

Kawerau District Council



Youth Policy & Vision

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Contents	2 - 3
Introduction	4
Kawerau District Council’s Vision Statement	4
Kawerau District Council’s Mission Statement	4
Policy Guiding Documents	
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)	5
- Children and Young Persons and their Families Act 1989	5
- Local Government Act 2002	5
- Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa	5
- Kawerau District Council’s Long-Term Council Community Plan 2006/07 – 2015/16	6
Why have a Youth Policy?	6
The Purpose of this Policy	7
Kawerau District Council’s Youth Policy	
The Four Key Principles –	
Principle 1 Youth Development	7
Principle 2 Advocacy	7
Principle 3 Partnership	8
Principle 4 Provision	8
Youth Vision Statement	8
The Youth Policy Goals	9
Definitions of ‘Youth’ & ‘Youth Development’	9
Current Youth Activity in Kawerau	9
Existing Council Activities and Services for Youth	10
Kawerau Youth Statistics – 2001 Census	10
Potential for Collaboration and Partnership	10
Proposed Council Roles	11

What Happens Next?	11 - 12
What Youth Can Do	12
Processes used to Develop this Policy	13
Youth Questionnaire (12-24 Target Age Group)	14
Summary of Kawerau Questionnaire Results	14 - 15
Issues for Young People in General	15 - 16
Kawerau Youth Groups & Clubs	16
Kawerau Youth Workers / Providers	17
Kawerau Education Providers	17

Introduction

Young people offer high levels of energy and ability and frequently make positive contributions to the Kawerau District. Their talents are valued by Council which wants to work with them to achieve its own Vision and Mission Statement and also to contribute to achieving all of its Community Outcomes. Council recognises that the needs of young people are often different to the rest of the population.

Young people test society's values and norms, provide energy and new ideas and encourage change. They form a significant part of our community and have the same rights as everyone else, especially to be heard, to be included, to be protected and to live fulfilling lives. They have different needs and perspectives from those of adults and should be consulted on community development.

Kawerau District Council's Vision Statement

'To provide the people of Kawerau with a quality of life that is second to none'.

Kawerau District Council's Mission Statement

'To identify and respond to the needs and aspirations of the residents of the District and in particular, provide the required services and facilities to enhance the quality of life of all the District's residents'.

Relevant Principles are:-

2. Maintain a flexible approach to the changing needs of the Kawerau Community and listen to and communicate with the Kawerau Community, in order to identify and evaluate the needs and aspirations of the residents of the District.
4. Remain sensitive to and supportive of the cultural, social, educational and environmental issues affecting the District.
6. Communicate with the residents of the District, information on the Council's present and future activities.

Policy Guiding Documents

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)

Over a decade ago, world leaders made a commitment to giving high priority to the rights of children – to their survival, protection and development. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) obliges New Zealand to recognise the right of children to have their opinions given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989

The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 requires children’s participation and that their views be heard.

Local Government Act 2002

Local Government Act 2002 Part 6 requires Councils to consult with communities and provides for greater participation by communities in decision-making. This needs to include youth in consultation processes.

Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa

The Youth Development Strategy was put together by the Ministry of Youth Affairs in 2002. It sets out how government, working with families and communities, can support young people to develop the skills and attitudes they need to take part positively in society, now and in the future.

Council accepts the basic principles of the Youth Strategy Aotearoa.

Youth development:-

- is shaped by the ‘big picture’
- is about young people being connected
- is a consistent strengths-based approach (i.e. focuses on the positive)
- happens through quality relationships
- is triggered when young people fully participate
- needs good information.

Youth Development Strategy aims:-

- Aim 1 - All young people have opportunities to establish positive connections to their key social environment
- Aim 2 - Government policy and practise reflect a positive youth development approach
- Aim 3 - All young people have access to a range of youth development opportunities.

Kawerau District Council Long-Term Council Community Plan 2006/07 – 2015/16

Councils now have the mandate to promote the social, cultural, economic and environmental well-being of their present and future communities and are required to give consideration to the views of all the community. The most relevant Kawerau District community outcomes for youth are included in the Long-Term Council Community Plan 2006/07 – 2015/16 and are:-

Safe, caring communities

Where

- Diversity is valued and strong bonds exist between different cultures, genders and ages
- Youth have a purpose and gain from, and contribute to, the Community.

Why have a Youth Policy?

- Kawerau is a young township. According to the 2001 Census, 26% of Kawerau's population are aged between 10 to 24 years of age.
- Young people have an immeasurable amount of potential, talent and energy in which to contribute to the quality of life in Kawerau.
- To tap this potential requires initiatives supporting Youth Development.
- Youth Development is about young people growing up and developing the skills and attitudes they need to take part positively in society now, and in the future.
- Taking a positive development approach is about being proactive, encouraging, guiding, engaging and investing in youth. Young people are seen as a resource rather than a problem.
- Kawerau District Council's Youth Policy is one way in which we can promote positive youth development.
- The Policy seeks the involvement of youth in Council decision making processes as well as informing youth of Council's commitment towards the young people of Kawerau.
- The Policy provides a base for Council to engage young people in Kawerau and to ensure that the voices and needs of youth are heard.

The Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to inform Kawerau youth of Council's responsibilities and commitments towards its young people.

Kawerau District Council's Youth Policy

The Four Key Principles:-

1. Youth Development

- 1.1 Participation
Youth are to be encouraged to be involved in Council processes that impact on the young people of Kawerau.
- 1.2 Involvement
Youth involvement is to be encouraged in relevant Council projects and events.
- 1.3 Consultation
Youth are to be actively consulted in decision-making processes that effect youth development.
- 1.4 Support
Opportunities are to be created and ongoing support provided for the development of the young people of Kawerau.
- 1.5 Celebration
Opportunities are to be created and supported that celebrate the achievements of Kawerau's young people.

2. Advocacy

- 2.1 Assistance
The establishment of a Youth Council or Youth Advisory Forum is recommended for Kawerau to advocate on behalf of Kawerau Youth.
- 2.2 Support
The Youth Council or Youth Advisory Forum will advocate on identified issues that effect youth.
- 2.3 Information
Kawerau Youth are to be educated and informed of their rights and responsibilities.

3. Partnership

- 3.1 Networking
Regular networking and information sharing opportunities between Council and Youth Service Providers is to be promoted.
- 3.2 Assistance
Community youth organisations in Kawerau are to be assisted with resources.
- 3.3 Promotion
The Community is to be made aware of the role of the Youth Council or Youth Advisory Forum as a resource and voice for young people.
- 3.4 Connection
Relationships between Council and Youth Service Providers is to be enhanced to support the delivery of events and services for the young people of Kawerau.

4. Provision

- 4.1 Funding
Available funds are to be distributed for youth events and activities in Kawerau.
- 4.2 Access
Information on Council services, events and activities are to be provided and accessible for youth and their families.
- 4.3 Resources
Collaborative projects with other agencies and organisations are to be undertaken to facilitate the co-ordination and further development of youth services and facilities.

Youth Vision Statement:-

Kawerau is where young people are optimistic and are supported and encouraged to take up challenges to contribute to a growing, vibrant Community.

The Youth Policy Goals are to:-

1. Acknowledge the importance and needs of the District's youth and recognize them in appropriate Council policies and decisions.
2. To promote positive links between young people, the Community and Council.
3. Assist youth, Youth Service Providers and the Community to meet youth's needs and promote a positive environment for youth.
4. Support projects that address youth needs.
5. Ensure facilities are accessible to a diversity of youth.
6. Provide opportunities for the youth of the Kawerau District to develop citizenship and leadership qualities, a sense of personal achievement and an understanding of local government and community service.

Definitions of 'Youth' & 'Youth Development'

Definition of 'Youth'

For the purpose of this policy, the definition of 'young people' is taken from the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, which describes youth as 'young women and young men aged 12-24 years inclusive'. According to the Youth Strategy Aotearoa, these years where we move between building on the experiences of childhood and generating the foundation skills for adulthood are critical.

What is 'Youth Development'?

According to the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Youth Development is about 'young people growing up and developing the skills and attitudes they need to take part positively in society now, and in the future'.

Current Youth Activity in Kawerau

There is an enormous amount of youth support and development activity taking place in the Kawerau District. This activity spans all four well-beings and focuses mostly on recreation, culture, youth at risk and education.

Existing Council Activities and Services for Youth include:-

- The provision of recreational activities such as a free swimming pool, playing fields, play grounds, a skate park, BMX track, Recreation Centre and Library
- Participation on the Eastbay Youth Projects Committee
- The provision of two separate School Holiday Programmes
- The supervision of a Family Violence Intervention Programme
- Participation in the Young Achiever Awards
- Participation in Creative New Zealand
- The provision of a Special Needs programme along with Kawerau College that undertakes tree plantings
- The provision of work experience to Kawerau College students
- The provision of recycling programmes in all Kawerau schools
- Actively supporting the Kawerau Conservation Corps
- Actively providing Periodic Detention work
- The provision of Drivers Licensing facilities
- Financial support of the Kawerau Junior Neighbourhood Support.

Kawerau Youth Statistics – 2001 Census

<u>Ethnic Group</u>	<u>10/14 Yrs</u>	<u>15/19 Yrs</u>	<u>20/24 Yrs</u>
European	336	186	147
Maori	492	297	285
Pacific Peoples	42	18	15
Asian	<u>15</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>-</u>
Totals	885	510	447

The total population of Kawerau in 2001 was 6,975. Therefore, 26% of Kawerau's population are defined as youth.

Potential for Collaboration and Partnership

Council recognises that it can only achieve its goals for young people and make an effective contribution to the achievement of community outcomes for them by co-operating, consulting and partnering with the Community and with Government organisations.

Proposed Council Roles

For youth initiatives and issues, Council serves a leadership role as a:-

- Facilitator By bringing agencies and key stakeholders together
- Advocate On behalf of, and together with, young people
- Co-ordinator Of planning for, monitoring of and reporting on, youth development in the District, together with consultation on those plans

- Funder & service provider Either solely or together with other Eastern Bay Councils and agencies
- Partner Contributing and networking as part of a team co-ordinating services for youth.

What Happens Next?

Council to:-

1. Adopt a Youth Policy & Youth Vision Statement.
2. Devise an Action Plan to make sure progress on the Policy happens.

The Action Plan will include specific initiatives that will be undertaken by Council or jointly with other organisations. The Policy and Action Plan will be reviewed annually to mark progress and note trends in youth development.

3. Review existing youth-focussed services.

Council will do this by:-

- i Ensuring they are affordable, accessible and safe.
- ii Identifying and providing appropriate, accessible and safe public places for young people.
- iii Sponsoring youth events annually.
- iv Maintaining tighter control on access to alcohol.
- v Working with other organisations to extend the range of activities available.
- vi Promoting services and activities for youth via a Council Youth or Youth Advisory Forum Website.
- vii Ensuring youth representation in projects and events run by Council where appropriate.

4. Focus on the strengths and abilities of young people and help to celebrate their successes, achievements and diversity.

Council will do this by:-

- i Promoting positive images of young people in the community, especially in the media.

- ii Supporting and facilitating motivational training and the development of leadership skills amongst young people.
 - iii Developing a method of formally recognising youth achievement.
5. Work with, and support, other organisations to advance the wellbeing of young people in the District.

Council will do this by:-

- i Promoting the Youth Policy.
 - ii Encouraging other organisations to involve youth in their planning processes.
 - iii Further community mapping of existing youth networks and initiatives by developing a database.
 - iv Ensuring that staff and councillors keep abreast of regional and national youth initiatives.
 - v Develop a programme of advocacy on youth issues.
6. Provide Youth with information and opportunities to participate in Council decision-making.

Council will:-

- i Lead and facilitate the development of a Strategy for the wellbeing and development of youth in the District.
- ii Support a Youth Council or Youth Advisory Forum which allows young people to discuss issues and work together to implement solutions.
- iii Collate baseline information on youth trends and monitor these on an ongoing basis.
- iv Ensure Council policies and the Youth Policy are aligned.
- v Encourage young people to become involved in wider community issues and events.
- vi Provide policy advice on youth issues.

What Youth can do:-

- Plan & organise youth events and activities and ask Council to help publicise them.
- Get involved with organisations which can provide services and facilities which extend them and provide recreational opportunities.
- Write letters and submissions to Council on issues that they are interested in and their ideas for the future.
- Read local papers, listen to local radio stations, visit the local Information Centre and/or visit the Council Youth Website for information about what is going on in the Kawerau community.
- Get discussions going in schools and the organisations they are involved with on youth issues.
- Nominate representatives for the Youth Council or the Youth Advisory Forum.

Processes used to Develop this Policy

A meeting was held with workers in the youth support sector in the Kawerau District on 03 August 2006 to discuss youth issues and how Council could 'add value'.

The meeting identified that:-

- There is a strong desire by the agencies for Council to be involved, at least in a leadership and facilitation role in youth development
- There are a large number of agencies working successfully on youth issues in the district, in a wide variety of activities
- Many agencies combine work in the youth and child areas, with no delineation between the two
- There is little co-ordination of effort or information and no agreed common vision as yet amongst the existing agencies
- There is more focus on 'Youth at Risk' than sponsoring 'Youth Talent'
- A formal process for youth to be involved in Council decisions is not in place
- There is no formal advocacy for youth in the district.

Information on the activity of other District Councils has also been sourced. Thirty-three other Councils are known to operate/support a Youth Council in their district. Several other District Council Youth Policies were reviewed.

The following Youth Questionnaire for young people was forwarded to the Kawerau College and to Youth Groups and Sport Groups.

Youth Questionnaire (12-24 Target Age Group)

1. What are the three best things you like about the Kawerau District?
2. Where are three coolest places to go? or coolest things to do?
3. If you had a whole day to spare what would you do?
4. What things could be done better for young people in our District?
5. What is the best way to find out what young people think?
6. What is the best way to make sure that young people's opinions are heard by those who make the big decisions about our District?
7. What positive things can young people do to help themselves?
8. Do you get enough information about what there is to do in the District? If not, how can we improve that?
9. Your age?
10. Are you male/female? Maori/non-Maori?

Summary of Kawerau Questionnaire Results

120 survey forms were sent out and 115 responses were received back.

What are the best things about Kawerau?

1. Tarawera River
2. Free public Pool
3. Shopping Mall
4. Skate Park / basketball courts
5. Friendly people

Where are the coolest places to go in Kawerau?

1. Shopping Mall
2. Skate Park / basketball courts
3. Tarawera River
4. Hot pools at Savages
5. Swimming Pool

What would you do if you had a whole day to yourself?

1. Somewhere out of Kawerau
2. Play on computer
3. Go to Whakatane
4. Shopping

What can be done better for young people?

1. More weekend / recreational activities for teenagers
2. Movie Theatre
3. More shops
4. Youth Centre

How should young peoples' opinions be heard?

1. Surveys
2. Questionnaire
3. Community newspaper
4. School visits
5. Talk to them

What can young people do for themselves?

1. Keep them busy
2. Play more sports
3. Not enough activities for young people
4. Youth Centre

Do young people get enough info? How can that be improved?

Overwhelming majority felt that youth did not get enough information of Youth matters and felt that the following were the best ways to improve that:- Flyers / pamphlets

Radio
Tell them at assembly
Bulletin boards
Meetings.

Issues for Young People in General

Issues faced by young people in general include:-

- teen pregnancy
- youth suicide
- drugs, alcohol and smoking
- gangs
- violence / family violence
- developing and maintaining relationships
- Safety and supportive environments
- Feeling valued
- Having their views heard and being involved in decisions that affect them
- Lack of income
- Isolated rural youth
- Unpreparedness to contribute to society productively
- Needing to leave the District for training and employment.

Kawerau Youth Groups & Clubs

Kawerau Youth Groups

- House of Hope [Assembly of God]
- Kawerau Christian Fellowship
- Kawerau Revive Youth Group
- Kawerau Youth Care Centre
- Presbyterian Church
- Seventh Day Adventists
- Te Wananga O Aotearoa

Kawerau Clubs

- Amateur Athletics Club
- Basketball
- Boxing Club
- Cricket Club
- Harriers Club
- JAB Rugby
- Judo & Martial Arts Club
- Kawerau Powerpulling Team
- Kawerau Scouts
- Mountain Bike Club
- Netball Association
- Pony Club
- Rugby Sports & Cultural Club
- Rugby League Club
- Rythmic Gymnastics Club
- Soccer Club
- Swimming Club
- Taekwondo Club
- Tennis Club

Kawerau Youth Workers / Providers

- Blue Light
- Child Youth & Family Service
- Community Mental Health, Alcohol & Drug Counselling
- Eastbay Rural Education Activities Programme
- EBOP Strengthening Families
- He Papa Pounamu
- Housing NZ
- Kawerau College - Truancy Officer – Kings Programme
- Kawerau Conservation Corps
- Kawerau Police
- Life Education Trust
- MaintainNZ
- Ngati Awa Social & Health Services
- Nga Hau Ora
- Presbyterian Support Northern – James Family
- Public Health Nurse
- Rautahi Training for Employment
- Relationship Services
- Royal NZ Plunket Society
- Safer Communities
- Salvation Army Training & Employment Service
- Te Korowai o Te Arohanoa Inc.
- Te Puni Kokiri
- Tuwharetoa Hau Ora
- Voyagers Youth Counselling
- Work & Income NZ, Kawerau
- Youth Aid Officer
- Youth Projects Committee [REAP]

Kawerau Education Providers

- Kawerau Central School
- Kawerau College
- Kawerau Intermediate School
- Kawerau North School
- Kawerau South School
- Putauaki Full Primary School
- Te Ara Kowhairi - Alternative School
- Teen Parent Education Centre