Pacific survivors' experiences of abuse and neglect in care

Summary and key messages

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Abuse in Care
Royal Commission of Inquiry

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Whakairihia ki te tihi o Maungārongo

He karakia

E tāmara mā, koutou te pūtake o ēnei kōwhiringa, kua horaina nei
E tohe tonu nei i te ara o te tika
E ngaki tonu ana i te māra tipu
Anei koutou te whakairihia ki te tihi o
Maungārongo, kia tau te mauri.

Rukuhia te pū o te hinengaro
kia tāea ko te kukunitanga mai o te whakaaro nui.
Kia piere ko te ngākau mahora
kia tūwhera mai he wairua tau.

Koinei ngā pou whakairinga i te tāhuhu
o te Whare o Tū Te Mauriora.
Te āhuru mōwai o Te Pae o Rehua,
kaimuru i te hinapōuri,
kaitohu i te manawa hā ora,
kaihohou i te pai.

Nau mai e koutou kua uhia e ngā haukino
o te wā, kua pēhia e ngā whakawai a ngā tipua nei,
a te Ringatūkino rāua ko te Kanohihuna.

Koutou i whītiki i te tātua o te toa,
i kākahu i te korowai o te pono,
i whakamau i te tīpare o tō mana motuhake,
toko ake ki te pūaotanga o te āpōpō e tatari mai nei i tua o te pae,
nōu te ao e whakaata mai nei.

Kāti rā, ā te tākiritanga mai o te ata,
ā te huanga ake o te awatea,
kia tau he māramatanga,
kia ū ko te pai, kia mau ko te tika.
Koinei ko te tangi a te ngākau e Rongo,
tūturu ōwhiti whakamaua
kia tina, tina!
Hui e, tāiki e!

– Waihoroi Paraone Hōterene

To you upon whom this inquiry has been centered
Resolute in your pursuit of justice
Relentless in your belief for life
You have only our highest regard and respect,
may your peace of mind be assured.

Look into the deepest recesses of your being
and discover the seeds of new hope,
where the temperate heart might find solace,
and the blithe spirit might rise again.

Let these be the pillars on which the House of Self,
reconciliation can stand.
Safe haven of Rehua,
dispatcher of sorrow,
restorer of the breath of life,
purveyor of kindness.

Those of you who have faced the ill winds
of time and made to suffer,
at the hands of abusers and the hidden faces of persecutors, draw near.

You who found courage,
cloaked yourselves with your truth,
who crowned yourself with dignity,
a new tomorrow awaits beyond the horizon,
your future beckons.

And so, as dawn rises, and a new day begins,
let clarity and understanding reign,
goodness surrounds you and
justice prevails.
Rongo god of peace, this the heart desires,
we beseech you,
let it be,
it is done.

– Waihoroi Paraone Hōterene

Pānui whakatūpato

Ka nui tā mātou tiaki me te hāpai ake i te mana o ngā purapura ora i māia rawa atu nei ki te whāriki i ā rātou kōrero ki konei. Kei te mōhio mātou ka oho pea te mauri ētahi wāhanga o ngā kōrero nei e pā ana ki te tūkino, te whakatūroro me te pāmamae, ā, tērā pea ka tākirihia ngā tauwharewarenga o te ngākau tangata i te kaha o te tumeke. Ahakoa kāore pea tēnei urupare e tau pai ki te wairua o te tangata, e pai ana te rongo i te pouri. Heoi, mehemea ka whakataumaha tēnei i ētahi o tō whānau, me whakapā atu ki tō tākuta, ki tō ratongo Hauora rānei. Whakatetia ngā kōrero a ētahi, kia tau te mauri, tiakina te wairua, ā, kia māmā te ngākau.

Distressing content warning

We honour and uphold the dignity of survivors who have so bravely shared their stories here. We acknowledge that some content contains explicit descriptions of tūkino – abuse, harm and trauma – and may evoke strong negative, emotional responses for readers. Although this response may be unpleasant and difficult to tolerate, it is also appropriate to feel upset. However, if you or someone in your close circle needs support, please contact your GP or healthcare provider. Respect others' truths, breathe deeply, take care of your spirit and be gentle with your heart.

The Royal Commission of Inquiry examined the abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults in State care and in the care of faith-based institutions. This summary provides an overview of Pacific survivors' experiences of abuse and neglect in care during 1950–1999.

Contents

"My mother needed help with eight children and therapy for her grief. I strongly believe her condition would have worsened significantly by being taken away from all her children. Rather than the State providing her with the help she needed she was punished further."

TE ENGA HARRIS
Pacific and Māori

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. This summary describes the abuse and neglect in State care and in the care of faith-based institutions experienced by Pacific survivors during the Inquiry period.
2. Chapter 2 is an executive summary.
3. Chapter 3 provides the context for this summary, including the number of Pacific survivors who registered with the Inquiry, Pacific frameworks of health and wellbeing, Pacific values that have grounded and shaped the Inquiry's work, and the historical and social context most relevant to Pacific Peoples' communities during the Inquiry period.
4. Chapter 4 describes the circumstances that led to Pacific survivors entering care during the Inquiry period. This chapter explains how racism, negative societal attitudes and discrimination played a particular role in many Pacific survivors entering care.
5. Chapter 5 discusses the nature and extent of abuse and neglect experienced by Pacific children, young people and adults in State and faith-based care. It focuses on the racist abuse that targeted Pacific Peoples' identities.
6. Chapter 6 describes the impact of the abuse and neglect that Pacific survivors suffered in care.
7. Chapter 7 explains the factors that contributed to Pacific survivors being abused and neglected in care. It focuses on the factors that had specific effects on Pacific survivors. It also summarises the lessons learned and the changes made to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect.

Chapter 2: Executive summary

8. Pacific Peoples had a shared history and whakapapa with Māori and Aotearoa New Zealand long before the arrival of Christian missionaries and colonisation. Large-scale migration, starting in the 1950s, brought Pacific families the opportunity for a new life in Aotearoa New Zealand. Racism, economic hardship and separation from their kainga (family) made it hard for some to adjust. Churches became the hearts of Pacific communities, replacing the village structures and support systems of their previous homes.

9. Racism, negative perceptions about migrants and 'overstayers', and moral panic about youth behaviours increased the surveillance and scrutiny of Pacific Peoples by authorities and society. The challenges faced by many Pacific families, such as racism, housing insecurity, poverty and loss of culture and identity after migrating, also contributed to disproportionate numbers of Pacific children and young people entering social welfare care.

10. Religion and culture were so interwoven that it was simply a given that many Pacific families placed their children and young people into faith-based education, including boarding schools. Government education scholarships brought some Pacific young people to Aotearoa New Zealand, where they were expected to excel with minimal practical or emotional support.

11. Pacific survivors in State and faith-based care were subjected to high levels of physical and sexual abuse. Pacific survivors talked about acts of violence that often came with racist verbal abuse targeted at their ethnic identities, languages, cultures, and physical characteristics, especially their skin colour. Pacific survivors were separated from their kainga (families), which created a disconnection from their language, culture and identities. They told the Inquiry how their ethnicity was grouped together with Māori or other ethnicities under 'Polynesian', or incorrectly recorded, or not recorded at all.

12. Many Pacific survivors endured profound struggles with belonging, identity and self-worth after being disconnected from their kainga, communities, culture, values and language. The effects of this cultural neglect were exacerbated by the targeted racial abuse they were subjected to. These acts transgressed the core Pacific cultural concept of the vā, or the "space between" that holds people and things together. Some survivors lost their faith because of being taken away from their families or being abused in faith-based care.

13. The personal factors that contributed to Pacific children, young people and adults being placed into care also meant they were more vulnerable to being abused and neglected in care. This was due to societal attitudes and discrimination based on racism, ableism, disablism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and negative stereotypes about children and young people, poverty and welfare dependency.

14. Pacific children, young people and adults were more likely to be placed in care, and to be abused and neglected while in care, if they were also living in poverty, or were Māori, Deaf, disabled or experiencing mental distress, or had experienced adverse childhood events, or had a deferential attitude to people in positions of authority. Pacific people who had multiple combinations of these characteristics were at higher risk.

15. Ultimately, the State failed in its responsibilities to keep Pacific children, young people and adults in care safe from abuse and neglect. The State failed to uphold the human rights of Pacific Peoples in care. Pacific survivors and their families' perspectives and solutions were often marginalised, and they were excluded from influencing the design and delivery of care. Discriminatory legislation, policies and practices reflected the views and attitudes of the people who designed them. By and large, they lacked diversity and lived experience, and their attitudes reflected those of broader Aotearoa New Zealand society.

16. Institutional and structural racism in the care system reflected the societal attitudes introduced through colonisation and Christian beliefs. These attitudes were underpinned by the view that Pākehā culture, lifestyle and values are superior to those of other cultures. Racism contributed significantly to the disproportionate numbers of Pacific People in care, and the abuse and neglect they were subjected to. Aotearoa New Zealand still has significant steps to take before racism is eliminated from our society.

"I can never forget the violence, the beatings, the yelling and the abuse. I had learning difficulties at school; being beaten up at home affected my brain so I had difficulty concentrating."

JASON FENTON
Asian, Niuean and Māori
(Ngāti Whātua, Ngāti Kuri)

Chapter 3: Context

17. The Terms of Reference directed the Inquiry to recognise the status of Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand and recognise that Pacific Peoples have been disproportionately represented in care.[1]

Summary of Pacific survivors who registered with the Inquiry

18. In total, 2,329 survivors registered with the Inquiry. As set out in Part 1 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, Pacific survivors represented 5 percent (113 survivors) of the total number of registered survivors.

19. The Inquiry recognises that the true number of Pacific survivors who experienced abuse and neglect in State and faith-based care may be far greater. There are likely many Pacific survivors who the Inquiry did not hear from and who did not disclose the abuse and neglect they experienced in care. This, and the poor record-keeping of survivors' demographic information and failure to document incidents of abuse and neglect, mean we may never know the true numbers of Pacific Peoples who suffered abuse and neglect in State and faith-based care.

20. The table on the next page sets out additional demographic information about the 113 Pacific survivors who registered with the Inquiry (number and percentage of total Pacific survivors):

1 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-Based Institutions, Terms of Reference, clause 7.

Gender	
> Female	32 survivors (28 percent)
> Male	79 survivors (70 percent)
> Gender diverse, non-binary, other, prefer not to say, no data	2 survivors (2 percent)
Ethnicity	
> Samoan	42 survivors (37 percent)
> Cook Islands	38 survivors (34 percent)
> Tongan	11 survivors (10 percent)
> Niuean	10 survivors (9 percent)
> Fijian	10 survivors (9 percent)
> Fijian Indian, Tokelauan or another Pacific ethnicity	9 survivors (8 percent)
Part of Takatāpui, Rainbow and MVPFAFF+* community	**8 survivors (7 percent)**
Average age when entered care	**9 years old**
Type of care	
> State care	87 survivors (77 percent)
> Faith-based care	34 survivors (30 percent)
> State and faith-based care	15 survivors (13 percent)
> Unknown	7 survivors (6 percent)
Deaf	6 survivors (5 percent)
Disabled	30 survivors (27 percent)
Experienced mental distress	93 survivors (82 percent)
Gang whānau (member of a gang or had family members in a gang)	25 survivors (22 percent)
Experienced incarceration	40 survivors (35 percent)

* MVPFAFF+ refers to diverse sexualities, gender expressions and roles in the Pacific (Māhū, Vakasalewalewa, Palopa, Fa'afafine, Akava'ine, Fakaleitī (or Leiti), Fakafifine).

21. Engagement with survivors, whānau and their communities was a critical part of the Inquiry. As the Inquiry progressed and learned more about how to connect with people in ways that were appropriate and safe for them, its engagement methods improved. The Inquiry sought to interact with people on their own terms.

22. The Inquiry held 9 fono and talanoa for Pacific survivors, reaching more than 230 participants across Aotearoa New Zealand. The Inquiry's Tulou – Our Pacific Voices: Tatala e Pulonga (Pacific Peoples' Experiences) Hearing in July 2021 was conducted in line with Pacific protocols in the Fale o Samoa in Māngere, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Commissioner Ali'imuamua Sandra Alofivae MNZM nurtured the vā (teu le vā) throughout the hearing.

23. In 2022, the Inquiry engaged groups of specialist advisors, including a Pacific reference group with lived or academic expertise. The Pacific reference group was provided with draft material, in confidence, to provide expert feedback for consideration in the finalisation of the Inquiry's reports.

Historical and social context most relevant to Pacific survivors

24. Understanding the historical and social context in which the care system operated before and during the Inquiry period is crucial in understanding Pacific survivors' experiences of abuse and neglect in State and faith-based care.

Colonisation and Christianity influenced Pacific societal attitudes and identities

25. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, missionaries began arriving in the South Pacific region. Although Pacific Peoples' experiences of colonisation and Christianity varied, the missionaries' impact on Pacific societies was far-reaching. Many Pacific societies adopted Christianity and it became a core element of their cultural identities. Some Pacific Peoples incorporated Christianity into their own belief systems.[2]

26. Pre-colonial Pacific cultures treated infants with attention and understanding. Raising children was a collective effort. Parents were not necessarily the ultimate authority figures; older members of the household, including older siblings,, could play a significant role in raising children.[3]

2 Yengoyan, AA, "Christianity and Austronesian transformations: Church, polity and culture in the Philippines and the Pacific" in Bellwood, P, Fox, JJ & Tryon, D (eds), The Austronesians: Historical and comparative perspectives (The Australian National University Press, 2006, page 361).

3 Schoeffel, P & Meleisa, M, "Pacific Island Polynesian attitudes to child training and discipline in New Zealand: Some policy implications for Social Welfare and Education," in Social Policy Journal of New Zealand, (6), (1996, pages 7-8).

27. Children were expected to learn their place in the family and in the community through observing and listening to others. Children would mature to "assume responsibility" and to be contributors to the collective.[4] Part of this responsibility was learning the importance of service, and it was "widely understood that one's existence is to honour, serve and protect their family."[5]

28. Christianity had a strong influence on Pacific Peoples' parenting practices, to the extent that physical punishment to discipline children became seen as normal and justified.[6] The adoption of Christian beliefs also brought with them negative attitudes and discrimination against people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity.[7]

29. Before colonisation, many Pacific cultures considered mental illness as 'spiritual possession' caused by the breach of a sacred covenant between people and their gods.[8] Pacific Peoples still see mental distress and disability as not just a medical issue with a physical cause but as an inseparable part of overall wellbeing involving "body, soul and spirit".[9]

30. Colonisation and the introduction of Christianity may also have influenced Pacific Peoples' views towards disabled people and people experiencing mental distress.[10] Pacific disabled people can face stigma and shame from people within their own communities, based on Christian beliefs in divine punishment for sin, and breaches of tapu.[11]

4 Schoeffel, P & Meleisa, M, "Pacific Island Polynesian attitudes to child training and discipline in New Zealand: Some policy implications for Social Welfare and Education," in Social Policy Journal of New Zealand, (6), (1996, page 7).
5 Witness statement of Folasāitu Dr Apaula Ioane (21 July 2021, page 10).
6 Schoeffel, P & Meleisa, M, "Pacific Island Polynesian attitudes to child training and discipline in New Zealand: Some policy implications for Social Welfare and Education," Social Policy Journal of New Zealand, No 6 (1996, page 6).
7 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care engagement, Pacific Rainbow MVPFAFF+ talanoa (22 September 2022, pages 24–25, 28, 41–45).
8 Suaalii-Sauni, T, Wheeler, A, Etuate, S, Robinson, G, Agnew, F, Warren, H, Erick, M & Hingano, T, "Exploration of Pacific perspectives of Pacific models of mental health service delivery in New Zealand," Pacific Health Dialog, 15(1), (2009, pages 18–27, page 19).
9 Ministry of Health, Pacific Peoples and mental health: A paper for the Pacific Health and Disability Action Plan review (2008, page 11).
10 Ministry of Health, Pacific Peoples' experience of disability: A paper for the Pacific Health and Disability Action Plan review (2008, page 24).
11 Ministry of Health, Pacific Peoples' experience of disability: A paper for the Pacific Health and Disability Action Plan review (2008, page 24).

31. Christianity had a broader influence on settler society in Aotearoa New Zealand as a whole, including upholding a social order based on British laws and influenced by Christian values and morals.[12] These societal attitudes meant that during much of the 20th century, Aotearoa New Zealand society expected people to fit in and conform to a narrow definition of what was normal.[13] The widespread societal belief that Palagi people, culture and beliefs were 'normal' and better than other groups contributed to racism and other forms of discrimination against indigenous and minority groups, including Pacific Peoples.[14]

Pacific Peoples' migration to Aotearoa New Zealand

32. Pacific Peoples have a longstanding whakapapa relationship with Māori and a common history of migration across the South Pacific that predates European contact. Pacific Peoples began migrating to Aotearoa New Zealand before the Inquiry period. Some Pacific veterans who participated in the New Zealand armed forces in the First and Second World Wars settled in Aotearoa New Zealand after returning from war.[15]

33. Large-scale immigration of Pacific Peoples to Aotearoa New Zealand began in the 1950s and increased rapidly.[16] Many Pacific Peoples migrated from countries with New Zealand citizenship rights, including Tokelau, the Cook Islands and Niue, and from countries with a special relationship with Aotearoa New Zealand, including Samoa (New Zealand was responsible for the formal administration of Samoa from 1920 to 1962). The Pacific population in Aotearoa New Zealand increased during the Inquiry period from 0.2 percent of the total population in 1951, to almost 2 percent in 1976 and 4.8 percent in 1996.[17]

34. The State initially actively recruited Pacific Peoples for low-skilled, low-paid jobs.[18] As a relatively wealthy country with educational and economic opportunities, Aotearoa New Zealand was known to some people in the Pacific islands as "the land of milk and honey".[19] For New Zealanders, the Pacific islands represented a source of cheap labour.[20]

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12 Tennant, M, "Magdalens and moral imbeciles: Women's homes in nineteenth-century New Zealand," Women's Studies International Forum, 9(5-6), (1986, pages 493-494); Lineham, P, "Trends in religious history in New Zealand: From institutional to social history," History Compass 12(4), (2014, page 336).

13 Guy, L, "'Straightening the queers' – medical perspectives on homosexuality in mid-twentieth century New Zealand," in Health and History, Volume 2, No 1 (2000, pages 101–120, page 108); Pratt, J, "The dark side of paradise: Explaining New Zealand's history of high imprisonment," British Journal of Criminology 46 (2006, page 553).

14 Sutherland, O, Justice and race: Campaigns against racism and abuse in Aotearoa New Zealand (Steele Roberts, 2020, page 116).

15 Māhina-Tuai, K, "FIA (Forgotten in action)," in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds) Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the people of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012).

16 Pacific Peoples also notably participated in the New Zealand armed forces in both WWI and II, and some of these veterans returned and settled in New Zealand, as discussed by Māhina-Tuai, K, "FIA (Forgotten in action)" in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the people of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012).

17 Stats NZ, 1996 census of population and dwellings: ethnic groups (Stats New Zealand page 10).

18 Salesa, D, Island time: New Zealand's Pacific futures (Bridget Williams Books, 2017, page 12).

19 Māhina-Tuai, K, "A land of milk and honey? Education and employment migration schemes in the postwar era," in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the People of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012, pages 161–177).

20 Māhina-Tuai, K, "A land of milk and honey? Education and employment migration schemes in the postwar era," in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the People of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012, pages 161–177).

35. While Pacific Peoples took up the opportunity for a new life in Aotearoa New Zealand, some found the migration challenging. Economic hardship and racism made it hard to adjust to a new way of living and affected the ability of aiga or kainga (family) to enforce and uphold important cultural controls, values, supports and practices.[21] Churches often became the hearts of Pacific communities, replacing the village structures and support systems of their previous homes.[22]

Pacific Peoples were increasingly targeted

36. In the 1950s there was growing public concern and social unease about juvenile delinquency, "adolescent independence, gendered social shifts and weakening family control".[23] The State responded by appointing lawyer Oswald Mazengarb to chair a Special Committee on Moral Delinquency in Children and Adolescents in 1954. The resulting Mazengarb Report was sent to every household in the country, which fuelled public anxieties about young people.[24]

37. In this environment of heightened social anxiety and societal attitudes based on an assumption that European people, cultures and beliefs were 'normal', racism led to oversurveillance of Pacific children and young people. As more Pacific families migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand and settled in urban areas, Pacific children and young people became more visible to social welfare and other authorities. Police officers were more likely to intervene with Pacific and Māori youth.[25]

38. During the first half of the Inquiry period, care settings grew both in the range of settings and the numbers of children, young people and adults taken and placed in them. Pacific children, young people and adults were increasingly placed in all care settings, becoming over-represented. Pacific children and young people began appearing before the courts in increasing numbers from the 1960s. Like Māori, Pacific children and young people were more likely than non-Pacific youth to be targeted by NZ Police and prosecuted.[26]

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21 Māhina-Tuai, K, "A land of milk and honey? Education and employment migration schemes in the Postwar Era," in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the people of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012, page 177).

22 Macpherson, C, Pacific churches in New Zealand: Programmes and services (Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 2018, page 2) , https://teara.govt.nz/en/pacific-churches-in-new-zealand/page-2.

23 Dalley, B, Family matters: Child welfare in twentieth-century New Zealand (Auckland University Press, 1998, pages 190–191); Brickell, C, Teenagers: The rise of youth culture in New Zealand (Auckland University Press, 2017, page 245).

24 Soler, J, Drifting towards moral chaos: The 1954 Mazengarb Report – a moral panic over "juvenile immorality," Master's Thesis, Massey University (1988); Mazengarb, O, Report of the Special Committee on moral delinquency in children and adolescents (Government Printer, 1954, page 27).

25 Stanley, E, The road to hell: State violence against children in postwar New Zealand (Auckland University Press, 2016, page 33).

26 Mitchell, J, Immigration and national identity in 1970s New Zealand (University of Otago, 2003, page 4).

"My parents' dream of a better life collided with the cultural ignorance of mainstream New Zealand in the 1950s and onward."

FA'AMOANA LUAFATU
Samoan

39. The economic downturn of the 1970s led to a State focus on Pacific Peoples and made their "place in Aotearoa New Zealand both difficult and precarious".[27] Pacific Peoples faced increasing discrimination and backlash. Dr Seini Taufa told the Inquiry that "Pacific People were targeted as illegal immigrants in New Zealand and were seen to be threatening the rights of 'New Zealanders' to jobs".[28]

40. This led to what is now known as the Dawn Raids, which began in 1974 and ended in 1976. NZ Police raided the homes and workplaces of Pacific Peoples, often in the early hours of the morning and "...employing aggressive or intimidatory tactics", to find overstayers with expired work permits.[29] NZ Police specifically targeted Pacific Peoples rather than other groups of workers who had also overstayed their visas.[30]

41. Pacific communities were distressed by the raids. Imprisonment and deportation disrupted families' and individuals' lives. Children and young people could find themselves alone while parents and caregivers were processed as overstayers.[31] Some enduring effects of the Dawn Raids included Pacific Peoples and the term overstayer being seen as one and the same, and experiences of ongoing and widespread racism.

42. Pacific Peoples born in Aotearoa New Zealand formed the Polynesian Panther Party in response to the growing racism and discrimination they faced.[32] The Polynesian Panther movement was the major opposer of the Dawn Raids and fought for a fairer immigration policy, and for better conditions for Pacific migrant workers. Through their efforts the Polynesian Panther Party drew national attention to the poor conditions of Pacific migrants and the discrimination they faced.[33]

Pacific values framework applied by the Inquiry

43. Part 1 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, sets out the Pacific values framework that the Inquiry used to guide its analysis and understanding of Pacific Peoples' experiences of abuse and neglect in State and faith-based care.

27 Salesa, D, Island time: New Zealand's Pacific futures (Bridget Williams Books, 2017, page 12).
28 Witness statement of Dr Seini Taufa (18 July 2021, para 35).
29 Anae, M, "All power to the people: Overstayers, Dawn Raids and the Polynesian Panthers," in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the People of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012, pages 221–240, page 222).
30 Barber, S & Naepi, S, "Sociology in a crisis: Covid-19 and the colonial politics of knowledge production in Aotearoa New Zealand," Journal of Sociology, 56(4) (2020, pages 693–703, page 701).
31 Anae, M, "All power to the people: Overstayers, Dawn Raids and the Polynesian Panthers," in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the People of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012, pages 221–240, page 238).
32 Anae, M, "All power to the people: Overstayers, Dawn Raids and the Polynesian Panthers" in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the People of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012, pages 221–240).
33 Anae, M, "All power to the people: Overstayers, Dawn Raids and the Polynesian Panthers" in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the People of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012, pages 221–240).

44. Informed by the knowledge, expertise and work of the Pacific reference group and the Fonofale model of Pacific health and wellbeing, the Inquiry used a values framework that was inclusive of all Pacific Peoples to guide its work. These values reflected what the Inquiry heard from Pacific survivors, their families and others from Pacific communities. In preparing this report and applying the Pacific values framework, the Inquiry was conscious of approaching Pacific Peoples' diverse experiences with humility, or vakarokoroko in vosa vakaviti (Fijian language), and respect.[34]

45. The Inquiry acknowledges that each individual Pacific culture is unique in its history, worldview and values, and in how its values are upheld, including how rituals and ceremonies are performed. Though these cultures are not homogenous, common values and concepts relating to the space of conflict or dispute resolution can be identified across many Pacific cultures. The Inquiry selected examples from different Pacific languages to represent each value.

46. The Pacific values used by the Inquiry, which were first set out in the Inquiry's report Tāwharautia: Pūrongo o te Wā,[35] are:

    a. kainga, which means family in te taetae ni Kiribati (Kiribati language)
    b. fa'aaloalo, which means respect in agana Samoa (Samoan language)
    c. fetokoni'aki, which means reciprocity in lea faka-Tonga (Tongan language)
    d. aro'a, which means love in reo Māori Kūki 'Āirani (Cook Islands Māori language)
    e. tapuakiga/talitonuga, which means spirituality, indigenous beliefs and Christianity, in agana Tokelau (Tokelauan language)
    f. kaitasi, which means collectivism and shared responsibility in gana Tuvalu (Tuvaluan language).

47. The values described above are interwoven and intersecting, often overlapping with one another. These values are understood to exist, come together, have meaning and interact within the concept of vā, which is the "space between" that holds people and things together.[36] Pacific worldviews have a strong emphasis on relationships and the intrinsic interconnections, or vā, between people and the material and spiritual worlds. When these values are honoured and practised, they create and reflect the conditions for honouring the vā.

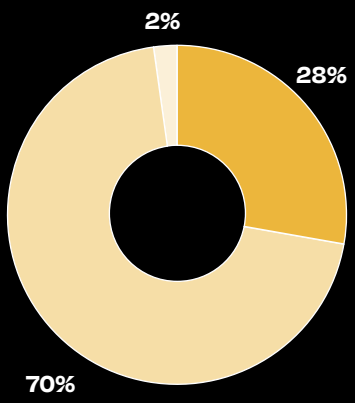
34 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, He Purapura Ora, he Māra Tipu: From Redress to Puretumu Torowhānui, Volume 1 (2021, pages 63– 65).
35 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, Tāwharautia: Pūrongo o te Wā, Volume 1: Interim report (2020, page 38).
36 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, He Purapura Ora, he Māra Tipu: From Redress to Puretumu Torowhānui, Volume 1 (2021, pages 61–62).

Key facts about registered Pacific survivors

Total Number of Survivors: **113**

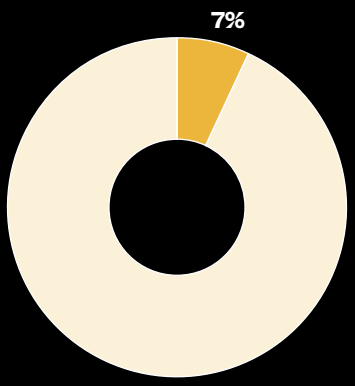
Gender

	NUMBER OF SURVIVORS	PERCENT
Female	32	28%
Male	79	70%
Gender diverse, Non-Binary, Other, Prefer Not to Say, No Data	2	2%



Part of Takatāpui, Rainbow and MVPFAFF+ community

	NUMBER OF SURVIVORS	PERCENT
Takatāpui, Rainbow and MVPFAFF+ community	8	7%



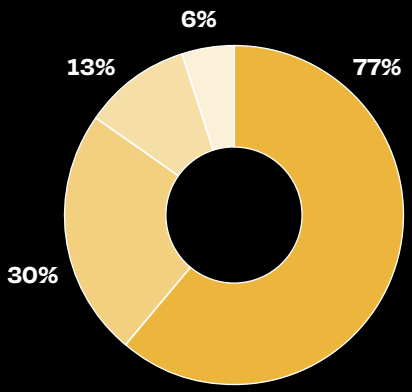
* Survivors who experienced both State and faith-based care are counted in all three groups (State care, faith-based care, and State and faith-based care).

Age

	YEARS OLD
Average age when entered care	9

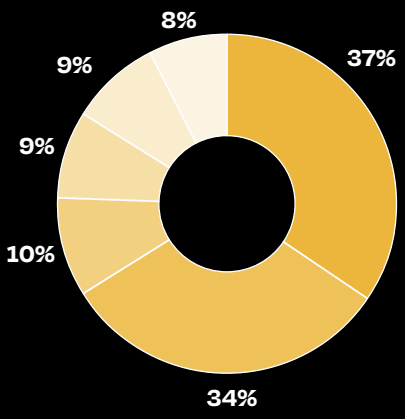
Type of care

	NUMBER OF SURVIVORS	PERCENT
State care	87	77%
Faith-based care	34	30%
State and faith-based care	15	13%
Unknown	7	6%



Ethnicity

	NUMBER OF SURVIVORS	PERCENT
Samoan	42	37%
Cook Islands	38	34%
Tongan	11	10%
Niuean	10	9%
Fijian	10	9%
Fijian Indian, Tokelauan or another Pacific ethnicity	9	8%



"It was not uncommon for Pacific Islanders to get picked up for no reason by the Police and be charged with idle and disorderly offences. Some of our children would be taken."

TIGILAU NESS
NZ born Niuean

Chapter 4: Circumstances that led to Pacific Peoples entering care

48. Part 3 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, sets out the circumstances that led to children, young people and adults entering State and faith-based care during the Inquiry period. Racism and other discriminatory attitudes created pathways for Pacific children, young people and adults entering care.

49. Between the 1950s and 1980s, Pacific people experienced heightened State surveillance and targeting by NZ Police and other State agencies, contributing to a disproportionate number of Pacific people entering social welfare care. Challenges with immigration, including language barriers, poverty and societal attitudes, also contributed to Pacific people entering care settings, especially social welfare care.

50. Family and community expectations and the extent to which religion was part of their everyday life and culture influenced Pacific children and young people entering faith-based schools.

51. While the Inquiry saw evidence of Pacific children, young people and adults entering all State and faith-based care settings, this chapter focuses on care settings where the pathways for Pacific Peoples had particular features – social welfare care and faith-based education.

Pathways into social welfare care settings

Pacific children and young people's entry was disproportionate

52. Data gaps are particularly pronounced for Pacific survivors during the Inquiry period. Pacific Peoples were frequently grouped with Māori in a general 'Māori / Pacific' category, or simply under the category of 'Polynesian', or their ethnicity was not recorded. This makes it difficult to provide a meaningful picture of Pacific Peoples representation in care, especially early in the Inquiry period.

53. The available records show that, by the 1980s, Pacific children and young people were disproportionately represented in social welfare residences. For example:

    a. In 1970, 58 percent (36 girls) of the 62 girls admitted into Kingslea Girls' Home in Ōtautahi Christchurch were identified as Māori or Pacific. The report did not differentiate between the two groups and made a comment with racist undertones, stating that the increase in Māori and Pacific girls "introduced new problems for training and discipline".[37]

    b. In 1975, 8 percent (three girls) of the 38 girls admitted into Kingslea Girls' Home were identified as Pacific.[38]

37 A review of some of the changes in the centre in the period 1942–70, Principal KJ Ford (page 125).
38 Letter from Miss Langley, teacher Allendale girls home, re: Review of the status and financing of schools in social welfare institutions, Auckland (April 1976, page 88).

c. In 1983, Pacific children and young people made up 16 percent (330 people) of the 2,027 residents of six social welfare residences in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland – Allendale Girls' Home, Bollard Girls' Home, Ōwairaka Boys' Home, Te Atatū Group Home, Wesleydale Boys' Home, and Weymouth Girls' Home. At that time Pacific people made up just over 6 percent of the youth population.[39]

d. A 1987 Department of Social Welfare study found that, of 239 girls aged 15–16 who were under the guardianship of the Director-General of Social Welfare, 51 percent were Māori, 37 percent were Pākehā and 12 percent were from other ethnic groups, primarily of "Pacific Island origin".[40]

Racism and other discrimination against Pacific Peoples created pathways into social welfare care

54. Societal attitudes and discriminatory beliefs, including racism, negative perceptions about migrants and 'overstayers', and moral panic about youth behaviours, contributed to Pacific children and young people entering social welfare care. Pacific survivors told the Inquiry about the challenges faced by their families, such as racism, housing insecurity, poverty and loss of culture and identity after migrating.

55. Expert witness, clinical psychologist and Associate Professor Folasāitu Dr Apaula Julia Ioane has extensive experience working with Pacific fanau (children) and tagata talavou (young people) in social welfare care settings and spoke at the Inquiry's Tulou, Our Pacific Voices: Tatala e Pulonga (Pacific Peoples' Experiences) Hearing. She noted racism and negative experiences with migration, among other contributing factors that led to State intervention:

> *"Some survivors spoke about their negative experiences with migration that included racism, poverty, loss of identity and cultural belonging. Many survivors also reported negative experiences in education such as language barriers, bullying by teachers and feelings of isolation leading to their noncompliant behaviour."*[41]

39 Berridge, D, Cowan, L, Cumberland, T, Davys, A, Jollands, J, McDowell, H, Riley, L, Ruck, A & Wallis, P, Institutional racism in the Department of Social Welfare Tamaki-Makau-Rau, 1984 (revised edition May 1985), (Department of Social Welfare, page 17); Stats NZ, The New Zealand Official Yearbook 1987–1988, Stats NZ, 1996b.

40 von Dadelszen, J, An examination of the histories of sexual abuse among girls currently in the care of the Department of Social Welfare (1987), cited in Savage, C, Moyle, P, Kus-Harbord, L, Ahuriri-Driscoll, A, Hynds, A, Paipa, K, Leonard, G, Maraki, J & Leonard, J, Hāhā-uri hāhā-tea: Māori involvement in State care 1950–1999, (Ihi Research, 2021,page 91).

41 Witness statement of Folasāitu Dr Apaula Julia Ioane (21 July 2021, para 20).

56. Samoan survivor Fa'amoana Luafutu came to Aotearoa New Zealand when he was 8 years old and within two years was before the Children's Board and placed into social welfare care. Fa'amoana explained some of the difficulties faced by his family after migrating:

"When my family first arrived, we needed support to adapt to the New Zealand way of life, not judgement and expectation that we just fit in straight away. My parents' dream of a better life collided with the cultural ignorance of mainstream New Zealand in the 1950s and onward."[42]

57. Professor Elizabeth Stanley explained that Pacific children and young people who "offended Pākehā sensibilities" often found themselves "inspected by authorities who readily legitimised institutionalisation as a means to domesticate, civilise or control them."[43] This was particularly evident during the Dawn Raids period of 1974–1976.[44] Pacific survivor Mr TY shared that while walking home in his school uniform, he would be stopped by NZ Police and asked about the number of people living in his home and whether any of them arrived in the country recently. He said that the blatant targeting of Pacific Peoples was a normal thing in Ponsonby.[45]

58. Expert witness Tigilau Ness, a NZ born Niuean who was a political activist and member of the Polynesian Panthers, told the Inquiry:

"It was not uncommon for Pacific Islanders to get picked up for no reason by the Police and be charged with idle and disorderly offences. Some of our children would be taken."[46]

59. Some survivors came to the attention of State authorities following complaints from neighbours. Māori and Pacific survivor Te Enga Harris was taken from the care of her family after a complaint, because "...my father was Deaf and there was always a lot of yelling and screaming so he could hear us."[47]

60. Samoan survivor David Williams (aka John Williams) said he was picked on by NZ Police for no reason:

"I could be walking down the street and Police would just pick on me. I would be with two white fellas and if there were two of us darkies, the cops would pull us up and leave the white guys alone. That's what it was like ... it got to the stage where I think because I was being picked up so many times by the Police and labelled a criminal, it became normal."[48]

42 Witness statement of Fa'amoana Luafutu (5 July 2021, para 85).
43 Stanley, E, The road to hell: State violence against children in postwar New Zealand (Auckland University Press, 2016, page 38).
44 Anae, M, "All power to the people: Overstayers, Dawn Raids and the Polynesian Panthers," in Mallon, S, Māhina-Tuai, K & Salesa, D (eds), Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the people of the Pacific (Te Papa Press, 2012, pages 221–239).
45 Witness statement of Mr TY (24 June 2021, pages 15–16).
46 Witness statement of Tigilau Ness (11 June 2021, pages 4–5).
47 Witness statement of Te Enga Harris (17 August 2021, para 38).
48 Witness statement of David Williams (aka John Williams), (15 March 2021, paras 150–151).

Poverty and financial hardship led to care

61. Some survivors came to the attention of authorities because of their parents' financial circumstances. Often the only jobs Pacific Peoples could get were low paying, labour intensive and with long hours. This affected how children and young people could be cared for and meant they were left alone and / or responsible for the care of their younger siblings.[49] Research shows a clear relationship between poverty and care system contact.[50] Compared to children and young people in the richest fifth of local areas, those in the poorest fifth areas have 13 times the rate of substantiation (a finding by officials that abuse has occurred). They are also six times more likely to be placed out of family care.[51]

62. Some Pacific children and young people resorted to stealing food because they were hungry, and this led to them coming to the attention of State authorities.[52]

63. Niuean, Tahitian and Māori (Ngāpuhi) survivor Mr VV was left at home alone as both of his parents had to work to pay for necessities, which meant they did not have time to constantly supervise him. The State became involved:

> *"I feel like I was taken away from home for nothing, because I wasn't going to school. Sometimes I blame my mother, but then I think to myself, what else could she do? My parents both had to work to pay the mortgage and buy a car and feed us."* [53]

64. Cook Islands and Māori (Ngāpuhi) survivor Mr UU went into care from a home environment where his grandparents had a lot of children to care for. His teachers observed that Mr UU had no lunch at school and was stealing food, so it was clear that the whānau needed wraparound support but did not receive it. NZ Police laid a complaint against his grandparents, which led to him being placed with an aunt and uncle. He described this placement as "a big turning point" in his life, as he got "the meanest hidings" there. Mr UU said:

> *"I can't imagine how scary, intimidating and shameful that would have been for them. It feels to me that the police complaint made my grandparents feel like the only option was to give me up. The reports say it was a family decision to put me with my aunt and uncle, but my family would have felt very pressured. I know that culturally it would have been hard for my grandparents to deal with the police, and they would do anything to get rid of them because they were scared and ashamed."*[54]

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49 Private session transcript of Mr NM (20 January 2022, pages 16–17); Witness statement of Mr TH (7 June 2021, para 5); Hyslop, I & Keddell, E, Changes needed to the current system of child protection and care in Aotearoa, Expert opinion prepared for the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care (7 June 2022, page 4).

50 Hyslop, I & Keddell, E, Changes needed to the current system of child protection and care in Aotearoa, Expert opinion prepared for the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care (7 June 2022, page 9).

51 Rashbrooke, M & Wilkinson, A, Cracks in the Dam: The social and economic forces behind the placement of children into care (2019, page 4).

52 Witness statements of Mr TH (7 June 2021, para 16) and Mr TO (1 July 2021, para 41).

53 Witness statement of Mr VV (7 February 2021, para 65).

54 Witness statement of Mr UU (23 June 2022, paras 56–58).

Abuse and neglect at home

65. The Inquiry heard from Pacific survivors who experienced physical, psychological and sexual abuse and neglect at home, by parents or non-family members, which led to being taken into care.

66. Niuean and Māori survivor Kamahl Tupetagi (Ngāpuhi), who was placed in social welfare care aged 9 years old, explained that his life with his parents was abusive and difficult:

> *"As well as the parties and drinking, there was lots of abuse during that time. I had a lot of physical abuse between the ages of about three and six. I was also sexually abused by people who would come and go at the house during parties and drinking."*[55]

67. Asian, Niuean and Māori survivor Jason Fenton (Ngāti Whātua, Ngāti Kuri) described the violence and abuse he suffered at the hands of a stepfather and how this compounded other challenging factors in his life, such as the effects of suspected foetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Jason went into foster care as respite after a family tragedy, and later a youth justice facility and Te Whakapakari Youth Programme on Aotea Great Barrier Island:[56]

> *"I can never forget the violence, the beatings, the yelling and the abuse. I had learning difficulties at school; being beaten up at home affected my brain so I had difficulty concentrating."*[57]

68. Pacific survivors told the Inquiry that their parents' or caregivers' harmful alcohol or substance use increased the risk of abuse and neglect being perpetuated in the home environment.[58]

'Acting out' in response to distress was a pathway into care

69. Pacific survivors told the Inquiry how the conditions they were experiencing at home, and sometimes at school, affected their behaviour. Poverty, parental addictions and mental health challenges, abuse, neglect and undiagnosed and unsupported disabilities frequently resulted in children and young people 'acting out'. Often challenging behaviour drew the attention of teachers, social workers and NZ Police, which led to State intervention and being taken into social welfare care.

55 Witness statement of Kamahl Tupetagi (3 October 2021, paras 6–9).
56 Witness statement of Jason Fenton (15 April 2022, para 2.6).
57 Witness statement of Jason Fenton (15 April 2022, paras 2.16–2.17 and 2.21).
58 Witness statements of Erica Dobson (2 December 2021, page 3) and Mr TY (24 June 2021, para 10).

70. Professor Elizabeth Stanley's book, Road to Hell, is based on the experiences of 105 former State wards.[59] Eighty-seven percent of Dr Stanley's participants came from homes where stress factors were prominent.[60] Nearly half of the participants came into contact with State authorities through offending (generally theft or property offences or, less commonly, violent offending), while one-third entered social welfare care through the vaguely defined category of 'delinquency', which might include antisocial or 'unfavourable' behaviour.[61]

71. Some Pacific survivors commented that nobody inquired more deeply into why they were behaving in a particular way or asked them what was going on in their lives or at home.[62] Pacific and Māori survivor Te Enga Harris remembered the day she and her siblings were removed by the State:

"I have relived this day over and over in my head. My mother was a kind and gentle woman. There was no need to treat her that way and she certainly did not deserve to be handcuffed. The Police assaulted my mother that day and for that I can never forgive them. One day we had a mother and then she was gone.

"My mother needed help with eight children and therapy for her grief. I strongly believe her condition would have worsened significantly by being taken away from all her children. Rather than the State providing her with the help she needed she was punished further."[63]

72. Samoan survivor Mr TY was 12 years old when he ran away from his abusive home and lived in a tree hut for three months. A friend brought him food and when Mr TY was desperate, he took milk money from milk bottles outside houses to buy food. He was picked up by NZ Police after he was found walking along the road with a blanket, and taken to Ōwairaka Boys' Home in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland in March 1975:

"After reading my file so many years later, I realised that I was charged with 'Not Being Under [Proper] Control' for running away from my abusive household. I had told the Police that I took money from milk bottles to survive so they also charged me with theft." [64]

59 Most of Dr Stanley's interviewees were born between 1955 and 1974. Stanley, E, The road to hell: State violence against children in postwar New Zealand (Auckland University Press, 2016).
60 Stanley, E, The road to hell: State violence against children in postwar New Zealand (Auckland University Press, 2016).
61 Stanley, E, The road to hell: State violence against children in postwar New Zealand (Auckland University Press, 2016).
62 Witness statements of David Williams (aka John Williams), (15 March 2021, para 9) and Mr TY (24 June 2021, para 39).
63 Witness statement of Te Enga Harris (17 August 2021, paras 45–46).
64 Witness statement of Mr TY (24 June 2021, paras 30–34).

73. Some Pacific survivors who migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand were not offered support to learn English, which led to difficulties at school and their subsequent entry into care.[65] Survivor Fa'amoana Luafutu arrived from Samoa without speaking English and found it difficult to cope at school as he couldn't understand what was going on. This caused Fa'amoana to start truanting, along with his cousins:

"That's how we first came to the attention of the State. It was deemed that we were out of control."[66]

Pathways into faith-based education

74. Faith-based schools have been, and continue to be, the main providers of faith-based care for children and young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Schools are operated or associated with the Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Plymouth Brethren and Gloriavale churches. These schools offer a combination of primary and secondary education and boarding facilities.

75. For Pacific families, the influence of the church in daily life led to children being enrolled in faith-run schools, and often faith-based schooling for children from devout Pacific families was simply a given. Pacific survivors spoke about how religion and culture were so interwoven that families would willingly open their homes to members of the church and clergy and enrol their children in religious schools.[67]

76. The Inquiry also heard from Pacific survivors who were sent to faith-based schools due to the perception that these private or State integrated schools would offer students a higher standard of education and opportunity than State schools.[68]

Government education scholarships for Pacific children and young people

77. Another pathway into care for Pacific children and young people was through New Zealand Government education scholarships. As part of the scholarship, children and young people from Pacific Island nations including Tokelau, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa were sent to Aotearoa New Zealand and placed in State-run social welfare residences or faith-based boarding schools.[69]

65 Witness statement of Hakeagapuletama Halo (25 March 2021, para 13).
66 Witness statement of Fa'amoana Luafutu (5 July 2021, paras 5 and 15).
67 Tamasese, T, Parsons, T, King, P & Waldegrave, C, A qualitative investigation into Pacific families, communities and organisations social and economic contribution to Pacific migrant settlement outcomes in New Zealand (Family Centre Pacific Section and the Social Policy Research Unit, n.d., pages 68–69); Witness statements of Ms CU (10 June 2021, para 16) and Rūpene Amato (16 July 2021, pages 5–6).
68 Witness statement of Rūpene Amato (16 July 2021, page 5).
69 Tamasese, T, Parsons, T, King, P & Waldegrave, C, A qualitative investigation into Pacific families, communities and organisations social and economic contribution to Pacific migrant settlement outcomes in New Zealand (Family Centre Pacific Section and the Social Policy Research Unit, n.d., page 49).

78. The Inquiry heard from a survivor who came to Aotearoa New Zealand from the Tokelauan atoll Nukunonu on a scholarship in 1981 when he was 12 years old.[70] He was placed in Sedgley Boys' Home (Anglican) in Whakaoriori Masterton where he faced racism, was abused by other boys and felt that he was in constant survival mode.[71] He felt unsupported and struggled to integrate into his new environment.[72] He used simple English and along with Tokelauan students mostly used body language, gestures and sign language to communicate with non-Tokelauan people.[73]

79. A 2010 review of Tokelauan education noted the flaws in the scholarship scheme, such as the language barriers faced by the Tokelauan students. Many required support to be in place to assist with their transition into the Aotearoa New Zealand education system, but limited if any support was provided. As a result, many would fail their national exams, creating conflict with parents, who expected them to return home well-educated and skilled.[74]

80. Pacific young people also entered the care of faith-based boarding schools through scholarship schemes offered to students who either excelled in certain areas or whose kainga (family) required financial assistance. Samoan and Scottish survivor William Wilson was a scholarship student at Wesley College in Pukekohe, a Methodist boarding school that described itself as a "practical expression" of the Methodist Church's concern for education, particularly for Māori and Pacific students, orphans and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.[75]

81. William was raised mostly by his grandparents as his father had passed away and his mother struggled with mental distress. His grandfather and social worker made the decisions for William to enrol at Wesley College. At Wesley College, William endured serious physical violence by older students and described the school as having a culture of violence.[76]

70 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care engagement, survivor from Inati Organisation, Ōtepoti (1 July 2022, page 1).
71 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care engagement, survivor from Inati Organisation, Ōtepoti (1 July 2022, pages 3–4).
72 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care engagement, survivor from Inati Organisation, Ōtepoti (1 July 2022, page 3).
73 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care engagement, survivor from Inati Organisation, Ōtepoti (1 July 2022, page 2).
74 Swain, P, and Ulu, A, Rethinking Tokelau education: Tokelau and the role of New Zealand volunteers, July 2000–June 2010 (Volunteer Services abroad, 2010, page 6).
75 Wesley College, Reflections on the history of Wesley College (1 July 2004, page 2).
76 Witness statement of William Wilson (6 July 2021, pages 27 and 31).

Chapter 5: Nature and extent of abuse and neglect of Pacific survivors

82. Part 4 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, describes how Pacific children, young people and adults in State and faith-based care experienced the full spectrum of types of abuse and neglect reported to the Inquiry, including:

a. entry into care, which caused trauma

b. psychological and emotional abuse and neglect

c. physical abuse and neglect

d. sexual abuse

e. racial abuse and cultural neglect

f. spiritual and religious abuse and neglect

g. medical abuse and neglect

h. solitary confinement

i. financial abuse and forced labour

j. educational neglect.

83. This chapter describes how Pacific survivors were subjected to targeted racial abuse focused on their Pacific identities and cultural neglect. It also explains that many Pacific Peoples in care experienced ethnic misidentification or lack of ethnicity recording, which was a specific form of cultural neglect.

84. The lack of recorded ethnicity data for people in State and faith-based care throughout the Inquiry period created challenges to identifying the full nature and extent of abuse and neglect experienced by Pacific survivors. The best available estimates indicate that up to 200,000 people were abused in care between 1950 and 2019. The Inquiry was not able to reach any conclusions about what proportion of this estimate were Pacific survivors.

85. Analysis of accounts from survivors, including the Pacific survivors who registered with the Inquiry, shows that 63 percent of Pacific survivors experienced physical abuse and 52 percent experienced sexual abuse in social welfare care. For Pacific survivors in faith-based settings, the most frequently experienced types of abuse were physical (45 percent) and sexual (33 percent).

86. Many Pacific survivors who came forward to the Inquiry also had whakapapa Māori, meaning they often experienced multiple and compounding forms of racial abuse and cultural neglect and were often denied access to multiple cultural identities and their associated knowledge, languages and customs.

Targeted racial abuse

87. Pacific survivors told the Inquiry that they experienced overt racial abuse that targeted core components of their identities. The Inquiry defines racial abuse as any instance of abuse that includes hostility, contempt, ridicule, or hurtful or offensive actions on the grounds of a person's skin colour, race, or ethnic or national origins. As such, it co-occurs alongside verbal, physical or sexual abuse, but provides another 'layer' to the abuse that victims experience.[77] Racial abuse of Pacific children, young people and adults in care is a transgression of the vā.

88. Pacific survivors reported psychological and emotional abuse, in the form of verbal abuse, being used to shame and degrade them. Pacific survivors report being called 'coconuts' and 'niggers'.[78] The Inquiry also heard that for Pacific disabled survivors, verbal abuse exacerbated challenges they already experienced due to disability or mental distress. For example, Samoan survivor Antony Dalton-Wilson recalled being called "bung-eye" by teachers because he was unable to see properly.[79]

89. Abusers did not always discriminate based on the specific ethnicity of those they were abusing; often it was out of colourism, or an underlying prejudice towards those with dark skin (which is itself based in colonial and racist ideologies). Samoan survivor David Williams (aka John Williams), who was placed into Ōwairaka Boys' Home in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland when he was 11 years old, told the Inquiry:

> *"The thing is, no matter where you went, if you had brown skin, you were going to get abused. Physically or sexually or both. Occasionally one of the white boys would, but he would have to be a real bad bugger. If you were brown you were going to get done no matter what."*[80]

77 Savage, C, Moyle, P, Kus-Harbord, L, Ahuriri-Driscoll, A, Hynds, A, Paipa, K, Leonard, G, Maraki, J & Leonard, J, Hāhā-uri, hāhā-tea: Māori involvement in State care 1950–1999 (Ihi Research, 2021, page 15).
78 Witness statements of David Williams (aka John Williams), (15 March 2021, page 15) and Mr TH (7 June 2021, page 14).
79 Witness statement of Antony Robert Dalton-Wilson (13 July 2021, pages 15-16).
80 Witness statement of David Williams (aka John Williams), (15 March 2021, page 15).

90. Derogatory statements were also made in survivors' records, which they discovered years later upon receiving them. Samoan survivor Fa'amoana Luafutu found comments that disparaged his family and showed negative views towards Pacific Island migrants, such as:

> *"This 12-year-old boy comes from a family who have not settled into European ways readily and cling to a Samoan language and dress. If the parents would take a greater interest in English, then they would have been able to assist their boy to a far greater extent."*[81]

91. Māori and Niuean survivor Mr VV, who was placed in Kohitere Boys' Training Centre in Taitoko Levin when he was 14 years old, shared how one staff member wrote in his notes that he was not productive as a member of the work group and suggested he should go back to the islands where his present way of life could be acceptable.[82]

92. In education settings, Pacific survivors reported that they were often disregarded and ignored by teachers, streamed into classes with easier work, or outright racially abused.[83] They were also punished more frequently and more severely for perceived misbehaviour than their Pākehā counterparts. During the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing, Chief Executive and Secretary for Education Iona Holsted acknowledged that the education system's expectations of Pacific children and young people were 'too low', which caused harm and contributed to poor educational outcomes over generations.[84]

Cultural neglect through disconnection from identity and families (kainga)

93. Many Pacific survivors were denied the ability to practise and access knowledge of their cultural identities, practices, customs and languages, and access to their kainga (family). The removal of Pacific children, young people and adults into care, and being kept separated from family once in care, was a transgression against the Pacific value of kainga (family) and a transgression of the vā.

94. Pacific survivors of institutional residential care reflected on how residential facilities and homes were not set up to provide for them culturally in the first place. Survivor Fa'amoana Luafutu told the Inquiry that Kohitere Boys' Training Centre in Taitoko Levin "had no function to meet the needs of a Samoan like me".[85] Similarly, Tokelauan and Māori survivor Mr TH said that "there was no cultural support at Epuni [Boys' Home]".[86]

81 Witness statement of Fa'amoana Luafutu (5 July 2021, page 13).
82 Witness statement of Mr VV (17 February 2021, page 9).
83 Witness statements of Michael Katipa (5 April 2023, para 47) and Gwen Anderson (30 December 2021, para 44).
84 Transcript of evidence of closing statement by the Crown at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 26 August 2022, page 1103)..
85 Witness statement of Fa'amoana Luafutu (5 July 2021, page 9).
86 Witness statement of Mr TH (7 June 2021, page 9).

95. While the experiences that survivors shared showed that cultural neglect and racial abuse were distinct forms of abuse, they were also often interrelated. Pacific survivors experienced verbal taunts and racist name-calling that made them too embarrassed to identify with or share their culture. Cook Island Māori survivor Jovander Terry shared how he was fluent in Cook Island Māori before entering into care. However, after the racist name-calling experienced by peers and staff at a boys' home,[87] he chose not to speak his language. Other institutions dissuaded Pacific survivors from speaking their specific language by using corporal punishment if they were caught doing so.[88]

96. Pacific survivors discussed corporal punishment that was given with a cultural justification. Survivors from the Methodist Wesley College in Pukekohe such as William Wilson recalled violent punishments enforced by peers, such as the 'Samoan Slap' and 'Island Respect Hidings'.[89] Instances of violence that occurred with a cultural framing contributed to the separation of survivors from their culture, as this abuse meant they wanted nothing to do with the practice or the abusers.

97. For Pacific survivors with a disability or mental health condition, institutions did not provide for a connection to culture, including within therapeutic processes.[90] Samoan survivor Lusi Faiva, who has cerebral palsy, described the lack of opportunities she had to learn about and participate in her culture during her time at Kimberley Centre in Taitoko Levin:

> *"(No) one ever talked to me about my Samoan heritage … I felt like people didn't know or care about my Samoan culture. Even if they did there was no recognition, interest or inclusion. There was no respect or effort to recognise me for who I am. Even I didn't know."*[91]

98. Other survivors were not told that they had family they could contact and connect with. Samoan survivor David Crichton shared that the social welfare residences and institutions he stayed in held the contact details for his extended Samoan family, but never facilitated that connection or told him about them.[92] Cook Islands and Māori survivor Anau Jr (Ngāpuhi), who was placed in care at 12 years old, was denied the ability to connect to his family as the social welfare residences and institutions did not try to contact his immediate and extended family while he was in care.[93]

87 Witness statement of Jovander Terry (29 June 2021, page 26).
88 Witness statement of David Williams (aka John Williams), (15 March 2021, page 3).
89 Witness statement of William Wilson (6 July 2021, pages 6–8).
90 Witness statement of Rachael Umaga (18 May 2021, page 22).
91 Mirfin-Veitch, B, Tell me about you: A life story approach to understanding disabled people's experiences in care (1950–1999), (Donald Beasley Institute, 2022, page 77).
92 Witness statement of David Crichton (9 July 2021, pages 21–22, 24).
93 Private session transcript of Anau Jr Anau (9 June 2020, page 23).

99. Some Pacific survivors were denied their connection to their kainga because the State failed to correctly identify and support their ethnicity while they were in care. The Inquiry has heard of instances where survivors were made to believe that they were Māori but only found out later in life that they were Cook Island Māori,[94] or learned they were Samoan only after they had requested their records from the Ministry of Social Development as an adult.[95]

Cultural neglect through ethnic misidentification

100. Some Pacific survivors reported that their ethnicity was misrecorded by care staff, or not recorded at all in State[96] and faith-based care,[97] faith-based schools[98] and psychiatric care.[99]

101. Survivor Mr TH, who spent time in Epuni Boys' Home in Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt, Arbor House in the Wairarapa and Hodderville Boys' Home (The Salvation Army) in Putāruru, received some of his files and saw that sometimes he had been recorded as only Māori and not Tokelauan.[100] Cook Islands Māori survivor Te Pare Meihana described how "with the flick of a pen", her ethnicity was changed to Māori to make it easier to adopt her out to a Māori family.[101]

102. Samoan survivor David Crichton was mislabelled as Māori upon entry into the care of Presbyterian Support Services as an infant, an error that followed him through his time into social welfare residences and institutions and then adulthood.[102] Due to thinking he was Māori, David missed out on the opportunity to connect with his Samoan culture and aiga, a neglect that he feels was the worst aspect of his time in care.[103]

94 Private session transcript of a survivor (5 May 2021, page 8).
95 Witness statement of David Crichton (9 July 2021, page 2).
96 Witness statement of Fa'amoana Luafutu (5 July 2021, para 83).
97 Witness statement of Ms RK (30 June 2021, page 3).
98 Witness statement of Kamahl Tupetagi (3 October 2021, page 22).
99 Witness statement of Rachael Umaga (18 May 2021, pages 4–13).
100 Witness statement of Mr TH (7 June 2021, pages 22–23).
101 Private session transcript of Te Pare Meihana (5 May 2021, pages 8–9).
102 Witness statement of David Crichton (9 July 2021, pages 3–4).
103 Witness statement of David Crichton (9 July 2021, page 35)

"The thing is, no matter where you went, if you had brown skin, you were going to get abused. Physically or sexually or both."

DAVID WILLIAMS (AKA JOHN WILLIAMS)
Samoan

Chapter 6: Impacts of abuse and neglect on Pacific survivors

103. Part 5 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, sets out the significant, pervasive and lifelong impacts that abuse and neglect in State and faith-based care had on survivors' physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing and spirituality, identity and cultural identity, education and employment opportunities.

104. For Pacific survivors, the abuse and neglect they experienced in care had particular impacts on their identity and sense of belonging, their faith, and the pathways of their lives.

Impact on identity and sense of belonging

105. For many Pacific survivors, the abuse and neglect they experienced in care had a profound and long-lasting impact on their identity and sense of belonging. From various Pacific perspectives, an individual's identity is deeply rooted in their lineage, kainga, communities and church.

106. The disconnection from kainga created by placing Pacific children, young people and adults in the care of others was itself a transgression of the vā. The severe impacts of breaching the vā include trauma, shame, disconnection and a denial of the ability to fakatupuolamoui (live vigorously and abundantly).[104] Expert witness Dr Sam Manuela explained that:

> *"...in instances where survivors were placed into the care of others, these then became substitutes for family. However, the vā that exists between family members does not have the same meaning as the vā between a person and unfamiliar others."*[105]

107. Time in care often resulted in Pacific survivors being disconnected from their kainga, communities and cultures, limiting their knowledge of their cultural values and practices and affecting their sense of identity and belonging. Cook Island survivor Mr UU told the Inquiry:

> *"The State disconnected me from my culture and sadly, my culture went further and further away from me as I shifted from home to home and then on to prison."*[106]

104 Witness statement of Dr Sam Manuela (12 July 2021, paras 56–59).
105 Witness statement of Dr Sam Manuela (12 July 2021, para 65).
106 Witness statement of Mr UU (23 June 2022, para 67).

108. Samoan survivor Ms TU was adopted by a Palagi family in a closed adoption and completely cut off from her kainga and culture. Ms TU struggled with her cultural identity for most of her formative years and continues to do so today.[107] Samoan survivor Malia Patea-Taylor shared how she grew up immersed in her culture fa'asamoa but after being abused by family members was taken into State care and moved multiple times. She became very disconnected from her culture and family to the extent she "hated Samoans",[108] but has since been supported to reconnect with her Samoan side.[109]

109. Many felt that the disconnection from culture and a sense of cultural identity were amongst the worst impacts of their time in care.[110] Pacific survivors lost the ability to practise, or the opportunity to learn, their languages and "core Pacific values".[111] This disconnection was not only felt by the individual survivor but collectively and intergenerationally as well, as many survivors spoke about how they were unable to teach their children about their culture.[112]

110. The intergenerational impacts of disconnection of Pacific survivors from their culture and communities was acknowledged by Oranga Tamariki Chief Executive Chappie Te Kani at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing:

> *"...the care and protection system between 1950 and 1999 failed to consistently ensure that all Pacific fanau in care had adequate access to their culture, identity, language and communities and in doing so contributed to isolation and cultural disconnection for these individuals. These impacts are ongoing and have also impacted not just those individuals, but their wider aiga as well".*[113]

111. Pacific survivors told the Inquiry about the impacts of not knowing, or being misled, about their ethnic background, which was often a direct impact of ethnicity recording practices that ignored and / or mislabeled Pacific identities. Survivors who were ethnically misidentified, particularly during their formative years, experienced despair and profound confusion about their identity later in life.

107 Witness statement of Ms TU (29 June 2021, paras 98–107, 132–137 and 148–179).
108 Private session transcript of Malia Patea-Taylor (27 September 2022, pages 33 and 37).
109 Private session transcript of Malia Patea-Taylor (27 September 2022, page 37).
110 Witness statements of David Crichton (9 July 2021, paras 123–130) and Mr SE (21 June 2021, page 78–80).
111 Witness statements of Mr SE (21 June 2021, page 80), Mr CE (8 July 2021, paras 111–116) and Jason Fenton (16 March 2022, para 6.14).
112 Witness statement of Mr UU (23 June 2022, para 66–68).
113 Transcript of evidence of Chief Executive Chappie Te Kani for Oranga Tamariki at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 22 August 2022, Opening acknowledgements).

112. Survivor Te Pare Meihana, who was placed in multiple care settings from a young age, told the Inquiry that her ethnicity was changed from Cook Island to Māori on her records when she was 3 years old. She talked about the shame she felt when she realised she was not actually Māori or from Whāngārā, the place where she was raised with her extended whānau. Finding out she was actually of Cook Islands descent made her feel ashamed, and her sense of identity was completely shattered:

"This caused me to feel like I've had this life that wasn't mine to have … I don't feel like I'm from the Cook Islands at all and I feel ashamed about that."[114]

113. Te Pare shared that the physical abuse she suffered in care was almost secondary to the personal trauma that comes from not knowing who you are.[115] This highlights the profound impact that shame can have on a survivor's sense of identity and belonging.

114. Disconnection from culture was not only a result of being removed from kainga, as it was exacerbated by the cultural abuse, neglect and oppression experienced by many Pacific survivors in care. Some Pacific survivors they told the Inquiry they did not belong anywhere because the racism they endured in care intensified their struggles with belonging and identity and self-worth. Samoan survivor David Williams (aka John Williams) said going into a family group home meant he lost everything:

"I had no identity, I had no belonging, I had no respect, you lose your culture, and you lose your identity. You don't think of yourself as an Islander or a Māori, because you start to believe what they are saying about you … the staff made it clear that Islanders didn't belong to this world … That's why I wandered up and down New Zealand quite a bit because there was no sense of belonging or family or culture. They lose your culture for you".[116]

114 Private session transcript of Te Pare Meihana (5 May 2021, page 14).
115 Private session transcript of Te Pare Meihana (5 May 2021, page 26).
116 Witness statement of David Williams (aka John Williams), (15 March 2021, para 196–198).

115. The racism and physical abuse by peers[117] experienced by Tokelauan scholarship students, who were brought to Aotearoa New Zealand and placed in Sedgley Boys' home (Anglican), was compounded by the failure to adequately prepare the students. While students were in the top of their class in Tokelau, language difficulties meant they were placed in lower ability classes in Aotearoa New Zealand.[118] Parents sent their children to be educated expecting they would return to Tokelau with qualifications and skills to serve their communities. However, the students often failed exams. Feeling shame for embarrassing their families, most students stayed in Aotearoa New Zealand.[119]

116. Dr Tamasailau Suaali'i-Sauni explains that for Pacific survivors and their kainga, "shame is a big thing, it's a big thing in any culture, but it's a big thing in Pacific cultures where hierarchies of respect make it difficult for those who are not in positions of power to express themselves".[120]

117. Abuse and neglect in care could ultimately impact a person's ability to fakatupuolamoui, to live vigorously and abundantly. Niuean survivor Jason Fenton explains:

> *"My inner child has been seriously mentally and emotionally affected due to the poor behaviour and abuse of others while I was in their care. This affected my lifestyle through my teenage years, right up to my adulthood. I believe if I wasn't put into foster care, who knows where I would be today."*[121]

Impacts on faith

118. For many Pacific Peoples, a "relationship with God and the church is actively maintained to ensure positive health, wellbeing and identity".[122] While not all Pacific survivors consider themselves to be religious or go to church regularly, the church is still seen as an "anchor for stability and belonging" for many Pacific communities.[123] Similarly, indigenous aspects of spirituality are also still "a prevailing feature of many Pacific cultures" and families, and can therefore be part of their identity and sense of belonging as well.[124]

117 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care engagement, survivor from Inati Organisation, Ōtepoti (1 July 2022, page 3).
118 Swain, P & Ulu, A, Rethinking Tokelau education: Tokelau and the role of New Zealand volunteers. Wellington: Volunteer Service Abroad (July 2000–June 2010, page 8).
119 Swain, P & Ulu, A, Rethinking Tokelau education: Tokelau and the role of New Zealand volunteers. Wellington: Volunteer Service Abroad (July 2000 – June 2010, page 8).
120 Transcript of evidence of Dr Tamasailau Suaali'i-Sauni at the Inquiry's Tulou: Our Pacific Voices: Tatala e Pulonga (Pacific Peoples' Experiences) Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 30 July 2021, page 593).
121 Witness statement of Jason Fenton (16 March 2022, para 6.3).
122 Witness statement of Folasāitu Dr Apaula Julia Ioane (21 July 2021, page 12).
123 Witness statement of Folasāitu Dr Apaula Julia Ioane (21 July 2021, page 12).
124 Witness statement of Dr Sam Manuela (12 July 2021, para 32).

119. Abuse and neglect in care, particularly in faith-based settings, led to some Pacific survivors being disconnected from their church, their faith, or a sense of spirituality. This disconnection was a transgression against the Pacific value of tapuakiga / talitonuga (spirituality, indigenous beliefs and Christianity). For many, the close relationship between their families and the church meant that the disconnection from their faith also represented a transgression of kainga and the vā.

120. Samoan and Māori survivor Rūpene Amato said becoming distant from the Church because of the abuse he suffered from a Catholic priest at a Catholic primary school was one "of the major impacts on my life", especially as religion was an important part of his family.[125]

121. Other Pacific survivors spoke about how the placement into care separated them from their faith. Samoan survivor Fa'afete Taito talked about the disconnection from his kainga, ethnic identity and faith as a result of being placed at Ōwairaka Boys Home, a State care institution. He explained that being taken from his mother had profound and lifelong impacts on him:

> *"My mother was everything to me in terms of being Samoan, being Christian, being my family … Prior to going into care, Christianity was also a big part of who I was. I lost my faith once I went into care. Being Samoan and being Christian were most of what I knew previously. I came out of care being tough and violent. That was my new identity."*[126]

122. Tokelauan and Māori survivor Mr TH shared how the abuse affected his faith:

> *"I was angry at God. I would ask him: why did you do this to me? Why did you bring all this pain and suffering to me? Why do you hate me so much? … I hated him for all the shit I went through and wondered why he let it happen to me … One day when I was in my twenties my aunty took me to church with her. That's how I started going back to church. I gave my life to the Lord. I felt a peace sensation come over my whole body. Everything felt right again. I stopped being angry at God."*[127]

125 Witness statement of Rūpene Amato (16 July 2021, page 12).
126 Witness statement of Fa'afete Taito for the Inquiry's Contextual Hearing (24 September 2019, page 7).
127 Witness statement of Mr TH (7 June 2021, pages 18 and 23).

Impacts that affected the pathway of survivors' lives

123. For many Pacific survivors, abuse in care led to a range of impacts that affected the pathway of their lives. For some, it led to alcohol and substance abuse.[128] Cook Island Māori survivor Tani Evan Kata Tekoronga told the Inquiry that most of the kids he knew in care "are either dead or doing life as junkies".[129]

124. For many Pacific survivors, abuse in care led to involvement in gangs, criminal activity and prison. Samoan survivor Mr CE, who was placed in a boys' home at 11 years old, said:

> *"Going to prison after being in care was a natural next step for me. To me, that was normal given the environments I was in while I was in care."*[130]

125. Many Pacific survivors identified a direct connection between abuse and neglect in care and becoming a member of gangs, getting involved in criminal activity and going to prison. Cook Island survivor Mr UU said, "all of the abuse I experienced in different homes drove me more and more into a life of crime. I was angry at those who hurt me. I was hurt, angry and sad when I saw others being abused."[131]

126. The Inquiry also heard that for some Pacific survivors, the criminal activity leading to prison was a result of not having received the skills, education, support or opportunities to do anything else while in care. Samoan survivor Leota Scanlon told the Inquiry, "I turned to crime to feed me and my sister. I would rob houses so that I could get food for us … The robberies and thefts caught the attention of police".[132]

127. Many Pacific survivors who became members of gangs or have been, or continue to be in prison, also identified that their education had been neglected in care and impacted on their employment opportunities. This meant many Pacific survivors were in low-paying jobs or unemployed, which played into low societal views and expectations of Pacific Peoples and this exacerbated negative stereotypes.

128 Witness statements of Mr TO (1 July 2021, para 189); Mr PO (15 February 2022, para 71) and Ngatokorima Mauauri (2 July 2021, para 133).
129 Witness statement of Tani Tekoronga (19 January 2022, para 75).
130 Witness statement of Mr CE (8 July 2021, para 132).
131 Witness statement of Mr UU (23 June 2022, para 72).
132 Witness statement of Leota Scanlon (23 June 2021, para 61).

"The State disconnected me from my culture and sadly, my culture went further and further away from me as I shifted from home to home and then on to prison."

MR UU
Cook Islands

Chapter 7: Factors that contributed to abuse and neglect of Pacific Peoples in care

128. Part 7 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, describes the factors the Inquiry identified as having caused or contributed to the abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults in State and faith-based care. Part 7 also identifies the lessons learned and the changes made to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect. Part 7 concludes by setting out findings relating to:
    - breaches of relevant standards
    - factors that caused or contributed to abuse and neglect in care
    - fault
    - lessons learned.

129. The Inquiry identified that four factors all caused or contributed to the abuse and neglect of Pacific survivors in State and faith-based care. These included:
    - factors relating to the people at the centre of abuse and neglect
    - institutional factors
    - structural and systemic factors
    - societal factors.

130. This chapter sets out the factors that had particular effects for Pacific Peoples and explains the reasons for this.

The people at the centre of abuse and neglect

131. During the Inquiry period, many kainga and Pacific communities needed support to care for their children, young people and adults at home or within their community. Without this support, many Pacific children, young people and adults were placed in State and / or faith-based institutions.

132. People placed in care needed support, strong protection and to be safeguarded against abuse and neglect. Instead, many were placed in care facilities with institutional environments and practices that heightened the risk of abuse and neglect.

133. Pacific children, young people and adults in State and faith-based care were diverse, with diverse care and support needs. Although each person in care was unique, every person needed support, strong protection, and safeguarding. Strong protection refers to a set of internationally-recognised factors that contribute to resilience because they promote healthy development and well-being and can reduce the risk of experiencing abuse and neglect. These factors are a combination of personal, parental, and environmental factors.

134. The rights guaranteed in te Tiriti o Waitangi reinforce many protective factors. For example, connection to whakapapa, whānau, hapū and iwi are taonga protected by te Tiriti o Waitangi.

135. Had these rights been upheld during the Inquiry period – such as the right to tino rangatiratanga over kainga, and the right to continue to live in accordance with indigenous traditions and worldview guaranteed by the principle of options – these rights would have been amplified protective factors for tamariki, rangatahi, and pakeke Māori, reducing entry into care and the risk of abuse and neglect in care.

136. Human rights recognise that children, young people, adults, people with disabilities and Māori as indigenous to Aotearoa New Zealand are distinct groups that also require special measures, particularly protective measures. In care settings, this means special protection measures like comprehensive standards of care needed to be in place. During the Inquiry period, the lack of special protections or measures for people in care were factors that contributed to abuse and neglect.

137. Many of the personal circumstances that made it more likely a child, young person or adult would enter care were also often factors that made them more susceptible to, or put them at an increased risk of, abuse and neglect in care. These factors were underpinned by societal attitudes like racism, ableism, disablism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia, and negative stereotypes about children and young people, poverty and welfare dependency.

138. These factors included:

a. being raised in poverty and experiencing deprivation

b. being disabled with unmet needs

c. being Māori and racially targeted

d. being Pacific and racially targeted

e. being Deaf with unmet needs

f. experiencing mental distress with unmet needs

g. being Takatāpui, Rainbow, MVPFAFF+, gender diverse or transgender and being targeted

h. if a person had experienced significant or multiple adverse childhood events before entering care

i. having a deferential attitude to people in positions of authority, including faith leaders and medical professionals

j. other reasons such as age or gender.

139. Most survivors of abuse and neglect in State and faith-based care had or experienced many of these factors, which heightened their risk of abuse and neglect. For Pacific Peoples in care, this meant that they were more susceptible to abuse and neglect if they were also raised in poverty, were Māori, Deaf, disabled, or experienced mental distress, were Takatāpui, Rainbow, MVPFAFF+, or had multiple combinations of these circumstances.

140. Part 3 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, explained that racism and other discriminatory attitudes towards migrants contributed to Pacific children and young people being targeted by NZ Police and other State agencies, particularly during the 1950s–1970s. Pacific parents were often only able to get low-paying, labour-intensive jobs with long hours, meaning children were sometimes left to look after themselves or younger siblings. Some Pacific survivors experienced physical, psychological and sexual abuse and neglect at home. Children and young people often 'acted out' in response to stressors at home or school. Personal circumstances such as these contributed to disproportionate numbers of Pacific children and young people entering social welfare care. These same personal circumstances made Pacific people more susceptible to experiencing abuse and neglect while in care.

141. A key factor that contributed to abuse and neglect in care were abusers. Abusers misused their positions of power and control over people in care to inflict at times extreme and violent abuse, or to neglect people in their care. Abusers sometimes took calculated steps to conceal their actions which allowed them to continue, at times, acting with impunity.

142. Many staff and carers who witnessed abuse and neglect, or were told about it, did nothing. Some bystanders did complain or raise concerns, but often with limited success.

143. The Inquiry heard about the importance of the Pacific values fa'aaloalo (respect) and tapuakiga/talitonuga (spirituality, indigenous beliefs and Christianity). Christian missionaries have had a significant and far-reaching impact on Pacific communities, who have incorporated Christianity into their own belief systems.[133] Many Pacific Peoples consequently have a deferential attitude to people in positions of authority, especially people in religious ministry.

144. At the Inquiry's Faith-based Institutional Response Hearing, the Bishop of Auckland, Bishop Steve Lowe, acknowledged that the way that priests are highly regarded by not just Pacific communities but other cultures as well within the Catholic Church has sometimes been damaging and needs to change.[134]

145. For many Pacific survivors and their families, obedience to religious authority was so ingrained they complied with the orders of clergy or other religious leaders. This made barriers to reporting particularly strong.[135] Many survivors, including Samoan and Māori (Ngāti Kahungunu, Te Aitanga ā Mahaki, Ngāti Māroko) survivor Rūpene Amato, told the Inquiry that at the time they felt the people they might have disclosed to, including their own families, would not believe that a person with religious status could commit abuse.[136]

133 Yengoyan, AA, "Christianity and Austronesian transformations: Church, polity and culture in the Philippines and the Pacific" in Bellwood, P, Fox, JJ & Tryon, D (eds), The Austronesians: Historical and comparative perspectives (The Australian National University Press, 2006, page 361).
134 Transcript of evidence of Bishop Steve Lowe on behalf of the bishops and congregational leaders of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand at the Inquiry's Faith-based Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 17 October 2022, page 211).
135 Witness statements of Ms CU (10 June 2021, paras 67-71), Dr Sam Manuela (12 July 2021, para 68) and Folasāitu Dr Julia Ioane (21 July 2021, para 49).
136 Witness statement of Rūpene Amato (16 July 2021, page 9).

146. Some Pacific kainga faced pressure to put their family members into State-run disability care facilities and were not offered resources, information or education about disability to support informed placement decisions.[137] In addition, Pacific kainga – many of whom hold respect for authority as a central cultural value – felt that questioning the advice and diagnoses of medical professionals was sometimes difficult.[138] For example, Samoan survivor Lusi Faiva told the Inquiry:

"I was two years old when I was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. There was little support for disabled children and their families when I was little. The doctor instructed my mum for me to go to an institution, he said, 'it would be better this way'. Soon after I was moved to Kimberley centre."[139]

Institutional and systemic factors that contributed to the abuse and neglect of Pacific survivors

147. Part 7 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, describes the systemic or institutional factors that contributed to abuse and neglect in care during the Inquiry period. These factors included:

a. standards of care were inconsistent and routinely breached
b. complaints processes were absent or easily undermined, with few records kept
c. senior State and faith leaders prioritised the reputations of institutions and abusers over people in care
d. oversight and monitoring was ineffective
e. rights guaranteed under te Tiriti o Waitangi and human rights were largely absent
f. people in care were dehumanised and denied dignity
g. people in care were isolated from whānau, kainga, communities and advocates
h. there was little accountability for abuse and neglect.

148. The Inquiry examined the State's responsibility for the abuse and neglect in care that occurred during the Inquiry period. The State was ultimately responsible for safeguarding all people in care, regardless of the care setting, and for preventing and responding to abuse and neglect. It was the State, for the most part, who decided who should and must enter care, what type of care and how long for, how people were to be treated in care, and how and to what extent abusers and those who contributed to abuse and neglect in care would be held to account.

137 Witness statement of Lusi Faiva (15 June 2022, page 1).
138 Transcript of evidence of Folasaitu Dr Julia Ioane at the Inquiry's Tulou – Our Pacific Voices: Tatala e Pulonga (Pacific Peoples' Experiences) Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 30 July 2021, page 695).
139 Witness statement of Lusi Faiva (15 June 2022, page 1).

149. During the Inquiry period, the rights guaranteed to Māori in te Tiriti o Waitangi were absent in care settings. Similarly, human rights protections were largely absent from care settings for most of the Inquiry period. Many children, young people and adults in State and faith-based care were isolated from their whānau, kainga and communities. This contributed to cultural abuse and racism for Pacific and Māori people in care.

150. Inadequate standards of care, failure to implement existing standards, and breaches of standards contributed to different forms of serious abuse and neglect across all care settings. People in care were regularly dehumanised and denied human dignity. These failures resulted in inappropriate and unsafe care placements, and a one-size-fits-all regimented approach to care.

151. Throughout the Inquiry period, government agencies held multiple and conflicting roles in care. Agencies often designed their own standards and policies, regulated some care providers, owned and operated care facilities, delivered care, employed staff, oversaw and monitored their own services, and advised the State on care-related policies and regulation of the care system.

152. This concentration of power, where an agency could be responsible for all aspects of a situation from decision-making to service provision to monitoring, decreased accountability and increased the risk of abuse. Many staff and carers in government agencies were under-resourced, or had too many duties, leading to some of them having to 'cut corners' or not being able to carry out some of their duties.

153. Where there were complaints processes in place, these were ineffective and easily undermined. People in care faced barriers to making complaints and were often not believed and called liars or troublemakers if they did raise concerns. When there were concerns or complaints about abuse, it was often treated as an employment issue or as a sin to be forgiven, rather as criminal behaviour that needed to be investigated and the perpetrator held to account. Senior leaders or managers often prioritised institutional reputations, and abusers' reputations and future careers, over the safety of people in their care. Abusers were often shifted to other residences or institutions.

154. Unlawful and serious breaches of standards of care were rarely reported to NZ Police. Senior leaders and managers often failed to report abuse or neglect to NZ Police. In some cases, they took deliberate steps to defer or avoid reporting and following through with other accountability steps, such as dismissal under employment laws. Other measures taken by senior leaders and managers included denying the abuse happened, blaming complainants for the abuse, taking a litigious response to complaints, or entering confidential settlements with abusers.

Faith-specific factors that contributed to the abuse and neglect of Pacific survivors

155. Part 7 of the Inquiry's final report, Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, describes the faith-specific factors that contributed to the abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults in faith-based care during the Inquiry period. These factors included:

a. the misuse of religious power

b. the moral authority and status of faith leaders and the access this power, authority and status gave them

c. gendered roles and sexism in positions of authority

d. negative attitudes about sex and repression of sexuality

e. racism and ableism based on religious concepts

f. the interpretation of sexual abuse through the lens of sin and forgiveness

g. harmful use of religious beliefs and practices.

156. Negative attitudes about sex, and repression of sexuality, had particular effects for Pacific Peoples in faith-based care. Although attitudes towards sex outside of wedlock have shifted in Aotearoa New Zealand over the course of the 20th century, pregnancy outside of marriage is still associated with shame in some Pacific Island communities.[140]

157. Pacific survivors described a culture where discussion of sexual matters was repressed. Evidence shows that institutional cultures where discussing sex is taboo can elevate the risk of sexual abuse.[141] This elevated risk can be because adults and children may be unable to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate interactions,[142] and it can also pose barriers to reporting sexual abuse.[143] At the Inquiry's Faith-based Redress Hearing, Cardinal Dew, Catholic Archbishop of Wellington, said:

> *"It's a very difficult topic I find with Pasifika families, because often sexuality is not mentioned or spoken about, and there's the added complexity of the culture of the church where they don't want to speak about anything to do with sexuality and they want to keep the church, and especially clergy, at a level that's not real."*[144]

140 Brookes, B, "Shame and its Histories in the Twentieth Century", Journal of New Zealand Studies 9 (2010, page 46-51).
141 Palmer, D, & Feldman, V, "Toward a more comprehensive analysis of the role of organizational culture in child sexual abuse in institutional contexts", Child abuse & neglect 74 (2017, page 28).
142 Palmer, D, & Feldman, V, "Toward a more comprehensive analysis of the role of organizational culture in child sexual abuse in institutional contexts", Child abuse & neglect 74 (2017, page 28).
143 Fontes, LA, & Plummer, C, "Cultural issues in disclosures of child sexual abuse", Journal of child sexual abuse 19(5) (2010, page 497).
144 Transcript of evidence of Cardinal John Dew for the Catholic Church at the Inquiry's Faith-based Redress Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 26 March 2021, page 869).

158. In some cases, this secrecy and taboo meant 'sex education' could become an excuse, a front, or an opportunity for abuse. Survivor Rūpene Amato, who attended St Joseph's School (Catholic) in Wairoa, told the Inquiry that a priest used one-on-one meetings in his home under the guise of 'sex education' to sexually abuse him and many of his classmates.[145]

159. The Inquiry's summary report on survivors' experiences of abuse and neglect in faith-based care has more detail on the factors that that were specific to faith-based care settings.

Societal factors that contributed to abuse and neglect in care

160. The Inquiry heard how societal factors, such as racism, sexism, ableism, disablism, discrimination against Deaf people, homophobia and transphobia, and negative stereotypes about children and young people, poverty and welfare dependency, contributed to survivors entering State and faith-based care and suffering abuse and neglect in care.

161. These societal attitudes were upheld by staff within care settings, which in turn contributed to abuse and neglect. The Inquiry also saw evidence of racist attitudes towards Pacific children, young people and adults in care. These were often combined with negative and discriminatory attitudes about migrants, which were exacerbated during and after the Dawn Raids in the mid-1970s. The culture of most State and faith-based care settings mirrored an ignorance of Pacific cultures within wider Aotearoa New Zealand society and the official policy of 'assimilating' Pacific migrants.[146]

162. Many of the State's discriminatory policies and practices contributed to high rates of entry into care and abuse, disproportionately impacting Pacific Peoples. Pacific people in care were separated from their aiga and kainga and experienced alienation from their cultures, languages and identities. Pacific Peoples were not able to access culturally appropriate forms of care for much of the Inquiry period.

163. Discriminatory legislation, policies and practices reflected the views and attitudes of the people who designed them.[147] By and large those people lacked diversity and lived experience.[148] Pacific survivors and their families' perspectives and solutions were often marginalised, and excluded from influencing the design of legislation, policies and practices.

145 Witness statement of Rūpene Amato (16 July 2021, pages 7-9).
146 Stanley, E, The road to hell: State violence against children in postwar New Zealand (Auckland University Press, 2016); Sutherland, O, Justice and race: Campaigns against racism and abuse in Aotearoa New Zealand (Steele Roberts, 2020).
147 Brief of Evidence of Dr Diana Sarfati on behalf of the Ministry of Health at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 17 August 2022, para 2.8 (5)); Crown Closing Statement at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 26 August 2022, paras 13, 17).
148 Transcript of evidence of Peter Hughes, Public Service Commissioner, at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 26 August 2022, pages 1064-1065).

164. Institutional and structural racism was present in the care system throughout the Inquiry period.[149] It was rooted in the belief "that Pakeha culture, lifestyle and values are superior to those of other New Zealand cultures, notably those of Māori and Polynesian people."[150] In the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing, the Crown acknowledged that institutional or structural racism and ableism in legislation, policy and systems contributed to the disproportionate representation of Pacific Peoples in care.[151]

165. At the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing, Chappie Te Kani, Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki, acknowledged that structural racism exists in the care system, and that it is a reflection of broader societal attitudes within Aotearoa New Zealand.[152]

166. From the late 1980s onwards, the State did take some steps to address institutional discrimination, particularly racism, and how it contributed to disproportionate numbers of Māori and Pacific Peoples being in care settings. However, at the end of the Inquiry period, institutional discrimination persisted and continued to result in disproportionate numbers of Māori and Pacific Peoples entering care.

Lessons identified and changes made

167. During the Inquiry period, the State attempted to make some changes to address problems identified in different care settings and to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect in State and faith-based care.

168. Most changes were specific to certain care settings. These changes included the creation of new legislation, policy, rules, standards and practices to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect in care as well as subsequent tweaks to these regulations, as new lessons were learned. Several of these changes had a positive impact on people in care, while some had intentions that were not achieved in practice.

169. Legislative and policy changes can largely be seen as a good faith attempt by the State to address lessons identified and to respond to and mitigate abuse and neglect in care. With hindsight, much more abuse and neglect could have been prevented if changes had been applied consistently across all settings and implemented differently. The changes often reflected discrete elements of a lesson, which limited their potential impact for preventing and responding to abuse and neglect in care.

170. Implementation repeatedly frustrated successful change. Common failures of implementation included funding and resourcing constraints, and lack of diversity in leadership positions, policy design and service delivery.

149 Transcript of evidence of Chappie Te Kani, Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki, at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 22 August 2022, pages 576–577; Brief of Evidence of Dr Diana Sarfati on behalf of the Ministry of Health for the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 17 August 2022, para 2.8(4)).

150 Māori Perspective Advisory Committee, Puao-te-ata-tu (day break): The report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare (Department of Social Welfare, 1988, page 77).

151 Transcript of closing statement by the Crown at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 26 August 2022, page 1102).

152 Transcript of evidence of Chappie Te Kani, Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki, at the Inquiry's State Institutional Response Hearing (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, 22 August 2022, pages 576–577).

"I feel like I was taken away from home for nothing, because I wasn't going to school. Sometimes I blame my mother, but then I think to myself, what else could she do? My parents both had to work to pay the mortgage and buy a car and feed us."

MR VV
Niuean, Tahitian, Māori (Ngāpuhi)

He waiata aroha mō ngā purapura ora

Kāore te aroha i ahau mō koutou e te iwi i mahue kau noa
i te tika
I whakarerea e te ture i raurangi rā
Tāmia rawatia ana te whakamanioro
He huna whakamamae nō te tūkino
He auhi nō te puku i pēhia kia ngū
Ko te kaikinikini i te tau o taku ate tē rite ai ki te kōharihari o tōu
Arā pea koe rā kei te kopa i Mirumiru-te-pō
Pō tiwhatiwha pōuri kenekene
Tē ai he huringa ake i ō mahara
Nei tāku, 'kei tōia atu te tatau ka tomokia ai'
Tēnā kē ia kia huri ake tāua ki te kimi oranga
E mate pūmahara? Kāhorehore! Kāhorehore!
E ara e hoa mā, māngai nuitia te kupu pono i te puku o Kareāroto
Kia iri ki runga rawa ki te rangi tīhore he rangi waruhia ka awatea
E puta ai te ihu i te ao pakarea ki te ao pakakina
Hei ara mōu kei taku pōkai kōtuku ki te oranga
E hua ai te pito mata i roto rā kei aku purapura ora
Tiritiria ki toi whenua, onokia ka morimoria ai
Ka pihi ki One-haumako, ki One-whakatupu
Kei reira e hika mā te manako kia ea i te utu
Kia whakaahuritia tō mana tangata tō mana tuku iho nā ō rau kahika
Koia ka whanake koia ka manahua koia ka ngawhā
He houkura mārie mōwai rokiroki āio nā koutou ko Rongo
Koia ka puta ki te whaiao ki te ao mārama
Whitiwhiti ora e!

– Paraone Gloyne

A Love Song for the Living Seeds

The love within me for you, the people, remains unchanged

Left alone, abandoned by justice and order

Subjected to the silent suffering of mistreatment

A heaviness in the core, silenced into stillness

The gnawing of my heart cannot compare to the anguish of yours

Perhaps you are hidden in the depths of the night, Mirumiru-te-pō

A night dark and dense

Where there may be no turning in your memories

But here's my thought: 'Do not push open the door to enter'

Instead, let us turn to seek life and well-being

Is memory dead? No, certainly not!

Arise, friends, let the truth resound loudly from the heart of Kareāroto

To ascend to the clear skies, a sky washed clean at dawn

Emerging from the troubled world to a world of promise

A path for you, my flock of herons, to life

So, the precious core may blossom within you, my living seeds

Scattered across the land, cherished and growing in abundance

Rising in One-haumako, in One-whakatupu

There, my friends, lies the hope to fulfil the cost

To restore your human dignity, your inherited mana from your ancestors

Thus, it will thrive, flourish, and burst forth

A peaceful feather, a treasured calm, a serene peace from Rongo

Emerging into the world of light, into the world of understanding

A crossing of life indeed!

– Paraone Gloyne

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