

# Evaluation of Skylight's Travellers Programme

**Final report**

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# Executive summary

Travellers really helped me cope with the difficulties I was facing at home, and helped me open up to those who really loved me. (Female Pasifika student) <sup>1</sup>

## Background

Travellers is an early intervention programme run by Skylight for students (generally in Year 9) in New Zealand secondary schools. The overall aim of Travellers is to “enhance protective factors for young people experiencing change, loss and transition events and early stages of emotional distress” (Skylight, 2011, p. 1). Currently, the Ministry of Health contracts Skylight to provide the programme as one component of the *New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy* (Associate Minister of Health, 2006).

Skylight has a culture of evaluating and improving the Travellers programme. In order to build on existing studies on Travellers, Skylight commissioned the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) to conduct an external evaluation that explored the short- and medium-term outcomes for the young people who took part in this programme in 2008 or 2009. This study began in April 2011 and finished in January 2012.

The overarching evaluation questions were:

- What are the short- and medium-term impacts of the Travellers programme for young people?
- How well is the Travellers programme meeting the needs of particular target groups?
- How can the Travellers programme be improved?

## Methodology

To collect information about the impact of Travellers on the short- and medium-term outcomes<sup>2</sup> of Travellers, we conducted a survey focusing on the opinions of young people who had completed the programme a few years ago.

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes in this report (including those at the beginning of chapters) come from the young people’s comments in the follow-up survey.

<sup>2</sup> The short- and medium-term outcomes were those identified by Skylight as the intended goals of the Travellers programme.

The short-term outcomes that were the focus of the evaluation were:

1. access to appropriate youth-focused sharing and learning opportunities
2. improved connectedness to school
3. trusting relationships formed in the group
4. improved help-seeking skills
5. increased access to appropriate support.

The medium-term outcomes that were the focus of the evaluation were:

1. increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges
2. engaged, confident and motivated young people
3. more positive relationships with peers/families/teachers.

We also included questions that had been used in Skylight's initial screening survey<sup>3</sup> so that the responses from the baseline data could be compared to the follow-up responses to tell us about shifts over time in relation to the above outcomes.

In total we received 212 completed survey responses from students from 26 different schools. Reflecting the fact that Travellers was first introduced in Auckland schools and has only been a national programme since 2008, many of these schools were from the Auckland region. This resulted in a higher proportion of Pasifika students completing the survey than is found in the general population.

Along with exploring outcomes for all of the young people in the evaluation, we also looked at the outcomes for students from different sub-groups, including groups that previous research had shown were at higher risk of presenting suicidal thoughts and behaviours (i.e., Māori students, Pasifika students and students from low socioeconomic communities).

We also validated the survey data findings through qualitative focus groups with students (pilot and post-survey). These three sources of data served to give us a more robust picture of impacts than any one source.

## Results

Overall, Travellers appears to be a useful programme for a range of students, with the majority (82 percent) rating Travellers at the top or mid-point on a five-point scale. The majority also reported that Travellers had helped them to learn a range of strategies, in particular strategies that contribute to increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges, and positive relationships and help-seeking. For example, over two-thirds (69 percent) had asked for more

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<sup>3</sup> The screening survey is completed by students, usually at the start of Year 9, and used to determine the risk level of the students in order to help schools decide who should take part in Travellers.

support since doing Travellers. This support came most often from friends, followed by family, the guidance counsellor, and teachers or deans at the school.

Travellers was less likely to help with strategies relating to schoolwork and time management, although it is unclear whether this is because students already have these strategies or whether this is less of a focus for Travellers.

Over half of the young people considered Travellers was run at the right age for them (64 percent). Sixty-two percent said that they could trust the people in their group, and a further 22 percent answered neutrally.

The students selected to take part in Travellers mainly came from a group rated as being at high risk (as indicated by criteria on the screening survey). Since taking part in Travellers, at the time of follow-up the young people reported experiencing less subjective distress despite experiencing a greater number of challenging life events compared to when they completed the screening survey. This increase in experience of challenging life events is not surprising and is likely to be due to maturation. The fact that the young people had lower levels of subjective distress suggests that since taking part in Travellers the young people had improved their ability to manage challenging life events.

Overall, at the time of the follow-up the young people had fairly positive views of themselves and their lives, with the median score of 32 on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* (with 40 or higher considered as at risk). There were also fewer young people who said they did not feel good about themselves most of the time since taking part in Travellers.

Some young people felt that the strategies they learnt in Travellers are very useful in dealing with challenging life events. However, less than half (44 percent) of the young people said that Travellers helped a lot or a bit with a difficult situation they were asked to describe in an open-ended section of the survey. It appears that while young people can identify skills and strategies they learnt in Travellers that contribute to their resiliency, it is more difficult for them to identify how the strategies they learnt in Travellers can be applied. It is not necessarily that these skills have not been applied to new situations; it may simply be that it is difficult to articulate this complex process.

However, the young people's open-ended comments clearly indicated that Travellers had positively affected their general wellbeing. Many were clearly able to articulate their feelings and experiences and made connections between their current sense of improved wellbeing and Travellers. Given that the survey required the young people to recall experiences and views about themselves from two or more years ago, the fact that many were able to do this suggests that Travellers has had a positive impact.

## **Discussion and recommendations**

A number of data sources were used to assess the short- and medium-term impacts of Travellers for young people; in particular, comparing patterns over time, collecting data on young people's perceptions of Travellers, and views gathered through qualitative focus groups. It is always difficult to attribute causality with past programmes. However, our three sources of data in combination all paint a similar picture, suggesting that Travellers was supporting change for young people.

Table 1 provides a summary of the overall impact of Travellers. This shows that Travellers was moderately effective across a wide range of outcomes. It was particularly effective for improving help-seeking skills and helping young people to form positive relationships with peers/families/teachers.

Table 1 **Summary of overall short- and medium-term impacts of Travellers for young people**

Short- and medium-term outcomes	Summary of impact
Access to appropriate youth-focused sharing and learning opportunities	✓ ✓
Improved connectedness to school	✓ ✓
Trusting relationships formed in the group	✓ ✓
Improved help-seeking skills and more positive relationships with peers/families/teachers <sup>4</sup>	✓ ✓ ✓
Increased access to appropriate support	✓ ✓
Increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges	✓ ✓
Engaged, confident and motivated young people	✓ ✓

✓ = Weak evidence, with less than 50 percent of young people responding positively to some of the questions that relate to this outcome.

✓ ✓ = Moderate evidence, with 50–74 percent of young people responding positively to some of the questions that relate to this outcome.

✓ ✓ ✓ = Strong evidence, with 75 percent or more of young people responding positively to some of the questions that relate to this outcome.

Travellers was meeting the needs of the higher-risk groups well (see Table 2). The outcomes for Māori were mostly comparable to those for non-Māori. Travellers was particularly beneficial for Pasifika students and students from low-decile schools.

Table 2 **Summary of overall short- and medium-term impacts of Travellers for at-risk groups**

Short- and medium-term outcomes	Māori	Pasifika	Low-decile
Access to appropriate youth-focused sharing and learning opportunities	✓	○	○
Improved connectedness to school	○	✓	✓
Trusting relationships formed in the group	○	○	✓
Improved help-seeking skills	○	✓	✓
Increased access to appropriate support and more positive relationships with peers, families and teachers	○	✓	○
Increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges*	○	✓	✓
Engaged, confident and motivated young people	○	○	○

✗ = Majority of evidence indicates lower outcomes for sub-group compared to other students.

○ = Majority of evidence indicates similar outcomes for sub-group compared to other students.

✓ = Majority of evidence indicates better outcomes for sub-group compared to other students.

\* Some of the evidence for this outcome was related to how helpful Travellers was in dealing with challenging life events. There were a large number of events that few people had experienced. Therefore, the overall pattern of responses was taken as one piece of evidence, rather than the responses to individual items.

<sup>4</sup> These two outcomes were combined because they were related and were explored in the same questions.

Although the data mostly suggested that Travellers was effective in meeting its aims, there was also evidence that Travellers could further enhance its model in order to benefit more young people and to have a greater long-term impact. While most young people found Travellers helpful, 16 percent did not and 14 percent said they did not trust the people in their group. Most of the young people thought that a few changes should be made to Travellers to enhance the programme. The most common suggestion was having more time spent in Travellers. Other suggestions included covering a wider range of topics, having guest speakers, and providing more information about why the young people were in Travellers.

The data suggest that students who are most in need benefit most from Travellers, and so being able to identify these students is important. Those who could trust the people in their Travellers group were more likely to report finding Travellers helpful, and so selecting students who can work together effectively also appears to be important. Selecting the right mix of students for Travellers relies on the use of the screening data, the professional judgement of school staff, and taking into account the views of the young people themselves. A suggestion for future research is to further explore how Skylight can support schools in selecting young people to take part in the programme.

In summary, the data show moderate to strong evidence of change across a wide range of wellbeing-related outcomes for most students, as well as for sub-groups of students, including those identified in New Zealand data as being more at risk of negative health-related outcomes. For a relatively short programme of workshop sessions this is a good outcome, which indicates that Travellers is likely to be a useful investment for schools when considering how best to support at-risk students and support them to develop strategies that contribute to their wellbeing. This quote is illustrative of the young people's perspectives:

Travellers helped me feel a bit better about myself and how to treat my family and friends better. Travellers taught me not to give up on life. (Female South African student)

# 1. Introduction

This report discusses the findings from an evaluation of Skylight's Travellers programme conducted during 2011 by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER). This chapter explores some literature on mental health and wellbeing of young people in New Zealand and provides some background to the Travellers programme. Finally, the evaluation carried out by NZCER is introduced.

## **Mental health and wellbeing of young people in New Zealand**

The revised *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), which all schools were expected to implement by 2010, aims to assist young people to develop as confident, connected, actively involved lifelong learners. The curriculum states that for students to lead full and satisfying lives they need, among other things, to be supported to build resilience and learn how to co-operate and negotiate, and to develop competencies for mental wellness and safety management. Therefore, it is vital that those involved in education (including guidance counsellors and teachers) work to equip young people with the competencies and strategies they need to manage their wellbeing and learning so that they can experience success in, and contribute to, a range of communities.

There is a need to keep looking for ways to promote young New Zealanders' resiliency. There continue to be high levels of depression and suicidal thoughts and behaviours amongst young people in New Zealand (Fortune et al., 2010), and suicide is one of the leading causes of death amongst young people (Ministry of Health, 2008b). Having multiple risk factors can have a cumulative impact on young people's mental health and wellbeing (Ministry of Health, 2008b). Risk factors can include low socioeconomic status, certain personality traits and characteristics (e.g., low self-esteem), mental health disorders, and social stresses, including experiencing stressful life events (Beautrais, 2003).

## **Health and wellbeing of different groups in New Zealand**

Statistics about the health and wellbeing of New Zealand youth show relatively large variations by gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Some young people in New Zealand are more likely to experience adverse health outcomes than others. The *Ministry of Health—Portrait of Health: Key Results of the 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey* (Ministry of Health, 2008a) found that while the majority of New Zealand children were in good health and had excellent access to health care services, there was still a considerable number of children who did not meet healthy

behaviour recommendations. Most concerning was the persistence of large disparities across a range of risk factors and health outcomes for Māori and Pasifika young people compared to the total population, and also for young people living in low socioeconomic communities (Ministry of Health, 2008a). This suggests that programmes that aim to improve young people's health and wellbeing need to include a focus on these populations.

### ***Gender differences***

The findings from the *New Zealand Youth '07 Health Survey* included a report on the suicidal behaviours and mental health of the young people in the study (Fortune, et al., 2010). These data showed that more female students than male students had suicidal thoughts, had significant depressive symptoms and had made a suicide attempt in the 12 months prior to the survey. However, young men are more likely to die from suicide attempts because of their use of more fatal methods compared to young women, who make more non-fatal suicide attempts (Ministry of Health, 2008b). Male and female young people appear to have quite different experiences in terms of mental wellbeing.

### ***Cultural and ethnic differences in mental health of youth***

There are differences by ethnicity, with Māori and Pasifika young people being more likely to report suicidal behaviours, self-harm, depression and mental health difficulties than their peers (Fortune, et al., 2010). Māori students are more likely than New Zealand European students to report having suicidal thoughts and plans, and are more likely to have attempted suicide. Similarly, more Pasifika students than New Zealand European students report having made a suicide plan and suicide attempts.

### ***Socioeconomic differences***

The findings from the *New Zealand Youth '07 Health Survey* also indicated that young people from low socioeconomic neighbourhoods are more likely to report suicide attempts than those from high socioeconomic neighbourhoods (Fortune, et al., 2010). It is important to note that Māori and Pasifika young people are over-represented in low socioeconomic communities, so some students may be in multiple risk groups.

These data suggest that sub-groups of students are particularly at risk. Preventing suicidal behaviour involves improving young people's mental health (e.g., through preventing and treating mental health disorders) and through reducing young people's risk factors. One way to achieve this can be through programmes that encourage wellbeing and support at-risk youth by improving young people's resiliency and mental wellbeing (Beautrais, 2003). Successful programmes work on both improving young people's protective factors, such as positive self-identity, as well as reducing risk factors (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002).



## The Travellers programme

Travellers is an early intervention programme run by Skylight for students (most often in Year 9) in New Zealand secondary schools. The overall aim of Travellers is to “enhance protective factors for young people experiencing change, loss and transition events and early stages of emotional distress” (Skylight, 2011, p. 1). Students’ risk levels are assessed through an online screening survey. The Travellers co-ordinator at the school then selects which students will take part. The students selected are not generally accessing much additional support at school.

The Travellers programme involves a series of small-group workshops for students, run by a trained facilitator. These workshops explore content such as: changes, losses and transitions and how to deal with these, and improving young people’s access to support. Travellers is based on a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) model, which involves exploring the relationship between thoughts and feelings and behaviours and works on challenging unhelpful thoughts and responses (Dickinson, Coggan, & Bennett, 2003; Skylight, 2005).

Travellers was developed by Skylight and the Ministry of Health (Skylight, 2011). It was initially piloted before being made available to all New Zealand secondary schools in 2008. Currently, the Ministry of Health contracts Skylight to provide the programme as one component of the *New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy* (Associate Minister of Health, 2006). Since 2008 around 2000 students per year have taken part in Travellers, and at present 96 schools are registered to run the programme.

There is a foundation of data gathering already in place for Travellers (through the screening assessment and post-programme evaluation, and the database that houses this information). In addition, a formative, process and short-term outcome evaluation was conducted by Pauline Dickinson over 2000–2003 (Dickinson, 2004), and a process evaluation, which focused on the content of the sessions and the training of facilitators, was reported on by Nathan McCluskey (2010).

Dickinson (2004) reported that positive short-term outcomes for young people related to the programme included: reduced scores on measures of emotional distress; more positive thinking; greater expression of feelings; positive social connections with peers; and supportive relationships with adults. Dickinson suggested that it would be beneficial if further research were conducted on the longer-term outcomes of the programme, building on the measures that were used (i.e., using more sensitive instruments and more qualitative questions). A report from the Prime Minister’s Chief Science Advisor (Merry & Stasiak, 2011) also recommended an evaluation of Travellers to assess the effectiveness of the programme.

## NZCER's evaluation of Travellers

To build on prior work, we designed an outcome evaluation<sup>5</sup> framework that would assist us to make judgements about the short- and medium-term impacts of Travellers. This framework included aspects of process evaluation<sup>6</sup> to explore the Travellers process and possible enhancements of the programme.

The overarching evaluation questions were:

- What are the short- and medium-term impacts of the Travellers programme for young people?
- How well is the Travellers programme meeting the needs of particular target groups?
- How can the Travellers programme be improved?

The next chapter provides details on the methodology we used in order to answer these evaluation questions.

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<sup>5</sup> An *outcome* evaluation is used to make judgements about an established programme.

<sup>6</sup> A *process* evaluation is aimed at exploring strengths and weaknesses, successes and challenges, and the conditions or processes that underpin what is being evaluated.

## 2. Methodology

Two main approaches were used to evaluate the short- and medium-term impacts of Travellers:

1. collecting survey data on students' perceptions of the extent to which Travellers had supported them to develop strategies they were able to use post-Travellers
2. comparing the patterns over time for young people who had completed Travellers (comparing the data collected in the screening survey to the follow-up survey).

We also validated the survey data findings through qualitative focus groups with young people (pilot and post-survey).

This chapter discusses how the survey was developed and administered, who responded, and how the data were analysed.

### **Focus of the survey**

A short online and paper-copy survey for students was the main method of data gathering. The survey included questions that directly related to the short- and medium-term outcomes and was developed in collaboration with Skylight. It was designed to look at the impact of Travellers on young people who had taken part and to explore their opinions of Travellers. The short-term outcomes that were the focus of the evaluation were:

1. access to appropriate youth-focused sharing and learning opportunities
2. improved connectedness to school
3. trusting relationships formed in the group
4. improved help-seeking skills
5. increased access to appropriate support.

The medium-term outcomes aimed for were:

1. increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges
2. engaged, confident and motivated young people
3. more positive relationships with peers/families/teachers.

These outcomes came from the Travellers logic model, which had been developed previously (see Figure 1) (Dickinson, 2008).

The survey also included questions that had been used in Skylight’s initial screening survey<sup>7</sup> so that responses from the baseline data could be compared to follow-up responses to determine whether there were any shifts over time. These questions included a *Life Events Scale* developed by Skylight and the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale*—a short version of the *Weinberger Adjustment Inventory* (WAI) (Weinberger & Schwartz, 1990), which measures emotional distress. We used a quasi-experimental design with pre- and follow-up data from the same group of young people to assess the impact of Travellers.

For a number of reasons we did not use a control group design. The main reason for this was that it was not possible to compare data from Travellers students to data from a control group because we were drawing on retrospective data and because it was not possible to clearly identify or reach a comparable group of at-risk students. Travellers students are selected based on a certain set of criteria that identify them as having had different life experiences from other students and to be at higher risk. Therefore, a control group could not be selected from their peers who did not attend Travellers at their school, because they would not have been in the same risk category at the time the baseline data were collected. We did not have baseline data from schools that do not use Travellers, and so we could not approach the students at these schools to form a control group as we had no data on their level of risk at the time of baseline data collection.

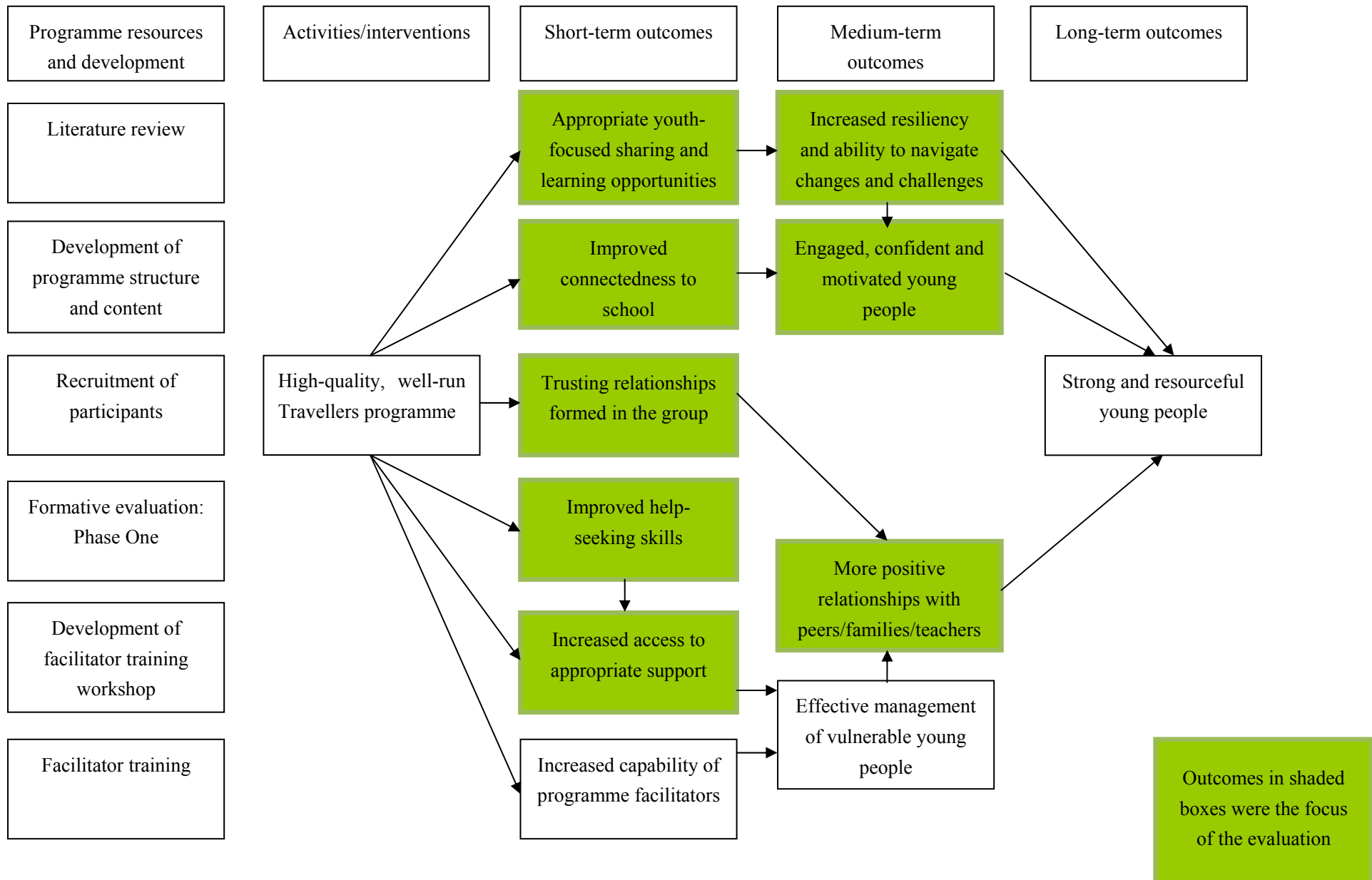
Another reason we did not attempt to use a control group relates to the ethical issue of approaching at-risk students at other schools to ask them about their life experiences. This could bring up sensitive or upsetting issues. Travellers schools have put in place mechanisms for student support, but we would not know if these supports were in place at all schools. In dealing with sensitive populations it is important that the implications of the principle “do no harm” are carefully considered.

We piloted the survey with 12 students from two schools in the greater Wellington region that had previously taken part in Travellers and made minor changes based on their feedback (see Appendix A). We also briefly discussed the survey with the co-ordinators of the programme from these schools.

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<sup>7</sup> The screening survey is used to determine the risk level of the students in order to help schools decide who should take part in Travellers.

Figure 1 **Original Travellers logic model**



## Participants and survey administration

The survey was given to young people who had taken part in Travellers in 2008 or 2009. We focused on students who had completed Travellers approximately 2 to 3 years after they had taken part in the programme for the following reasons.

- These young people would be able to provide information on whether the effects of the programme are sustained over a considerable length of time.
- These young people were likely to still be in school (since the typical year for taking part in Travellers is Year 9, the young people would probably be in Years 11 or 12).
- Travellers was made available nationwide in 2008, allowing for schools from across New Zealand to be involved in the evaluation.
- These young people were old enough to make an informed decision about whether to be involved in the evaluation or not.

Sixty-six schools had run Travellers in 2008 and/or 2009. The Travellers co-ordinators at all of these schools (who were usually the guidance counsellors) were all contacted via email or phone to invite their school to take part in the evaluation. Surveys were sent to 36 schools in total, which included both secondary and composite schools. The remaining schools chose not to take part, did not respond, or had participated in the pilot.

Schools that gave permission for students to take part were sent instructions about how to administer the surveys, copies of the information letter (see Appendix B) and paper copies of the survey (see Appendix C). Students could choose to complete the survey online or on paper. Details were provided in the information letters about where students could access further support in case the survey process brought up sensitive concerns (i.e., contact details for Travellers, Youthline and their school guidance counsellor). The Travellers co-ordinators from the schools were asked to collect the surveys from the students and post them to NZCER.

In total we received 212 completed survey responses from students at 26 different schools.<sup>8</sup> Fourteen surveys were completed online and 198 were paper copies. It is not possible to estimate the response rate because the total number of students who completed Travellers in 2008 and 2009 is unknown. However, we consider this a good response rate given we were collecting potentially sensitive information and the students who took part in Travellers were likely to be difficult to follow up due to issues such as school transience. The characteristics of the participating students and their schools are described below.

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<sup>8</sup> One survey was passed on to a student no longer attending school. However, this is a separate group that we were unable to reach in this evaluation.

## Student and school demographics

Of the 212 students who responded, 60 percent were female, 33 percent were male and 6 percent did not respond to this question. Almost all of the students were either 15 years old (41 percent) or 16 years old (41 percent). Eleven percent were 17 years, 2 percent responded “other” and 5 percent did not answer this question.

Table 3 shows the ethnic groups the young people identified with (they were able to select more than one group).

Table 3 **Ethnicity of students**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Total young people (n = 212) %</b>
Pākehā / New Zealand European	50
Pasifika	28
Māori	15
Asian	10
Other	8
No response	11

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were possible.

Table 4 shows the characteristics of the 26 schools the young people came from. It was most common for students to come from secondary schools (91 percent), co-educational schools (61 percent), small- to medium-sized schools with 501–1000 students (45 percent), schools from the Auckland region (83 percent), mid-decile schools (58 percent) and state schools (89 percent). It is not surprising that the majority of surveys came from Auckland schools as Travellers was initially rolled out in the Auckland region, and so more schools in this region were involved in Travellers in 2008 and 2009. As a result of the high proportion of Auckland schools, there was a large number of Pasifika students.

Table 4 **Characteristics of schools of the young people who responded**

	Total young people (n = 212) %
<b>School type</b>	
Secondary	91
Composite	7
No response	2
<b>Co-educational or single sex</b>	
Co-educational	61
Girls' school	22
Boys' school	14
No response	2
<b>School size</b>	
1–500	3
501–1000	45
1001–1500	14
1501–2000	10
2001–2500	16
> 2500	10
No response	2
<b>Location</b>	
Auckland	83
Nelson	8
Wellington	3
Bay of Plenty	2
Canterbury	2
No response	2
<b>Socioeconomic decile</b>	
1–2	18
3–8	58
9–10	21
No response	2
<b>Authority</b>	
State	89
Private	9
No response	2

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.



## Data analysis

Along with exploring outcomes for all of the young people in the evaluation, we looked at the outcomes for students from groups that were shown in previous research to be at higher risk.

These target students were:

- Māori students
- Pasifika students
- students from low socioeconomic communities (as indicated by the socioeconomic decile of the school).

We also looked to see whether there were any different patterns for male and female students; for students who were from co-educational compared to single-sex schools; and for those who indicated that they found Travellers to be helpful or very helpful overall compared to those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful.<sup>9</sup>

Data were also analysed to look for changes over time. Students were asked to provide their contact details in the survey so that their responses could be matched to the baseline screening data<sup>10</sup> provided by Skylight. The responses to the screening survey were provided as the answer to the question “Do you feel good about yourself most of the time?” (yes or no); the number of life events with major impact (number); the number of schools attended (grouped as 1–3, 4–6, 7–9 or 10 or more); their score on the short form of the *Weinberger Adjustment Inventory* (score between 12 and 60),<sup>11</sup> and the risk category given to each student (low, medium or high). These data were matched to the follow-up survey, and the changes between responses at baseline screening and follow-up were analysed for matched students.

To ascertain if there were any differences between sub-groups and whether there were any differences over time, chi-square statistics from contingency tables were used to test for statistical significance. Only statistically significant differences where the *p*-value was equal to or less than 0.05 are reported.<sup>12</sup> This indicates that there is a 5 percent or less probability that the differences observed were a chance association. Where statistical differences are reported, the *p*-value is included. Some statistics that are reported do not sum to 100 due to non-responses and to rounding.

After analysing the data, we presented some of the results to a group of eight students from one school in Wellington who had recently taken part in Travellers, either in 2011 or 2010 (see Appendix D for questions), and three Travellers co-ordinators from the school. This provided us with additional qualitative data, which is also presented in this report.

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<sup>9</sup> Students were asked in the survey: “Overall how helpful was Travellers for you?” The group that rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful includes those who rated Travellers as neutral, not helpful, not at all helpful, or did not respond to this question.

<sup>10</sup> This question was optional, so students could decide whether they provided their names or not.

<sup>11</sup> No responses to individual statements from the Inventory are stored by Skylight.

<sup>12</sup> Not all significant differences are reported; only those that are relevant or show a useful pattern.

To assess the extent to which Travellers supported change in relation to the expected outcomes, we triangulated the following qualitative and quantitative data sources: students' survey self-reports of improvements over time, student data comparison over time on key scales, students' open-ended comments, and student focus group reports. We also made comparisons with data from other related studies and had informal conversations with Travellers facilitators in schools. It is always difficult to attribute causality with past programmes. However, if all the sources of data tell the same story (as they did in this evaluation), this provides stronger evidence of the impact of a programme than if only one set of data is used.

## Report structure

The data are presented in the report as follows:

- overall Travellers experience<sup>13</sup>
- resilience and ability to navigate changes and challenges (the first medium-term outcome)
- engaged, confident and motivated young people (the second medium-term outcome)
- changes over time (where there are comparisons between the screening data and the survey data relating to the first and second medium-term outcomes)
- relationships and help-seeking (relating to the third medium-term outcome of more positive relationships with peers/families/teachers)
- recommendations from the young people.

There are three main sections in each chapter.<sup>14</sup> The first section presents the overall data from all the students who completed the survey. Relevant information from the student focus group and co-ordinator interviews is sometimes included. The second section compares data from six sub-groups. Table 5 provides a description of these sub-groups.

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<sup>13</sup> This chapter includes data from questions that look at the overall experience, or questions that are related to a number of different outcomes. Where relevant, these data are sometimes referred to again in later chapters.

<sup>14</sup> The chapter on changes over time does not include data on all of the sub-groups because the numbers are small. This will be discussed further at the beginning of this chapter.

Table 5 **Description of sub-groups**

Name of sub-group	Description of comparison
Overall helpful vs. overall neutral/unhelpful	Those who said they found Travellers very helpful or helpful on a Likert scale compared to everyone else <sup>15</sup>
Māori	All of those who identified as Māori <sup>16</sup> compared to those who did not
Pasifika	All of those who identified as Pasifika <sup>17</sup> compared to those who did not
Decile	Students from low (1–2), mid (3–8) and high (9–10) decile schools
Gender	Male compared to female students
Co-educational vs. single-sex	Students who attended a co-educational compared to single-sex schools

Only a small number of students identified as Māori, and so care needs to be taken when drawing conclusions from these results. Some of these sub-groups were also related. There were more Pasifika students in the low-decile group (57 percent) compared to non-Pasifika students (3 percent) ( $p < 0.01$ ). Also, more female students came from low-decile schools (24 percent) compared to only 10 percent of males ( $p < 0.01$ ). Mid-decile schools were more likely to be co-educational schools (71 percent) compared to low-decile (61 percent) or high-decile (42 percent) schools ( $p < 0.01$ ).

The third section in each chapter is an overall summary. The final chapter in the report addresses the overall evaluation questions.

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<sup>15</sup> “Everyone else” includes those who said Travellers was neither helpful nor unhelpful, was unhelpful, or was very unhelpful.

<sup>16</sup> This includes students who selected other ethnicities as well as Māori.

<sup>17</sup> This includes students who selected other ethnicities as well as Pasifika



### 3. Overall Travellers experience

It [Travellers] just made me feel more positive towards issues I have with myself and others. I feel more confident, which I think has made me a happier person. I enjoy talking about troubles and issues with my friends so that we can help each other through. (Female student)<sup>18</sup>

This chapter discusses general questions relating to the young people's overall Travellers experience, both for all students and for different sub-groups. The data discussed relate to the following outcomes: access to appropriate youth-focused sharing and learning opportunities; improved connectedness to school; trusting relationships formed in the group; improved help-seeking skills; more positive relationships with peers/families/teachers; and increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges.

#### All students

##### Age when participating in Travellers

Most (90 percent) of the students completed Travellers when they were in Year 9. Seven percent had completed Travellers in Year 10, less than 1 percent had completed the programme in Year 8 and 3 percent were not sure. The majority (64 percent) of young people felt they had taken part in Travellers at the right age for them. Ten percent would have preferred to have done Travellers when they were older. Slightly fewer (6 percent) would have preferred taking part when they were younger. Twenty-one percent were not sure if this was the right age for them.

##### Trust within Travellers group

The young people were asked to rate how much they felt they could trust the people in Travellers, from 1 (I could completely trust them) to 5 (I could not trust them). Over half (62 percent) felt that they could trust the people in Travellers, rating it a 1 or 2. Twenty-two percent were neutral, 14 percent rated the trust within the group a 4 or 5, and 2 percent did not respond to this question. Some young people made comments about making friends with others in their Travellers group and enjoying being able to interact with people who had been through similar experiences. For example, one student talked about the benefits of sharing within the Travellers group, saying:

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<sup>18</sup> No ethnicity data were provided by this student.

I think it helped me understand to make the most of my opportunities. This happened through hearing others' stories. I learnt how to relate to others and how others' experiences could help me deal with new ones for me in the future. (Male Māori and Pākehā student)

The focus group students emphasised the importance of trust in terms of how much group members were willing to share. Building trust was seen by the young people as something that was difficult to do and they did not always feel they could trust all group members.

## Benefits of Travellers

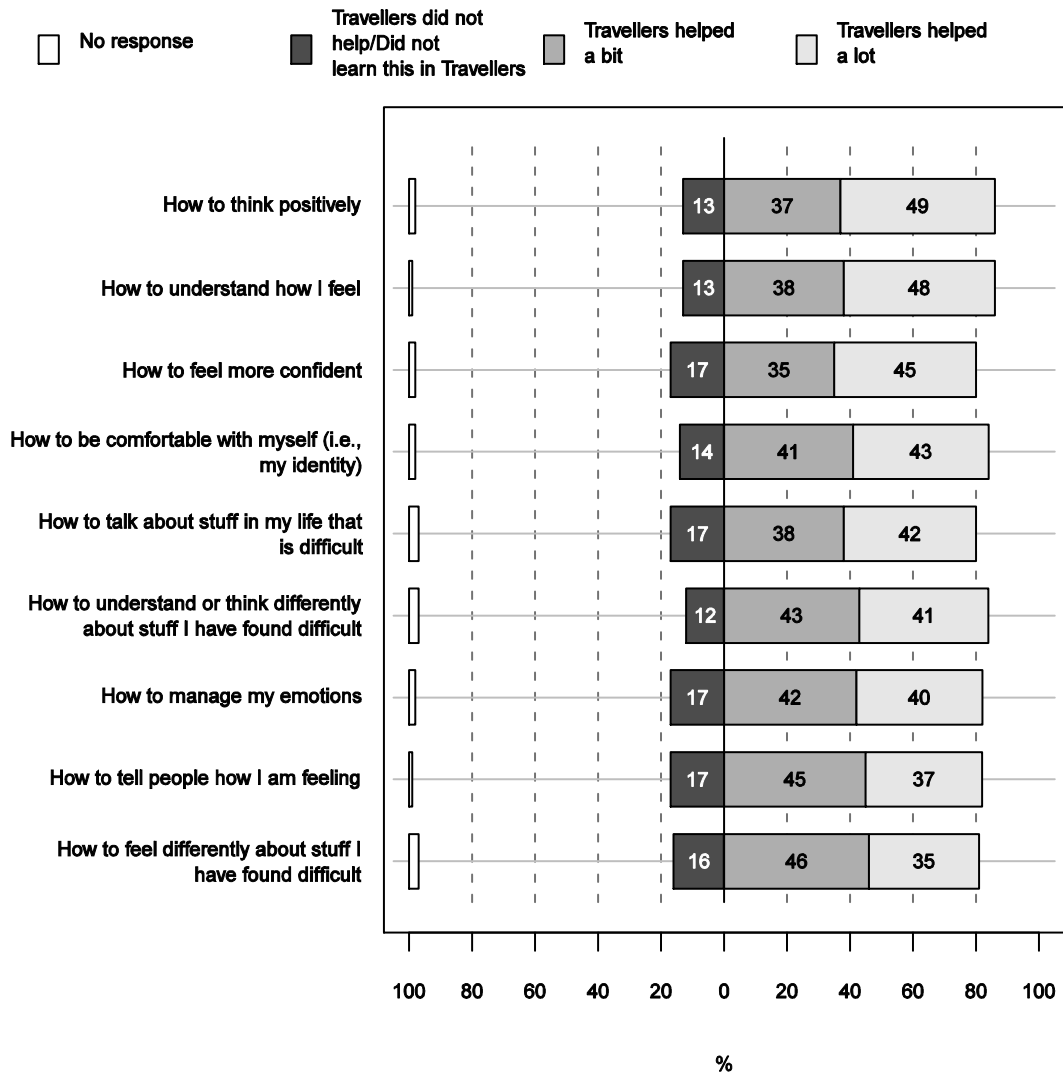
The young people were asked to rate how helpful Travellers had been for them overall, from 1 (very helpful) to 5 (not at all helpful). Just over half (52 percent) thought that it was very helpful or helpful, 30 percent were neutral, 16 percent thought that it was not helpful or not at all helpful, and 2 percent did not respond.

We asked the young people whether Travellers helped them to develop various strategies. These related to three overarching areas: increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges (see Figure 2); relationships and help-seeking (see Figure 3); and managing schoolwork and time (see Figure 4). Travellers was most helpful for skills relating to thinking and feeling differently (see Figure 2) and help-seeking (see Figure 3).

The majority of young people considered Travellers had helped them either a bit or a lot to develop a range of strategies. Overall, 81 percent of the young people said that Travellers helped a lot and 90 percent said that Travellers helped a bit with at least one of the strategies. Fifty-nine percent said that Travellers helped a lot with five or more strategies. The median number of strategies that Travellers helped a lot with was six, with a range from zero to sixteen.

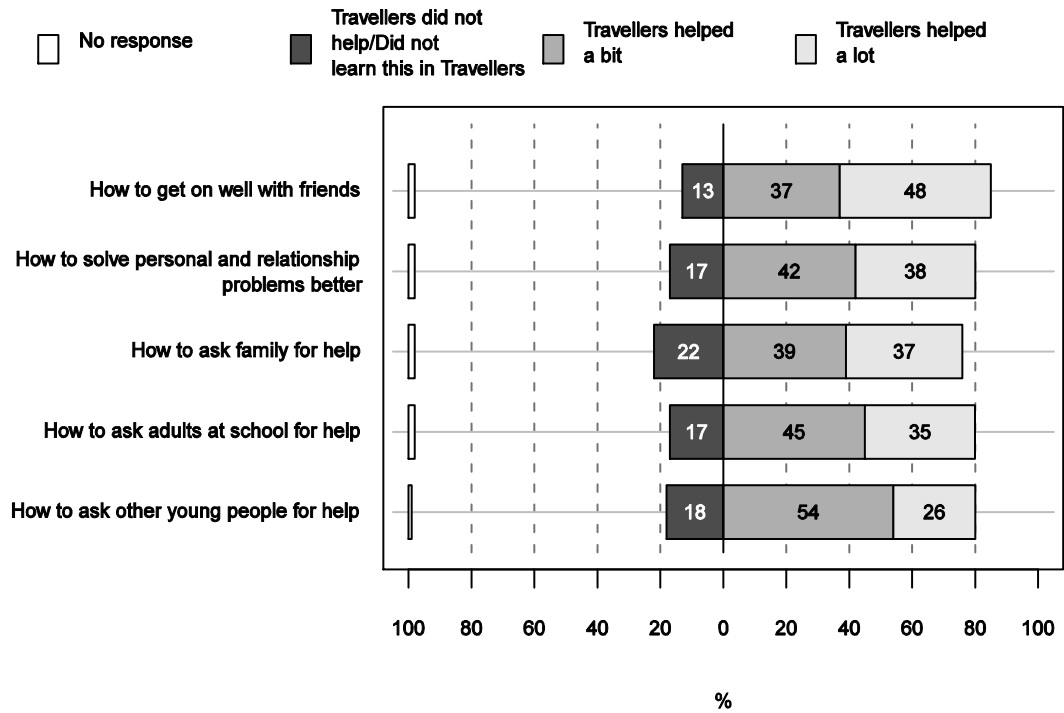
The young people were likely to rate Travellers as helping them a lot with the development of strategies relating to thinking and feeling differently (see Figure 2), which is a core aspect of CBT, which Travellers is based on. Over 40 percent of students said that Travellers had helped them a lot in developing the following strategies: how to think positively (49 percent); how to understand how I feel (48 percent); how to feel more confident (45 percent); how to be comfortable with myself (43 percent); how to talk about stuff that is difficult (42 percent); how to understand/think differently about stuff I have found difficult (41 percent); and how to manage my emotions (40 percent).

Figure 2 **Thinking and feeling strategies learnt in Travellers (n = 212)**



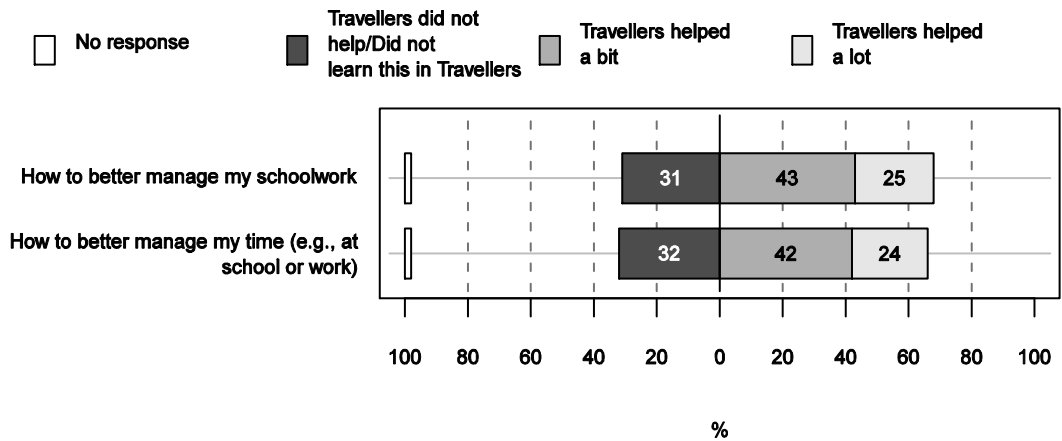
Travellers also helped many students with their relationships and help-seeking (see Figure 3). Forty-eight percent said it helped them to learn how to get on well with friends. Slightly fewer said it helped them with strategies relating to talking to others or asking for help.

Figure 3 Relationship and help-seeking strategies learnt in Travellers (n = 212)



Travellers was less likely to help with strategies relating to school (see Figure 4). Twenty-five percent said that it taught them how to better manage their schoolwork and 24 percent said it helped them to better manage their time.

Figure 4 School and time management strategies learnt in Travellers (n = 212)



The young people were asked to describe in their own words the main way Travellers had helped them to think or feel differently about life at school, home or in the community. Responses were coded using different themes derived from the data (see Table 6).



Table 6 **Impact of Travellers for students**

How Travellers helped	Total young people (n = 212) %
Learnt to talk to people / to ask people for support / realised support that was available	20
Became more confident	14
Learnt how to manage/understand my feelings	14
Developed better/new relationships / became more connected to people	14
Learnt to be/respect/understand myself / felt comfortable with my identity	12
Helped me to feel more positive / view things more positively	12
Helped normalise issue/situation (e.g., realised I wasn't alone in what I was going through, realised my feelings were normal)	8
Helped me to solve problems <sup>19</sup>	6
Helped with school (e.g., managing my time, doing better academically)	6
Realised what was important in life / gave me time to reflect	2
General positive comment of how Travellers helped or example of how Travellers helped in particular situation	11
Not sure how Travellers helped / Travellers did not help	7
Other comment	6
No response	12

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were possible.

The most common impact of Travellers was that it helped young people to learn to talk to others or to ask for support (20 percent). One young person stated:

Travellers helped me mainly with being able to talk about problems to others, rather than suppressing it; which helped me in other areas of life, I feel more calm towards people etc. I'm able to talk to my best friends and sometimes my Mum about things I never could before. (Female Pākehā student)

Travellers also helped many young people to: feel more confident (14 percent), manage/understand their feelings (14 percent), connect with people and form relationships (14 percent), be comfortable with their identity (12 percent), and feel more positive (12 percent).

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<sup>19</sup> Particular skills to solve problems were not mentioned.

One new theme that came up in these open responses was that Travellers helped to normalise issues/situations; for example, it helped the young people to realise they were not alone in what they were going through. Eight percent of the young people said Travellers had helped them with this. For example, one young person said:

It helped me realise that I'm not the only one that has gone through tough times in my life and that there are people I can talk to who understand. (Male Māori student)

Seven percent of the young people said that Travellers was not helpful or that they could not remember what they had learnt in Travellers, and 12 percent did not respond to this question. These figures are in line with the 18 percent who said they did not find Travellers helpful overall or who did not respond to this question.

Some comments articulated the multiple ways that Travellers had made a big impact on the young people. For example:

It [Travellers] has helped me feel like I should just pursue my dreams and become who I want to be and expressing myself in an honest way. I felt like I was hiding my real self because of my insecurities before I was a part of Travellers. Now, I feel like I'm myself. I'm not pretending to be anyone and I'm not trying to please everyone else. I feel so alive and so appreciative of every second of my life and it made me become more thankful. (Male Asian student)

We also asked students in the focus group about what they had learnt from Travellers. Almost all of the students in the focus group felt that they had learnt useful strategies from Travellers, aligning with the areas in the survey; for example, how to think positively, how to manage their feelings, how to understand other people's feelings, how to be more confident, and how to deal with / react to difficult situations.

Like the survey students, the focus group students did not feel that they had learnt strategies relating to school and time management through doing Travellers, but did not think these were important strategies for Travellers to focus on.

## **Sub-groups**

Statistically significant differences within the sub-groups are discussed below. The description of the sub-groups can be seen in Table 5.

### **Overall helpful vs. overall neutral/unhelpful**

More of those who rated Travellers as helpful or very helpful said they could trust the people in their Travellers group (82 percent) compared to those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful (42 percent) ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating the importance of trust. Those who rated Travellers as helpful were more likely to think Travellers occurred at the right age for them (79

percent), compared to 47 percent of those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful ( $p < 0.01$ ). Those who rated Travellers helpful overall were more likely to say they had learnt strategies from the programme, compared to those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful. These significant differences are presented in Table 7.

Table 7 **Strategies gained through Travellers (rated Travellers helpful compared to neutral/unhelpful)**

<b>Strategy that Travellers helped a lot to develop</b>	<b>Rated Travellers helpful (n = 111)</b>	<b>Rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful<sup>20</sup> (n = 97)</b>	<b>p value</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>Increased resiliency</b>			
How to understand how I feel	63	32	< 0.01
How to think positively	62	33	< 0.01
How to talk about stuff in my life that is difficult	57	26	< 0.01
How to feel more confident	61	28	< 0.01
How to be comfortable with myself	60	23	< 0.01
How to understand/think differently about stuff I have found difficult	54	27	< 0.01
How to manage my emotions	52	25	< 0.01
How to feel differently about stuff I have found difficult	48	20	< 0.01
How to tell people how I'm feeling	52	21	< 0.01
<b>Help-seeking and relationships</b>			
How to get on well with friends	61	33	< 0.01
How to ask other young people for help	38	11	< 0.01
How to ask adults at school for help	50	18	0.01
How to ask family for help	50	23	< 0.01
How to solve personal and relationship problems better	51	23	< 0.01
<b>Schoolwork and time management</b>			
How to better manage my schoolwork	28	21	0.02
How to better manage my time	30	16	< 0.01

<sup>20</sup> This includes the young people who on the Likert scale rated the overall helpfulness of Travellers as 3 (neither helpful nor unhelpful), 4 (not helpful) or 5 (not at all helpful), or did not respond to this question.

## Māori

A greater proportion of Māori students (71 percent) compared to non-Māori students (61 percent) rated Travellers as either helpful or very helpful overall ( $p < 0.01$ ). There were a few strategies which a significantly higher proportion of Māori students thought that Travellers had helped them to develop. Two of these strategies concerned increased resiliency. More Māori (58 percent) than non-Māori (34 percent) said that Travellers helped them a lot to tell people how they were feeling ( $p = 0.04$ ). Also, more Māori (58 percent) than non-Māori (31 percent) said that Travellers helped them a lot to feel differently about things they had found difficult ( $p = 0.02$ ).

In terms of developing strategies to better manage schoolwork, more Māori (35 percent) than non-Māori (23 percent) said that Travellers helped them a lot to develop this strategy ( $p = 0.03$ ).

## Pasifika

A greater proportion of Pasifika students (15 percent) had completed Travellers in Year 10 than non-Pasifika students (3 percent) ( $p < 0.01$ ). It is possible that schools with a high proportion of Pasifika students have chosen to run Travellers in Year 10.

The data suggest that Travellers was particularly helpful for Pasifika students. Table 8 shows that more Pasifika than non-Pasifika students rated Travellers as very helpful in teaching them a range of strategies. However, it is important to interpret these results cautiously. We have found a general pattern (from previous surveys conducted by NZCER) that Pasifika students tend to respond more positively to survey questions compared to non-Pasifika students. For example, survey data from an evaluation of Fruit in Schools (Boyd, Dingle, Hodgen, King, & Moss, 2009) and from research on preparing students for the transition from school (Boyd, with McDowall, & Ferral, 2006) showed that Pasifika students held more positive views than their Māori or Pākehā peers about factors such as their views about physical health and their experiences of learning at school. Further research is recommended to look at whether the programme did have particularly good outcomes for Pasifika students, or whether this is due to different survey response tendencies.

Table 8 **Strategies gained through Travellers (Pasifika compared to non-Pasifika students)**

Strategy that Travellers helped a lot to develop	Pasifika students (n = 60) %	Non-Pasifika students (n = 152) %	p value
<b>Increased resiliency</b>			
How to understand how I feel	60	43	< 0.01
How to think positively	60	44	< 0.01
How to talk about stuff that is difficult	52	38	0.04
How to feel more confident	63	38	< 0.01
How to be comfortable with myself	58	37	< 0.01
How to understand/think differently about stuff I have found difficult	50	38	0.04
How to tell people how I'm feeling	47	34	0.02
<b>Help-seeking and relationships</b>			
How to get on well with friends	65	41	< 0.01
How to ask other young people for help	43	19	< 0.01
How to ask adults at school for help	48	30	< 0.01
How to ask family for help	55	30	< 0.01
How to solve personal and relationship problems better	53	32	< 0.01
<b>Schoolwork and time management</b>			
How to better manage my schoolwork	37	20	< 0.01
How to better manage my time	33	20	< 0.01

## Decile

Students from low-decile schools tended to view Travellers more favourably than students from mid- or high-decile schools. More students from low-decile schools thought they could trust the people in their group than students from mid-decile or high-decile schools (low decile 82 percent, mid 60 percent, high 58 percent,  $p = 0.03$ ). As discussed above, in the focus group establishing trust within the group was seen as very important in order to help students benefit from Travellers. More students from low-decile compared to mid- or high-decile schools said that Travellers helped them a lot to develop a range of strategies (see Table 9).

Table 9 **Strategies gained through Travellers (students from low-, mid- and high-decile schools)**

<b>Strategy that Travellers helped a lot to develop</b>	<b>Low decile (n = 38) %</b>	<b>Mid decile (n = 124) %</b>	<b>High decile (n = 45) %</b>	<b>p value</b>
<b>Increased resiliency</b>				
How to understand how I feel	74	43	42	< 0.01
How to think positively	66	45	42	0.03
How to feel more confident	71	44	29	< 0.01
How to be comfortable with myself	63	42	27	< 0.01
How to understand/think differently about stuff I have found difficult	55	43	24	0.04
How to manage my emotions	47	43	22	0.05
How to feel differently about stuff I have found difficult	50	31	29	0.03
How to tell people how I'm feeling	55	32	36	0.02
<b>Help-seeking and relationships</b>				
How to get on well with friends	71	48	29	< 0.01
How to ask other young people for help	39	27	7	< 0.01
How to ask adults at school for help	58	29	29	0.01
How to ask family for help	66	31	29	< 0.01
How to solve personal and relationship problems better	55	38	22	0.03
<b>Schoolwork and time management</b>				
How to better manage my schoolwork	42	21	18	0.03
How to better manage my time	34	23	13	0.01

## Gender

There were few gender differences. However, more male students (77 percent) compared to female students (52 percent) felt they could trust the people in their Travellers group ( $p < 0.01$ ).

## Co-educational vs. single-sex

While there were gender differences, there was no statistical difference in trust within the group when comparing students from co-educational and single-sex schools. Students from single-sex schools (47 percent) were more likely than students from co-educational schools (27 percent) to say that Travellers helped them to ask adults at the school for help ( $p = 0.01$ ).

## Summary

Overall, Travellers appears to be a useful programme for a range of students. The majority of young people felt that Travellers was helpful or very helpful for them and that they could trust the people in their group. Travellers has supported the young people to learn a range of strategies, in particular, strategies that contribute to increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges, and to positive relationships and help-seeking. For example, Travellers provided strategies that were helpful in assisting young people to reframe their thinking and feelings. Travellers was less likely to help with strategies relating to schoolwork and time management, but it is unclear whether this is because students already have these strategies or whether this is less of a focus in Travellers. Travellers also seems to be particularly helpful for some of the at-risk groups—Māori and Pasifika students, and students from low-decile schools.

There is, however, still potential to further enhance Travellers. Sixteen percent did not find Travellers helpful and 14 percent said they could not trust the people in their Travellers group. This suggests that identifying students who are most in need of completing Travellers is important, as is having the right mix of students who can trust one another. These ideas and possible ways to improve Travellers will be discussed later in this report.





## 4. Increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges

It [Travellers] has helped me embrace who I am and figure out who I wanted to be. I was hiding who I am all the time and I hated that feeling. Travellers has helped me deal with my issues and try to solve them in a positive way. It has helped me figure out who I am and who I'm wanting to be. (Male European student)

This chapter explores the medium-term outcome of increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges. The chapter discusses whether young people applied the strategies they learnt in Travellers to challenging life events they had experienced in the last 12 months. Three sections in the survey related to young people's increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges. The first was the *Life Experiences Scale* that came from the screening survey. The second question included additional life events that were not included in the screening survey; these additional questions were included to further explore how a range of strategies learnt in Travellers were applied by the young people<sup>21</sup>. The third asked students to describe a challenging situation themselves and how Travellers had or had not helped them. Data from all students are presented, followed by data relating to the sub-groups.

### All students

The *Life Experiences Scale* consists of 13 items,<sup>22</sup> and the students were asked to indicate whether or not they had experienced the event in the last 12 months. Table 10 shows that many students indicated they had experienced these life events. The majority (82 percent) of the young people had experienced one or more of these 13 life events in the last 12 months. The median number of life events experienced was four, with a range from one to thirteen. The most commonly experienced life event was not doing well at school, which was experienced by half of the young people. Afraid of being hurt by someone and being put down by people were both experienced by 42 percent of the young people.

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<sup>21</sup> These additional questions are presented separately from the *Life Experiences Scale* questions that were included in the screening survey.

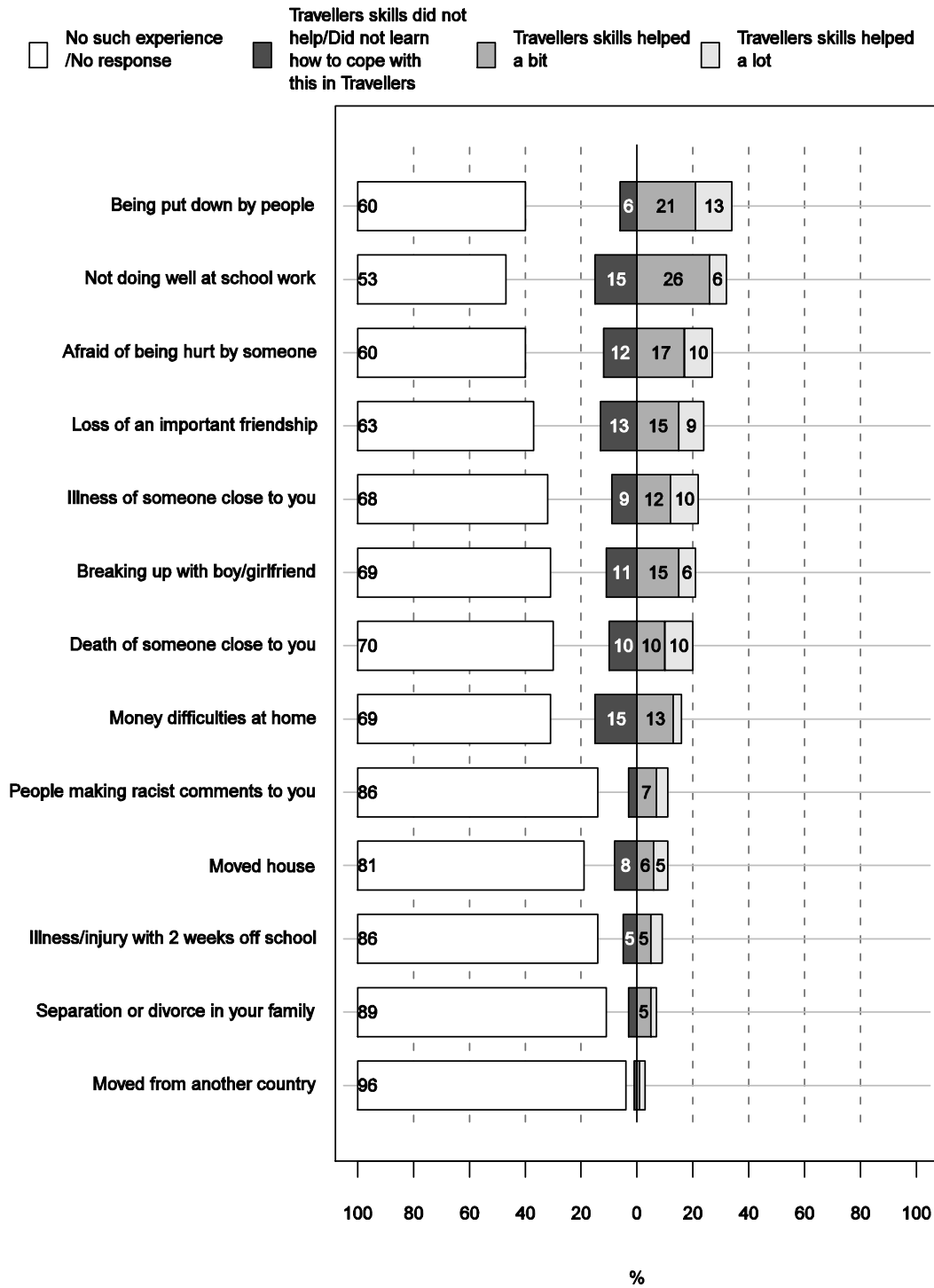
<sup>22</sup> The screening survey included two additional questions. One was about whether they had moved schools and one was about whether they had been bullied.

Table 10 **Life events experienced in last 12 months by young people**

Life event	Total young people (n = 212) %
Not doing well at school work	50
Afraid of being hurt by someone	42
Being put down by people	42
Loss of an important friendship	39
Illness of someone close to you	34
Money difficulties at home	34
Breaking up with boy/girlfriend	33
Death of someone close to you	32
Moved house	21
People making racist comments to you	16
Illness/injury with two weeks off school	15
Separation/divorce in your family	12
Moved from another country	6

Young people who had experienced one or more of these life events were asked to rate how helpful Travellers strategies had been in helping them to deal with that event, from 1 (Travellers strategies helped a lot) to 3 (Travellers strategies did not help / did not learn how to cope with this in Travellers). Figure 5 shows that the life events that Travellers strategies were more likely to help a lot or a bit with were: being put down by people (34 percent), not doing well at school (32 percent), and afraid of being hurt by someone (27 percent).

Figure 5 Life events experienced and how Travellers helped (n = 212)



Some life events were more common than others. Looking at the data for how helpful Travellers strategies were for *just those* who had experienced the events, Travellers strategies were most likely to be very helpful for the following events: the death of someone close to you (33 percent

of the subset<sup>23</sup> (i.e., those who had experienced this and saying Travellers strategies were very helpful), the illness of someone close to you (31 percent of subset), being put down by people (31 percent of subset), and afraid of being hurt by someone (25 percent of subset).

Strategies learnt in Travellers were less helpful for money difficulties at home (10 percent of subset), not doing well at school (11 percent of subset) and breaking up with boy/girlfriend (17 percent of subset).

There does not seem to be a clear pattern in terms of which events Travellers strategies helped the most with. For some life events around a third of the young people who had experienced that event found the strategies learnt in Travellers to be very helpful, but there were other events where few people found the strategies learnt in Travellers to be very helpful. There could be a number of reasons for this. Perhaps the strategies learnt in Travellers are difficult to apply to other situations. Alternatively, the strategies may be being transferred but it is not always possible to directly relate this back to Travellers. In other words, young people learn strategies from many different sources, one of which may be what was learnt in Travellers. It may be difficult for young people to pinpoint what was learnt in Travellers.

Table 11 shows how many students had experienced the additional 13 life events (i.e., those not included in the screening tool). The majority (76 percent) had experienced one or more difficult life events in the last 12 months. The median number of life events experienced was four, with a range from one to thirteen. Difficulties with family relationships were experienced by almost half of the young people (45 percent). Over a third had experienced worrying about their friends doing things that could harm them (37 percent), having people being aggressive or angry towards them (37 percent) and getting into trouble at school (34 percent).

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<sup>23</sup> The subset refers to those who had experienced the event.

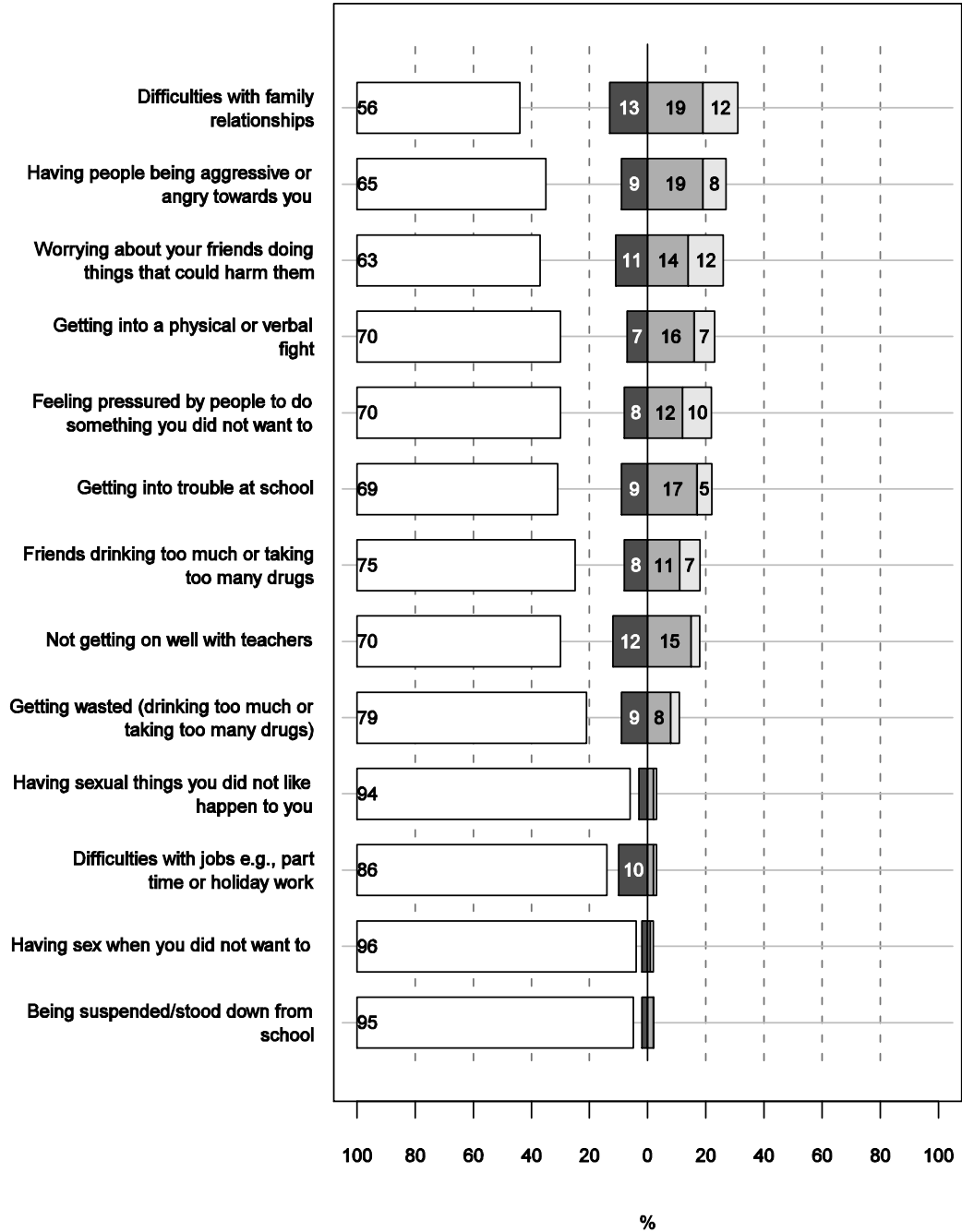
Table 11 **Additional life events experienced in last 12 months by young people**

Life event	Total young people (n = 212) %
Difficulties with family relationships	45
Worrying about your friends doing things that could harm them	37
Having people being aggressive or angry towards you	37
Getting into trouble at school	34
Getting into a physical or verbal fight	32
Not getting on well with teachers	31
Feeling pressured by people to do something you did not want to	30
Friends drinking too much or taking too many drugs	26
Getting wasted	22
Difficulties with jobs	16
Having sexual things you did not like happen to you	7
Being suspended / stood down from school	5
Having sex when you did not want to	5

Figure 6 shows how helpful Travellers strategies were rated as being for the different life events. The life events that Travellers strategies were more likely to help a lot or a bit with were: difficulties with family relationships (31 percent), having people being aggressive or angry towards you (27 percent), and worrying about your friends doing things that could harm them (26 percent).

Figure 6 **Additional life events experienced and how Travellers helped (n = 212)**

No such experience /No response
  Travellers skills did not help/Did not learn how to cope with this in Travellers
  Travellers skills helped a bit
  Travellers skills helped a lot



For those who had experienced these events, Travellers strategies were most likely to be very helpful for: feeling pressured by people to do something you did not want to (33 percent of subset), worrying about your friends doing things that could harm them (33 percent of subset), difficulties with family relationships (26 percent of subset), and friends drinking too much or taking too many drugs (25 percent of subset). Travellers strategies were less helpful for not getting on well with teachers (11 percent of subset) and getting into trouble at school (15 percent of subset).

Overall, these data align with the finding that Travellers strategies appear to be less applicable to school-based situations. Strategies learnt in Travellers seemed to be reasonably helpful for a variety of other life events, but not all students found that Travellers strategies helped them to deal with the difficult situations they encountered.

## Open-ended descriptions

The survey asked students to briefly describe a difficult situation they had experienced in the last 12 months. Twenty-one percent described family problems, 16 percent talked about someone they knew becoming ill or passing away, 14 percent wrote about friendship issues, 11 percent about romantic relationship problems (e.g., a break up), 9 percent about a problem at school (e.g., an academic issue or getting into trouble at school), 3 percent about a mental or physical health issue they had had, and 2 percent about being bullied. Twenty-five percent did not give a response to this question and 9 percent gave a response that could not fit into one of these main categories.

The young people were also asked to describe how, if at all, Travellers helped them to deal with the situation they had described. A third (33 percent) of young people thought that Travellers strategies helped them a bit with the situation; another third (33 percent) were not sure. Twenty-one percent did not think that Travellers strategies had helped them and 11 percent thought that it had helped them a lot. The most common way that Travellers helped was around help-seeking—it helped the young people to ask for support/help and helped them to realise what support they had access to and to help them to talk about their situation (17 percent).

Eight percent said that Travellers helped them to express, deal with or understand their emotions; 7 percent said that Travellers helped them to see things in perspective or to think more positively (for example, it helped them to realise that life has its challenges or that other people have had similar experiences); 6 percent said that Travellers helped them with confidence / to believe in themselves; and 2 percent said it helped them to see other people's perspectives or to understand other people's emotions or situations better. Seven percent gave responses that did not fit these main codes, and 60 percent did not respond to this question<sup>24</sup> or said that Travellers did not help.

These strategies were aligned with those that students had indicated previously that they had learnt from Travellers (for example, thinking or feeling differently as well as helping with

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<sup>24</sup> It is common for open-ended questions to have lower response rates.

relationships and help-seeking). Two areas that students identified that were not specifically asked about elsewhere in the survey were that they learnt how to see things in perspective and how to understand other people and/or reflect on situations. For example:

Travellers helped me by showing me that there is always more than one side of the story and that I have to consider my mom and her feelings. (Female Pasifika student)

I've talked to people about it, and I'm just able to see money differently now. I know I'm not the only person in the world going through this and there are a lot of people worse off. (Female Pākehā student)

Many young people took a variety of strategies from Travellers that they could apply to their life. A number recognised that these strategies can be seen as transferable and will hopefully help to build the young people's resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges. However, there was also a group who could not necessarily see how or describe how strategies learnt in Travellers had helped them. This is not to say that these skills have not been applied to new situations; it may be that it is difficult to articulate this complex process.

## **Sub-groups**

In this section some of the differences between sub-groups are described. The open-ended questions where students were asked to describe a situation and how Travellers helped are not divided by sub-group because there was a proportion of non-responses and the number of responses in some of the themes was small. When discussing how helpful Travellers strategies were in dealing with different life events, it is important to remember that the number of people who had experienced the event was sometimes very small.

## **Overall helpful vs. overall neutral/unhelpful**

Not surprisingly, for the majority of the life events, those that rated Travellers helpful overall were significantly more likely to say that Travellers helped them a lot with the event compared to those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful.

## **Māori**

Students who identified as Māori mostly showed a similar pattern to the overall group of young people. There were a few life events where a significantly higher proportion of Māori than non-Māori found that Travellers strategies helped them a lot. In particular, more Māori (73 percent) than non-Māori (25 percent) said that Travellers strategies helped a lot when they were feeling pressured by people to do something they did not want to do ( $p < 0.01$ ). Also, more Māori (62 percent) than non-Māori (27 percent) said that Travellers strategies helped a lot when they were worried about their friends doing things that could harm them ( $p < 0.01$ ).



## Pasifika

Higher proportions of Pasifika students than non-Pasifika students thought that Travellers strategies helped them a lot with a variety of life events, particularly events involving family or others close to them. For example, more Pasifika students (44 percent) than non-Pasifika students (26 percent) thought that Travellers strategies helped them a lot with the death of someone close to them ( $p < 0.01$ ) as well as with the illness of someone close to them (Pasifika 35 percent, compared to non-Pasifika 29 percent,  $p < 0.01$ ). A higher proportion of Pasifika students (48 percent) compared to non-Pasifika students (20 percent) thought that Travellers strategies helped them a lot with difficulties with family relationships ( $p = 0.04$ ). Fewer Pasifika students (21 percent) than non-Pasifika students (55 percent) thought that Travellers did not help when they were having money difficulties at home ( $p = 0.02$ ).

More Pasifika (22 percent) than non-Pasifika (8 percent) students thought that Travellers helped them a lot when they were not doing well at school ( $p = 0.02$ ). There were no significant differences between the proportion of Pasifika students and non-Pasifika students that had experienced any of the life events.

As discussed above, the young people were asked to describe a situation that had occurred over the last year and were asked how helpful Travellers had been in helping them deal with this situation. More Pasifika students (62 percent) than non-Pasifika students (38 percent) thought that Travellers helped them a lot or a bit with the situation they had described ( $p = 0.01$ ).

## Decile

Generally, students from low-decile schools saw Travellers strategies as more helpful when dealing with life events than did students from mid- or high-decile schools. Students from low-decile schools were more likely to say that Travellers strategies helped a lot with the loss of an important friendship (low decile 43 percent, mid 25 percent, high 5 percent,  $p = 0.01$ ). Students from low-decile schools were also more likely to say that Travellers strategies helped a lot with being put down by people (low decile 54 percent, mid 29 percent, high 22 percent,  $p = 0.02$ ). More students from low-decile schools compared to mid- or high-decile schools said that Travellers strategies helped a lot with not doing well at school work (low decile 28 percent, mid 11 percent, high 0 percent,  $p < 0.01$ ).

An exception was that students from mid-decile schools were more likely to say that Travellers strategies helped a lot with illness of someone close to them compared to high- or low-decile students (mid-decile 34 percent, low 29 percent, high 15 percent,  $p = 0.04$ ).

A greater proportion of the students from low-decile schools compared to the mid- and high-decile schools also said that Travellers helped them a lot or a bit with the difficult situation they had described (low decile 68 percent, mid 40 percent, high 40 percent,  $p < 0.01$ ).

## Gender

More females (38 percent) than males (24 percent) reported that they had experienced the death of someone close to them ( $p = 0.04$ ) or a break up (41 percent of females and 23 percent of males,  $p < 0.01$ ). However, there were no significant differences in terms of how much they thought Travellers strategies had helped them with these events.

More female students (55 percent) reported difficult family relationships compared to male students (34 percent) ( $p < 0.01$ ). More females (33 percent) than males (4 percent) said that Travellers helped with family relationship difficulties ( $p < 0.01$ ). While part of this difference could reflect the higher number of females who experienced this event, it does not solely explain this difference.

While 25 percent of females said that Travellers helped a lot when they got into trouble at school, no males said that Travellers helped a lot with this ( $p < 0.01$ ). However, more males (66 percent) than females (40 percent) said Travellers helped a bit when they got into trouble at school.

## Co-educational vs. single-sex

Students from co-educational schools (20 percent) were more likely than students from single-sex schools (9 percent) to have had difficulties getting jobs ( $p = 0.03$ ). They were also more likely to have had sexual things happen to them that they did not like (10 percent at co-educational schools compared to 1 percent at single-sex schools) ( $p < 0.01$ ). However, there were no significant differences in terms of how helpful Travellers strategies were in dealing with these issues.

## Summary

In summary, many of those who completed the survey were experiencing numerous challenging life events. Therefore, improving young people's resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges is important. Some young people felt that the strategies they learnt in Travellers were very useful in dealing with challenging life events. However, there were also some events where few people were able to transfer the strategies they had learnt in Travellers. Therefore, while Travellers appears to be contributing to young people's resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges, it would be beneficial to look at ways to support young people to see how Travellers strategies can be applied in a range of different situations. Young people may need additional support to fully transfer strategies into new contexts.

Again, Travellers seems to be particularly helpful for those students in the various target groups—Māori and Pasifika students and students in low-decile schools.

The next chapter looks at the outcome of students' engagement, confidence and motivation.

## 5. Engaged, confident and motivated young people

Being a part of Travellers really helped me see the positive side of life, school and family. I used to make a joke out of life and school, especially my family, but since joining Travellers I have currently realised the importance of these three factors in our lives. I have grown the courage to speak up and openly when I am down and my life has fully recovered in a good way. Travellers was the best thing that happened to me.  
(Female Pasifika student)

This chapter explores data relating to the medium-term outcome of engaged, confident and motivated young people. Data from the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* is reported on. A few additional questions were also included in the survey, which looked at how the young people felt about themselves, their school and their future. In chapter 6 ('Changes over time'), the scores on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* are compared to the scores in the screening tool.

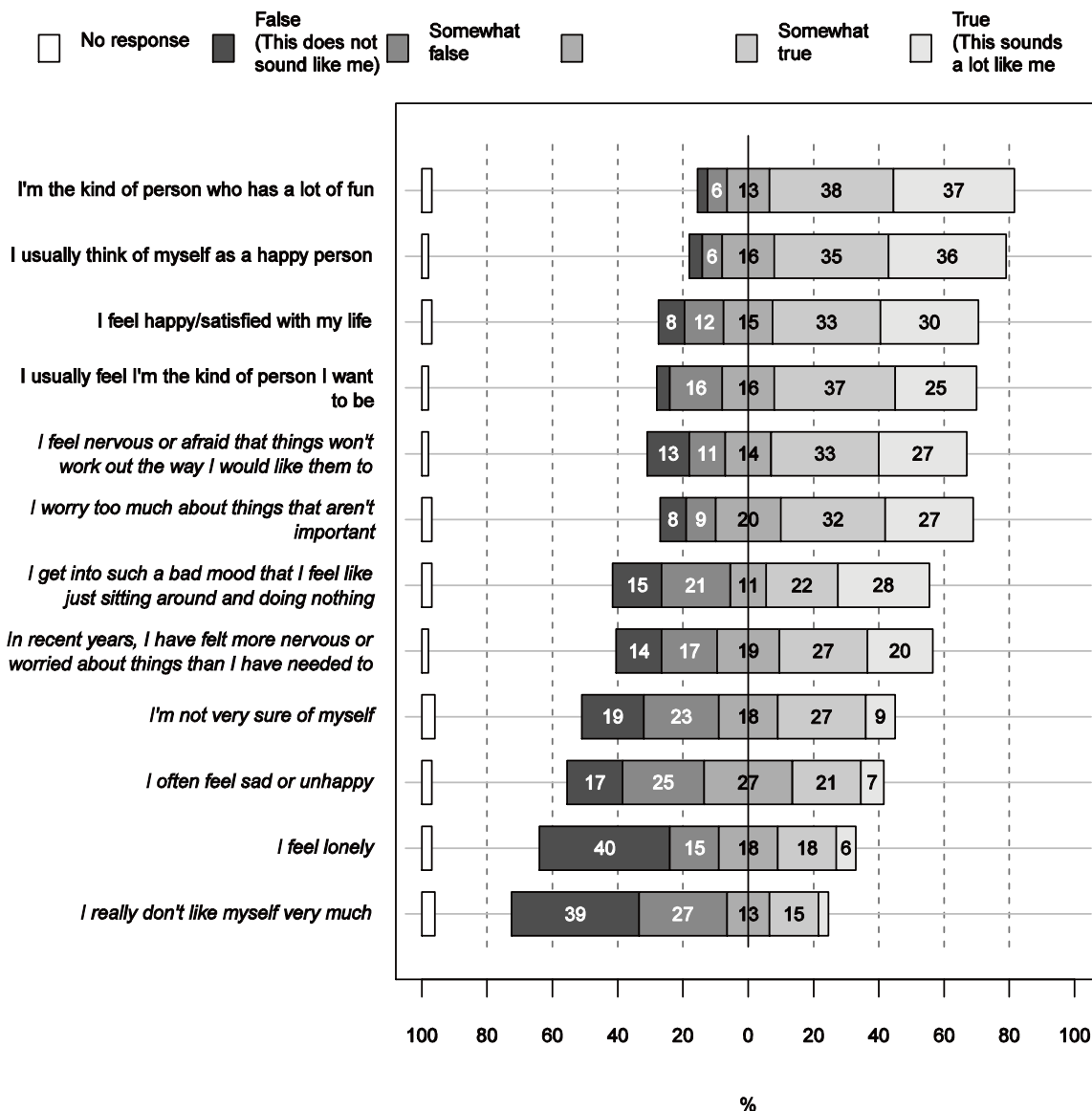
### All students

Scores on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* can range from a minimum of 12 (low subjective distress) to a maximum of 60 (high subjective distress). In the survey there was a range of scores, from 12 to 58. The median score was 32, which is within the normal range (a score of 40 or more is seen as potentially at risk).

Figure 7 shows the students' responses in the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale*. The majority of the young people thought that they were the type of person who has a lot of fun (75 percent said this was true / somewhat true); that they thought of themselves as a happy person (71 percent said this was true / somewhat true); that they like themselves (66 percent said this was true / somewhat true); that they feel happy/satisfied with their life (63 percent said this was true / somewhat true); that "I usually feel I'm the kind of person I want to be" (62 percent); and that they do not feel lonely (55 percent said this was true / somewhat true). This suggests that the young people generally see themselves as engaged, confident and motivated.

The things the young people tended to struggle more with related to worrying or feeling nervous. Around half of the young people said the following statements were true / somewhat true: "I feel nervous or afraid that things won't work out the way I would like them to" (60 percent), "I worry too much about things that aren't important" (59 percent), "I get into such a bad mood that I feel like just sitting around and doing nothing" (50 percent) and "In recent years, I have felt more nervous or worried about things that I haven't needed to" (47 percent).

Figure 7 **Subjective Experience of Distress Scale (n = 212)\***



\* Italics indicate where the questions are negatively phrased.

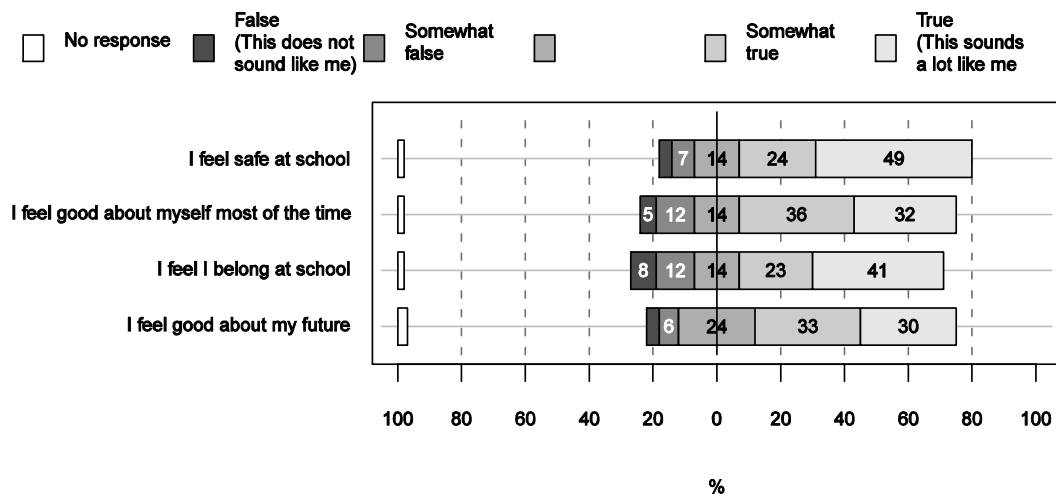
Figure 8 includes the four questions that were added to the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* in the survey. The majority said that the following statements were true or somewhat true: “I feel safe at school” (73 percent), “I feel good about myself most of the time” (67 percent), “I feel I belong at school” (64 percent), and “I feel good about my future” (63 percent).

The item “I feel safe at school” was also asked in an NZCER survey called *Me and My School*. In the national data collected with Year 9 students in the *Me and My School* survey, 22 percent said the statement “I feel safe at school” was false or somewhat false. In the Travellers survey, only 11 percent said this statement was false or somewhat false. The *New Zealand Youth '07 Health Survey* of Year 9–14 secondary students (Adolescent Health Research Group, 2008a, 2008b) also

asked a question about school safety<sup>25</sup>. The results were similar to the *Me and My School* survey. In 2001 there were 22 percent who did not feel safe at school most of the time or did not respond to the question, and in 2007 this figure was 16 percent. These figures suggest students who had taken part in Travellers feel safer at school than the national sample.

Connectedness to school (and family) is an important protective factor. Health research with adolescents shows that a sense of wellbeing and connectedness to school is protective against a wide range of health risk behaviours, which include emotional distress and suicidal thoughts and behaviours, early age of becoming sexually active, and the use of cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana (Health Sponsorship Council, 2005; Resnick et al., 1997).

Figure 8 **How the young people felt about school, themselves and the future (n = 212)**



## Sub-groups

There were no significant differences between Māori and non-Māori or between female and male students. Other differences by sub-group are discussed below.

## Overall helpful vs. overall neutral/unhelpful

Students who rated Travellers as helpful overall also tended to report experiencing more distress compared to those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful. This suggests that those who are in greater need may find Travellers more beneficial. Perhaps because these

<sup>25</sup> The *Me and My School* survey and the *Youth '07 Health Survey* gave slightly different response options in the question than in the Travellers survey.

students have encountered more emotional challenges, they have had more opportunities to use the strategies they learnt in Travellers. However, an alternative explanation is that those who report more distress are more likely to report being responsive to Travellers compared to those who do not report much distress.

Those who rated Travellers as helpful overall were more likely to say the following statements were true or somewhat true:

- “I often feel sad or unhappy” (43 percent) compared to 38 percent of those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful ( $p = 0.04$ ).

Those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful were more likely to say the following statements were true or somewhat true:

- “I usually think of myself as a happy person” (17 percent) compared to 5 percent of those who rated Travellers as helpful ( $p = 0.02$ )
- “I’m the kind of person who has a lot of fun” (14 percent) compared to 5 percent of those who rated Travellers as helpful ( $p < 0.01$ )
- “I feel happy/satisfied with my life” (27 percent) compared to 14 percent of those who rated Travellers as helpful ( $p = 0.04$ ).

An exception was that more students who found Travellers helpful (77 percent) than those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful (68 percent) said that the statement “I feel safe at school” was true or somewhat true ( $p = 0.01$ ).

## Pasifika

Generally, Pasifika students had less positive responses than non-Pasifika students on the questions that looked at subjective distress. This is an interesting finding, because it differs from other patterns of responses where Pasifika students tended to have more positive results than non-Pasifika students. More Pasifika students said the following statements were *true or somewhat true*:

- “I feel lonely” (75 percent) compared to 47 percent of non-Pasifika students ( $p < 0.01$ ).

More Pasifika than non-Pasifika students said the following statements were *false or somewhat false*:

- “I’m the kind of person who has a lot of fun” (82 percent) compared to 72 percent of non-Pasifika students ( $p = 0.03$ )
- “I feel happy/satisfied with my life” (73 percent) compared to 59 percent of non-Pasifika students ( $p < 0.01$ ).

One exception was that more Pasifika students said that the statement “I feel good about myself most of the time” (78 percent) was true or somewhat true, compared to 47 percent of non-Pasifika students ( $p = 0.01$ ).

## Decile

There were a number of significant differences between the responses for the decile groups, but there was no obvious pattern.

## Co-educational vs. single-sex

Students from single-sex schools (39 percent) were more likely than students from co-educational schools (28 percent) to say that the statement “In recent years, I have felt more nervous or worried about things than I have needed to” was true or somewhat true ( $p = 0.03$ ).

## Summary

This chapter looked at the students’ scores on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* as well as some additional questions that looked at experiences of distress, as a measure of the young people’s engagement, confidence and motivation. Overall, the students had fairly positive views of themselves and their lives. Their median score was 32, which is lower than the score that indicates being at risk. Comparisons in the scores between the screening survey and the follow-up survey are discussed in chapter 6, ‘Changes over time’.

The students who rated Travellers as helpful overall tended to self-report experiencing more distress compared to those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful. This could suggest that those who are in greater need may find Travellers more beneficial; alternatively, those who report more distress are more likely to be responsive to Travellers compared to those who do not report much distress.





## 6. Changes over time

Before I started Travellers I was a person who was not confident, but after I [had] done the programme I started to come out of my shell ... (Female Pasifika student)

This chapter comments on the two related outcomes of:

- increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges
- engaged, confident and motivated young people.

Comparisons are made between the screening survey results and the follow-up survey responses to ascertain if the young people's responses had changed over time. The screening survey is used to look at students' risk levels and to inform schools about which students they may wish to select to participate in Travellers. Students are classified as low, medium or high risk based on their responses. Students are classified as high risk if they:

- responded *no* to the question "Do you feel good about yourself most of the time?"
- had moved schools seven or more times<sup>26</sup>
- indicated they had experienced more than four life events that had a major impact
- scored more than 40 points on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale*.

Data from all students who completed the screening survey in 2008 are discussed below in order to provide some baseline figures, and comparisons are made between the matched 129 students who completed both the screening and the follow-up surveys.

### Screening data from all students

In 2008 and 2009, 19,800 students took part in the screening survey. The survey is generally given to all Year 9 students at a school that takes part in Travellers. The students came from 66 schools. Fifty-one percent of the students were female, 48 percent were male and 1 percent did not respond to the question. Almost half (48 percent) of the students were Pākehā/New Zealand European, 16 percent were Pasifika, 13 percent were Asian, 12 percent were Māori and 11 percent were a different ethnicity.

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<sup>26</sup> This question was not included in the follow-up survey.

## Changes over time

To be able to compare students' patterns of responses, we asked students to provide their names, if possible. Of the total 212, we were able to match the responses of 129 of the young people in the screening survey to their responses in the follow-up survey. This sample was made up of 63 percent female students and 38 percent male students<sup>27</sup>. In the screening survey, almost half (47 percent) of these 129 students identified as Pākehā/New Zealand European, 23 percent as Pasifika, 10 percent as Asian, 9 percent as Māori, and 11 percent as other.

## Screening results

The students who took part in Travellers were generally those who displayed more risk factors (see Table 12). Twenty-six percent had a score of 40 or more on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale*, and the median score was 35. These figures were higher than for the 19,800 students that had completed the screening survey. Only 5 percent of the students scored over 40 on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale*, and the median score was 24. A greater proportion of students who took part in Travellers compared to all of the young people who completed the screening survey had experienced four or more life events that had a major impact and said they did not feel good about themselves most of the time.

Table 12 **Risk measures from screening survey for all young people compared to young people selected for Travellers**

Risk measures	Matched young people's screening survey (2008/09) (n = 129)	Young people who completed screening survey (2008/09) (n = 19,800)
	%	%
Score of ≥ 40 on <i>Subjective Experience of Distress Scale</i>	26	5
Do not feel good about themselves most of the time	31	6
Have experienced ≥ 4 life events that had a major impact	19	4

Table 13 shows that those who were selected for Travellers and participated in this evaluation were generally those that were classified as higher risk (78 percent) compared to 15 percent of all of the young people who completed the screening survey.

<sup>27</sup> Percentages do not sum to 100 because of rounding.

Table 13 **Risk level from screening survey for all young people compared to young people selected for Travellers**

Risk level	Matched young people's screening survey (2008/09) (n = 129)	Young people who completed screening survey (2008/09) (n = 19,800)
	%	%
High risk	74	15
Medium risk	14	9
Low risk	7	55
No risk rating*	5	20

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 because of rounding.

\* Students who had not answered one or more questions in the survey did not have a risk rating.

Because the number of students in each of the sub-groups was small for the 129 matched students, the only sub-group comparison that was possible was between males and females. There were no significant differences between male and female students in terms of the number of life events experienced, the scores on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale*, whether they felt good about themselves most of the time, and their risk rating.

### Comparisons over time for matched students

Comparisons were made between the 129 students' screening and follow-up survey responses (see Table 14). The total number of life events experienced, as indicated in the *Life Events Scale* at the two points in time, were compared. On average, the number of life events experienced in the last 12 months had increased by 2.08, meaning that on average the young people had experienced around two more challenging life events in the last year than they had in the year prior to completing the screening survey. This was a significant difference ( $p < 0.01$ ). In the follow-up survey there were more young people who had experienced four or more life events (46 percent) compared to the time of the screening survey (19 percent). This increase in experience of challenging life events is not surprising and is likely to be due to maturation. At the time of the follow-up survey the young people were older and thus more likely to be experiencing, or to see their family or friends experience, a wider range of events common in their age group. These include relationship formation or break ups, or drug and alcohol use.

Despite experiencing more challenging life events, the young people's scores on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* had improved over time. There was an average score improvement of 2.66 points ( $p < 0.01$ ). In other words, although the young people were experiencing difficult life events, on average they reported experiencing less distress. In the screening survey the median score for the 129 students on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* was 35, and at the time of follow-up this had decreased to 32.

In both surveys the young people were asked whether they felt good about themselves most of the time. In the screening survey they were given two options to respond: yes or no. In the follow-up survey, to provide a greater level of detail they were asked to rate this on a five-point Likert scale. If they strongly agreed/agreed with the statement this was taken as a yes; if they strongly disagreed/disagreed, this was a no, and if they rated it a 3 this was labelled as unsure.

Overall there was a positive shift over time. This pattern was in keeping with the above pattern, but with slightly less significance ( $p = 0.06$ ). In the screening survey 31 percent of the 129 young people said they did not feel good about themselves most of the time compared to only 18 percent in the follow-up survey. Of those who said they did not feel good most of the time in the screening survey, 55 percent had changed their views at the time of the follow-up survey and indicated that they did feel good most of the time.

Table 14 **Changes over time (screening and follow-up survey) for the 129 matched students**

Risk level	Matched students' screening survey (2008/09)	Matched students' follow-up survey (2011)
	(n = 129) %	(n = 129) %
Median score on <i>Subjective Experience of Distress Scale</i>	35	32
Percent that <b>do not</b> feel good about themselves most of the time	31	18
Percent that have experienced $\geq 4$ life events	19*	46

\* In the screening survey this only included those life events that had a major impact.

There is evidence that these positive changes over time in the young people's perceptions of their wellbeing are not solely due to maturation and can be related to Travellers. One way to address the question of causality is to compare the Travellers data set to other data sources. The *Youth '07 Survey* provides age-related data about the mental wellbeing of New Zealand youth (Fortune, et al., 2010). The *Youth '07* data showed that 15-year-olds were the most likely age group to have suicidal thoughts and plans, or to engage in self-harm (the trend shows an increase from 13 years and a decrease after 15–15.5 years). They also found that depressive symptoms did not vary with age. These trends are in contrast to the trend shown amongst Travellers students. At the time of the follow-up survey most of the students were 15 or 16 years old (the most at-risk age shown in the *Youth '07* data). However, they were less likely to have negative thoughts about themselves at this age compared to when they completed the screening survey (often when they were 13 years old).

## **Summary**

The students selected to take part in Travellers mainly came from the group of students who were rated at the time of screening as being at high risk. Since taking part in Travellers, the young people reported less subjective distress despite experiencing a greater number of challenging life events. There were also fewer young people who said they did not feel good about themselves most of the time. It is always difficult to attribute causality with past programmes. However, the combination of data contained in this report suggests it is likely that Travellers contributed to these positive outcomes.



## 7. Relationships and help-seeking

Travellers has helped me to be more confident in what I am doing, and when I'm finding some things hard, I ask people for help, especially from my friends. (Female Pasifika student)

This chapter looks at the support sought by the young people since doing Travellers. The data discussed relate to the outcomes of: improved help-seeking skills, more positive relationships with peers/families/teachers, and increased access to support.

### All students

We asked the young people whether they had asked for any support from other people during difficult times since taking part in Travellers. Around two-thirds (69 percent) had asked for more support. Table 15 shows who they had asked for more support. The most common sources of support were friends (84 percent) and family (58 percent). Many of the young people were also seeking more support from people at school, with 41 percent getting support from the school guidance counsellor and 32 percent from a teacher or dean at the school.

Table 15 **Sources of support**

Support	Young people who asked for more support (n = 146) %
Friends	84
Family members	58
School guidance counsellor	41
Boy or girlfriend	35
Teacher or dean at school	32
Counsellor (not at school)	15
Other <sup>28</sup>	7
No response	< 1

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were possible.

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<sup>28</sup> Some of the other sources of support mentioned were doctor/nurse, older people (e.g., friend's older siblings, youth group members), chaplain and social worker.

Strategies learnt in Travellers appear to be very helpful for relationships and help-seeking. Of those who had sought more support, the majority (79 percent) identified more than one source of support that they had used since doing Travellers. As discussed previously, many students felt that Travellers had helped them to ask for support from others. Travellers was seen as helping a lot or a bit with: how to ask other young people for help (82 percent), how to ask adults at school for help (80 percent), and how to ask family for help (76 percent). Strategies learnt in Travellers also helped a lot or a bit with how to get on well with friends (85 percent) and how to solve personal and relationship problems better (80 percent).

## **Sub-groups**

There were no significant differences between Māori and non-Māori or between students from co-educational and single-sex schools. Other differences between the sub-groups are discussed below.

### **Overall helpful vs. overall neutral/unhelpful**

Those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful were more likely to ask for support from their boy/girlfriend (46 percent) than those who rated Travellers as helpful overall (27 percent) ( $p = 0.02$ ).

### **Pasifika**

More Pasifika students (87 percent) than non-Pasifika students (62 percent) had asked for more support since doing Travellers ( $p < 0.01$ ). More Pasifika students had asked for more support from:

- family members (77 percent) compared to 48 percent of non-Pasifika students ( $p < 0.01$ )
- teachers or deans (46 percent) compared to 25 percent of non-Pasifika students ( $p < 0.01$ ).

### **Decile**

Although there were no significant differences overall in asking for support as a result of Travellers, students from low-decile schools were more likely to ask for support from friends compared to students from mid-decile schools or high-decile schools (low decile 97 percent, mid 78 percent, high 89 percent,  $p = 0.02$ ).



## Gender

Seventy-seven percent of female students compared to 58 percent of male students said they had asked for more support since doing Travellers ( $p = 0.03$ ). There were no significant differences in the types of support asked for.

## Summary

Improving young people's help-seeking skills is one goal of Travellers. Travellers encourages people to ask for help from a range of different sources. Over two-thirds of the young people had asked for more support since doing Travellers. This support most often came from friends, followed by family, the guidance counsellor, and teachers or deans at the school. The fact that guidance counsellors usually facilitate Travellers programmes may have contributed to raising their profile within schools. Pasifika students and female students were more likely to ask for more support after doing Travellers than non-Pasifika or male students.



## 8. Recommendations from the young people

It [Travellers] would have more impact if it was followed up. (Male Māori student)

This chapter discusses the young people's recommendations for how to improve Travellers.

### All students

Although many young people found Travellers helpful, most (67 percent) thought a few changes could be made to improve the programme. Twenty-six percent thought Travellers was fine as it was and 5 percent thought that Travellers needed a lot of changes. Two percent did not answer this question.

Table 16 shows the students' different suggestions for how Travellers could be improved. The most common suggestion was to have more Travellers sessions in later years / when they were older, with different topics (48 percent). Other common suggestions were: have more sessions each week (37 percent); have a wider range of topics covered (35 percent); have longer session times (33 percent); have guest speakers (e.g., other young people) (33 percent); and provide more information about why I was in Travellers (32 percent). For example, one student said:

I think the Travellers programme should be a lot longer as most of the stuff I learnt was forgotten. (Male Pākehā student)

Table 16 **Suggestions for how Travellers could be improved**

Suggestion	Total young people (n = 212) %
More Travellers sessions in later years / when older, with different topics	48
More sessions each week	37
Wider range of topics covered	35
Longer session times	33
Guest speakers	33
More information about why I was in Travellers	32
Follow up to help me practise the skills I learnt	30
More practical activities	30
Make the activities better for people my age	26
More information about the purpose of Travellers	22
More time to get to know the students in Travellers	20
More time for me to talk about my experiences	15
Provide information that suits a wider range of different young people	12
Have a different group of students in Travellers	12
Involve my family more	5
Shorter session times	5
Have a better leader	4
Fewer sessions each week	3
Other	2
No changes needed	26
No response	11

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were possible.

In the focus group, seven out of eight of the students wanted more follow-up sessions in later years. Some also suggested that it would be good to continue meeting outside of the Travellers programme to discuss challenges that may arise after the programme had finished. Many students also wanted more frequent sessions—suggesting that Travellers be run twice a week.

The young people in the focus group also would have liked more information about why they were selected for Travellers and the purpose of the programme. Other suggestions from these young people included having more opportunities to talk about real-life situations rather than scenarios and having sessions better organised (e.g., sometimes the co-ordinator had other urgent work). The students suggested that useful topics to cover in Travellers were: relationships, family problems, emotions, confidence, loss, bullying, friendships, relaxation, trust, and other current issues for individuals. Many of these topics are already included in the Travellers programme. A

few schools we spoke to had managed to put in place some form of follow-up as they were trying to respond to the requests of the students.

## Sub-groups

There were no significant differences between Māori and non-Māori. Other differences by sub-groups are outlined below.

### Overall helpful vs. overall neutral/unhelpful

Those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful were more likely to want shorter session times (8 percent) compared to those who found Travellers helpful (2 percent) ( $p = 0.03$ ). A greater proportion of young people who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful also wanted fewer sessions each week (6 percent) compared to 1 percent of those who found Travellers helpful ( $p = 0.03$ ). This provides some information on who Travellers is not working so well for. Travellers may not be seen as a priority for some students, or they may not see the benefits of being involved, suggesting that during the selection process it is important to consider who would benefit from the programme.

Compared to those who found Travellers helpful, students who rated the programme as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful were more likely to want:

- more information about why they were in Travellers (42 percent) compared to 24 percent of those who rated Travellers as helpful ( $p < 0.01$ )
- more information about the purpose of Travellers (33 percent) compared to 13 percent of those who rated Travellers as helpful ( $p < 0.01$ )
- information to be provided that suited a wider range of different young people (18 percent) compared to 8 percent of those who rated Travellers as helpful ( $p = 0.04$ )
- a better leader (7 percent) compared to 1 percent of those who rated Travellers as helpful ( $p = 0.01$ ).

## Pasifika

More Pasifika (37 percent) than non-Pasifika (22 percent) students thought that no changes were needed ( $p = 0.04$ ). However, the only significant difference in the suggestions was that more non-Pasifika students (7 percent) than Pasifika students (0 percent) wanted their family involved more. This is surprising given the importance of family amongst Pasifika cultures. Perhaps there are other avenues for family involvement already available in the lives of young Pasifika students, or perhaps the young people feel that Travellers is not appropriate for Pasifika families.

## Decile

There were few significant differences by school decile. However, students from lower-decile schools were more likely to say they wanted longer session times compared to students from mid- or high-decile schools (low decile 53 percent, mid 27 percent, high 33 percent,  $p = 0.02$ ). While 9 percent of students from mid-decile schools wanted their family involved more, no students from low- or high-decile schools wanted more family involvement with Travellers.

## Gender

The only significant difference between males and females was that more female students (38 percent) than male students (24 percent) wanted information on why they were in Travellers ( $p = 0.04$ ).

## Co-educational vs. single-sex

Students from co-educational schools (32 percent) were more likely than single-sex school students (18 percent) to say that no changes were needed to Travellers ( $p = 0.03$ ). There were a number of changes that more students from single-sex schools suggested compared to those from co-educational schools. These included suggestions relating to what was included in Travellers, as well as how it was run and information provided about it. In particular, more students from single-sex schools:

- thought that there should be a wider range of topics (49 percent) compared to co-educational school students (30 percent,  $p < 0.01$ )
- thought that there should be guest speakers (47 percent) compared to co-educational school students (25 percent,  $p < 0.01$ )
- wanted more information about the purpose of Travellers (30 percent) compared to co-educational school students (18 percent,  $p = 0.04$ )
- thought that it would be better to provide information that suits a wider range of different young people (21 percent) compared to co-educational school students (8 percent,  $p < 0.01$ )
- thought that there should be a better leader (8 percent) compared to co-educational school students (2 percent,  $p = 0.03$ ).

## Summary

In summary, two-thirds of the young people thought Travellers could be improved by making a few changes (as opposed to none or a lot of changes). Overall, most suggestions tended to be about having more time spent in Travellers, including more session times in later years, more sessions each week and longer session times.

The data previously discussed show the need for programmes such as Travellers for many young people. A large proportion of young people are experiencing challenging life events and their responses indicate that they want more opportunities to engage in similar experiences. However, these suggestions have resourcing implications and schools may not always have the financial, time or people resources to be able to extend Travellers. It could be useful to explore cost- and time-effective ways to continue the impact of Travellers. For example, students in the focus group expressed interest in having catch-ups with the people in their Travellers group in future years.

Some of the suggestions could be more easily implemented. For example, around a third of students wanted a wider range of topics covered, guest speakers, and more information about why they were in Travellers. Having a wider range of topics covered and more information about the Travellers programme, including information about why they were in Travellers, was especially supported by students who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful overall.

While making changes to Travellers may help engage some young people, a message that came through from the focus group of students and from the co-ordinators was that it is important that students are carefully selected using professional judgement. Travellers is not always the best option for all young people, and giving students a choice about whether they are involved is important.





## 9. Discussion and conclusion

It [Travellers] helped me to get past the difficult things that were happening by being able to talk about them with other people. (Male Māori and Pākehā student)

In this section the three evaluation overarching evaluation questions are considered in turn:

- What are the short- and medium-term impacts of the Travellers programme for young people?
- How well is the Travellers programme meeting the needs of particular target groups?
- How can the Travellers programme be improved?

### **What are the short- and medium-term impacts of the Travellers programme for young people?**

The main story the data tell us is that most students are learning a variety of strategies from Travellers, particularly in relation to seeking help/support and thinking and feeling in more positive ways. However, not all students were able to articulate how they could apply Travellers strategies to new situations. This does not necessarily indicate that these strategies have not been applied; it may be that describing this process is complex. The changes-over-time data (which compare the screening to follow-up) suggest that in fact the young people are able to use the strategies they learnt in Travellers. Despite experiencing a greater number of challenging life events, the young people's scores on the *Subjective Experience of Distress Scale* improved over time (comparing the screening to follow-up).

It is, however, not possible to conclusively say that the changes over time were due to Travellers. In education settings there are many factors that can influence change. Thus attributing causality solely to any one programme is a complex endeavour. Patton (1997) considers that “causal links may never be established with certainty” (p. 237). However, our three sources of data were all painting the same picture of Travellers, and therefore, looked at in combination, we are confident that these data suggest that Travellers was supporting change for young people.

### **Short- and medium-term outcomes**

Table 17 provides a summary of the evidence for how Travellers contributed to the short- and medium-term outcomes of the programme. This summary took into account the overall evidence and is intended to be a general indicator of the effectiveness of Travellers. Overall, Travellers appears to be moderately effective for a wide range of outcomes, and particularly effective for improving help-seeking strategies and supporting positive relationships.

Table 17 **Summary and evidence of overall short- and medium-term impacts of Travellers for young people**

Short- and medium-term outcomes	Summary of impact	Main source(s) of evidence
Access to appropriate youth-focused sharing and learning opportunities	✓ ✓	Around half of the young people rated Travellers as helpful or very helpful overall.
Improved connectedness to school	✓ ✓	Over half of the young people said that Travellers helped them a lot or a bit to better manage their schoolwork (68 percent) and time (66 percent). Over half said they feel safe at school (73 percent) and feel that they belong at school (64 percent).
Trusting relationships formed in the group	✓ ✓	Over half (62 percent) of the young people thought that they could trust the people in their Travellers group.
Improved help-seeking skills and more positive relationships with peers, families and teachers <sup>29</sup>	✓ ✓ ✓	Over 75 percent of the young people said that Travellers helped a lot or a bit with their help-seeking and relationships. 85 percent said Travellers helped them a lot or a bit to get on well with friends, 80 percent said it helped to solve personal and relationship problems better, 80 percent said it helped to ask adults at school for help, 80 percent said it helped to ask other young people for help, and 76 percent said it helped to ask their family for help.
Increased access to appropriate support	✓ ✓	Around two-thirds (69 percent) of the young people had asked for more support since doing Travellers.
Increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges	✓ ✓	Over 75 percent of the young people rated Travellers as helping a bit or a lot with all of the strategies that related to thinking and feeling differently (e.g., how to think positively, how to understand how I feel). However, less than half (44 percent) of the young people said that Travellers helped a lot or a bit with a difficult situation they had described in the survey. The young people were also asked how much Travellers helped with particular life events. There was a large range of responses, depending on the event.
Engaged, confident and motivated young people	✓ ✓	At the time of follow-up, students' scores on the <i>Subjective Experience of Distress Scale</i> were below the at-risk level. These scores had moderately but significantly improved since the screening survey. The students' responses to the question "Do you feel good about yourself most of the time?" had improved overall since the screening survey.

✓ = Weak evidence, with less than 50 percent of young people responding positively to some of the questions that relate to this outcome.

✓ ✓ = Moderate evidence, with 50–74 percent of young people responding positively to some of the questions that relate to this outcome.

✓ ✓ ✓ = Strong evidence, with 75 percent or more of young people responding positively to some of the questions that relate to this outcome.

<sup>29</sup> These two outcomes were combined because they were related and were explored in the same questions.

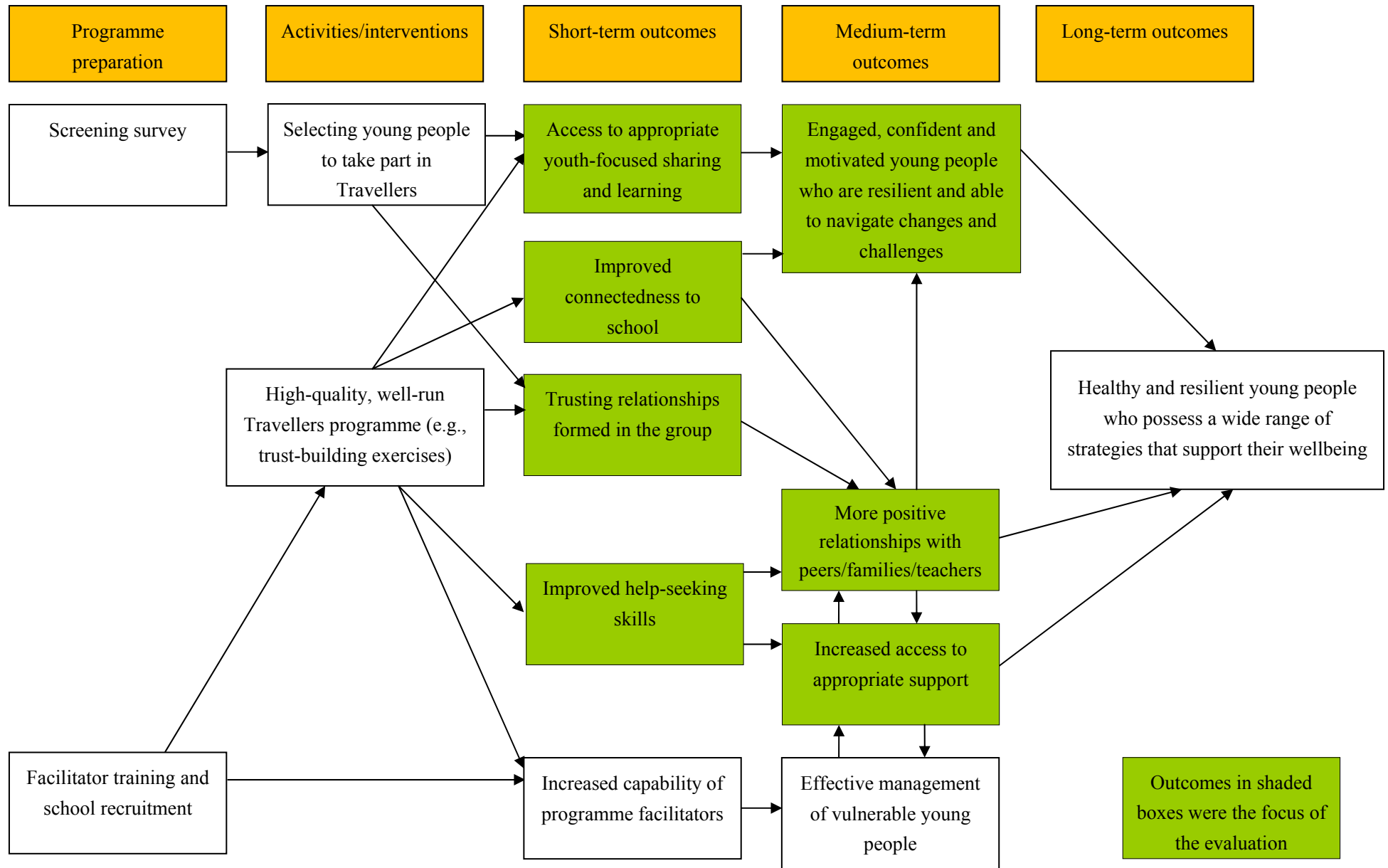
The young people's open-ended comments clearly indicated that Travellers had a positive impact on their general wellbeing. Many were clearly able to articulate their feelings and experiences and made connections between their current sense of improved wellbeing and Travellers. Given that the survey required the young people to recall experiences and views about themselves from two or more years ago, the fact that many were able to do this suggests the impact of Travellers. It is NZCER's experience that if school experiences are not memorable, students' recall of them can be very limited.

The changes that Travellers is supporting are contributing to building protective factors against youth suicide. These protective factors include: mental and emotional wellbeing; good social skills; problem-solving abilities; positive engagement with school; and family cohesiveness (Fortune, et al., 2010).

## Logic model

We have used the data to rethink the Travellers logic model, which outlines the expected programme outcomes. When looking at the items that provided evidence for these different short- and medium-term outcomes, some overlap and close links between these outcomes become apparent. For example, students who are engaged, confident and motivated are more likely to be resilient and able to navigate changes. We have suggested a new logic model structure that combines these two medium-term outcomes (see Figure 9). It also contains more linkages between the outcomes compared to the original logic model (see Figure 1). Increased access to support is moved from a short-term outcome to a medium-term outcome that flows on from improved help-seeking skills. We have proposed changing the long-term outcome from "Strong and resourceful young people" to "Healthy and resilient young people who possess a wide range of strategies that support their wellbeing". This holistic outcome is long-term focused and flows on from the short- and medium-term outcomes. We have also changed the heading "Programme resources and development" to "Programme preparation" and included the key aspects of the screening survey, selecting a group, and building trust in a group in the logic model.

Figure 9 **Modified Travellers logic model**



## How well is the Travellers programme meeting the needs of particular target groups?

The evaluation looked at the impact of Travellers for sub-groups, some of which were target groups shown to be at higher risk in previous research (i.e., Māori and Pasifika students, and students from low-decile schools). Table 18 provides an overview of how Travellers is meeting the needs of sub-groups: Travellers is meeting the needs of these groups well. The outcomes for Māori were mostly comparable to those for non-Māori. The data suggest that Travellers was particularly beneficial for Pasifika students and students from low-decile schools.

It is important to remember that most of the students who participated in the survey came from schools in the Auckland region, which are likely to have had high Māori and Pasifika populations. Therefore, students were likely to have been in Travellers groups with students from similar cultural backgrounds. Schools in the Auckland region seem to be running the programme in ways that suit these groups of students. We did not have enough data to ascertain whether schools in other areas with more of a mix of students were also meeting the needs of Māori and Pasifika students. This would be a useful area for further research.

Overall, Travellers appears to be beneficial for both male and female students and students from both co-educational and single-sex schools.

Table 18 **Summary of overall short- and medium-term impacts of Travellers for sub-groups**

Short- and medium-term outcomes	Māori	Pasifika	Low decile	Females	Single-sex schools
Access to appropriate youth-focused sharing and learning opportunities	✓	○	○	○	○
Improved connectedness to school	○	✓	✓	○	○
Trusting relationships formed in the group	○	○	✓	✗	○
Improved help-seeking skills	○	✓	✓	○	○
Increased access to appropriate support and more positive relationships with peers/families/teachers	○	✓	○	✓	○
Increased resiliency and ability to navigate changes and challenges*	○	✓	✓	○	○
Engaged, confident and motivated young people	○	○	○	○	○

✗ = Majority of evidence indicates lower outcomes for sub-group compared to other students.

○ = Majority of evidence indicates similar outcomes for sub-group compared to other students.

✓ = Majority of evidence indicates better outcomes for sub-group compared to other students.

\* Some of the evidence for this outcome was related to how helpful Travellers was in dealing with challenging life events. There were a large number of events that few people had experienced. Therefore, the overall pattern of responses was taken as one piece of evidence rather than the responses to individual items.

## **Can the Travellers programme be improved?**

Although the majority of young people found Travellers helpful, most also suggested a few improvements. Overall, most suggestions from the young people tended to be about having more time spent in Travellers, such as having more Travellers sessions in later years when they were older and with different topics, having more sessions each week or longer session times, or having more follow-up to help them practise the skills they learnt. These suggestions show the young people's support for Travellers. From talking to Travellers co-ordinators at two schools, it is apparent that some schools are already looking for ways to meet this need by developing some form of follow-up. It may be helpful for Skylight to look at ways to support schools in continuing with this follow-up.

Some of the suggestions that came from students could be more easily implemented. For example, common suggestions from the young people were: cover a wider range of topics, have guest speakers, provide more information about why they were in Travellers, and provide more practical activities and age-appropriate activities. Providing interactive and focused activities has been found to be beneficial in other programmes focused on improving young people's wellbeing.

Overall, the data suggest that most of the time Travellers is reaching the appropriate young people, with the students selected to take part in Travellers mainly coming from the group that were rated as being at high risk in the screening survey. The young people who were benefiting the most from Travellers were the ones who were in greater need. Students who rated Travellers as helpful overall tended to report experiencing more distress compared to those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful. Also, as discussed below, Travellers was particularly helpful for Māori and Pasifika young people and students from low-decile schools, which have been identified in previous research as being at higher risk of mental health issues. Therefore, having robust systems for identifying students who are most in need is important for Travellers.

Having the right mix of students in Travellers is also important. Establishing trust within groups relates to how effective the young people found Travellers. More of those who rated Travellers as helpful or very helpful said they could trust the people in their Travellers group, compared to those who rated Travellers as neutral / did not find Travellers helpful. Young people who are not necessarily at high risk may still contribute to positive group dynamics and could also act as role models in the group. Selecting the right mix of students for Travellers relies on the use of the screening data, the professional judgement of school staff, and taking into account the views of the young people themselves.

The data showed that not all of the young people who took part in Travellers fitted into the high-risk category. A suggestion for future research is to further explore how Skylight can support schools in selecting the right mix of young people for the programme to ensure that all of the students that take part in Travellers benefit from participating. Future training of Travellers co-ordinators could involve looking at how data about young people (screening data as well as other data) can be used to decide which students take part in Travellers. At future training sessions

Skylight could also look in more depth at how trust within Travellers groups can be established from early on in the programme.

## **Summary**

The data provide evidence that there is a need for Travellers, and many of the young people have indicated that they want more opportunities to engage in similar experiences. The data we collected from the young people also indicate there is potential for Travellers to further enhance its model in order to benefit more young people and to have a greater long-term impact.

In summary, the data suggest that Travellers is successful in meeting its short- and medium-term outcomes. The data show moderate to strong evidence across a wide range of wellbeing-related outcomes—for all students, as well as for different groups of students. This suggests that it may have long-term impacts for some of the young people, and that Travellers is likely to be a useful investment for schools when considering how best to support at-risk students and enhance their wellbeing. Travellers has provided many of the young people with strategies to help support their wellbeing.

The Travellers programme helped me so much. It taught me to understand different ways of dealing with my problems, how to socialise better and most importantly that I am not alone. (Female Māori and Pasifika student)





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## Appendix A: Focus group questions for students pre-survey

	Interview questions	Type of Information sought
1	Were there any bits in the survey that you found unclear or hard to understand? Were there any words that were hard to understand? Could you tell me some more about that? Did you all find that hard?	Clarity of purpose and understanding
2	Were you happy with the choices you were given to answer different questions?	Clarity of purpose and understanding
3	Some of the questions in the survey are about things that might have been difficult experiences for you. Do you think it is ok to ask these questions in a survey? Could we ask these in a better way?	Learning, information sharing
4	Thinking back to your experience of Travellers, did the survey cover the most important things you got out of it? (This could be a skill, a strategy or a change in your behaviour or attitudes.) What were these things? (Let's brainstorm—go round group) If it didn't, what do we need to add?	Coverage of outcomes
5	What was the thing you <b>liked the least</b> about the survey? How could we make it better?	Satisfaction
6	What was the thing you <b>liked most</b> about the survey and why?	Satisfaction
7	If you know of others who have been involved in Travellers would you tell them it was a good idea to take part in the survey? What would you tell them about the survey? If yes why, if not why not?	Learning, information sharing
8	This is the last question. Is there anything else you think we could do to improve this survey?	Satisfaction



# Appendix B: Information letter for students

## **Skylight's Travellers Programme**

### **Have your say about Travellers**

#### **Greetings / Kia ora / Kia orana / Malo e lelei / Talofa lava**

We are a team of researchers from the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER). We want to hear about the impact of Travellers on your life. Travellers was a programme you took part in back in either 2008 or 2009 at your school. We are doing this project for an organisation called Skylight. They run the programme. Travellers teaches life skills such as coping with change and loss. Travellers aims to help young people so we really want to hear what young people think about it. This is your chance to have your say about Travellers.

#### **What do you need to do?**

If you choose to take part, you will do a survey either online or on paper (it is your choice). The survey will take about 15 minutes to do.

#### **What will we do with your survey?**

We will write a report for Skylight based on what everyone says in their surveys. We hope that this study helps to work out what is good about Travellers and what to improve so that it can help other young people.

All the surveys are confidential. That means whatever you say will only be known by you and us, the researchers.

We would like to compare what you said in your survey before you did Travellers to your answers in this survey. This is why we ask for your name. You can choose whether you want to write your name in the survey. We will not use your name in anything we write.

#### **What to do if you *want* to do the survey**

1. On the front of the survey you have been given, please tick whether you want to fill in the survey online by going to [www.surveymonkey.com/s/Travellersprog](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Travellersprog) or else whether you will do the paper version.
2. Complete the survey.

3. Put the paper survey in the envelope you have been given and seal it. Return this to the person who gave it to you (probably your school guidance counsellor). Return this survey even if you have done the survey online. Please complete the survey by **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August**.

**What to do if you *don't* want to do the survey**

You are free to choose whether to do this survey or not. If you want to discuss this with your family at all please feel free to.

If you do not want to do the survey:

1. On the front of the survey you have been given, please tick that you do not want to do the survey.
2. Put the blank survey in the envelope you have been given and seal it. Return this to the person who gave it to you (probably your school guidance counsellor) by **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August**. They will not know that you have chosen not to do the survey.

Thank you very much for reading this. If you have any questions, you can ask Sally Robertson or Katrina Taupo (contact details are below).

If you want to talk to anyone about how you're feeling, please contact the school guidance counsellor or Youthline. You can call Youthline for free on 0800 37 66 33 or text 234 for free or else email [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz)

We hope you decide to be a part of our study. Thank you for your time,

Sally Robertson and Katrina Taupo

The New Zealand Council for Educational Research

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# The Travellers Programme

These questions ask you about your experience of Skylight's Travellers Programme. You took part in this programme at your school in **2008** or **2009**.

**1. What year were you in at school when you took part in Travellers (in 2008/2009)?**

*[Please tick one]*

- 1) Year 8
- 2) Year 9
- 3) Year 10
- 4) Not sure

**2. Do you feel like this was the right age for you to do Travellers?**

*[Please tick one]*

- 1) Yes – it felt like the right age
- 2) No – I would have liked to have done Travellers when I was younger
- 3) No – I would have liked to have done Travellers when I was older
- 4) Not sure

**3. Did Travellers help you develop the following skills?**

*[Please tick one circle on each line]*

	Travellers helped a lot	Travellers helped a bit	Travellers did not help / Did not learn this in Travellers
(a) How to ask other young people for help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) How to ask adults at school for help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) How to ask family for help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) How to understand how I feel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) How to tell people how I am feeling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) How to think positively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) How to manage my emotions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) How to talk about stuff in my life that is difficult	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(i) How to understand or think differently about stuff I have found difficult	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(j) How to feel differently about stuff I have found difficult	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(k) How to feel more confident	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(l) How to better manage my schoolwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(m) How to better manage my time (e.g., at school or work)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(n) How to solve personal and relationship problems better	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(o) How to be comfortable with myself (i.e., my identity)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(p) How to get on well with friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(q) Other skills ( <i>please specify what skill</i> ) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(r) Other skills ( <i>please specify what skill</i> ) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



4. Please describe (in your own words) the main way Travellers helped you to think or feel differently about life at school, home, or in the community.

5. a) Since doing Travellers, have you asked for any support from other people to help you get through a difficult time?

*[Please tick one]*

- 1) Yes, I have asked for more support
- 2) No, I have not needed to ask for support as Travellers gave me the skills I needed
- 3) No, I have not asked for more support
- 4) Not sure

5. b) If yes, who have you asked for support?

*[Please tick all that apply]*

- a) Friends
  - b) Boy or girlfriend
  - c) Family member (e.g., parents)
  - d) Teacher or dean at school
  - e) School guidance counsellor
  - f) Counsellor (not at school)
  - g) Other (please specify)
-

## How you Feel

This question asks you about how you feel about yourself right now. Remember, if you want to talk to someone and receive some support, you can talk to **Travellers**, your **school counsellor** or **Youthline**. The contact details for Travellers and Youthline are at the end of this survey.

**6. In this question we want you to focus on yourself and your experiences. Please tick one circle in each row.**

	True (This sounds a lot like me)	Somewhat true	Somewhat false	False (This does not sound like me)
(a) I usually think of myself as a happy person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) I'm not very sure of myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) I really don't like myself very much	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) I'm the kind of person who has a lot of fun	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) I worry too much about things that aren't important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) I often feel sad or unhappy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) I usually feel I'm the kind of person I want to be	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) I get into such a bad mood that I feel like just sitting around and doing nothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(i) I feel lonely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(j) In recent years, I have felt more nervous or worried about things than I have needed to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(k) I feel nervous or afraid that things won't work out the way I would like them to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(l) I feel happy/satisfied with my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(m) I feel good about myself most of the time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(n) I feel safe at school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(o) I feel I belong at school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(p) I feel good about my future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(q) Other ( <i>please specify</i> )	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(r) Other ( <i>please specify</i> )	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. In the *last 12 months* have you experienced any of the following events (please circle Yes if you have)?

If Yes, did the skills you learnt in Travellers help you to cope with these? Please tick one: either helped a lot, helped a bit, or did not help.

	Yes	Travellers skills helped a lot	Travellers skills helped a bit	Travellers skills did not help / Did not learn how to cope with this in Travellers
(a) Moved house	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) Separation or divorce in your family	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) Death of someone close to you	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) Illness of someone close to you	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) Loss of an important friendship	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) Afraid of being hurt by someone	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) Breaking up with boy/girlfriend	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) Illness/injury with 2 weeks off school	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(i) Not doing well at school work	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(j) Money difficulties at home	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(k) Being put down by people	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(l) People making racist comments to you	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(m) Moved from another country	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. In the *last 12 months* have you experienced any of the following events (please circle Yes if you have)?

If Yes, did the skills you learnt in Travellers help you to cope with these? Please tick one: either helped a lot, helped a bit, or did not help.

	Yes	Travellers skills helped a lot	Travellers skills helped a bit	Travellers skills did not help / Did not learn how to cope with this in Travellers
(a) Getting into trouble at school	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) Not getting on well with teachers	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) Being suspended/stood down from school	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) Difficulties with jobs ( <i>e.g., part time or holiday work</i> )	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) Difficulties with family relationships	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) Feeling pressured by people to do something you did not want to	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) Worrying about your friends doing things that could harm them	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) Getting wasted ( <i>drinking too much or taking too many drugs</i> )	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(i) Friends drinking too much or taking too many drugs	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(j) Having sexual things you did not like happen to you	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(k) Having sex when you did not want to	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(l) Getting into a physical or verbal fight	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(m) Having people being aggressive or angry towards you	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(n) Other event (please specify) _____	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(o) Other event (please specify) _____	1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Think of a time that has been most difficult for you in the *last 12 months*. What happened?

(Please describe briefly below e.g., I had a fight with my best friend).

10. a) Did the skills you learnt in Travellers help you deal with the situation you described above?

- <sup>1</sup> Yes a lot     <sup>2</sup> Yes a bit     <sup>3</sup> No     <sup>4</sup> Not sure

10. b) If yes, how did the skills you learnt in Travellers help you deal with the situation?

(e.g., Travellers helped me know that I could ask other people for support).

## The Travellers Programme

11. Overall, how helpful was Travellers for you?

**Very helpful**     $\bigcirc^1$      $\bigcirc^2$      $\bigcirc^3$      $\bigcirc^4$      $\bigcirc^5$     **Not at all helpful**

12. Overall, how much did you feel you could trust the people in Travellers?

**I could completely trust them**     $\bigcirc^1$      $\bigcirc^2$      $\bigcirc^3$      $\bigcirc^4$      $\bigcirc^5$     **I could not trust them**

13. a) Is there anything that needs to be improved about Travellers?

*[Please tick one]*

- 1) No, it is fine as it is
- 2) Yes, it needs a few changes
- 3) Yes, it needs a lot of changes

13. b) How could Travellers be improved?

*[Please tick all that apply]*

- a) No changes needed
- b) Longer session times
- c) Shorter session times
- d) More sessions each week
- e) Fewer sessions each week
- f) More Travellers sessions in later years / when older with different topics (e.g., Years 10–13)
- g) Follow up to help me practise the skills I learnt (e.g., small groups, one on one)
- h) More practical activities
- i) Guest speakers (e.g., more young people coming to talk)
- j) Make the activities better for people my age
- k) Wider range of topics covered
- l) More information about the purpose of Travellers
- m) More information about why I was in Travellers
- n) Have a different group of students in Travellers
- o) More time to get to know the students in Travellers
- p) More time for me to talk about my experiences
- q) Have a better leader (the person who runs Travellers)
- r) Involve my family more
- s) Provide information that suits a wider range of different young people (e.g., people from different cultures)
- t) Other improvement (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Do you have any other comments about what you got out of Travellers?**

### Some Background Information About You

These questions ask for a few details about yourself.

**15. What gender are you?**

- <sup>1</sup> Male                       <sup>2</sup> Female

**16. What ethnic group(s) do you belong to (*please tick all that apply*)?**

- a) Māori  
 b) Pākehā/New Zealand European  
 c) Pasifika  
 d) Asian  
 e) Other (*please say which*)
- 

**17. How old are you? [*Please tick one*]**

- 15  
 16  
 17  
 Other age (*please specify*)
- 

**18. What is the name of the school you go to?**

## Contact Information

We would like to compare what you said in your survey before you did Travellers to your answers in this survey. This is why we are asking for your name.

We will not name you in anything that we write.

You can choose whether you want to answer this question.

**What is your full name?**

**Later on Skylight may want to contact some people to ask whether Travellers has an impact later on in their life.**

**Are you happy to be contacted in the future about Travellers?**

- Yes  
 No

**If yes, how would you like to be contacted? (e.g., by email, at school)**

*(If you feel comfortable, please write your email address, home phone number, and/or cell phone number)*

## Thank You

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

Remember if any of these questions have upset you please contact the school **guidance counsellor**, **Travellers** or **Youthline**.

You can call Travellers for free on **0800 299 100** or go to their website [www.travellers.org.nz](http://www.travellers.org.nz)

You can call Youthline for free on **0800 37 66 33** or **text 234** for free or else email [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz)

**When you have completed this survey please seal in the envelope and return it to the person who gave it to you.**



**Thank you for your participation**





# Appendix D: Student focus group questions post-survey

## Warm up question:

What was the best thing about doing the Travellers programme for you?

Background statistics from survey	Questions to ask students
<p>1. Around half of students thought they got these skills from Travellers (HAND out list...).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to think positively (49 percent)</li> <li>• how to understand how I feel (48 percent)</li> <li>• how to get on well with friends (48 percent)</li> <li>• how to feel more confident (45 percent)</li> <li>• how to be comfortable with myself (43 percent)</li> <li>• how to talk about stuff that is difficult (42 percent)</li> <li>• how to understand/think differently about stuff I have found difficult (41 percent)</li> <li>• How to manage my emotions (40 percent)</li> </ul>	<p>Are there any other skills you thought you needed to learn but did not?</p>
<p>2. Travellers was least likely to help young people to manage their time (25 percent) and schoolwork (24 percent).</p>	<p>Would this have been useful to learn through Travellers or do you learn these skills from somewhere else?</p>
<p>3. Over half of the people who answered the survey thought that they could trust the people in their Travellers group. However some thought that trust could be improved.</p>	<p>What are some ways that trust could be improved?</p>
<p>4. Lots of people said that Travellers helped them to ask for support from their friends, family members, boy or girlfriend and people at school like guidance counsellors and teachers or deans.</p>	<p>Do you think it is important to be able to ask for support? Is there anything that Travellers could do to make it easier?</p>
<p>5. The survey asked students to describe a recent challenging situation like having friendship troubles or a difficult family relationship. Only 11 percent said that Travellers helped them to deal with their situation.</p>	<p>Why do you think this is? How easy or hard is it to use what you learn in Travellers to real world situations? Is there anything that could make this easier?</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>If you were designing the perfect Travellers programme what would it look like? How would the sessions be run? What topics would you cover? Fill in the sheet below. After this we will get you to discuss your ideas with a partner and report 1 or 2 main ideas you pick back to the group.</p>

In an ideal Travellers programme...

Who would lead the sessions? E.g., the guidance counsellor, guest speakers.

How many sessions would you have each week? How long would you go to Travellers?  
(e.g., 1 term, 1 year)

What sorts of activities would you do?

What are the most important topics to cover? (e.g., relationships breakups).

Once you finish Travellers, would you need a way to discuss any problems or thing that might come up for you? What would this look like? (E.g., your group could keep meeting, you could cover new topics when you are older, you could meet with the counsellor etc.)

Any other comments:

## Appendix E: Travellers co-ordinator questions post-survey

### *Running Travellers at your school*

1. How does your school run the Travellers programme? (e.g., How are students selected? Who facilitates the sessions? Where and when are they held)?
2. Do you think Year 9 is the best age for students to do the programme? Why/why not?
3. What follow up (if any) occurs for the students after they have completed Travellers?

### *Outcomes for students*

4. Is Travellers valuable for students? (What differences in students do you notice as a result of Travellers?)
5. Does Travellers benefit some students, or groups of students, more than others? Do you see any solutions to this?
6. In the Student Survey, students tended to tell us more about the shorter-term skills they gained from Travellers (like how to think positively). A number thought that Travellers had not helped/or only helped a bit in terms of them dealing with more recent challenging situations. Why do you think Travellers is not always seen as helping them?

### *Changes and improvements*

7. Many students thought some form of Travellers follow up would help them. About half of the students wanted more Travellers sessions run in later years/OR when they were older on different topics. Do you think there would be value in some form of follow up? What format could this be in and what do you think are key topics that could be included?
8. Do you have any other comments about Travellers?