

FACT SHEET III: FOR YOUTH WORKERS (NON-PASIFIKA)



SEAN

Pasifika Youth Worker

More than a decade working as a youth worker.

"A passion for providing culturally authentic and responsive support to young people and believes that his role enables him to do this in effective ways".



Reflection

Sean works in the school context and supports Pasifika Youth towards maintaining a positive education and life trajectory.

When asked about some of the strategies he draws on in his work with young people, Sean highlights the important role that the process of Talanoa plays in his day-to-day work.

Talanoa?

[Pasifika] Noun



The informal sharing of knowledge, ideas and thoughts through storytelling and dialogue, and can be a powerful vehicle in terms of bridging communication barriers.

Sean shared a recent example of how Talanoa is used in his day-to-day work in secondary schools:

SCENARIO

I witnessed a principal ask one of the Pasifika youth what are his aspirations in life.

RESULT...

If I didn't have this conversation, the principal might have walked away from the interaction thinking that the young man he had spoken with had no aspirations.



I DON'T KNOW!
I DON'T KNOW!
I DON'T KNOW!

The young man looked down at the ground and responded "I don't know. I don't know".

Aspiration

[faemli] Noun

When in fact, it was quite the opposite – he just didn't understand the term 'aspiration'.

Aspiration Means...

It wasn't until I spoke to the student that I realised that the boy knew what he wanted to when he left school but that he didn't understand the term 'aspirations'.

"Sometimes these informal conversations have powerful consequences."

- Sean

Role of the youth worker: Guidance

Pasifika Youth Workers are a vital component of the Youth Work landscape.



Not only do they walk and navigate two worlds – the professional and their own community connections – but they can also provide crucial guidance for non-Pasifika Youth Workers as they come to know and understand Pasifika Youth.

Part of this guidance might involve working alongside non-Pasifika Youth Workers to support their understandings of how to interact with young people and their families, as well as guiding organisations in the development of culturally responsive practices and ways of working with Pasifika youth.

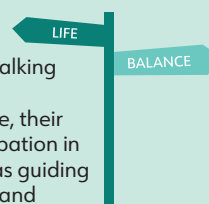
Role of the youth worker: As a mentor

All Youth Workers have a crucial role to play in the lives of Pasifika Youth. Not only do they act as mentors, but as highlighted in the case example presented in this fact sheet, they also help young people to develop, build and maintain strong relationships in the educational and community context.



Part of this work involves walking alongside young people to support their independence, their connectedness and participation in different contexts, as well as guiding them to realise their rights and responsibilities across these contexts.

It also involves advocating for Pasifika youth when other organisations or people do not understand the life of a young person.



Reflective Questions:

- What are some of the challenges faced by the Pasifika youth you work with?
- What are the strengths of the Pasifika youth you work with and how can these strengths be harnessed?
- What strategies do you find effective when working with Pasifika youth?