrive at limits that are reasonable and negotiated around the use of alcohol
- To reduce the harm that comes from alcohol misuse and to ensure that young people enjoy safe and informative teenage years.

Some Parent Pack resources have been developed as part of a Youth Access to Alcohol (YATA) initiative – a community action initiative developed by the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC). Other Parent Packs have been developed by community groups, for example, as part of

initiatives of Safer Community Councils. The number of Parent Packs produced over the past ten years has recently been audited, revealing that at least twenty-five communities have produced these resources, including the following[7]:

- Bream Bay
- North Shore (Community Facilities Trust, North Shore City)
- Waiheke Island
- Waitakere
- Papakura
- Franklin SCC
- Rodney
- Taupo
- Whakatane
- New Plymouth
- Napier
- Hastings
- Palmerston North
- Masterton
- South Wairarapa
- Kapiti
- Ashburton
- Timaru
- Cromwell
- Gore
- Invercargill

A further five communities have expressed interest in developing Parent Pack resources.

Overall, the various Parent Packs that have been developed to date have tended to follow similar formats but have been adapted to fit local needs, services and resources[7].

Little formal evaluation has been undertaken of the impact of Parent Packs on communities. However, a number of communities have attempted to gather data to inform the development and revision of their local packs. For example, Duncan et al [7] report that at the time of an audit undertaken in early 2006:

- Nelson YATA was engaged in collecting data to establish what parents in their communities want.
- Waiheke Island YATA reported that they had tried to evaluate the resource by including a questionnaire. A low return rate was achieved, but positive comments were received from those that were returned.
- Taupo District Council had included a survey form with their Pack however this elicited a low response rate. Some positive comments were received from respondents.
- Timaru District Council had completed an evaluation via telephone in 2004.
- Napier YATA had developed an on-line evaluation form but had yet to develop an evaluation report.
- Toi Te Ora Public Health Unit has recently developed an on-line evaluation form of the Eastern Bays Parent Pack[1].

Other groups expressed an interest in evaluation of Parent Packs at some point in the future. For example, Franklin Safer Community Council and Invercargill YATA had expressed their intentions to undertake an evaluation in the future.

In 2006, ALAC received a scoping report which suggested an evaluation framework and gave a series of recommendations about methods that could be used in undertaking Phase Two of the evaluation process[7].

Building on the suggestions including in this report, the current report provides the results of Phase Two of the Parent Pack evaluation and is structured as:

- Section One: Context and Methodology
- Section Two: Evaluation Findings
- Section Three: Discussion of Findings
- Section Four: Overall Conclusions and Implications for Future Activities

1.2 Purpose of the Project

With approximately 25 Parent Pack Resources produced over the past decade and more likely to be produced[7], in mid-2007 ALAC commissioned Bijoux Research to undertake an evaluation of the resource, to examine:

- perceptions of the impact of Parent Pack resources on attitudes and behaviour, and
- perceptions of the impact of the resource in communities, particularly in relation to reducing alcohol related harms and promoting a positive and safe environment for young people.

Acknowledging the initial scoping that had been undertaken to support the development of an evaluation of the Parent Pack resources, the current evaluation was structured to build on existing knowledge[7].

Specifically, the current evaluation aimed to:

1. Explore perceptions of the impact of the Parent Pack resource on selected communities.
2. Explore perceptions of the impact on and reach of the resource for Maori and Pacific communities
3. Describe the core components of the Parent Pack resources, and
4. Identify recommendations to improve the Parent Pack resources.

1.3 Methods

The framework for Phase Two of the evaluation of the Parent Pack resource was based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) framework for evaluation of public health interventions[8].

Data collection data was undertaken using a case study approach and a combination of key informant interviews and focus groups. A case frame was developed in partnership with ALAC to select three communities. The case frame included the following variables:

- inclusion of communities that had already developed and disseminated a Parent Pack,
- selection of areas where significant proportions of Maori and Pacific peoples reside, and
- a range of urban, provincial and rural communities.

The resultant three case study communities selected for this evaluation were Waitakere City, Eastern Bays and Taranaki. In both Eastern Bays and Taranaki, the wider YATA group were consulted before participation was agreed.

Data collection in each of these communities took the form of:

- One face-to-face with the key YATA Coordinator in each community (n = 3)
- One focus group with community members involved in the local development of the Parent Pack (n=16 community members)
- One focus group with parents that have used the local Parent Pack (n = 15 parents)

In each community, the local YATA Co-ordinator played a key role in organising both focus groups, including selecting appropriate times and dates, arranging venues and inviting participants. Data collection was undertaken during July and August 2007.

Further to this, a key informant interview was undertaken with ALAC's National YATA Coordinator. This interview provides both an ALAC perspective of how Parent Packs have been incorporated into YATA activities as well as giving an overview of the primary motivations, contents and impacts of the various types of Parent Pack resources.

The evaluation tools including the interview schedule for key informants and the discussion guide for focus groups are attached as Appendix One.

SECTION TWO: EVALUATION FINDINGS

2.1 Introduction

This section provides a description of the format of the Parent Pack resource in each of the case study areas as well as outlining the findings from four key informant interviews, three stakeholder focus groups and three parent focus groups. The findings are organised around the broad stages of development and dissemination of the Parent pack resource. These are:

- Motivations and intended outcomes
- Resource development: content, process and target audience
- Distribution

2.2 Description of Parent Pack Resource in each Case Study Area.

2.2.1 Audience groups

Parent Packs are a printed resource targeted at three primary audiences:

- a) parents of teenagers,
- b) those who work with teenagers, and
- c) young people.

While the format of most Parent Packs is very similar – a stapled glossy booklet of various sizes – the content tends to be adapted to local needs, sometimes incorporating phrases in te reo Maori and with local contact details for further information and support.

A wide range of organisations have been involved in producing these resources, and the effort to produce Parent Packs is often a collaboration of several agencies and groups. Some more modest Parent Packs have been fully funded through the YATA Community Grant Scheme but most are collectively funded from a variety of sources. Costs can be in excess of \$20,000 where the unit numbers are high so these can be large, resource intensive projects for communities to undertake. A number of Parent Packs include a feedback form but at the time of reporting this evaluation it is unknown how effective this is or has been in assessing the effectiveness of these resources.

2.2.2 Waitakere City

Like many Parent Packs, the Waitakere City version is a glossy booklet subtitled 'Tools for the Teenage Years'. It is a joint production of Safe Waitakere and the local CAYAD project and is supported by Waitakere City Council, New Zealand Police and Hoani Waititi Marae Trust. Acknowledgements are given to "the guidance and input from many people", including those who produced "a similar resource". Collaboration is also evident in the almost identical booklet produced by neighbouring Rodney District. The booklet's cover is a rather serious image of a young person out of focus behind a glass door or window and opens with an introduction from the Mayor, Bob Harvey. It offers practical advice on parenting teenagers generally in a variety of situations as well as listing facts about drugs and alcohol, violence, depression, sex and legal age limits as well as local phone numbers of service providers which may be of help to both parents and young people. The production of the Parent Pack was jointly

funded by the Safe Waitakere Alcohol Project and the CAYAD project with an application still pending from the Lion Foundation.

2.2.3 Eastern Bays

The image on the cover of the Eastern Bays Parent Pack is a graphic of a young skate boarder in the air on his board and a repeat of the word 'caution'. The graphic was designed by a local secondary school pupil. The pamphlet is introduced by the three Mayors of Opotiki, Kawerau and Eastern Bays and was produced by the Eastern Bays YATA Committee with assistance from the Taupo YATA committee. Credit is also given to ACC Think Safe, Pacific Health: Toi te Ora Public Health, REAP, Eastern Bay Road Safety Committee and ALAC. The content is almost identical to that contained in the Waitakere Parent Pack but including information on learning to drive and more information on sexuality and sexual health. The booklet finishes on a positive note with an advertisement for applying to a youth event and a list of local service providers and their phone numbers along with several national website addresses for further information. In the first print run, 5000 copies were printed for a total of \$11000 and the pre Christmas launch in 2006 "almost wiped out the stock". Requests for more resources from Police (given out at front desk at Police stations) and schools, saw a reprint of another 3000 copies in early 2007 and a re-launch distributed 2000 of these copies immediately. The initial costs were sourced from ALAC, Accident Compensation Corporation and the local Road Safety Committee and this was further supported by funding of \$3500 for the relaunch, which were covered by ALAC and Accident Compensation Corporation.

2.2.4 Taranaki

The Taranaki Parent Pack is also subtitled "Tools for the Teenage Years" and was produced by the drinkSAFE4youth YATA group of the New Plymouth Safer Community Council, which is made up of members from the three local territorial authorities, Taranaki District Health Board, Police, Accident Compensation Corporation, Te Puni Kokiri and the New Plymouth Safer Community Council. The first page also acknowledges the Safe Waitakere Alcohol Project, Taupo YATA Committee, the Crime Prevention Unit of the Ministry of Justice and Public Health South. This Parent Pack is perhaps unique in that it is produced as a bilingual resource in both te reo Maori and English and is strongly visually linked to a local campaign "Think Before you buy under 18s Drink". In addition the booklet includes a letter on Police letterhead congratulating parents on obtaining the resource. It is signed by the local Area Commander and briefly summarises "what Police can legally do with your child if we find them in risky situations" and encourages parents to contact their local Police Station for more information. Beyond the formatting and bilingual inclusions, the content is almost identical to that of the Waitakere and Eastern Bays Parent Packs and again is completed with a list of local contact numbers and website addresses for relevant service providers. A \$30000 grant from the Crime Prevention Unit through the Safer Community Council supported the production (\$5577) of 5000 booklets and the development of a comprehensive distribution and delivery model. Other organizations provided resource in kind – access to images, time, expertise and ALAC provided \$2000 for translation of English into te reo Maori.

2.3 Motivations and intended outcomes

Parents are a priority audience for YATA communities and have traditionally proved a difficult audience to reach with other than media messages. For the three case study communities, the Parent Pack resource is seen to offer a means of complementing previous campaigns by providing a practical tool

for parents that can “disseminate safety information” to influence “attitudinal or behaviour change” as well as raising awareness.

“To fill an information gap – parents across the board had expressed that their knowledge of alcohol and youth issues was not up to scratch”

“Parents understanding their kids less and less”

“Satisfy the need – we get a lot of calls at youth aid from parents wanting help”

“Looking at the issue of alcohol from a supply side – parents as main suppliers – wanting to give them some guidelines”

Connection to ALAC’s YATA programme was instrumental in the initiation and development of the idea of producing a Parent Pack for each of the case study areas. In each case, the introduction to the concept occurred in a YATA forum of some sort and ideas and experiences were also shared amongst YATA groups. As well, funding was often accessed through ALAC and the human resource required to complete the task was only accessible through the local networks that were already strongly developed as part of the YATA commitment.

For example, in Eastern Bays, the local YATA group “had been working on a number of initiatives and saw the benefits of putting a lot of the information available into a single resource to be distributed to parents” when the Taupo version of the resource was shown to them at a YATA meeting. The group wanted a resource that “crossed the whole Eastern Bay, would raise profile of YATA, but the main intended outcome was to get a resource together that we could evaluate”. In Taranaki, the Parent Pack resource grew out of experiences from the implementation of a ‘Think B4 you buy under 18s drink’ campaign which the local YATA group ran from 2002. Feedback on this campaign suggested that local parents were seeking information on “how to handle problems that arise with teenagers” and wanted more than a series of “one-off” campaigns. The YATA group “wanted to do something more practical than just marketing” and “took stock of what else was around and found the Parent Pack to be a popular strategy”.

Members of the organising committees in the three case study areas identified a number of intended outcomes and outputs. These include:

- Raising awareness and provide a useful, easy to read resource that incorporates a whole range of issues around young people for parents and providers to use;
- Developing a tool to use in presentations in workplaces and other settings where parents “who are not going to go and get books on the subject out of the library” are able to be engaged;
- Providing a tool to enhance the ability for “mild to moderate issues to be dealt with within a family setting rather than by health or social services – more intervention and prevention from families before the acute issues arise and need professional help”;
- Supporting parents by showcasing the various support agencies in the local community and how to access them, and

-
- Working in a collaborative manner.

2.4 Resource Development: content, process and target audience

Each case study community had a nominated project leader who drove the project and was responsible for ensuring deadlines were met and that agreed processes were followed. It was seen as “critical to have someone spearhead things and motivate the group”. In two out of three cases, a project subgroup was also established to oversee the day to day decisions involved in the project. In all instances, the wider YATA group was kept well-informed and involved in the broader decision-making process. Where this framework was destabilized (through staff changes and attrition) the integrity of the process was compromised due to a lack of leadership and confusion over roles.

“It has been slow. There was a period between xx leaving and the group re-finding its strength - xx drove the project – we have done some work in looking at our priorities and the Parent Pack is number one – we have got the resource but we haven’t finished it off – there is still work to be done and we are positive that it can be done – we definitely don’t want to see the resource sit in boxes and expire”

Overall, the decision making behind the content and process of developing a Parent Pack resource can vary widely from “What have other communities done? Lets copy that and put our name on it” through to looking at the issues in their communities, engagement in the production process (such as developing bilingual content) and including thorough consultation and consideration of sourcing of information. Each case study community placed significant emphasis on the need for wide consultation in determining the content of the resource. Each case study area developed its own pathway through the production process but, typically, multiple drafts were distributed among the wider stakeholder group and focus groups were often undertaken to test the content and format. This established a wide ownership of the resource in each of the case study communities.

“An extensive consultation process tends to gain a lot more buy-in from communities and community services, creating a richer resource that is distributed more widely...A less consultative process allows for a cheaper, quick fix for communities”

“...[we found] a lot of inaccuracies in other parent packs – identified when consultation undertaken with key stakeholders in the community – updated information in conjunction with these agencies making sure information is 100% correct”

“took stock of what else was around and found the Parent Pack to be a popular strategy... we were very thorough in developing something appropriate to Taranaki...made use of the researcher based in the health promotion unit and set up focus groups to design”

“...something to really meet the needs of the community – and this is where the bilingual thing came from – this was solidly tested through this process”

“Went out to community groups again to seek their feedback – as recommendations for consideration rather than as directives to remove any information”

“Focus groups were necessary to make the language appealing and accessible – they initially saw it as too stiff and starchy”

“One or two areas we chose not to include although focus groups had suggested we might, in an attempt to maintain the alcohol focus”

In Taranaki there was a strong drive to “link the imagery to the ‘Think’ campaign as it had had a massive success in 2002 as far as public awareness”. Feedback from this campaign indicated that the wider community expected more than a “one-off” and the group “wanted to make sure people linked this resource with that campaign”.

“We wanted a reasonably positive image on the front cover, a realistic image of Taranaki youth... There was an awful lot of going backwards and forwards to the designer in the development of the resource by the key coordinator. We got it to draft stage prior to taking to focus groups and then a lot more work went on as a result of these with what we needed to change. This was partly why the whole thing took longer than expected but we wanted to get it right. I’m very pleased we took the time we did”

“Wide ownership for the resource was achieved by those involved in the development through such extensive consultation and involvement – it was a real community effort – right from the start ...and right through to the end with distribution of resources, everyone had a role in that too”

Taranaki also made the decision to incorporate te reo Maori within their Parent Pack, primary alongside headings and subheadings in English. This was a result of discussions with local Maori through focus groups and the desire to have a “kaupapa Maori flow” through the resource.

“It was determined that headings would make it Maori friendly but a lot of text in Maori would make it less accessible to the average Maori parent”

“It has been positive in many ways – the group persevered in getting it right – quite a lot of people were involved in this, especially around the Maori translations, and this was all very positive”

Despite each of the other two case study areas also having relatively significant Maori populations, incorporating te reo Maori into their Parent Packs was seen not to be as relevant or useful, partly due to time and resource constraints, although these decisions may be revisited for future editions.

“People might say it could have had more te reo Maori in it, but a lot of urban Maori don’t speak Maori. The same could be said for many ethnic groups. If we were to try and capture all of these people and languages the resource would be very much larger – whereas for a first edition, English has got to be the right track to go down. This is something that we could work on in future if the demand is there”

“Feedback from one area suggested the resource might also be written in Maori, however when they were invited to initiate this, the suggestion was withdrawn and so it remained in English, for this first edition”

“Initial discussions with kaumatua and kuia suggest a resource in te reo would be a waste of time as Maori are not speaking it”

According to the YATA co-ordinator, the content of Parent Packs tends to vary from community to community based upon identified stakeholder need. This tends to range from a select drug and alcohol focus through to a wider social issues focus, acknowledging that alcohol and drug issues sit within the wider context of youth culture.

“...Info on major health issues – alcohol, drugs, tobacco, safe partying, sex, party pills – where to go for further information – the types of things parents could be discussing with their teenagers around these topics – contacts list at back...Others are a small leaflet with facts about alcohol”

“The purpose of our group is ‘Youth Access To Alcohol’ so for us it was all about that particular message, but in order to be useful to parents we had to address some wider issues”

“We decided not to include the suspension stuff from schools as we thought this was going too far off in a direction – we gave contact details for the minority who might need them – the vast majority don’t get to that stage”

“We touched on bullying and text bullying as we are aware this has been a high profile concern for people and sexual health/sexual orientation – touching on the basics – [decisions] done by committee”

“We wanted to cover everything – we had representation on CAYAD from a wide range of services and wanted to “capture the board” with youth issues – an opportunity to bring a wide range of issues together within the one resource”

“Professional and personal experience with youth and consultation with parents informed what might be appropriate to include in the Parent Pack. A fair bit of research was done around what was put in it”

“Consultation determined the content”

Overall, the content and processes undertaken are very similar between the case study Parent Packs but this can disguise the very local conversations that underpin these decisions. In each of the case studies, the content of other Parent Packs was used as a base with “the expertise of various members of the YATA group and..., where necessary, outside experts” then used to inform the local development of the sections. When this process was completed in Taranaki, however, the group felt there was not

enough information about the Police perspective on how they would deal with teenagers “in trouble”, so a letter of introduction was inserted from Police which also endorsed the resource to parents.

In Eastern Bays, a suggestion via a focus group to have the resource endorsed by local iwi was followed by a concerted effort, but this ultimately proved “too daunting” in terms of both the time involved and the potential changes that might need to result at a point when the resource was almost ready for printing.

More than the content perhaps, the target audience varies across communities, with some being quite clear that this is solely a resource to empower parents, and others recognising that teenagers as well as teachers, clinicians and other adults are also important targets for the information. This variation in target audience tends to have more impact on the format and look of the resource than on the content itself, which is inclined to be comprehensive yet concise and easy to read.

“Kept things as direct and simple and supportive to parents as possible”

“The style of format varies from sterile health type booklet to funky – more pick up from youth with the latter”

“Parents were invited to a meeting to comment on the content and format [and a] local high school Year 13 Design student took on the design of the resource as a school project – ‘Caution tape’ for building sites used as a graphic image to suggest the caution required in dealing with this issue, throughout resource. Sought a flavour for Eastern Bay in the look of the resource”

“Parents were primary audience and some negotiation was required in determining the look of the resource that would say immediately that the resource was about young people, but for their parents, whilst not excluding young people”

“Aimed primarily at parents but including information on what teens want from their parents, to try and capture them as well – I don’t see it as designed for teenagers as such, it would need to be in a different format, perhaps, to truly target teens”

Although the focus of the current evaluation did not include perceptions of the Parent Pack resources among young people, parents were able to report positive feedback about their young people’s willingness to read the resource, and discuss the relevance of the content.

“Daughter brought it home and read it, then I read it – really useful and relevant to me because of the age she is approaching”

Daughter has read it as she quotes it now and again

I found the booklet really good. I showed my 13 year old and he found it very interesting. I don’t think it’s just a pack for us to read, it should be handed over to kids as well and then they have a real understanding of where we are coming from. This provides backup to what we are saying

"My daughter has read and if I mention it I get the usual old "I've read it, you don't have to tell me all about it again – I know all that, I've read it," which is good, I suppose. She knows that you're empowered as much as she is which is a good thing"

"I like "Tools for the Teenage Years" – it is, it's a tool for us and a tool for them. It gives both sides"

The Parent Pack resource was reported as being used in a range of settings, including secondary schools and intermediate schools, and by health and social service agencies.

I don't only use the resource at home, but at work. We were doing current events at school and I used the book to illustrate the effects of P.

"Parents; young people; teachers; health and social workers; has provided youth workers with a better understanding of some of the issues that they are constantly working with; the three councils have come on board in support of the pack, so has given them an increased awareness of some of the issues for parents in the Eastern Bay"

"The resource has gone to the intermediate schools to reach parents of pre-teens also"

2.5 Distribution

Distribution is recognised as a key factor to the success of the initiative in each community and a wide range of approaches are taken. Common modes of delivery include:

- Dissemination via school mailouts to all homes
- Given to young people at school to hand deliver home
- Hand delivered to parents via facilitated sessions with parents, parent teacher evenings, parenting courses
- Dissemination via other service providers, such as Police, health, CYFs
- Distributed at local youth and/or family focussed events

In Taranaki, for example, the 'Think B4 you buy under 18s drink' campaign in 2002 had a high profile local promotional campaign. One of the strategies used as part of this promotion was to deliver presentations in workplaces to groups of adults in order to improve their awareness of "the issue of youth access to alcohol and its consequences". The workplace setting was "found to be very fertile ground" and the content of the presentations was "well received". Most of the audience were parents – "a great way to reach them as they are hard to get them anywhere else" – and were perceived to be empowered by the opportunity to discuss the issue.

Building on this experience when the Parent Pack was considered, the mode of delivery also included presentations to parents, but this time in the school setting and all of the parents in the parent focus group had attended at least one of these presentations (one parent had attended two – one at the local intermediate school and one at the local secondary school). This was considered a more reliable way to

distribute the resource than simply sending the resource home without explanation and the approach was endorsed by the parent focus group.

"The use of this facilitated process around a table meant we shared our experiences and discussed local issues. I think if people were just handed the resource they would just place it aside, whereas when it is presented you are going there wanting to know a bit about it. It makes it all a bit more real because others share that these things have actually happened to them – this was helped by being a small group of parents who knew one another – in a larger group people may not have shared the same. I think receiving it in a group was better because you do discuss things – otherwise it is very easy to think your child is the only one dealing with these issues. Having had these discussions, you are able to say "I know so-and-so's parents don't let them do that, I'm not the only one" – they don't always realise you talk to one another"

Resources were developed to support the three presenters who were contracted with funding from the Ministry of Justice Crime Prevention Unit to undertake 30 presentations by June 2007. Unfortunately, due to unclear circumstances, only a few presentations had been completed at the time of this evaluation. Consequently the Parent Pack resource has been disseminated in Taranaki through schools, without the anticipated supporting presentations having been made, as well as through a variety of other networks. Even so, "only a very few of the 5000 resources have been distributed at this point".

"The distribution plan was to undertake these 30 presentations and then seize opportunities as they arose at events – engaging people once again in discussion rather than just handing them out. Sent out from school we thought there was too much risk that the resources wouldn't make it to the parent to be read"

"I haven't heard too many people talk about it aside from those at the meeting so I don't know how widely available it was. When the 'Think' campaign was in town there was a lot of talk about it, but I don't know if the high school had enough to send out to all parents – which is a shame because it is good and it is easy reading"

"I believe they were just going to target the parent groups to start with and it wasn't going to be handed out to the children (to pass on), so perhaps it needs to get out there more. Maybe they do need to distribute through the schools out to homes"

"There was initially a distribution strategy for the resource, we were very strong on the fact that we didn't want them just handed out and put on counters – that was a group decision, that we really wanted to have presenters distribute – there are probably going to need to be other things that are looked at now that there are so many that haven't been distributed at this point...It is much easier to dump them on counters, they wouldn't be hard to get rid of if we just wanted to be rid of them"

Waitakere also used "face to face" presentations, designed so that participants "could talk with and support one another" but resources were always intended to be distributed beyond the groups at the presentations and were proactively marketed widely within the community, resulting in further print runs.

It is unclear whether any of the parent focus group participants attended a presentation and one of the four participants had not received the resource until contacted about the focus group.

"I don't recall getting the resource, my daughter can be relaxed in handing me notices, so whether she got it and it didn't reach me... I only actually received it last week when contacted about this focus group"

In the Eastern Bays area, distribution through various organisations was seen as preferable to directly marketing to parents because this enabled the YATA group to work alongside the organisations and, in some cases, such collaboration led the organisations to develop services to directly support and utilise the Parent Pack resource. A wide variety of organisations were invited to the launch to view and discuss the Parent Pack as well as being offered copies to distribute. This facilitated some robust discussion as well as promoting a sense of commitment to the resource even from those organisations that had not had a hand in developing it. Consequently a number of initial orders were increased.

Schools were a popular way of distributing the resource because they were the "easiest way to get them into households" as well as being an effective way of supporting parental intervention through use as a resource in the school health curriculum and the general well-being of pupils when at school. However, two of the six participants in the Eastern bays parent focus group had not seen the resource prior to the focus group despite being alerted to it through the school newsletter.

"Recognise the Parent Pack and have seen it somewhere in child's room but has not been passed on to me"

"Has been home though I haven't seen it. Only when approached to be part of focus group that another Parent Pack was sent to me"

The parent focus groups all found getting information directed to them solely by relying on their teenagers to pass it on was less than satisfactory and offered a number of suggestions to complement, or even supersede, this distribution strategy.

"Because it comes home with teenager, it doesn't necessarily make it out of their bag to the parent immediately or at all – maybe should be directed straight to parent"

"Maybe our daughter didn't place enough importance on it and it's just another one of those things that gets lost along the way"

"Letter box drop would be a good thing"

"Mailed out by school might be better"

"Maybe teenagers don't want Mum and Dad to see it"

"Dissemination needs some more consideration – how do we best reach parents"

The case study communities also used a range of mechanisms through Police and social services, mentoring programmes, local hospitals, marae and other trusts and community events to distribute the booklets locally, with varied success. In addition, at least one of the case study communities has had “requests from all over New Zealand” for its resource. In Waitakere it has been “parenting courses” that have continued to distribute the resource – “[we are] constantly asking for more resources (box after box) – [it’s] an important gauge of its success – the resources support their kaupapa and provide something for them to give out to parents”.

“Resource hasn’t been limited to high schools but has gone out through GPs and clinics, and across ages and cultures”

“The resource was made available everywhere. It was made quite clear that it wasn’t to sit on shelves gathering dust. A commitment was made to give it to parents directly rather than sitting in the bottom of kid’s school bags – so many schools took the approach of distributing through parent/teacher evenings. The community recognised it as a really good resource and were looking at ways of proactively delivering it”

“I even saw it in Foodtown”

Distribution is recognised as an ongoing part of the project and has been more costly in both time and money than the communities generally expected.

“Because the resource has been such a success, there have been ongoing requests for the resource outside of Waitakere. Future funding needs to be secured for the resource as current funders are limited to keeping the resource local. This is seen as an ongoing project and yet the funding used for its development is not meant to be used as ongoing funding”

“[There was] slippage in timeframes in the development process, which was worth having to get it right. Despite setting up a subgroup and having a good driver to work with the designer, there were so many revisions. We probably underestimated the work involved at this stage”

In different ways in each of the case study communities, distribution processes and outcomes have also perhaps been one of the most fraught aspects of Parent Pack production, with different organisations and individuals having different understandings and expectations of what has been agreed.

“Before we got to the draft stage, we met with all the principals at the Secondary School Principals Association meeting and got their support for it – they were very eager to see it developed and were offering to post it to parents – we explained that in the first instance we wanted to bring parents together and talk with them about it. As it turns out we haven’t yet done this to the extent that we had wanted. It is still ongoing...it has just not worked as well as it might with the people we have chosen to do the presentations. This has been frustrating – if we had had all three of them out there making a concerted effort over a 3 month period, it would have made a much greater impact and people would probably be talking to each other about it, however this hasn’t happened”.

“Schools have requested it and said they want to get it out there and can't wait for the small presentations, so we have actually had to go with that and distribute a number of them that way too – not sure of the breakdown of what has gone where”

“We also wanted presentations to take place in workplaces but I don't think that has happened – I don't know where this is at. Still an avenue we can use – only 30 minutes needed so could slot it into lunch time meeting or health and safety meeting”

“Concerning and frustrating that we haven't managed to implement the strategy that we designed. It can continue to happen but frustrating that it didn't happen in an intense burst”

“ A media campaign ran alongside launch to help generate interest in pack but it has not been very successful in generating requests for Parent Packs”

“If we look at sports clubs and schools and anticipate it becoming a yearly thing, then we would need to start looking at the logistics of distribution, once the linkages have been made – initially the face to face contact was so important”

“the way [delivery] was done had benefits in the discussions and relationship building that ensued – for the projects it is very much about the relationships with communities – this would be lost with a courier – its hard for the individual but has paid off in other ways – this could depend on how big it becomes”

“I don't know how we could have done this differently other than having someone who was designated as responsible for managing those relationships and driving them. Again, with all the changes to the group there was no one who could do that at the time and so it just slipped”

SECTION THREE: PERCEIVED IMPACT AND STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

3.1 Introduction

This section provides a description of the impact of the Parent Pack resource in each of the case study areas, and the impact of the resource for Maori and Pacific communities by outlining the findings from four key informant interviews, three stakeholder focus groups and three parent focus groups.

3.2 Perceived Impact

In the absence of any substantial formal evaluation of any of the case study resources, and sometimes the relatively short time since dissemination, the impacts and effectiveness of the resource can only be gauged through perception. Even so the overall grade given by participants in the key informant interviews and in the organizational committee focus groups was a 4 out of 5 for impact (with 5 being very good to excellent). When asked to support their high ratings, participants provided a range of positive comments describing the impact of the resource and its effectiveness:

“Absolutely [it has a positive impact, it] provides information, gives parents an insight into how their young people think and the signs associated with lots of different things –alcohol, drugs etc”

“The Parent Pack is brought to you by significant authorities– they are to be trusted, the marae, the Council, the Police, the Mayor’s endorsement”

“Anecdotal evidence that Parent Pack sits on coffee tables and is used to guide discussions with young people in the home”

“Points made in Parent Pack resource are becoming conversation starters – “is this how it is for you?”

“Teenagers using the information to fire back at parents – “remember in the book, it says that parents shouldn’t ...”

“...informal positive feedback received, has raised awareness, provides a tangible output for YATA and a vehicle for them to engage with communities. Local newspaper started using the information under their regular column on parenting. Prior to existence of the Parent Pack, this column had focused more on younger children so a good spin off.”

“A resource like this doesn’t solve people’s problems entirely and that was why the delivery strategy stipulated the presentation format, to get parents talking to one another – seeing how empowered they were by the group process and the networks then established”

“It has been almost embarrassingly good – I don’t think there has been significant negative feedback and that is because of the care in the preparation and the content being spot on”

The perception of effect shifted markedly, however, when participants were asked to rank the impact on specific sectors of the population, as shown in Table One. The scores reported in Table One are an average of the rankings provided by all participants based on the scale described earlier.

| | Waitakere | Eastern Bays | Taranaki |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------|
| Parents | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| Teenagers | 3 | 3 | N/A |
| Maori People | unknown | 5 | 4 |
| Pacific Peoples | unknown | 1 – v small pop | unknown |
| Service providers | 4 | 4 | unknown |
| Grandparents | 5 | unknown | unknown |

Table One: Average Perception by Case Study Area for Target Audiences.

The reaction from those parents involved in the focus groups was also largely very positive. The concise nature of the information written in “quick reference” non-jargon bullet points was received extremely well.

“Wasn’t overkill, easy to read over with your kids, easy for them to read, both have an understanding of what is in there which is important”

“Simple but full of information, no big grammatical words, straight to the point”

“The fact that it was in bullet-points and quick and easy to read was really helpful – I enjoyed this and found it really helpful”

“Very easy to read with bullet points – to flick through the topics and main points – I am only just approaching the issues raised in the book (14 year old) and its scary, but I can see there are some obvious points that parents need reminding of, when I read it I think “that’s so obvious, why didn’t I think of that” but we need to be reminded – really practical”

“Yes, easy to read, in our language, has things we are interested in, logical things that you really can say and do, kid friendly too – if you left it on the table they could read it. My daughter found the ‘what you can do at different ages’ topic very interesting. Quite good to be able to put the Parent Pack in front of them and say ‘This is what the law says’ ”

“Photos are of teenagers who look clean cut and this makes you stop and think about the consequences of supplying alcohol to your kids (they could end up in the cells) and the previous ‘Think B4 you buy’ ads of young people vomiting etc are really disgusting and provocative – make you stop and think – its something brief that they don’t have to read too much – the picture says a lot”

“This is a one-stop pamphlet that brings together information that would otherwise have to be gleaned from a whole range of agencies – easy to read, provides enough information to grasp the topic and then directs you to agencies to help if more information is needed”

“Coming from a third party it reinforces what you are trying to say, reinforcing your battles”

“The independent voice it provides helps to set some ground rules – while we haven’t discussed as a family at all, one can see from teenagers initial reaction that she says it as such”

At the same time, parents also had suggestions to make the resource more user-friendly and useful to them.

“Organisations listed on the back would be better placed alongside the topic area to which they can provide support so that people know which organisations to turn to. No clue which agency would deal with what issue as it currently stands”

“As parents we don’t really know what help is available out there – if the agencies had a blurb on their services it might help”

“Chat room issues would be good topic to add – how to control it, how to keep yourself safe. Not wanting to be an interfering parent but keeping an eye over their shoulder. Internet safety in general was discussed. The Parent Pack is a little thin on these issues”

“Maybe they could put more in it like the internet, families in break-up – where to go at school when this happens etc. Apart from that its fine – its in my top draw at home”

“One thing possibly missing from the book is a ‘code’ that teenagers can use to tell you that they are in an uncomfortable situation and would like you to come and pick them up – this allows them to save face in front of friends. This could be a phrase that they use to tell you they want out like “How’s grandma?” It takes the onus off them for having to leave the party”

“Self harm would be a good topic area to have included – depression, fashion statements, EMO etc might be quite handy to include”

“Inclusion of something on the role of siblings. As a teenager, your child may not want to talk to you about some of these issues. Having a trusted adult or older person with similar values to you can provide your child with someone else they can turn to – this could be a sibling or other responsible adult. They have to get the info from somewhere, so as a parent it would be good to know it was correct and in line with your own values. Grandparents also fulfil this role in many instances”

“Inclusion of information on the importance of taking time out with and for each child individually”

“ Add something on gangs. They are an issue at the moment”

“Peer pressure – might be easier to stand up to mum than to friends”

“Peer pressure is very powerful. Could have some info included on this topic. Hard for parents to watch the effects of peer pressure on their teenagers – how do we deal with this? Huge changes can happen overnight”

"Another section that could be included in the book would be 'communicating with teenagers' – finding ways to sit down and talk"

Several parents also spoke candidly about some of the difficulties in actioning the suggestions.

"For me, the whole booklet was very good. What I need to do now is not put it away. I had put it away and forgot about it. It would be helpful for me to leave it out in the lounge now to reaffirm things and it would be good for my daughter to see it as well, now that my son has taken a liking to it. If it's just sitting there she will read it"

"It sounds good written down – watch out for this that and the other thing – but it can be very hard to interpret what teenagers are thinking and doing and you don't want to misinterpret – having not reached that stage yet, I can't pretend it's not going to happen and you need to have an action plan. We need to have these discussions now so that when our child gets to that stage they already have some idea of the rules etc. However, it is hard as a parent to talk to my kids about something they don't know much about yet and I don't want to scare them. It's hard to know how much to say now and how much to leave until it comes up. Too much information might send the kids off to go and do it, whereas what they don't know about, they don't think about. We are a more traditional family with high moral values, a lot of their peers will not share these values"

"I haven't used it as such yet, I read it last year and put it away, but this has really encouraged me to bring it back out in the open and I will definitely use these points for my meeting with my son and we will arrange how we will do this party"

Even so, most of the parents had either actioned or intended to action some of the ideas contained in their local Parent Pack, and all found the information at least somewhat helpful. A strong theme was on safety promotion and harm minimisation messages in relation to alcohol and other drugs.

"My son is having an 18th birthday party and inviting 30 kids from his form class. I will use the section on planning parties to discuss the ground rules with him"

"My daughter has a party coming up this weekend and I have established ground rules around her attendance"

"The ages where you are able to do things was good – there is a lot going on in teenage years – good for summary – could add more to this list"

"Alcohol part very useful – haven't had a lot to do with drugs but alcohol is a common issue – had my daughter read that as well"

"Drug and alcohol section – gives some ideas on what to look for – good for reference"

" Daughter talks of availability of drugs at school – concerning for parents. One topic in particular where it would be good to know which agencies to discuss this further with"

Other parents commented on increasing their awareness of legal issues

"Favourite page was the ages and legalities – keeps me up to date on what's going on. Thought the rest wasn't really relevant to me or my son at this stage (16) not going to parties"
"Schooling – suspensions etc. Empowering to my son as well as me."

An increased awareness of techniques to enhance young people's safety, in a variety of settings including at school, on the internet, and in relation to mobile phones were also highlighted by parents.

"Text bullying was an issue for us previously – it would have been excellent to have this information to help us deal with that at the time"

"Internet safety - we have placed our PC in a high traffic area as a result of reading about these issues in the Parent Pack. School is fairly vigilant with the safety aspects of the Internet now too and so I think they get that drummed into them at school"

"Really good to read this type of resource to reinforce that it is ok to ring parents of your children's friends – you are not being over-protective"

For some parents, the Parent Pack resources were considered a powerful communication tool which 'normalised' and facilitated discussions about a range of potentially sensitive issues between young people and their parents.

"The resource can encourage parents to talk about issues and ensure they are on the same page, supporting one another in decisions around these issues"

"Kind of use it as a checklist – to actually have it written down means it is more than just your parent who is being a pain"

"I'm going to take this home now and read this particular passage to her"

"I have tried to take the information on board and facilitate discussion with her. She has just finished the health topic at school that covers each of these issues, so based on what I had read, we sat down and had a general chat about it"

"I really like all the references regarding places you can go for extra help – there is quite a lot in the book but great to have follow up contacts for more specific information"

"Have read it a couple of times and provides a reference to go back to and seek out further information and contacts"

"Kids would like it if the majority of parents were on the same level and therefore the boundaries were clear across the board – this would require the resource to be more widely distributed, to kids as well as parents"

Approaches to using the resource varied amongst the parent spoken with. Many were quite proactive in using the booklets to initiate conversations with their teenagers. Others encouraged a more passive absorption simply by leaving them in visible places.

"Kids hate being spoken down to. Instead of randomly bringing up issues from the resource, it would be better to be flicking through the resource and ask their opinion on something "It says in here that... What do you think about that?""

"With the public debate around party pills, my daughters heard stuff on the news and were wondering what they were. I was able to show them in the Parent Pack and then when they heard about a new form of methamphetamine on the market they related it to the book"

"You want your kids to know about these things and the PP gives you an excuse to bring these topics up"

"I think for those of us with younger kids we have an advantage because we can actually use the PP to steer them, more so than for older kids"

"If you leave it on the kitchen table for a few days ... she and her boyfriend were there last night flicking through it, pretending that they weren't. But then she starts reading bits out, its good"

"They (13 year olds) have looked through it. My wife has had a look through also. That's pretty much it – we'll leave it there so that they can see it."

"We haven't sat down and actually discussed this, but it's been on the table and both of them have looked at it"

"Kids will read it when they are ready if it's left lying around. If it's forced upon them they won't read it"

My daughter didn't say "This is rubbish." But she didn't put it down at all. Neither did she say "Gosh, this is very interesting." She was just taking it in. The fact that she didn't say anything against it is a big plus"

"When I took it home the girls were looking through it with a friend and they were talking about different bits and pieces"

"The message is not just for parents and the various styles of communication within families mean that it is often left lying around for kids to read themselves. It is information I want my kids to know, by whatever means, to keep themselves safe While I don't know a lot about drugs, if the kids ask I can say 'I don't know, but go and have a look in there'"

"Sometimes you have to let them [the teenagers] lead – if you give too much information and if they are not ready for it, they don't take it in at all"

"I totally agree, they get the whole picture if they ask for it"

The response from teenagers when information from the parent packs is put into action is credited with raising awareness of the issues with teens, as well as letting them know that "that mum and dad have got information". In addition, the majority of parents spoken with added that using the Parent Pack had helped to improve their relationship with their teenager as well as having positive impacts on expectations and behaviour. Several conceded that they would not have such conversations without the book to use as a resource to both inform themselves and to offer for information to their teen, and all said they expected to refer to it again in the future.

"I'm sure he has absorbed it and is thinking about it subconsciously. It has set some ground rules and he will be thinking about future things"

"I think it influenced my daughter because she quotes it back to me"

"I think we have a better relationship because I have more understanding. It has given me more confidence"

"I am almost certain she wouldn't touch any drugs at all based on what she has read in here, and also what she has seen and what we have spoken about in the past. You can never be 100% sure, but I'm pretty certain"

"I probably would have rung up the school counsellor and said "what do I do?" It has been a tool for me, it's good"

"Waving this at him (the resource) tells him that I care and am trying to do something"

"Knowledge is power for our teenagers as well as us – helps to keep them safe"

"I use every opportunity to bring these topics up and just by jokingly talking about it, we cover the issues – it is when they are quiet about things that you need to worry"

For Waitakere and Eastern Bays, where the Parent Pack had been widely distributed for some time, the impact perceived by the organisational committee was extremely positive, with the reach being wider than anticipated.

"I think it's so bloody good – I have seen other pamphlets and such, but they don't capture the breadth of areas and its very simple. You don't have to collect a bunch of pamphlets on different topics – one document – everything is here"

"For me, the information is all in one place, encompassing all of what we thought parents might need, which is a reasonable size – its size doesn't advertise the fact that you have a problem"

teenager, which collecting a whole range of pamphlets on different issues might do – I think this has a huge impact on people picking it up”

“The size is great – it has been pared down – and how it looks, it has that attractive pick-up-able look”

“As a parent, it normalises what we are going through with our teenagers. I also really like the memo from the kids which tells parents what kids want from you, the boundaries etc”
“I like the language – it is just plain and simple – a teenager could read it without taking offence”

“I like the action plans – like not trying to reason with a drunk teenager I was glad to have a resource that supported my network, the convenience, the plain, simple, de-jargonised language”

“I don’t think we really contemplated the demand from parents of pre-teens through primary schools in preparation for what lies ahead”

“Teachers at school gave very good feedback, using it as a base for parent/teacher evenings – this is where we were shocked to hear the response from primary teachers”

“Repeat orders would suggest that the resource has been distributed very wide”

“We have to wait for some more feedback – it might draw our attention to something we didn’t see, otherwise no, it’s perfect”

The organisational committee in Taranaki appeared to be relatively conservative in their estimation of the perceived impacts of the resource on the target audiences, due in part to a lack of formal feedback to date, the short timeframe since the initial distribution of the resource in Taranaki, the effectiveness of select distribution channels and to the recognition of the limitations of a written resource such as the Parent Pack. However, in contrast, the feedback from the Taranaki parent focus group was very positive and there have already been some repeat orders from some schools.

In other areas, a number of positive unforeseen impacts were also described:

“The resource has gone way beyond Waitakere, we didn’t think that would happen”

“One by-product has been the development of a Maori specific poster based on ALAC’s poster campaign that is used in the resource (His parents did this to him). This has also been taken to Pacific communities who, while they said it was not well-tailored to them, has given weight to dialogue around these issues”

At the same time, there are also acknowledged limits to the impact and effectiveness of the resource in Waitakere and Eastern Bays. Again, in the absence of formal evaluation, these are perceptual and relate mostly to impact on Maori and Pacific communities, as well there was some reflection on the realistic capacity and inherent limitations of a written resource.

“Obviously you want it to be as good as it can be but you have to recognise the limitations of written material – I don’t think it can be a 5 really – it’s not going to go and make someone completely reassess how they parent a teenager”

“Personally, I have often thought that the title ‘Parent Pack – Tools for the Teenage Years’ oversells it – firstly it’s not a pack, it’s a book and secondly ‘Tools for...’ might be over-promising a bit. Realistically it’s a booklet that we hope will give people some strategies to move in a positive direction and some follow up contacts. But more importantly, I think it’s just about generating discussion and communication with other support people in the community”

“We have tried to limit the amount of writing, but there is still a lot of writing in here – which might exclude people with literacy issues”

“We have tried to section it off so that topics can be covered without too much time”

“People might think this is their answer to everything but it’s not it’s just a guide”

While the Parent Pack resource was seen to be effectively targeting information to parents, the perceived impact of the resource on young people was less clear. Other methods and tools were considered to be of potentially more value for communicating directly with young people

“Young people have not tended to be a target for the resource. More involvement from young people could ask the question “What do you want your parents to know about what you are getting up to? And what are the best ways we could communicate with your parents?” More empowering process and moves away from a government agency approach to what we think parents might need or want to know. Seen as too hard, too time-consuming and too costly to bring young people together to gain this information. With their involvement we might have been able to identify better ways of reaching their parents as well, and PP could have become part of a bigger project reaching parents.

Effective use of the Parent Pack was also seen to be somewhat pre-determined by existing levels of communication between young people and their families.

“The Parent Pack assumes a level of communication between parents and young people that may not exist. Young people often discuss these sorts of issues with peers or other adults. Parents are possibly likely to address these issues only once an incident has occurred and they feel forced into discussing the issue and taking their young people to services that can help them, rather than as a preventative approach”

While each community had sought engagement with Maori communities in the development and distribution of the resource, this, had mostly been limited to the assessing appropriateness for this audience in terms of language and distribution channels. Engagement with Pacific communities was limited to the utilisation of existing Pacific networks for the distribution of the resource.

"We don't have a huge Pacific community... The ones I have involvement with, Samoan and Tongan, would require another presenter, and would have to be approached slightly differently through church environments, there would be some things to take into consideration... would need to have ethnic-specific presenters for each group. It would take a bit more work I think. There is a Pacific Island collective that has just started up – that would be the best way for us to go, and the multi-ethnic council..."

"As a Samoan, I have introduced the resource to some of our groups... the public health nurse uses it sometimes, she's an Islander... a resource is always good, but I don't have any stats or evaluation from these families, because a lot of them don't know how to read"

Exceptions to this are the clear effort Taranaki have made to target Maori through both the formatting of the resource as well as the use of presentations in various settings. Waitakere have also approached Maori Wardens and Pacific elders a purposeful effort to circulate the resource in a manner in which it might be more likely to be used.

"In [some] communities Maori and Pacific have purposefully not been targeted and so therefore... the resource [appears] not relevant to these communities at all. This is a considered 'general population' approach as the issues are seen as being common to all. Shifting this mindset is quite difficult. The areas with a higher proportion of Maori and Pacific seem to have no problems seeing the need for a more targeted approach"

"Other communities see a Maori representative on the organising committee as a license to tick the box making it appropriate to Maori"

"Hasn't been delivered to any groups of Maori-specific parents as yet for us to get that information"

"We specifically employed a Maori provider for the presentations to reach into Maori communities, and we did discuss with the presenters whether the presentations should be different for Maori audiences – and it was felt it didn't need to be different – that the personal style of the presenters caught be called upon to tailor for Maori... Our focus has been with Maori at the moment, to get it right there"

Even with targeted effort, there is ongoing acknowledgement of the difficulty in assessing who reads and uses the resource.

"Effective for parents who are reading the resource but how do we get more to read it?"

"I wonder how many people treat it like this though? How many people keep it where they can just put their hands on it? A number of factors impact on whether other parents would do the same – by nature of participating in the focus group, this is a collection of motivated and concerned parents"

"Need to have people take that initial look at it, there is so much that comes past parents, but taking the initial step of reading it would show the value in it – that is the biggest hurdle"

"The title 'Parent Pack' hopefully sparked interest with those unaware of the resource – maybe something that would give the answers I have been looking for...[but] it is difficult to gauge whether the resource actually made it into the hands of parents although it was widely distributed – this would have to be ascertained from those who worked to distribute directly to parents"

Parents in the focus groups who had received the resource, however, gave varying responses when asked to rank the research, but overall positively endorsed the resource as Table Two illustrates.

| | Waitakere | Eastern Bays | Taranaki |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| Overall Rank (where 5 = excellent) | 4-5 | 5 | 3-5 |

Table Two: Overall Range of Rankings from Parent Focus Groups in each Case study Community.

These parents felt the resource "reinforced and strengthened" their values but also acknowledged that they "may not be a good representative sample of parents". The groups each expressed concerns with how to ensure the resource was made as widely available as possible so that it might assist and empower all parents.

"I do have high values and morals – it opened me up to sometimes taking a different path. The book has already encouraged me to do this with my daughter – it acted as a reminder to act positively rather than wait for her to initiate"

"Confirmed that some of our values are ok – kids would like to make you think that you are the only parent checking these things out – it confirms that this is acceptable (to be checking up) and affirms what we believe"

"Reinforces my values and reminds me that we have do certain things if we want our children to behave in a certain way"

"Reminds me not to hark on and on about issues. Gives good pointers like not approaching them when they have been drinking"

"Reinforces what I have always thought about them being your kids not your friends"

"It empowers me, I say to him "I know what you should be doing now" as he's a great one for telling me what to do and what he's entitled "

"It's a parents bible"

"This is my backup – they know it all"

“Is the resource available from each of the services listed in the directory on back cover? For me when I saw this I thought “this is what I need, this is good...something you want to grasp and keep somewhere handy.” You would hope that other parents would feel the same but maybe they don’t have access to it”

Overall most parents recognise the booklets as tools and guides that could not ultimately protect their teenagers or themselves, but which could offer support towards achieving positive outcomes for both parents and teens.

“You can give them all the info and tools, and at the end of the day they have their own minds and will try things – don’t beat yourself up – you have done your best. They have to make their own mistakes”

“Today is the day we have silence for child abuse – a lot of these parents come from backgrounds with no support and if they have the tools to deal with life a bit better then they won’t bash up their kids”

Alongside the parental support, there was very positive endorsement of Parent Packs as both a resource and a process for fostering more effective, and collaborative, work practices.

“There is so much potential outside of simply having the resource – we can explore different methods of delivering the messages – but in the end, there is something tangible to take away with you – you could design a whole performance around it – role play, parents’ stories etc – use this as a tool – it’s not just the information, it’s how you deliver it”

“Judge Andrew Beecroft not only took the time to read it, he also wrote about it in the Mail, congratulating the resource – couldn’t get better than that – that has probably been the most formal feedback – but with informal comments, requests for more copies validate the resource”

“Do it, it’s a great thing”

3.3 Strategies for the Future

Communities recognised the need for evaluation of the resource before moving forward into future iterations. Each wanted to be sure of the value to parents. Each also wanted to be sure that distribution channels were fully maximized to gain the necessary and desired reach and acknowledged that this had been both a strength and a weakness with their current project. Even so, the experience of producing and distributing the Parent Packs had left the case study communities with some strong experiences and perceptions of ways forward.

“Better reaching the target audience – better distribution. We’re all crying out for this information”

Encouragement was expressed to other communities wanting to develop a Parent Pack resource with the recommendation that the wheel not be reinvented, but this was coupled with the strong recommendation that significant effort and time needed to be taken to ensure the resource both

reflected, and had buy-in, from the local community. Alongside this, there were strong recommendations for the development of a template of some sort. This acknowledges the very similar content in many of the currently available Parent Packs but also nods towards the need for guidance on process.

"I suppose we saw weaknesses in the resources developed by other communities and tried to overcome them - we were lucky that we had other resources to look at, it wasn't the first one, we did spend quite a bit of time going through other people's"

"Concerned about the amount of hours many spent in the research and development of similar resources around the country – the provision of a strong template for communities to utilise in this process would bring costs down considerably"

"If ALAC could develop a template with 90% of information standardised, communities could simply change the cover sheet which currently includes the mayoral introduction and local service contact details on inside covers"

"We hope that capacity is built in to the project to have it developed as a nationwide initiative whilst maintaining a community focus and that funding opportunities within the community don't dry up and jeopardise the ongoing development of the initiative"

"Probably nothing we would take out"

Acknowledgement was given to the limitations of a written resource in providing the full answer to parental empowerment and open communication between parents and their teenagers. There was recognition of the need to consider the wider context in which resources operate and an awareness and willingness to be "more creative" and "inventive" in developing engagement with the wider environment.

Fundamentally, communities recognise the need for updates of the resource to be current with contact details as well as to keep abreast of developments in youth culture which evolves at a fast pace as well as to learn from their own, and others, experiences. Several suggestions, often particular to specific resources and communities, were offered. These include monitoring feedback on the resource to inform changes in future editions:

*"First edition for Waitakere, it will grow and change according to the community need – good effort for first try – the amount of consultation at start really helped with parents, specialists etc – others will emerge with further information that could enhance future editions
Fill it up a bit more – expand on some of the topics without compromising the size of the resource too much"*

*"The headings have proved quite difficult for people to read. This was debated during development but the designer insisted they were part of his vision. They would need to be changed next time"
"Reshape some of the graphic impact of resource – as opposed to the content. Provide finger tabs for easy reference to sections ...and colour coding successfully"*

Other suggested changes were focused on ensuring the content, look and feel were as 'local' as possible, including meeting the needs of a range of cultures and Maori and Pacific parents in particular:

"Future considerations would need to take reaching other cultures into account"

"If the resource is successful in English it gives weight to the arguments for having it translated into other languages in future"

"Maybe not the whole resource done in different languages – just key points highlighted – a mixture of English and another language would help to not alienate those whose language skills might not be as good as they would like"

"In the delivery of the message, if there is someone to work alongside you, they can translate verbally where necessary – there is an enormous breadth of foreign languages in Waitakere – 100 different languages spoken in one school – impossible to cater to all"

"People can feel part of the Parent Pack and represented within it when they see their language portrayed especially for Pacific peoples and Maori – it is important that we pick some key languages to highlight some of the key points"

"The process involved in developing the initial Parent Pack could be handed over to communities whereby they could take on the development of a resource appropriate to their community in their language – great community building"

"Do any additional content areas need to be investigated for Maori and Pacific or should content be expressed in a more acceptable manner? We run the risk of being offensive in our use of language"

"Location-specific information could also be included – e.g. liquor bans etc"

"The photographic imagery could be made more relevant by using local material rather than American imagery which features none of the local ethnic makeup"

"Possibly some sort of graph showing which agencies were responsible for which services would have helped parents to identify better who to turn to for help. It is often not at all obvious in their name what services they supply"

Stakeholders reflected that improvements could be made in identifying processes and strategies for dissemination of the resource, and monitoring after distribution. It was also important to identify expectations for partner agencies

" Greater emphasis on other members of YATA having greater involvement and taking on more responsibility so that all the onus does not fall on one person"

"I still think the presentation and marketing strategy is a good one – find the right people and manage that process"

"A feedback slip somehow incorporated into the resource"

"Investigate further ways of distributing the resource"

"Include information on where people could access more copies"

Other suggestions for future work included focusing on a broader range of issues, or the needs of particular priority groups of young people

"No information is included on youth mental health, in retrospect this should have been included – suicide prevention, mental health, how to support young people through depression etc"

"Kids going away to university could be another topic area of interest to parents"

'The challenge remains to adequately represent the range of issues facing teenagers without growing the resource too much"

Other stakeholders were enthusiastic about leveraging from the opportunities created by the Parent Pack resources to develop additional resources, or alternate ways of working to support young people

"Young people should be more involved"

"Peer education is a very effective tool for reaching out to young people and is gaining increased traction – a face to face, facilitated process with a range of minority audiences"

"There is more evidence that we are needing this (alternative means of communicating the message) and it has been started already with some young Pacific people going around churches and did role play about the messages teenagers were receiving and gave them information about the services available. This has proved very powerful and can be used as a springboard for sharing experiences. Young people provide a dynamic medium for communicating this message"

Even so, and perhaps reflecting the different stages the case study communities are at with this resource, there were mixed levels of confidence about repeating the exercise and updating the resource. Responses included:

"Yes, absolutely [we would produce it again]"

"We would have to wait for more feedback from parents – we did try to address everything that came out of the focus groups, but we don't know until we ask whether this satisfied their need. It will be really important to find what you have got in your final report and also to talk to some parents ourselves. I wouldn't repeat the process without finding out how it has been received and used by parents"

"Depends on parental feedback – probably would if parents identified a strong need for it and particularly if they said it could be enhanced by x and y"

“Probably, but would have to be looking at what my involvement was and my other work because it means I have put other things on hold”

“For us as a group it’s about building on past projects rather than jumping about from one thing to the next. We are currently at a stage where we can look at what we haven’t done very well and look at how we can now do it better... At the same time, we should be looking for additional strategies around that, to facilitate more interactions to reduce parental isolation”

“Despite the ups and downs we have had, it hasn’t completely turned us off the idea – at the end of the day we do think it’s a really good, valuable resource, and it’s about working together and the collaboration of YATA”

Some communities have made the effort to gather feedback but there is still very little knowledge about the effectiveness of the resource and most feedback to date has been informal. Most local attempts at evaluation have yielded little information. Communities are thus naturally keen to hear back from ALAC regarding evaluation findings.

“Really hard to say who will actually see the resource when it is sent out by the school unless you do some follow up evaluation – quite possible that we will look at doing this down the track a little bit – we hadn’t entirely developed an evaluation plan and then you came along and we thought we’d wait and see what you find”

“We have a feedback form for the presentations to capture information from these groups, however nothing beyond this”

Most communities are acutely aware of the challenges they face in achieving effectively reaching parents of teenagers and affecting positive behaviour change. The case study communities in this evaluation see this as a challenge to strengthen the Parent Pack resource as a strategy “by having other strategies that fit with it and build around it - using Ottawa Charter to ensure a comprehensive approach”

“Parent Packs have been seen as a huge project in themselves that will make the necessary impact on parents, as opposed to being seen as part of a bigger approach”

“A larger strategy might also have strategies to better target Maori and Pacific communities that might not involve a booklet but more one-on-one facilitation and different strategies for different cultures”

“If the organisers of the book did try to follow up with parents with some kind of discussion groups to go with it, then it gets people to read it and not just put it aside and to then see the value of the information that’s in there”

We want the PP to be used in a preventative fashion rather than as the ambulance at the bottom of the hill

“This book has opened discussion amongst us that we all have issues with our kids and I think there are so many parents who think that they go through all this stuff by themselves. It would be nice to be able to let people know that they are not alone, I don’t know how. Wouldn’t it be great if more parents could have discussions like this? It would be very beneficial but the problem remains in getting people to come to these discussions. As most of us are also on the PTA at school, we might have to take it further and organise an evening.”

SECTION FOUR: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

There is strong evidence from New Zealand and elsewhere that families have a critical role to play in promoting and enhancing the health and wellbeing of young people.[3, 4, 6, 9] Families that are characterized by a parenting style which is high on warmth and also high on setting reasonable boundaries (described as authoritative and nurturing) are most likely to experience positive outcomes in young people's emotional well-being, school success, self-esteem and in avoiding drug use and illegal acts.[9] Health promotion resources and tools which encourage parents to build relationships with their children and adolescents where they regularly have positive times together and make sure that young people feel safe in talking to them about anything that is on their mind are likely to be effective in contributing to positive outcomes for young people.[9]

All the stakeholders who participated in this evaluation suggested that the Parent Pack resource was intended to achieve a range of outcomes, including:

- Raising awareness among parents, other key adults and young people of the range of issues that young people may be facing;
- Developing a useful, easy to read resource which can be used to start conversations with parents in a range of settings, and provide a strengths-based approach to addressing identified issues
- Provide a starting place for parents to access assistance and early intervention from local service agencies
- Collaboration between community stakeholders

Overall, evaluation findings are positive, and suggest that the resource meets stakeholder expectations in relation to the key outcomes described above. For the majority, the Parent Pack resource is seen as a useful and valuable tool to facilitate communication between parents and young people, and between other adults and young people. The primary target audience for the resource is parents, and there is some evidence that the resource is targeted to adults in other setting including schools, community health promotion campaigns, and parenting courses.

Throughout this evaluation, positive assessments have been made by stakeholder groups about the tone, style and content of the Parent Pack resources across the three stakeholder communities. Parent Packs are characterized by factual information, delivered in clear language, and a non-judgmental tone. While directly assessing the views of young people was outside the scope of the current evaluation, previous research undertaken in New Zealand suggests that health promotion resources which are congruent with young people's lived experiences, and which contain factual non-judgemental information are more likely to be acceptable to young people.[10]

Development of the resource within each of the communities was supported and facilitated by a YATA group, however, in all communities the development of the Parent Pack resource incorporated a wide range of agencies over and above the YATA group. Partnerships with a wider range of agencies throughout the resource development and distribution process enhanced perceptions of local ownership of the resource and engagement with post-resource distribution and dissemination processes. Acknowledging the time, human and financial costs related to the development, printing and

dissemination of the Parent Pack resources, a broad network of partners was also considered an effective means of cost-sharing across many organizations. Partnering with a range of agencies may also increase access to sources of funding, including but not limited to ALAC resources.[11] A recurrent finding of the evaluation was that the costs (particularly financial costs) of printing and distribution of the Parent Pack resource were frequently larger than had originally been anticipated by stakeholders. Issues associated with the level of available funding from a range of sources available to YATA groups to support the development of initiatives such as Parent Packs has been identified in a previous evaluation.[11]

Identifying partners, and roles and responsibilities throughout the project to develop and disseminate the Parent Pack resources was highlighted as a key factor in ensuring that the project remained on track, and was able to be satisfactorily completed. Evaluation findings suggest that the development of Parent Pack resources is a large and complex task, the full extent of which may be underestimated by communities. Consequently, being on a single individual to lead and complete the project increases the risk of non-achievement. Acknowledging that the team to develop the Parent Pack is likely to include representatives from a range of groups, it is important to develop processes and systems that ensure that all partners needs are met, and positive relationships are maintained during the development process, and afterwards. It may be useful to develop a detailed plan of actions and processes encompassing all the project phases from development and production through to dissemination. Agreement should be reached about the timing and sequencing of tasks, and specific roles and responsibilities.

Evaluation findings highlight that the content of the Parent Pack resources was essentially similar across the case study communities, and in other Parent Pack resources which had been used as models for the development of the resources within the case study communities. Evaluation participants suggested that there was the potential for an agency to develop a 'template' for information to be included in Parent Pack resources, which communities could then vary to meet local needs. The advantages of a template included time and cost savings, and ensuring that information was accurate and up to date. Some suggestions were received about which agency should take responsibility for developing the template, including a role for ALAC. While contributing to the components of the resource which focus on alcohol has been a role for ALAC, the scope and focus of the Parent Pack resource is wide, and includes other drugs, school information, bullying, safety promotion in the internet, violence prevention, and sexual health issues. Consequently, the broad focus on youth health issues suggests that if a lead agency is required to support the development of a template, then the Ministry of Youth Development appears to have the most appropriate mandate for this work.[12] Other agencies, including for example ALAC or the Family Planning Association, could be involved as partners, and provide topic-specific expert advice.

Across the communities in this evaluation, important differences were observed in relation to the inclusion of te reo Maori in the resource. Amongst the case study communities, a clear need emerged for the development of specific strategies for reaching out to Maori and Pacific communities in particular. One strategy to achieve this focused on the inclusion of te reo Maori text in the resource, to respond to suggestions from local partners. However, this strategy required careful consideration, to ensure that the best possible balance was achieved between incorporating te reo Maori as a means of including priority groups of parents, versus the unintended consequences of excluding others. Initial

feedback suggests that this strategy has worked well, however consultation would be required to see if this strategy was transferable to other communities.

While the current evaluation was able to assess perceptions of the impact of the Parent Pack resources on selected communities, the extent to which the resource has a measurable impact on increasing information and awareness of parents about the issues that their young people may face is unknown. Feedback from the stakeholder groups within this evaluation considered that the impact of the resource was very positive, and proxy measures of positive impacts included the involvement of leading figures in the community (including the Mayor and others), and requests for reprints of resources within the community, and from areas outside the local community. Additionally, parents considered that the resource functioned as an effective communication tool with their young people, and enabled a framework to support potentially fraught conversations with young people about sensitive or challenging issues.

Closer examination identified the need to increase the impact of the resource for priority groups, including Maori and Pacific parents. Communities had explored a range of strategies to increase the reach of the Parent Pack resources to Maori and Pacific communities, including through the text and formatting of the resource, the delivery style of presentations, and through developing partnerships with Maori wardens and Pacific elders. However there was widespread acknowledgement that further work was required to identify what might be required to effectively meet the needs of Maori and Pacific parents, and best be distributed to them. This also raised questions about the appropriateness of a resource such as the Parent Pack for some groups. For example, in some Pacific communities, parents are unlikely to engage with their young people on the topics such as those contained within the Parent Packs because such issues are considered taboo and culturally should not be participated in. To begin to build communication strategies in such communities, there was discussion about using marae and churches, and events associated with these places and institutions, as appropriate venues and vehicles for distribution of Parent Pack resources. At the same time there is recognition that a written format has proven less than ideal in engaging with these communities. Peer education, facilitated discussions and other aural media were discussed as more appropriate means of reaching these audiences.

More broadly there was acknowledgement that more work is required to determine the most effective means of distribution of the Parent Pack resource to parents and the best format in which to deliver the messages within a Parent Pack. This is part of a larger question examining how information can be effectively communicated to parents in ways that cause them to consider the issues as well as to take action where appropriate. Associated with these issues is the perpetual "challenge...in getting the disengaged parent to open or read the material" and this may equally refer to parents who do not believe their children would take part in these activities (and therefore consider the information contained in Parent Pack resources irrelevant) as it may refer to other parents who are not interested in the material for other reasons.

Each case study community took a different approach to distribution and each saw the success of their project as resting on the strength of their distribution plan. The three distinct processes involved:

-
1. *Stakeholder engagement* - Launching the resource to a group of stakeholders and using this as the key dissemination vehicle
 2. *Shotgun approach* - Sending out the resource to every intermediate and secondary school, stakeholder and community group in the area for them to distribute to parents
 3. *Targeted approach* - Undertaking 30 presentations or workshops with parents and using this as the primary means of distribution.

Evaluation findings are unable to identify which process was the most effective, however evidence suggests that health promotion resources targeting youth health and wellbeing issues which are supported by a comprehensive and integrated approach to delivery and dissemination of key messages are more likely to be effective in meeting their stated aims and objectives.[4]

While each study community alluded to a communication or distribution plan of some sort, there appeared to be a lack of a distinct and comprehensive distribution strategy developed early in the project development process, and the results in the communities were quite different. In two areas there has been the need to reprint the resource and replenished supplies of the resource to some settings several times, whereas in the other area, the resource has been very slow in moving, both through the production phase as well as in dissemination. This is partly because of staff changes and a period where no one was driving the project but also because anticipated distribution processes have not gone according to plan.

In hindsight each community was able to identify further strategies that might have enhanced their dissemination, pointing to a need for further work in determining the best means of distribution. These include:

- Establishing a clear distribution plan with agreed timelines, outputs, limits, roles and responsibilities. Adequate ongoing resourcing may be an issue.
- Consideration of 'settings' and development of distribution strategies appropriate for different settings
- Recognising the potential and role of various strategies and ensuring these are in complementary ways.

Parent Packs do not exist in communities in isolation, they are part of a spectrum of health promotion resources available to and utilised by communities. One of the intentions of the Parent Packs is to provide a 'one-stop-shop' of information for adults, about social and health issues for young people. Communities recognised that Parent Pack resources were more likely to be effective if they were part of a broader initiative or range of interventions, however, challenges were often experienced in implementing supporting strategies. Evidence from this evaluation suggests that a range of strategies were trialled and considered useful in building a supportive environment to implement and disseminate the Parent Pack, including developing presentations for delivery in a variety of settings, and a media plan to increase community awareness and facilitate requests for resources. Additional funding was also received by some communities to enable the development and delivery of supporting strategies. While the impact of the supporting strategies is unclear, perceptions of these activities are positive. To facilitate communities learning from each other's experiences, consideration could be given to formally integrating parallel and supporting activities into the development of the Parent Pack resources.

Additional funding and other support could be sought from external agencies. This approach could also enable the Parent Pack resource to be 'nested' within larger scale strategic programmes and interventions delivered by a range of agencies, which aim at supporting young people and their families.

Finally, a key finding of this evaluation and the earlier work undertaken by Duncan et al [7] is that while many communities invest heavily in the development and dissemination of Parent Packs, in comparison little investment has been put into assessing and monitoring the impact of Parent Packs on communities. Evaluating the reach, and impact of health promotion resources is challenging, particularly for community stakeholders who may require support in evaluation methods and data analysis. However, support could be sought for a consistent evaluation framework from agencies such as ALAC or the Ministry of Youth Development, who would be more likely to have in-house research and evaluation resources which communities could access. Alternatively, consideration could be given to developing a resource and placing it on a website to increase access by community group stakeholders. Careful consideration will be required to ensure that the evaluation framework meets the needs of priority groups of parents, including Maori and Pacific parents.

SECTION FIVE: OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Findings reported in this evaluation indicate that the Parent Pack resources examined in three case study communities are useful and achieving their desired aims. The resources appear to have a high level of acceptability for parents and other groups of adults in the community. Demand for the resources is high, and many communities in New Zealand appear to be seeking similar resources. However evaluation findings from this research suggest further work is required to examine effective means of increasing the reach and relevance of the Parent Pack resource for Maori and Pacific parents.

The current evaluation was supported by the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC). ALAC has been a partner in the development of many Parent Pack resources, both in the case study communities examined in this evaluation, and in others not reviewed here. ALAC's strategic vision is to change the drinking culture within New Zealand, to reduce the burden of alcohol related harm from alcohol use, particularly from harms associated with intoxication. Within this vision, young people, Maori and Pacific peoples are identified as priority population groups, as they experience a disproportionate burden of alcohol related harms.[13] Acknowledging the priority focus on alcohol and young people, ALAC has provided supports to a range of communities and Parent Pack resources including via the YATA groups, targeted funding, and through general support for the development and consultation processes through staff, including the Project Manager, Community Action and Youth and Regional Project Managers. Findings from this evaluation suggest that communities are appreciative of ALAC's support of the Parent Pack resource, and encourage the continuation of similar levels of support. While some suggestions were made for ALAC to take a greater role in supporting Parent Packs, including taking responsibility for the development of a template, the focus on a broad range of young people's health and social issues suggests that any lead agency role would be more appropriately undertaken by an agency such as the Ministry of Youth Development. However, it is apparent from the analysis of this evaluation that a clear role remains for ALAC in providing expert advice on alcohol issues such as supply control and demand reduction.

When considering the future opportunities for the Parent Pack resource, it is important to recognise that the primary target audience for the resource is parents, not young people. Should a community want to include young people as a primary target audience for this type of resource, then it would be important to include the voices and perspectives of young people. However, it is vital not to preclude critical consideration of whether or not a book-style resource is the best way to reach young people themselves. For example, other technology and media vehicles may be more effective means by which the issues and concerns of young people may be more readily discussed.[14] Careful monitoring and evaluation of any resources would be required, to build on existing models of good practice and manage the risk of any unintended consequences.

It is important to note that while the findings of this evaluation report are positive about the impact of the Parent Pack resource, the evaluation has a number of limitations. These include a focus on stakeholder perceptions, which included a sample of parents, of the impact of the resource on selected communities, and for Maori and Pacific communities. While stakeholder perceptions are one useful indicator of impact, in the time and financial resources available for the current evaluation it was not

possible to undertake a more indepth examination of impact, or to review and assess specific indicators of youth health and wellbeing, or measures of family engagement. Additionally, while the case study communities are able to illustrate a range of communities, the experiences of these communities are not necessarily indicative of the experiences of all communities who have developed and disseminated Parent Pack resources.

Recommendations to improve the Parent Pack resource:

- Develop a template to identify and document the phases of development, production and dissemination of the Parent Pack resource, including roles, responsibilities, time, financial and other commitments from partner agencies, and timelines of key deliverables. This will facilitate clarity of expectations around the project, and will also serve as means of monitoring the project against expectations.
- Develop a template of information that could be included in the Parent Pack resource, to ensure accurate information and to facilitate regular updating of information. The template should be sufficiently flexible to be adapted to fit the needs of local communities.
- Identify effective means of working with mana whenua and Pacific communities to examine if the Parent Pack is an appropriate resource for Maori and Pacific parents. This could be undertaken either by the supporting agencies, or by the community stakeholders involved in the development of Parent Pack resources. Informed by the above, develop options to increase the relevance of the resource for Maori and Pacific parents, including the use of te reo Maori.
- Develop a template of supporting activities that could be developed and delivered alongside the dissemination of the Parent Pack resource. The template should be sufficiently flexible to be adapted to fit the needs of local communities.

Develop a template to assess the reach and impact of the Parent Pack resource on the target audience(s). The template should be sufficiently flexible to be adapted to fit the needs of local communities, and efforts should be made to ensure ease of use and maximum response rates. This could be informed by a current evaluation of the Eastern Bays resource, being undertaken by Toi Te Ora Public Health Unit, and by the tools used in this evaluation.[1]

REFERENCES

1. Toi Te Ora Public Health Unit. *Parent Pack Evaluation Form*. 2007 [cited 2007 September]; Available from: www.bopdhb.govt.nz/toiteora/PDFs/Parent%20Pack%20evaluation%20Toi%20Te%20Ora%20-%20Public%20Health.doc.
2. Adolescent Health Research Group. *New Zealand Youth: A profile of their health and wellbeing*. 2000 [cited 2007 September]; Available from: <http://www.youth2000.ac.nz/>.
3. McCreanor, T., P. Watson, and S. Denny, "Just accept us how we are more": Experiences of young Pakeha with their families in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, 2006. March(27): p. 156-170
4. Bennett, S., C. Coggan, and P. Dickinson, *The Mentally Healthy Schools Initiative in Aotearoa/New Zealand*, in *Mental Health Promotion and young people: concepts and practice*, L. Rowling, G. Martin, and L. Walker, Editors. 2002, McGraw-Hill Australia Ltd: Roseville, NSW.
5. Ministerial Committee on Drug Policy., *National Drug Policy 2007-2012*. 2007, Ministry of Health: Wellington.
6. Adolescent Health Research Group., *A health profile of New Zealand youth who attend secondary school*. *New Zealand Medical Journal*, 2003. 116(1171).
7. Duncan Consultancy Services., *Evaluation of the Parent Pack Resource. Phase One: Scoping Exercise*. 2006, Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.: Wellington.
8. Centers for Disease Control. *Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health*. 1999 [cited 2007 August]; Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr4811a1.htm>
9. McLaren, K., *Building Strength: Literature Review*. 2002, Ministry of Youth Development: Wellington.
10. Bennett, S. and C. Coggan, "Don't nag me": *Young people's perceptions of risk taking and alcohol consumption*. 2000, Injury Prevention Research Centre: Auckland.
11. Litmus Research., *YATA Evaluation. Report to the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand*. 2006, Litmus Research.: Wellington.
12. Ministry of Youth Development. *Ministry of Youth Development*. 2007 [cited 2007 September]; Available from: <http://www.myd.govt.nz/>.
13. Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand., *Statement of Intent or the year ending 30 June 2008*. 2007, Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.,: Wellington.
14. Rowling, L. and G. Martin, *Mental Health Promotion and Young People: The next 10 years*, in *Mental Health Promotion and Young People: concepts and practice*, L. Rowling, G. Martin, and L. Walker, Editors. 2002, Mc-Graw Hill Australia Ltd: Roseville NSW.

APPENDIX ONE: EVALUATION TOOLS

Interview discussion guide: ALAC Community Action Coordinator

Can you please tell me about your role with regard to the development of parent packs by YATA groups?

What is your understanding of the motivations behind the desire to develop parent packs? What are the intended outcomes?

Tell me about what is commonly included in a parent pack...why?

Tell me about the different formats of parent packs? What are the common themes?

How are they distributed? What are the most effective ways of distribution?

How are they funded?

How do groups tend to go about making these decisions? Who is involved and in what way?

What works?: content...rank?

0 = not effective, 5 = extremely effective

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can tell me why you picked this number?

For who?...Maori? Pacific? Others? Parents? Young people?

0 = not effective, 5 = extremely effective

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can tell me why you picked this number?

What doesn't work? Why?

How could they best be improved?

Overall how do you rank the effectiveness of parent packs as a resource for parents?

For young people? For Maori? For Pacific peoples?

0 = not effective, 5 = extremely effective

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can tell me why you picked this number?

General Comments

Do you have any comments about your experience of groups producing and using a Parent Pack Resource?

Thank you and wrap up.

Interview Discussion Guide: Key Informants

Name:

Role:

Community:

Contact details:

In recent years, a number of communities have produced parent pack resources. These have tended to follow similar formats but have been adapted to fit local needs and to provide information about local services and resources. The parent packs are designed to give parents the tools and guidelines to deal with issues faced by their teenage children, particularly alcohol and drug issues. Some parent pack resources were developed as part of a youth access to alcohol (YATA) initiative while others have been developed by community groups, for example, as part of initiatives of safer community councils.

I am talking to a number of communities who have developed parent packs as part of the YATA project to:

- understand and evaluate perceptions of the impact of the Parent Pack resource on selected communities.
- Assess perceptions of the impact on and reach of the resource for different population groups within these communities (Maori and Pacific esp)
- Describe the core components of the parent pack resources and
- Identify recommendations to improve the parent pack resources

This is why I want to talk with you. Can we start with you telling me who you are, what your role has been (and is) in terms of the development and distribution of parent packs and then talk further about your reasons for producing a parent pack: what you included and why as well as how you decided these things and which aspects you felt worked and which perhaps didn't work as you might have thought they would.

Your Purpose

Can you please tell us what the reasons were for your group developing a Parent Pack?

Intended outcomes

Content:

Can you tell me what was in your parent pack? Why did you choose these things/this format?

Your Processes

1. Can you please describe the processes around developing your Parent Pack i.e. who designed it? How was it printed? How did you decide what went in it? Was it based on another one you have seen? Who made these decisions?
2. How much did it cost to produce?
3. How many did you produce?
4. How did you fund production of your Parent Pack?

Distribution and Use

5. Who did you distribute them to? How did you disseminate them? How effective was the distribution?
6. Do you know who used them? What parts have they used?

What Worked?

7. Please indicate on the following scale how effective you thought the Parent Pack was.

0 = not effective, 5 = extremely effective

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can tell me why you picked this number?

8. Do you think your Parent Pack had a positive impact or effect? If Yes, please describe.
9. Who did it have a good impact on? And how? Can you rate each of these on the same scale please?

Young People? 0 = No effect, 5 = a good, strong effect

0 1 2 3 4 5 (Please circle one)

Parents? 0 = No effect, 5 = a good, strong effect

0 1 2 3 4 5 (Please circle one)

Maori communities? 0 = No effect, 5 = a good, strong effect

0 1 2 3 4 5 (Please circle one)

Pacific communities? 0 = No effect, 5 = a good, strong effect

0 1 2 3 4 5 (Please circle one)

Other? 0 = No effect, 5 = a good, strong effect

0 1 2 3 4 5 (Please circle one)

10. How does this compare with the impact you thought it would have?

What Didn't Work?

11. Do you think any aspects of your Parent Pack or its use didn't work well? If yes, please tell me about these.

12. Why do you think this was?

13. How would you improve or change your Parent Pack if you produced it and distributed it again?

14. Do you have any advice for any group thinking about producing a Parent Pack resource?

15. Would you produce a parent pack again?

General Comments

Do you have any comments about your group's experience in producing and using a Parent Pack Resource?

Thank you and wrap up.

Focus group discussion guideline No.1 – Those involved in development of resource

The focus group will adhere to the following basic structure:

- Welcome
- Explain objectives of meeting: content, processes, impact/outcome, Maori, Pacific
- Explain means of recording meeting.
- Start recording, reiterate objectives and gain verbal consent
- Agenda
- Ground rules
- Introductions
- Discussion
- Wrap up

Discussion Guide

Can we start by talking about how you came to produce a parent pack...

What made your group decide to produce a Parent Pack? How were these decisions made? *Probe:* funding/motivations/drivers/process/purpose/intended outcomes

What did you include in your parent pack? Why did you choose these particular things? How were these decisions made?

Probe: availability/relevance/local...also process: who did the work

Would you include these things if you did another parent pack? Why/why not? What would you change? If you were to do it again, what else might you include?

Tell me about the dissemination process - How was your parent pack distributed? How were these decisions made? How do you feel about this - were you happy with how the parent pack was distributed and who the Parent Pack was distributed to and used by? *Probe:* how do you feel about this? Did the parent pack get to the people you intended it to get to? what would you do differently next time?

Tell me about your impressions of the impact your parent pack has had: what did it do well? What could it have done better?..strengths/weaknesses/opportunities.

Probe- Has the Parent Pack had any impact on Maori communities? Pacific communities? Other impacts?

What do you think worked best about your parent pack - What did you like about your Parent Pack? What didn't you like about it? Were these the things that worked best/least? What do you think could make the parent pack more effective?

How would you rate this tool in terms of its usefulness and effectiveness (use scale)?

Have you had any informal or formal feedback on the resource? What has this feedback said? What have you learned from this experience?

Finally, what would your advice be to another community contemplating developing a similar resource?
What would you do the same next time? Probe: content/process – decision making/distribution/making.
What would you change? Why?

Would you do it again?

Any other comments?

Thank you and wrap up.

Focus group discussion guideline No.2 – Parents

The focus group will adhere to the following basic structure:

- Welcome
- Explain objectives of meeting
- Explain means of recording meeting
- Start recording, reiterate objectives and gain verbal consent
- Agenda
- Ground rules
- Introductions
- Discussion
- Wrap up

Discussion Guide

Can we start by you telling me how you became aware of the parent pack...

How did you find out about it? How did you get one? Was it easy to get hold of?

Was the Parent Pack easy for you to use? Which parts did you use?

What did you like about it?

Were parts of the Parent Pack more helpful or less helpful? What were they?

What didn't you like about it?

How could the Parent Pack be improved?

Overall, did it meet your needs? Was it what you thought it would be? Why/why not ?

Did the Parent Pack influence you in terms of your values and ideas? Can you describe these...link to particular aspects of Parent Pack.

Was it useful to you - Did it help you to get the message through to your teenager? Describe the response you got when you used it

Do you think the Parent Pack influenced the person you used it with? What makes you think it did or didn't?

Has its use resulted in any change in attitude or behaviour?

Would you use it again?

How would you rate the parent pack in terms of its usefulness and effectiveness (use scale)

What do you think could make the parent pack more effective? Is it a useful resource for parents?

Any other comments?

Thank you and wrap up.