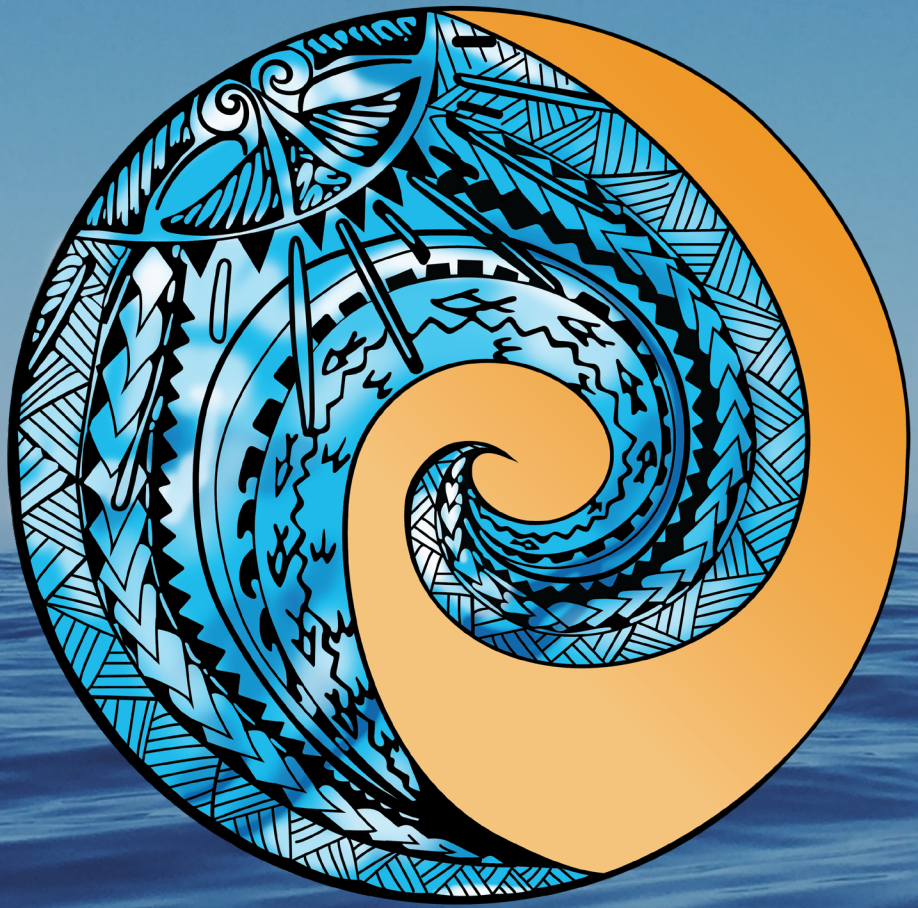


RELATIONAL RESOURCES FOR CHANGE

# THE MOANA

## Framework

YOUTHSAY

## THE MOANA FRAMEWORK

- Moana is a tool to help practitioners and agencies engage effectively with Pasifika youth and aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau. It came from a large national study; the Youth Transitions Study (www.youthsay.co.nz).

- Qualities practitioners need to build relationships and support transformational change, when working with Pasifika youth, are offered in the Moana framework. These are the practices that young people in the Youth Transitions Study said made the most difference to their capacity to create and sustain positive change.

- The Moana framework includes the skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, processes, and systems that practitioners and agencies demonstrate when working successfully with Pasifika youth.

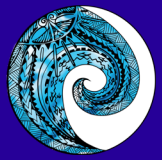
## A RELATIONSHIP-BASED WAY OF SUPPORTING RANGATAHI

- Moana is a metaphor. It draws from Oceania's library – the stories, proverbs, words, images within Pasifika cultures (Mafile'o, Mitaera, & Mila, 2019; Mila, 2017). Also, Moana reflects the cultural concepts of Tā-Vā (time-space) (Ka`ili, 2017; Māhina, 2017). Even though Moana aligns with ancient knowing and ways of doing things, Moana is also relevant to engaging Pasifika youth today.

- This framework outlines the qualities practitioners and their agencies can adopt along with questions to support practice with Pasifika youth. Importantly it reminds us of the need to understand the relationship between Pasifika youth and the world around them if we are to be effective. The Moana Framework can be used in conjunction with PARTH and Tōu Ake Mana which were also developed out of the Youth Transitions Study.

- Tā-Vā is a Pasifika way of seeing the world where everything connected through relationships over time. Tā is a word for time, and Vā is a word for space, including the relational space. So Tā-Vā is the understanding that we are connected to the past and to the future, and are a part of something bigger than what is happening now. Tā-Vā recognises that exchanges are always happening, and harmony and beauty results when there is symmetry in our reciprocal exchanges. On the other hand, disharmony results from imbalances in the give-and-take of our connected lives.

- The Moana framework is underpinned by a Tā-Vā perspective: practitioners and agencies can apply Pasifika ways of doing things and positively serve Pasifika youth and families. In the Youth Transitions Study, young people talked about wanting to deepen their connections and their sense of belonging. The Moana framework provides a way of supporting this. Moana uses the ocean (moana) as a metaphor – a picture or story which helps us to understand something in a deeper way. It includes waves (young people), shorelines (practice encounters), sand (knowledge and values), and light (reflections).



## WAVES

A representation of the Pasifika youth in perpetual movement

## SHORELINES

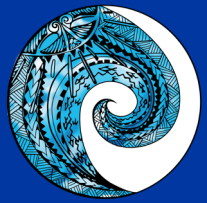
Shorelines symbolise opportunities for Vā, authentic relational spaces between Pasifika youth, aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau and practitioners that acknowledge their Turanga.

## SAND

A representation of practice that is fluid, adaptable and flexible through Tā-Vā.

## LIGHT

A natural phenomenon to depict pathways highlighted through Langi/Rangi/Ranginui, holders of natural light sources that offers spaces for deep reflections and focus.



# WAVES

Waves, a symbol of the Pasifika young person in perpetual movement. In the framework, the sun and the moon are relational forces for tidal behaviour and the connections to the environment, (stars, winds, islands) that all impact on the waves. Together these represent the culture, people, places, time and structures around Pasifika young people, and how they use all of these resources to navigate their voyage. The point the tide turns inward and outward represent a young person exploring their identity and acknowledging their essence of who they are. Both shoreline and ocean waves are a representation of deeper energy movements. The Pacific Ocean is home to the deepest trenches on earth reminding us young people have reservoirs of positive energy and potential that can be drawn on by the practitioner. The metaphor of the wave is a visual representation of the Pasifika young person. It acknowledges the depths of their stories, experiences, knowledge, context and life exchanges.

**Qualities of a Practitioner:**

- Listen astutely and respond with strong and open conversations.
- Facilitate healing and creativity.
- Respect and validate Pasifika youth experiences.

**Critical-Reflective Questions:**

- How am I honouring this Pasifika young person and being transparent in my conversations?
- What am I doing that is creative and providing opportunities to grow and heal?
- How am I navigating and validating youth experiences without judgement?

# SHORELINES

Shorelines symbolise opportunities for Vā, authentic relational interactions occurring between Pasifika young people and their aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau and the practitioner. The shoreline symbolises a privileged position where practitioners support Pasifika young people to express their dreams and aspirations. Shorelines are shaped by the young person identifying their direction. The shoreline enables practitioners to support and encourage growth of hope, self-belief, dreams, resources of new opportunities, and encourage young people to embark on ambitious journeys.

**Qualities of a Practitioner:**

- Value the Turanga (essence from one's status, position, geneology) of Pasifika youth.
- Relationally connect to enhance wellbeing.
- Support dreams and hold hope through nurturing the Vā.
- Adapt with agility while honouring and valuing what is shared with you.

**Critical-Reflective Questions:**

- What is the unique essence of this Pasifika youth and how am I valuing this?
- Culturally how am I understanding possible pathways for the Pasifika young person?
- What resources do I need to bring to this shoreline for this Pasifika youth to achieve their aspirations?
- Is my practice agile and adaptive to the needs of the Pasifika youth?

# SAND

Sand is an example of Tā-Vā. It represents knowledge held within time and space, from the past, present and future. Sand is flexible, adaptable and fluid within its ecosystem;  the practitioner can support the Pasifika young person within their environment to work towards their aspirations and Tā-Vā. Within Tā-Vā the essence of culture, language, spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing of the Pasifika young person is paramount and nurtured in ways that are meaningful to them.

**Qualities of a Practitioner:**

- Understand the interrelationships between the parts of the ecosystem, and power imbalances through the Pasifika view of Tā-Vā.
- Understand the natural support systems of each Pasifka youth.
- Practice flexibility, adaptability and fluidity.
- Practice humility in what is shared with you.

**Critical-Reflective Questions:**

- Using Tā-Vā how am I supporting a shift in power, growth and transformation of the Pasifika young person's ecosystem?
- How am I supporting the Pasifika youth to connect with their natural systems of support?
- Am I able to recognise when I need to practice flexibility, adaptability and fluidity?
- What stops me from practicing in this way?
- How am I consistently honouring and valuing their voice?

# LIGHT

Light from Langi/Rangi, connects the moana, islands, shorelines and sand from above and below. As an instrument of illumination, the practitioner and their organisation can encompass a multi-layered view of a Pasifika young person's context, inviting them to explore more deeply different transformational pathways. Light highlights depths within waves – reminding us to acknowledge and encourage the strength, capacity and the resources of the Pasifika young person and aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau. Practitioners can help Pasifika young people seek out and connect with various light sources in their worlds, such as peers, whānau, and other people, places, things, culture, and values that are resources for them.

**Qualities of a Practitioner:**

- Recognise and create actions that generate opportunities for transformation.
- Gain a deeper understanding.
- Be an expert in your field, be trustworthy and show integrity.
- Value the privilege of walking alongside aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau as they navigate non-Pasifika systems.

**Critical-Reflective Questions:**

- How am I supporting Pasifika anau to recognise and celebrate 'transformations' in their youth?
- How am I creating responsive connections that help build understanding?
- What qualities do I need when building trust?
- How am I communicating integrity within relationships?
- How can I be available and supportive of Pasifika young people in navigating and standing strong in their cultural identity?
- How do I represent Pasifika youth without compromising their cultural identity?

# RESOURCES

**Yavu: Foundations of Pacific Engagement** is a resource developed by the Ministry of Pacific Peoples as a guideline on how to engage with our Pacific communities in a way that is meaningful and relevant.
***https://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/MPP8836-Yavu-Pacific-Engagement-Digital-Book.pdf***

**Pasifika Proud** is a network taking action to strengthen Pasifika families provide community-led family violence prevention. They have developed a range of resources relevant to working with Pasifika youth, families and communities.
***https://www.pasefikaproud.co.nz/Mana***

**Moana Digital Ocean** is an immersive web-based digital art experience exploring our relationships with the ocean and climate breakdown, highlighting indigenous voices and knowledge. This is art as activism.
***https://digitalocean.manamoana.co.nz/***

YOUTHSAY
Whāia to huanui kia toa
*Pursue your pathway to success*

***www.youthsay.co.nz***

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# CREDITS


This framework was developed by staff at Te Aroha Noa Community Services in Palmerston North in partnership with the Youth Transitions research team, Massey University. Theresa Chick and Donna MacNicol worked with Tracie Mafile'o and a team of advisors to bring together the framework and have tested it with Pasifika practitioners around the country.

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