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**Pilot study investigating pathway for practitioner engagement
with whānau during a self-control activity: implications for
uptake in the home and for empowered engagement.**

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Masters in Community Psychology [School of Psychology]
at
The University of Waikato
by
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THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

2023

Abstract

There is a gap in youth mentoring services using the home environment of at-risk youth to encourage development of the skills worked on within mentoring. This thesis explores whether a game-based intervention situated in the home environment of youth may initiate changes in behaviour that coincide with their learning during mentoring. Participants were recruited through a private youth mentoring service within Whāngarei. Participants included whānau of youth who are enrolled in the Awhi Ako youth mentoring service and their respective mentors. The Awhi Ako mentoring service aims to support youth through their selected needs by a wider wraparound service.

A game was picked to introduce to whānau to play together at home. This game contained a mechanism that may reward self-control behaviours. Whānau were interviewed and asked to discuss their child's self-control behaviours before the introduction of the game and any changes after playing the game.

A principal focus of this thesis is on practitioner engagement with the whānau of mentored youth. Practitioner engagement with communities and people is an integral value underpinning Community psychology. Whānau within the youth mentoring service include Māori, Pasifika, Pākehā and mixed ethnic backgrounds. A core focus of this thesis is understanding the relationship between practitioner and participants and how this impacts upon uptake of the introduction of the activity. In accordance with community psychology underpinnings and values of cultural awareness, cultural respect and understanding this thesis aspires to provide evidence towards the importance of this relationship. Another key focus of this thesis is comprehending the multifaceted effects of an intervention within the home environment and how this impacts mentors, the home environment and the development of youth. Emphasizing a fundamental principle of community psychology of interconnectedness between all facets of a persons life.

The conclusions drawn from this thesis illustrate the importance of developing a relationship with whānau a key focus to their willingness to participate and actively engage in this pilot study. The findings from this pilot study indicate that whānau experienced hardship and that whānau within at-risk environments had competing priorities that impeded the introduction of home-based activities.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge and thank Vincent Reid who oversaw supervising my project. Vincent provided me with tremendous amounts of knowledge within the psychology field that helped mould my master's thesis question and methodology.

I would like to thank the University of Waikato for the opportunity to conduct my research project and for the assistance of resources. And to thank all of my previous professors, tutors and students who have assisted my learning throughout my years at The University of Waikato.

I would like to thank Tokotoko Solutions Limited who supported my research project and supported my work during this time. I would like to thank the whānau with enrolled youth in the Awhi Ako programme for participating in my research and for their time.

I would lastly like to thank my whānau and friends that have assisted my learning throughout my master's studies.

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Introduction

This thesis is an exploratory pilot study investigating the pathway from intervention to outcome for an introduced game-based intervention. It investigates whether incorporating a self-control initiating game into the home environment of mentored youth will be advantageous for them. The aim is to enhance the skill set of self-control behaviours developed through mentoring experience into other facets of their lives. Based on prior work the incorporation of the home environment with the intervention will solidify those skills for youth. A board game involving aspects of self-control was chosen as these behaviours are vital for social development yet are not clearly evidenced in the at-risk sample of the current study (Jones, Pierce & Chapple, 2021). This thesis engaged with a private youth mentoring service, with a specific focus on involving whānau of youth enrolled within the mentoring service. Their participation included an initial interview prior to the introduction of the game into the home environment. After a minimum of two weeks of playing the game there was a second interview. The data comprised of pre- and post- game assessments of the youths self-control behaviours. A central part of this research revolved around practitioner engagement with participants emphasising the importance of culturally responsive and appropriate interactions with whānau. This thesis examined whether practitioner engagement and appropriateness influenced the uptake of the board game activity. This pilot study also investigated the wider consequences of the implementation of the board game intervention in the home, including whānau engagement, changes in the mentors rather than the young people, and alterations in youth behaviour. In the introductory section, I provide relevant research that underpins the investigation conducted in this thesis.

Self-control

Self-control includes understanding and having control over turn-taking, sharing, problem-solving skills, inhibition, impulse control, patience and taking your time with actions (Van Looij, 2019). Self-control activities relate to how we control our emotions and behaviours and involves the ability to manage one's cognition, emotion, and behaviour (Li, Willems & Finkenauer, 2019). Self-control is identified as a protective construct that can reduce addictive behaviours such as substance use or sexual risk taking (Brody, Murry, McNair, Chen, Gibbons, Gerrard & Wills, 2005). Research has demonstrated the relevance of including self-control within prevention measures used to educate and promote healthy life choices and discourage behaviours such as drug or alcohol abuse (Van Looij, 2019). This

further the notion that self-control impacts social situations, schooling and real life decision-making (Brody et al, 2005; Duckworth, Szabo-Gendler, & Gross, 2014). Social and emotional skills can be developed through learning self-control. These skills can reduce stress, increase feelings of well-being, improve coping abilities, limit drug and alcohol addiction, mediate aggression, enhance psychosocial functioning, increase connectedness to formal educational settings, and increase the capacity of students to learn (Hromek & Roffey, 2009).

An array of benefits may be seen across a person's life when self-control behaviours are nurtured via prevention programmes with whānau. Grolnick and Farkas (2022), and Augimeri, Walsh, Donato, Blackman and Piquero (2018) and Dopkins, Nietzel, Garza Sears and Hoke-Sinex (2001) found that parenting has a large influence on facilitating self-regulation in children. When creating an intervention that initiates self-control and self-regulation behaviours, the inclusion of parental involvement should be considered. Self-regulation involves the ability to inhibit inappropriate behaviour and is also related to whether children engage in appropriate behaviours when not explicitly asked (Grolnick & Farkas, 2022). Augimeri, Walsh, Donato, Blackman and Piquero (2018) developed the stop now and plan programme (SNAP) designed to assist developing self-control behaviours for youth within whānau and school environments. The programme involves cognitive and physiological awareness of emotional responses and how to improve self-control behaviours to make better choices. This programme provides a wraparound approach working with multiple services in order to generalise and reinforce this model through various settings. This study was conducted between 2013 and 2017 and participation required an initial assessment of the youth and whānau. The SNAP programme is catered to the needs of the whānau including the length of time the whānau is involved in SNAP and the extent of the measures administered by the program. During the participation period of the whānau they were attending individual counselling, SNAP groups and other identified measures. They found that the programme increased self-control and self-regulation behaviours and reduced externalising behaviours. Externalising behaviours include discouraging behaviours towards the external environment such as physical aggression, stealing and destruction of property (Van Looij, 2019).

A key implication of studies such as Augimeri et al., (2018) is that self-control is a valuable lifelong skill. It is beneficial to embed these skills while still in a home environment where these skills can be practised.

Awhi Ako programme and whānau

This thesis centres on the Awhi Ako programme offered by Tokotoko Solutions Limited, a not-for-profit organisation within Whāngarei providing mentoring for at-risk youth. The organisation seeks to put people first and has three core values, kaitiakitanga (guardianship), manaakitanga (hospitality) and whanaungatanga (relationships) (Tokotoko Solutions Limited, 2022). Awhi Ako is a youth mentoring initiative, aimed at pairing young people, between the ages of 6-16 years, displaying highly complex and challenging behaviour including social and/or learning needs, with a trained mentor. The contractors referring youth to Tokotoko Solutions Limited collaborate with the youth mentor, young person (mentee), and team to develop targeted goals for the programme. Youth mentors employ social transformation techniques to create goals to work towards during the programme. These are developed with the input of each young person enrolled in the programme. A gap in the mentoring of at-risk youth inspired the creation of Awhi Ako, with the objective of providing the mentees with experiences and relationships to promote success in education and the future. The vision of the Awhi Ako programme is to enhance their community by empowering individuals through establishing life skills and providing the opportunity for experiential learning. The primary goal is to nurture the youth and promote equal opportunities through quality mentorship (Tokotoko Solutions Limited, 2022).

Mentors within Awhi Ako are paid staff members, who are recruited and supported by a Mentoring Coordinator. Young people are referred to the Awhi Ako programme through contract providers. Following referral the establishment of a support plan is created by the mentee, their whānau, contract providers, school, Awhi Ako and other key stakeholders. The young person is then paired with their respective mentor. Mentors provide individualised plans with their mentees and meet on a regular basis. This consists of weekly contact time for between six months to two years. It is expected that through this relationship, mentees will gain new skills, explore new interests, increase their confidence, social skills, independence and self-worth. The mentoring systems also seeks to expand the experience based of each youth beyond their whānau/ neighbourhood. During this time, the mentor and mentee also work towards specific goals decided between mentor and mentee at the beginning of their developing relationship.

Identified within the Awhi Ako mentoring program, is a need to include whānau within the youths progress and development within activities. This pilot study aims to involve parents, caregivers, or guardians of mentored youth in the Awhi Ako programme, in enhancing skills acquired by the youth within their home environment. Specifically, this pilot study will target developing self-control behaviours within the home environment to optimise learning outcomes made within the Awhi Ako programme and to solidify that learning for youth. A key focus is understanding the varying effects on other aspects of the youths life due to this development in self-control behaviours. For example, this would include impacts within the home environment, mentoring environment and the mentor's attentiveness. Although the Awhi Ako programme is not designed exclusively for Māori youth, the majority of youth enrolled in the programme are Māori. Pacifica youth are also enrolled in the Awhi Ako programme, necessitating an understanding and implementation of different cultural perspectives throughout the research process to ensure successful interactions with whānau.

Before I can be culturally aware of the cultures I will be engaging with within this pilot study, I need to understand my own positioning as the practitioner and how this will influence my interactions with others. I am a 23 years old, Cook Island Māori and New Zealand European female who was born in New Zealand and I have lived here my whole life. I have a background in working with youth that makes me more empathetic towards youth. I am not religious, I do adopt some Kaupapa Māori practices within my own life and only recently am I learning about my Cook Island Māori culture. These factors will influence how I interact, interpret, respond and enter contexts. Understanding positionality and how it impacts this study is important as there is a need to acknowledge biases including how information and situations can be interpreted from a different perspective.

Mentorship

The present thesis investigates one-on-one mentoring, with an adult mentoring a young person. Komosa-Hawkins (2009) and Erdem, DuBois, Larose, De Wit and Lipman (2016) highlight how positive mentoring experiences lead towards positive social, health and life outcomes for youth. This makes it crucial that youth mentoring services proactively align their programmes with current research and resources for creating effective youth mentoring programmes (Komosa-Hawkins, 2009). Mentors are able to observe youth within their environment and comment on the youths observed behavioural development.

Creating a positive relationship between mentor and mentee can alter self-worth, self-esteem and social competence for the mentee (Komosa-Hawkins, 2009; Bowers, Li, Kiely, Brittan, Lerner & Lerner 2010). In this study the involvement of whānau within the mentoring process was considered and recommended for future research. Weinberger (2005) proposed the idea of mentors using the Families and Mentors Involved in Learning with Youth (FAMILY) model to support this relationship development between mentor and whānau. The FAMILY model suggests holding events throughout the year that provide transportation, childcare and refreshments to newsletters keeping whānau updated and involved with the provision of opportunities for parental engagement (Weinberger, 2005). Farrugia, Bullen, Davidson, Dunphy, Solomon & Collins (2011) conducted a study evaluating youth mentoring programs within New Zealand. They found that programmes that had a focus on psychological and interpersonal goals were effective as they produced positive outcomes. Those aspects that were seen to be beneficial to mentoring programmes were research-practitioner relationship and the nature of the mentoring relationship (Farrugia, Bullen, Davidson, Dunphy, Solomon & Collins, 2011).

The study by Farrugia et al., (2011) found that few mentoring programmes within New Zealand involved parents or whānau within their structure. The conclusions of that study suggested that there was no difference in the effectiveness of the mentoring programs. Studies from other countries indicate that parental involvement does increase the effectiveness of mentoring programmes, and in fact can make or break a relationship between mentee and mentor (Spencer & Basualdo-Delmonico, 2014). This thesis explores this research space in mentoring and investigates the benefits of home and whānau involvement within a mentoring programme.

Cultural identity has been acknowledged as an important corner stone of mentoring with Māori and Pasifika youth (Farrugia, Bullen, Solomon, Collins & Dunphy, 2011). The incorporation of Māori or Pasifika culture within the programme is also essential for engendering successful outcomes. A practice within Māori whānau is tuakana teina, where older members of a whānau, tuakana, support younger whānau members, teina. (Farrugia, Bullen, Solomon, Collins & Dunphy, 2011). By involving whānau within the mentoring process this can reenact this process of tuakana/ teina.

The intended outcomes of this thesis encompass discovering the influence of a home-based game on the dynamic of the mentoring relationship. Mentors will be aware their mentees are

undergoing a game-based intervention at home that aims to develop self-control behaviours. This may organically influence the mentoring environment, prompting mentors to be more observant towards the development of self-control behaviours in the mentees. As a result, mentors may exhibit more understanding of the home-environment, potentially increasing engagement with the youths home setting. This heightened awareness may enable mentors to identify behaviours they previously may not have noticed. This has the potential to strengthen the relationship between mentor and mentee and enable the young person's personal progress.

Engagement with whānau

Brody et al. (2005) investigated the link between support structures for parents within their home environment to help the parent-child relationship and how this relates to the display of self-control by youth. Self-control is positively associated with academic competence, psychological adjustment, and avoidance of damaging behaviours such as substance use (Brody et al, 2005: Jones, Pierce & Chapple, 2021). Similarly a study conducted by Goodkind, Lanoue, Lee, Freeland and Freund (2012) found that there is a strong link between parents involvement, nurturing nature and effective coping skills for youth. This study found that there were a number of benefits that came from increasing parent involvement and communication with their youth (Goodkind, Lanoue, Lee, Freeland & Freund, 2012). Willems, Laceulle, Bartels, and Finkenauer (2020) studied the influence of whānau connectedness on early childhood and adolescent self-control development. This study supports the importance of parents creating an accepting and supportive environment. Creating an opportunity for children to learn self-regulation of behaviours and impulses in a safe space, links the environments of home and school. The importance of initiating self-regulation and self-control within a supportive home environment is highlighted in several pieces of research (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989: Li, Willems, & Finkenauer, 2019:). Relatedly, Hutchings, et al., (2007) support the idea of parents being involved in interventions for youth. This study also acknowledges that parents have a large influence on their youths behaviours. This exploratory pilot study will explore supporting parents in their home environment to initiate self-control behaviours through the introduction of a shared activity. The findings of Goodkind, Lanoue, Lee, Freeland and Freund (2012) suggest that there will be other benefits to the whānau environment that go beyond self-control, such as increased communication between parents and children. Farrugia, Bullen, Davidson, Dunphy, Solomon & Collins

(2011) suggest one of the benefits of whānau involvement in mentoring environments will be increased connectedness between youth and their parents. This supports the ecological perspective of community psychology which suggests all facets of a persons life are interconnected. Therefore an intervention targeting one factor will have impacts upon other factors (Trickett, 2009). This thesis aims to discover exactly what these other factors may be. It is predicted these other factors will include increased whānau engagement, whānau communication and a reassessment of the youth's behaviour from the parents.

A community psychology perspective recognizes that practitioner-client engagement is crucial in positive long-lasting outcomes following a research investigation (Trickett, 2009). When a practitioner enters the space of a community, they are aware their actions and engagement directly impacts the people around them. As this is a community psychology thesis, I seek to understand and implement positive engagement strategies. These positive engagement strategies are predicted to alter the response of the whānau I work with and the uptake of the activity I introduce.

The whānau who have youth enrolled in the Awhi Ako programme are from a range of ethnicities. A practitioner needs to identify the parenting processes and culture of the whānau context for each individual youth (Brody et al, 2005). This is in order to facilitate the development of responsive, supportive parent-child relationships that enhance youths development of self-control. Māori, Pasifika, Pākehā and mixed ethnicity whānau with youth are enrolled in the Awhi Ako programme. For successful engagement with whānau their diversity in cultures and practices will need to be understood. Appropriate cultural engagement during face to face engagements with whānau is important (Tsang, Bogo, & Lee, 2011).

It is important to acknowledge there may be factors limiting parental engagement in interventions. There may be barriers such as childcare, transportation and/or time constraints that make it difficult to be actively involved (Kelleher, Davoren, Harrington, Shiely, Perry & McHugh, 2016). Low-income or ethnic minority whānau have been shown to have higher unmet needs from services and lower service utilization than whānau who are not from a minority (Mendez, Carpenter, LaForett & Cohen, 2009). Attitudinal factors such as discrimination or judgement have also been identified as limiting parental engagement with interventions or services (Mendez, Carpenter, LaForett & Cohen, 2009). My participants

schedules will be prioritised. I will work around the participants in order to minimize the effects of the identified potential issues these whānau may face.

Māori whānau

Wild, Rawiri, Willing, Hofman and Anderson (2020) conducted interviews with Māori parents around determinants for programme engagement by Māori whānau. This study found organisations with structural barriers, racism, and people judgmental in tone of voice, makes those whānau disengage and creates distrust in organisations. Mendez, Carpenter, LaForett & Cohen, 2009, and Harris et al., (2012) discuss the need for practitioners to be aware of their clients history with organisations. Within my thesis pilot study it is therefore crucial to recognise the whānau I work with may have this mistrust in organisations due to judgment and discrimination they may have experienced in the past. Practices identified to minimize disengaging behaviours are respect, compassion, relationship-building and being culturally appropriate (Wild, Rawiri, Willing, Hofman & Anderson, 2020).

When engaging with Māori whānau, it is crucial to understand Kaupapa Māori principles and how they will be implemented within my practice. Whanaungatanga, whakapapa and pepeha are important cultural positioning systems important to Māori (Cram, Pipi & Paipa, 2018).

Whanaungatanga represents kinship and relationships that connect us with the world.

Whanaungatanga is an important practice when engaging with Māori whānau. Within the whanaungatanga process you can get to know whānau, their practices, beliefs and adjust your interaction accordingly to be culturally appropriate (Wilson, Moloney, Parr, Aspinall & Slark, 2021). Whakapapa show our genealogy and relationships with our ancestors and land which can be represented through pepeha (Cram, Pipi & Paipa, 2018). When introducing yourself it is important to implement these practices so whānau are able to position you within their world and create links and kinship with you (Cram, Pipi & Paipa, 2018). These connections create a larger, relationship-based, context around the evaluation thereby embodying the professional evaluation with the Kaupapa Māori approach. Other important practices include respect, meeting people face to face, looking and listening, hosting, being generous and humble. These practices will be implemented within my engagement with whānau.

The concepts that are key for a Kaupapa Māori approach are summarised below, together with how they have been implemented in this thesis. Principles of Kaupapa Māori according to Cram, Pipi & Paipa (2018):

Tino Rangatiratanga—The Self-Determination Principle. A guarantee of the Treaty of Waitangi was continued sovereignty whereby Māori have meaningful control over their own lives and cultural well-being. This means involving the whānau within the plan for their children and not just telling them what they need to do. By introducing an activity that the parents take lead of with their children this places the mana over to the parents who will lead the activity with their youth.

Taonga Tuku Iho—The Cultural Aspirations Principle. Being Māori is normal and taken for granted, such that the language, customs, knowledge, and characteristics of being Māori are validated in day-to-day practices. Within my engagement with the whānau I will understand cultural customs and implement these as “normal” within my engagement. Such as karakia before meetings, the use of te reo Māori and pepeha.

Ako—The Culturally Preferred Pedagogy Principle. Māori custom brings to the fore Māori preferred pedagogies. Ako means to both learn and to teach, such that everyone has knowledge to learn and knowledge to share. My interactions with whānau will not be that of an expert but that of someone who is ready to offer knowledge and is ready to learn. Parents will be at the centre of initiating the games and teaching their youth.

Kia Piki Ake i Ngā Raruraru o te Kāinga—The Socio-Economic Mediation Principle. Kaupapa Māori practices and values instil a collective responsibility to mediate socioeconomic disadvantage experienced by whānau. I will understand the barriers making it hard for the whānau to engage and do my best to accommodate for these barriers.

Whānau—The Extended Family Structure Principle. The whānau is the building block of Māori society. Whānau members have a collective responsibility for one another, and the connectedness of whānau members helps ensure survival and achievement. Two types of whānau are often described: whakapapa or kinship whānau, and kaupapa whānau (i.e., those linked by a common purpose). Within my engagement with whānau it will be clear the wanted outcome is for the benefit of the whānau as a collective. This is a whānau

responsibility not a singular responsibility for someone within the whānau. Whānau will have opportunities to contribute to question and be actively involved in this process.

Kaupapa—The Collective Philosophy Principle. A collective vision and commitment sits behind Kaupapa Māori initiatives. This vision reflects Māori aspirations for cultural, social, economic, and political well-being. As the practitioner I will make my vision for this thesis clear. That I wish to uplift the mana of the youth and their whānau that come through our service and empower them to be active participants in increasing their well-being and knowledge.

Pasifika whānau

An understanding of Pasifika culture by the practitioner is necessary as there are Pasifika whānau within Awhi Ako. Therefore, I will need to understand Pasifika practices, principles and customs when engaging with these families.

When working alongside Pasifika whānau an understanding of the va is important. The va is known as the space that connects people with each other, all other living things and higher beings (Ioane, 2017). This relational space includes physical, mental, spiritual and historical elements which are integrated within models of health for Pasifika whānau. To be culturally responsive it is important to accept and acknowledge that Pasifika people originate themselves from this collective world view (Allen, Taleni & Robertson, 2009). I will be working with Pasifika whānau within the va, my engagement will need to be adapted accordingly. This includes thanking them for allowing me to enter their home and finding time for me to enter their space, sharing with them my experience of working with Pasifika people and being Pasifika myself, offering to start in prayer, asking everyone to share who they are in the room, looking for connection to myself and commenting on these connections in similarities. This process begins the sharing of alofa (love), as respect and building your relationship is important for Pasifika people (Allen, Taleni & Robertson, 2009).

Pasifika youth are often taught to respect elders and people with authority as well as prioritising the community over their individual needs (Taleni, Macfarlane, Macfarlane, & Fletcher, 2018). Therefore, disengagement by Pasifika youth, which is interpreted as non-compliance, can be youth not willing to acknowledge you because appropriate processes such as acknowledging their whānau and elders were not implemented or prioritised (Ioane, 2017). This is Pasifika youth showing their respect and maintaining the va towards elders (Ioane,

2017). This emphasises the need as a practitioner to respect the *va*, acknowledge elders, acknowledge their community and *whānau* and build a genuine relationship before implementing the programme. This will lead to maintaining engagement with Pasifika *whānau*. A genuine in-depth understanding of culture, spirituality and relationships is crucial when working with Pasifika people as well as the commitment and knowledge of a practitioner to work responsibly and appropriately with its Pasifika clients and their *whānau* (Talení, Macfarlane, Macfarlane, & Fletcher, 2018). As I have recently become involved in my Pasifika heritage I have developed this understanding of cultural awareness and appropriateness towards Pasifika people which I will incorporate within this thesis. Pasifika youth are balancing western culture and sustaining their own culture with impacts from the migrant nature of their travels to New Zealand, which is important to note when working with Pasifika youth (Farruggia, Bullen, Solomon, Collins & Dunphy, 2011).

Activity Intervention

Experience-based learning tools, such as games, provide a forum for the development of the skill sets, attitudes, and values that build resilience, coping skills and self-control behaviours (Eldar, Morris, DaCosta, & Wolf, 2006). Hromek & Roffey (2009) conducted a review which argues that games are a powerful way of developing social and emotional skills in young people. Skills necessary for positive social interaction including regulating negative emotions, learning to taking turns, sharing, fair, just and respectful behaviour are largely learned through play and within games (Bay-Hinitz, Peterson & Quilitch, 1994). The playful nature of games and activities makes them an ideal way for teaching these skills in a manner that does not look like traditional teaching. How these games are facilitated is crucial in youth understanding and is a key determinant of any social outcomes from game-based interventions (Hromek & Roffey, 2009).

Playing games and making learning fun is highly motivating to youth and important for development. Learning through games or activities provides youth with the opportunity for language development, hypothesis testing, problem solving, and the formation of independent thought constructs (Hromek & Roffey, 2009). It is important for these games to have the element of fun to retain the engagement of the youth playing them.

Games are educational tools that can be used to teach skills helpful for managing friendships, teasing, anger management, pro-social competitiveness, anxiety, depression, and happiness (Hromek, 2005). These games usually include a competent player with prosocial skills to

help come up with positive solutions and help guide the learning experience during gameplay. The social dilemma and challenges throughout a relatively complex game provide opportunities for behaviour rehearsal, collaboration, and self-reflection (Hromek & Roffey, 2009). Each game allows the child to make comparative observations, try new strategies, and watch other player interactions as experienced within the rule structures and social safety of the game. When played with a skilled facilitator, games can provide a safe, fun, way of coaching young people in prosocial skill development and emotional regulation and can provide reinforcement (Bay-Hinitz, Peterson & Quilitch, 1994).

All games played face-to-face provide an opportunity for social engagement in which players must use self-regulation, such as waiting for one's turn to play, and social skills in order to play successfully with others. The activity I will be introducing to initiate self-control behaviours into the home environment of mentored youth within Tokotoko Solutions Limited, is a board game titled "Carnival of Monsters" (Garfield, 2019). Carnival of Monsters requires turn taking, patience, decision-making and some regulation of emotions. This particular game also has a mechanic whereby points can be scored immediately, or, potentially more points can be scored at the end of the game. This delayed gratification component links with self-control and can be put into an executive function framework (Mischel, Shoda, & Rodriguez, 1989).

Learning within small groups is an essential component of activity learning and also initiates cooperative learning. Cooperative learning involves people working together in small groups towards a shared goal or task. Many studies have documented the benefits of cooperative learning (Hromek & Roffey, 2009; Bay-Hinitz, Peterson & Quilitch, 1994). Cooperative learning leads to increases in academic outcomes, social skills, empathy, motivation, intellect, communication, conflict resolution, self-esteem, self-control, positive attitudes toward school, and critical thinking (Rosita, Nurhayati, Jumiatin, Rosmiati, & Abdu, 2020). Cooperative learning and cooperative group work have also been associated with an increased ability to tolerate different perspectives on the same issue and increased levels of assertive problem-solving skills (Hromek & Roffey, 2009). This promotes the idea of reflection after the activities encouraging small group discussions on what has been learned, issues and topical discussions after the game or activity is played. Debriefing provides the opportunity for players to make connections between experiences gained from playing and real-life situations (Hill & Lance, 2002).

Intervention success can also be determined by the level of parental involvement within the intervention. Marsh, Foley, Wilks and Maddison's (2013) judged parental-caregiver participation was more beneficial when it was coupled with a community component of interaction. It is possible to conclude that when parental involvement at home is paired with community involvement there are more benefits for the initiative or programme targeted at helping youth. The level of parental involvement was dependent on the support they received from agencies involved in the intervention (Marsh, Foley, Wilks & Maddison, 2013). This makes my practitioner engagement essential in the effectiveness of this self-control initiating activity. Youth are more positively influenced to change their own behaviours by creating a whānau environment that promotes healthy behaviours (Marsh, Foley, Wilks & Maddison, 2013).

Community Psychology

There are core principles within Community psychology. The core principles directly related to my community psychology master's thesis are sense of community, empowerment, diversity, ecological perspective and strengths-based perspectives (Wendt, Hartmann, Allen, Burack, Charles, & D'Amico, et al., 2019).

This thesis focuses on the active involvement of the parents with youth services involved in benefiting their children. Through positive engagement, parents can feel a sense of community surrounding their youth and whānau. Culturally appropriate and positive engagement can create a positive and joyful sense of community, where all parties are able to actively participate and thrive (Highfield, Webber & Woods, 2023). The sense of community creates support, a sense of belonging and opens psychological space for a person to thrive.

Whānau have an active role in being drivers in promoting positive youth development with their children. When whānau and youth are capable of understanding the desired outcomes and working towards them independently, without the aid of the practitioner, this encourages youth and their whānau to become active agents in their own transformation. Empowerment is a crucial component of community psychology, as the goal is not to impart expertise and dictate behaviour, but to equip individuals with knowledge and skills to achieve the desired changes themselves (Robertson & Masters-Awatere, 2007). As a practitioner, I aim to facilitate this process of self-empowerment, by providing the necessary tools and resources for whānau and youth to accomplish their potential for development. Within my work with whānau, it is crucial to acknowledge each whānau has a unique background, culture and

upbringing which may significantly influence their perceptions and behaviours. As a practitioner, it is my responsibility to comprehend these differences to the best of my ability and adapt my interactions and engagement accordingly.

Adopting a deficit approach may lead to limited or detrimental outcomes when interacting with whānau. A deficit approach is when people assess a situation or failures as a result of the individual rather than understanding external factors or system limitations (Wendt et al., 2019). Thus a strengths-based approach that recognises inherent abilities and positive attributes of individuals and whānau is necessary to generate beneficial change and foster long-lasting outcomes (Wendt et al., 2019). By utilising a strengths-based approach, practitioners can empower whānau to realise their full potential and achieve positive and sustainable transformations.

Community psychology uses a positive youth development framework comprising a strengths based approach that focuses on developing skills and assets youth already poses to promote positive, desirable outcomes (Chand, Farruggia, Dittman, Ting Wai Chu & Sanders, 2013). It is important that youth are empowered to make these positive changes themselves with assistance and guidance. Positive youth development theories highlight the importance of the parent-child relationship in this process of positive youth development (Chand, et al., 2013). Within parent-child interactions low levels of conflict, parental warmth, effective parental monitoring, parental encouragement and autonomous decision-making in adolescent have been identified as important for optimal outcomes (Chand, et al., 2013). My study will be developing behaviours surrounding conflict resolution and decision-making which are identified as important parental factors for positive youth development. Within the study by Chand et al., (2013) positive outcomes were shown when parents actively involved adolescents in decision-making and increased whānau cohesion. The introduction of “Carnival of Monsters” may well initiate patience, turn-taking, decision making, problem solving and long-term planning. All of these are skills are associated with self-control behaviours that can help youth develop life-long skills. Self-control development can positively impact the home environment by creating more communication, decision-making for the home and being more involved in home life enhancing positive youth development and whānau cohesion.

The community psychology principle of the ecological perspective and the ripple effect is applicable to this thesis. The ecological perspective understands the interconnectedness of all facets of a person’s life (Trickett, 2009). The ripple effect principle discusses the unplanned

impacts of an intervention on a person or community (Pullmann et al., 2022). This highlights the potential ripple effect of this home-based activity on many areas of the youths life.

Beyond its influence on the home environment, advantages may also extend to the mentoring environment (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004). Mentors may have heightened attentiveness due to developing progress within the youths behaviours at home. This enhanced awareness may prompt mentors to adapt interventions or develop new strategies. The introduction of this activity is likely to generate multifaceted impacts across various dimensions of a youths life. This pilot study seeks to initially understand what these impacts may be.

Method

Research aim:

This master's thesis aims to investigate the uptake of an introduced self-control activity within the home environment of mentored youth based on the engagement techniques of the practitioner with the whānau. This thesis also aims to discover the benefits of introducing the self-control activities into the home environment of mentored youth within their home, mentoring environment and their relationship with their mentor.

Research questions:

1. Does the way the practitioner engages with the whānau alter the uptake of the activities at home?
2. Which techniques for interacting with the families produced positive engagement?
3. What techniques for interacting with the families produced no engagement?
4. Does the introduction into the home of an activity that may foster self-control skills improve youth behaviour?
5. What are the impacts upon the mentoring relationship with youth after the introduction of a home-based activity?

I predict with appropriate engagement by the practitioner that implements appropriate cultural principles, whānau will engage with the practitioner and uptake the activity within the home environment. Any behaviours by the practitioner that are not culturally appropriate or do not consider cultural practices will result in disengagement from whānau.

I predict with positive engagement between the whānau and practitioner there will be an improvement in self-control behaviours within youth and positive change within the home

environment and youth mentoring space such as increased communication, sharing, patience and positive well-being changes. I predict there will be other identified implications from the intervention including positive development in the youths relationships with their mentor and there will be a heightened awareness of the mentor to acknowledge and assess self-control behaviours within the youth they mentor.

Research design:

Three data gathering methods were utilised within this pilot study. A literature review was conducted around techniques for engagement with whānau. Brief semi-structured interviews with parents/caregivers or guardians of mentored youth were conducted. An activity intervention was also introduced.

Literature review: The literature review will consist of techniques for interacting with Māori and Pasifika whānau, whānau who lack trust in large organisations and feel judged, self-control information and how to measure self-control within a home environment. This information will be used to discover practitioner engagement techniques and assess their use within the research project.

Semi-structured interviews: Brief semi-structured interviews with approximately 3 whānau of the youth who are being mentored. Interviews consist of what their child does within the mentoring programme, their current home environment and the young person's involvement and engagement with the programme and with the home environment. During this interview I will employ the engagement techniques identified as best practice within the literature review, taking a Kaupapa Māori approach. After the activity is introduced into the home environment there will be another semi-structured interview with parents discussing the young person's involvement within the home, any changes that occurred during and after the activities and how the engagement techniques used by the researcher impacted engagement with the activity. Approximately 4 Tokotoko Solutions Limited youth mentoring staff will be asked to participate in brief semi-structured interviews centred around noticeable changes within the youth after the introduction of the self-control activity.

Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire: The BIQ survey will be completed by parents/caregivers or guardians before the activity is introduced and again two weeks after the activity is introduced. This is to measure youths inhibition behaviours linked with self-control before the activity is introduced and whether parents/caregivers or guardians could

see a change after the introduction of the activity. This is a Likert scale of measurement that can be quantitatively analysed. Detailed information on the BIQ is given below.

Activity intervention: A board game based activity that is designed to initiate self-control behaviours such as turn taking and delayed gratification will be introduced into the home environment after the first set of interviews. Surveys on use of the activity will be collected for 2 weeks, and a post set of interviews and surveys will occur.

Data analysis: The method used for analysing the qualitative data gathered from interviews will be thematic analysis. After analysing which techniques I implemented within my engagement with whānau, I will analyse the interviews with parents to discover themes relating to my engagement and how this altered their engagement and the uptake of the activity. I will discover themes relating to their child's self-control behaviours before and after the introduction of the activity. I will analyse themes around the impact this intervention had on the mentoring environment.

The surveys will be analysed using non-parametric quantitative analysis due to small quantities of data. This will provide data that can be discussed qualitatively to support the evidence provided through interviews.

Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire

The Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire is designed for parents to rate and measure temperamental characteristics of their youth (Broeren & Muris, 2010). Studies conducted by Broeren and Muris (2010) and Agostini, Benassi, Mineli, Mandolesi, Giavagnoli & Neri (2021) suggest that the Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire survey is a reliable and internally valid and consistent measure of behavioural inhibition in youth. The Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire consists of 30 questions targeted at understanding behaviours related to shyness, fearfulness and withdrawal that parents are able to identify in their children (Broeren & Muris, 2010). The 30 questions target three areas of temperament and inhibition which are social novelty, situational novelty and physical activities with risk of injury (Agostini, Benassi, Mineli, Mandolesi, Giavagnoli & Neri, 2021). Inhibition relates to behavioural reactions to unfamiliar or challenging contexts, people or objects (Agostini, Benassi, Mineli, Mandolesi, Giavagnoli & Neri, 2021). These behavioural reactions can be similarly compared to behaviours related to self-control hence this questionnaire has been chosen for this pilot study. The Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire has therefore been identified as adequate to measure the behaviour change we are hoping to initiate with the

introduction of the self-control activity. Due to a lower number of whānau participants not enough qualitative data was received from the surveys. Therefore, analysis of the surveys will not be conducted other than general trends incorporated into the wider interpretation of the impact on whānau of the intervention.

Participants:

There were three participants from whānau with youth enrolled in the Awhi Ako programme, that took part in this research project. All three participants had youth who were enrolled in the Awhi Ako programme run by Tokotoko Solutions Limited. One whānau had two youth enrolled in the Awhi Ako programme totalling four sets of data collected from whānau pre-game intervention. The three participants participated in semi-structured interviews and behavioural questionnaires before the introduction of the game to be played at home. One of the three participants participated in a semi-structured interview and a behavioural questionnaire after the introduction of the game.

Two of the participants and households identified as being of Māori descent and culture. No Pasifika whānau consented to be involved in the research project.

Four youth mentoring staff who mentored youth whose whānau were involved in the research, took part in this research project. Youth mentoring staff participated in post-game intervention interviews. One whānau participated in the semi-structured interview after the introduction of the game being played at home.

Ethics was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee within the University of Waikato. The ethics approval case number is FS2023-24.

Procedure:

Contact with whānau was first made by the supervisor of the Awhi Ako programme. This was to ask whānau first if they give their consent for the practitioner to contact them with further information. After whānau responded to the supervisor giving consent, I was able to contact whānau to discuss a date and time to meet.

Two whānau did not give consent to the supervisor for me to contact them. One whānau consented to be involved in the research however pulled out due to external factors before the first interview could be conducted. Three whānau consented to participate in my research project. Two of these whānau consented to being recorded during the interview so transcripts

could be written later and one whānau did not. Therefore for the one whānau the transcript was written during the interview.

Before the introduction of the activity initiating self-control behaviours, participants read through information sheets and consent forms and were verbally briefed on the research project in person and their role within that research. Participants had the opportunity to ask any questions before giving written consent to participate. Initially three whānau who were approached consented to being part of the research project. Participants were then asked the best time and date to conduct the first interview and survey which could be at that moment if it suited them best.

On the date and time selected by the participants, participants were offered the opportunity of whānaungatanga and karakia before starting the interview process. After karakia, the recording device was turned on and interviews began. I followed the semi-structured interview questions however went with the flow of the conversation. Interviews lasted roughly thirty minutes each. After all interview questions the recording device was turned off and a closing karakia was performed if the whānau wanted. I then offered kai as a koha to the whānau and time to debrief or ask any questions they may have. Participants were then handed the Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire to fill out which roughly took ten minutes for each participant. One whānau wished not to complete the Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire.

I then instructed whānau on how to play “Carnival of Monsters” and answered any questions they had. This roughly took forty five minutes to explain to participants. I asked whānau to initiate playing “Carnival of Monsters” around three times a week for a minimum of two weeks. I booked in a time with participants at least two weeks after the introduction of the game to conduct the final interviews and surveys. Participants were informed they had two weeks from the date of their interviews to request their information be removed from the research project. It was explained after two weeks from the date of their interview it will be too late to redact their information as it will have been transcribed and merged with other participants.

I then wrote out the transcripts from the first set of interviews. I removed any information from the transcripts that would identify the participants. I began to identify key themes within the first set of transcripts.

After a minimum of two weeks’ time I contacted whānau to schedule the last set of interviews. I then revisited participants at home to conduct interviews and surveys on their

selected time and date. I followed the same procedures above where I opened with karakia if the whānau agreed, however, whanaungatanga was not necessary as we already had a relationship. I turned on recording devices and started the interviews. For the participant that did not consent to recording I wrote as we spoke. Participants were again offered kai as a koha. I gave participants the final Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire. Participants were informed they had two weeks from the date of their interviews to request their information be removed from the research project. It was explained after two weeks from the date of their interview it will be too late to redact their information as it will have been transcribed and merged with other participants. Participants were handed my supervisors, managers and my contact information and were told they could contact either of the three to ask for their information to be removed or to ask any questions.

After this process I wrote out the transcripts for the final interviews. I removed any information from the transcripts that would identify the participants. I then began to identify key themes within the transcripts and compare these themes with the themes represented within the first set of interviews.

Due to the lower number of returned surveys a quantitative analysis is unable to be performed although general trends were incorporated into wider implications for the whānau from this research.

I then contacted the mentors of the youth whose whānau participated in my research. I emailed them about my research and what involvement would look like. If they were interested I gave them possible dates for a face-to-face discussion and further information. Mentors contacted me back with dates and times they were free to hear more about my thesis. During the meeting with staff who contacted me back, I discussed my thesis further. Staff were handed the information sheet and consent form and offered space for questions. All four staff consented to be a participant in my research. Participants were offered the opportunity for karakia before the one-on-one interview began. The interviews lasted roughly 15 minutes and covered questions around any observable changes they noticed in the young people since the introduction of the activity. Following interviews participants were offered a closing karakia.

Following my data analysis, I formed the master's thesis report based on my findings.

Results

Interview findings:

Three whānau with four youth enrolled in the mentoring service were interviewed before the introduction of the game. Four mentoring staff members and one whānau were interviewed after the introduction of the game.

One of the main themes identified answered the research question of whether engagement techniques used by the practitioner impacted willingness to participate. Interviews discovered practitioner engagement impacted willingness of whānau to participate as predicted. The positive engagement techniques used by the practitioner and relationship building before the introduction of the board game, led to whānau being happy and willing to participate within this research project. Whānau felt more trusting and relaxed with the practitioner because of the previous relationship built. It was due to external factors the whānau were unable to participate. Whānau commented on knowing the practitioner before the research project and this relationship encouraged them to participate. An issue identified was whānau having an overwhelming number of agencies working with them. The whānau participating in this pilot study were involved in wraparound services that assisted supporting the whānau and youth. This usually means multiple organisations tasks set for the whānau each week. Whānau had many competing priorities during the entire intervention process due to the number of agencies working with each whānau. The wraparound services tasks were prioritised over game play due to their larger impact upon daily living within whānau lives. The practitioner understood these competing priorities and assisted supporting whānau through their priorities before introducing and prioritising the game. This made organising times for interviews and playing the board game difficult. This was a significant barrier for the entire research project. Another theme was positive self-control development and impacts upon other facets of the youth's life. Changes were identified by whānau and mentors in the youths positive self-control behaviours. This included sharing, turn taking, teaching others to play the game, patience and the ability to self reflect. Other benefits were observed such as increased whānau engagement and mentor attentiveness. It was hypothesised there would be other observable impacts from the introduction of the game.

Other relevant themes identified within the interview process included whānau liking Tokotoko Solutions Limited, which has a large impact on whānau engagement and trust with these services. Before the practitioner could contact whānau, whānau first had to give

permission to Tokotoko Solutions for Kaitlyn to contact them regarding the board game intervention. Whānau showed how trusting they were of Tokotoko Solutions, due to their prioritising relationship building. This creates a trusting relationship between whānau and organisation. This is important for this pilot study as it highlights the importance of first starting with relationship before intervention and how whānau may not have agreed to participating in this study if it were not for the trusting relationships already developed. Another theme was whānau being unaware what their youth does within organisations. Due to the large number of services involved with these whānau, it is hard for whānau to stay up to date and aware of everything these services do with their children. This can lead to miss communication between service and whānau, and service and service. Therefore, it is vital to understand what other services may have tasked for a whānau to better determine the amount of time they will have for an intervention. As well as not confusing or complicating tasks already set for the whānau. Within this pilot study, other services tasks were not considered which contributed towards the difficulty of finding times to play the board game intervention. Another theme was negative development of behaviours due to intervention potentially being unsuited to youth. When youth were overwhelmed, confused or found the game too difficult, they tended to become overtly controlling, change the rules or refuse to play the game. Upon reflection mentors suggested this could be due to the intervention being unsuited to specific youth. The game was determined as unsuited if it was too difficult, they had limited whānau members to play the game with or were uninterested in the game. All factors leading towards the youth not playing the game or developing undesired behaviors such as becoming overly controlling during game play.

Interviews with mentors after the youth had been playing the board game intervention, contained predominately recommendations for the future introduction of the board game intervention. Recommendations were provided by youth mentoring staff around engaging the home environment of youth and whānau within mentoring. These recommendations included more whānau feedback on procedures and activities led by respective mentors, activities given to youth to complete at home with whānau based on their specific interests and needs and how they have been more attentive towards youth development but unaware of whether the development is based on the game intervention. Themes identified by mentors who played the board game intervention included observations of the youth developing reflection

skills, patience and turn taking. Mentors could see the benefit of the game play within youth behaviour. However, with more time and observation would have more observable results.

Find themes and quotes from interviews in Appendix F and Appendix G.

Due to only one whānau completing a BIQ survey the data was not quantitatively analysed. However, no significant changes in self-control behaviors were identifiable through the survey. The whānau who completed the BIQ survey found larger changes in whānau engagement, participation and patience over changes in self-control behaviour.

Discussion

Main identified themes

The way the practitioner engaged with the whānau did impact upon willingness to participate. The whānau identified positive engagement between the practitioner and whānau. This benefited whānau willingness to be involved in this research project.

“No. I’m pretty happy with the engagement.”

“It is probably also because we’ve known you beforehand and we know that you are a calm collective person and it just made the process easier.”

The practitioner used relationship building, brought a koha to the interviews and prioritised the relationship with the individual over scheduling for the research project. This created a trusting space between the practitioner and whānau, meaning whānau felt more comfortable around the practitioner as shown in research (Conboy et al., 2010). However, data does not show it increased the uptake of the activity within the home environment. Whānau were willing to be involved in the research and wanted to play the game, however other priorities and expectations of the whānau were prioritised over the game play for this research project. The practitioner found the meetings, conversations and interviews contained off topic discussions around other areas of the whānau lives that they identified as a higher priority. The practitioner happily assisted whānau with these discussions, however this diverted from the introduction of the game. The practitioner's positive engagement techniques such as koha, karakia, whanaungatanga, building trust and face to face meetings created a willingness to participate. Other external factors, separate to the practitioner engagement, impacted on participants not participating in research. Upon reflection, the whānau involved in this pilot study were perhaps not the most well suited due to their high workloads, high priorities and

other services involved with the whānau. With this busy schedule it was not top priority for the whānau to play the game regardless of their willingness to participate. This was seen throughout the engagement process as it was extremely difficult to find a time available to interview and talk with whānau as well as for them to find time to play the game. This pilot study therefore found at-risk youth although the most likely to benefit from such interventions, perhaps are not the most suited to its introduction. Perhaps an intervention that is less time consuming will be more suited to whānau who have wraparound services attached to them. These wraparound services have their own time-consuming tasks for whānau that would be prioritised over this game introduction. Whānau with more time and less expectation from a range of services will be better suited to a board game based intervention.

An identified theme mentioned by whānau members before the game was introduced, was an overwhelming amount of agencies working with their youth. This is not unusually as wraparound services typically have multiple organisations on the team assisting and supporting the whānau. However, with this many organisations it can be confusing which agencies are working on specific behaviours and education etc. With this understanding it would be beneficial for whānau to hear from the services themselves what they do with their young people.

“Because she’s got activities with other organisations I don’t know which is which.”

Most of these whānau have been within services for many years therefore it is important to build trust and open communication. By doing this we can encourage and empower whānau to be the drivers of their own change so they can exit these services with the knowledge and skills to maintain their happy homes. The whānau identified as being of Māori cultural backgrounds. Whānaungatanga and building relationships is critical when providing a service to Māori whānau. This helps build connections and trust with whānau that results in their active participation within services. Whānau are identified as having issues with this relationship development across services. This could stem from a lack of communication between organisations that are providing services for the whānau. Knowing these whānau are working with other services makes it crucial for all the services to have open communication with each other.

This pairs with the theme mentioned above which was the whānau balancing many priorities limiting the time they have available. Whānau were extremely busy as characterised by the difficulty of recruiting participants, people pulling out and difficulty organising a time to

meet. Therefore, organisations should be aware of what other tasks organisations have set for the whānau in order to adjust their own set tasks to ensure the whānau is not becoming overwhelmed.

Positive outcomes and self-control behaviours were identified in youth by their whānau and respective youth mentors. The development of self-control behaviours such as decision-making, patience and turn taking were developed and observed during the game play. As well as problem solving and helping other players to problem solve which shows developing social skills through playing the game.

“She was pretty good at, once we sort of got the hang of going around and having a turn each she was pretty good at waiting her turn. She would like to hurry everyone else in making their decision, so she could get back to her but um yeah she was pretty good. And she’d like to give advice on what everyone else was deciding for their turn”.

“yeah, cause I think she already knew some of the better cards and not so she was giving that sort of advice.”

“When it came to her turn she would take extra time to make those decisions”.

Participants had only been playing the game for roughly 3-4 weeks and had already shown the development of self-control behaviours. I believe this supports the notion of activities at home being able to enhance the learning from the mentoring environment to the home environment.

A mentor identified youth developed the ability of being able to reflect on past events and why they may have acted the way they acted and better ways to react.

“as time went along, like not immediately around that time of playing, but I think further along, like a term later she was thinking a lot more about some of the actions she had done previously so she was able to recall what she had done and the feelings that were coming after or during the time, at the time of the incidents, or not there not incidents just at times of different like learning or transitions during the day we weren’t able to talk about at that stage we had to wait and then she was able to reflect. Um, and make good judgement on what was happening at that time.”

Perhaps with more time and practice between the mentoring space and home environment the youth will start exhibiting their learnt behaviours in all aspects of life and within their social interactions as supported by the interconnectedness of the facets of a person’s life.

When an intervention is introduced, there may be other benefits or impacts on the individual (Stoker, 1987). As predicted there were other benefits from the introduction of the game not just on the development of self-control. Another benefit identified through game play was increased engagement at home. Whānau identified youth were doing more with their whānau and leaving their room.

“It keeps the connection going. Enjoying each other’s company, learning from engagement and mistakes. Yeah”

Mentors were more aware and actively observing changes and behaviour development in their youth. Mentors were aware their young person was participating in home-based game play to initiate self-control behaviour development. This increased their awareness of any development the young person was having. However, it was identified by mentors they were unsure whether these developments were due to the game play, mentoring or other service providers. With more time and structure around the board-game it may be easier to observe distinct changes based on the board-game initiating self-control behaviour development. With more time, other benefits will likely be observed making this a well-rounded intervention.

Other relevant themes identified.

Whānau with youth enrolled in the Awhi Ako programme could identify ways in which Tokotoko Solutions Limited benefited their youth. These included Tokotoko Solutions Limited developing good communication with whānau, focusing on strength development and values, and creating a stable, balanced environment for their youth. Illustrating Tokotoko Solutions Limited is a safe place which whānau trust sending their youth to work on positive youth development.

“I like Tokotoko because it shows strengths and puts things in place to help with what they struggle with.”

“Definitely. It’s given them positive outlooks on life. They know the mentors are there for them. They have built bonds with people. And Tokotoko sticks around and you show up.... . It gives them stability and helped them get balance. They come home and they look fulfilled.”

This positive relationship development between whānau and organisation is essential for creating trust and open communication (Conboy et al., 2010). Without these elements it would be very hard for an organisation to engage with whānau and have positive participation

in what the organisation is trying to achieve. I believe through the collected data the positive relationship is present with Tokotoko Solutions Limited and whānau. However, this relationship may not be utilised to its full potential within the mentoring environment through including whānau in the mentoring process. As well as a lack of communication around what exactly youth are working on within the Tokotoko Solutions Limited space.

When asked what it was specifically their youth were working on, whānau were unable to provide a response. Whānau showed uncertainty towards what exactly their youth were working on within Tokotoko Solutions Limited and therefore unaware of whether or not their youth were working on skills developed within mentoring, at home. Although whānau mentioned good communication between their whānau and Tokotoko Solutions Limited, there seems to be a disconnect in communication around what the youth are specifically working on and what whānau can do at home to help.

“Do you know if your child practices any of like I guess the stuff she is learning at Tokotoko, at home?”

Not that I know of”.

“Does your child practice anything that she learns at Tokotoko when she’s at home?”

I don’t know. I honestly don’t know”.

This discussion demonstrates a noticeable disjunction between the mentoring space and home environment. Whānau are aware their youth are benefiting from the mentoring space but unsure exactly what the nature of these benefits are. This warrants further development and exploration within this space. This observation shows the need for mentoring services to better develop communication with whānau regarding specifics their youth are working on and how to integrate the learning within the home environment. Moreover, this provides the potential for the empowerment of whānau, enabling them to support and facilitate ongoing skill development within their youth at home. Empowering whānau through this gain in knowledge and therefore responsibility fosters a dynamic where the practitioner partners with the whānau rather than assuming an authoritative role (Ross, 2017). Throughout my engagement with whānau I prioritised their empowerment by engaging in open discussions throughout the introduction of my game receiving feedback and recommendations by the whānau, rather than positioning myself as an expert who knows more than the whānau.

Regarding the development of self-control behaviours which is a central focus of this thesis, whānau were able to recognise and identify such behaviours already being developed within their youth. This included recognising youth were somewhat regulating their emotions during arguments with other siblings. A key result being fewer physical fights breaking out within the home environment.

“They are fighting less and not retaliating during arguments.”

“Yeah her behaviours improved, her behaviour has improved heaps”.

Nevertheless, whānau acknowledged ways in which their youths self-control behaviours could be enhanced. Noticeable skills recognised by whānau as needing enhancement included decision-making, patience, emotion regulation and auditory restraint. While these skills are cultivated within the mentoring environment, the skills comprehensive development is reliant upon their practical application within the home environment through purposeful activities undertaken collectively as a whānau with youth. The cultivation of self-control skills is enhanced when integrated through all aspects of youths lives, showing the significance of integrating these skills within the home.

“But it’s physical at the moment and he needs other strategies.”

“Uh, let’s see, like butting in is something that needs to stop.”

“And how would you describe your child’s self-control?”

A work in progress.”

A significant factor mentioned by whānau was an observed deficiency in their youth's engagement within their home environments. Implementing collective whānau activities provides the potential to enhance whānau engagement within the home environment (Barnett et al., 2020).

“We barely do anything at home, they are usually tired. They won’t do their chores.”

“She does, she comes out every now and then. But spends most of her time in her room.”

If whānau were aware of the skills their youth were working on within Tokotoko Solutions Limited this could encourage whānau to actively participate in collective whānau activities to enhance their youth's wellbeing. Relating to the principle of the ecological perspective where many benefits are achieved from the introduction of this game-based activity.

However, negative self-control behaviours were also identified. A mentor of one of the youths identified the youth was becoming overly controlling with the game.

“Um, the student liked to take control of the game and um almost tried to create her own rules for the game”.

“felt like she only wanted to play some of the rules that she liked within the game and not all of the rules”.

“it was a long process and I think in the end we just played to her rules cause she wasn’t interested in playing all of the rules because it was just too much for her.”

Youth exhibit diverse patterns of cognitive processing and knowledge development, leading to variations in their understanding, interpretation and comprehension of the game. This variability is evident in cases such as this, where a young individual tried to understand and then teach someone else the game, perhaps finding this difficult resulting in the youth developing new rules and adaptations to the game. The youth mentors understand youth have variations in development. So despite frustration from unfamiliarity with the rules, persisted in playing the game according to the youths instructions. This experience highlights the importance of introducing the game in the mentoring environment so mentors are already familiar with it. Furthermore, it highlights the necessity for the selection of personalised games, as the youth might have modified the rules due to the games original form being too challenging for them. This is further discussed in recommendations.

Mentors identified they were more aware of the self-control developments of their youth due to this pilot study. Mentors were still unable to distinguish whether the advancements were due to mentoring, the home based intervention or the other services wrapped around the youth. However, they were more aware of the developments made by the youth. This has other benefits for the youth as it means mentors are more attentive to the needs of the youth.

The limitations identified within this research was the small number of participants due to competing priorities. Therefore, there is a smaller data set, and I am therefore unable to make generalisations on the observations and finding of this data. However, this provides a base for future research to be conducted within this area.

Recommendations

This pilot study exploring the pathway from intervention to outcome was able to identify recommendations for future studies within this area with a larger number of recruited participants. Recommendations surround the effectiveness of home environment involvement within the mentoring space and practitioner engagement creating positive engagement between whānau and services.

Youth mentoring staff who were participants within this research suggested tailored activities created for each household. These activities will be tailored once the respective mentor has built a relationship with the whānau. The activities will therefore be enticing, relevant and exciting for the whānau to play. The activity will also be catered to the time frame the whānau has. Having a generic game that all households played was not always advantageous as found within this research project. Some youth really enjoyed the selected game “carnival of monsters,” and some did not due to learning levels, interests of the youth and time whānau had to play the game.

“what we think would work and I guess we use just the way we live ourselves in our own homes and what we think would work in our home, we sort of give ideas of what we think would work in their home and its, every home and the dynamics of each home are really really different, so it’s really hard to generalise what would work”.

By tailoring these games to the household this will be the most effective at increasing participation and creating an activity intervention the whānau will have time to play. Creating a tailored intervention will however take more time and will need to be considered by the practitioner or research designer.

This intervention was created to enhance the learning of self-control within the mentoring space within the home environment in a different more enticing way through game play. The research project showed games targeted at developing self-control skills were very beneficial and necessary with the at-risk youth present within this mentoring service. However, it was recommended that any games introduced to the home environment to help develop self-control behaviours should also be played within the mentoring space with their respective mentors and other youth. In future research, time to play activities will need to be scheduled into the timetable of each youth. Many of the youth tried or wanted to play the game with their mentors but due to time frames and other goals this was not achievable.

“do you think that it might be more beneficial if we also asked them to bring it into mentoring and do it in this space as well?”

100%. Yeah. Cause then that would help us get to know more about the game and how it works”.

This ensures mentors can monitor the progress achieved by the youth as they engage with the game at home and at mentoring, enabling them to adjust their mentoring to the specific needs of the youth.

The use of culturally appropriate engagement methods was proven to be beneficial during this research project. It is highly recommended to any practitioner engaging with a community to ensure they understand the cultural practices of those they will be interacting with. This demonstrates to the community you will be working alongside them with support, guidance and with the knowledge you hold, aligning with their existing efforts, cultures and practices. Rather than assuming the role of an authoritative expert dictating what should be done and how it should be done.

“It is probably also because we’ve known you beforehand and we know that you are a calm collective person and it just made the process easier.”

This will lead to long lasting positive relationships with the communities you will be assisting. Allowing you to increase your connections with others as well as leaving the communities you engage with feeling empowered and supported to assist in bettering their own futures.

The course of this pilot study from intervention to outcome was able to discover possible barriers for a larger study. Therefore, these barriers can be reviewed and adjusted before starting research. For future research a larger sampling size is recommended. Due to the small number of whānau enrolled in the Awhi Ako programme within Tokotoko Solutions Limited there was a small sampling size. Along with this, these whānau have at-risk youth and are involved in multiple services. Although these whānau may strongly benefit from this intervention activity, but it may be unrealistic with the stressors and barriers they already have in place. For future research it is recommended that whānau are filtered or chosen based on their schedules and risk factors within the household. For interventions targeted towards

at-risk whānau, it may be more realistic to have a less time-consuming intervention. For whānau with similar needs but are not overwhelmed by high priorities, this intervention will be better suited.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Information sheet for semi-structured interviews and questionnaire with whānau of Youth Mentoring mentees

Kia Orana and Kia Ora, I am a student from The University of Waikato conducting a master's thesis on the potential benefits of introducing self-control activities to the home environment for a PSYCH594 – Psychology Thesis paper. The master's thesis research team consists of Kaitlyn Watson an employee of Tokotoko Solutions, and my supervisor Vincent Reid. My contact information and my supervisor's contact information can be found at the end of the information sheet.

I am inviting you to be a part of my research project studying practitioner engagement with whānau during a self-control activity and the implications for uptake in the home and for empowered engagement.

It is important that I explain to you what the research is for, what your role in this research is and where the information from this research will end up.

The purpose of this research is to inform readers of the importance of practitioner engagement with the whānau they are working alongside. The research also seeks to understand the possible benefits of introducing a self-control activity into the home environment of mentored youth.

My research questions for this thesis are:

1. Does the way the practitioner engages with the whānau effect the uptake of the activities at home?
2. In what ways did the practitioner engage with the families that worked?
3. In what ways did the practitioner engage with the families that did not work?
4. Does introducing self-control activities into the home environment benefit (or not) youth?

This thesis is beneficial as it informs readers of the importance of culturally appropriate, respectful and positive practitioner and participant engagement. It will investigate current literatures understanding of proper engagement with whānau and inform future practitioners of what works and what does not. This research is also beneficial in the sense it will provide whānau with a game that will try to initiate desired self-control behaviours in youth.

The benefits of developing self-control behaviours include improving the ability to cope with difficult situations, to cope with stress, decision-making and impulse control which helps emotional outcomes, improves long term happiness and improves socializing and social skills.

Your role within this evaluation is to participate within two one-on-one interviews of about 30 minutes in length. In the first interview, you will be asked to provide information on your child's current involvement in your home environment, their current self-control behaviours and what you believe your child works on within Tokotoko Solutions. You will then be asked to play a game within your household for two weeks, playing the game around 3 times a week. After these two weeks you will be asked to complete another interview. The second interview will cover how the introduced self-control activity has benefited your young person, the home environment and what the practitioner did to make you want to play the game and what they did that did not make you want to play the game. This will occur in a quiet place

within Tokotoko Solutions or within your home environment, whichever makes you feel more comfortable.

I ask for permission to record the interview so transcribing can occur after the interview. During the interview, you do not have to answer questions unless you are happy to talk about the topic. You can stop the interview at any time, and you can ask to have the recording device turned off at any time. This interview will be used to discover key themes, patterns, understandings or relationships that answer the research questions.

I will also give you a questionnaire to complete on your child's behaviour. This will take around ten minutes to complete. The survey consists of 30 questions centred around your child's self-control behaviours. You will then be asked to play a game within your household for two weeks, playing the game roughly 3 times a week. After these two weeks you will be asked to complete the same survey again. The surveys may be filled out in a quiet place within Tokotoko Solutions or within your home environment, which ever makes you feel more comfortable. During the survey, you do not have to answer questions unless you are happy to answer them. You can stop the survey at any time. This survey will be used to determine your child's development of their self-control behaviours before and after the introduction of a game.

Confidentiality will be kept throughout this research project, and participants will be anonymised after interviews with Kaitlyn.

After the interview you will have the opportunity to receive a transcript to review. This is so you can see we have recorded what you have said correctly. You will have up until two weeks after the interview to retract your interview and participation in the research project if you choose to do so. I will give you my contact information as well as my supervisor. If you choose to withdraw then you may contact me or my supervisor and I will remove your data.

If the interview or the survey brings up anything distressing then you can call these helplines or contact these services:

Youthline 0800 376 633

Need to talk 1737

Miriam Centre 22 Mill Road, Regent, Whāngarei 0110

Parent & Family Counselling Service 25 Otaika Road, Raumanga, Whāngarei 0110

Evaluator and primary communicator: Kaitlyn Watson

Contact phone: 021 170 6644

Email: kaitlyn3watson@gmail.com

Supervisor: Vincent Reid

Contact phone: 07 837 9593

Email: vincent.reid@waikato.ac.nz

"This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email alpss-ethics@waikato.ac.nz, postal address, Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240."

Appendix B

Participant consent form

I have received a copy of the Information Sheet describing the research project. Any questions that I have, relating to the research, have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions about the research at any time during my participation, and that I can withdraw my participation at any time up to two weeks after the final interview. I understand if I consent to the game being introduced into my household we are still under no obligation to play the game.

During the interview and survey, I understand that I do not have to answer questions unless I am happy to talk about the topic. I can stop the interview and survey at any time, and I can ask to have the recording device turned off at any time.

When I sign this consent form, I will retain ownership of my responses, but I give consent for the researcher to use the interview and survey for the purposes of the research outlined in the Information Sheet.

[I understand that my identity will remain confidential in the presentation of the research findings]

I give consent to the information from the interviews and surveys being used for the purposes of the research project.

I wish to receive a transcript of my interview Yes / No

Email address to receive the transcript:

I give consent to a device being used to record this interview Yes / No

I give consent to the game being introduced and played within my household.

Date:

Signature

Appendix C

First semi-structured interview questions with parents/caregivers or guardians of Tokotoko Solutions Youth Mentoring mentees

Introduce ourselves – whanaungatanga. Karakia.

What is your understanding of Tokotoko and what your child does within Tokotoko?

Do you believe (or not) your child is benefiting from what they learn at Tokotoko?

Do you practice anything your child learns at Tokotoko, at home?

What is your child's engagement like at home?

How would you describe your child's self-control behaviours (with self-control defined before asking this question)?

Would you be happy to complete activities at home for the next two weeks to reinforce what is learned during mentoring?

What would make you hesitant to do this activity at home?

Second semi-structured interview questions with parents/caregivers or guardians of Tokotoko Solutions Youth Mentoring mentees

Introduce ourselves – whanaungatanga. Karakia.

Have you been playing the game at home and how often?

Have you been practising anything your child learns during mentoring, at home?

What is your child's engagement like at home after the introduction of the game?

How would you describe your child's self-control behaviours now? Is there a change?

What made you want to play this game at home?

What made you not want to play this game at home?

What did you or your child learn while playing the game?

Can you see positive changes after playing the game? And if so, what?

Can you see negative changes after playing the game? And if so, what?

Appendix D

Behavioural Inhibition Questionnaire (Parent Form)

The following statements describe children's behaviour in different situations. Each statement asks you to judge whether that behaviour occurs for your child "hardly ever", "infrequently", "once in a while", "sometimes", "often", "very often", or "almost always". Please circle the number "1" if the behaviour "hardly ever" occurs, the number "2" if it occurs "infrequently", etc. Try to make this judgement to the best of your ability, based on how you think your child compares with other children about the same age.

	1 Hardly Ever	2 Infrequently	3 Once in a While	4 Sometimes	5 Often	6 Very Often	7 Almost Always
1. Approaches new situations or activities very hesitantly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Will happily approach a group of unfamiliar children to join in their play					1	2	3
3. Is very quiet around new (adult) guests to our home					1	2	3
4. Is cautious in activities that involve physical challenge (e.g., climbing, jumping from heights)					1	2	3
5. Settles in quickly when we visit the homes of people we don't know well					1	2	3
6. Enjoys being the centre of attention					1	2	3
7. Is comfortable asking other children to play					1	2	3
8. Is shy when first meeting new children					1	2	3
9. Happily separates from parent(s) when left in new situations for the first time (e.g., kindergarten, preschool, childcare)					1	2	3
10. Is happy to perform in front of others (e.g., singing, dancing)					1	2	3
11. Quickly adjusts to new situations (e.g., kindergarten, preschool, childcare)					1	2	3
12. Is reluctant to approach a group of unfamiliar children to ask to join in					1	2	3

Continued next page

	1 Hardly Ever	2 Infrequentl y	3 Once in a While	4 Sometimes	5 Often	6 Very Often	7 Almost Always
13. Is confident in activities that involve physical challenge (e.g., climbing, jumping from heights)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Is independent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Seems comfortable in new situations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Is very talkative to adult strangers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Is hesitant to explore new play equipment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Gets upset at being left in new situations for the first time (e.g., kindergarten, preschool, childcare)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Is very friendly with children he or she has just met	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Tends to watch other children, rather than join in their games	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Dislikes being the centre of attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. Is clingy when we visit the homes of people we don't know well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Happily approaches new situations or activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Is outgoing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Seems nervous or uncomfortable in new situations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. Happily chats to new (adult) visitors to our home	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Takes many days to adjust to new situations (e.g., kindergarten, preschool, childcare)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. Is reluctant to perform in front of others (e.g., singing, dancing)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Happily explores new play equipment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Is very quiet with adult strangers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix E

Information pamphlet

What does self-control mean?

Self-control is about being able to regulate yourself.

Self-control is a complex skill that develops over time and we are all constantly working on.

What are the benefits of self-control?

Self-control enables children to cooperate with others, to cope with frustration, and to resolve conflicts. Self-control also helps young people manage their thoughts, actions and emotions.

Learning self-control can improve the ability to cope with difficult situations, to cope with stress, decision-making and impulse control which helps emotional outcomes, improves long term happiness and improves socializing and social skills.

Reflection questions for after the activities

What did you learn through this activity?

Can you think of how this matches what you learn at Tokotoko Solutions?

Some websites to check out if you are interested:

<https://positivepsychology.com/self-control-for-kids/>

<https://www.understood.org/en/articles/self-control-what-it-means-for-kids>

Appendix F

Theming and quotes from pre-game interviews of whānau of mentored youth.

Themes	Supporting codes
Tokotoko Solutions benefits	<p>“Um, well I don’t know much at the moment because I’ve only just started to turn around and be involved with it and knowing what the thing so they’ve managed to turn around and help her with certain things and stuff like this, which has been really really good”.</p> <p>“I was grateful to get her out of (previous organisation) because I found that Tokotoko was doing better”.</p> <p>“Yeah if there is anything that um, she has a concern or something like this with your child or she’s got suggestions on some other type of course or something that she might be interested, she lets me know about it”.</p> <p>“I like Tokotoko because it shows strengths and puts things in place to help with what they struggle with.”</p> <p>“Definitely. It’s given them positive outlooks on life. They know the mentors are there for them. They have built bonds with people. And Tokotoko sticks around and you show up.... . It gives them stability and helped them get balance. They come home and they look fulfilled.”</p> <p>“And do you think that your child is benefiting from what she learns at Tokotoko? Yes.”</p>
Self-control development in youth	<p>“Yeah her behaviours improved, her behaviour has improved heaps since what she was like when she was ten”.</p>

	<p>“They are fighting less and not retaliating during arguments.”</p> <p>“Certain behaviours and stuff like this yeah she pulls me up on it,”</p> <p>“Uh, let’s see like butting in is something that needs to stop”.</p> <p>“she’s not doing too badly and stuff the only thing I do have to um correct her on when we do go to other peoples and stuff like this is just the volume”.</p> <p>“How would you describe your child’s self-control behaviours? One has a lot of patience, but that’s why I’m looking forward to this game”.</p> <p>“when we are having a conversation with another adult where the kid should not be interfering in the conversation,”</p> <p>“And how would you describe your child’s self-control?”</p> <p>A work in progress.”</p>
Engagement at home	<p>“I don’t have great heaps of visitors, ahh no. I’m not a visitor person I’ll go out if I needa go out to thing or I might go visit a family member and stuff like that but no I usually stay at home”.</p> <p>“Like she gets on her um snapchat or whatever the heck it is and turns around and chats to her friends”.</p> <p>“At the moment just the games that she’s playing on there and that and it’s like you have quality time but then I have I’ve gotta have my space and stuff like this and I turn around and with her she’s gotta have thing but she’s also gotta realise that she got to be able to be by herself on her own and not have to worry”.</p>

	<p>“They come home and talk about what they liked and what they learnt.”</p> <p>“We barely do anything at home, they are usually tired. They won’t do their chores.”</p> <p>“She does, she comes out every now and then. But spends most of her time in her room.”</p>
Whānau feeling overwhelmed	<p>“Because she’s got activities with other organisations I don’t know which is which.”</p> <p>“Yeah the interactions involve catching up and any incidents that happened.”</p>
Mentoring being practiced at home	<p>“Do you know if, oh well you’re here as well, if your child practices any of like I guess the stuff she is learning at Tokotoko, at home? Not that I know of”.</p> <p>“Does your child practice anything that she learns at Tokotoko when she’s at home?</p> <p>I don’t know. I honestly don’t know.”</p> <p>“Does your child practice anything they learn at Tokotoko, at home? Yeah emotion regulation. But it’s physical at the moment and he needs other strategies.”</p>
Games initiating behaviour development	<p>“we’ve got other games and stuff like this..... she’s done really really good at”.</p> <p>“At the moment just the games that she’s playing on there and that and it’s like you have quality time but then I have I’ve gotta have my own space”.</p> <p>“there is nothing wrong with people suggestions ideas and stuff like this, give it a try if it works it works if it doesn’t it doesn’t there’s no harm in it so yeah”</p>

Appendix G

Theming and quotes from post-game interviews with whānau of mentored youth and mentors of mentored youth.

Negative behaviour development	<p>“felt like she only wanted to play some of the rules that she liked within the game and not all of the rules”.</p> <p>“she didn’t want to read the instructions to us or she didn’t want us reading the instructions of how to play so that almost gave her a bit of control”</p>
The game being too difficult	<p>“it was a long process and I think in the end we just played to her rules cause she wasn’t interested in playing all of the rules because it was just too much for her.”</p> <p>“so we played a very modified version of the game. Yeah”</p> <p>“I think like kind of what you told me before like one was like that was kinda cool and the other was like meh, meh meaning he wasn’t enjoying it.”</p> <p>“It’s like with this game you had to pick the right monsters and that was pretty hard”</p>
Positive self-control behaviour development	<p>“She was pretty good at once we sort of got the hang of going around and having a turn each she was pretty good at waiting her turn. She would like to hurry everyone else in making their decision, so she could get back to her but um yeah she was pretty good. And she’d like to give advice on what everyone else was deciding for their turn”.</p> <p>“yeah, cause I think she already knew some of the better cards and not so she was giving that sort of advice.”</p>

	<p>“The student liked to take control of the game and um almost tried to create her own rules for the game”.</p> <p>“When it came to her turn she would take extra time to make those decisions”.</p> <p>“like turn-taking that’s fine, everything else but decision-making”.</p> <p>“I think a lot of the games that she plays, she likes to take control of like how anything is done. Um, and then but sharing, a lot of sharing comes out of a lot of learning to share and learning to give people that time and listen to their um, I guess ideas have definitely come from playing those games yeah”</p>
Skills translating to other areas	<p>“as time went along, like not immediately around that time of playing, but I think further along, like a term later she was thinking a lot more about some of the actions she had done previously so she was able to recall what she had done and the feelings that were coming after or during the time, at the time of the incidents, or not there not incidents just at times of different like learning or transitions during the day we weren’t able to talk about at that stage we had to wait and then she was able to reflect. Um, and make good judgement on what was happening at that time. So yeah, but yeah it was a long process., but yeah it was good to see that she was able to stop and think about what things had happened and how she was thinking and feeling at the time”.</p> <p>“from me in my mentoring sessions, I think it’s just been that slow um, slow growth. So that’s why its hard to like pinpoint if there’s been this change and this change in a short amount of time.”</p>

	<p>“It keeps the connection going. Enjoying each other’s company, learning from engagement and mistakes. Yeah”</p>
Feedback/ recommendations	<p>“what we think would work and I guess we use just the way we live ourselves in our own homes and what we think would work in our home, we sort of give ideas of what we think would work in their home and its, every home and the dynamics of each home are really really different, so it’s really hard to generalise what would work. Um, so yeah I have no idea, I mean I find it hard because I would say oh yeah I think something would work in my house so let’s try that.”</p> <p>“Do you think it was a good idea to have it at home as well if that can happen, and in mentoring? Yeah I think so, yup, and more regular in the mentoring space, with bigger groups, with more numbers.”</p> <p>“That’s hard to answer. Because I feel like there’s lots of things going on their life, and different agencies coming in and doing different things, um.”</p> <p>“The first thing that comes to mind is something we have kind of already talked about at Tokotoko but is involving the family more in our mentoring sessions. So like I know this isn’t necessarily easy but like getting the family into our sessions, not just the young people, and like the conversations that we have with the young people, having it with the family as a whole”.</p> <p>“Um, another thing I think works really well with teenage boys is giving them challenges. Like hey this is your challenge to do at home and we are gonna come back and we are gonna talk about did</p>

	<p>you do this. Like I think that works really well with like these young people who are quite competitive. And if you can like engage them in that kind of a way I think like that would be really cool. So like making a challenge or a game , but then also like tying it into hey the stuff that we are talking about or the stuff that we are teaching you it's not just for mentoring but it's for your life"</p>
<p>Positive engagement identified by whānau</p>	<p>"You were real precise with how you explained how to play the game. You made sure to get every single detail."</p> <p>"No. I'm pretty happy with the engagement."</p> <p>"It is probably also because we've known you beforehand and we know that you are a calm collective person and it just made the process easier."</p> <p>"Was there anything bad that I did that you wish I hadn't of done while we were engaging? No, do you want something. Not that I'm aware of. I would have told you otherwise."</p> <p>"You know so it's just kinda figuring out what's gonna work and it's not gonna be a one size fits all with our students or whānau so yeah probably working it out as a team."</p> <p>"Yeah yup and their situation and you know some families might not be able to or might not be a realistic situation so it's like you know it is what it is."</p>
	<p>"She perceived the game as something enjoyable because she wanted to show me and for us to do it. But at that time her focus was on receiving work</p>

from school and completing that, so um. She was frustrated that she couldn't play it but that was yeah the programme at that time."

"she bought it a few times but um, it was, we had a programme so um yeah it didn't quite fit at that time and she stopped bringing it so we haven't had a chance to play."

She loves game playing and I think if she was in a situation at home where there were people that wanted to play that she definitely would be into it because she really enjoys that kind of interaction, yup.