

# AT A GLANCE

**"WITHOUT RACISM AOTEAROA WOULD BE BETTER"**  
MOKOPUNA SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES OF RACISM AND SOLUTIONS TO END IT



## About this report

This report is the outcome of a collaboration between Mana Mokopuna – Children and Young People’s Commission (Mana Mokopuna), the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) and National Iwi Chairs Forum (NICF). The Ministry and NICF asked the Office of the Children’s Commissioner (predecessor to Mana Mokopuna) to engage with children and young people to ensure their voices were heard in the development of the Nation Action Plan Against Racism. These engagements aimed to ensure that children and young people had their views heard on matters that affect them. This project was led by the Mana Mokopuna Participation and Engagement team - Mai World.

Our engagements were held between September 2022 and June 2023. This report shares the voices of mokopuna from engagements in their community, with mokopuna in state care and at a nationwide engagement with mokopuna present at the Race Unity Speech Awards.

## Digital Illustrations by Sara Moana

## Acknowledgements

Mana Mokopuna wishes to acknowledge those within the National Iwi Chairs Forum (NICF) and the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) and the Joint Steering Committee for upholding the right of mokopuna to have a say in important discussions such as the National Action Plan Against Racism. Our thinking and engagement design was guided by the work of the NICF, the Ministry and the Joint Steering Committee and we are grateful they provided us with the opportunity to hear from mokopuna about their views and experiences of racism.

Most of all we are grateful to the mokopuna who participated in this project for their time, wisdom and insights, as well as the community connectors and partners who went above and beyond to support us to deliver these engagements. Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou, thank you to everyone who was involved.

## About us

Mana Mokopuna – Children and Young People’s Commission is an Independent Crown Entity, established under the Children and Young People’s Commission Act 2022. Mana Mokopuna is governed by a Board and led by the Chief Children’s Commissioner. We advocate for the full participation, rights, interests, and well-being of all children and young people (mokopuna) under 18 years of age, and young people under 25 years old who are, or have been, in state care or custody in Aotearoa New Zealand. We view mokopuna within the context of their families, whānau, hapū, iwi and communities.

We aim to listen to, engage with, and reflect the voices of mokopuna and share them with decision-makers. We work with mokopuna from all around Aotearoa to understand what they think about a range of topics. We then share their thoughts so they can guide government and community decision-making, as well as the work we do.

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# At a Glance

## An overview of the project

In 2022, the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) and National Iwi Chairs Forum (NICF) commissioned the Office of the Children’s Commissioner<sup>1</sup> (predecessor to Mana Mokopuna) to engage with mokopuna about their experiences of culture and racism, as well as their aspirations and ideas for addressing racism in Aotearoa New Zealand. This voices report provides the key themes and insights gathered through face-to-face engagements with 161 mokopuna across Aotearoa New Zealand, these engagements were completed throughout September 2022 to June 2023.

While the mokopuna who participated in this project are not a representative sample, their insights come from authentic, powerful, and profound real-life stories which illustrate the experiences of a diverse range of mokopuna across the motu.

Most of our engagements with mokopuna focused on three areas of inquiry<sup>2</sup>:

- 1) What are your positive experiences of culture, tradition, and language?
- 2) What is racism and how have you experienced it?
- 3) What should happen to address and eliminate racism?

The engagements were between 2-4 hours long, and combined activities and conversations in a focus group style interview. The aim for each session was to cultivate the feeling of sitting around a kāuta (cooking area) or campfire, where deep, genuine and intimate conversations are known to be held in a safe and comfortable environment. Mokopuna spoke to the campfire and their insights were directly recorded by Mana Mokopuna kaimahi (staff). Mokopuna could also record their own voices and experiences on post-it notes. The voices, experiences and stories shared by mokopuna were then analysed to identify the key themes.

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<sup>1</sup> As of July 1, 2023, the Office of the Children’s Commissioner was disestablished and a new Independent Crown Entity, Mana Mokopuna – Children and Young People’s Commission was established. Mana Mokopuna is governed by a Board, chaired by Chief Children’s Commissioner Dr Claire Achmad who is the active, visible advocate for all mokopuna in Aotearoa New Zealand. Throughout the report we will be referred to as Mana Mokopuna, noting that at the time of engagement we facilitated engagements as our predecessor – Office of the Children’s Commissioner.

<sup>2</sup> These questions were the areas of inquiry for the first and second phase of engagements for this project. The final phase of engagements solely focused on question three and asked mokopuna to share their ideas and solutions to eliminate racism in Aotearoa New Zealand. This was due to a limited timeframe to hold engagements with these mokopuna.

This report shares these insights as a light to drive out the darkness of racism as informed by and for the mokopuna of Aotearoa New Zealand. Based on what we have heard from them, Mana Mokopuna calls for action to end racism in Aotearoa New Zealand, and advocates for a rights-based approach to ending racism. We urge the government, decision-makers, school leadership and those with influence in the lives of mokopuna to listen to them and play their part to end racism.

Prior to this project, Mana Mokopuna had not facilitated any engagements with mokopuna to hear specifically about racism or discrimination. However, racism was a common thread throughout separate, previous engagements on education, well-being, experiences with Oranga Tamariki, and the lived experiences of tamariki and rangatahi Māori, Pacific young peoples, mokopuna whaikaha, and mokopuna of ethnic communities. This project provided an opportunity to respond to these earlier voices through a project that focuses on understanding and addressing the issue of racism from a mokopuna perspective.

Mana Mokopuna acknowledges with deep appreciation the mokopuna who have shared their experiences of racism and discrimination in other engagements we have previously facilitated across the motu. For example, in the 2018 report series, Education Matters to Me, we heard from many mokopuna that people at school are racist towards tamariki and rangatahi Māori.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [Office of the Children's Commissioner, Education Matters to Me: Key Insights. \(2018\).](#)

# Mokopuna shared the following insights about racism in Aotearoa

## 01

### We experience racism in lots of different ways

Mokopuna told us that they experience racism explicitly and in more subtle ways, such as people judging them or making assumptions about them and their culture. They also shared that racist treatment is when people treat them differently, stereotype or bully them, and that other mokopuna sometimes engage in racist behaviour because they have learnt it from others.

“

**One day, I was in my science class. Me and my two other friends, we were just playing around my teacher got mad then she called another teacher and all of the sudden she only pointed on me not my friends because they weren't black and that really broke my heart and I started crying.**

*(Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato)*

”

## 02

### Racism is everywhere

Mokopuna identified that there is a culture in Aotearoa New Zealand that favours Western/ Pākehā norms. They shared that this racism is embedded in the community, at school and in government systems. Some mokopuna also noted that when people are raised amongst these cultural norms, they often do not see anything wrong with it.

“

**Living the hard life, the struggle, and you cant change it because you Māori.**

*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

”

“ **I didn't experience racism until I got to school.**  
*(Rainbow Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Te Whanganui ā Tara)*

”

## 03

### Connection to my culture helps me feel that I belong

Mokopuna shared how important their culture is for feeling a sense of belonging and pride. They shared the many different elements which provide them with a community, support system and examples of how their cultural identity can be seen, valued and respected.

“

**Having a 2nd second language gives you a sense of belonging to your culture.**

*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*

”

# 04

## We have aspirations for an Aotearoa that is free from racism

When we asked mokopuna to come up with solutions to eliminate racism across the motu, many shared their aspirations with us – including that future generations would not have to grow up experiencing racism.

“Without racism Aotearoa would be better.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato)*

# 05

## We have lots of solutions to end racism, but action is essential

Mokopuna offered ideas spanning across education, civics, community and other solutions to end racism in Aotearoa New Zealand. Most importantly, mokopuna wanted to see action.

“For people in government: Actually listen + know what it [racism] means. Don't just take ideas, act upon it.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 12-16, Ōtepoti)*

### Solutions grounded in te ao Māori

“Teach every culture about the Māori traditions and life style.”

*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-18, Te Moana a Toi)*

### Solutions to empower mokopuna

“Workshops – run by young people for young people – talk about different cultures, experiences in new country and belonging.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)*

### Solutions which support whānau and families

“We need more money to live.”

*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

### Education-focused solutions

“Educating all generations on racism and its effects.”

*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*

### Solutions targeted at the system

“Include more people of colour and religions into parliament.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)*



## What we heard from mokopuna

This section provides insights into what we learnt from mokopuna – children and young people – about their experiences of racism in Aotearoa New Zealand through the three different phases of engagement. It also shares their aspirations for a sense of belonging and a future where the next generation of mokopuna can grow up in a country that embraces diversity, where people can walk down the street and be in the places and spaces that are important to them in their communities without fear of judgement, stereotyping or racist treatment.

# 01 We experience racism in lots of different ways

Mokopuna emphasised that many different experiences shape our understanding of racism. A common theme across the engagements was that racism is learnt behaviour and no one is born racist. It was evident from our engagements with mokopuna that they experienced racism in many ways, this varied from the feeling of being judged, stereotyping, bullying, and racist treatment.

## Racism against mokopuna Māori is very common

Throughout our engagements, there was a reoccurring theme about the distinct experiences of mokopuna Māori, who shared that racism is intergenerational in nature.

“**The Māori battalion...Man we fought the war for the racist and we got nothing, but our Māori showed the world.** (Mokopuna, aged 14-16, Remand Home)

“**Getting weird looks for speaking Māori in public.** (Mokopuna Māori, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)

“**People think all Māori are thieves.** (Mokopuna Māori, Youth Justice Residence)

## We feel judged about our culture and how we look

Mokopuna, and particularly mokopuna Māori, feel like they are looked at differently. They told us they are judged about how they look, if their names are different, or for being Māori.

“**Looked at differently, weird looks – just at the shops.** (Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato)

“**kids judged due to food i.e. dumplings or names that are uncommon.** (Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau)

“**boys at school saying they are scared of me cause of [being] Māori.” (Mokopuna, Youth Justice Residence)**



## People stereotype and make assumptions about our culture

Mokopuna told us about harmful assumptions people make about their culture, including that stereotypical comments hurt their feelings.

“People say “you can’t be Māori or Samoan your too white” or “stop trying to speak Māori you’re just doing it for attention.”

*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*

“Assumptions after school  
Māori will go on the benefit.”

*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-18, Te Moana a Toi)*

“Black person hide your stuff.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

## Racism is bullying

Mokopuna also described bullying as a common form of racism they experienced. Many of the instances of bullying that mokopuna talked about happened in their schools.

“They bullied me for wearing a hijab so I stopped wearing it to school.”

*(Resettled Mokopuna, Te Whanganui ā Tara)*

“End school first, racism is coming from school, I don’t get bullied anywhere but school.” *(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)*

## Racism comes from many different people and groups

Mokopuna described racist treatment by others, which included derogatory comments about their culture and religion, and being disrespected or made fun of. They talked about how they were made to feel inferior or ‘different’.

“Treated different because you’re from a different country.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)*

“They started coughing (first covid hit) Chinese virus at school.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau)*

Mokopuna shared about the racism they see and experience between groups of similar backgrounds, such as between Pacific and Māori communities. Some mokopuna gave an example of being called “plastic” – which meant they were not Māori or Pacific enough.

“Pacific people calling me plastic.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau)*

“Brown people are mean to brown people.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 9-12, Rural Te Matau a Māui)*

“Full islanders calling us/treating non-full islanders different.”

*(Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau)*

# 02 Racism is everywhere

Mokopuna identified that there is a culture in Aotearoa New Zealand that favours Western/Pākehā norms. They shared that this racism is embedded in the community, at school and in government systems.

## Racism systematically targets Māori

Mokopuna shared experiences of racism which linked to the oppression of Māori culture and language. They also highlighted the systemised perception of Māori as poor or criminals, whilst also emphasising that poverty is inescapable due to the cycle of intergenerational poverty and racism.

**“ Living the hard life, the struggle, and you cant change it because you Māori. ”**  
*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-16, YJ Remand Home)*

## Racism comes from those in power, older people and the government

Mokopuna talked about not being treated with respect and dignity by government agencies and not feeling represented by people in power. They also shared that there should be more diversity in positions of power, such as more Māori, people of colour, and people of different religions within Parliament.

**“ Bet you that the people in the beehive dont know what it means to be poor and to deal with racism. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

**“ Govt agencies not treating whānau with respect and dignity e.g.WINZ. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*

**“ In white dominant spaces we always have to fight for our culture. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau)*

## Racism in schools

Throughout our engagements, mokopuna identified school and the education system as the main place they had experienced racism.

**“ Being kicked out of school because other people are scared, but no one wants to know your story or help you after that and then you get judged forever. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

Mokopuna shared teachers often made assumptions and judgements about their abilities based on the way they looked or their cultural background.

“**The teachers don't really care to be honest. They say it [racism] is part of growing up.** (Mokopuna, aged 9-12, Rural Te Matau a Māui)

“**My teacher thought me and my tongan friends were related. I'm Samoan.** (Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)

## We need our basic needs met

These engagements also highlighted that many mokopuna and their whānau, especially those with care experience, are still struggling to get the basics. Some mokopuna shared that the reason they turned to crime was because they were struggling to get by.

“**Getting judged for being hungry not our fault we are poor.**” (Mokopuna, Youth Justice Residence)

## Abuse of authority

It was evident that mokopuna recognised that adults with authority such as teachers, principals and police officers have a responsibility to do right by all people, no matter their ethnicity, background, upbringing or religion. However, mokopuna shared that it was common for people in these positions of authority to abuse their power and be racist towards them.

“**I went to a trusted adult at school about something unrelated to my school work and they assumed my parents were pressuring me to study & get excellences.** (Mokopuna, Secondary School Age, Ōtautahi)

“**The principal treats groups unfairly. For some groups – get suspended others, Palagi, a second chance.** (Rainbow Mokopuna, Aged 14-18, Te Whanganui ā Tara)

In our engagements with care-experienced mokopuna, police harassment and brutality were a common theme. Mokopuna in care often used their experiences with police to define what racism is.

“**Get arrested and police beat you up.** (Mokopuna, Youth Justice Residence)

“**Police harassing youths to try make youths admit to things you haven't done.** (Mokopuna Māori, Aged 14-16, Remand Home)

# 03 Connection to my culture helps me feel that I belong

Mokopuna shared with us the importance of being understood and feeling comfortable expressing who you are. Having the opportunity to learn about their culture and traditions was also important to them.

## Māoritanga

Māoritanga and te ao Māori were recognised as a key aspect of culture for many mokopuna Māori. This was a reoccurring theme and they listed a range of tikanga, taonga and Māori values which made them feel proud to be Māori.

“ **Seeing our pēpi enjoy reo māori and our culture.** ”  
*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-18, Te Moana a Toi)*

“ **The things that makes me proud to be Māori is the culture and my whānau.** ”  
*(Mokopuna Māori, Secondary School age, Te Matau a Māui)*

“ **Things I am proud of from my culture kapa haka, knowing where you come from and moko kauae.** ”  
*(Mokopuna, aged 11-15, Care and Protection Secure Residence)*

## Being a part of a community

Feeling connected to community, family and whānau provided mokopuna with belonging, comfort and support.

“ **That you could go up an older lady on a marae and be able to call them aunty even if you don't know them and have a full on convo.** ”  
*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*

“ **I don't feel left out with my Tongan family. It's the little things.** ”  
*(Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau)*

## Expressing culture through clothing, traditions and cultural activities

For mokopuna, being able to express their culture through clothing or cultural events was important to who they are. They also shared that they felt affirmed when cultural events and activities were held and supported by others and the government.

“ **Clothing, puletasi, puletaha, taovala, kiekie.** ”  
*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*

“ **Culture: The different dances that we perform that shows who we are as people and sometimes portrays our story.** (Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau) ”

“ **Clothes – how we represent ourselves – where we are from, shows who I am.** (Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Waikato) ”

## Language is a way for us to connect to our culture and others

Mokopuna shared that knowing their native language helps them feel connected to their culture and others who share the same language. They shared that their language was something they were proud of and enjoyed connecting with others by speaking with them.

“ **Being able to speak our mother tongue.** ”  
(Mokopuna, aged 9-12, Rural Te Matau a Māui)

“ **Language. Although I can't really speak it, I do understand and think it's really beautiful.** ”  
(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)

## My faith and religion are a part of my culture which connects me to friends and family

Many mokopuna talked about how they felt safe and supported within their faith and belief systems. Although we did not directly ask about it, religion was raised by mokopuna as part of their individual, family, community and cultural identity.

“ **Mousque [mosque] go pray with friends, pray.** (Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti) ”

“ **Not scared to embrace it - taking turn to do prayer and stuff.** ”  
(Mokopuna, Secondary School Age, Ōtautahi)

## Food brings people together

Mokopuna shared with us the relationship between food, culture and family, and how food brings people together. They also talked about the need to respect other people's food, and not make fun of food from other cultures.

“ **Food like traditional meals and cooking.** (Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato) ”

“ **I love everything [about my culture], family, food, people, everything, Eid [drawing of mosque].** (Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti) ”

# 04 We have aspirations for an Aotearoa that is free from racism

Mana Mokopuna asked mokopuna what ideas they had to eliminate racism in Aotearoa New Zealand. As mokopuna were tasked with big picture and blue skies thinking, many of them shared their aspirations for a racism-free society. Many mokopuna were concerned for future generations, mokopuna asked that we:

**“ Make sure our children don’t grow up experiencing racism. ”**  
*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-18, Te Moana a Toi)*

Mana Mokopuna shares the aspirations of these mokopuna and asks the government to create systemic change so that they can walk freely down the street with no worries, see themselves in the people in power, and have the opportunity to learn about their culture.

**“ Walk down the street with no worries. ”**  
*(Rainbow Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Te Whanganui ā Tara)*

**“ No overpolicing in lower socio-economic places. Not basing assumptions on looks. ”**  
*(Rainbow Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Te Whanganui ā Tara)*

**“ 1 person is not enough to represent a city. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)*

**“ Getting stuff you want/need without being judged. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 9-12, Rural Te Matau a Māui)*

If there was no racism, some mokopuna shared that it would help their confidence and allow them to be who they are.

**“ Having confidence in yourself & who you are then it’s doesn’t matter what people see. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Waikato)*

**“ Without racism people will be able to show their culture freely. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato)*

Mokopuna voiced different perspectives, fresh ideas and genuine concern about the state of racism in Aotearoa. No child or young person should have to worry about having the basics or being judged, stereotyped or bullied at school and mokopuna shared that without racism they would have what they need.

**“ Give people the support they need not what you think they want. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

**“ Everyone would be confident [without racism] and want to speak there [their] culture. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato)*

**“ More loving, caring, help, sharing. ”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 9-12, Rural Te Matau a Māui)*

## However, some mokopuna shared a sense of hopelessness

Some mokopuna also told us that they felt racism would never be fully stamped out. They recognised that it would take a major commitment to make changes to racism in Aotearoa New Zealand, and there are likely some people who do not want things to change.

**“ You can't fix racism because people don't really want to fix it, they talk about it and they pretend to care but they actually don't care. ”**  
*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

# 05

## We have lots of solutions to end racism, but action is essential

We asked mokopuna to share their ideas to eliminate racism in Aotearoa New Zealand, most mokopuna were incredibly eager to share and wanted to ensure that action was taken.

### Solutions grounded in te ao Māori

We heard from both mokopuna Māori and mokopuna tauwiwi that te ao Māori and te reo Māori are important in their lives and for their education. This included making te reo Māori compulsory in all schools and early childhood education.

“**Teach every culture about the Māori traditions and life style.**”

*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-18, Te Moana a Toi)*

### Opportunities for mokopuna Māori, their whānau and everyone to embrace te ao Māori

Mokopuna Māori shared the importance of Māori values and asked for more opportunities to learn about te ao Māori as well as opportunities to set them up for a good future.

“**Help us learn about our culture, about our language, give our land back, support our family.**”

*(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

### Solutions to empower mokopuna

Solutions targeted at empowering mokopuna, will require systems change – to enable youth-led solutions and disrupt feelings of hopelessness.

#### Youth-led solutions

Mokopuna want opportunities to engage and participate through youth led initiatives. They were clear that they have important views and perspectives that must be heard.

“**Help youth learn from each other and that's it ok mix.**”

*(Mokopuna, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*

“**Workshops – run by young people for young people – talk about different cultures, experiences in new country and belonging.**”

*(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)*



# Solutions which support whānau and families

Mokopuna supported solutions which provided their families with opportunities, resources and financial support as they recognised that racism was ingrained in systemic issues which have left people, particularly Māori, with very little.

## Mokopuna, whānau and communities need financial support

Some mokopuna shared that poverty was the reason they had to participate in crime. As a solution, mokopuna suggested giving young people, their whānau and communities financial support as a way to solve racism.

“Give money to people to deal with the problems, our family struggle and we do what we need to do to survive. Then people judge us and say we do things because we Māori. (Mokopuna, aged 14-16, Remand Home)”

## Solutions need to focus on the community

Mokopuna spoke about the importance of community and having a safe place to talk. They shared that different cultures should come together, and that representation is important.

“Needs to be driven by community. (Rainbow Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Porirua)”

“Cultural celebrations within the community. Can be school student lead, council lead, facilitator lead. (Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Nationwide Engagement)”

## We want more places and spaces to learn about different cultures

Mokopuna shared there is an opportunity for youth spaces, these would include space for casual interaction and different cultural activities.

“Build community centres for young people to learn about different cultures. (Mokopuna Māori, Secondary School age, Te Matau a Māui)”

## We should host lots of cultural events

As a priority in addressing racism, mokopuna suggested holding more events such as festivals, concerts and markets which would provide a space for groups to showcase their culture. They believe this will help to build understanding and connection between different cultures.

“**Having more nation-wide festivals like; Diwali etc. with this also increase education & knowledge.** *(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*”

“**National cultural celebrations equivalent to Te Matatini (if they don't already).** *(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Nationwide Engagement)*”

## Speakers who have experienced racism should be sharing their story

Mokopuna suggested that hearing from speakers that have experienced racism could help educate people about it and they hoped that audiences could connect and understand the impacts of racism by hearing someone's lived experience.

“**Having someone who has experienced racism come to school and talk about it.** *(Rainbow Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Porirua)*”

## Different cultures should come together

Mokopuna shared that they would like the opportunity to learn from each other through bonding and sharing stories to understand more about different cultures. In sharing these ideas with us, mokopuna emphasised that cultural divides were not entrenched, especially for younger generations.

“**If we learn about different cultures we won't bully people about wearing or being different.** *(Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato)*”

# Solutions to create societal change

Mokopuna shared that they think racism exists where society is not accepting of differences. When this happens, expressions of culture or religion such as language, types of clothing, religious practices, and ways of celebrating are seen as being outside the 'norm'. The following solutions that mokopuna shared look to disrupt the norm and encourage people to express who they are.

## Communication and language are important to eliminate racism

Mokopuna thought all people who have experienced racism should have access to mental health support such as counselling or that people should be supported to talk about racism if they've experienced it.

**“ Being able to understand that you can speak up and encourage groups of people to speak up. (Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Nationwide Engagement) ”**

**“ That people can communicate their concerns in a way that ensures that they are heard and safe if action is taken. (Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau) ”**

## Traditional and cultural clothes should be valued

By making traditional clothing more accessible, some mokopuna shared that culture can be celebrated and valued through clothing.

**“ Wearing traditional clothes i.e. hijab. (Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato) ”**

**“ Make cultural clothing more accessible. (Mokopuna, aged 12-16, Ōtepoti) ”**

## Campaigning and using social media to share that racism is not ok

Mokopuna also suggested having a campaign where people share informative videos of their cultures and experiences to expose racism as an issue and help people see the real impacts racism has.

**“ Share on social media – Facebook, Instagram, YouTube. Must be entertaining and informative. Young people listen to other young people. Tell [them] not to be racist. (Mokopuna, aged 12-16, Ōtepoti) ”**

**“ Collaboration with different cultures on social media. (Mokopuna, aged 11-13, Rural Waikato) ”**

## Solutions targeted at the system

There were many solutions shared that provided practical actions for the government to take and improve government services which would help make improvements to the system and end systemic racism. Mokopuna shared ideas that ranged from suggesting that the government should invest in communities to having translators at essential services.

“**Train people who have power to understand what youth need, to understand youth from other cultures.** *(Mokopuna Māori, aged 14-16, Remand Home)*”

## There are lots of things the government can do to change the system

Mokopuna shared that the government should support community focused interventions against racism. We, as Mana Mokopuna, advocate for a systemic shift to enable community-led solutions to improve outcomes for mokopuna.

“**Govt not looking at just stats of things, go in and do your job in the community.** *(Rainbow Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Porirua)*”

“**The government being honest and truthful about where they are going wrong & seeking help outside the beehive.** *(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*”

## Increasing representation is important

Visibility and representation of culture is important for mokopuna to help normalise and build cultural understanding. Mokopuna spoke about the importance of meaningful representation of different cultures in workplaces, in media (TV, music, social media) and in positions of political power. Mokopuna put emphasis on having actual diversity, they want Aotearoa New Zealand to be a balance of different cultures instead of one dominant culture.

“**Having more representation and have culture become normalised (eradicate stereotypes).** *(Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau)*”

## Consequences for people who are racist

Mokopuna wanted to see action when there are acts of racism.

“**Harsher punishment for those who get caught being racist.** *(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*”

# Education-focused solutions

Mokopuna in all groups identified the need for education around racism. They told us solutions to end racism should start within school and the education system.

## It is important to educate people of all generations and those in power

Many mokopuna also shared the importance of education for all adults, they acknowledged that it would take time and effort for adults to change their mindsets.

**“Educating all generations on racism and its effects.”**  
*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)*

**“Training the police with better education for racism.”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 11-15, Care and Protection Secure Residence)*

## Racism can be stopped if we break the chain for young mokopuna

Many mokopuna emphasised the importance of supporting whānau and community to create a positive environment of learning and acceptance.

**“Children are not born racist they are influenced by the people. So, in order to break this chain, it is about being active in schools, community. It’s also about standing strong and standing up not only for yourself but for everyone in times of adversity.”**  
*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Nationwide Engagement)*

Mokopuna told us they wanted education as early as possible to combat racism and cultivate a more inclusive society.

**“Teaching & educating youth – that’s when it gets to them.”**  
*(Rainbow Mokopuna, aged 14-18, Te Whanganui ā Tara)*

## Educating teachers

A priority that mokopuna raised was educating teachers on different cultures, how to show respect and what might be offensive to different cultures. Mokopuna told us about the importance of teacher education and accountability.

**“Start with teachers and then move onto students – educate about other cultures.”**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)*

## Representation for teachers and school leadership

Mokopuna felt it was critical to have more diversity in school leadership. They spoke about the importance of meaningful representation of different cultures in school.

“ **More cultures & diversity represented in kura -> staff, cultural narrative, buildings, slt, boards etc.**  
*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Ōtautahi)* ”

## Some ideas and examples to enable learning

Mokopuna had a range of ideas for addressing racism in their schools. They want leaders who are respectful, open, supportive, and have the courage to listen, share truth and aroha.

“ **Culture day in schools to showcase all diversity in the school.**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)* ”

“ **Jump jam – bring back in te reo Māori.**  
*(Mokopuna Māori, Secondary School age, Te Matau a Māui)* ”

“ **More cultural exchanges/opportunities between wharekura and English speaking schools.** *(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Nationwide Engagement)* ”

“ **Have mentors like tupuanga in every school.**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 14-17, Tāmaki Makaurau)* ”

“ **Cultural diversity facilitator in schools, actively working to promote diversity.**  
*(Mokopuna, Secondary School age, Nationwide Engagement)* ”

“ **School – 4 periods, less time at school – less bullying.**  
*(Mokopuna, aged 12-14, Ōtepoti)* ”