

Creating Rainbow Inclusive Schools

Workshop series 2020-2021

InsideOUT Report for the Mental Health Foundation

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Introduction

Background

In 2019 InsideOUT was funded by the Mental Health Foundation to run a series of six *Creating Rainbow Inclusive Schools* workshops across Aotearoa between February and May 2019, followed by a further nine workshops scheduled to be delivered between July 2019 and May 2020. Four of these workshops were delivered in 2019, with another five workshops due to be delivered in 2020.

Following the successful workshop delivery in 2019, InsideOUT was further funded to deliver:

- An additional 27 workshops (24 regional workshops and 3 Primary + Intermediate staff focused workshops)
- 25 school workshops consisting of both a student and a staff session

These were in addition to the 5 remaining workshops still to be completed from the previous contract.

All 57 workshops were initially planned to be delivered between January - June 2020, however COVID-19 interrupted the delivery of these workshops, and the deadline was extended several times through to the end of 2021 (with some school workshops delivered in the second half of 2021).

Shifting focus

Beginning in 2020, the *Creating Rainbow Inclusive Schools* workshops shifted from being offered primarily in main centres with the goal of bringing school staff and secondary school students from different schools together, to a mixture of workshops in main and regional centres; a number of workshops focused on bringing together staff, whānau and older students from primary and

intermediate schools; and school workshops delivered to staff and students within their schools – particularly in rural areas, or areas where the number of local schools made it difficult to run regional workshops effectively.

This change was made in response to the fact that while the regional workshops bringing people together were still very valuable, there was also a clear need to support schools in areas that wouldn't otherwise have access to these opportunity, as well as recognising the growing need for and interest in support for primary and intermediate schools wanting to become more rainbow inclusive.

This Report

This report describes the workshops delivered throughout 2020-2021 as part of the *Creating Rainbow Inclusive Schools* series, including data on workshop participation and evaluation. As with the workshops in 2019, the 2020-2021 workshops were highly valuable not only to the participants, but also to InsideOUT as they allowed facilitators to gather information of the issues and challenges facing rainbow students and staff in schools around the country, and to learn more about what mahi is already happening in this area, and the positive changes that are already occurring.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the valuable and generous efforts of everyone whose work enabled this workshop to happen, including our workshop facilitators, regional coordinators, volunteers, and other team members who contributed to the project, especially given the challenge of delivering a series of workshops nationally during a global pandemic. It required a great deal of persistence, patience, and flexibility as plans changed, trips were cancelled and rescheduled, and Alert Levels fluctuated.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank the Mental Health Foundation, and the Pink Shirt Day campaign for funding this project, and being understanding, flexible and supportive as we responded to the COVID-19-related challenges.

The Workshops

Workshop types

For 2020-2021, three different types of workshops were available:

- **Regional** - three hour workshops held in regions throughout the country open to school students and staff from a number of schools.
- **Primary + Intermediate** - similar to the regional workshops, these were also three hours long and open to those from different schools but were focused more specifically on primary + intermediate schools. Older students were still welcome to join but these were aimed more at school staff and whānau.
- **School Sessions** - these consisted of both a student session and a staff session, and were delivered to a number of schools, particularly in more regional areas where it could be more difficult for them to reach a regional workshop.

Workshop locations

InsideOUT delivered 29 regional workshops, 3 Primary + Intermediate workshops, and 25 School workshops - 57 workshops in total.

Region	Regional	PRI+INT	School
Northland	2		4
Auckland	4	1	
Waikato/Coromandel	2		2
Central North Island	4		
Taranaki			1
Manawatū-Whanganui	3		
Wellington	4	1	2
Nelson-Marlborough	1		
West Coast	2		3
Canterbury	2	1	1
Otago	3		6
Southland	2		6
Total	29	3	25

Workshop details

| Demographic notes

Participants were encouraged to register for the workshops ahead of time, however it was not a requirement for attending. All attendees were required to sign-in at the workshop. This was both to gather information on their role and school, as well as providing contact information for follow-up resources and contact tracing purposes. Information on role and ethnicity was also collected on the evaluation forms which were anonymous. While the participants were strongly encouraged to complete these forms, and most did so, not all participants did. As such, data gathered from these (such as ethnicity) is representative of those who completed the forms.

School workshops involved a student session (either for any interested students, or a selected group of students such as the school's rainbow diversity groups, or student leaders), and a staff session. It was encouraged that all staff attend the staff session - this was not always possible however, and due to the time constraints of these workshops it wasn't possible to take attendance in the same way as it was for the regional and primary/intermediate workshops.

Regional and Primary + Intermediate workshops

As there were only a small number of Primary + Intermediate workshops, and both these workshops and the regional workshops were delivered and evaluated in a similar manner, the two workshop types have been grouped together.

| Attendance of Regional and Primary + Intermediate workshops

For the 32 regional and Primary + Intermediate workshops, there were a total of 379 participants. This included:

- **133** students (35.1%)
- **168** staff (44.3%)
- **78** participants with other roles (20.6%)

136 schools were represented across the regions. Of these schools:

- **74** schools were represented by **staff only** (54.4%)
- **34** schools were represented by **students only** (25.0%)
- **28** schools were represented by **both staff and students** (20.6%)

| Overview of evaluation for Regional and Primary + Intermediate workshops

Of those who completed the evaluation forms:

- **11.6%** included **Māori** in their ethnicity
- **5.2%** included **Pasifika** in their ethnicity
- **2.7%** included **Asian** in their ethnicity
- **71.6%** included **Pākehā or European** in their ethnicity
- **0.9%** included **another** ethnicity
- **7.9% did not specify** their ethnicity

The majority of participants (94% and over) reported that they either **agreed or strongly agreed** that the workshops were useful, relevant, understandable, accessible, and interesting.

School workshops

InsideOUT delivered 25 planned school workshops. Scheduling of the school workshops was complicated by COVID-19 and the following public health restrictions required to keep people safe.

This had a more significant impact on the school workshops than the regional workshops as schools tended to be more impacted by Alert Levels 1 and 2 (specifically regarding visitors to the school) and school schedules, already very busy, were even more so as a result of lockdowns and postponed events, making it harder to reschedule, find alternate dates and arrange for facilitator travel.

| *Schools delivered to*

The workshops were originally offered to 25 schools. Where those schools did not wish to host the workshops, or were unable to for some reason, the workshops were then offered to other schools.

	Original schools that received the workshops	Original schools that rejected or were unable to receive the workshops	Alternate schools that received the workshops
Northland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kaitaia College ● Kerikeri High School ● Northland College ● Otamatea High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bay of Islands College ● Dargaville High School 	
Thames/Coromandel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coromandel Area School ● Mercury Bay Area School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thames High School ● Whangamata Area School 	
West Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Buller High-School ● Westland High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greymouth High-School ● John Paul II High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cobden School
Otago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mount Aspiring College ● Cromwell College ● Dunstan High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wakatipu College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Columba College ● Tokomairiro High School ● Dunstan Kāhui Ako (staff) and Alexandra Primary (students)
Southland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aparima College ● Central Southland College ● Menzies College ● Northern Southland College ● Gore High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fiordland College ● St Peter's College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aurora College
Other regions			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spotswood College ● Diamond Harbour School ● Porirua College

| *Evaluation of school workshops*

Due to the structure, limited timeframes, and group sizes involved with the school workshops, it was not practical to provide and collect paper evaluation forms with these sessions the way it was for regional workshops. Online forms were sent to schools after the workshop, however unfortunately the uptake on filling these out was very minimal. If similar workshops are delivered in the future, alternative methods of collecting feedback that accounts for these limits will be important.

Here are a few comments from schools that did provide qualitative feedback on the sessions:

Newtown School

- *“Excellent host who articulated the content with confidence and ease.”*
- *“Gave us direction of next learning steps and where to find help for these.”*

Alexandra Primary School

- *“It opened the conversation about how we address possible issues at school.”*
- *“[Participant appreciated the] ability to ask questions about things we are unsure about and have those questions answered.”*
- *“[Would be improved by] more practical advice around what other schools have done to embrace rainbow youth. How to cope with sports days (gender-based), school camps (sleeping arrangements), bathrooms etc. Didn't need the slides on what bullying is, pink shirt day etc as we are fully aware of this already - it is our core business. Also, is there any further up-to-date data?”*

Evaluation

Regional workshop participants were provided with an evaluation form with a number of quantitative and qualitative questions about the workshop. Feedback was also collected during the closing round of workshops. While participants were strongly encouraged to complete the forms, and were provided with a link to fill the form out online, not all participants completed the evaluation.

Attendance

For the **32** regional and Primary + Intermediate workshops, there were a total of **379** participants. This included:

- **133** students (35.1%)
- **168** staff (44.3%)
- **78** participants with other roles (20.6%)

136 schools were represented across the regions. Of these schools:

- **74** schools were represented by **staff only** (54.4%)
- **34** schools were represented by **students only** (25.0%)
- **28** schools were represented by both **staff and students** (20.6%)

Of the **379** participants across the 32 regional and Primary + Intermediate workshops, **303** (79.9%) completed evaluation forms. The proportions of participants of different roles who completed the feedback forms was representative of the proportion of different roles who attended the workshops. Those with the role of:

- **Staff** made up 44.3% of **attendance**, and 42.7% of the **evaluation** forms completed
- **Student** made up 35.1% of **attendance** and **35.5%** of the **evaluation** forms completed
- **Other** made up 20.6% of **attendance** and 22.4% of the **evaluation** forms completed

Quantitative scales

Workshop qualities

There were seven questions on the evaluation forms that used Likert scales. Five statements relating to qualities of the workshop with the possible answers of:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Unsure
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

The statements were:

- Today's workshop was **useful**
- Today's workshop was **understandable**
- Today's workshop was **relevant**
- Today's workshop was **accessible**
- Today's workshop was **interesting**

Where participants selected either *4. Agree*, or *5. Strongly agree* in response to a statement, this was considered to be an affirmative response to that quality of the workshop. Selecting either *1. Strongly disagree*, or *2. Disagree* was considered a negative response to that quality of the workshop.

For example,

- Participants who **found the workshop useful** would include all participants who selected either *4. Agree*, or *5. Strongly agree*
- Participants who **did not find the workshop relevant** would include all participants who selected either *1. Strongly disagree*, or *2. Disagree*

| Usefulness

97.7% of participants found the workshop **useful**, and only a small number of participants didn't find the workshop useful at all.

Today's workshop was useful

1. Strongly disagree - 0.0%
2. Disagree - 0.7%
3. Unsure - 1.6%
4. Agree - 27.3%
5. Strongly agree - 70.4%

There was only a small difference between how useful participants found the workshop depending on their role.

Percentage of participants who found the workshop useful

- Students - 98.1%
- Staff - 96.1%
- Other - 100%

| *Relevance*

99.0% of participants found the workshop relevant. No participants found the workshop irrelevant, and only a small number of participants were unsure.

Today's workshop was useful

- 1. Strongly disagree - 0.0%
- 2. Disagree - 0.0%
- 3. Unsure - 1.0%
- 4. Agree - 21.1%
- 5. Strongly agree - 78.0%

There was only a small difference between how relevant participants found the workshop depending on their role.

Percentage of participants who found the workshop relevant

- Students - 99.1%
- Staff - 98.4%
- Other - 100%

| *Understanding*

97.7% of participants found the workshop understandable. No participants found that they could not understand the workshop, and only a small number of participants were unsure.

Today's workshop was useful

- 1. Strongly disagree** - 0.0%
- 2. Disagree** - 0.0%
- 3. Unsure** - 2.3%
- 4. Agree** - 16.8%
- 5. Strongly agree** - 80.9%

There was only a small difference between how useful participants found the workshop depending on their role.

Percentage of participants who found the workshop understandable

- Students - 97.8%
- Staff - 96.9%
- Other - 98.5%

| *Accessibility*

94.1% of participants found the workshop accessible. No participants found the workshop inaccessible, and only a small number of participants were unsure.

Today's workshop was accessible

- 1. Strongly disagree** - 0.0%
- 2. Disagree** - 0.0%
- 3. Unsure** - 5.9%
- 4. Agree** - 19.4%
- 5. Strongly agree** - 74.7%

There was only a small difference between how accessible staff and other participants found the workshop, both groups finding it more accessible than the student participants.

Percentage of participants who found the workshop accessible

- Students - 88.0%
- Staff - 97.7%
- Other - 98.5%

| Interest

97.7% of participants found the workshop interesting. No participants found the workshop uninteresting, and only a small number of participants were unsure.

Today's workshop was interesting

1. Strongly disagree - 0.0%
2. Disagree - 0.0%
3. Unsure - 2.3%
4. Agree - 23.0%
5. Strongly agree - 74.7%

There was only a small difference between how interesting students and other participants found the workshop, both groups finding it more interesting than the staff participants.

Percentage of participants who found the workshop interesting

- Students - 99.1%
- Staff - 96.1%
- Other - 100.0%

Participant perception

There were also two questions where participants were asked, "*following today's workshop how:*

- *Likely are you to take part in Pink Shirt Day 2020/2021 (as relevant)*
- *Confident do you feel?"*

With the possible answers:

1. Not at all
2. Slightly
3. Unsure
4. Quite
5. Very

Where participants selected either **4. Quite**, or **5. Very** in response to a statement, this was considered to be an affirmative response to that question. Selecting

either *1. Not at all*, or *2. Slightly* was considered a negative response to that question.

For example,

- Participants who **were likely to take part in an upcoming Pink Shirt Day** would include all participants who selected either *4. Quite*, or *5. Very*
- Participants who **were not confident following the workshop** would include all participants who selected either *1. Not at all*, or *2. Slightly*

| *Future Pink Shirt Day participation*

94.7% of participants were likely to take part in an upcoming Pink Shirt Day. Only a small number of participants weren't likely to, or were unsure if they would take part in an upcoming Pink Shirt Day.

How likely are you to take part in Pink Shirt Day 2020/2021?

- 1. Not at all* - 0.3%
- 2. Slightly* - 0.7%
- 3. Unsure* - 4.3%
- 4. Quite* - 18.5%
- 5. Very* - 76.2%

There was a small difference between how likely participants of different roles were to participate in an upcoming Pink Shirt Day, with staff being the most likely and other participants being the least likely.

Percentage of participants who were likely to take part in Pink Shirt Day 2020/2021

- Students - 94.4%
- Staff - 96.1%
- Other - 92.5%

| *Confidence*

88.4% of participants felt confident following the workshop. Only a small number of participants did not feel confident, with a slightly larger percentage feeling unsure of their confidence.

How confident do you feel?

- 1. Not at all* - 0.7%
- 2. Slightly* - 1.0%
- 3. Unsure* - 9.9%

4. Quite - 37.6%

5. Very - 50.8%

There was a slightly larger difference in how confident participants of different roles felt following the workshop (compared to other responses in the evaluation form) with students being the least confident and other participants feeling the most confident.

Percentage of participants who felt confident following the workshop

- Students - 85.2%
- Staff - 89.1%
- Other - 92.5%

This question was intended to determine how confident participants felt taking their learnings back to their schools or workplaces, supporting rainbow people in schools, and standing up against bullying. In order to make the evaluation forms clearer and easier to read, the question was written simply as “how confident do you feel [following the workshop]?” Some students noted on the forms that they were responding to the question based on their own personal levels of confidence rather than their confidence as it specifically applied to the topic of the workshop. This, along with the fact that the majority of the students who attended were part of the rainbow community and/or were the subjects of rainbow-focused bullying and discrimination in their schools and therefore are likely to have factors such as concerns for safety, negative consequences of experiencing bullying, and past experiences with attempting to stand up for bullying impacting their confidence levels, may explain why fewer students felt confident following the workshop.

Qualitative evaluation

Participants were also asked a number of qualitative questions on the evaluation forms:

- What did you **like** about the workshop?
- What would you **change**?
- What's one thing you will do **moving forward** to help us speak up, stand together and stop bullying?

- What's something you will do differently to make your school more **rainbow inclusive** after this workshop?

There were **303** recorded responses in total (**79.9%** of participants). Not all participants completed all questions.

What did you like about the workshop

281 (92.7% of those who completed an evaluation form) participants responded to the question *“what did you like about the workshop?”* Of these responses:

- **132** answers (47.0%) liked that the **environment** of the workshop was safe, accessible, or engaging.
- **109** answers (38.8%) liked the **resources or content** of the workshop.
- **72** answers (25.6%) liked the discussion or opportunity for **conversation**.
- **70** answers (24.9%) liked the opportunity for networking and the **connections** they made during the workshop.
- **69** answers (24.6%) liked the **facilitation or delivery** of the workshop.
- **27** answers (9.6%) liked the interaction between students and teachers during the workshop, and the chance to hear the **voices of young people**.

| Conversations

Participants enjoyed the opportunity for open conversations, both between facilitators and participants, and between school staff and students, allowing for a range of different perspectives, ideas, and approaches.

“I heard a lot of different voices and options on how to do things.”

They valued the opportunity to discuss relevant experiences, and to talk openly about struggles and the less pleasant things that rainbow people in their schools were dealing with.

“[I liked] Talking about homophobia and transphobia instead of brushing it under the rug.”

| *Facilitators*

Workshop facilitators and their approach to facilitation was frequently discussed, with participants reporting that they liked how friendly, approachable, and engaging the facilitators were, and how they made everyone feel welcome. Many also remarked on their patience, depth of understanding of the topics covered, and their willingness to explain and respond to challenging questions.

“Accessible. Gentle. Supportive.”

“Fantastic understanding for needs of the group.”

Facilitator responsiveness (to the needs of the group), accessible presentation, and ability to engage participants and draw out responses were also appreciated.

“Presenter was engaging, slides were easy to read + understand. Lots of audience participation.”

Participants also like that the facilitators were members of the rainbow community, and were therefore able to speak to their own experiences.

“I like that it is done by trans people.”

| *Voices of young people*

The opportunity to hear the voices of young people – particularly of rainbow young people – was also appreciated by the participants. Young people reported that they appreciated having the chance to share and to be listened to, and, similarly, staff enjoyed hearing from the young people.

“Rainbow young people’s voice, opinions and advice, opportunity for students to share.”

“Was very inclusive, and I felt heard.”

Young people also appreciated hearing from staff, as well as other adults from the rainbow community.

| *Environment*

Many participants reported that they liked the relaxed, comfortable atmosphere, specifically referencing how safe and inclusive it felt and the informal, conversational tone of the workshop which allowed for discussions.

“No pressure/optional to answer questions so people felt more comfortable.”

“How comfortable we were made to feel.”

“Inclusivity and ability to speak without judgement.”

Participants appreciated the inclusion of breaks for discussions, and food to help people keep their energy levels up and to feel more comfortable. Some participants particularly appreciated that the food provided was inclusive of their dietary requirements.

| *Resources + content*

Participants liked the resources that were provided within the workshop, including physical resources, places to find further information, and connections to local supports.

The slides and presentations were also mentioned. These were described as being informative, easy to follow, and aesthetically appealing. The concepts and terminology covered in the workshops were well-defined and clear.

Practical tips, actionable advice, and the chance to talk through examples were also mentioned, as was the approach to difficult or challenging topics. The

addition of content for specific groups (such as for the Primary + Intermediate workshops), as well as to respond to the make-up of regional workshops, was also appreciated.

“Great that it was easily understandable & filled with a lot of easy & oft-overlooked simple tasks that can make a large difference.”

“It was relevant and straight to the point about problems and things that need to change.”

| *Connections to others*

Participants liked the opportunities that the workshops provided to connect with others - whether those were other rainbow people, staff and students from other schools, or simply other people doing the same mahi.

“We all were dealing with the same thing, and I was able to meet new people.”

What participants would change about the workshops

135 participants (44.6% of those who completed an evaluation form) responded to the questions *“what would you change about the workshop?”* Of those who responded to the question:

- **46** answers (34.1%) wanted changes to the activities or structure of the workshop, or changes to the way the workshop was delivered.
- **32** answers (23.7%) wanted the timing of the workshop to change, or to make the workshop longer.
- **27** answers (20.0%) wanted more people present at the workshop, and more promotion of the workshop.
- **14** answers (10.4%) wanted additions to the content.

Note: there were some different interpretations of what the question was actually asking (for example, participants instead listing what they would change about their schools, or about themselves). It would be helpful if this question more clearly stated whether it was asking for changes to the workshop, or to the community.

| *Accessibility, venue*

Some participants reported issues with the accessibility of the workshop, such as the speed and volume when facilitators were talking, or difficulty hearing due to outside noise. Other issues such as the size of the venue and temperature also came up.

| *Activities*

There was a range of feedback relating to workshop activities. Suggestions of more activities or energisers were common. Some found that the balance of presentation, group discussion and other activities was well balanced, some would have preferred more group discussions, and others would have preferred more interactive activities.

Some participants (mainly staff) did not enjoy the activities at the start of the workshops where staff and students were separated into different groups for discussions so that the different perspectives of bullying and discrimination occurring within schools could be raised, and wished for this to happen with combined groups. However, this is done intentionally to ensure students feel safe to share openly and feel heard, then summaries from both groups are shared back to everyone.

| *Approach*

Possibly more focused questions.

More solution based rather than talking about issues.

| *Attendance + promotion*

Workshop attendance was also something that many participants would change, stating that they wished more people had come along, especially when certain groups (such as staff or secondary schools) were under-represented. This was often framed as a sense of disappointment that key people working in schools who might benefit from the workshop weren't in attendance.

“Participation! Why aren't there more schools? Not your fault but how could we increase participation?”

“Where are the damn high school teachers to hear this??”

There was also feedback given around the promotion of the workshops. This included encouragement for InsideOUT to do more workshop promotion, as well as participants wishing they had promoted it further within their networks.

| *Content*

A number of suggestions were made regarding content that could be added to the workshops. Some suggestions were within the scope of the workshops (preventing and responding to rainbow-focused bullying and creating rainbow inclusive schools) such as:

- Experiences and information from schools where rainbow diversity groups have been established
- Rainbow Pasifika and intersectionality
- Support for ally staff
- More practical ideas
- Bullying from students toward staff, or between staff

Other suggestions were outside of the scope and focus of the workshop, but provided insight into the sorts of workshops that participants would like to see in the future, such as:

- Rainbow history
- Medical resources

| *Food*

Food was also mentioned by participants as something they would change. Some responses did not give specifics of changes they would make, but suggestions included healthier or more filling food, or more food overall. Food for workshops was purchased based on the number of registrations, so in some cases when participants attended but did not register this could result in there being less food than was ideal.

| *Length*

The length of the workshops was mentioned frequently, with some participants saying they would have made the workshop shorter, and others saying they would have made the workshop longer.

“Perhaps more time for discussion BUT am aware that if this had been longer, would I come along??”

| *Resources*

Requests for more resources or more specific resources were also present. This included specific written resources for sectors such as ECE and Primary schools, ‘tools’ for planning and running groups, and rainbow items.

“Get a free little rainbow flag.”

Future Actions

245 participants (80.9% of those who completed an evaluation form) responded to the question *“What’s one thing you will do moving forward to help us speak up, stand together and stop bullying?”* Of those who responded to the question:

- **106** people (43.3%) will start conversations or work to educate themselves and their communities.
- **66** people (26.9%) will speak out against or challenge bullying when they see it, particularly for more subtle forms of bullying.
- **55** people (22.4%) will adapt their own behaviour, for example by:
- **32** people (13.1%) will increase rainbow visibility in their schools or communities.
- **51** people (20.8%) will make their school policies more inclusive or organise a staff PD.
- **32** people (13.1%) will support their school's QSA.
- **13** people (5.3%) will get involved in Pink Shirt Day.
- **23** people (9.4%) will take other action

| *Advocacy*

Advocating for education and awareness; structural change; inclusive environments; staff and students in the rainbow community. Advocating in different spaces, and advocating for students to other staff.

| *Awareness*

Raise awareness of rainbow communities, the challenges this community faces, and workshops and resources to help support them.

| *Bystanding + Upstanding*

Be an active bystander/upstander; challenge stereotypes; call out 'subtle' bullying; challenging the use of terms like 'gay' being used in a negative way. Being aware and looking out for it; being prepared for these situations when they do happen; encouraging other allies to step up.

“Call things out, have courageous conversations.”

“Help address the issue, encourage schools to stop victimising the victim or blame the victim.”

| *Connections*

Connect with other schools, other groups; connect with other services and campaigns like InsideOUT and Pink Shirt Day and connect others as well; work to actively build networks and peer support.

| *Educating*

Educating others (staff, students, friends, whānau, and communities) by ‘taking teachable moments’; sharing information and resources; encouraging others to engage with workshops and professional development.

“Education - Bystander to upstander info very useful”

“Provide true information about rainbow identities to help erase stigma”

| *Inclusive education and environments*

Support inclusive schools, environments and education by:

- Reviewing and updating school documents and policies
- Covering rainbow specific topics in the curriculum and making sure all topics are rainbow inclusive
- Using correct and respectful language for individuals
- Using expansive and inclusive language in general
- Breaking down and removing binaries and segregation
- Advocating for safe and inclusive bathrooms, facilities, and uniforms

“See what is happening at new school + how I can potentially change the environment + help people feel more safe.”

“Start in my classroom and move throughout the school - language is important.”

| *Pink Shirt Day*

Run Pink Shirt Day events; make events like Pink Shirt Day have a higher profile or be more meaningful; discuss the origins of and meaning behind Pink Shirt Day.

“Run our best Pink Shirt Day ever :)”

“Spark a conversation @ our school & hopefully introduce the Pink Shirt Day tradition.”

| *Rainbow Diversity Groups*

Start diversity groups and QSAs; support or become more involved with existing groups; help to advocate for the group or liaise between groups and school staff to make sure their voices are heard and valued.

| *Resources*

Access resources shared in workshop; bring resources to school or workplace; seek out specific resources where needed; help others to find or access resources.

| *Safe spaces*

Create or maintain safe spaces for rainbow people, or ensure spaces are truly safe, or safe for all; advocate for the need for these safe spaces within schools.

| *Speak up*

Start conversations; spread the word about Pink Shirt Day; speak up when things happen that aren't okay; model appropriate and effective responses; consistent,

positive messages. Talk about rainbow communities and topics in a way that normalise, reduces stigma, and makes it easier to talk about openly. Talk about positive rainbow stories and in positive ways.

“Be more open about how much bullying sucks and can affect people”

“For school speeches coming up I will be talking about bullying”

| *Visibility*

Be a visible rainbow person, be a role model, either as a rainbow person or as an ally; create displays, put up posters, share books; encourage, run and support events and activities; bring in visible signage and representation; include rainbow topics in newsletters.

“Keep role modelling as a rainbow person in society.”

What’s something you will do differently?

209 participants (69.% of those who completed an evaluation form) responded to the question *“What’s something you will do differently to make your school more rainbow inclusive after this workshop?”*

Of those who responded to the question:

- **69** people (33.0%) will educate others or raise awareness about rainbow issues.
- **50** people (23.9%) will speak out or challenge bullying or non-inclusive policies.
- **41** people (19.6%) will work to make their school structures or policies more rainbow inclusive.
- **33** people (15.8%) will educate themselves or change their own behaviour.
- **34** people (16.3%) will start or develop a QSA.

- **29** people (13.9%) will get involved in rainbow campaigns or workshops, for example Pink Shirt Day.
- **21** people (10.0%) will take other action, for example:
 - Empowering students to take action
 - Engaging allies
 - Creating rainbow safe spaces.

InsideOUT support going forward

209 participants (69.0% of those who completed an evaluation form) responded to the question *“What is something InsideOUT can do to support you in this mahi going forward?”* Of those who responded to the question:

- **73** answers (34.9%) wanted further workshops or staff PD.
- **56** answers (26.8%) wanted resources sent to them.
- **47** answers (22.5%) wanted InsideOUT to continue its current activity and engagement.
- **47** answers (22.5%) wanted InsideOUT to keep in contact or follow up with them and their schools or communities.
- **25** answers (12.0%) wanted more resources created, for example to cover:
 - Early childhood education, particularly how to support parents to then support children
 - Tips on changing workplace culture
 - Tertiary institutions and therapists
 - Primary and intermediate schools
 - How to talk to people who don't want to learn or listen
 - Rainbow stickers and flags
 - Advocating for rainbow inclusive school policies
 - The intersection of rainbow and neurodiversity identities
 - Support available for whānau.
- **28** answers (13.4%) covered other areas, for example:
 - InsideOUT speaking at various events

- Supporting connections, between:
 - Attendees of individual workshops
 - Local schools
 - Primary schools
- Having regional coordinators in more areas, such as Hawkes Bay
- Support for whānau.

Other feedback

20 participants responded to the question *“Anything else you’d like to say to us?”*

13 answers said thanks or appreciated the support.

Other answers of interest included:

- Excitement and appreciation that Marlborough and Blenheim were being supported and getting education.
- Asking about a primary school based course.

“I really appreciate the effort and energy that has gone into this workshop.”

“I had a great/inclusive/supportive afternoon”

Findings

Throughout the regional and Primary + Intermediate workshops, as well as the school sessions (particularly students sessions), activities and discussions were held to draw out issues and challenges, impacts of rainbow-focused bullying and discrimination, and positives and progress at the participants' schools and workplaces. The following content is an analysis and compilation of notes taken during the workshops.

As well as helping facilitators to gain an idea of what participants were facing in their schools, forming the basis of other activities in the workshop, and supporting follow-up with schools where needed, these topics and examples provided a key source of data for the findings below.

| *Note-taking*

Facilitators took notes of what was shared throughout the workshops. Before doing so, facilitators obtained verbal consent from participants, which involved letting participants know:

- Why the notes were being taken, and what they would be used for
- That no identifying information would be shared
- That they were under no obligation to share
- They could let facilitators know if they wished to share but not have notes taken
- If they consented to having notes taken but later decided they would prefer not to have that shared, that they could contact us to have the notes removed.

With students especially, facilitators would check in if some of what was shared had the potential to be identifying, or sensitive. If students were happy for it to be included regardless, facilitators would work with them to ensure the wording of the notes was appropriate.

Manifestations of bullying

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying takes many forms. It can be overt or subtle, aggressive or passive. It affects both people who are rainbow, and those who are not. This section examines the various ways homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying can and does manifest.

This section particularly aims to highlight that rainbow bullying occurs on a spectrum and that negligent behaviour (e.g. not trying to use correct pronouns) is just as much bullying as deliberately harmful behaviour (e.g. physically harassing rainbow students).

Physical bullying

Physical action that comprises homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic bullying includes interpersonal violence, and rainbow posters (e.g. from QSAs) being vandalised or taken down (sometimes even being filmed and posted on social media), resulting in fear and discouragement. QSAs are often the target of threats and harassment, from both students and staff.

Language

Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic bullying can manifest via the use of language, for example:

- Un-inclusive and/or unnecessarily gendered language
- Rumours being circulated about certain students having a rainbow identity
- Invasive and inappropriate questions (particularly directed to transgender young people about their identities and their genitalia)
- Threatening correspondence
- Offensive jokes
- Rainbow vocabulary (e.g. the word 'gay') being used with negative connotations or as an insult to describe people and things

| *Slurs*

Slurs in particular (whether homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic) are very present in educational settings, being used casually and aggressively, and being expressed in a variety of ways (e.g. face-to-face, online, graffitied etc.). These slurs

are not only directed at rainbow people, but also people who are perceived as being queer, or breaking heteronormative stereotypes (e.g. a boy wearing a pink jersey).

This issue with slurs is exacerbated by an absence of, or inconsistent effort by, teachers to call out or shut down usage of slurs. Some teachers even use slurs, or encourage their usage. The culture of slurs being used and being normalised results in students feeling unsafe emotionally and sometimes physically, and facilitates the spreading of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic attitudes.

| *Pronouns*

A common lack of respect for the pronouns of rainbow young people is another significant form of bullying via language use. Their experiences range from the lower end of negligence and lack of effort, to the higher end of deadnaming and misgendering. This discourages students from sharing their correct pronouns and/or name. The inconsistency with situations where students have their pronouns and names respected demonstrates a lack of understanding about the importance of respecting pronouns, across both staff and students. This is further reflected by the minimisation of rainbow students' struggles to have their name and/or pronouns respected.

Online bullying

Online homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic bullying can look like:

- Taking and sharing photos and videos of rainbow students without consent
- Taking and circulating online photos and videos of rainbow-focused bullying (either directly bullying or harming a person, or destruction of property, posters, flags, etc being destroyed)
- Outing people online. This sometimes happens unintentionally when school staff include rainbow young people in online posts supporting or addressing rainbow issues.

Online bullying in particular poses some specific challenges. As so much of a young person's life involves online activity (e.g. school, social life), rainbow young people experiencing online bullying often feel they cannot escape it and must restrict their online presence in response. This has serious consequences for their ability to socialise and connect, particularly during lockdowns. Online bullying also poses particular challenges for schools, where it is difficult for them to control and respond to it. This is sometimes used as an excuse for schools to not address it, which results in online bullying being used to bully others without consequence.

Social bullying

There is also a noticeable category of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying which involves restricting or controlling how rainbow young people are able to exist and interact in social settings. This category includes behaviour and actions like:

- Excluding rainbow young people
- Outing rainbow young people without consent, often in unsafe environments. This can be done by students, counsellors and schools (e.g. in public social media posts about pride events)
- Pressuring rainbow young people to come out, often in unsafe environments
- Students saying they would be uncomfortable around rainbow people
- Undermining rainbow identities, for example by:
 - Mocking queer identities (e.g. by adopting stereotypical ways of talking or dressing)
 - Sexualisation of queer identities
 - Spreading or publication of harmful stereotypes about rainbow people
 - Calling rainbow identities unimportant or too complicated

Impact of social environment on bullying

This section examines the impact of various social environments on rainbow bullying, and how they can both aggravate and improve the experiences of rainbow young people who are being bullied.

Whānau and wider community

Whether a rainbow young person's whānau is supportive or safe has very significant effects on rainbow young people. An unsupportive or unsafe whānau can be hugely detrimental, while a supportive whānau makes a hugely positive difference for rainbow young people, particularly in advocating for rainbow inclusivity in their schools.

Issues in whānau and wider communities with homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour that were identified through this project include not only active hostility, but also expressing relief or hope that their children or community members do not have a rainbow identity.

It is not only rainbow young people, but also rainbow community members (e.g. teachers, parents) who experience homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. This is particularly experienced by students with rainbow parents.

| Intersections between school and community

Rainbow inclusive schools also play a huge role in the safety and wellbeing of rainbow young people, but an inclusive wider community is needed alongside rainbow inclusive schools for rainbow young people to feel safe, and to fully express their identities. Numerous rainbow young people said in this project they will only be able to fully express themselves once they move away from their whānau and/or community. However, rainbow young people with unsafe or unsupportive whānau struggle to confide in school staff, due to concerns of being outed to their whānau.

It is also significant that schools struggle to be rainbow inclusive when their wider communities (including students' whānau) express homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Examples identified of this included schools:

- Receiving community backlash for raising a pride flag
- Struggling to respect students' wishes to not be outed to their whānau
- Struggling with how to open communication about rainbow inclusivity with their wider communities

Both whānau and wider communities often lack education and awareness around rainbow inclusivity. This has been identified as a strong factor towards homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, particularly as it gets passed through generations (children learning it from their whānau). Further rainbow inclusive resources are particularly needed for whānau of rainbow young people, and for support services in schools (i.e. counsellors, social workers).

| Rural communities

Living in a rural community can exacerbate the challenges already commonly faced by rainbow young people, such as experiencing more prevalent non-inclusive attitudes, a sense of isolation, and being reliant on unsupportive whānau members for transport.

| Intersections of faith and culture

The intersection between faith, culture and a rainbow identity is difficult to navigate. Faith-based environments, including schools and churches, are often not experienced as safe environments for rainbow people. Religion is also sometimes used to justify homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, for example by prohibiting or impeding QSAs in schools. The harm caused by this is exacerbated by religious leaders claiming it does not happen

QSAs and rainbow diversity groups

QSAs and rainbow diversity groups provide important spaces for rainbow young people to connect, share experiences and collaborate in a safe, inclusive environment. Lots of positive feedback was given during this project's workshops about the impact of QSAs in creating these safe spaces, and many workshop participants (students and staff alike) indicated either a new or renewed motivation to develop a QSA at their school. For those workshop participants who already had an existing QSA at their school, they often mentioned feeling inspired, affirmed, and confident after hearing about the work of other QSAs. This emphasised the importance of spaces like these workshops for students and staff to share experiences and ideas, and thereby learning from and supporting each other in the process.

| Challenges for QSAs and Rainbow Diversity Groups

The many different manifestations of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools pose significant challenges to QSAs. These challenges include:

- Students being discouraged from starting, continuing, or attending QSAs by hostile school environments, for example:
 - Threats towards students
 - QSA posters being ripped down
 - Opposition groups forming
- Low engagement with QSAs as students are concerned about areas such as:
 - Not already having connections within the group (particularly for international students)
 - Fear of outing themselves
 - Fear of being targetted with homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic bullying
- Schools placing restrictions on QSAs and their activity (e.g. participating in campaigns like Out on the Shelves, Pride Week, or even Pink Shirt Day). For example:

- Only senior students being allowed to attend
- No public events being allowed
- Pride Week having to include 'school pride' not just rainbow pride
- Pink Shirt Day being held but without acknowledgement of the rainbow students or rainbow-focused bullying
- No visual rainbow displays (e.g. posters, pride flags) being allowed to be shown, being taken down, or being considered inappropriate (e.g. a student's NCEA work discussing rainbow issues being removed from the wall for open day)
- Heavy strain and workload put on students who want to participate or lead QSAs, but must take this on alone due to very limited staff support

These challenges have further long-term negative effects for QSAs, for example:

- Sustainability concerns with students graduating, and difficulty identifying what content or topics are appropriate for discussion within QSAs (e.g. safe sex practices), due to very limited staff support
- Limited visibility and awareness, as QSAs are often only advertised by word of mouth due to safety concerns

Schools

As most young people spend so much time in their schools, whether their school is rainbow inclusive can make a substantial difference to their experiences of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. While this section does largely focus on the behaviour and actions of staff, it is also of note that homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in a school community affect students and staff alike.

| *School or staff?*

The language used in this section is significant, in terms of referring to either staff, schools, or both. "School" is used when referring to larger structural or policy issues, while "staff" is used when referring to more individualised action. This is to balance the situation where "staff" puts emphasis on individuals, and helps highlight the range of behaviours that affect rainbow bullying, while "schools" puts emphasis on the institution and any structural issues therein.

There is a wide spectrum of rainbow inclusivity among school staff, ranging from being actively rainbow inclusive, to being actively hostile towards rainbow students. This makes it difficult for rainbow students to know who they can safely approach for support. While actively rainbow inclusive staff are often in the minority, they have a significant impact on how safe, confident and supported rainbow young people feel, even when the wider school community is unsupportive.

| *Positive impacts*

Some positive examples of a school's impact on a rainbow young person's experiences of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying include:

- Teachers working to make their classrooms less gendered. For example:
 - Letting students choose their own activities, rather than assuming what they would want based on their gender
 - Deliberately including representation of diverse families
- Teachers defining class values in collaboration with their students
- Staff visibly indicating they are committed to inclusivity, and are safe to talk to, e.g. by wearing rainbow lanyards or badges
- Staff apologising for misgendering students
- Students providing important support for each other, even when unsupported by their wider school community
- Staff responding quickly and strongly to rainbow-focused online bullying and following up afterwards with the students targeted by the bullying

Schools can provide a safe environment for rainbow young people when they do not have access to it within their whānau or wider community. However, individual staff action in isolation is not enough to create rainbow inclusive spaces - collective action from the wider school community is needed.

| Harmful behaviour from staff

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour from staff includes:

- Using slurs
- Expressing hostility towards rainbow identities
- Placing obstacles to making schools rainbow inclusive (e.g. enforcing a gendered dress code at a school ball)
- Using non-inclusive gendered language
- Using religion to excuse homophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- Being unwilling to acknowledge issues with, or engage with solutions around homophobia, biphobia and/or transphobia within their school communities, leading to rainbow students feeling unsafe and unsupported

Even in explicitly rainbow inclusive spaces like the workshops of this project, issues were still experienced with staff participants taking up space in the workshop to focus on their interests rather than engaging with the activities, and with a staff participant repeatedly misgendering a student participant, despite reminders. This highlights that creating rainbow inclusive spaces needs to be an active, ongoing process.

| Challenges and obstacles

Schools face a number of difficult obstacles to creating rainbow inclusive spaces. These include school staff often lacking knowledge and understanding of rainbow identities and issues (e.g. rainbow inclusive sex education, or how to respond to rainbow bullying). This often leads to out rainbow students being expected to educate their school communities.

A particular obstacle schools face in creating rainbow inclusive spaces is balancing student and whānau interests. This usually manifests when students don't want to be outed to their parents, and schools struggle to identify what can be done without parental consent (e.g. around gender affirming uniforms and using a student's self-identified name and pronouns).

There is a common generalised sentiment among students that staff are unwilling to, or are unable to, support them with issues of homophobia, biphobia and/or transphobia. These concerns are particularly common in relation to school counsellors, for example about confidentiality, or counsellors not being able to provide rainbow-specific guidance.

The implications of this perception, regardless of whether it is reflected in staff practice or not, are significant and far-reaching. These include miscommunication and misunderstandings between staff and students, students being discouraged to report bullying incidents or approach staff for support, and students in already vulnerable circumstances being forced to be their own advocates.

| Attitudes across different social areas

The following harmful attitudes and assumptions are present throughout schools, whānau and wider communities, rather than being limited to specific spaces.

These include the minimisation of struggles related to having or expressing a rainbow identity, and the reduction of rainbow people to stereotypes, as opposed to individuals who happen to have rainbow identities.

There is also a prevalent over-sexualisation of rainbow identities, particularly for young people. This results in double standards where rainbow relationships, and especially public displays of affection therein, are more likely to be seen as inappropriate than with cishet relationships.

Cisgender heterosexuality is often assumed to be the norm, which makes rainbow diversity more difficult, uncomfortable, or even unsafe to express. This adds to the politicisation of rainbow identities, where being rainbow diverse is seen as political or making a statement. This also silences discussion and education around rainbow topics, where challenging this norm is discouraged, whether by rainbow students coming out, or allies calling out bullying. This results in a

harmful 'don't ask, don't tell' culture, and encourages negative connotations to be attached to rainbow identities.

Many harmful assumptions about rainbow identities are expressed and shared, which often intersect with issues like racism and white supremacy. Examples of these harmful assumptions include that:

- Being rainbow is a choice
- People “become” trans to win sports competitions
- Being rainbow is catching
- Rainbow people are predatory or pedophiles
- Having a rainbow identity is a sickness and should be fixed, particularly in terms of trans identities

Relation of school policies and processes to bullying

This section examines how school policies and processes relate to rainbow bullying, particularly the impact of a lack of policies and processes. Even when schools are publicly perceived as inclusive, bullying against rainbow students is often still present, and even hidden from teachers. This is often enforced or even encouraged by school policies and processes. For example, gender expression is commonly policed in schools both socially and by gender-specific school rules (e.g. uniform codes). It is also important to note that even if not reflected in explicit policy, many students reported feeling that their school was not a rainbow-inclusive space. This emphasises the importance of school policies to explicitly address rainbow bullying, and treat it seriously in all contexts. Response is also needed to the current situation where changes to school systems, policies, or culture are usually slow, difficult, or not possible. Key challenges to these changes include school “tradition” being prioritised over the wellbeing and inclusion of students, and problematic power dynamics that are unaccepting of difference.

Most common policy and process areas

School policies relating to rainbow students are very commonly non-existent, insufficient, discriminatory, unclear, miscommunicated, or in need of updates. This section examines the areas of school policy and process specific to the experiences of rainbow young people that were most commonly raised throughout this project.

| *Rainbow education*

There is very commonly a lack of inclusion of rainbow topics, communities and people throughout school subjects. Reports of this usually centred on health education, including relationships and sexuality education (RSE). Problematic school approaches ranged across:

- Not covering either health or RSE
- Covering health, but not RSE
- Covering health and RSE, but not in a rainbow inclusive way

The last approach involves not discussing diverse genders or sexualities at all, or to a minimal standard. For example the topic of safe sex and how to reduce the risk of STIs may be covered, but is restricted to “straight sex” (sexual activity within heterosexual or different gender relationships, typically referring only to cisgender, endosex bodies). This results in rainbow young people not learning how to look after their bodies and practice safe sex. It is also of note that when a curriculum doesn't not provide adequate rainbow education, QSAs and rainbow diversity groups often become sources of this necessary information and learning.

Even when a health and/or RSE class covers rainbow topics, this is often not managed safely, which results in rainbow young people feeling unsafe. This can happen with:

- Students being outed or singled out
- Students being given sole responsibility to education their classmates and teachers about rainbow topics

- Harmful or violent views being validated, encouraged or allowed space
- Teachers missing or not understanding cruel or bullying comments

A key reported barrier to appropriate and comprehensive rainbow education is school staff not being adequately educated in rainbow topics, or in safely teaching rainbow students. This ranged from staff simply not having knowledge, to staff believing and spreading inaccurate and harmful misinformation.

| Rainbow education in primary and intermediate schools

There is a strong desire for rainbow education to begin in primary school or even earlier. Young people are informally learning negative things about rainbow people from a young age, and when formal positive rainbow education does not start until high school, it becomes very different to unteach those existing beliefs. There is also a strong concern that young rainbow students must wait until they are older for their peers to learn how to be rainbow inclusive.

Many primary and early childhood education staff also indicated they appreciated the opportunity provided by the workshops to learn about creating rainbow inclusive schools, and start the conversation for their school communities. These staff also particularly mentioned enjoying connecting and collaborating with other educators.

| Uniforms

School uniforms were very commonly raised as an unnecessarily gendered school rule, leading to students feeling uncomfortable and/or unsafe, and in some cases feeling a need to suppress their gender identity.

This often manifests by schools discouraging students from using uniform items other than those they have been assigned. For example:

- Using policy gaps about uniforms to discourage students, by telling them there's no or little precedent for changing uniforms. Also note that these same policy gaps are sometimes leveraged to allow students to wear gender-affirming uniform, however the anxiety this inconsistency causes in gender-diverse students illustrates that comprehensive and inclusive policy for rainbow topics is better than policy gaps
- Telling students it is too difficult for the school to provide a gender-inclusive uniform or uniform options
- Rewarding students for wearing the uniform they have been assigned, which discourages students from wearing other uniform items
- Not permitting students who wear uniform other than what they were assigned to use any gendered bathrooms

These non-inclusive uniform approaches are sometimes enforced by uniform retailers, who can discourage students from wearing uniforms other than what they have been assigned.

When a school does provide an alternative and/or gender-neutral uniform, a number of concerns have still been raised:

- Gender-neutral uniforms are sometimes not socially safe. For example, students wearing alternate uniforms can be bullied (often with homophobic or transphobic tones), or have their clothing questioned. This is particularly experienced by boys wearing uniforms assigned to girls.
- The alternative uniform options that schools provide are sometimes inaccessible. For example:
 - Students must go through a lengthy and invasive process to be allowed to wear uniform other than what they have been assigned
 - Schools will not support students to wear uniform other than what they have been assigned unless their whānau give permission. This makes the process particularly inaccessible for students with families who may not be supportive
- The alternative uniform options that schools provide are sometimes not truly gender-neutral. For example:
 - Girls' PE uniforms tend to be sexualised
 - Pants made available in an all girls' school tend to have a feminine cut and are expensive

- Some schools have only limited gender-neutral options, e.g. pants but no shorts

| *Bathrooms*

School policies around gendered bathrooms significantly contribute to rainbow young people feeling unsafe or uncomfortable at school. These harmful policies or approaches include requiring students to use the incorrect bathrooms/changing rooms, or staff/visitor toilets, and preventing use of gender neutral bathrooms and changing rooms even after they are built. This usually happens either in response to complaints, or misbehaviour in the bathrooms.

The complaints usually involve a small number of staff or parents complaining about bathrooms that are not segregated by gender, which sometimes results in schools not building them. This is concerning as even if these complaints were from a large number of parents or staff, having gender neutral bathrooms is a matter of access and rights.

The misbehaviour in bathrooms (e.g. vaping) leading to them being locked or closed usually ends up with gender diverse students being punished for the actions of other students. Even if this behaviour was from students who were gender diverse, it is inappropriate to punish students by removing their access to basic facilities such as bathrooms.

Another issue around bathrooms concerns the restriction of access to gender neutral facilities, including:

- Requiring students to have permission or a key
- Using staff/nurse toilets that required asking permission each visit
- Having gender neutral facilities only available at certain times (e.g. not available if nurses were tending to someone in the sick bay)
- Inconsistent knowledge that the facilities could be used, resulting in only some students being allowed to use them, and not at all times. Some schools opted not to tell students about them so as to “not to make a big deal” out of it.

- Facilities located at such a distance that students would be late to class, miss more class time, or get in trouble for taking so long
- Far too few facilities for the number of students needing to use them

Further issues identified with bathrooms were also that they tend to be places of violence and harassment (even when not specifically gendered) as they frequently contain graffiti that is homophobic, transphobic, or discriminatory, and that there is a lack of clarity about gender neutral facilities and which students can use them. These rules can be inconsistently upheld by staff resulting in students being unsure if they will get in trouble for being in the bathroom or not. It was also not infrequent that when asked if the school had gender neutral bathrooms, staff would report yes, while students would report no.

| *Gender segregation*

In addition to bathrooms and uniforms, there are many other key examples of the detrimental effect that school policies of gender segregation can have.

Gendered stereotyping and exclusion in extracurricular activities and vocations is very common, for example with boys who take nursing, beauty or fashion being called gay, and with sports segregated by gender, with some sports only having 'girls' or 'boys' teams. This is also seen with activities like kapa haka, where schools frequently shut down requests to make it more safe and inclusive as it's a cultural activity, rather than engaging with tangata whenua and finding appropriate methods of inclusion. This can exclude rainbow Māori and takatāpui students from taking part, and reinforces stereotypes and colonial beliefs.

| *Gendered language*

Another example is where gendered language is used to refer to students, even when students raise concerns. For example, the use of stereotyped gendered language and ideas such as "ladies and gentlemen" and "ladies go first", and strongly gendered friendly or affectionate language, such as "mate" for boys and

“love” for girls. Students reported this being an issue for both gender diverse and cisgender students.

| *School balls*

School balls commonly highlight school policy issues around gender segregation, with restricting the clothes students can wear, and difficulties with students bringing partners of certain genders to balls. These ranged across:

- Students reported being forced to take a different gender student to ball
- Schools placing restrictions for taking same gender partners to ball, such as signing forms, or having to first speak to a counsellor
- Not communicating that a school technically allowed students to take partners of any gender, which meant this was not common knowledge to students, and was less socially safe to do so

| *School camps*

Another key area is school camps, with such issues as:

- Belief that schools must get parental permission and disclose to other parents if their child is sharing a sleeping space with a gender diverse student
- Belief that having students sleep in mixed gender cabins will lead to inappropriate behaviour. This is an inappropriate sexualisation of young people, and reinforces stereotypes that gender diverse people are predatory. It also holds rainbow students to a higher hypothetical standard of behaviour than non-rainbow students

Other examples include:

- Students lining up being split into ‘boys’ and ‘girls’ lines
- School positions, e.g. head students being ‘head boys and girls’, and a ball ‘king and queen’
- Single sex schools not respecting the gender identity of gender diverse students, for example trans boys staying at a girls’ school being told they shouldn’t ask to be called ‘he/him’. This treatment, while clearly

transphobic, also ignores other factors which influence the school a child attends.

| *Responses to bullying*

School responses to reports of bullying are inadequate in many cases, and there is a lack of transparency in terms of how schools respond to bullying, particularly rainbow-related bullying. This lack of clear communication leads to students distrusting the process, and fearing they are not being taken seriously. There is often no visible repercussion or consequence for the bullying, and teachers do not follow up with students to explain what these were. This results in students feel unsafe, unheard and discouraged from reporting future bullying

There is also a particular lack of communication and transparency between staff and students around pride events, leading to students feeling unsupported.

Some key examples provided were:

- A school had flown a pride flag, received many email complaints about it, and had taken down the flag at the end of the day. There was not consistent communication to students whether the taking down was in response to the complaints, or just a normal end-of-day procedure.
- Students were not given clear communication about why their school was not having a pride event. Some students thought it had been banned, others were told it clashed with another event.

This evidences the need for clear school policies and staff upskilling around responding to bullying.

| *Whānau relationships*

A key area which schools struggle with is balancing whānau wishes with student privacy and needs. For example, schools often struggle to manage situations where a student has asked to be called by a certain name or pronouns, but does not feel safe or comfortable with their whānau knowing. Another example is where schools are prevented from providing rainbow inclusive support by parental interference, leaving students with nowhere to seek support.

| *Student information*

This particularly concerns students' preferred names and pronouns, as there are very often procedural and bureaucratic obstacles to updating these in school systems. Students don't know how to start the process of updating these, and most student management systems do not provide options for rainbow diverse students or whānau, for example:

- Not tracking pronouns
- Only having “male” and “female” options for sex/gender
- Difficulty in changing gender options for a student during transition
- Asking for a “mother” and “father” rather than “parents”
- Newsletters and other communication home referring to a parent's “son” or “daughter”
- Use of pronouns for students in letters and reports being set by “system gender” and having no option for pronouns other than “he” or “she”

These issues are also often consistent across other school information areas like permission forms and communication. Students are often only able to overcome these obstacles if they have an actively supportive family, which is commonly not the case for gender diverse students.

| *Gatekeeping*

Gender diverse students are also exposed to invasive and sometimes harmful questioning and procedures when they try to have their personal information updated in the school systems. It is important to note that much like students have rights to a safe learning environment, and to education, they also have rights to wear appropriate uniforms, and to have the information held about them be correct and respectful. This is not an issue of permission, but rather one of access. These issues of access can include:

- Requiring students to present evidence (e.g. reports from health professionals) before changing information
- Requiring parents to either give permission or be informed for information changes or access to uniform items. Some students may not be able to provide this, or may be placed in danger by requesting it
- Long wait times or complicated processes
- Imposing inappropriate conditions, for example there were multiple student reports that they were allowed to change their name/gender/pronouns in school systems or wear different uniform items, but if they did so, they would no longer be allowed to use any gendered facilities such as bathrooms
- Inadequate or partial responses, such as allowing a student to be called by their chosen name but not updating the system
- Staff discretion on whether an application was correctly completed, meaning that students do not have certainty of their personal information being respected and updated, even when they follow a school's process

| Support following bullying

It was commonly identified that schools particularly lacked knowledge or adequate process around providing support for rainbow young people targeted by bullying. Counsellors in particular are unprepared to provide rainbow-specific support for young people, for example by not having specific resources to refer to, or not knowing what help to provide. This need for a database of rainbow resources and services extends to both students, and for their whānau.

Another issue identified was that counsellors often do not maintain a consistently safe environment, for example by not using inclusive language, assuming the gender and/or sexuality of students seeking support, or approaching rainbow inclusivity from a framework of 'fixing' rather than including. Further, there is often a lack of follow-up communication between teachers and counsellors, which results in miscommunication and misunderstanding about the support available to students. There is also a normalisation of mental illness in rainbow young people, which makes it harder for them to access support.

Impacts of policy and process

Staff and school responses to rainbow bullying play a significant role, particularly where the harm of rainbow bullying is compounded by the common absence of comprehensive school responses to bullying. When teachers do not call out or punish bullying, the bullying continues, escalates and is normalised. When teachers do not take meaningful action when students bring bullying concerns to them, students feel unsafe and unheard. Some students have expressed they tried multiple times to speak up, with no staff response. This lack of an established school response to rainbow bullying, and lack of clear contact point in the case of bullying, means that students feel unsafe, isolated and helpless.

Having a comprehensive school response to rainbow bullying means having an established procedure in place for all manifestations of it. Some schools have strong responses to physical bullying, but none for other forms like cyber bullying, or verbal bullying.

Impacts of bullying

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying has profoundly negative effects on the safety and wellbeing of students, particularly those with rainbow identities. These impacts affect all aspects of a young person's hauora, from taha tinana (physical wellbeing), taha hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing), taha whānau (social wellbeing) and taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing).

The delivery of this project highlighted and revealed some of these impacts, but is important to note that this section is not an exhaustive nor comprehensive collection of all impacts of the bullying experienced by rainbow young people. This is why, for example, the impacts on taha whānau (social wellbeing) are explored in more depth than the other aspects of a young person's hauora. It is also of note that the impacts explored here are largely direct, but that there are many long-term effects of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying that

have not been explored here, but which nonetheless exist and have huge significance for the lives of rainbow young people.

Taha hinengaro

The impacts on taha hinengaro include hopelessness, anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicide attempts, which all make it harder for these young people to seek help.

Taha tinana

The impacts on taha tinana include substance abuse, issues stemming from lack of access to gender-affirming healthcare, and the impacts of physical violence.

Taha wairua

The impacts on taha wairua include young people experiencing difficulty to connect with their culture, spirituality or religion, particularly due to feeling like they must choose one at the expense of their rainbow identity.

There is also the significant impact of rainbow young people finding it more difficult to connect with, understand and express their rainbow identities. This is because homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying:

- Makes it unsafe for rainbow young people to come out, with fears of being bullied, isolated or receiving violence
- Means many rainbow young people feel a need to repress or conceal their rainbow identities, even for rainbow young people who had previously come out.

Taha whānau

The impacts on taha whānau include a sense of isolation, which is exacerbated by rainbow young people often consistently experiencing this across multiple social spaces, for example being targeted by homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying both in school and from their whānau and wider communities.

| Engagement in school

The engagement of rainbow young people in their schools was shown to be severely affected by homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in a variety of ways, for example:

- Hiding at break times
- Reduced participation in extracurriculars, e.g. sports, camps and choirs
- Dropping out of or moving school, due to rainbow students being forced to choose between their education and their hauora. This was particularly seen with gender diverse students

Gender diverse students in particular face barriers to engaging in their school, where many feel they have to choose between expressing their gender identities, and being able to fully engage with their education. For example, many gender diverse students face invasive questions or teachers drawing attention to them when they express their gender identity.

| Engagement with support systems

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying was also shown to result in rainbow young people not feeling safe to engage with potential support systems (e.g. QSAs or speaking with staff), as these systems had not protected them. This sense of lack of protection came from situations like counsellors breaking the confidentiality of students without good cause (e.g. casually discussing a student's rainbow identity with other teachers), or a lack of visible school response to reported bullying.

| Engagement in wider community

The engagement of rainbow young people in their wider communities was shown to be diminished and restricted by homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, and particularly the normalisation of rainbow-focussed bullying, harassment and discrimination. This has limited the agency and expression of rainbow young people, for example where they feel they cannot speak up about

issues that affect them, and face criticism and bullying for expressing their identities.

The bullying, discrimination, and lack of representation in the school sends an implicit message that rainbow experiences aren't important and make students feel unsafe and that they have to hide.

Conclusions

Despite the challenges in delivery, the 2020-21 series of *Creating Rainbow Inclusive Schools* workshops proved to be valuable both to participants, and to InsideOUT and others working to support rainbow students and staff. While progress is being made it's clear that there is a lot of work still to be done within schools to prevent and respond to rainbow-focused bullying and create more inclusive environments, and a need for further resources, training and support for schools of all levels in all areas of the country.

New Resources

As of December 2021, InsideOUT has released a series of new resources for schools, with several of these endorsed by the Ministry of Education. Many schools wanted more detailed information on how to respond to particular situations that arise for them (e.g. supporting trans students on school camps) that we can't fit into the workshops, or wanted more printed resources they could receive to access more information, including support to develop rainbow inclusive policies. We believe now that these comprehensive resources are complete these elements of the feedback will be addressed, especially if physical copies can be provided at workshops in the future.

Going forward

A number of schools in Aotearoa were unable to access our previous regional workshops in their region, due to their rural location and the barriers to attend such as time, cost and lack of transport. Further to this, we found that offering workshops in individual schools was more effective in many instances. In most cases all staff attend the PD and a group of students or occasionally whole classes/year groups take part, whereas at our regional workshops there were typically only one or two representatives from a school and not always both staff and students. By going directly to a school it means people are given the same information and we aren't relying on one or two people to be the advocates or feed information back to their wider school community. This can be more

impactful, especially when it comes to things like getting senior leadership's support for making changes in the school.

For these reasons along with now having provided at least one open workshop to every region of Aotearoa, we believe moving forward it will be more effective to offer more individual school workshops rather than any further regional workshops. In particular we would like to offer these to more rural, lower decile or primary and intermediate schools as these schools are less likely to engage with InsideOUT's existing mahi, including workshops they have to pay for.

Bringing it all together

We believe there is a key opportunity to create an overarching framework of rainbow inclusion for schools that brings together existing resources, campaigns such as Pink Shirt Day and Schools Pride Week, workshop opportunities, policy guidance, curriculum resources and more. Pulling together everything available to schools in this area and giving them clear guidance and incentives around where to go next on their journey to rainbow inclusion and safety at school would be an effective way to help achieve the goals of both InsideOUT and the Pink Shirt Day Campaign. We often find that schools may do well in one area of rainbow inclusion but are often not aware of all the options available to them, or next steps once they have done one good thing. A framework or tool could assist schools to keep responding proactively and thoroughly to rainbow inclusion and bullying prevention for rainbow students.