

*Woodhill Park Research Retreat with the
South Kaipara Men and Family Centre Board of Trustees*



SO JUST HOW WELL ARE WE DOING WITH OUR MAHI?

*AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SOUTH
KAIPARA MEN AND FAMILY CENTRE, APRIL, 2010*

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Lotteries Commission. Copies of this abbreviated report are available from the
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www.helensville.co.nz/community/menandfamilycentre.htm

Online copies can be downloaded from www.woodhillpark.com

Abstract

The South Kaipara Men and Family Centre was established by the South Kaipara Men's Trust to deliver programmes promoting the welfare of men, young men and their families within the district. The Centre has three staff, each of whom works part-time at determining the needs of men and their families so that they can initiate, manage and deliver programmes and activities. At the same time, one of the three workers runs a private practice in counselling from The Centre. This evaluation study reports on a one year evaluation research exercise funded by the New Zealand Lotteries Commission. The goal was to appraise the work of The Centre. The research acknowledges that a problem based orientation is unavoidable but seeks to emphasise 'action development' as proposed by Jenkin (2010). A mixed methods approach was used which saw a survey administered to 101 people and a number of in-depth semi-structured interviews being completed. Findings suggest more promotion of The Centre might be useful but greater community awareness is likely to open the floodgates of demand for services that staff are unlikely to be able to address as they are already working to full capacity.

Acknowledgements

A report such as this is seldom attributable to a single person. Instead, the mahi, 'the work', can be sheeted home either directly or indirectly to agencies and people; lots of them. For this study, the 'lots of them' comprised the volunteers who gave of their time in completing the survey we administered. They provided the feedback, the data, which informed our mahi. We are grateful for their contribution.

We also want to acknowledge the work of those who worked with the data: Bevlyn Rotohiko entered data into Excel so that Dr Lyn Lavery and her brother Andrew could process it via SPSS (a statistical package of some *oomph*); Andra Jenkin transcribed the interviews which we recorded so that Jens could analyse them with the aid of QSR NVivo 8 (a qualitative data analysis package of some *oomph* also). And beyond the data were a range of other contributors: Warwick Pudney provided ongoing advice, John Grant, Ruth Tamihana-Milne, Andrew Connolly gave in-depth interviews; the Board of The Centre was supportive and there were various agencies who helped in

one way or another. Dr Philip Harkness provided editorial assistance for the abridged version of this report.

We want to acknowledge the Lotteries Commission which provided the funds that kick-started the project. Their funding was realistic but in reality, what we sought by way of assistance was framed as reasonable to heighten our chances of being successful in our funding application. We did not inflate our budgetary demands and we did not over-promise our expectations so we were delighted with the level of funding that was achieved. It would be remiss of us not to mention the roles of other agencies such as the Helensville Women and Family Centre who have been supportive as have Heartlands, the local Helensville News and the five Marae dotted around the district. Their support has been silently steadfast and crucial.

Additionally, we want to acknowledge those who became members of a Research Ethics and Research Advisory Committee. That committee was charged with overseeing and critically commenting upon the research design, being vigilant about possible ethical issues, critiquing survey wording and later, carefully reading and critically commenting upon the early draft of this report. To them we say 'thank you', and it is fitting that they be identified in the pages that follow.

Finally, we want to acknowledge the men and their family members who have used The Centre. The Centre exists for them, and it is because of them that The Centre was formed. Our sincere hope is that as time moves on the focus of The Centre will shift from being problem orientated to instead zeroing in on activities which continuously grow family enrichment. Time will tell if that hope eventuates but whatever the future holds in store for The Centre, we trust that this research will assist somewhat in its evolution.

Dr Jens J. Hansen,
Principal Researcher

Wikiriwhi Ratima,
Research Collaborator

Kim Gordon
Research Collaborator

Members of the Research Ethics and Research Advisory Committee

Andrew Connolly is Director of the Men and Family Centre, South Kaipara. He came to his role from its genesis in 2006 with a varied background of working with women and boys who were involved in family violence (WATCS), pastoral care of migrant and refugee students (Unitec), workplace EAP (Workplace Support), and Community Development in squatter communities (Servants to Asia's Urban Poor Manila).

Jane Sherard holds the position of Kaiarataki Chief Executive of Ngati Whatua Nga Rima o Kaipara Trust, the collective and participatory voice of the five ancestral Marae in the southern Kaipara area – Reweti, Haranui, Te Kia Ora, Te Aroha Pa and Puatahi.

Dr Allen Bartley is a sociologist and Senior Lecturer in the School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work at the University of Auckland. In addition to his research and teaching experience, he has acted as an ethics advisor in the Faculty of Education, as well as playing an active role in the committees that monitor and promote the Equity functions of the University.

Kim Gordon is the Administrator/Accounting Technician at the Men and Family Centre and she brings solid accounting, financial and office management skills to the mahi of the Centre.

Nina Pelling, of *Te Rarawa, Te Aupouri, Waikato* is Academic Development Lecturer/Academic Advisor Maori at Unitec. She has an MEd (Hons), and a BA in Education.

Jane Livingston is Community Development Manager, Massey Community House, who brings with her a passion and enthusiasm for her role as Community Development. She has a Bachelor of Social Development from Massey University.

Wikiriwhi Ratima grew up in and around Reweti Marae. On completing high school he trained as a chef and worked in Auckland for 15 years before becoming a part-time facilitator of activities at the Men and Family Centre.

Dr Adrian Gane, Chairman, came to this Committee as Chairman of the South Kaipara Men's Trust. He has held this position for the last four years, but has been a Trustee since the inception of the SKMT. He has two sons, now growing into young men and is a local G.P. who has lived in Helensville for the last 23 years.

Dr Jens Hansen is Director of the Woodhill Park Research Retreat and has been an academic and social scientist for more than thirty years and has also worked for many years in community development. The author of more than one hundred publications and presentations he is known internationally as a qualitative research methodologist.

Jens has served as a research advisor to a range of tertiary institutions and has been involved in three research ethics committees as either a member or as chair. He is a member of the adjunct faculty and Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi and is founding research fellow at the School of Social Sciences at Manukau Institute of Technology. With his wife Jenny, he operates the Woodhill Park Research Retreat which is the only academic home stay for postgraduate students in Aotearoa New Zealand. Jens knows that this exercise, aside from keeping the late night lights glowing at his house whilst he wrote, has awakened a new dimension of academic interest for him. He is keen, therefore, to see more projects of this kind launched for men and their families. He is keen to see the development of a range of ongoing evaluations of this nature and would like to see literature and theory associated with men become strengthened so that it can be deployed as a framework for analysis.

Foreword

After 35 years of feminism in New Zealand and massive cultural shifts in family structures, roles and expectations, it is a fact that many men find themselves at a loss as to where they fit in the scheme of things. The emergence and growth of the Men and Family Centre is, therefore, a timely but hardly surprising response to a growing discomfort, lack of vision and an absence of *groundedness* that many men (and women) feel.

The Men and Family Centre grew out of community concern for young men and the strife they were getting into. It became apparent very early on that the fathers, mothers, caregivers and Whanau of these young men were struggling too. The Men and Family Centre was thus born out of and in response to those struggles.

This research project was designed to ascertain how we've done. Have we actually responded fittingly? How aware are our target populations of who we are and what we do? Are there gaps and unaddressed needs – what might these be and what responses are required to address them? Is it the Men and Family Centre that is best equipped to meet these needs or can we support others to do this more appropriately? What partnerships and collaborative arrangements will most effectively and efficiently meet these needs?

It is our intention that this research project will, at least in part, bring some clarity and focus to these sorts of questions and consequently contribute to steering the initiative forward. We commend this work as a small but significant contribution to the development of the cultural and social health of the South Kaipara community that may also have relevance to other communities, not only within Aotearoa New Zealand but also beyond.

Adrian Gane

Chair, South Kaipara Men's Trust

Andrew Connolly

Director Men and Family Centre,
South Kaipara

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1. Introduction

Perhaps the greatest social service that can be rendered by anybody to this country and to mankind is to bring up a family. (George Bernard Shaw)

The South Kaipara Men and Family Centre is, as its name suggests, an agency that operates out of a centre. The Centre¹ pursues two foci: the first involves being a deliverer of services and programmes; the second as a facilitator and contributor to community development.

The district within which these foci become manifested is the South Kaipara District but The Centre happens to be located in Helensville which is one of the few population locations of notable size within South Kaipara. The Kaipara District is a large predominantly rural area to the north-west of Auckland and Helensville is the southern-most town within that locality. The building which houses The Centre is quite modest as are the three people who comprise the staff of The Centre. This report reviews how the community regards those programmes and services in what is hopefully a constructive and objective manner. It also considers what other activities and services might be needed for men and their families within the South Kaipara district.

The report has been mainly informed by findings stemming from a project involving evaluation research but as with all research, and especially evaluation research, the investigation processes which shaped the construction of these words should ideally be ongoing or at least regularly revisited. This needs to happen so future events and processes can be monitored to enable future strategic and operational planning be informed by up-to-date relevant data. Evaluations also need to be conducted at regular intervals so intervals of time can be sampled. One-off evaluations tend to provide restricted accounts – one-off snapshots of what is going on based on limited event sampling across a restricted time-span. They seldom, therefore, provide reliable data about longer-term organisational effectiveness which is often what commissioning agencies seek from evaluation research.

However it becomes easier to make comments about such matters when commissioned time parameters span a longer interval and when mixed methods are used to gather evaluation data. For this study, the time-span

¹ The South Kaipara Men and Family Centre is referred to in this report as The Centre.

involved more than a year from inception to completion and a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data gathering procedures were used.

The true substance of the agency and the personality intricacies pertaining to entities from the agency who are the targets of evaluation research can, however, only ever be partially reflected in any ensuing report. What matters are the available services and this report reviews those services and how men and their family members have received them. On some occasions, service outcomes can be truly transformative (for instance, a potential suicide may be averted) and in other instances, their impact may be relatively limited (a good time was had by a father and his children at an event). Bearing this in mind, the overarching goal of this research was to evaluate the extent to which programmes of the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre (the Centre) provide for the needs of the community of men, young men, and their families who work and reside within the South Kaipara district.

Stemming from that overall goal were some specific aims: we wanted to recognize and celebrate needs within the community which the Centre is already addressing, and, as a corollary, we also wanted to identify needs which the Centre might not yet be addressing. When we began this study, we proposed four working hypotheses to frame the research. These hypotheses were:

First, that The Centre provides responsive cost effective programmes, activities and services to men, young men and their families within the South Kaipara district.

To a large extent, we reasoned, such scrutiny could be achieved by noting the list of activities and by surveying participants to determine what they think about what is on offer. The survey findings which are described in Section 4 address that hypothesis.

Second, that there is a need for youth mentoring in the South Kaipara district.

This was the original premise which sparked the establishment of The Centre and so it was logical to explore that matter.

Third, that there are unknown gaps and unmet needs in the services provided by The Centre.

This working hypothesis was included for a very obvious reason. If we were to discover previously unknown and unmet needs that would be a very useful signal for future delivery.

Fourth, that the work and services provided by The Centre remains unknown to the majority of people in the South Kaipara district.

The thinking behind this working hypothesis had to do with our desire to judge the extent to which The Centre has been able to establish a presence within the community. We wanted to know the extent to which the South Kaipara community is aware of The Centre and if they feel confident about using Centre and its service. This begs questions, however, about whether or not The Centre can accommodate greater demands.

It is useful to highlight aspects of the intended outcomes of this evaluation research. First, it was intended that a literature review would be prepared and that literature review is presented in the next section of this report – that review distinguishes, for example, on what is involved in being a father (as opposed to producing progeny), and highlights the importance of reducing family disharmony. The review also briefly critiques a number of commentaries about what ideal policies might need to embrace in making families become more resilient but such policies have tended to stress the prevalence and impact of absent fathers upon children.

As noted, an intended outcome of this evaluation was to generate some form of commentary about how well the Men and Family Centre's existing programmes and services meet the needs of the South Kaipara district. The final section of this report provides commentary about this matter in tandem with making suggestions about how The Centre can extend rather than necessarily expand services to men, young men, and their families.

We want an outcome of this evaluation to be that information about this research becomes diffused to kindred agencies from within the local district and beyond. We want relevant communities of practice to learn about the positive work being undertaken by The Centre. The very important role of the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) must, therefore, be acknowledged here. DIA made a realistic amount of funding available for the completion of this evaluation research and they agreed to our proposal an imperative that the work be disseminated. To a certain extent, that remit alone ensures this work remains ongoing but our hope remains that others will feel motivated towards either contributing to the work of the SKMT or that they will replicate the work being undertaken at a different locale.

The report comprises seven sections. This introduction, Section 1, is followed by a very brief account of the origin and structure of the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre, Section 2. (A minor but potentially

important point emerging from Section 2 is a suggestion that The Centre might ensure that an archivist records future events and milestones.)

In Section 3 an explanation is given of procedures used to complete this evaluation research. The overarching emphasis of this work has been posited in emphasizing positives as opposed to lamenting deficits. This was achieved by following an appreciative development model as devised by Chris Jenkin (2010). Jenkin, a senior lecturer in early childhood education has coined the term ‘action development’, for her doctoral thesis. She reasons that AI is useful because it begins by recognizing what is already working well which is tantamount to saying, ‘anything goes if it’s justifiable, but let’s begin by focusing on what works.’ She thus proposes that for positive development to occur, successes must be identified and celebrated. Thereafter, she claims, it is acceptable to use action research procedures if these are needed to ignite further success.

This is consistent with our stance because if an evaluation is to be fair, it must move beyond commemorating positives to also objectively recognising problems and issues. For that reason, we do not shy away from providing critical commentary where this is needed. Finally, Section 3 also explains how ethical integrity was assured in this study.

In many academic and research works, literature is purveyed by researchers as a predicate to compiling an account of whatever research procedures are chosen. This happens because normally, the literature often helps crystallise research issues and research design. However, the original proposal submitted to the DIA did not require a critical review of literature -- hence literature pertaining to men and their families did not pre-inform the researchers about methods used for this study. Nevertheless, undertaking an examination of the literature was an embedded aspect of the qualitative methodology used and thus it was decided to present commentary about extant literature after the section on research procedures. Accordingly, this is presented as Section 4. Section 5 presents results¹ from a survey conducted with a sample of 101 respondents. Results are descriptive only as no cross-tabulations occurred between those few demographic descriptors used and questionnaire items. Qualitative data from the survey are not reported in this section – instead, they are presented in Section 6 together with other qualitative findings. Finally, in Section 7, a discussion of matters raised throughout the report is presented together with relevant recommendations.

¹ We prefer to use the term results when quantitative (QN) data are being reported and findings as more apt term for labelling qualitative (QL) data. See Hansen, 1995.

2. The origin of the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre.

My father used to play with my brother and me in the yard. Mother would come out and say, "You're tearing up the grass." "We're not raising grass," Dad would reply. "We're raising boys." (Harmon Killebrew)

There is no formal history of the origin of the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre. A file provided by Andrew Connolly had this to say about a meeting that was held in 2004:

South Kaipara Men's Trust (SKMT) started from a public meeting to discuss concern about youth in Helensville. A group of men got together to see how men could help the situation. From this the SKMT arose, initially we met at Lions lounge at Rautawhiri Park.

A constitution was set up and a deed of trust with help of a lawyer and meetings continued for a year a half. The idea of a men's centre was talked about, we looked for a place, and we found the old primary school at Gerald Stokes Ave. The Men and Family Centre was born. This was a place where Andrew could work from, have our meetings and run some programmes

The Trust governs and gives direction to the Men's centre which was only staffed by Andrew, later joined by Kim.

The support came from community organisation such as Kaipara College, Helensville women's centre, RDC, Lions. Funding came from ASB, Lotteries, COGS, and others.

Jonathan Lee, who explored capacity building for men and their families in South Kaipara (Lee, 2006, p.1), noted that:

The formation of the South Kaipara Men's Trust happened due to a concern about the behaviour of men, young men in particular, within our community. The question which arose from our very first meeting two years ago was "Who are the perpetrators and what are we going to do about them?" The ensuing¹ questions were, "What is our obligation as men towards these young men?" and "Where are the fathers or role models of these young men?"

¹ Jonathan Lee actually used the term *pursuing questions* but it has been assumed that this was a typographical error and so the word *pursuing* has been replaced with the work *ensuing*.

It was identified that there were no support services for men to help men deal with their fathering skills, anger management, [and] misbehaviour by boys who had no fathers or positive male role models in their lives.

The project was seen as an opportunity to help reduce the levels of stand downs of young men in schools and thus improve the overall chances for young men in the future.

The project was seen as an opportunity to provide good role models and improve engagement between different age groups of men.

It is hoped by lifting the capacity of the local services and men through engagement within our community we will begin to see an improvement in family life.

The overarching thinking by a group of men who sought to grow male responsibility within the community is aptly summed up by Lee. He noted that males need to learn how to become responsible by engaging with “...men who care” (Lee, 2006, p. 1). The goal was to strengthen families by building the capacity of men and their families in South Kaipara and that goal remains just as valid now as it was in 2004 when the first meeting took place. The corollary to that overarching goal was to collaborate with local services and to align and engage men with local expertise.

Quite clearly, there was concern about families and especially about young men. The effects of drugs, alcohol, vandalism and tagging were highly visible within the community. In reality, the concern was as much about young people and the seeming inability of social and community services to cope with these matters and there was an absence of appropriate social services for young men in particular. There was also a perception that social services were thinly spread throughout this large rural district and that they might not be capable of delivering whenever ‘flash points’ of concern arose.

Accordingly, the SKMT which was formed to strengthen families through capacity building identified a number of project objectives. They wanted to reduce barriers to male participation; they wanted to promote social services for men (and young men in particular); and, they wanted to develop a long term community plan that could grow participation.

To achieve this they recognised that communication strategies were needed. First and foremost, this included talking with men to find out what they needed to help them clarify their role/s within families and the community at large. They also recognised the importance of men gaining heightened awareness of available social and community services and

benefits which could be derived by accessing them. Moreover, the founders of SKMT recognised that collaborative work between local and non-local agencies (as opposed to individualised efforts) would likely yield improved community benefits.

Lee reported that relationships between many groups in South Kaipara were strained and that there was (as of 2005) little interaction between them. He reported that men were not consumers of community programmes and services and there were quite different views between Maori and Pakeha concerning best ways of assisting young men in the community.

A project leader was mooted and a condition was that the appointee should have skills enabling liaison with funding providers and an ability to generate progress reports. The project leader would work independently but would be involved with those in governance, if only to overcome professional isolation. According to Lee, males from 12 years and over were the primary target group with whom relationships should be improved and with whom work should be completed. In addition, it was proposed that leaders of community groups should be targeted so that they in turn would gain more awareness of the needs of men and their families.

In a way, Lee and his associates from the SKMT recognised that having a two way reciprocal partnership is an important ingredient to being able to achieve community change. To that extent they recognised the important roles which key women can play in ensuring social and community services delivery. Lee and his colleagues noted the importance of community media in implementing change and they also appreciated that the business sector and kindred groups from outside the district could assist their cause. And neither was the important contribution which central government agencies should provide was not lost on them.

Lee's documentation remains very useful for three reasons. First, it describes some of the early thinking and the validity of such thinking has not become moribund with time. Second, the documentation points out the desirability of ensuring constructive progress through ushering in a co-ordinated approach to development. Collaboration is essential not only for identifying social and community problems and strengths, but also for delivering solutions and improvements in an effective manner. Finally, and as a third valuable component, Lee's report details a series of programmes and services which were delivered up to 2006 and also a series of events which were proposed for 2006. His list of needs is not exhaustive but it remains relevant at the time of preparing this report.

That Andrew Connolly became the Co-ordinator of the Men and Family Centre is a matter of history. That Connolly is The Centre and that The Centre is Connolly is a strong testament to his commitment to working with men and their families. The Centre now has three part-time (Andrew, Wikiriwhi¹ and Kim) and is still governed by the Board of the SKMT. It is housed in what was the Rodney Youth Learning Centre venue and a good deal of what Andrew does is very consistent with the goals and objectives described by Lee. Moreover, a good deal of what happens by way of programme and service delivery is very much aligned to the needs and strategies Lee identified.

However, a major difference is that Andrew Connolly is not only a community developer – he is also a qualified counsellor. Clearly, this is now recognised as an important, indeed it is a crucial professional dimension of The Centre. We have not deeply probed the counselling dimension of what Andrew does and it would be ethically inappropriate to do so. Suffice it to note that counselling remains a core professional activity whilst the incumbent remains professionally involved. How he reports on that involvement must necessarily remain a matter between Andrew and the Board. It is not what this review is about.

¹ References made to Wiki within the body of this document are a shortened form of Wikiriwhi.

3. Research procedures used for this evaluation

**He didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it.
(Clarence Budington Kelland)**

Three researchers undertook this evaluation study of the operations of the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre¹. Evaluation research can usefully be thought of as an applied investigation during which investigators seek to review the operations of an organisation or a service. The intention is to gather data so that informed judgments can be made about the effectiveness of the workings of that organisation and/or service.

As previously noted, a review of literature did not inform research design. Instead, our own experience was the key influence. However, extant literature was critically scrutinised and a series of conversations were had with a leading Aotearoa New Zealand figure in men's studies². We contend that this blend of critically examining literature and engaging with an expert enriched our understanding of issues concerning men and their families even though we had designed the study before that happened.

As a matter of convenience an evaluation template (Jens Hansen, 2008b) was used to inform what we did. That template represents a synthesis of best (evaluation research) practices and it was devised with reference to strategies used by other evaluation researchers. As a predicate to beginning the research, team members systematically worked through the template.

As noted above, evaluations are completed primarily to appraise the calibre of service provision which an organisation delivers. When such appraisals focus mainly on problems, other matters tend to become submerged because the focus is mainly on fixing that which is seen as problematic. And, when the focus is concerned with problem solving a deficit approach to social development tends to be unavoidable (Crotty, 1998; Cummins, 2003). This evaluation research does not steer clear of that approach to thinking because the presence of social problems in any community, including the South Kaipara district is indisputable. Domestic

¹ Because The Centre needed to continue to provide services to the community whilst this study was being completed, staff availability sometimes became stretched.

² We are extremely grateful to Warwick Pudney, a psychotherapist, author and researcher who focuses his professional life on researching men. Almost daily conversations occurred between the principal author and Warwick over a period of about six months and Warwick's valuable input is gratefully acknowledged. A comprehensive list of pertinent references provided by Warwick is available from the principal author.

violence is a problem in some families as can be substance abuse, poverty, crime, mental illness, unemployment and under-employment. Moreover, such problems are not confined exclusively to men or even exclusively to women but rather, impact upon both genders and upon various family configurations.

Given this reality, the methodology (design overlay) for this study involved a mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2003; Jens Hansen, 2005; Trochim & Donnelly, 2007) which means both quantitative and qualitative research procedures were used. Specifically, we administered a survey to 101 respondents or an estimated ten per cent of the client universe who have participated in activities and/or services provided by the Centre. Much time was spent in designing the final instrument and eventually, a survey of approximately 100 respondents or 10% of the client base (and where possible, members of their families) was completed. In addition, a small number of semi-structured interviews were conducted and in the near future, a small number of focus groups will be facilitated¹.

The sampling procedures used involved convenience sampling and snowball sampling (Jens Hansen, 2008a). Snowball sampling happens when participants who have already taken part in a survey, recruit others. For this study, people who participated in activities sponsored or facilitated by the centre were asked to complete the survey. In addition, they were asked to ensure that other members of their Whanau contributed to the study by completing the survey. In addition, the two part-time workers of the centre canvassed their own networks and made telephone contact with potential respondents.

Surveys were numbered to preserve anonymity and response data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Survey data comprised mainly categorical responses and these were prepared for exporting into SPSS, a statistical package which can generate descriptive statistics more readily than can be achieved in Excel. A statistician was recruited² to generate the SPSS outputs and these data are reported in Section 5. Cross tabulations between demographic attributes and questions were not completed because the sample size was small and splitting it, therefore, would not be terribly useful.

¹ These focus groups have, however, been deferred until after the production of this report because it is intended to review findings from this report with focus group participants. Involving communities of interest in this manner will promote collaborative future planning so that programmes and services can become better formulated and adjusted to suit the needs of stakeholders.

² The work of Dr Lyn Lavery, and her brother, Andrew Lavery, each from the firm *Academic Consulting*, must be acknowledged here. In addition, the data inputting by Bevlynn Rotohiko must be noted with gratitude.

Moreover, the nature of this evaluation study did not demand such statistical procedures.

A number of the questions included within the survey were of an open-ended nature and they thus invited respondents to provide open-ended responses. And as indicated above, a small number of semi-structured interviews were also completed. Our intention had been to conduct a range of face-to-face interviews, in-depth, with key people from the community who had been associated with the genesis of the centre or who had contributed to the centre since its inception. There were, however, problems with gaining access to busy people and thus the number of interviews completed in face-to-face mode were fewer than originally intended. Nevertheless, useful and informative data were gathered and key interviews were transcribed before they were introduced into NVivo 8, a qualitative software programme, for thematic analysis.

Other interviews were conducted by telephone and while phone interviews were not recorded, extensive notes were made (J. Hansen, 1983, 1987; J. J. Hansen, 1983; J. J. Hansen, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1995; J. J. Hansen & Noble, 1993; J. J. Hansen & Noble, 1993a; J. J. Hansen, Rajendra, & Southern, 1995)¹ Notes were introduced into NVivo 8 as appropriate bearing in mind that any matters which were to be treated as confidential were excluded.

All literature data were also imported into NVivo 8 and documents were similarly coded by themes but they were coded in considerable detail over an extended time period. This involved scanning existing studies, perusing pertinent documentation, services and plans from the Centre and reviewing previous studies which have been completed. Our intention was that literature would inform thinking which underpinned our qualitative interpretations (Hansen, 1999) and critical commentary stemming from the reviewed literature can be found in Section 4 of this report.

When the proposal for this research was assembled we saw the need for a number of focus groups with people from the South Kaipara community who had not (yet) availed themselves of The Centre. Our thinking was that it would be a relatively useful and easy matter to discover why they have not participated in services offered. The idea was that people would be invited and after being told about The Centre they would simply be asked how best The Centre could be responsive to their needs.

¹ A point to be made here is that the referencing system used in this report is that of APA 6th which is why citations are sometimes quite different in presentation format to the systems previously employed in APA 5th.

In reality such fact finding has already occurred in an informal way and affirming data already reside within those who lead The Centre (Ellis & Bochner, 2003). A series of conversations with staff have demonstrated that staff from The Centre, and members of the Board of Trustees, routinely engage with community members about The Centre and they are very aware of what people within the community think about their services – e.g. commuting to and from Auckland to work, having a young family, living within an isolated setting, etc. We concluded, therefore, that the money and effort involved in assembling such people would be better spent, for instance, on marketing – on promoting services and programmes and heightening community awareness.

But another form of focus group, a *corroborative* or *affirmative* focus group might be useful in the future (Andrews, 2005; Buckland, 2001). A corroborative focus group is, as its name suggests, a vehicle for affirming the validity of findings via a focus group. There is, we believe, considerable merit in adopting this approach and in feeding findings which may emerge from corroborative focus groups into an ongoing strategic and programme planning exercise. Such an approach to dealing with emergent data is consistent with the thrust of appreciative inquiry or, more accurately, is consistent with what Jenkin (2010) calls ‘action development’.

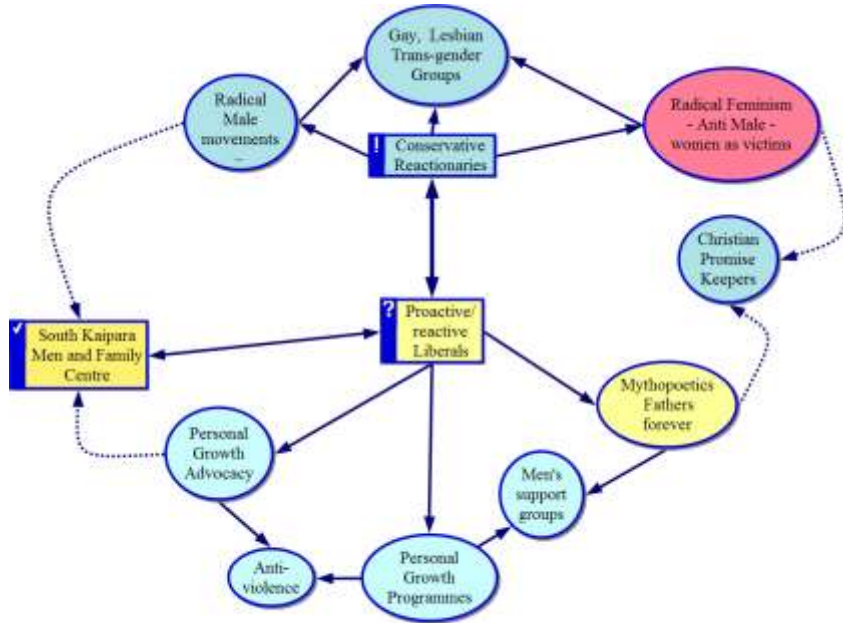
4. What does the literature tell us?

Traditionally, many ...research candidates ... begin with a literature review. That review, or more accurately, that assaying of the literature, is often written in draft form and it is then left to languish until much later in the piece. In our view, however, the process is a continuous and dynamic one.... In fact, we would go so far as to claim that a literature review worth its salt will have been examined and adjusted at the end of each chapter of your dissertation or thesis or study and yet again at the very end of the research endeavour before you hang up your keyboard. (Hansen & Smith, 2001)

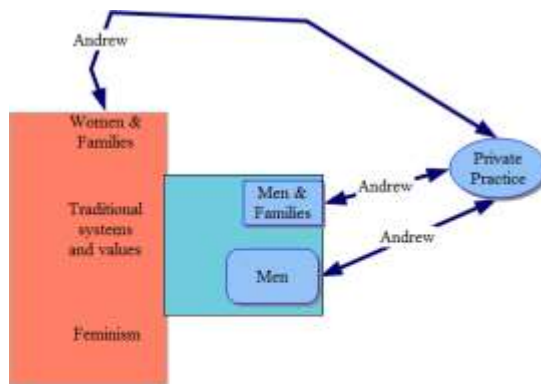
We have already noted that this literature review does not precede the research procedures section of this report as would traditionally be expected. We have also noted (and strongly underscored) that literature did not help formulate research objectives and consequent methods which is relatively abnormal. What is perhaps even more unusual is that we opted to complete a software assisted literature analysis even though, of course, software is only a tool; it can never ever thoroughly undertake the complete gamut of data management procedures thus attesting to the fact that humans are not yet entirely superfluous to the research process...

In this study, literature items (MS Word documents and PDF items) were imported into NVivo 8. This enables researchers wish to extract and report verbatim from previously locked PDF materials. Three comparatively unique strategies to undertaking this literature review were used in conjunction with this software assisted approach.

The first involved completing an interview with Warwick Pudney who is recognized as an Aotearoa New Zealand authority in the field of men's research. The strategy followed can be likened to applying a *Delphi approach* at the beginning of a literature review. The Delphi Technique usually involves canvassing the views of experts to generate informed survey items. The idea has been generalized here by soliciting the ideas of an expert in order to inform a literature review. With Pudney's help it became possible to devise two theoretical (explanatory) models which could aid the interpretation of literature. But a word of caution must be offered about interpreting models – it must be remembered that models are merely devices for facilitating clarification; they are seldom, if ever absolute in their ability to offer a complete explanation. That certainly is the case here.



A simple model explaining theory within extant literature
 (Source Pudney & Hansen, 2010)



A changing emphasis from Women & Families, Tradition and Feminism, to Men, and, Men & Families being served by professionals in private practice
 (Source, Hansen & Pudney, 2010)

The second strategy centred on analysing what was arbitrarily selected as a key item of literature. That key item, as it happened, was penned by Warwick Pudney and represents a plea by him to get policies right for men (Pudney, 2003). A meticulous analysis of the paper was completed to identify issues confronting men and to identify associated policy options and/or gaps. That analysis prompted a range of classificatory constructs (nodes) which were then used to code ideas and text from other literature with adjustments made to the nodes set as fresh ideas emerged. The third strategy, however, was the most innovative and involved generating a most commonly used word frequency query of the literature with findings being expressed as a visual 'tag cloud'¹.

about age all also been between both can care child
children families family father
fathers from gender has have
health journal leave likely male may **men**
more mothers new one other parent parental parents problems
research role shame social some study support than time
violence were which who women
work

Cloud Tag showing relative strength of top fifty words of three or more letters. (Source: Hansen, 2010)

¹ A 'tag cloud' is a visual word cloud which provides a visual depiction of user-generated tags. For this review the 50 most frequently occurring words were depicted to illustrate what the literature was mainly about. The interpretation of a tag cloud is clearly an enormously subjective process but it can be quite helpful in guiding first impressions.

The emergent 'tag cloud' forms an alphabetical size-depiction of key words contained within the literature (see above) so readers can easily draw their own subjective impressions of key words which arise from the literature.

This approach should only ever be seen as a strategy for eliciting a first impression snapshot and when this kind of inquiry into word frequencies is treated in such a manner, the procedure becomes quite useful tool. Most obviously, the words *men*, *children*, *family*, and *fathers* stand out as BIG key words; they arise in BIG form from the collective literature and declare themselves as BIG more frequently encountered terms. Clearly, they warrant exploration. But other words stand out because they are the opposite of big player words (e.g. *shame*, *problems*, *parental*, *one*); the very smallness of these items also encourage further analysis. Other words could be construed as pointing to the complexity of the social milieu of families and the words *work*, *women*, *more*, *violence* either individually or in combination create interesting strands of word association. And of course, thorough investigators will not overlook expected words which are altogether missing.

So what then emerged from the literature? Bearing in mind Pudney's models, there are a number of strands within the literature. Most obviously, there was a body of literature which give credence to the ideas of radical conservatism being mainly used as a theoretical framework¹. These two quotes typify that approach:

Although the roots of the larger policy framework can be traced back to the feminist-inspired Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, increasingly it has come to resemble the more conservative social control, "law and order" policies that favor the criminalizing of deviance (Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Corvo, 2008)

There is a lack of awareness, articulation, and advocacy of men's experience, needs and perspective. Courts are then unwittingly delivering a one-sided service. (Pudney, 2002)

But while such quotes seemingly present a litany of gloom and doom it has to be noted that in reality, much other literature generally affirmed the usefulness of Pudney's model of emphases shifting away from

¹ It should be noted that this report does not present a blow-by-blow account of who wrote which paper or book, about which theoretical perspective, in whatever year. Nevertheless, the need for completing a detailed critique of reviewed literature remains strong and we believe that a compelling case could be made for funding such research.

women/feminist focused writing to also including literature about men and their families. Indeed, if the literature demonstrates nothing more than the emergence of support of that kind, then the exercise of having investigated extant literature has been worthwhile.

For this evaluation, a systematic qualitative analysis of the literature was undertaken and this revealed a number of interesting points. For instance, searches for the terms father AND child, as well as men AND families revealed that these terms are used abundantly within the literature in one form or another. More importantly, the literature clearly notes that the absence of fathers is most likely to be deleterious to children. Stated even more powerfully, there is much evidence to support the positive influence of father engagement with offspring.

The conclusion that can be drawn, then, is that the importance of a father for well-being of children is pretty well indisputable. To that end, again, the literature has been a powerful source of reinforcement for the presence of The Centre and there also seems to be support across the literature for the kind of stance that The Centre has adopted. That stance embraces activities which promote the development of skilled and positive fathering and sound father and child relationships as well as strengthening the roles of men and their families.

For interest, the term *shame* was explored even though it had appeared as a minor matter within the cloud tag. What the literature has indubitably shown is that there has been, as Pudney observed, a gradual shift towards men and their children rightfully accessing services that were once seen as the provide for women and their offspring – without shame.

5. Quantitative results: what the survey told us

When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years. ~Mark Twain, "Old Times on the Mississippi" Atlantic Monthly, 1874

Survey results reported here comprise descriptive statistics obtained from a sample of 101 respondents. The survey design was approved by an advisory board that monitored the research and research ethics. What follows is a question-by-question analysis of the quantitative results, and appropriate commentary is included for each question item. Qualitative results are dealt with in the following section.

Locations of Respondents (N=101)

Location	Frequency	%
Te Awaroa/Helensville	48	47.5
Kaipara CoastHighway	1	1.0
Parakai	11	10.9
Reweti/Woodhill	7	6.9
Waimauku/Muriwai	5	5.0
Haranui/South Head	5	5.0
Somewhere Else	20	19.8
Missing Data	4	4.0
Total	101	100.0

The above data illustrate the geographic dispersal of the sample and it is clear that most respondents were local. In effect, geographical propinquity was at play for almost eighty per cent of the survey sample.

Age of Respondents (N=101)

Age	Frequency	%
Completed by caregiver & young person aged 13-17	1	1.0
18-21 years	1	1.0
22-35 years	21	20.8
36-49 years	44	43.6
50-60 years	17	16.8
61 + years	12	11.9
Missing Data	5	5.0
Total	101	100.0

The data reveal that very few respondents were pre-adult and only a dozen were aged more than sixty years old. Notably, age range intervals were not uniform in this study but it can be reasoned that it is likely that the proportion of respondents who completed the survey from the smaller range interval (50 – 60 years) was not markedly different to that of the other age cohorts.

There were three reasons for this: first, the sampling procedures used, as noted earlier, were based on convenience sampling procedures and snowballing recruitment techniques. Second, because this exercise focused on evaluating the activities and effectiveness of the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre, it was reasoned that we should mainly ask 'locals' to complete the survey – there seems to be little point in asking people who live in distant communities to comment about matters pertaining to a community of which they were not usually a part. Third, we hoped to attract responses from men and their partners (irrespective of gender) and, as will become clear, we actually achieved a response rate that was more or less representative of

national and (Auckland) regional gender proportions and age distributions. Stated more specifically, our sample, and not surprisingly, was a virtual mirror of the gender and age distribution found within Helensville and the South Kaipara district.

The gender balance we achieved in this 2010 study was considerably different to the sample gathered by Lee in 2006 when he investigated the capacity building aspirations and achievements of men and their families in South Kaipara. In Lee's sample ($\Sigma N=50$) 82% of participants were female; in our sample ($\Sigma N=101$) approximately forty per cent were male ($n=43$, 42.6%).

Ethnicity of Respondents (N=101)

Ethnicity	%
Pakeha	59.8
Māori	29.9
Pasifika	1.9
Asian	0.9
Other	7.5
Total	100.0

An initial glance at these data suggests that the distribution of responses by ethnic or cultural self-defined category is quite consistent with the ethnic make-up of the Kaipara and Helensville district from the 2006 Census. We achieved a lower level of participation from the Pakeha community than the number of 'European' categorised people from the census (77% as per 2006 Census) but a higher level of Māori participation. This is perhaps not surprising as strong leadership and liaison with local iwi is spearheaded by the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre staff and Trust Board Members. Even though the smallness of the sample blunts the impact of this observation, the low level of Pasifika participation in the survey was apparent. Slightly less than two per cent of this sample was Pasifika whereas the 2006 Census indicated that 6.3% of the Helensville population described themselves as belonging to Pasifika peoples.

Gender of Respondents (N=101)

Gender	Frequency	%
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Male	43	42.6
Female	53	52.5
Missing Data	5	4.9
Total	101	100.0

Although females outnumber males nationally, and Auckland Regional gender demographic data indicate that there are slightly more women than men in the region¹, that slight imbalance shrinks to the point of almost becoming imperceptible when the focus by gender zeroes in on a small community such as Helensville. In this survey there were more female respondents than male respondents but in many respects, that is a satisfying result because any evaluation of what a Men and Family centre/programme delivers must necessarily canvas the views of all family members irrespective of gender. Also, as the number of missing or unusable responses was not large, missing data were considered to have an inconsequential impact on survey results.

A not uncommon ploy within survey research involves asking respondents to indicate which option (from a range of possible answers or responses) most accurately reflects their individual (preferred) stance with respect to a specific matter. Data which refer to such matters are known as categorical data. When this approach to asking survey questions about opinions is adopted, options to which individuals can respond are generally, but not always, presented on a continuum. Much of the data gathered in this evaluation research involved categorical responses to a continuum of choices and such data can be quantified merely by counting the number of responses which can be allocated to individual categories. This technique is useful because it allows investigators to gauge and quantify the intensity or the depth of feelings and opinions which survey respondents hold about one or more matters. But there is a danger of reading too much into categorical frequencies, especially if they become *averaged*. This study intentionally did

¹ Notably, the 2006 Census showed that typically, 2,532 people were resident within Helensville and within the Auckland region, as noted in the 1996 Census “There were more females than males living in Auckland at the time of the 1996 Census with 955 males per 1,000 females. Nationally, there are more females than males, but Auckland has a greater proportion of females. Although the region has a smaller elderly population (which would decrease the proportion of females), the large urban population would be the main contributing factor as females are associated more with urban-based occupations.”

not seek to determine ‘average opinions’ precisely because categorical data should not be accorded such treatment.

Father/Parenting (N=101)

Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	2	2.0
Not important at all	6	5.9
Important but not a priority	26	25.7
Important and is a priority	46	45.5
Missing Data	21	20.9
Total	80	100.0

There was a relatively high non-response rate for this item but notwithstanding, it is apparent that fathering and parenting activities were viewed as relevant for the majority of respondents. Given the literature on Men and Family Centres from both Aotearoa New Zealand and overseas (e.g. Roy, 2008), such a finding provides a strong *raison d’etre* for the very existence of the agency and its suite of services. The reality is that of those who responded, nearly three quarters were supportive of such activities and that statistic alone prescribes a mandate for such a programme focus.

Courses and Activities for Adults (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	2	2.0
Not important at all	34	33.7
Important but not a priority	38	37.6
Important and is a priority	15	14.9
Missing Data	12	11.9
Total	101	100.0

Whilst parenting activities were clearly seen as important, the same level of relevance cannot be attributed to the provision of courses and activities for adults. That makes the recent government removal of adult and community education (ACE) classes from the Helensville, South Kaipara

district all the more regrettable. Ironically, courses and activities for adults potentially serve as a mechanism for growing fathering/parenting by providing a toolkit for those same parents who view fathering/parenting as being important. Indeed, the qualitative questions asked within this study (specifically, what other services might be needed to be added to a list of options presented) prompted a small number of respondents to make comments such as those which follow:

Father + son days

*Mentoring & support for male youth with absent fathers-
important, and a priority*

*Activities for Fathers and sons who are disabled/unfit for
adventure type activities*

*Also, step parenting courses that discuss such issues could be
made available.*

The above quotes and commentary are not intended to promote the notion that courses and activities are what the Men and Family Centre is exclusively about – its remit is far broader than adult and community education. The 2006 report prepared by Lee (2006) consistently found that almost two thirds of those surveyed (31 of $\Sigma N=50$ respondents) rated fathering and strengthening families activities as either useful or extremely useful. Such a focus retains currency today.

Courses and Activities for Youth (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	1	1.0
Not important at all	15	14.9
Important but not a priority	43	42.6
Important and is a priority	28	27.7
Missing Data	14	13.9
Total	101	100.0

While only about half of the respondents considered the provision of courses and activities for adults to be important, it was found that a greater proportion of those surveyed (70%) held the view that the provision of courses and activities for youth was either important (but not a priority) or

was important (and was a priority). There is merit in considering these results in tandem with the previous question because they provide a mandate for the Men and Family Centre to continue involvement in the provision of such activities. Moreover, the strong support for family and children's activities aligns with this observation and equally, the qualitative comments which were provided reinforced this. A small selection of quotes follows:

I'd like to see a service help provide information to young adults about their role in society/ the community they live in terms of operational as well as opportunities available to them in terms of jobs, careers, training etc.

More activities for young men would be awesome

Te Reo Maori + Kapa Haka-so that the youth are able to identify themselves through language and performing arts to give them self esteem and a sense of self worthiness

Again it must be stressed that these comments were sourced from one of the qualitative questions within the survey with by far the majority of respondents having opted not to respond at all.

It has been claimed that mentoring originated in ancient Greece where young males not uncommonly lived with more mature men at their side so that they could learn values. In this study, mentoring was perceived as important two thirds of all respondents.

Mentoring for Adults (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	1	1.0
Not important at all	13	12.9
Important but not a priority	38	37.6
Important and is a priority	35	34.7
Missing Data	14	13.9
Total	101	100.0

Specifically, the data indicated that mentoring was viewed as important (but not a priority) by almost one third of those surveyed (n=33,

32.7%) and as important (and a priority) by almost another third of those sampled (n= 32, 30.7%). It is strongly suggested, therefore, that this is an issue of some note and it is a matter that might usefully be further probed by the SKMT.

It has been demonstrated that opinion leadership is a crucial dimension for consolidating the social fabric of small rural communities (Hansen, 1995; Hansen, 1999) and mentoring is an integral component of such consolidation. In practice, mentoring mainly succeeds when it occurs between like-minded individuals and/or between members of groups perceived as having equivalent status. Typically, such mentoring emerges spontaneously rather than being contrived. Indeed, targeted (contrived or purposive) mentoring typically does not enter the orbit of thinking for most community and governmental organizations.

In South Kaipara, a desire to see mentoring services established for young men was in fact, a primary reason for the establishment of The Centre. The thinking was that appropriate people could be persuaded to offer such services but in reality resource people who could provide such a service, were thin on the ground. Hence, some wanted outside people might be recruited. This desire, however, is at odds with what informal intelligence suggests, namely that local people, although they want mentoring to happen, want it to be provided by local people as opposed to people 'from away'. But indisputably, they do want mentoring to happen.

Anger Management (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	6	5.9
Not important at all	14	13.9
Important but not a priority	33	32.7
Important and is a priority	31	30.7
It's a top priority	1	1.0
Missing Data	16	15.8
Total	101	100.0

It is not surprising to note that at least two out of every three survey subjects nominating anger management, drug and alcohol abuse and family violence as matters as a concern. A tentative conclusion that can be drawn is

that anger management, violence prevention and substance abuse, collectively constitute a pressing issue to be addressed. However, a matter a simple survey such as this can only hint at this – the actual experiences of those who work with men and their families across a range of services can provide a far sharper snapshot of the depth of these matters.

Preventing Drug and Alcohol Abuse (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	4	4.0
Not important at all	8	7.9
Important but not a priority	23	22.8
Important and is a priority	46	45.5
It's a top priority	1	1.0
Missing Data	19	18.8
Total	101	100.0

Family Violence Prevention (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	6	5.9
Not important at all	20	19.8
Important but not a priority	32	31.7
Important and is a priority	24	23.8
It's a top priority	1	1.0
Invalid Data	1	1.0
Missing Data	17	16.8
Total	101	100.0

Informal conversations with the Director of the Men and Family Centre have indicated that stressing a proactive development/preventative strategy (the fence at the top of the cliff) meshes with his philosophy of community practice far more than does a reactive (ambulance at the bottom) approach. Nevertheless, counselling was perceived as an important service by nearly half of those who responded.

Counselling (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	5	5.0
Not important at all	30	29.7
Important but not a priority	32	31.7
Important and is a priority	18	17.8
Invalid Data	1	1.0
Missing Data	15	14.9
Total	101	100.0

As reported earlier, survey respondents were generally favourably disposed towards the provision of adult and community education activities (52% responded in favour) and they were similarly supportive of professional training workshops (50% in favour). Given that more than fifty per cent of the training which members of community welfare groups and voluntary health workers receive stems from training workshops (Hansen, 2005; Hansen, 2009) the importance of this survey item needs to be strongly underscored.

Professional Training Workshops (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	5	5.0
Not important at all	30	30.3
Important but not a priority	32	32.3
Important and is a priority	20	19.8

Invalid Data	1	1.0
Missing Data	15	14.9
Total	101	100.0

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt that the provision of support groups was important to them and almost fifty per cent (49.5%) attributed some importance to this provision. But as per other questions, there was a relatively high level of missing, invalid and 'does not apply to me' responses (n=21, 20.9%). When these responses are removed from the data, and percentages are recalculated, it becomes apparent that five out of eight (62.5%) felt that support groups were important.

Support Groups (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	5	5.0
Not important at all	30	29.7
Important but not a priority	30	29.7
Important and is a priority	20	19.8
Invalid Data	1	1.0
Missing Data	15	14.9
Total	101	100.0

Recently ProCare network North and Ngati Whatua Nga Rima o Kaipara won a national health innovations award and they have facilitated an ongoing Marae Aratiki Marae Hurora plan. Given the heightened awareness that has emerged in the district about matters pertaining to health, it is not surprising that positive responses emerged to this question.

Healthy Lifestyles (N=101)

Level of Importance	Frequency	%
Does not apply to me	1	1.0
Not important at all	21	20.8
Important but not a priority	27	26.7

Important and is a priority	39	38.6
Missing Data	13	12.9
Total	101	100.0

As noted earlier, this survey asked respondents to rate their beliefs about the provision of various services on a continuum and such data are categorical. Dealing with such data so that they accurately reflect relative importance is problematic and these issues have been discussed within the full report. Nevertheless, findings indicated that fathering and parenting was seen as having super-ordinate importance and this amounts to an endorsement of the very *raison d'être* for the Men and Family Centre. Obviously, however, The Centre mandate is much broader.

Thus, as previous discussion has highlighted, proactive initiative to minimize violence and substance abuse and the delivery of life-skills via training, counselling, support networks and activities also fit into the remit of The Centre.

Importance of Activity/Service Ranked (N=101)

Rank	Activity/Service
1	Fathering/Parenting
2	Family Violence Prevention
3	Preventing Drug and Alcohol Abuse
4	Mentoring for Youth
5	Healthy Lifestyles
6	Courses and Activities for Youth
7	Anger Management
8	Counselling
9	Support Groups
10	Professional Training Workshops
11	Mentoring for Adults
12	Courses/Activities for Adults

Survey participants were asked whether or not they thought community members knew of the location of the Men and Family Centre and although slightly more than half said 'yes' (57.4%), one in four said 'no' with the remainder either not responding or providing invalid data.

Perceived community knowledge of Men and Family Centre (N=101)

Response	Frequency	%
No	27	26.7
Yes	58	57.4
Invalid Data	3	3.0
Missing Data	13	12.9
Total	101	100.0

Interestingly, qualitative comments tended to reinforce this. People were asked how the services could be improved and here are some of their comments concerning the 'visibility' of the Centre:

Building could be opened on more days for people pop in + find someone to chat to.

Activity stands at school events to promote centre and create a familiarity to young boys.

More promotion on 5 Marae.

Continue to be out there in the community so more can know about centre.

internet access?

Website to share micro detail –Look @ those who travel out of the 'ville each day, different breed from us.

By better support of the centres services (more participants). This can be achieved by more publicity advertising the centre's range of programmes, which will also result in the community's better understanding and awareness of the centre.

The services provided are great the centre would probably benefit from advertising/letting the community know what's available at the centre.

The quotes above are fairly compelling – they collectively reinforce the apparent need to increase the profile of the centre and this is clearly an activity for staff and those in governance to action. While these data reveal a spread of both users and non-users, the extent to which people are associated with the Centre is not known.

Usage of the Men and Family Centre over the past 12 months (N=101)

Response	Frequency	%
No	52	51.5
Yes	40	39.6
Missing Data	9	8.9

Total	101	100.0
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Main Involvement with the Men and Family Centre (n=63)

Type of Involvement	Frequency	%
Personal	19	18.8
Professional	17	16.8
Through others e.g. Family members	15	14.9
Other	5	5.0
Invalid Data	7	6.9
Total	63	62.4

Response numbers were not high but qualitative comments are informative. This selection of quotes were sourced from a survey item that asked respondents to nominate what they felt might encourage them to participate:

I know it is a men centre but I feel I can't go to the activities because I am female. Maybe mother and son days would be good.

Activities [needed] for young boys aged 7-9 yrs.

Mum and daughter activities, Mum and son activities or more family activities. (I would love to do some of the fun thing's my husband does with the kid's.)

Courses that could be helpful to me such as budgeting, employment, manage break-ups, relationships, responsibilities

CYF regularly refers to M&FC

*I'm mostly interested in creative activities that would encourage and nurture my relationships with my children.
Music, arts.*

Some comments have not been reported here but they reinforced the need to increase the amount of publicity generated by the Centre and about the Centre

Involvement in the Men and Family Centre

Activity	Frequency	%
Tama Tane College Mentoring	4	3.6%
Tu Matua Fathering Group	1	0.9%
Father and Son Activities	22	20.0%
Counselling	18	16.3%
Training, Seminars	8	7.3%
Resolve, Clearing Anger	8	7.3%
Drop-in Centre	1	0.9%
Using our Resources e.g. books	7	6.4%
Common Ground – men’s group	4	3.6%
Hei Raukura Tikitiki	1	0.9%
Referrals to other services	6	5.5%
Anzac Day/Fathers Day Celebrations	23	20.9%
Other	7	6.4%
Total	110	100.0%

These data demonstrate the range and, to a lesser extent, the depth of involvement which survey respondents demonstrated (viz, some may have noted involvement in more than one activity). Three features are noticeable: first, a one off event such as Anzac Day/Fathers Day Celebrations, which was well publicised, attracts people; second, routinely offered activities and services such as father and son activities and counselling are well patronised; third, and perhaps most importantly given the relatively large Maori population within the district, Maori based activities seemed, on the surface, to have little following. This warrants further investigation.

Other parties affected as a result of participation (n=73)

Party Affected	Frequency	%
Parent	3	3.0
Spouse/Partner	20	19.8
Extended Family	10	9.9
Children	32	31.7
Other	7	6.9
Invalid Data	1	1.0
Total	73	72.3

Quite clearly, these data point to the impact of the Centre – it impacts on Whanau or more specifically to Whanau members – parents, partners, extended family and children. Some idea about the effectiveness of the services offered, however, can be better gleaned by examining qualitative data which were gathered. Andrew Connolly noted, for instance, that he had worked with one young man who had initially presented as depressed as potentially suicidal. While quantitative data demonstrate that the centre impacts on Whanau, the qualitative data unlocks commentary about effectiveness of those interactions. Other comments from participants were also inspected and these uniformly reflect positive outcomes as a consequence of involvement with the Centre:

As I have 3 children which all demand my attention, it was good just to spend quality time with them individually. Also having new experiences with things I have not done before.

My husband spends time with his only son.

And of course, there are also tangible outcomes/benefits which derive from activities mounted by the Centre:

... fishing up the Kaipara. ...fish for tea...

Satisfaction with support (n=42)

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	%
Not at all	1	1.0
Not really	2	2.0
Mostly gained the support I wanted	10	9.9
Yes, I gained the support I wanted	28	27.7
Invalid Data	1	1.0
Total	42	41.6

The response rate for this question was low but it was apparent that those canvassed generally gained the support they needed. Two thirds of the respondents (n= 28, 68.2%) gained needed support and a further quarter mostly gained necessary support (n=10, 24.4%). The conclusion that an agency can never please all of the people all of the time readily springs to mind but there were some comments within the qualitative findings which warrant inclusion here:

Building could be opened on more days for people pop in + find someone to chat to.

Resolve [a programme offered by the Centre] run in the evening for working people.

*Improved assessment of needs, more factual information.
Better follow up support.*

Having a trained social worker available to visit families in the community.

Maybe organization, because we weren't contacted with right/correct details etc, or I think this course would have received some more promotion from Men's Centre

The quotes above are not so much criticisms but rather can be interpreted as comments made by participants when they were asked to nominate ways in which services might be improved. Some comments, which were largely systemic in nature, have already been covered in previous sections of this report (viz – the need for more promotion and advertising)

but one comment that came through was a plea for more funding for services.

Satisfaction rating

Score	Frequency	%
4	1	1.0
5	2	2.0
7	6	6.0
8	12	12.0
9	15	15.0
10	11	11.0
Missing	53	53.0
Total	100	100.0

The data above reveal two interesting things: first, more than half of those who responded chose not to share their assessment of satisfaction about the Men and Family Centre. However, of the remainder who did respond, it was apparent that most were satisfied with their engagement with The Centre. It is suggested that the Men and Family Centre can take considerable comfort from this result.

Willingness to participate in an Interview (N=101)

Response	Frequency	%
No	54	53.5
Yes	29	28.7
Missing Data	18	17.8
Total	101	100.0

This final question from the quantitative data reporting was administrative. At first glance it suggests, perhaps disappointingly, that the majority of those who completed the survey were not willing to be interviewed. But as with previous commentary, it must be remembered that not all of those who completed the survey had been 'clients' or participants

in programmes and activities offered by the Centre. Thus it can be speculated that a reasonable proportion of those who have been involved would be willing to participate further in this evaluation study – itself a gratifying result.

6. Qualitative findings: What the survey questions and interviews indicated

Family life is full of major and minor crises – the ups and downs of health, success and failure in career, marriage, and divorce -- and all kinds of characters. It is tied to places and events and histories. With all of these felt details, life etches itself into memory and personality. It's difficult to imagine anything more nourishing to the soul. (Thomas Moore)

This section of the report comprises two thrusts: the first reviews open-ended survey responses and the second considers findings which emerged from the semi-structure interviews which were completed. The open-ended data were derived from the survey sample and the interview data were obtained as a consequence of completing a small number of face-to-face interviews with key people from the community and a small number of telephone interviews were held with representatives from professional agencies who interact with The Centre.

In the case of this evaluation, nine open-ended questions were asked of respondents and their answers were typed into the Excel data-base, verbatim, with spelling mistakes included, and then imported into NVivo 8. That sorting, together with mail-merging, enables all responses to each question to become processed by NVivo 8 as a series of aggregations pertaining to individual constructs. In this study, this involved aggregating answers to individual questions and considering each aggregate to be a (retrievable) node or category in its own right¹.

The first open-ended question asked respondents to itemise items concerning services and/or activities they would like to see provided by The Centre. Few people responded to this question but one person wanted The Centre to be open more often, another wanted activities for mothers and daughters, another hoped to see activities for the elderly and yet another believed that activities should be mounted for youth. One respondent was interested in attending business courses and there was also a desire to have 'men only' activities. Motor cycle rallies were requested and father and son activities were mentioned on more than one occasion. On a more serious side, one respondent wanted The Centre to keep children out of gangs.

¹ This process is called auto-coding and is achieved when the software recognises and arranges data by Microsoft heading level and by unique identifier (question wording). The important point to make is that each scoop of data (i.e. all the responses to each individual question) can then be further coded, a process known as 'coding on'.

Mentoring, especially for youth, was mentioned a number of times as was the prospect of fathers and daughters participating in activities.

What emerges from this very simple listing of responses is the overall desire the community has for The Centre to serve as a broker of adult and community education activities (ACE). This interest, regrettably, happens at a time when the National led Government has terminated its provision of funding for such activities.

Respondents were asked about their view of te Tiriti o Waitangi with respect to The Centre and its operations. Once more, less than half of the respondents answered but two things were apparent: first, by and large, people seemed to be both supportive of, and quite knowledgeable about te Tiriti; second, respondents were generally keen, again, to see The Centre take on a brokering role so that adult and community education courses could be offered, especially courses focusing on Tikanga and Kaupapa Maori. The repeatable theme that surfaces once more is that The Centre is appreciated as a potential provider and facilitator of adult learning across all ages and for men and women and their families.

A third question asked respondents to nominate what might prevent either themselves, or others whom they know, from using the services of The Centre. Two thirds of the sample (n=67) answered this question and it became obvious from responses that many interpreted the wording as requiring a closed 'yes/no' response because almost a third of those who responded to this item simply said 'no' or used a word to that effect (n=22 said this). One respondent said that being a solo mum with four children, of whom two were boys, made father and son activities problematic for her to attend especially if the children's father was unavailable. Another said, "Only that I'm a woman, not a man, so feel shy about dropping in". Others talked about the location of The Centre and about (not) knowing about what The Centre has to offer while a few others indicated that approaching The Centre might be hard for those who lack confidence. This comment from a respondent aptly sums up that sentiment:

Can be hard 4 youth to approach and enter the centre with no programme or workshop (excuse) to give confidence to enter. Also they do not believe there is a place for them here (teenagers).

Some answers provided matters for staff from The Centre to think about. For instance, the absence of a ramp for people with physical disabilities was noted, the matter of "stigma" (which is a synonym for shame or Whakama) was mentioned and the matter of costing was commented on by a few respondents. Time needed to participate was also an issue that

emerged for some but for a few others, being known locally was seen to be a factor that prevented them from approaching The Centre. A pertinent comment was made by one person who said: “Advertising is for ‘boys + their fathers’ some boys have no contact with their father”.

The overall impression gained was that even though advertising and promotion of what The Centre is about is a regular feature of what the staff do, some sectors of the community remain unaware of what The Centre is about. Tackling a lack of community knowledge about a centre is, of course, always problematic. Community agencies across the board encounter community ignorance about what they do and don’t do and many thousands of dollars are spent by them in trying to promote helping services and routinely scheduled events.

The question about whether or not there were factors which might deter people from participating, yielded useful triangulation because a follow-up item asked respondents to indicate what might be needed in order to achieve their involvement. Some expressed a desire for mother and son and, mother and daughter activities while others wanted a confidence boost (“My wife making me”, “More motivation by me - come out of my shell more”) and still others wanted more time available to be able to take part (“An extra five hours per day”).

One person noted she would take part, “if I was a man” and another said, “I know it is a men centre but I feel I can’t go to the activities because I am female. Maybe mother and son days would be good” while in a similar vein, another respondent said, “Mum and daughter activities, Mum and son activities or more family activities. Again, by way of triangulation, some respondents reinforced their desire for courses to be offered by The Centre and they were quite prescriptive in their wishes:

Tama Tane College Mentoring

Activities for young boys aged 7-9 yrs

Education on what’s offered - awareness

Husband and wife sessions, Husband and daughter sessions

Family orientated activities

Whanau activities?

Maybe family centred activities, or perhaps a couple seminar/course or activity

Courses that could be helpful to me such as budgeting, employment, manage break-ups, relationships, responsibilities

Maybe courses run in the evening

I'm mostly interested in creative activities that would encourage and nurture my relationships with my children. Music, arts,

One person attributed their involvement to having talked with a trustee (Board member) and another had found out about The Centre through work clients. The mere presence of The Centre is also important and some people noted that their involvement arose from the fact that the service and programmes were available. For some, The Centre was clearly a place to support even if they either didn't need it at the time or indicated that they, "haven't really thought of it but it is good to know it's in this community". But comments were typically supportive and the following are typical samples of the many comments made:

My husband spends time with his only son

Community bonding + family strengthening

Understanding of the services provided and to whom it's available

Sense in belonging in Hlnsvl community

Information about centre - out there for people to consider-

Location of the centre. What is available at that time. Passion of the people involved.

Girls had a nice day at the horse riding. It was good to get with the kids at a good price. We don't do this very often.

Gained a better understanding of what the centre does.

Enjoyed bonding time with own and other families in the community. Met people we wouldn't normally have contact with.

More parenting skills

A better understanding of myself especially through the counselling

Sleep and a clear mind on where I'm going in life and ways to get there

A number of respondents enjoyed sharing time, activities and fun with their children and the importance of fathering events is clearly supported. Being able to sleep at night is important and attributing intervention services from The Centre as being life-changing is a powerful testament of support.

Others, a minority, seemingly refer others to The Centre as a part of their own professional role/s. These comments indicate a dimension of professional confidence in being able to 'refer' others to The Centre:

Nothing personally. Clients benefited from involvement

Helpful for client

Improved relationship between client and father.

Better outcomes for our clients – Good follow-up – Community involvement for our clients

Ironically, an associated question which probed to what extent, if any, the services and activities of The Centre had impacted upon others, was answered by only one person. That person, presumably a professional, indicated that their client had benefited by being associated with The Centre. So at first glance, it would appear that respondents who completed the survey were unable to report any benefits which their family, friends or associates had derived by being involved in some way with The Centre. However, despite this, The Centre, the services, and the programmes which staff facilitate, do clearly have an impact. This became evident from the various comments made throughout the study when people responded to other questions, for example, the women who noted the enjoyment that their spouse/partner derived from participating in activities; for instance also, the fathers who reported that they had enjoyed events and excursions with their children.

One question asked, "What other support might have been helpful for you and/or your family?" and in all there were only 23 responses to that question, for example:

father and daughters activities;

mother and son workshops;

clearing anger courses,

mentoring services,

budgeting services,

fun activities at centre for all family and,

an important get together at a regular intervals for mutual support.

Ideas and comments about support which could be provided

Respondent Idea	Writers' comments
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Session on "p"	The request for a session on "P" may already have been acted upon on a number of occasions but the fact that one family has requested further information represents a plea that should not be dismissed.
Counselling from non-local professionals, e.g. import the old Man Alive - know Andrew too well	The idea an external counsellor may have merit. Discussions with Andrew Connolly about this very matter gave rise to a strong understanding that this may not be an issue for him at least. However, the matter has been raised here which suggests it may be of concern to the person/s who made the point. It might, therefore, be an issue to revisit.

Support when my son was stood down then suspended - be good for him to volunteer/work alongside good men at these times	The idea of having young men work alongside 'good men' may be difficult to implement but it does, perhaps, warrant discussion.
Previously my husband had tried to contact someone at the men's centre with some urgency, however no response. At that time our family would have benefited from contact and support	Ideally, there is a need to make some form of division between work and private/family life because that can be a cause of considerable stress on families and accordingly, staff from The Centre should not be on call 24/7. But as some families may need better than 'opening hours' access when emergencies arise, the idea of having an answering service via a call centre, and then rostered people who can be called upon to assist in an emergency, may be a very worthwhile project for the community.
Longer sessions	Does the duration of a counselling session need to be reviewed?

Survey respondents were asked to delineate how they thought that the current services and programme provision might be improved. Of the 101 respondents, only 33 (33.3%) provided answers. There were, however, some noteworthy comments a sample of which are listed below:

Activity stands at school events to promote centre and create a familiarity to young boys

Run in the evening for working people

I don't know what the Men + Family Centre is about

*Improved assessment of needs, more factual information.
Better follow up support.*

Having a trained social worker available to visit families in the community

The toilets need upgrading! :)

Perhaps an information sharing evening run with other groups.

*By better support of the centre's services (more participants).
This can be achieved by more publicity advertising the centre's
range of programmes, which will also result in the
community's better understanding and awareness of the
centre.*

*Maybe organisation because we weren't contacted with
right/correct details, etc, or I think this course would have
received some more promotion from Men's Centre*

Not so much improved but regularly + continuous services

More courses

*More funding so they can offer more services in our
community.*

One person indicated that he/she did not know what The Centre was about but others, who may or may not have known what The Centre is about made suggestions about promoting The Centre to a greater extent. Hence there were suggestions that the five Marae be targeted for promoting Centre activities, that schools be targeted via not only the PTA but also by having static displays, tables, etc.

It is clear that The Centre is strongly mentioned across a range of Internet pages which seems to indicate that e-marketing is a part of the current information diffusion process. However, there may be merit in the Board reviewing this form of promotion as a part of its Strategic planning.

The final open-ended question invited respondents to pose any question that they felt could usefully be asked and then, if possible, they were requested to answer that question:

Q. What is the purpose of the Men + Family Centre?)

What prejudices does the community have towards the centre?

*Is there a time in near future when Men's, Women and Youth
Centres will merge to an acute community centre, overlap yet
stay separate?*

*What impact would there be in the community if the centre
was to close? This would be a massive loss to the community as
there are so little services directed towards men and boys.*

Who funds the centre?

The responses speak for themselves – respondents, all six of them, were variously concerned about funding, believed that closure of The Centre (hypothetical) would wreak a massive loss upon the community and yet again, pointed to an awareness that not everyone in the community knows about The Centre and its services. Overall, however, it can be argued that data from the survey, both quantitative and qualitative pointed to The Centre being a necessary but vibrant organisation, a service that is led by a conscientious professional. We are confident that the data point to a healthy organisation which probably needs to market itself more and which certainly needs to take steps towards reviewing the local community thirst for courses and activities.

Finally, in this first part of this section, the comment can be made that, by and large, the survey findings point to The Centre conforming (a la the Warwick Pudney, 2010 models) to following a more liberal approach to service delivery (as opposed to being a radically conservative agency). The centre does seek to be responsive – it does seek to offer programmes which are tantamount to adopting a proactive approach to community or action development (a la Chris Jenkin, 2010) but it also commits to providing counselling services as and when these are needed.

This next part of this section considers findings which emerged from interviews. They are reported as a series of themes and as a commentary about the operations of The Centre. An important point to bear in mind is that while the same questions are asked of a reasonably large group of people in surveys, the numbers involved in interviews are not large and questions are almost always directed at finding out unique items of information. In the case of these interviews, we wanted, first and foremost, to determine whether or not The Centre had fulfilled the intentions which the ‘founding fathers’, the SKMT, had envisaged for The Centre.

We also wanted to be able to corroborate what the survey data had already begun to tell us, and that was that the work of The Centre, and the work completed by the staff, was well regarded within the community even though there were clearly concerns about the limited extent to which promotion occurred and there was also some desire by some people for The Centre and its staff to provide even more than was currently being delivered.

To begin the processes of discerning and then reporting on targeted themes from the qualitative data, another ‘cloud tag’ was generated by eliciting a pictorial representation of key words which had emerged from the sum of all interviews and notes about interviews.

about actually all also around because been
 being can cause centre come community could did doing
 don't families from get going good got great had
 has have him his how I'm I've involved just kids kind
 know like look lot mean men more need
 now one other our out people project quite really said say school
 see some something sort still stuff them they're thing
 things think those through time very want way we're
 well were what when where which who
 wiki women work would yeah year yep you're you've
 young your

A Cloud Tag showing strength of emergent words from all interviews and interview notes

Because they were irrelevant, the names of interviewers and interviewees have been removed from this alphabetical Cloud Tag with the exception of Wiki. Wiki's presence and involvement across all dimensions of The Centre was and remains larger than life. Although Andrew is the Director and provides the guiding hand to ensure operations are consistent with the strategic development pathways developed by the trustees; he also provides counselling services, develops fund raising applications, oversees administration, practices community liaison and achieves a host of other

things. He is busy and Wiki is, therefore, an integral cog in a very busy organisation:

A key informant was John Grant, the principal of Kaipara College. He was asked about the genesis of The Centre and had this to say:

It's probably driven...it's probably got two or three lines of origin actually, but one of them is certainly the Whanau liaison project that Ruth Sampson was running. That's certainly one of the geneses and Ruth is somebody you probably need to talk to though it's bloody hard to get a hold of her. Because she certainly was instrumental in stitching together the original meetings which were down in the rugby club five years ago, I'd say, four, five years ago I would say.

John also added that in his view, Andrew Connolly was an important factor in the origin of the Trust and later The Centre. It also became clear that the role of Kaipara College, or more specifically, the role of staff from the College was important. John was asked about the people who had taken the project that step further to ensure that The Centre became established. He was also asked about whether or not the 'project had worked.', and he held the view that The Centre had achieved its purpose not only in its original sense of being a Men's Centre but also as a Men and Family Centre:

It is a men and family centre. Oh just I think it probably is a vehicle that fulfils the original role that the project had which is some community group that's focused on working fathers and sons closer together, it still does that.

John Grant indicated that even though Kaipara College does not have any official link to The Centre, what is on offer is effective. A point that arose in the discussion concerned information transfer – the transmission of information about programmes and services. When asked about the extent to which the college was being kept informed about what The Centre had to offer, John had this to say:

Well we are aware of what's available there...The level of communication is reasonable but not super effective. I wouldn't be one hundred percent confident that I know everything they're doing. I don't necessarily expect to...

I suppose we have exactly the same relationship with them as we do with the Women's Centre.

John was asked to comment about the effectiveness of The Centre. His answer was cautious and highlighted that his involvement was not deep because his children were not participants:

Well Jens I don't know that I can tell you, and I don't want that to mean that I don't know that it's ineffective; I just don't know how to tell you because I don't have sons. I don't live in the community; I don't go to its functions. So I don't know, but that doesn't mean I have any reason to suspect it's not effective, I just don't know.

When asked if he thought that this greater involvement might be a consequence of families having been involved with The Centre, its services and activities, John commented:

Yeah, the need's still there. But then the need for the Woman's Centre's still there too.

The conversation turned to shifting needs and to the problem of drugs. The following excerpt shows that in John's view, this matter remains problematic, just as it was when The Centre was launched:

John Grant: Well, yeah, there are shifting needs. I mean the shifting need at the moment is around drug use.

Jens: That was a need when the Men and Families Centre was started, wasn't it?

John Grant: You know, we've still got too many families using drugs in front of their kids and then telling their kids, look, don't do what I'm doing. The fact that we've excluded two kids from that situation this year. It's cost them their education at Kaipara.

Jens: Yeah. If that was a need then and it's still a need, to what extent is the Men's Centre, in your perception, involved in trying to deal to that?

John Grant: I don't know. I see some of its progress, but I don't know.

Once again, there appears to have been a hesitancy to pass judgment on the effectiveness of The Centre but notwithstanding, it was very evident that in John's mind, the root problems which had prompted the formation of The Centre were still apparent within the South Kaipara district. The presence of social services can never ever ameliorate social problems entirely but they can address matters which are deemed to be of concern to a community. Certainly it was clear from John's willingness to discuss the work of The Centre that he was confident that worthwhile work was being undertaken. He pointed out however, that what was needed was money, more of it and a consistent supply.

From the interviews, it became apparent that there were limits to which institutional leaders from the community could and would become involved in providing foundational and ongoing leadership to an agency such as the Men and Family Centre. Whilst the provision of ongoing leadership was not a dimension of this evaluation research, it is, nevertheless, not a matter to be overlooked.

There is a need, as Andrew has noted in his discussions with the evaluation researchers, for ongoing professional and supervisory leadership and there is also a need for ongoing leadership and governance. Encouraging securing and sustaining involvement in such matters is always problematic within small rural communities and this matter may well be worthy of consideration by the SKMT insofar as its future planning is concerned: should the Trust take on responsibility for training future leaders; should those in governance become paid for their services; should such matters fall within the orbit of responsibilities which the pending super-city inherits?

Quite clearly, the current local government, the Rodney District Council has little if any involvement in such matters and whilst The Centre has survived thus far, there may well be a limit as to how much more 'donated' time can be given by those who already provide leadership in one form or another.

John was asked if problems encountered were becoming 'worse' and he had this to say:

I don't know about worse. No, no I mean you've got to get it into perspective. Is this a lot of parents? It's not a majority, it's not even a...it's a small minority of parents that do this. But the effect they have is extraordinary. Their kids get into fatal problems. .. And I mean educationally fatal problems.

John illustrated the severity of the problems encountered.

I mean, I've got two or three kids out on suspension now for drugs, okay? You see, I'm just pulling them into mind. In one case he's a new kid in the school. He's got trad...We took him on because he got done for dope in his previous school. I don't(know) anything about his father so I can't tell you.

Another case, dad won't have anything to do with the school. The boy's heavily into dope, we can't get him out of it, he's on our crossroads programme we can't get him...dad won't come and deal with it...

The other case, dad is probably a major source of using. Almost certainly. Almost certainly the boy who's bringing

supplies in is getting it from the family... I got another boy out at ... who's on suspension now and who will probably get excluded. Mum and dad were in denial and they are probably significant users themselves. In fact I'm pretty bloody sure they are.

The cluster of comments above demonstrates why the deficit approach described in section two of this report continues to retain currency. John sees a clear role for The Centre.

That's what I mean about, you know, this is where fathers and sons have major jobs to do together, where fathers have got to start deciding that ... where their youth finished and their parenting begins, you know. I mean, we all had our wild parts of our youths where we committed our indiscretions and got boozed and didn't think about the consequences and okay, but how do you still be in that mode when you got kids that are eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen? How are you still in that mode?¹

...Yeah, yeah, I know, if they're, if you had time to do it we would give you these kids. And you can go and talk to families and see how we could stitch together...how we could get into the fathers and work them. But we're just working with the difficult kids. The preventative stuff that we need to do and the developmental stuff that we need to do is from a young age to sort of, get messages through to fathers about the responsibilities they have to their sons. Yeah, and that starts, you know...And developing that relationship, and developing in the fathers a sense that their boys learn what the father's do, not what the father's say, is one of the critical messages.

Because I'm probably, you know, if you come to me and say, well John, I'll go and see all of these fathers you'll just end up seeing...you'll just come back to me and you'll say, Jesus! You know, that's...cause you'll see that, we're not talking about them, we're talking about fathers that do need help to develop positive relationships and positive senses of responsibility with their sons. If I call on the Men's Centre to do that, it's not my job to do it, and it's too difficult for me to get involved in that.

¹ One answer to John's question was offered by Andrew Connolly when he pointed out that what John was highlighting was the absence of male initiation within our communities. That is not for a single second a suggestion that any form of unacceptable rituals should be carried out to 'initiate' young men; rather it is recognition that many young men, particularly those who have limited contact with responsible men, become ill-equipped to assume responsible male roles as adults.

After this conversation, John was asked about who should be involved in providing the kinds of services which The Centre provides and once more, the lack of both time and money was raised as a stumbling block, "I haven't got time or money to do it...I haven't got time or money to do it. I don't mean my time; nobody's got time or money to do it". As principal, John was quite adamant that the roles assumed by The Centre were beyond the orbit of the school but he noted, "I wouldn't mind a stronger liaison".

The term liaison in this instance could be inferred to involve a greater degree of collaboration, a tall order for a school principal perhaps, but not impossible if 'liaison' were to become a delegated responsibility. The preventative value of The Centre was clearly appreciated by John as being an important task for The Centre when first it was conceived. He noted that:

But you know, we, it was quite important initially when we talked about the Men's Centre, as I recall discussions, to see the Men's Centre, not as another organization trying to fix the problem. The Men's Centre was supposed to be a place which was more proactive, which is supposed to provide more educative opportunities and development opportunities and opportunities for men and, to have activities with their sons and supposed to do all that proactive stuff. I don't want to charge the Men's Centre with the fix this problem up scenario. By and large you can't fix the ones up that we're talking about.

John went on to reinforce the role of The Centre as an educational agency not just with respect to violence prevention, but also with regard to male/female relationships and with a call to men to not abdicate family roles. He noted that:

... a lot of men are too bloody happy to let their women sort the ed...the school, it's the women's stuff. I mean we've got quite a few exceptions fortunately, but that's also time, you know... And teaching some guys what they need to know about how you actually set your sons up for a pretty successful future is not easy. And if you're in a family situation where you haven't seen a lot of successful men yourself, non-violent, substance managing, men, you know, that hold down jobs, maintain reasonable relationships, and I don't necessarily mean the same partner all the time, but maintain reasonable relationships, all that basic sort of stuff. You know, how do you learn it?

The interview concluded with a reiteration of how challenging the situation was perceived to be and with an underscoring of the reality that the school simply does not have the resources needed to work collaboratively with The Centre. This excerpt demonstrates the frustration the schools seem to constantly exhibit. But this conveying of doom and gloom also, once again, demonstrates precisely why The Centre is a critical agency within a seemingly fractured community. It also illustrates why it is important, when developing a framework for future developments (strategic plans), that a positive spin be pursued by the SKMT as far as is reasonably possible:

John Grant: And there's no adult men in the family, at the moment, and there's probably been two or three adult men, well, one infers, fairly violent in the past. And I'm saying to myself, how can I sort these kids out? They can't be sorted.

Jens: And yet ironically, there's no one who can work with the Men and Families Centre so that there's a collaborative approach. I mean I keep coming back to...

John Grant: It's not my job. And I cannot...I haven't got the resourcing and the time and under this Tory government, they're taking money off us and they're taking staffing off us.

It is very clear that even though the school feels besieged, the role of The Centre in facilitating action (community) development remains paramount. It must, therefore, continue to promote change whilst simultaneously addressing (as far as is reasonable feasible) individual problems of men and their families. It is tempting to report, in as much detail as the conversation that was held with John Grant, the interview with Ruth Sampson. Ruth, like John, was very much involved in the formation of The Centre. However in many respects that would be an exercise laden with repetition because some of the information that Ruth provided traversed similar territory to that which John had described. For that reason, we have not provided as detailed an account as was provided of the conversation with John. Instead, we have noted key points of congruence and have opted to highlight 'fresh' findings.

Ruth reinforced that fact that the need to address youth problems was a prime motivation for forming The Centre. She also highlighted that the move was partially initiated in order to quell vigilante type movements who wished to punish errant youth. But significantly, she also believed that it was important to bolster the (perceived) importance of men's roles in their family especially in the wake of a (perceived) history of female dominance:

My project was, there was an emphasis on youth and on Maori, but not exclusively. However, at that time, there were quite

crazy vigilante groups in Helensville that were meeting, especially rugby club type guys because there was a lot of tagging and burglaries and they were right into punishment and getting teams out to get these kids off the street, da-da-da-da-da. So male youth issues were at the fore, all negative issues were at the fore at that time. Through scoping there was a clear need for...coming through all the time, for male mentoring from the community, and also from within that in the scoping as I was going around looking at the sports clubs, the primary schools, the college, there was a clear indication at that time that of feminization around male staff really. So that means that a lot of the boys, traditional boys, like rugby teams, kid's rugby teams were actually getting coached by women now. You know, the old bastion of men; a lot of the social recreational activities at home were being run by women. Males were actually quite invisible in that, older males.

...Women were everywhere. Women were in the classrooms, predominantly; women were out in the social recreational clubs, predominantly; so through that I realised, you know, you've got to get men participating alongside our boys. Of course, a lot of our boys that I had talked to did not have... a bunch of them didn't have good males in their lives. So males were absent, women teachers, women taking the sports team, you know, that was the scenario. Because I have been involved in the seventies in the feminist movement, I'm really aware that for female issues that were right at the fore then, it was the females that came forward with the solutions for our younger females, and I had a great belief that males would do the same.

So the belief, by a local woman, that men could and would perform was, in part, a driving reason for the formation of The Centre. She noted that it was her who wrote the letters to get men to attend a meeting for the benefit of men and she arranged for significant male leaders to sign her letters. She also noted that antipathy was initially apparent:

Andrew came to the fore straight away out of, there were only three men that came forward to say this is a great idea. The others were, well what do you mean men only, why can't women be there? You know, they're going to think we're gay. Oh. Men hadn't actually met together as men before at home, unless they'd gone to a strip thing at the rugby club. You know, man, men's only events weren't like this.

So I was given heaps by men saying, you can't cut women out and I was given heaps by women saying, why the hell can't we be there, we know all the answers. But I had a great belief that if women would have been included from the beginning, the journey would have been different. I think women would have actually started to take over. And men needed that time. So John was involved from that. I was involved from that, and then from the first year, but Andrew was one of the most instrumental.

He got it, he saw it, he ran with it and then for about a year, I was a bit of an invisible secretary. I would be writing the minutes in the background, arriving with invisible kai to feed men. I don't know, men must have just thought it was coming out of the sky. (Laughing) But I had an invisible role, but at that time, as they got involved with Man Alive. Yeah, and then that was the mentoring group which, I had, this came right at the beginning of my scope and I actually met Alan Blackburn. And that was really instrumental, 'cause he really impressed me and I thought, what a great man doing great stuff with young men and I knew he had those same great men. But I actually hit him up and said, look if we got a men's group going could you come in and he goes, yeah yeah yeah yeah.

While the above commentary strongly supports the popular truism that behind every successful male (exercise) lurks a strong woman, it also supports the idea that many ideas succeed because the right person, female and/or male, just happened along at the right time. Ruth Sampson confesses to offering the school as an umbrella organisation at the time but shrewdly, she also recognised the potential Andrew Connolly offered as a future leader. The point here is not to extol the virtues of the current director, and neither is it to lavish praise upon a remarkably influential woman, but rather to note that local people were able to recognise and tap into local human resource pools in order to achieve what was desired for the community.

In the event that other communities read our evaluation and seek to emulate either wholly or in part, the activities and services of The Centre, they would be well advised to carefully seek out a chosen potential leader whom they could literally shoulder-tap.

Ruth also noted the uniqueness of the MSD action research project which initially sparked the formation of The Centre as well as the time-lag required to ultimately ensure the success of the initial venture. As she indicated:

It was ambitious. I think it was the first men and young men's project in the country. Community development project that they'd funded. And it had some success, but I'd probably say limited success, that project. I think that the great stuff has actually come post-project. Minus that big money. The great stuff being the Men's Centre.

Ruth also mentioned the importance of Wiki's contribution and Andrew's zeal:

You coming on board, hugely instrumental; now the korero has changed. Like people...you're really visible. I only hear really good things about what Wiki is doing. You know I think the people with the right passion are fronting, Andrew has huge passion.

She additionally was enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the evaluation research that was being completed. She perceived that the centre was at the vanguard of being innovative and responsive to the community. Here is what she said:

...my reflection is that it is, when...the Women's Centre was always the hot community establishment, you know, they're well established now, got the legs, great organisation, on to it in terms of funding, resourcing, all of that. But my feeling is that the Men's Centre is actually the organisation which I look at now which I look at now as being the, at the forefront of all organisations at home. I'm immensely proud of the work that you guys are doing. And you're doing things that no one else is doing and it's incredible, like for instance this research, you're the first group at home that I've ever seen that has said, you know, we want to do some research about you know, are we meeting our own you know, goals, aims, objectives. Are we meeting community needs, you know people shy away from that. You know, they're frightened of that, they don't want to go out because the community go and say, no, oh you suck, no you're not doing nothing, but you fellas have embraced that, I have a community development approach to life, so a ground up approach. And, what I've seen post MSD project has actually been so much more of a grounded approach than before, which is ironic to me but I see it, like this research that is something that you guys are fronting. You know, you're driving that forward. And responding really clearly to community needs. And this is just a part of that.

Ruth was very clearly aware of just how well The Centre was performing both at an operational level and with respect to governance:

And I would know if people were pissed off. What I love is that the Men and Families Centre initiatives and employees is the one organisation, the one in the last year that I haven't heard any negative feedback, 'cause there's always negative feedback, we didn't like the way da, da, da, da, da, from the sidelines...

...And it's the one that has been absolutely, it's like you're finding your stride, and I actually think that you're finding your stride because it's great to dump the MSD projects, so dump those outside stuff that got you going. Now you know there's the coming of age and you guys, not really coming of age I think Andrew's well in front of others at home, his leadership is I think phenomenal, 'cause he is ambitious I think.

Although Ruth was very positive about staff from The Centre, she was also acutely aware of the sound work that members of the Trust completed. But the pivotal comment, insofar as this review is concerned, focused upon the extent to which The Centre had achieved its goals:

Do I think that you're fulfilling your initial goals? Outcomes? I think that you've surpassed them. In some ways 'cause you're actioning that stuff, but also right from the beginning, there was this great visionary stuff. It's true.

As she added later in the interview"

I see the Men's Centre as leading that type of visionary approach to a community development model of a ground up, you know, instead of that silo or top down approach to say funding and resourcing.

Yet again, the issue of money arose and like John, Ruth was supportive of the need to make sure that The Centre was well funded and this seemed to be a recurrent theme throughout this exercise:

Yep. And I've loved what you do, because right back in my scoping I asked all these boys, so tell me what you want. I actually didn't know, I thought they were going to say they wanted bloody McDonalds and we want a this flash thing and we want a Playstation. Right at the beginning, wholeheartedly, it was that stuff. It's, we want to go hunting. I remember telling Trace, they want to go hunting, they want to shoot things up. They want to go hunting, they haven't gone

hunting. I used to go pig hunting. These boys haven't gone hunting, and they wanted to go hunting, fishing, they just wanted, they actually just wanted to do the simplest things.

In the end, Ruth's ambition for The Centre was somewhat different to that which John had expressed. John had consistently and reasonably recognised the problematic circumstances that confronted, and continue to confront, men and their families in Helensville and the South Kaipara district. Not so much by contrast, but instead, from a different perspective, Ruth tended to emphasise positive development:

But you know, being Maori we know that the separation of our roles as well, and as women we desperately need strong men, and the men they lead, and we want, you know, as women, we also want men to lead. But... so just wanted to end with that and you know there are all these men and these young men and their families at home, there are no blankets that go over, that stereotype them all, but the Men's Centre potentially has things to offer all men and young men and it's around, I think, that working towards that, 'cause that will only strengthen all of our families, eh?

In summary, then, there were similarities between the information that these two proffered; they each acknowledged the need to address a problem; they each used the school as a vehicle for initiating a social change strategy; they each demonstrated grand faith insofar as those presenting as leaders was concerned – especially Andrew and later Wiki. However, whereas John, primarily because of his position as Principal felt he could only be involved superficially, albeit supportively, Ruth demonstrated enormous positive faith in the work that staff at The Centre not only can do but also deliver.

Her enthusiasm was mirrored by professionals from the community and especially restated in the strongest of terms insofar as Andrew is concerned. The coordinator of a local agency participated in a telephone interview and portions from the notes made during the phone conversation have been included here. They provide evidence of strong support by and to a kindred agency and they reflect a sincere appreciation of the professionalism displayed by Andrew Connolly:

Lady¹ has an association with Andrew and The South Kaipara Men's Centre and this has come about partially because she has followed what goes on as a professionally interested

¹ Pseudonym used.

observer and partially also because Andrew serves on the advisory board of her agency.

Andrew, according to Lady, is not only a "professional point of reference" but is also "an excellent trustee". The notes taken indicate that Andrew brings professional skills to the table and to the women's refuge in general and he is appreciated for that. His professional valuables are his experience, his skill-set as a community developer and his training and experience as a counsellor; these skills are greatly appreciated by Lady and those with whom she is associated. Lady held the view that having that kind of professional association and linkage is actually a very positive dimension to The Centre and its value cannot be discerned from the survey data even though it is clearly valued within the professional community.

The level of appreciation by others that was conveyed to me illustrates a facet of The Centre that is clearly working well and that is consistent with the positive thrust of Action Development where things are already positive, and are appreciated as being worthwhile, should be continued in order to foster even better services. But there was also an appreciation by Lady of Andrew's professional questioning - she was almost describing a professional approach that takes noting for granted. The impact of that has been that it has prompted others to try to assume a similar professional scepticism. For example, Andrew recently asked questions about the size of the phone bill of the organisation and that prompted the agency to review their costs and phone operations (they are on mobile because of the nature of the services they offer).

Lady spoke at some length about just how valuable she has found Andrew's support and it is clear that professional and collegial leadership is offered and freely given by Andrew consistently and in an unassuming manner. It has been extremely well received.

Lady was asked about her impressions of what the Men' Centre achieves and her immediate comment was "the programmes are brilliant". When asked to expand on just what is brilliant she spoke enthusiastically and at length about the clearing anger workshops and courses and also about the fathers and sons events that The Centre holds. Lady was asked about what contact was made by The Centre and how she found out about the programmes and services that are on offer and she

indicated that she received pamphlets and fliers from time-to-time. She held the view that more advertising would be a good thing.

Another agency had similar things to say. Man¹ from a local Youth Agency provided a commentary that varied in detail from that offered by Lady but clearly, the essence of the feedback remained constant. Excerpts from the interview notes are shown below:

I asked Man what his view was of the work of the SKMT and The Centre and his immediate and forceful reply was, "It's extremely effective. It needs to expand. It's brilliant but it needs to expand". Man explained that in his view, what Andrew and Wiki do is far more grounded and realistic than some of the other programmes that are run by men's groups. "There's none of that drum beating - what they do is grounded - it's like, grass roots activities."

He explained that in his view, there are no rights of passage for contemporary young men which perhaps explains, to some extent at least, why they fight, do drugs, get into trouble, join gangs and so on. In fact, he noted, gangs actually had forms of male initiation which was, perhaps, one reason for them being successful in attracting young men as 'prospects'. This point about rites of passage, initiation into manhood and so on triggered a recollection that a book Andrew had lent me a copy of was "Adam's Return: The Five Promises of Male Initiation" a book penned by Richard Rohr (Rohr, 2004). In Man's view, programmes and services that were happening at The Centre have a "huge impact on kids". According to him, the "small adventures Wiki, and Tracy and Andrew organise can be life changing". He added that they were "far more than counselling"; they were real and he was totally supportive of what he observed.

He considered the links between the Men and Family Centre and the Women's centre to be very worthwhile but he was extremely impressed with the way that Wiki serves as a link (a conduit) between The Centre and the various marae in the district, especially Reweti. Man was all for co-ordinated services and community programmes and he thought that the leadership being shown by The Centre was extremely valuable. Man hoped funding would continue to be available so the services would not cease.

¹ Also a pseudonym.

To conclude this section, a small number of key comments are included from an in-depth semi-structured interview completed with Andrew Connolly. As well, comments about the diverse appreciations which staff demonstrated during the many conversations we held as evaluation researchers are briefly introduced. In many respects, the appreciations which staff members demonstrated were instrumental in informing the thrust of the interview with Andrew. That interview lasted longer than any of the other conversations but it also traversed matters that cannot, and will not be reported because it would be unethical, or more precisely, unprofessional to do so. As has already been noted in this report, details concerning the provision of counselling services are necessarily a matter that quite rightly remains between Mr. Connolly and his Board.

What emerged from the interview was an impression that Andrew has a passion for what he does and yet he is also frustrated at the lack of time to do all that is needed; in effect, so many challenges and so few resources! That impression was very largely formed and strongly reinforced by the many conversations which were held during weekly meetings which took place at the beginning of this evaluation study. The two staff members were very mindful of all of the tasks that The Centre had on its plate. They were also very aware that the counselling services Andrew provides, although pivotal, remain very time-consuming.

Kim provided numerous examples which demonstrated that Andrew was very *au fait* with budgetary matters and Wiki repeatedly demonstrated coherence with what Andrew wanted to achieve. They each seemed to have a shrewd but realistic understanding of ongoing work that needed to be done and they each were acutely aware of the shortage of funding. Both work part-time and it has to be underscored that Kim has a husband who works which is partially why she can afford to work at The Centre. She, like Andrew, has strong Christian values and she continues to study towards the Graduate Diploma of Not-for-profit Management at Unitec.

Wiki, who has a growing family, also works part-time. Of necessity, he works as a Chef when he is away from The Centre because The Centre cannot employ him full-time. His motivation is clearly nested in wanting to facilitate development for young men and especially (but not exclusively) Maori. His support for work being carried out by the Centre is very strong indeed. He understands the imperative of working with fathers and sons and of providing a rich and varied suite of activities but his approach is not pie-in-the-sky idealism. He is very aware, for instance, that more promotion of The Centre would be useful, but like Kim, and like Andrew, this awareness is coupled with a realization that more advertising will almost certainly grow demands for services – a daunting prospect for a skeleton staff.

As has already been noted in earlier sections of this report, Andrew clearly ponders the work that is being completed; he wonders if it is relevant and effective:

Doubts, well, talking at the kitchen table you know, people say, how's the Men's Centre going? And my generally reply is really, well, we're doing this and we're doing that and we've got good funding for next year and all the external signs are that things are going well and that people are coming to our programmes and everywhere that I talk about what we do, people go, wow that's amazing, I wish we had that in our community. But then there's a doubt too and I ask, are we really targeting, or are we really hitting the people that we want to be hitting? For instance, there's a lot of Maori families out there, and not only Maori, but predominantly Maori that we aren't really impacting despite all our efforts.

In a sense, and understandably, Andrew is reflecting a problem oriented approach to his work and his focus is consistent with a deficit manner of seeing things – Maori are over-represented with respect to family problems so targeting them is logical. What is not apparent in such a way of thinking is that there is a great deal of korero between Andrew and Wiki in order to ensure that a Kaupapa Maori framework is acknowledged and adopted as far as possible. That Wiki understands and lives that approach is without question and comments reported earlier from Ruth demonstrate this. Equally, it was apparent that Andrew is very cognisant of Tikanga Maori and he seeks to integrate that into his work to the extent that his own skills enable that to happen.

But at the same time, Andrew was very aware that Maori do not always participate and, echoing John Grant's comments, he speculated that drugs and alcohol may inhibit some men from socialising with other men and accessing support services. He is acutely aware of those target groups, men and their families, Maori and Pakeha, who are not being reached:

I guess part of my thing, my target group has always been the marginalised, those that aren't accessing existing services that don't make the most of the school and what the school can offer, that don't get to the doctor, that don't, you know, with their kids getting in trouble or whatever, they just deal with things themselves as best they know how which can involve violence, rather than seeking professional help. And so in some way those are the kind of people that I would like to be touching into, those are the kind of families that I think need what we offer. And it also feels like those are the kind of

families that aren't still aren't, that we're not reaching. Just as generally speaking a lot of the other social services don't reach them either.

There was a consistency here with what John Grant had noted and also with what Ruth Sampson had observed. There are target families and there are challenges to be addressed in seeking to create community interventions and community development programmes and services.

It became clear, however, that Andrew deliberately and carefully chooses his professional fora – he does not, for instance, attend some meetings because the nature of what is discussed cuts across his work as a counsellor. He does not see this as a tension but rather views it as being professional.

But what did come through as a tension was the observation that some of his work might, inadvertently, be letting other agencies off the professional hook. For example, Andrew is not employed by schools (note the use of the plural) but they clearly benefit from The Centre's services and they are well resourced compared to The Centre. Andrew was quizzed about why The Centre has not become more political and he had this to say:

And I think that's a role that the Men's Centre hasn't really picked up on, we haven't really been involved in the political advocacy side of things, we're much more on the grass roots doing the work. And I think maybe that's just a time factor, maybe it's the skills and the skill factor of people currently involved in the Men's Centre.

Clearly, at this stage political activism has not been a mantra but the first flush of success and an anticipated reduction in financial support (as demands for services have grown) continues to be a concern. At the same time, Andrew revealed his reluctance to becoming tied down by bureaucracy:

...because we're a fairly new organisation, and it always takes more money to get things up and going, if there is less money, we may be able to keep some of these things going with the community links, getting more volunteers on board tackling maybe some local businesses to come in and support or sponsor various aspects of what we do. So there could be some alternatives to the funding. But my question is, a lot of organisations go through this stage, through these steps that we have, and then they apply for either a Ministry of Social Development through one of their bodies, bulk funding, so that they get... the large part of their funding is sort of taken care of from year-to-year and it's bulk funded to provide particular

services within the community. I've avoided that because it's a bureaucratic nightmare to get that done and then the accountability back to MSD on those areas takes a lot of work and I'm just not interested. I mean we have to account for, to all of our funders as it is...

That reticence of becoming beholden and accountable to government departments may, in fact be contestable but without doubt, the things that excite Andrew have to do with igniting success in young men:

What I get the buzz out of is having a connection with a man or young man and they go away feeling encouraged, having some insight, seeing the need to change and feeling empowered to change some aspect of their functioning. And when I see that happening, the lights that turn on and the stories that come back having them having tried something different in their relationships or in their work or whatever, and it, that being helpful to them.

When asked about how well the counselling services and the community development roles of his professional life co-exist, Andrew noted:

I guess I see it as a creative tension, I don't think, it's very rare that one draws from the other, I think they both add to each other. I think my counselling practice informs the community development that we do.

Yeah, so I think working as a counsellor one-on-one with people or with families or with couples, I think that that informs the community development side of things in terms of what the issues are in the community and maybe how we can create some more supportive or some more caring structures within the community.

Maybe courses that need to be run or the particular services that aren't being developed in the community and can we bring those in from outside, etc., so I think the counselling practice informs the community development and I think, the community development side of things networks me and strengthens the community to be able to support individuals and families.

Clearly, each dimension, community development on the one hand, and counselling on the other, is beneficial, indeed essential to the overall operation that The Centre represents. Indeed, it can be argued that the provision of each domain of services is not only relevant and thus very

commendable, but may well serve as a model for other communities of interest to emulate.

Leadership, however, is crucial and this was a point not lost on Andrew:

Speaking of leadership, that's where I see some of our community development strength, is in actually taking leadership roles and bringing a men's voice into some community decisions.

When asked how this was achieved Andrew noted:

I think we do, do it. In the network meetings, in the relationships that we have with a lot of the service providers within our community, whether they be mental health or social workers, counsellors, I think there'd be about seven or eight women counsellors within the community, there's me I'm the male side of things. It's a hugely feminine dominated social service delivery, it's usually feminine dominated and I think there needs to be a male voice that comes in there and that's an area of leadership that I think we can provide.

What emerges is an impression of seeking equivalence of voices rather than pursuing strident forms of 'men-ist' and 'men-ism' or even 'masculinism'¹ and this is consistent with the more moderate model that was depicted for the Centre. But at the same time, for example, Andrew was an advocate for increasing the presence of men in programmes such as the HIPPY programme where men are conspicuously absent:

None of the...I think I call them HIPPY tutors were men. And even the parents, and I know for a fact that there are some HIPPY dads in terms of dads that have been taught by tutors how to teach their children. But it's the mums that got up and in front of everybody and took credit for the work that they'd done through the year. And I ponder and I ask myself and I ask those around me, where are the dads? And so that's a question I'm going to take back to Bernie and the tutors, what are you guys doing for getting

¹ It's very interesting to note that we don't actually have these terms in our language whereas the term 'feminism' is an ingrained and well grounded concept as is the term feminist. Perhaps there is a case for introducing this as a new word into the social science lexicon.

HIPPY input into dads? Because I know there are some that are doing it. But they're not the ones that are getting up on stage saying I've learnt something of how to encourage and teach and how to motivate my child.

The above comment ironically illustrates a gentle approach to being political – the advocacy is not strident but it is intentional. Such an approach is to be very much encouraged and we firmly see that ploy of being involved in the community as a considerable strength of what The Centre does. It is, in effect, a subtle form of leadership that needs to be further explored:

But at that exploration is in the context of self, where the centre is and providing leadership in the centre I think. If for instance we developed some thinking around this and some processes for this to happen, then I think the centre, the Men's Centre in Helensville will be providing leadership at a national level around that kind of stuff.

To grow this form of leadership is important and hence, Andrew's espoused intention of involving board members more in activities and in experiencing first-hand the ideas of international leaders such as Richard Rohr is noted and commended. Leadership is an elusive construct that has fascinated humans for centuries and in particular, the question of whether or not leadership is an innate capacity or one that is grown has been roundly and soundly debated. Irrespective of people's viewpoints about the origins of leadership, however, it is very apparent that for leadership to be able to continue unabated, receiving some form of ongoing professional support is crucial. To that end, the strategies Andrew has put into place to ensure he receives professional supervision must be noted and commended. They are essential for him personally (as a catharsis) and they are significant for him professionally (as a platform for continuing professional growth). The extent to which ongoing development is factored into the work-realm of The Centre was not explored but that remains a matter the SKMT should not overlook in its governance of the operations of The Centre.

By way of a concluding comment here, we have no doubt that the qualitative findings reported here buttress the overall impression gained from the quantitative data reported in the previous section. Each data form has pointed unreservedly to The Centre and its staff members being highly regarded; they are ambitious for the benefit of the communities of interest that are served, but nevertheless they realise that The Centre remains financially 'challenged'. There is no doubt that whilst greater levels of promotion are desirable, a consequence may be that there will be insufficient resources available to cater for a greater demand that more promotion will

almost certainly engender. Put bluntly, more money is clearly needed if more services and activities are to be provided.

7. Implications for The Centre?

Every single person has capabilities, abilities and gifts. Living a good life depends on whether those capabilities can be used, abilities expressed and gifts given. If they are, the person will be valued, feel powerful and well-connected to the people around them. And the community around the person will be more powerful because of the contribution the person is making. (John P. Kretznabd & John L. McKnight)

Any evaluation that is worthwhile will invariably uncover matters, big and small, short-term and longer, which will impact upon the people and organisation being reviewed. That obviously applies to this study but, notwithstanding implications, it is important to remind readers that this evaluation research was not born out of a need to review a flawed agency. And neither was there an imperative to judge people whose performances may have required appraisal because what they were doing was in some way, 'deficient'. Instead, in the case of this evaluation study, the drive was for achieving continuous organisational and ongoing professional improvement. The underpinning reason for the Director and the SKMT board requesting this review was to gauge relevance, to discern needs and to achieve guidance that might inform future directions.

What was not noted in the instigating brief was the political potency that an evaluation such as this might develop. Interpreted data can be used as a political persuader; data can be used to lobby for change and it can also, of course, be used to inform future planning. It all depends, however, upon the veracity of the data. Data have to be valid, reliable and fairly represented or the impact of their potency is likely to become reduced at best or dismissed at worst. In this study, we are confident that sound procedures have been followed from the outset. That was why we developed an Advisory Committee that was charged with monitoring ethics and with advising on research design. We are thus confident that the survey we administered was carefully scrutinised by people who were able to do such things from an impressive platform of combined experience. We are also confident that the analysis completed via SPSS was adequate¹. As noted in earlier sections, the analysis was mainly descriptive and data were not split by demographic variables because the sample size was relatively small and because the evaluation simply did not warrant that level of detailed analysis.

¹ The work of Dr Lyn Lavery, who is a consummate mixed methods methodologist is acknowledged once more.

Equally, we are confident that the rigour associated with conducting interviews was sound and that the analyses were thorough. To that end, having an experienced qualitative researcher as a team member was useful as was the use of advanced qualitative research software. The data gathered were intensely and iteratively considered and we argue, the interpretations that were drawn from the data were fair. Once more, Advisory Committee members were brought into the process as critical commentators before, during and after the work had been completed.

To a certain extent that is especially relevant with regard to this final section of this report. Advisory Committee members were provided with a copy of the draft report. They then met to share responses and those responses partially, but not wholly, have informed this section of the report. The words, 'not wholly' are used here because there are three other dimensions to this section: first, the original evaluation goals and the tentative hypotheses that we promulgated are revisited; second, following the presentation and discussion of comments made by the Advisory Committee, a brief review of strengths and shortcomings of the evaluation research is offered. (It is useful to include such a review because that enables future investigators to learn from our experiences.) Finally, a series of recommendations have been developed and as these represent an important outcome of an exercise such as this, a word or two needs to be said about the intention of recommendations.

A recommendation is not a requirement. It is, at best, a suggestion, a pointer towards an optional action that may be developed in order to shift the status quo of an organisation or a situation. A recommendation, therefore, can propose that a group of people, or a Board, consider and debate a suggested course of action or actions. This might mean that some actions cease and/or that new actions become trialled. Recommendations can also trigger policy revision and/or introduction and may become incorporated into future planning and/or one-off campaigns.

The point is that recommendations are not set in concrete and while their formulation may be born out of the research process, their destiny can clearly be shaped by those who have influence over the host agency (e.g. government departments, LGAs, benevolent charitable trusts). , At the same time, recommendations can be operationalized by those people who have responsibility for the governance and operation of an agency and its services. So what is presented at the conclusion of this section is a series of recommendations which those associated with the centre, either directly (e.g. the Director and the Board), or in an adjacent manner (e.g. Schools, other social services, local government and other potential funding agencies), should carefully consider.

When we began this study, we promulgated a series of aims and hypotheses. These were formulated as planning tools; they provided 'markers' which not only facilitated design, but also helped us to review findings and results. These goals and hypotheses have been reproduced below in table form and are they are accompanied by a very brief commentary about their subsequent veracity, i.e. have the aims been achieved and have the hypotheses been demonstrated or not.

Evaluation aims revisited: have they been achieved?

Research Aims	Comments
To evaluate the extent to which programmes of the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre (The Centre) are responsive to, and provide for, needs of men, young men, and their families who work and or reside within the South Kaipara district.	We believe that this aim has been achieved and that we have demonstrated that The Centre is very responsive to the needs of men, young men and their families within the district. However, we also believe that this study has shown that the capacity of The Centre is becoming stretched and is unlikely to be able to continue to meet more than the needs of a few unless more funding is found. The Centre works to capacity already but needs exceed that capacity.
To recognize and celebrate needs within the community which the Centre is already addressing.	Clearly the blend of programmes and counselling services being offered are very well regarded but there remains a community thirst for even more. Further resources are warranted if more is to be provided.
To identify and prioritise needs which The Centre might not yet be addressing.	The <i>expressed</i> ¹ needs refer to more of the same being provided, especially adult and community education programmes. The <i>perceived</i> needs for Whanau liaison and family intervention warrant continuous consideration not only by the SKMT board, but also by associated social and community services agencies. Mentoring is also a perceived need. The resource implications of

¹ Needs can be either *expressed*, i.e. nominated by clients/consumers who can tell us what they want. The can also be *perceived* which means that clients/consumers may not be aware of what they are seen to need by professionals.

	<p>providing for such needs are unknown at this point but are likely to be ongoing and considerable. Interagency collaboration and political lobbying are likely to be needed before changes to service provision can be introduced into the South Kaipara district.</p>
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On the whole, it can be argued that the modest goals which we set in formulating this evaluation research have been met. We unreservedly argue that The Centre and staff who work there, deliver. They deliver wonderfully well given meagre resources, insufficient time and burgeoning needs. They are clearly well regarded by people from the South Kaipara district and their appreciation is obviously pointed at the duality of services – the ongoing community building courses and events as well as the professional counselling that occurs. That the current government has opted to remove the provision of funding for adult and community education is regrettable because that clearly has implications for The Centre. Given the withdrawal of ACE, local people are now looking to agencies such as The Centre to deliver but such delivery does not altogether align with the founding remit of The Centre. Nevertheless, discussions with other agencies within the district may be worthwhile and approaches to politicians may also be warranted.

Research hypotheses revisited: have they been demonstrated?

Research Hypotheses	Comments
<p>That The Centre provides responsive cost effective programmes, activities and services to men, young men and their families within the South Kaipara district.</p>	<p>This hypothesis has been demonstrated. Records from The Centre, survey results, interviews with opinion leaders and associated agencies all highlight the outstanding work being achieved. However, the data also indicated that there is a need for more and that further promotion of The Centre is needed.</p>
<p>That there is a need for youth mentoring in the South Kaipara district.</p>	<p>Regrettably, this hypothesis was supported. It would be nice to be able to say that there is no need for youth mentoring but in fact, all of the available evidence we have suggests that not only is youth mentoring sorely needed but so too is mentoring for men in general. Providing for such a service should become a priority for the future.</p>
<p>That there are unknown gaps</p>	<p>In a sense, this hypothesis is always going to be</p>

and unmet needs in the services provided.	demonstrable but the point that arises is that many needs which we identified are being addressed <u>as far as time and resources allow</u> . What is needed now is for a critical review of existing programmes and services, and a realistic appraisal of ongoing resource needs. Ways and means of aligning current needs with resourcing needs then need to be found. Political activism may be required.
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Beyond the above commentary, there are obvious ideals such as early intervention programmes being supported by men and their families, fathers and their children becoming more active within schools and community agencies, and, collections of agencies operating collaboratively. Ideas such as creating a Community Hub have been floated for Helensville and these ideas should not conveniently be 'parked for future consideration'. They require continuous attention because neglecting the existing social malaise will almost certainly prove to be more costly to the community and to government in the longer run.

In the meantime, specific needs such as extended counselling services, more activities for all family members, approaches which are Māori focused and, providing community workers are very real. It is not the prerogative of this report to advocate for solutions but it is the responsibility of the writers to point these matters out. The Ottawa Charter of 1986 prescribed that citizens should build healthy public policy which puts health onto the agenda of policy makers from all sectors. It also proposed that health services be re-orientated so that all sectors address pressing needs (such as those shown in this report) and that supportive environments be created. The Centre has clearly sought to do this but gaining support from central and local government, has, we believe, continued to be problematic.

We commend The Centre for seeking to strengthen communities of interest whilst growing the personal skills of members from those communities. But we ruefully note, again, that more is needed despite the observation that there appears to be a widespread reluctance to enter into arrangements whereby continuous support be provided. These matters and more were discussed by the Advisory Committee after they had read a draft copy of this report. They noted that:

- the initial need for mentoring remains a priority and yet this study did not really gather much information about that need;

- the need for anger management activities clearly continues to be a perceived need even though that need was not a particularly strongly indicated as a need by participants in this study;
- the matter of for whom anger management workshops and courses should be facilitated remains unclear and a case may need to be developed for extending these activities;
- the idea of The Centre offering workshop which focus on men but which are offered especially for women was strongly supported not only by the data but also by the Advisory Committee;
- a stronger electronic presence was proposed including the development of a website and routinely sending emails with information about activities and services being organised by The Centre
- however, data from this study which advocated a more vigorous approach to marketing were interpreted cautiously by the Advisory Committee who noted that successful promotion of services offered by The Centre might undermine the capacity of staff to deliver – they are already fully stretched and might not be able to deal with an increased demand given that there are only three part-time staff;
- long term funding seems to be clearly emerging as a long term requisite if the long term viability of The Centre and its community development services and programmes are to be assured;
- in that regard, there is substantial merit in The Centre and the SKMT working very closely with Ngati Whatua;
- collaboration with Ngati Whatua and with other communities of interest and practice, should emphasise that cooperation between agencies is needed to maximise delivery capacity within the mainly rural South Kaipara district where human resources are relatively scarce and where many citizens are daily commuters to and from Auckland;
- capacity building across a range of agencies may appear to be an attractive option when seeking funds from agencies such as the ASB trust, Lion Foundation, etc. but it remains important to gauge the capacity of The Centre to deliver quality services, either alone, or in partnership with allied agencies, especially when demands for services are rapidly growing;
- success may, therefore, constitute a double-headed arrow unless ways and means can be found for expanding the amount of work-time for which current part-time staff can be employed;
- adding responsibilities for income generation may thus be counterproductive;
- there is merit in carefully managing the diffusion of information stemming from this report – this means that the report should be forwarded not only to community agencies and relevant government departments, but it should also be extended to become the basis of journal articles submitted to relevant scholastic and research arenas;

- although there was only an occasional mention of the value of men's sheds (during interviews) it was suggested by members of the Advisory Committee that developing this kind of service should be explored by The Centre and by the SKMT;
- indeed, it was thought that there may be merit in the SKMT reviewing its own orbit of responsibility if only to ensure that it continues to govern for ongoing community responsiveness, especially for men and their families.

An important discussion to include within this final section is a brief commentary about the efficacy of the research procedures which were used in this study. Detailing research strengths and possible flaws is important because other researchers can almost certainly learn from discussions of research omissions and commissions. In this study, for instance, focus groups were not run although in many respects the intense discussion that was held with the Research Advisory Committee was tantamount to a corroborative focus group. Additionally, as has already been pointed out, statistical data were not split along demographic variables because the sample size was considered to be too small.

But that said, there were a substantial number of strengths which emerged from this study. First, it must be noted that this study did critically probe literature and it did so in ways which remain, relatively speaking, quite fresh. The discussion at the outset with an expert in the field, the detailed analysis of a key (seminal) item of literature in order to frame ensuing reviews, and the generation of Cloud Tags each represented successful strategies. Equally, the development of an ad hoc advisory committee was very useful because it involved a range of expert people and made the investigation far more collaborative than otherwise may have been the case. Ultimately, it is hoped that other agencies will pick up this report and will seek to not only emulate the formation of a men and family centre, but will also develop at least some basic understandings of what evaluation research is all about.

Finally, to round off this concluding section, a number of recommendations are proposed which have emerged from the body of the report. It should be noted that while it is not at all uncommon for evaluation reports to nominate recommended course of potential action, recommendations are, as their name suggests, ideas which are put forward for consideration. To a certain extent, the bullet points above are tantamount to recommendations and some of the commentary within the two tables presented within this report section also point to recommendations. But readers might also like to carefully consider the following:

It is recommended that:

1. The SKMT discuss recruiting the services of a local historian and/or archivist so that information about The Centre and its activities are not lost over time.
2. The SKMT and staff carefully consider the extent to which promotion of The Centre and its services is warranted. In particular, the Trust should carefully consider the capacity of the three part-time staff to accommodate extra demands that are likely to surface as a consequence of successful marketing of services. Successful marketing may, in fact, become a catalyst to delivery failures emerging in the event that demand outstrips the ability to provide.
3. The Centre review the pros and cons of either becoming an ACE provider for the South Kaipara district or of becoming a broker for others to provide ACE activities. The demand for such services is clearly apparent.
4. The Centre and the SKMT review possibilities for working closely with the Community Radio station and for increasing its Internet presence, possibly by developing its own website.
5. The Centre and the SKMT should investigate the possibilities of brokering or fostering leadership training opportunities for all sectors of the community but especially young men. The need for succession planning should be a longer term consideration when developing leadership training events.
6. The SKMT needs to ensure that professional supervision of staff be continuous, planned, and of a high calibre. Further, the SKMT should include in its strategic plan, the provision of ongoing professional development for all who are associated with providing services to The Centre and that includes the Board as well as staff.

So in the end, what has this study achieved? As Andrew Connolly summarised it:

This study shows that The Centre has responded well to its original mandate. It stands, however, at a critical juncture: has it reached a plateau at its current size and level of service delivery or should it keep on growing to meet the demand and community expectation for more volume of the same types of services? In addition, the literature indicates the need for broader work: men's rights of passage, political advocacy, further development of collaborative projects with other NGOs and government organizations, men's sheds, men's conferences. For more and broader work The Centre will need to lift both the amount and sustainability of funding. With the majority of The Centre's income coming from annual contestable grants and one year contestable project funding, the scope for growth to meet community needs is minimal. It's pretty clear that business advice should be sought to enable The Centre to overcome this dilemma and move towards

embracing more efficient social enterprise models of functioning.

The study has also very thoroughly addressed the criteria that were established in the contract that was formed with the Lotteries Commission and it has demonstrated that there is a relative paucity of literature about men, especially young men and their families. Even a perfunctory inspection of Wikipedia demonstrated this and in fact, the administrators even invited people to generate a contribution about Men and Family Centres (or centers).

Yet again, the study has demonstrated that a mixed methods approach can achieve quite sound results and findings when the overarching research agenda is not hugely ambitious. In other words, a mixed methods approach seems pretty satisfactory for an evaluation study such as this – despite the non-inclusion of ‘logic models’ which merely seem to delineate desired outcomes.

But the overwhelming and most lasting impression that has emerged from this research is that the idea of developing a trust, the SKMT which in turn begat The Centre, has been a very sound idea indeed. Contemporary men are, to a certain extent, devoid of identity. They are, as Andrew Connolly argues – bereft of initiation – they suffer from not having been admitted into the sphere of what it is to be a responsible man.

That does not mean that men are shallow or even hollow as a result of not becoming initiated into manhood. It does not mean that they are bad or incorrigible as some would paint them. But it does mean that men have to acknowledge that they, men, can have problems. Hence, the existence of a service such as the South Kaipara Men and Family Centre can do much to generate positive community development whilst providing remedies to some, if not all of those problems which impact upon men and those with whom they live, work, play and love. By addressing those problems in ways which emphasise the positives, men and their families, indeed the community at large, become all the better off.

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¹ Please note that the comprehensive list of references, including those contributed by Warwick Pudney, are included in the unabridged version of this report. That version can be accessed by contacting the principal author via jens@woodhillpark.com

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Appendices

Appendices form part of the original (extended) evaluation report include the explanatory letter given to respondents and individuals who were interested in the research, the explanation about the interviews (and an invitation to be contacted, if necessary, for participation) and the survey instrument. All items were scrutinised and critiqued by the Research Ethics and Research Advisory Committee.

Unabridged copies of the original study document are available from the author or from his website: www.woodhillpark.com