

The Incredible Years: Learning from the Experiences of Māori Whānau and Māori Staff in Special Education

Mere Berryman, Paul Woller and Ted Glynn

**Poutama Pounamu Educational
Research & Development Centre**

Purpose

To consider the implications for
Māori from the delivery of the
Incredible Years programme.

Research Question

What have been the experiences of Māori within the Incredible Years programme?

Method

Focus on the experiences and discourses of Māori whānau who had received the programme and also Māori facilitators who had been both trained in the programme and who had facilitated this programme with Māori whānau.

What we learned from specific International Literature

- A strong emphasis on cultural responsiveness (Webster-Stratton, 2007).
- A strong emphasis on skilled facilitation that values the contribution of parents and builds their self-esteem (Hutchings, 2008).
- An emphasis on cultural tailoring including cultural revitalisation and the creation of positive cultural identity among indigenous parents (Dionne, 2008).

What we learned from New Zealand Literature

- Emphasis on working in ways that are culturally appropriate while maintaining the effectiveness and the fidelity of the programme (Fergusson, Stanley, & Horwood, 2009).
- Emphasis on “culturally adapted” to include cultural traditions that acknowledge key Māori processes and protocols (Altena, & Herewini, 2009; Cargo, 2008)

Participants

	Māori Facilitators	Whānau Māori
District 1	1	
District 2	3	4
District 3	2	6

A culturally responsive pedagogy of relations (Bishop et al, 2007)

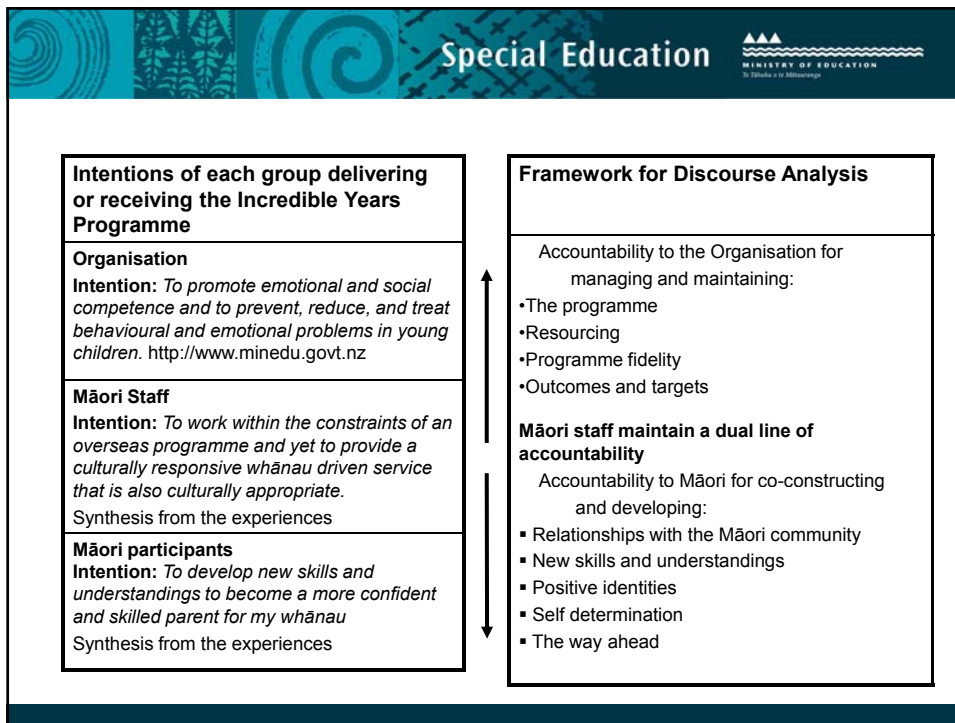
- where power is shared: learners' right to self determination
- where culture counts: learners can bring who they are
- where learning is interactive and dialogic: ako
- where connectedness is fundamental to relations
- where there is a common vision.


Whānau appreciated

- The relationships and face to face, group focussed interactions that they developed with their facilitators and the clear focus on child and whānau
- Having their own experiences validated and feeling that they were able to contribute as well as learn.
- The interactions and icons that they recognised as their own.
- On the other hand, whānau were concerned with the cultural constructs and packaging that did not relate to them as Māori.

Māori facilitators:

- Understood that relationships were paramount.
- Understood that they needed to both listen to whānau (responsive) and respond accordingly, and to bring a Māori perspective (appropriate) to the programme.
- Were very adept at tweaking and modifying the messages and their delivery style of the Incredible Years programme so as to better engage with Māori parents.
- Despite their initial resistance these Māori facilitators showed that when they were able to make the 'connects', and when time and resources are available to facilitate the programme responsively, the Incredible Years programme can be very effective for whānau.



Special Education 

Responsive/Appropriate

It is important to consider that cultural appropriateness on its own does not ensure cultural responsiveness. However, cultural responsiveness is more likely to lead to cultural appropriateness.

Self-determination

An increasing expectation is that any programmes that seek to address Māori health and education issues are developed from within a cultural framework of knowledge, values, beliefs and pedagogical practices that are Māori so as to further support and validate Māori cultural identity.

Kaupapa Māori Programmes

- Atawhaingia Te Pā Harakeke
- Hei Āwhina Mātua

Final Questions

- How effective could such a programme be if it were theorised from the beginning from within a Māori worldview?
- Could Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi provide the mandate to see Māori assuming agency and responsibility for generating a parenting programme that is underpinned with the preferred beliefs, values and practices and connected with the collective identities and cultural preferences of Māori?