

# The Jade Speaks Up Trust:

Putting child wellbeing at the heart of learning



## LOXLEY AWARD FINAL REPORT – July 2022

### Our initial intentions

When we initially applied for the Loxley Award our purpose was to respond to the Covid 19 emergency within New Zealand and provide resources for teachers to bring some relief to the increasing numbers of children experiencing anxiety and loss of hauora due to changing circumstances and stressors within their homes. We were aware that within classrooms students were exhibiting more unsettled behaviour, increased emotional volatility and elevated worry. Teachers were seeking educational resources they could use confidently to address these states of mind, particularly the new levels of anxiety amongst students.

At the time of our application we had begun developing a new resource in response to a call from a School Wide Resource Teacher in the Ministry of Education Positive Behaviour For Learning (PB4L) programme. She had observed teachers' need to unpack anxiety in an educational manner and students' needs to learn strategies to be calmer and more resilient. The material we developed is aligned to the Te Whare Tapa Wha Model of hauora developed by Mason Durie as well as to the NZ Health Curriculum Document and to the key competencies to support and improve children's wellbeing and hauora, through understanding and reducing anxiety.

To ensure the cultural robustness of the resource we wanted to engage with at least two Māori and Pasifika educators for the development of culturally sensitive approaches and activities. We also intended to request a few more teachers of Years 5-8 to trial a selection of lessons with their students, and provide feedback and recommended changes which would lead to another iteration of manual writing.

We knew the next phase of development would require dedicated time for us to bring together resources, collate and refine them into a suitable teaching resource structured in easy to follow lesson plans. We wanted to supply teachers with suitable background information, glossary and links to current on-line websites, well-being specialists and resources.

To this end we planned to book a quiet house for a 4 day writing retreat focused on reflecting, work-shopping ideas and writing the material. We envisioned two professionals completing the final formal editing and formatting process before the resource could be published.



Students showing off their pieces of pounamu, a gift from us as acknowledgement for being part of our pilot.

We thought we would offer this resource only to schools already familiar with the Jade Speaks Up (JSU) programme because although it is a stand alone resource it would also build on the learning of emotional literacy, trust and self calming which children had already gained through JSU.

In the final stages of the project, we projected that Elaine and Andrea would do a presentation at a New Zealand educational well-being event either face to face or online.

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## What we have achieved

During this phase of developing YG?YG! we have been guided by Apirana Ngata's famous proverb 'E Tipu e Rea', and his concept of combining the knowledge from the world of Pakeha with the Māori world view and notions of hauora, waiora and mauri ora to increase the balance of cultural diversity and competency needed for a child of Aotearoa-New Zealand to grow into the person they need to be to embrace 'the days destined' for them.



***E tipu e rea mō ngā rā o tō ao  
Ko tō ringa ki ngā rākau a te Pākeha  
Hei ora mō te tinana  
Ko tō ngākau ki ngā tāonga a ō tipuna Māori  
Hei tikitiki mō tō mātuna  
Ko tō wairua ki tō atua, Nānā new ngā mea katoa***

***Grow and branch forth for the days destined to you  
Your hands to the tools of the Pākehā for the welfare of your body  
Your heart to the treasures of your ancestors as adornments for your brow  
Your spirit to god, who made all things.***

***Tā Apirana Ngata  
(1874 - 1950)***

What follows is a narrative description of some of the significant moments and details of the programme which have been altered through our collaboration with Māori and Pacific teachers. With the Loxley Award we were able to put out a call for Māori and Pacific teachers to join us in developing and trialling the content we had already gathered together. Initially a teacher in a Whakatane Kura te kaupapa affiliated with Ngati Awa, a Pacific teacher in an Auckland Catholic school and a young Pacific woman engaged in an agency focused on sexual abuse work in Wellington responded to the call.

However we had some early challenges. While this combination provided the voices of Māori and Pacifica at the table, we were now in the months of on-again, off-again Covid lockdowns which meant we were unable to easily arrange face to face working times together. The need to build relationships was evident from the politeness of our newly involved people in our online meetings. There was a sense of deferment towards us as the initial developers which took some months of online meetings to break through. Ultimately our co-developer in Wellington pulled out due to family and work circumstances whilst our two in-class teachers continued to meet with us online. It wasn't until the end of the second term 2021 that Andrea was able to meet face to face with our Whakatane teacher/kaiako and students/ākonga and Elaine met with our Auckland teacher and her class. These were a pivotal point of growing a relationship with the teachers and their commitment to trialling the programme with their students increased.

YG?YG! is based on two of the principles of coping with trauma, firstly understanding of self - how do I understand what is going on inside me? And secondly developing self -agency - how do we give students tools to control what's happening within, when they can't control what's happening outside of them? It became obvious that as the developers of the programme we needed a process that embraced the principle of sharing our own understandings of ourselves before the two teachers could have a fuller sense of self agency for not only implementing the programme but also for telling us what needed to be changed and what worked well.

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## What we have achieved...continued

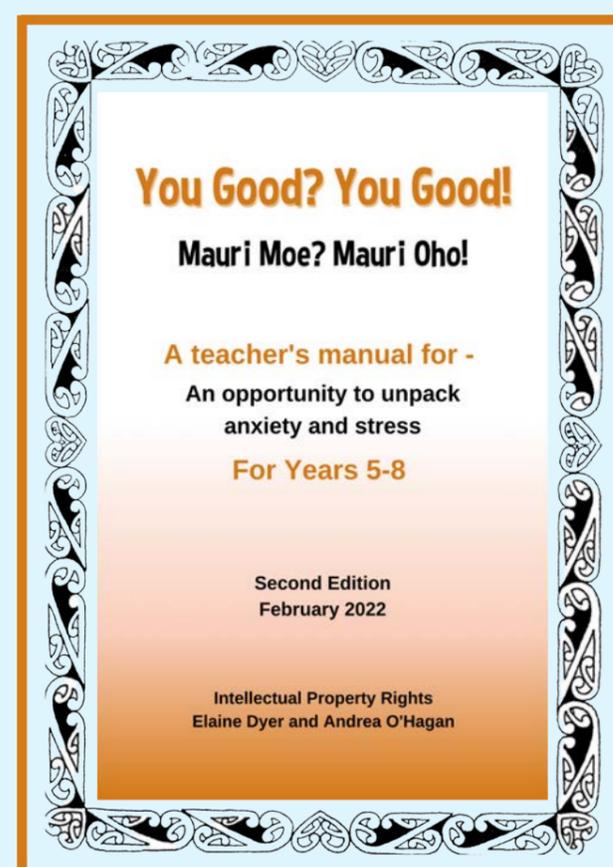
In term three 2021 we flew Andrea and our Whakatane teacher to Auckland where the four of us held a two day Thought Wananga in the Auckland Mt. Eden Quaker House. Through two days of sharing what guides us in our cultures to create wellness, we discovered similarities between the diversity of cultures which we represented – Māori, Pacific, Dutch, Scots, Welsh and English. We shared our connections to our ancestors, to significant places (land, whenua) and to our own internal resources or knowing of what we can do to look after our wellness. **Appendix 1** outlines the shared results of our foundation thoughts on self-care and wellness. It has become one of the resources we share with teachers undertaking the programme.

From this new place of having listened deeply to each other we turned our attention to the YG?YG! Manual. It was now clear that the manual was back to front. Elaine and I had started the manual from the place of the individual, then moved into learning about the brain and emotions and finished with learning about the strengths of our elders and how they had coped with tough times such as world recessions, earlier pandemics and outbreaks of illness. We now recognised that the ancestral relationships needed to be at the forefront of the manual. We placed the whakatauki-proverb 'E hara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini' – My strength is not as an individual but as a collective' in Module One and reshaped activities so students would be encouraged to learn from their elders through conducting interviews in the community and collecting family stories of how older people (their forebears) had coped with hardships in the past. This was a significant shift in our thinking and an acknowledgement of the worldview of Māori and Pasifika people which we had not accounted for in our first edition of the manual.

The new resource is currently in its second edition and with a working title of You Good? You Good! Mauri Moe? Mauri Oho. The te reo Māori portion of the title came from a report of a research project conducted through the University of Waikato's Te Kotahi Research Institute in partnership with four Māori community organisations around New Zealand.

This report references Dr. Mason Durie and Taina Pohatu's work defining mauri as a dynamic energy which is central to relationships and how a person interacts with the mauri of others. Mauri Moe is described as a proactive state of untapped potential which may present in a person as withdrawal and being anxious. Mauri Oho is also described as a proactive state which occurs when something has triggered a willingness to engage. Notably Mauri Oho 'indicates a point of personal courage, [when] a person locates their inner strength' (p. 42) and understands more about their own inner resources which in turn provides more impetus for change. Beginning to participate and beginning to engage are seen as signs of Mauri Oho.

We felt that these two explanations paralleled our thinking when we chose You Good with a question mark followed by You Good with an exclamation mark as the name for the programme. We had in mind a withdrawn child feeling anxious and needing to be asked 'are you good? are you ok?' followed up at some future time with an exclamation of 'you are good!' upon observing the child moving out of the withdrawn disposition into a state of engaging with others, thereby discovering what they could do to change their emotions. Again our pilot teachers are now leading the way with new suggestions of altering the name to Mauri Tū, Mauri Ora which parallels terms used in the kura and in kapa haka to signal being in a state of readiness and a state of wellness.



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Jade  
Speaks  
Up!

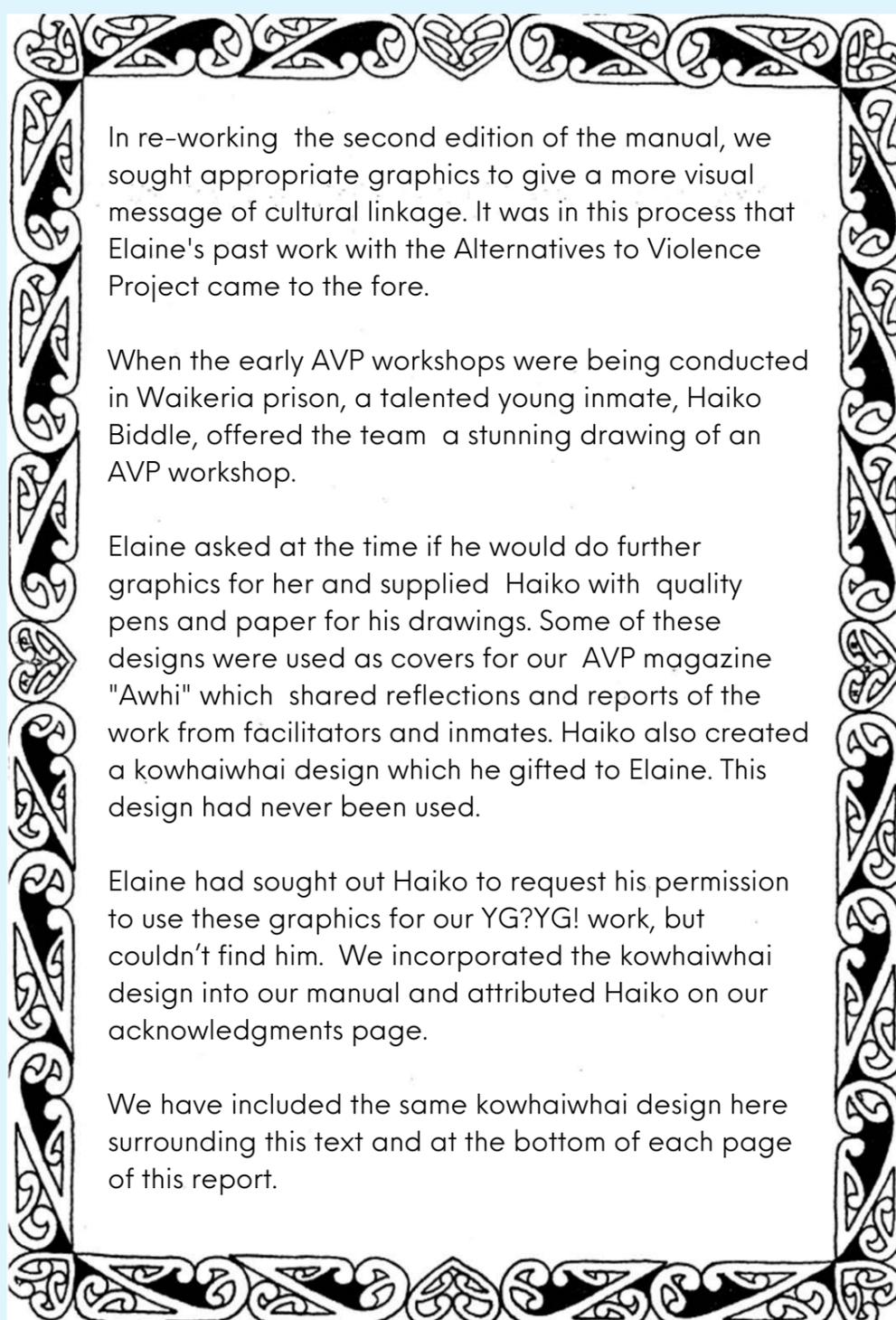


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## Other developments

In the second half of 2021 we were approached by a Lead Advisor of Wellbeing in the Dunedin Ministry of Education to provide MoE funded training for schools in Southland, and Dunedin and Oamaru. Many of these schools had been identified by Police and Social Service agencies as being in particular need of material that addressed family violence, stress and anxiety.

YG?YG! was offered as one of the options which has brought the programme into seven more schools. The Loxley Award allowed us to spend more time focusing on the alterations needed to transform a draft document into a working document for more teachers to use. It also enabled us to refine our training processes further and bring new perspectives to the table with our co-creators.



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Jade  
Speaks  
Up!



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## Other developments...continued

Can you imagine Elaine's delight when Whaea Joy, working with the Whakatane Kura said she knew his family, had grown up in the same small community and was a close friend of Haiko's Mum. Although at this point of writing Elaine has not spoken to Haiko directly, it feels very satisfying to entrust that this will happen. The fact that we are providing resources for children who may feel distressed by home or life and bringing contributions from the men in prisons to this work seems a fitting tribute to those men who initially commissioned Elaine to work in communities and change the course of events for children so they too would not end up in prison.

It feels appropriate that Quakers are again supporting the quintessential work of improving wellbeing in our country, especially in more vulnerable communities. The sense of weaving circles within circles is profoundly humbling and I [Elaine] muse on the many connections with the programme and people committed to wellbeing throughout Aotearoa and internationally that I have had the privilege of participating alongside.

In April this year Elaine and Andrea attended a 5 hour presentation by Dr. Kathryn Berkett (pictured) on neuroscience and anxiety.

The presentation and the number of teachers attending illuminated the need for us to showcase the connections between the learning activities within YG?YG! and the underpinning neuroscience and neurolinguistics which Andrea contributed to the development of the YG?YG! programme.

This was also made possible by the Loxley Award providing us with the funding to rework our training outlines for Professional Development days for teachers.

A range of energisers (or in AVP terminology, "Light and Livelies") have been included within the YG?YG! Programme. These came from Elaine's experience of AVP combined with working with hundreds of workshops and writing various training manuals.

We adapted names and instructions of the activities to underline and complement the more technical information about neuroscience and the brain. They also fit with the cutting edge research from neuroscience on attachment theory and what is needed to calm and settle any child coping with trauma before they can do the learning activities. (Perry and Winfrey, 2021)

In our most recent online catch up with the kura team mentioned above, we heard of how our adapted energisers were enthusing the students and the teachers, which helps build relationships and trust. Just as in AVP, learning by embodying the movement, playful energy and experiencing non-formal instruction provides opportunities for bridging and applying the principles to life lessons from these experiences.

The resource is accompanied by professional advice to the teachers through an initial training day and a later online supportive supervision session during classroom implementation.



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## Best laid plans

We experienced unavoidable delays due to ongoing Covid & flu impacts. Our teachers were struggling to manage the encroaching pandemic. They were dealing with:

- The pressure to provide suitable home learning while the schools were closed
- On return to the classroom, larger than usual absences, more behaviours signalling student anxiety and children at different stages of readiness for class-based learning following their experiences of 'homeschooling.'
- Children more focused on socialising with one another than learning in the aftermath of lock-down

There was teacher eagerness to become more committed to the implementation, yet even up until the end of Term 2 this year, there have been significant disruptions. Each of the teachers have now successfully delivered several different components of the programme. A schedule for full implementation has been created for Term 3, and we are confident that the teachers will manage to make further progress.

One of our child well-being surveys used in the original Jade Speaks Up programmes became unavailable to us and we worked together with our researcher, and a school principal to develop a new survey more suited to our cultural context. HEY, (How's Everything with You?) emerged and has been helpful in assisting teachers to monitor changes in student wellbeing. The survey also helps guide teachers in having pastoral conversations with their students in a more specific manner.

Time was on our side in that our team of kaiako at the Kura in Whakatane has expanded by a second teacher and a kuia, Whaea Joy, who is assisting the teachers in translating the resource into Te Reo.

## Public presentations

In November 2021, we trialled an online forum for parents to learn some skills and increase understanding of anxiety from YG? YG! A group of 12 parents and a teacher linked to one Auckland school running the Jade Speaks Up programme enrolled for a series of three evening sessions. It was heartening to hear how relevant the material was to the lives of the parents as well as the applicability they could see for their children, for their workplaces and their marriages.

We were very grateful to be assisted in the online facilitation by Togia Lanefale, an experienced facilitator of fathering workshops. His presence helped bridge cultural and gender gaps and showed again the strength of cross-cultural team work.

We provided an interactive presentation of our progress thus far with YG?YG! to the Quaker's online Summer Gathering on 3rd January, 2022. It was attended by a small group, who had positive responses. Several commented that more Quakers would be interested and consequently we made a similar two hour presentation for Auckland Friends on 20th March.

We believe this was recorded so that it could be shared more widely. The enthusiastic group of attendees gave us encouragement to continue with this work. Andrea has been invited to provide a workshop on YG?YG! and JSU within an educational drama symposium on a marae close to Gisborne in October and has invited our two Whakatane kaiako/teachers to co-present with her.

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### Learnings

It has been significant to experience the importance of relationship in any transfer or training in material which, although targeting children between 9-12 specifically, is also relevant to the lives of the teachers, social workers and parents who deliver this programme to their students. Our design work this year on the material as well as professional development towards increasing their confidence in delivering this to their students has gone from strength to strength. We can now deliver the teacher PD online as well as kanohi te kanohi – face-to-face.

Compassionate self-care is at the core of this programme, along with encouraging the teachers to ask for help for themselves or sensitively offer support to others if experiencing anxiety or stress. As we have noted earlier, with the increasing demand for and inaccessibility of mental health/ counselling services for our rangitahi, this core of self agency and empathic support for others is part of why this work is timely.

Part of our proposal to the MoE was to expand our pool of regional trainers for the Dunedin/Southland/Oamaru teachers. To this end, MoE funded our work with three highly experienced and skilled women who are supporting the ongoing refinement of the material as well as giving us credible and encouraging feedback on the value of our approach and the careful crafting that it represents. Each of them are also committed to bi-culturalism and have significant competence in this area thereby further strengthening this work.



**Megan Gallagher**

Megan is a teacher, coach, presenter and writer. She is still teaching part time as well as taking part in a variety of initiatives including working with JSU as well as running her own business 'Ignite Your Spark'. Megan has a strong interest in wellbeing, she was a health educator for a number of years and in 2017 she completed her masters of education with a dissertation focusing on teacher wellbeing.



**Evelyn Mann**

Evelyn runs Dramaworkz providing quality drama experiences in classrooms and teacher professional development using process drama as a pedagogical tool. She has worked in over 600 education settings in Aotearoa between Te Hapu in the North and Half Moon Bay in Rakiura/Stewart Island. Currently working for Drama NZ as a mentor to schools in Otago and Southland.



**Trish Wells**

Trish has over 25 years' experience as an arts educator in initial teacher education across primary and secondary programmes. Her research interests are drama education and an applied theatre approach to pedagogy across the curriculum. She is a co-founding member of Talking House Theatre Company. Trish has numerous publications and has presented her research extensively nationally and internationally.





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### Concluding thoughts

Elaine and Andrea began this project with a set of experiences we really wanted to know more about. We wanted to combine our knowledge with that from Te Ao Māori and move beyond our perceptions of what could work to make anxiety a concept which children could understand and have agency over. The unspoken and possibly unthought question we became aware of was 'What does moving beyond our perceptions mean in reality when there are differences in the culture and age of our co-developers and their students?'

This led to considering how do we truly come together with collaborators in a responsive dialogic and relational space with the reality of having developed so much content already? How do we ensure our collaborators not only had a place at the table but also had a voice and were heard? How did we ensure our content and thoughts were received as non-impositional? Paulo Friere posed the question – how do we share power amongst the people? In the creation of a truly dialogic space we had to ask ourselves 'who am I?' and deconstruct our own background beliefs and experiences. This began in the two-day Thought Wananga and still continues as our relationships build on trust with and commitment to our collaborators.

Within the YG?YG! Programme we include activities to highlight what deep, respectful listening looks, sounds and feels like. When the same respectful listening came to the forefront of our interactions with our collaborators, our agenda for the project and the programme was changed by the ideas our teachers brought forth. Our timeline developed more flexibility to allow for the needs and cultural drivers of the teachers and students. We were beginning to build a waka we could all embark on – He waka eke noa. And three significant strands or themes have emerged in the creation thus far of this waka as important fundamental aspects of Te Ao Māori have been recognised and more consciously built into the programme.

- 1** The first important theme of the learning for us as well as for students who will experience this programme, is that interconnection with others is especially relevant for emotional and mental wellbeing. That our individual resonance is strengthened when we resonate with others. No child can expect to be fully well until they know that aspects of their ancestors and the present community influence what they do. Mauri Ora is the self in strong connection with others accompanied by understanding that the individual self is important in the scheme of things.
- 2** The second significant theme can be proffered as the following questions, firstly 'what is the place of indigenous thought and practice – in this project, specifically Māori and Pasifika – within education in Aotearoa and in collaborative projects such as this one?' Secondly, 'what is the role of non-indigenous/pakeha participants and teachers in ensuring cultural perspectives are put forward?' We are in the process of going beyond our initial ideas for YG?YG! towards understanding and making new combined meaning of aspects of Te Ao Māori connected with western world findings from fields of neuroscience and neurolinguistics. Our small project is beginning to develop into a resource which could be of greater value than we imagined for Aotearoa teachers and their students.
- 3** The third theme is the importance of embodied learning for connecting students with each other and with their teacher so that learning about wellbeing is done through a combination of new learning combined with physical activities/light and livelies which offer safe risk-taking, laughter and cooperative thinking and doing. In Te Ao Māori traditional learning was undertaken through doing physical tasks or arts and through storytelling. In modern day school based kapa haka, it is our understanding that learning is still done through group 'doing' and telling the stories of what is behind the lyrics, the movements and the group dynamics of each performance. Once again, the importance of relationships and relational learning comes to the forefront as students are engaged in teamwork, community and collaboration within the 'energisers' we have deliberately included in YG?YG!.

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### A final thank you

We applied for the Loxley Award with a list of outcomes and we hope this narrative report outlines that through the support of the Quaker Peace and Service Committee we have gone beyond our initial set of outcomes. Our learning has been experiential and YG?YG! is richer for this. We have deeply appreciated both the financial support and the flexibility of time QPS has given us to do what we have done in the context of Covid.

This part of the development of YG?YG! has been significant and memorable for both Elaine and Andrea. We see new strengths in the programme and aspects we still need to work on. 'Kotahi karihi nāna ko te wao tapu nui a Tāne' - 'the creation of the forests of Tāne comes from one kernel' - starting small leads to growth.

Thank you for your support of this small venture which we hope leads to the opportunities in classrooms for many children in Aotearoa to learn how they can develop skills and understandings that will take them from a place of Mauri Tū into Mauri Ora.

Nga mihi nui

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'A.M. O'Hagan' and the second is 'Elaine Dyer'.

Andrea O'Hagan and Elaine Dyer



### Bibliography

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Pihama, L, Smith, L, Cameron N., Te Nana R., Kohu-Morgan, H., Skipper, H., & Mataki, T. (2020) He Oranga Ngakau - Maori approaches to trauma informed care Te Kotahi Research Institute, University of Waikato.

