Improving Health & Wellbeing Websites:
Views of Pacific adolescents

Websites for health & wellbeing

Quality health and wellbeing websites can increase access to health information, 24/7, at no cost to users. Globally, there are over 70,000 health related Google searches every minute.[1] In the Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey ('Youth19')[2] **94% of Pacific participants said that they had a device they could access in their own time and 60% had looked up health information online.**[3] Many websites are designed for cultural majority users and/or by adults.[5] In Youth19, following other questions about online resources, we asked "**How could websites or online tools be more useful for you if you were having a hard time?**" Participants could answer in their own words. This brief offers a summary of key themes based on responses from Pacific participants.

Pacific youth voices

In total, 93 Pacific young people (approx. 11% of all Pacific participants) made a comment or suggestion other than "I don't know" or equivalent on this optional question. Of these, 52 participants identified as female. 50 participants were aged under 16, and 43 were aged 16 or over. We used a general inductive analysis approach[4] to analyse this data.

Key themes

Pacific youth indicated that health and wellbeing websites can be helpful and play an important role alongside human support.

They also had key perspectives regarding how these websites could be improved. There were three key themes:

- make it accessible
- show it is trustworthy, keep it clear
- facilitate human connection.

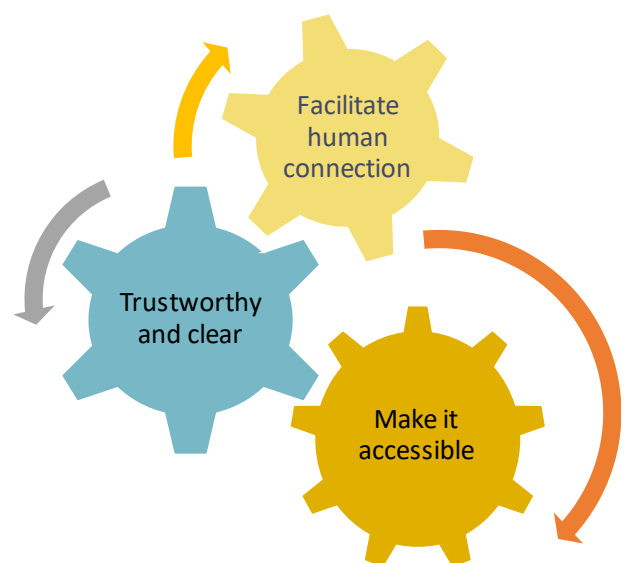These are illustrated in Figure 1 and detailed in the following pages.

Figure 1: Improving health and wellbeing websites: Pacific youth perspectives

Findings

Online tools helpful for some

Some participants highlighted ways in which tools are or are not useful. There were some positive responses from Pacific youth while a few were not sure or negative. The importance of talking with friends and family was emphasised, including via online tools. Example quotes are provided below with participant sex, age group and school decile grouping shown for each.

> *"All The Time when I'm feel sad and I will go to my online or social media and then I'll call my friend to share them my problem"*

(Pacific female, aged 16 or over, Decile 1-3)

> *"They [health and wellbeing websites] give you advice and is always there just like a friend"*

(Pacific male, aged 16 or over, Decile 1-3)

> *"You could use social media accounts, to contact friends of family members (who are in a different country) ask them for advice. you could look for websites online to help you , but the best thing to do would be to ask your parents or a family member face to face!"*

(Pacific female, aged under 16, Decile 1- 3)

> *"I don't believe online websites because it might not be relevant to what I'm going through"*

(Pacific female, aged 16 or over, Decile 1-3)

Improving digital tools

Pacific youth reported wanting health and wellbeing websites to be clear, simple and usable.

They commented on the importance of being offered options for human contact and support when having a hard time.

Like other Youth19 participants, Pacific youth wanted health and wellbeing websites to contain trustworthy information that is relatable to youth.

These themes, among others, provide insights into ways that health and wellbeing websites could be more appealing and better meet the needs of Pacific youth. These themes are detailed over the following pages.

1. Make it accessible

Pacific youth reported wanting health and wellbeing websites to be easy to find and accessible. This included providing or advertising health websites on platforms they were already using and reducing barriers to accessing sites such as proxies and blocked sites.

"Communicate on Insta"
(Pacific male, aged under 16, Decile 1-3)

"Online games could have health awareness advertisements"
(Pacific male, aged under 16, Decile 4-7)

"Unblocking websites"
(Pacific female, aged under 16, Decile 1-3)

2. Trustworthy and clear

a) Show me that it is trustworthy

Pacific youth wanted to know that websites and online information was trustworthy and from reliable sources. Some suggested providing an indicator or quality assurance or endorsement from reputable people and organisations. Support or advice was thought to be trustworthy when coming from experts and health professionals. It was also seen as relevant or helpful when it was supported or endorsed by familiar people and spaces such as church, family, friends or teachers.

"Ensure us of its reliability. Make your resources interesting and seem like you care"
(Pacific female, aged 16 and over, Decile 1-3)

"By having proof of others using the website"
(Pacific male, aged under 16, Decile 1-3)

"Certified information"
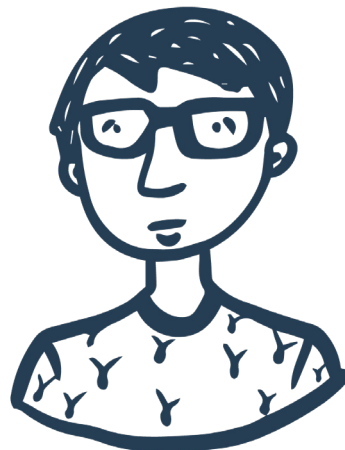(Pacific female, aged under 16, Decile 4-7)

"Have people make real websites and advertise them so that people who search for it do not get mislead by things people put on the internet which are false 80 percent of the time"
(Pacific male, aged 16 or over, Decile 1-3)

YOUTH19
A Youth2000 survey

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau
NEW ZEALAND

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

UNIVERSITY of OTAGO
Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo

AUT

b) Keep it clear

Pacific youth emphasised the importance of digital tools being clear and in everyday language. Suggestions such as using simpler language and smaller paragraphs so the information on websites can be more easily understood were common.

"By typing things in simpler forms like less words then tons of paragraphs that we have to read just to get a simple answer."

(Pacific female, aged under 16, Decile 8-10)

"More understandable words"

(Pacific female, aged 16 or over, Decile 4-7)

"Be more concise with the paragraphs"

(Pacific female, aged 16 or over, Decile 7-10)

"Provide more relevant information instead of being redundant"

(Pacific male, aged 16 or over, Decile 1-3)

"Explain things and have clear tabs to press like details etc."

(Pacific female, aged under 16, Decile 1-3)

3. Facilitate human connection: promote pathways to support

Pacific youth emphasised the importance of digital tools providing pathways to human support and connection. Some emphasised opportunities for chat functions with peers or people who could give advice or support in real time.

"Have a confidential page for those who would want have a live conversation to talk about things that are important and valuable etc."

(Pacific female, aged 16 or over, Decile 1-3)

"Messaging a person online for support\ advice."

(Pacific female, aged 16 or over, Decile 8-10)

YOUTH19
A Youth2000 survey

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau
NEW ZEALAND

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

UNIVERSITY of OTAGO
Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo

AUT

Method

A general inductive analysis approach[4] was used to analyse the open-text responses presented in this brief. We first reviewed the responses, grouped like with like to identify different types of responses, then coded and identified the themes presented here.

Youth19

In 2019, researchers from four Universities collaborated to survey over 7700 New Zealand adolescents in 52 Auckland, Northland and Waikato secondary schools. This is Youth19, the latest survey in the Youth2000 series.[2]

The survey was a representative, high-quality study about the wellbeing of rangatahi/youth. Schools were randomly selected from the region and then Year 9-13 students were randomly selected from each school roll. A diverse sample of students completed the anonymous survey in English or te reo Māori on handheld internet tablets with optional voiceover. See the full questionnaire and more at www.youth19.ac.nz.

References

[1] ECH Alliance. (2020). Mental health apps are seeing a surge of downloads — but choosing the right one matters. ECH Alliance. Retrieved from: https://echalliance.com/mental-health-apps-are-seeing-a-surge-of-downloads- but-choosing-the-right-one-matters/

[2] Fleming, T., Peiris-John, R., Crengle, S., Archer, D., Sutcliffe, K., Lewycka, S., & Clark, T. (2020). *Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey, Initial Findings: Introduction and Methods*. The Youth19 Research Group, The University of Auckland and Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

[3] King-Finau, T., Kuresa, B., Archer, D., & Fleming, T. (2021). Youth19 Digital Access Brief. Youth19 and The Adolescent Health Research Group, Auckland and Wellington.

[4] Thomas D.R. (2006). A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data. American Journal of Evaluation. 7(2):237-246. doi:10.1177/1098214005283748

[5] Fleming, T., Dewhirst, M., Andreae, H., Kafatolu, D., Haase, A., Ormerod, F., Pine, R., Chinn, V., Haenga-O'Brien, A., Da Rocha, M., Sutcliffe, K., O'Brien, K., Szabo, A., Whelan-Turnbull, N., Lucassen, M., & Aspin, C. (2021). *Digital Tools for Mental Health and Wellbeing: Opportunities & Impact. Findings from the Research.* Wellington: The Digital Mental Health Lab, Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington.