

YOUTHCONNECT NZ

MENTAL HEALTH APP PROPOSAL



Protecting the Wellbeing of Youth
in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Executive Summary

In response to the proposed legislation to ban social media for individuals under 16, we seek to implement a two-stage process that ensures young people continue to receive essential support from NGOs and agencies focused on their wellbeing.

The first stage involves enhancing the accessibility of NGOs and agencies working with tamariki and rangatahi across Aotearoa New Zealand. This will be achieved by equipping these organisations to effectively raise awareness of their services through existing social media and streaming platforms, with a particular emphasis on reaching youth.

The second stage involves the creation and implementation of YouthConnect NZ, a proposed mobile application designed to centralise and streamline access to critical services for tamariki and rangatahi in New Zealand. By creating a user-friendly digital hub, this initiative aims to bridge the gap between youth and essential support services, including mental health, education, housing, and crisis intervention. Development and implementation of this platform will ensure that all young people in Aotearoa can access the resources they need.

Project Overview -Stage 1

Mapping & Supporting NGO's and Agencies to Amplify Youth Wellbeing Services

The purpose of stage one is to conduct a comprehensive outreach initiative to connect with all NGOs and agencies across Aotearoa New Zealand that support youth wellbeing. The aim of which is to better understand the services they provide and assess their needs regarding digital outreach.

Specifically, the project will evaluate whether these organisations require funding assistance to run social media and streaming platform campaigns to raise awareness of their services among tamariki and rangatahi.

This project will serve as a critical first step in mapping the landscape of youth wellbeing support services, understanding their digital outreach needs, and identifying opportunities for collaboration and assistance in leveraging digital channels to reach youth more effectively.

Project Objectives:

- Identify and Map NGOs and Agencies
- Reach out to every NGO and agency across Aotearoa New Zealand that supports youth wellbeing to gather comprehensive data on their services, target demographics, and current digital engagement efforts.
- Assess Digital Outreach Needs,
- Evaluate the capacity of these organisations to run campaigns on social media and streaming platforms. Identify specific gaps in skills, resources, or strategies related to digital engagement and communication.
- Build Relationships with NGOs and Agencies.
- Develop collaborative partnerships with NGOs and agencies to foster a supportive network that can share knowledge, best practices, and potential resources for digital outreach.
- Obtain funding support for these organisations to improve their digital presence.

Approach:

- Phase One: Outreach and Data Collection
 - Conduct a nationwide survey and interviews with NGOs and agencies that focus on youth wellbeing.
 - Gather information on the types of services provided, target age groups, current digital engagement efforts, and challenges faced in reaching youth through social media and digital platforms.
 - Compile the data into a comprehensive report that identifies key needs, gaps, and opportunities for digital engagement.
- Phase Two: Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis
 - Analyse the survey data to identify the digital needs and challenges faced by NGOs and agencies.
 - Determine the financial resources required to help these organisations effectively run campaigns to raise awareness of their services.
- Phase Three: Support Development and Partnership Building
 - Use the insights gathered to link up NGOs and agencies with funding opportunities and other stakeholders to provide the necessary support.

Expected Outcomes:

- A comprehensive mapping of all NGOs and agencies across New Zealand supporting youth wellbeing.
- Clear identification of the challenges faced by these organisations.
- Stronger partnerships between funding partners, stakeholders and NGOs/agencies, leading to enhanced digital capabilities.
- A more effective outreach strategy that enables NGOs and agencies to raise awareness of their services through social media and streaming platforms, directly engaging tamariki and rangatahi.

Impact:

By mapping out the needs of NGOs and agencies and providing them with financial support to obtain the tools and resources to enhance their digital outreach, this project will ensure that more youth in Aotearoa New Zealand are aware of the wellbeing services available to them. Increased awareness and accessibility of support will contribute to better mental health outcomes, resilience, and overall wellbeing for tamariki and rangatahi across the country, critical if legislation is passed to ban social media for under 16's.

Funding Request:

To successfully carry out this project, funding will be needed for the following:

- Development and distribution of the nationwide survey.
- Staffing costs for outreach and data collection efforts.
- Analysis and reporting of findings.
- Staffing costs for outreach to potential funders and stakeholders able to provide the necessary financial resources for NGOs and agencies.

Conclusion:

The YouthConnect NZ project will create a comprehensive understanding of the digital engagement needs of organisations supporting youth wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand. With this knowledge, we can aim to provide the required financial assistance required to help these organisations raise awareness of their critical services to the youth population, ultimately fostering a healthier, more connected future for New Zealand's young people.

Project Overview -Stage 2

YouthConnect NZ Mobile App

The purpose of stage two is to provide a comprehensive, easily accessible service directory for NGOs and agencies working with youth. The app would enable direct engagement through live chat and phone calls with practitioners, booking systems, 24/7 helpline integration, and could offer educational content on well-being.

Many young people may struggle to find the right support due to fragmented service delivery, and this could be harder should legislation come into effect that bans social media for under 16's, particularly given the increasing need for digitally accessible support that aligns with youth behavior and preferences at this current time.

The app will provide a centralised solution to ensure that youth can quickly connect with organizations that provide essential services.

Project Objectives:

Short-Term Goals:

- Develop and launch the minimum viable product (MVP) within a specified timeframe.
- Establish partnerships with key NGOs, government agencies, and community organisations.
- Conduct user testing and refine app features based on feedback.

Long-Term Goals:

- Expand service offerings based on user demand and emerging social needs.
- Ensure ongoing sustainability through government funding, NGO collaboration, and potential private sector investment.

Project Implementation Plan:

Phases:

- Research & Stakeholder Engagement.
- Wireframing & Prototype Development.
- App Development.
- Testing & User Feedback.
- Full Launch & Marketing.

Funding Request:

To successfully carry out this project, funding will be needed for the following:

- Staffing costs for initial outreach with NGO's & Agencies.
- Sourcing expertise and resources.
- App Development & Hosting.
- Content & Resource Integration.
- User Testing & Community Engagement.
- Marketing & Outreach.
- Ongoing Maintenance & Updates.

Sustainability Plan:

To ensure the long-term success of YouthConnect NZ, we will need to:

- Secure ongoing government funding through relevant ministries and social programs.
- Engage NGOs and corporate partners for sponsorship and co-funding.
- Implement monetisation strategies (e.g., optional NGO premium listings, targeted funding campaigns).

Regularly update and improve the app to align with evolving youth needs.

Conclusion:

The YouthConnect NZ app is a vital tool to empower young people across New Zealand, ensuring they have seamless access to essential services and support networks. This is especially relevant if legislation is passed to ban social media for under 16's, and at this current time when under 18's still have access to smartphones.