

**Shifting, Circulating and Staying:  
Understanding Young People's Movement**

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## 1. Introduction

This paper focuses on young people aged 16–24 who were involved in the Building Attachment Research Programme. This age group is focused on because it spans important unique age stages and transitions unlike any in later life: leaving school, entering employment or tertiary education, independent travel, embarking on adult relationships, having children and establishing an independent household.

Residential movement can be planned, voluntary and predictable, or unplanned and unpredictable. Increasingly, the experience of residential mobility for young people is reported to be unpredictable, circular and complex. Movement is not always part of a smooth progression to adult roles and independence.<sup>1</sup> Patterns becoming more common are of young people leaving and then returning to their parental home, of young people remaining at home with parents for longer, and of young people starting their own family while remaining within the household of their own parents or other close relatives. For some young people, residential movement has started early in childhood or teenage years and is associated with family disruption, separation of their parents or lack of a stable and safe home environment, rather than being a planned process associated with personal development and advancement.

Despite current policy preoccupations,<sup>2</sup> it is generally acknowledged that there is a lack of New Zealand-based literature on the complexities of the physical, social and emotional ‘transitions’ young people go through in life before, and on leaving school. Furthermore, there are few New Zealand studies of young people’s residential movement histories, or the impacts of residential movement, both positive and negative, on them. Our study therefore contributes to a growing literature about young people’s lives in New Zealand.<sup>3</sup>

Our study is strengthened by employing two complementary methods of data collection and analysis: a three year longitudinal panel survey of movement in, out and within specified communities, and a small longitudinal cohort study.

The advantage of the panel survey is that it has enabled a range of data to be collected across time. This means that as well as ‘snapshots’ of people’s situations and experiences each year, changes in their situations and experiences can be traced from one year to the next. Collection of data through panel interviews allows analysis of how both individuals and households experience change and how they respond to changes. The panel data provides a unique picture of the details of geographical mobility and the dynamics of the young people’s family, social relationships, housing, education and work experiences over a three year period.

The cohort study enables us to examine the processes that underpin the aggregate patterns established from the panel surveys. We focus on two issues. First we study the role of residential movement in the construction of youth identity. Secondly, we look at the social networks of young people and how those networks relate to young people’s resilience.

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<sup>1</sup> Social Exclusion Unit (2005); Dwyer et al. (2003).

<sup>2</sup> The Ministry of Youth Development has a focus on youth transitions, among other interests.

<sup>3</sup> Morrison and Loeber (2005); Higgins (2002); Adolescent Health Research Group (2004); Wyn and Harris (2004).

Our methodological approach in the cohort study is to accept that there is no single or “right” pathway to adulthood. While researchers have argued that contingency is all-important, this is not necessarily obvious to young people embarking on adult life and studies have shown a mismatch between the presumptions of young people about smooth, linear pathways through education into employment and their actual experiences, and “objective” reality.<sup>4</sup> Nor are the decisions young people make “rational” in the sense that they align with predictions from rational economic or labour market models.<sup>5</sup> Researchers have therefore sought to understand not just what, but how and why, young people make their decisions rather than sideline them “erroneously” as either “victims or dupes to structure” or “as completely free actors”. There is much debate on how to do this and some youth researchers have called for studies that “simply listen to what young people have to say when making sense of their lives”.<sup>6</sup> However, for at least two reasons we argue that it is not possible to simply listen.

First, we cannot escape our own moral framings. The apparently concrete notion and issue of residential mobility, which is the research issue giving rise to this paper, is morally saturated. Movement is often seen as something that happens for ‘good’ reasons, such as education, or improved prospects or for ‘bad’ reasons like avoidance of debt or eviction. So, while some argue that research has valorised “the geographically and socially mobile above those who stay at home”,<sup>7</sup> some research has focused on the problem of too frequent movement. In New Zealand, as elsewhere, concern with transience and its perceived negative connotations has led to special priority on research into residential mobility.<sup>8</sup>

The second reason why we cannot simply listen to young people is that in research contexts young people are “making sense of their lives” not merely for themselves; they are making sense *for us*. They are offering an “account” of themselves and their lives in terms our questions make relevant. In laying down an issue as worthy of research we tacitly make the matter an “accountable” one and the research interview is thus never an “innocent” report on reality.<sup>9</sup> Young people made their own assumptions about why we wanted to talk to them. We were alerted to this by one of the young people we spoke with who explained that:

*they’re all talking about probably what questions you’re going to ask and stuff ...[and] thought they’re only going to ask naughty people to be in this.*

Under such circumstances residential mobility was made problematic and we were not able to “simply listen”; we had already shaped what we elicited. We acknowledge this in our discussion of the impacts of residential movement on the self identity.

In this paper we firstly provide some context to young people’s movement and then describe the young people focused on in this paper. Then the past, present and intended

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<sup>4</sup> Te Riele, (2004); Patiniotis and Holdsworth (2005); Wyn and Harris (2004), Higgins and Nairn (2006).

<sup>5</sup> Morrison and Loeber (2005).

<sup>6</sup> Smith, Lister, Middleton, and Cox (2005).

<sup>7</sup> Gabriel (2006:44).

<sup>8</sup> Gilbert (2005).

<sup>9</sup> Antaki (1994).

movement of the young people and some reasons for movement are considered. We then look at the meanings that the young people attach to movement, particularly whether they assign it a problematic status, and the extent to whether movement has been a factor in the way they see themselves and their relationships with others. The focus then shifts to the young people’s responses to and uses of movement. Dealing with residential mobility is often articulated with employing various elements of social capital to engage with transitions to adulthood. Finally, we present some insights this study provides on residential movement in the lives of young people.

## 2. Young People’s Movement

New Zealand is a highly mobile society,<sup>10</sup> and young people are more mobile than most of the population. The 2006 census confirms that young people move house more than average. For the total population, 24.7 percent moved in the year prior to the 2006 census and 57.7 percent moved at least once in the previous five years. Young adults of 20–34 years are the most likely to have moved in the five years between censuses. Table 1 compares movement for different age groups. Looking at the age groups closest to our focus on 16–24 year olds, the census shows that for the 15–19 year age group, over one quarter moved within the year before the census and just over half moved at least once in five years between censuses. In the 20–24 year age group the proportion moving within the year was almost half and almost three quarters moved in the five years between censuses.

**Table 1: Residential Mobility by Age Group (2006 Census)**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Movement within previous year (%)</b>	<b>Movement within previous five years (%)</b>
15–19 year olds	28.4	52.7
20–24 year olds	46.8	72.1
<i>Total population</i>	24.7	57.7

While the census suggests that young people are among the most mobile in our society, it does not indicate the nature, meaning and implications of that movement, nor any differences there may be within and between different communities.

For young people in small towns and rural areas, educational and employment opportunities often lie elsewhere, generating the desire to move. In three of the case study areas — Kawerau, Opotiki and Amuri — it is commonly expected and accepted that young people will move away. In Amuri, it is common for children and young people of some farming families to leave the community for schooling (even primary schooling in some cases), and to a lesser extent this also happens in Opotiki among certain families following a tradition of boarding school. In those three communities too, ambitions for tertiary education and employment often lead to moving away. The

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<sup>10</sup> Long (1991).

issues are slightly different for young people in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua, who can access tertiary education and employment while still remaining in the same area.

Children and young people were identified by social service providers as very mobile in all the case study areas, but particularly so in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua, Opotiki and Kawerau. In those areas the movement of children and young people into the area and circulating around the area was noted. Children and young people's movement to stay with extended family members or friends was often a decision made by the family to benefit the young person, by enabling them to attend a chosen school, by providing more space and a quiet environment for older children or providing them with a safer and more supportive environment. Family decisions about placing children in another household appeared to be relatively common, and not confined to any one ethnic group.

In Cannons Creek/Waitangirua, the movement of children and young people to improve their care and protection was identified. The most common example given was families sending children and young people to relatives to remove them from negative peer group influences. There was a view among social service providers that this practice is common among Pacific, Māori and European families, but that it is more likely for European parents and their children to move away from the area together, while Māori and Pacific families tend to send the child who needs support to another household.

Several of the social service providers interviewed in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua noted that the movement of children and young people between families is usual and unremarkable, particularly within Pacific families as it is part of the way the wider kin group cares for its members. It can be a very positive experience for those concerned. For example, grandparents play an important role in caring for the young. Families make choices about their children's education and welfare by placing them with family members and new arrivals in the community look to locally-established relatives for support when they enrol in secondary school or look for a job. Circulating among households of kin is not perceived as residential mobility.

*It's not seen as moving if people go to stay with relatives. Children will go stay in the holidays, or young people looking for employment (Pacific service provider).*

In addition to the usual patterns of young people's movement between relatives, organisations working with young people in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua identified a small number of very mobile youth who are not linked into any stable family base. Sometimes they are moving around to escape unsafe home environments, including abuse, alcohol and drugs. It appears that there are young people without jobs or family support who have been drawn to Cannons Creek/Waitangirua through a network of young people. They come from many areas, including the Hutt Valley, the Kapiti Coast and as far away as Auckland. Social service providers commented that those young people may circulate between households, staying with friends or family, or move into flats and receive the Independent Youth Benefit. It was also noted that young people who have left Child Youth and Family care at 17 and are unsupported by either a family or community organisation experience housing difficulties and are particularly vulnerable to getting caught up in offending or self-harm. Providers in Cannons Creek/

Waitangirua identified a lack of emergency housing as a major problem facing young people who have no stable home base. Youth workers talked of young people who have left home who find it difficult to get safe accommodation. Social service providers in Opotiki and Kawerau also noted a lack of emergency accommodation for young people in their areas.

In both Opotiki and Kawerau, considerable movement of young people independent of their families was noted by social service providers. This involved not only local young people moving around the homes of families and friends, but also some from out of town moving in with friends or relatives. Even within the course of a week, a young person may stay in more than one house. Some of these young people are not enrolled at school, or attend only infrequently. Some are vulnerable to violence and abuse.

*A lot of kids going into youth justice are from no settled home ... they don't belong in any particular place they could call their own and feel secure* (social service provider, Opotiki).

*It becomes a mode of life for [young people], it's normal* (social service provider, Opotiki).

*Lots of kids from the coast and Tuhoe come to stay with whānau ... these kids just decide they're going to stay with relatives in Kawerau* (resident, Kawerau).

### **3. Introducing the Young People**

The two main ways of collecting data on young people's residential movement were through a cohort study of 34 young people, and through panel interviews with 94 young people (the youth panel). These methods are outlined in Annex 1.

#### ***Age, sex and ethnicity***

The 34 cohort study participants were between 16 and 18 years old, in or near their final year of schooling at the time of their first interview in 2004. At this point the cohort consisted of 16 young men and 18 young women. For a second interview in 2005–2006, five young men and 10 young women were able to be contacted.

In the cohort study, participants identified with a variety of ethnicities.<sup>11</sup> The issue was not straightforward. Some identified as New Zealand (or Australian) European but acknowledged Māori or Pacific ancestry. Others identified with more than one ethnicity but were vague about what that comprised. What can be said with confidence is that they were a highly heterogeneous group with a minority identifying as European or Pakeha only (this was expected because of the ethnic composition of the case study communities).

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<sup>11</sup> Identification with more than one ethnicity was apparent among both the cohort study and the youth panel. This is increasing, according to the 2006 census, where 10.4 percent of people identified with more than one ethnic group, compared to 9 percent in 2001 (Statistics New Zealand, 2007).

Almost half (46 percent) of the 94 youth panel participants were 16–18 years in 2006. Three quarters of them were aged 20 years or under, and one quarter were aged between 21 and 24 years. Forty-two were women and fifty-two were men.

Almost one fifth of the youth panel identified with more than one ethnicity. The ethnic composition of the youth panel reflected the different ethnic compositions of the four case study areas. The largest proportion of young people, 39 percent, identified with three Pacific ethnic groups, Samoan, Cook Island Māori and Tokelauan, reflecting the ethnic make-up of the biggest panel based in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua and the youthful age structure of those households. The preponderance of Pacific youth also reflects the tendency for Pacific young adults to remain in their parental homes or the homes of other close relatives, rather than go flatting. One quarter of the youth panel identified as Māori and 16 percent identified as NZ European. Twenty percent defined themselves as belonging to ‘other’ ethnic groups, which they described as Australian, and various combinations of Māori, NZ European and Pacific ethnicities. Fourteen young people were born overseas, all except two in the Pacific Islands.

### ***Education and employment status***

At the time they were first interviewed, all members of the cohort were in what their teachers considered to be likely their last year of schooling, or were identified by community contacts as very recent school leavers (i.e. not yet in paid employment or tertiary study). All but one of the cohort able to be contacted had indeed left school by the second time they were interviewed and were either working or in tertiary study. The one exception had returned to school for a further final year, something which she had not expected.

As is typical for this age group, the majority of the youth panel were also involved in secondary or tertiary education or training (see Table 2). In the first round of interviews conducted in 2004, 25 were involved in education or training. In rounds 2 (2005) and 3 (2006), 29 were involved in education or training. This included a few who were doing an education or training course, as well as working. Some who were primarily in education or training also had part-time jobs. In round 1, one third were at school, one third were engaged in a tertiary certificate or diploma course, and one third at university. Those proportions remained the same for round 2, however in round 3, over 80 percent were engaged in a tertiary certificate or diploma course, or at university.

In each round, about one third of participants were working: 14 in round 1, 22 in round 2 and 28 in round 3. Most were involved in office, retail or café work. In addition, a few individuals were involved in the following occupations: trades (carpenter, painter and decorator), horticultural work, shearing, banking, information technology, mill hand, labouring, machine operator, hairdressing, teacher aide, early childhood education, youth worker and the military.

Between each interview, around 39 percent of the young people had some change in labour force status. For most, this change involved a move from education to employment, however a few had left or been laid off their jobs and were looking for work, sick, or at home looking after a child. One person moved from a full-time job to part-time work and study. Those who did not move house were less likely to change their labour force status, compared to those who moved within or outside of their case

study area. As shown in section 4 below, education and work figured large in the young people’s decisions about moving.

Few in each panel round were actively seeking work, and fewer still were not in the labour force because they were beneficiaries or caring for others at home.

**Table 2: Labour Force Status**

	<b>Education and training</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Seeking work</b>	<b>Not in labour force</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Round 1 (n = 50)	25	14	3	4	46*
Round 2 (n = 62)	29	22	9	7	67**
Round 3 (n = 73)	29	28	14	6	77**

\*Missing data: 4 in round 1

\*\*Totals are more than the number interviewed because five people in round 2 and four people in round 3 were in both employment and education

**Income**

At the time of the first interview, some of those in the cohort study had been working after school, and were earning or were expecting to earn money over the upcoming summer holiday period. In no case was the income earned before leaving school counted as a contribution to family income, but rather money needed for personal extras.

The incomes of the young people in the panel were also relatively low, because of their age and involvement in education and training. In round 1 of interviews, three quarters had an income of \$10,000 gross per annum or less. However, this steadily rose. In round 2, 41 percent of the young people had an annual income of \$10,000 gross or more, and in round 3, 50 percent had an income of \$10,000 gross or more per annum.

In round 1, young people in Opotiki and Kawerau were more likely to have zero income. But in round 2, almost two thirds of Kawerau youth were earning \$10,000 gross or more per annum, compared to 45 percent of Cannons Creek/Waitangirua youth and only 8 percent of Opotiki youth. In round 3, a higher proportion of Kawerau young people were earning \$15,000 gross or more per annum — 50 percent compared to 38 percent in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua and 36 percent in Opotiki. Both Kawerau and Cannons Creek/Waitangirua had wide spreads of income in round 3 — from zero income to \$50,000 gross per annum.

### ***Household size and composition***

From the information available,<sup>12</sup> the young people in the cohort study were most likely to be living in relatively small, family-like households. These households were not always those of immediate family.

The youth panel participants lived in households ranging in size from 1–12 members. In round 1, the young people were most likely to be living in households with 3–5 members (34 percent). In later rounds, more young people were living in bigger households. In round 2, 35 percent lived in households with 4–5 members, and one quarter lived in a household with seven members. In round 3, 39 percent of the panel were living in households with 6–7 members.

Those in Kawerau were most likely to be living in households with six or more members in round 1, but in rounds 2 and 3 those in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua were more likely to be living in households with six or more members.

In all rounds, the large majority of the panel were living with family members, in a variety of family structures. In round 1, 61 percent were living in a nuclear family with at least one parent and siblings, and 35 percent were in a family plus others (either other relatives or non-relatives). Similarly in round 2, 62 percent were living with at least one parent and siblings, and 33 percent were in a family plus others.

In round 3, most were still living with family; 51 percent were living with at least one parent and siblings, and 38 percent were in a family plus others. One person was living alone, five were living with a partner and one was living with flatmates.

Only a few, eight of the 94, had children of their own. Only one of those lived in a household with partner and children. The rest lived in three-generation households with other family members, and were not the householder with overall responsibility for managing the household.

Experiencing a changing household was common. Over the three years, 25 (39 percent) of the youth panel who participated in two or more interviews had lived with different people in their households. Mostly this was a change in the composition of their family living in the household, although six young people left their families to form their own households or move in with others.

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<sup>12</sup> Some of those interviewed were unwilling to describe their household composition. When discussed generally with teachers this was considered to be attributable to privacy concerning family separations.

#### 4. Patterns of Youth Movement: the Youth Panel

This section explores the residential movement<sup>13</sup> patterns of the youth panel. It describes how many times they have moved, where they moved, the reasons for movement, and their future intentions regarding movement.

##### **Past movement**

Movement was a routine part of growing up for the majority of the youth panel. Looking at the movement of panel members when they were children (up to age 16), over two thirds of the young people (68 percent) had shifted house by the time they were 16. The number of moves ranged from 1–16. However almost half moved only 1–3 times. A lot of movement was within the same town or district. As far as they could remember, movement was often for family-related reasons, or for housing.

##### **Reasons for moving in childhood (youth panel):**

Financial circumstance led to moving house several times. All 14 moves were within [city]. Father bought a house, did it up, sold it and bought another.

We lived down the road and moved only to look after uncle who was sick.

After I was born, I lived with my mum at my grandmother's place until we shifted here just before my 5th birthday. But my grandmother kept wanting me because I was their oldest and only grandson for years. Plus, I was named after my grandfather who I hadn't met at the time.

Moving overseas for parent's work.

Mother's decision, she wanted to be closer to family.

We moved around living with different members of the family.

As expected, most of the youth panel members had shifted since 2001. However, there was variation in the frequency of movement. Movement data was available for 77 young people from 2001–2006. This showed that while one quarter had not moved at all over that time, three quarters had shifted house. Just under half (48 percent) moved between one and three times, and just over one quarter moved four times or more. The most moves in the five years were made by one person who shifted 12 times.

Between 2004–2006 (the time of the panel interviews), just over half (47) of the young people moved. Most of the movers (42 of 47) shifted 1–3 times, although one person moved 11 times during that period. Over the three years, 15 young people moved within their case study area. A further nine joined the panel by moving into a panel household. Meanwhile 12 young people moved away from their area and then

<sup>13</sup> Residential movement is defined as a change in dwelling that is one's primary residence. It can be a move over a short distance, or over a long distance.

returned to the area within the panel time frame. By the completion of interviews in 2006, one third of the young people (32 of 94) were living outside of any of the case study areas, living in Auckland, Wellington, Hutt Valley, Rotorua, Tauranga and Australia.

All three of the Amuri panel members moved during the panel time frame; one returned to the area, one moved within the area, and one moved away. One Amuri young person shifted five times during the panel time frame.

The Kawerau and Opotiki young people were also likely to move, with 15 Kawerau panel members and 14 Opotiki panel members moving. This was around two thirds of the youth panel members in each of those areas. These areas also had those with the most number of moves during the panel period. The person with the highest number of moves, 11, started in Kawerau. Of the 14 movers who started in Opotiki, 10 had moved 2–3 times between 2004–2006. Both areas had young people moving and then returning to their areas within the panel time frame; five for Kawerau and six for Opotiki.

In contrast, only one third (15) of the young people in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua moved during the panel time frame, and most moved only once. None of the young people moved more than twice between 2004–2006. One moved away and then returned to Cannons Creek/Waitangirua.

#### ***Reasons for moves 2004–2006***

The reasons for young people's movement during the panel time frame were typical of their age transitions. Although the main reason for most young people was "work",<sup>14</sup> often several reasons for moving were cited, e.g. moving for work was associated with travel, seeking independence and trying a different lifestyle. Young people did not only move to a job, but also for a new life that included seeking employment. All of the case study areas noted that movement away for employment and lifestyle reasons was particularly salient for young people.

The panel survey data showed that over the three years of interviews, most of the young people were involved in education or training, while about one third were working. However, from round 1 to round 3 there was a discernible change from participation in secondary education to further training or tertiary education, and for some, employment. Incomes over the three years rose for some, reflecting a move into employment.

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<sup>14</sup> In contrast, those aged 25 and older participating in the panel interviews were more likely to move because of housing, such as needing to find alternative rental accommodation, buying a home, problems with the physical condition of their dwelling, or needing a bigger or smaller home. There was also a lot of movement for family-related reasons such as needing to care for another family member. Few people moved solely for employment.

For the youth panel members, taking up employment usually meant a move outside of the area. Those in Opotiki and Kawerau in particular moved for work. Some looked to Australia for employment opportunities, and it was typical to join other family members there. Others moved elsewhere in the Bay of Plenty or to Auckland or Wellington. Two joined the New Zealand Army.

Cannons Creek/Waitangirua residents noted that some young people, who leave the area to look for work and to widen their life experience, tend to stay in contact with their home community, sharing information about what they are doing. These moves away are seen as positive and not necessarily as losing contact with the area or with family. According to some, such young people intend to return to “the Creek” eventually. All three of the Amuri youth panel left the district for job and/or educational opportunities. Job opportunities for young women were noted to be particularly sparse in Amuri.

**Reasons for moving (youth panel):**

I moved six times in 2005. I am currently between living with Mum and my girlfriend in [city]. I found work there, and moved there because my girlfriend was moving there too. As Mum would put it, “no fixed abode” because I don’t stay in one place for long. I’m living in two places. My previous home was too far from my work place and social lifestyle i.e. night clubs. I’m more settled here now and much much happier.

My parents wanted me to get out and try overseas, see life as they didn’t, they had a family too young. I wanted to go to experience Australia as I had been over before for the holidays, and I thought I’d give it a go. In 2005 I moved to Australia. At first I stayed with my cousin and his partner till I got on my feet financially and made friends. Although I was scared and it was the first time away from home, I had family members to help and support me. Then in 2007 I moved home.

Education influences decisions about going or staying in all of the case study areas, but particularly the three in rural and provincial areas: Opotiki, Amuri and Kawerau. Education was a common reason for moving, with young people going to secondary school, university or polytechnic away from their home area.

In Opotiki, participants in the panels and other research activities observed that students, sometimes with one parent, or in some instances whole families, were moving out of the area for educational reasons. Reasons for seeking education outside of the area did not seem to focus on the quality of local schooling. On the contrary, comments were made about boarding school not always working out for students, and positive comments were made about local schools. However, some families perceived that there are more opportunities and greater subject choice at schools outside of the area. For example, those parents seeking a Māori immersion or bilingual secondary education look to secondary schools in Rotorua, Auckland, Palmerston North and other centres. The East Coast area, particularly among Māori families, has a tradition of sending students away to school. Similarly, in Amuri, it is common for young people to leave for secondary education, or for primary schooling in some cases. One person observed that education “is a big factor in whether people stay”.

While education was not such a driver of outward movement from Cannons Creek/Waitangirua, in part because of wider choice of schools and tertiary education within easy travelling distance, some gave examples of families moving to a university city when a young adult entered university. Movement of a family for primary and secondary education was not so much an issue; children could attend schools in other parts of Porirua or Wellington if desired, and several in the youth panel had attended secondary school outside of Cannons Creek/Waitangirua. The panel interviews also indicated that some of those over 25 had chosen to live in Cannons Creek/Waitangirua because it is close to Whitireia Community Polytechnic.

**Reasons for moving (youth panel):**

I only moved once as a kid and that was to the next street. I have left secondary school and moved on to uni. I am doing a Bachelor of Management Studies. It only took five days for me to settle in. The people that I am living with became my friends and I just liked the environment, because it made me feel comfortable and good.

I private boarded at school and came back home at weekends. Then the university course I want to do is best in Wellington. This house was the only one we could find. I'll be here in this house until the lease runs out.

After employment and education, other important reasons for moving were connected with housing and family. The panel data showed that a large majority of the young people continued living with family members over the three years, which was not surprising as almost half were aged between 16 and 18.

For the young person living at home, housing-related reasons for moving often involved the whole family, and this usually meant that the young person was not the main one making the decision to move. Moving to a bigger house, having nowhere else to live, wanting a house in a more desirable area and overcrowding were all cited as reasons for families moving. The Cannons Creek/Waitangirua young people particularly mentioned housing and family reasons together. These included shifting because of the father's job or because the parents having to or wanting to move to another house. In all areas, moving out of a relative's home to establish one's own residence was also a desire.

**Reasons for moving (youth panel):**

I moved in with my partner and his parents. I fell pregnant. I went on maternity leave. It's a big house, we have our own space. At the moment we are saving to buy our own house. I would like to move so that we could have our own comfort and privacy.

For those young people who had left their parental home, housing-related reasons for movement included wanting to find cheaper or more suitable accommodation, and having to move because their rental accommodation was sold. Some young people living away from their families cited family-related reasons for shifting house (often resulting in movement back home or returning to the home area). Common family reasons cited by Kawerau and Opotiki movers were homesickness and wanting to live with parents or other relatives. The parents' home was used as a base by some young people moving between jobs, returning home to seek work during university vacations, or after they had completed tertiary study.

**Reasons for moving (youth panel):**

I moved to [city] where I flatted with a friend for one year, until my flatmate got engaged and that house also sold. Then I moved to live with a cousin in [city], until that house sold. Then we moved to another place in [city] and then I moved home to Mum's to save to move to [big city] to live with my oldest sister. Two weeks after I moved home my sister changed plans and moved to Australia. I am now saving to move to live with her.

Personal relationships with parents, friends and partners were also reasons for moving. While less common than the other reasons outlined above, they were nevertheless important drivers of movement. During the panels, a few young people moved out of their parental home to establish their own household with a partner. A few young people became parents. This could either prompt a move to live with other family members, or a move out of the parental home to gain more space. Difficulties with parents was another reason for moving out of the parental home. Relationship break-ups inevitably prompted movement, sometimes resulting in the young person moving back to the parental home.

**Reasons for moving (youth panel):**

I was born and raised here and have moved four times, all here in this town. We lived in Willow Street. Then in 2005 we moved to stay with my big sister and her partner and kids. Then, I moved with my mum and two youngest sisters. Then I moved back to stay with dad and my two brothers. I was sick and tired of mum's friends and their kids coming over and then being left to take care of my sisters and mum's friends' kids too. I just had to ask dad if I could come and stay here because of the stress I was experiencing at mum's house.

(2004) I came from [big city] where I was on the street. I wanted to be with friends and away from parents. Too much conflict with my mum especially. Time for a change. I was a street kid and needed some stability. I'm now in a family environment, not being on the streets anymore and starting a family. (2005) I will be moving with partner and children to Auckland to find work for my partner. But we are unsure when we will move.

### ***Movement and attachment to the community***

A focus on structural factors alone, such as the local labour market or education and training opportunities restricts a wider understanding of residential movement dynamics for young people and the importance of place in those dynamics, particularly for youth in provincial and rural areas.<sup>15</sup> The feelings, attitudes and values about the place where they live may have a bearing on the decisions young people make about their residential movement.

We found that most of the young people liked where they lived and felt a sense of identity with that place. In fact, almost all the young people in the panel (94 percent) commented on things they liked about the place where they lived. The young people were very familiar with their areas and had close connections to their communities through family and friends, rather than through organised groups or activities. Over half reported that “most” of their friends lived in their area, and almost half said that “most” of their relatives lived in their area.

#### **Views of home (youth panel):**

I’ve got it tattooed on my chest, Home Grown Kawerau! (Kawerau).

Māori culture. Physical surroundings. Relaxed nature. Pride of being from Opotiki that people have (Opotiki).

It feels like home because of the environment and Polynesian people (Cannons Creek/Waitangirua).

Small so you know lots of people. Physical environment, nature, quiet (Amuri).

Often feelings of liking and attachment to the area were tied up with having been born in the area. Young people talked about their “home town” being important to them; 41 (44 percent) were born in the area in which they lived and 65 (69 percent) said that they had lived elsewhere and then returned to live in the area. For those young people, leaving and returning, particularly to live with relatives, may not be as formal as implied by the terms movement or migration, or even be seen by them as changing residence. Rather, it is a coping strategy and a key element in their continuing identification with place.

Such familiarity and sense of belonging with a home place did not necessarily mean an unwillingness or lack of desire to move. There were examples of young people who had established and maintained connections across a range of places, suggesting that identification with place is not necessarily fixed to one locale. Nor is identification with place static over time.

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<sup>15</sup> Pretty et al. (2006).

### ***Movement intentions***

In each annual panel interview, participants were asked about their intentions to move. In each year, the large majority (between 91 and 92 percent) of the youth panel intended to move. However, over the three interviews most were uncertain about when they intended to move, although they thought they would move sometime in the near future.

Around one quarter in the first two interviews and less than one fifth in the third interview had a time frame for moving. Time frames were often open-ended, and ranged from a few months, to six years. Those who did have a time frame for moving had in mind a job or career, further education, or just wanted to leave home soon.

Most Cannons Creek/Waitangirua young people thought they would move. However, unlike the young people in the other areas, any future moves were expected to be with their families, as most were living with other family members and intended to remain in the family household. The most common reasons given for their intended move were related to their family's movement intentions, such as their parents' jobs, or family desires to move to a more suitable house. Although the Cannons Creek/Waitangirua young people thought they would move, most had no time frame for moving and they were the ones who actually moved least over the three years of interviews.

In Opotiki, Kawerau and Amuri, the young people's movement intentions were not tied up with family moves initiated by parents. Across the three years of interviews, the main reasons for wanting to move were for work, tertiary education or because they wanted to move to a more desirable house or location. Some were uncertain about their housing situation or security of tenure, and consequently they expected to have to find other accommodation at any time.

When asked whether they would consider a move away from their community to work elsewhere, 55 percent of the young people said they would. The most popular destination was "anywhere", although some had a particular place in mind where they wanted to live, either in New Zealand or Australia.

Just over half said there were things they disliked about the place where they lived that would prompt a move, especially the dearth of tertiary education or employment opportunities and lack of facilities or entertainment suitable for young people.

#### **Factors prompting a move (youth panel):**

Restriction of jobs, education, number of friends (Opotiki).

Lack of shops and choice (Opotiki).

No jobs, nothing social outside the many pubs and gambling places. Does not offer any places to go for youth at risk (Kawerau).

There's not enough work around. More courses than anything else (Kawerau young person).

Being isolated, away from friends in town. Unless you're into other scenes. Local young farmer sort of people hang at the pub which I'm not into (Amuri).

The old people, they hassle you, try to tell you off, not much to do for young people, a skate park would be good (Amuri).

## 5. Making Sense of Movement

As we have acknowledged, we cannot “simply listen” to how young people make sense of events in their lives. In agreeing to be research participants, the individuals we spoke to had committed themselves to produce answers, but they were answers designed *for us*; as interviewers we were privileged interlocutors. Young people who experienced frequent movement are no doubt often asked to account for it: teachers, school peers, and others encountered in daily life require explanations from newcomers. In order to understand this issue we have therefore focused not simply on the content of what the young people say, but what sort of social actions their replies constitute. We found their replies functioned as justifications, mitigations, and dismissals which were made in systematically different ways, depending on whether or not they accepted that their residential movement had been for ‘good’ or ‘bad’ reasons.

As shown in section 4, movement was a routine part of growing up for over two thirds of the youth panel. Since participants in the cohort study were purposefully chosen as frequent movers, most had at some time experienced very high levels of movement. A variety of reasons for childhood movement were cited. Most young people provided justifications in terms of good or defensible reasons for movement like parents moving to make capital gains on property, or because of family traditions such as the oldest grandchild being raised by grandparents. In a few cases, it was about their parents’ employment opportunities.

However, some could not put forward defensible reasons since they acknowledged they had little understanding of why the family or their parent(s) moved. They reported apparently randomly moving at the whim of one or both parents, decamping frequently to visit sick relatives, or just moving around “living with different members of the family”. Or movement was expressed as associated with delinquent or illegal behaviour in some way. When residential movement could not be glossed as good it was justified in some way. Among our participants, boys did this differently to girls.

### ***Normalising movement: part of the family plan and nothing out of the ‘ordinary’***

Sacks drew attention to the way individuals justify themselves as competent social beings even in unlikely circumstances by insisting on being ‘ordinary’. By being ‘ordinary’ Sacks did not mean average on some statistical basis but as being accepted as ‘ordinary’: both speaker and interlocutor are ‘ordinary’ competent social beings rather than weird, incompetent and therefore stigmatised in some way. Being ‘ordinary’ is “in effect, a job that persons and people round them [are] ... coordinatively engaged in to achieve that each of them, together, are ordinary persons”.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Sacks (1984:415).

So for instance people who dress with marked attention to being exceptional might still lay claim to be ordinary. Young men and women who dress provocatively as Goths sporting 15 inch, coloured Mohawks, tartan trousers, skin piercings and leather and bejewelled accoutrements have been shown to nevertheless insist on their essential ordinariness even while they distinguish themselves from the ‘average’ person.<sup>17</sup> If possible, it seems everyone wants to be seen to be ‘doing ordinary’.

Of the young people involved in the in-depth interviews, about half depicted their residential movement as ordinary in this sense, whatever the first appearances. If there was a defensible, creditable reason for explaining a history of frequent residential movement, these young people put it forward. In some cases this was easy to do. In those instances, the case was made that despite movement, the family remained a coherent and relevant basis for daily life and inasmuch as having a family is a universal ‘normal’ social fact. Moving as part of a planned move by family, moving with family, or moving among family were all asserted as a ‘normal’ or ‘ordinary’ social fact.

For instance, those sent to boarding school saw moving as unremarkable. The four or five who boarded recounted it as benign or indeed advantageous. Natalie had “loved” boarding school; Max had expected to follow the family tradition, it had not interfered with the emotional closeness of family life and “it’s better I reckon” than schooling locally. Olivia had boarded with a city family to attend secondary school and although she remained very attached to her nuclear family, returning most weekends to the family home, she nevertheless declared this shifting around as without any adverse impacts. Len had won a scholarship and had enjoyed boarding school, having it terminated only at family insistence after an accident since his parents wanted direct oversight of his care and future health.

In other instances young people who had moved with family — even if in difficult circumstances — similarly dismissed residential movement as problematic. For example, Keith had been born overseas, and when the family split up he returned with his mother to the area where she had been brought up. Keith felt that none of this had been a problem, even though “all my other family’s over there”, and Keith and his mother had shifted around within the area a great deal. Keith depicted it all as stable and benign since his was a world densely populated with extended family. Family offered friendship and recreation networks, as well as avenues for current and future work. Keith was working on a family “sheep ’n beef” farm where family members were getting “quite old I reckon ... need a hand yeah”. He now also worked “the odd milking” on local farms and his plans for future work “long term ... I already know”: he intended to work in a shearing gang and slowly graduate up the farming ladder.

Maurice and his family had shifted a great deal during Maurice’s childhood. He now lived in a small town with his immediate family but away from ancestral areas. By his account everything had been “easy”. He was determinedly optimistic. He liked the small town his family had shifted to because “everyone kind of knows each other so you can be friends easy and stuff like that. It’s better I reckon”. He conceded that the secondary school he attended had had a bad name but it was now “coming up” and he enjoyed it. Shifting around had had no adverse impact in his view.

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<sup>17</sup> Widdicomb and Wooffitt, (1995).

Ivan shifted around within New Zealand and only recently arrived in his current area. Although the reasons for all this movement were expressed as good ones, improved employment for his parents, Ivan was discontented with it — but for ordinary reasons. The latest move was “pretty ratshit” because he had lost his friendship networks: “I didn’t really want to leave that behind. It’s not that far away, but still. All my friends there ... I tried to stay”. Nevertheless the family remained the intact unit of daily life. Although Ivan “didn’t really like the school at first cos I just didn’t want to come”, he depicted himself as a reasonable, ordinary being and “oh I come round. It’s a pretty good school. Pretty laid back”. He was doing well despite disinclination, so that “my dean says to me that I’ve got the smarts to go further ... I excelled” in exams. Movement had had no irredeemable adverse impacts that he expressed.

Similarly the girls who had moved as part of planned family moves insisted their frequent childhood and teenage residential movement had had no adverse impacts. They insisted on the strength and primacy of ordinary family life. Patricia had been to “quite a few schools” by the time she was 16, indeed too many to recall offhand — but this had been in the course of family travel both in New Zealand and overseas “because of church”. Although almost continuously on the move Patricia insisted on family integrity in the midst of perpetual movement: “we’re quite a close-knit family ... a busy family”. No fuss or bother was caused by all this moving around because “we normally all ... just fit in wherever”. At the time she was interviewed, the family was hosting nine overseas evangelical visitors and a friend had moved in because “she was just having problems at home”. For Patricia, “where the family is, home for us”. Place of residence was irrelevant so long as the family was together.

Rachel’s account was similar. Her family moved often for evangelical work and at one time even lived on the road for a sustained period. This was almost a family tradition and through church networks the family was densely networked both regionally and internationally. Rachel had been home schooled for long periods and she defended this as better than education through schools and argued she had always acquired friends wherever the family had been, and anyway “I guess I’ve got a large family ... and I’m just used to moving”.

The assertion of family integrity and importance could be maintained in the face of unlikely circumstances. Henry had been placed with non-parental family by court order and also sent to boarding school. Nevertheless as soon as he was able at the age of 16 to return to his mother he did so, shifting towns, changing schools and losing friends to effect this. He insisted all this upheaval was of no account and rebuffed the interviewer’s presumptions that such a history would have created difficulties:

Interviewer: *Ok so what’s it like in school? Tell me about coming here. Cos coming at 16 is not all that easy is it?*

Henry: *Oh yeah I get on ... easy.*

By his account, everything was “easy”. Boarding school had been easy — “yeah that was good. They ... kind of encouraged you there”. Boarding school had been more formal — “school tie school shoes and ...more competition cos all boys”, while at his present school he liked wearing his own clothes and “yes and ... girls here”. If anything school life was now better: “people I get on with them easier”. Henry “just had to talk

to them ... Just started getting on”. Family life was good even though he commuted and was able to be at home only at weekends, and when home had no room or space of his own — “just stay in the sitting room ... hop on the couch”.

### ***Normalising the potentially “not ordinary”***

There are limits to the possibility of being seen as “doing ordinary”. As Sacks (1984) said, “There are people ... who specifically cannot be ordinary”. Sometimes people have to offer an account of themselves in which they acknowledge some features as notable, as not fitting the ‘doing ordinary’ category. About half the young people in our cohort were in that situation. They acknowledged their own residential mobility as either notably different or notably more difficult than that of their peers.

In the last section we saw how the argument of family could be stretched to cover and justify and make ordinary many kinds of residential movement that might statistically or on first look appear aberrant or notable. But the argument was also stretched to cover cases specifically not ordinary. It was encountered among the young women we spoke to who acknowledged their past movement was too frequent and haphazard to be glossed in any straightforward way as ordinary but who avoided any label of bad movement by arguing that their movement was within, if not with, family. They thus made normal the sort of movement that without the anchor of family might be indefensible as a good reason for perpetual shifting. Family was constituted as a good reason for potentially bad movement.

The sisters Shirley and Teresa recited family histories in which movement was endemic. Since childhood the girls had moved continuously and for the most part together, among scattered family members. Their mother and father had seldom been together “ever since we were little”. Now they oscillated between either parent, and between several older brothers. Shirley and Teresa depicted themselves as nevertheless cherished by their family: their brothers were vigilantly protective and provided havens of hospitality, they were “daddy’s little girls” and they returned frequently to their mother in another city. Although they acknowledged theirs was a story of “quite complicated” family ties and emotional interconnections, both insisted it was not a history of random or chaotic itinerancy and emotional dislocation.

Lindsay’s account was based on a similar premise. With her siblings and mother, Lindsay had moved within the locality and further afield throughout childhood, living in some formation with other family. The situation when first interviewed was typical. Mother and girls were “with our auntie ... my brother and my sister, my mum, my mum’s brother, um, my uncle’s girlfriend and their three kids”. There were ongoing but “normal” family frictions — “oh my mum was having a few problems” — so they had moved to “sort it out” and “we all went up north and I went to school there”. Lindsay described all this journeying as a “hikoi”, a term that connotes purposefulness rather than chaos. At the time she was first interviewed, Lindsay accorded school little importance and “er I didn’t exactly come to college” when the time came because family members had tricked school officers when they came looking for a “Lindsay ... they thought I was a boy”. The problems Lindsay gave priority were rather those of “normal” adolescent rebellion against a parent. She and her mother “don’t really get on” and her mother “thinks I should to change my attitude...I know my attitude’s bad,

but, ‘cos she makes me mad”. Family problems and family dynamics rather than residential movement were the things Lindsay made most salient in her life.

Three other girls in the study had been separated from their birth family by court order. Nevertheless all down-played this and recast these events as due to ‘normal’ family problems like sickness and personal characteristics.

Winifred initially presented her situation as unremarkable since she lived with “my mum my dad. I’ve got one other sister...aunties and uncles”. It then emerged that Winifred had been placed with foster parents at birth. Although these foster parents “are not my mum and dad ... I call them mum and dad ‘cos they are” and she had “lots of sisters ... not my real sisters but ... my sisters”. In the past Winifred moved a great deal and been to many schools and in institutional care because she had been “too naughty”. Now she insisted “I’ve changed” and decided “I wanted to stay with mum and did I didn’t want to shift away again”. Winifred insisted her experience was quite unexceptional and normal in her family. Everyone was in a sense a runaway “cos my mum and dad give care giving ... I think it’s good ... I think it’s better” and the newcomers “become kind of sisters”.

Yvonne explained her highly itinerant childhood as due to her mother who was “fussy where she lives” and who had moved continuously between sets of family members. Yvonne had spent her more recent years mostly with “my stepdad” but recently she shifted again when on holiday to “meet my mum’s side of the family” which “turned to living up here”. She now described being reintegrated into a family of 11 siblings. Yvonne dismissed any of this as particularly notable; it was simply a matter of discovering and being incorporated into family networks.

Zoe had moved around a great deal but was persistently vague about details. She foreclosed discussion of earlier residential mobility by reference to parental illness. Current living arrangements were evidently the result of a family group conference but represented by Zoe nevertheless as a result of normal family discussions. Now, she lived with “my auntie and my cousin. And my dog. There you go”. Her home was, “um it’s a family home so you need um family can come and go ... Oh like like it’s a family home so like if someone ... came down they can just come in and stay there. So anyone in the family can just come and stay there whenever they want to”. Like the other young women who had moved a great deal, Zoe emphasised its normalcy by referencing back to her family and its ‘normal’ dynamics.

### ***Valorising ‘bad’ movement***

While young women ‘normalised’ frequent movement for potentially ‘bad’ reasons by reference to family as a context and a reason, the young men in our cohort gave much more individualised and heroic accounts of frequent movement for such reasons. Invariably, those who acknowledged their histories of movement as in some way problematic nevertheless made themselves the heroes of their own tale. These young men, unlike any of the young women, openly acknowledged their residential movement as if not deviant in itself, associated in some way with ‘deviance’. They then made one of two kinds of argument.

One argument was a kind of redemption story in which the issues associated with frequent movement were resolved by self-discoveries of innate talents so considerable

as to outweigh any past deviance and demand admiration. The other way was to assert an identity as outlaw.

### **Redemption as extra-ordinary**

Characteristic of the redemption story was Graham's, who described childhood shifting around as "pretty hard". It had left him "pretty scared" and he was "bullied a lot" as a new boy at school. Graham then turned to "the wrong crowds" and carried out a number of criminal and dangerous activities before landing up before the courts, and being dealt with through restorative justice processes in his school. Self-discovery through kapahaka then changed his life around. Through kapahaka he got "popular" and "they don't bully me anymore ... no way I get I bullied". He now had grand plans for the future which included winning competitions, winning national attention and overseas travel.

Frank told of a very violent childhood with many traumas of which very frequent residential movement was only one. As perpetual new boy at school he was "bullied in primary", got involved with the "wrong crowd" as protection and did petty crime. Now however he was discovering himself as a rugby star: "I'm hanging around with the rugby boys" who "like my rugby how I play rugby. They like my style". Bullies were "too scared of my mates" to harass him. He was recognising himself as a potential superstar: school was "too easy", local girls were "too ugly" to warrant his attention and he prided himself as a man hardened to violent games.

Similarly Ernest spoke of trauma and having been moved around households and schools where he "always got bullied". After a brush with the law, about which he was not specific, Ernest had "been through hell so yeah" but he had reinvented himself into a formidable pugnacious warrior. He prided himself on a fierce code of honour: "don't take the first punch which I don't". His interests were weapons and hunting and his aspiration was to "join the army and go to war".

David had "oh all my life ... been moving round" then "went on the wrong tracks", about which he was vague. Although initially a shy child, David said he soon discovered he was a natural performer. Under duress at school, he finally got up in front of the class and "gave it a go ... it was sweet". Then, he "just started ... doing all my stuff". He declared he now took the initiative to shift around:

*"I started getting used to all the schools around there and then I started going to different schools ...just to get the acknowledgement ... it was my idea ... I just got bored."*

### **Presentation as 'outlaw'**

A different, second sort of justification was put forward by a small group of young men who had no redemption story to tell, no means of mitigating their often sustained and serious criminal or 'deviant' behaviour with deeds — be they heroic or comedic — to command admiration. They instead presented themselves as some sort of outlaw, someone who disdained authority rather than coveted fame.

Conrad had such a story to tell. He had moved so often, had met "so many people" he could not recall or reconstruct his history of schooling or living arrangements. He had been expelled from school so often he had lost count. Expulsions were invariable because "I was fighting too much at school". He acknowledged "I was causing trouble I'm a bit of a trouble maker". But then he added significantly "**they** said. Yeah

(laugh)". He went on to explain the rules of school attendance were not his. The rules he broke were not his rules; he had preferred to have fun down at the river with his 'mates'. Conrad laughed at "their" rules and had no intention of towing the line.

Brian had experienced a highly peripatetic childhood with his father and some of his siblings in a large metropolitan city. He changed schools too often to recall and then "oh I got into trouble" so serious it warranted a court order returning him to a rural area and his mother's care, an arrangement which was holding up tenuously. Brian did not accept that his trouble was really serious. When asked what he was doing 'wrong' Brian said he did mere "little stuff": he was "smart" to the teachers, got up to "mischief". When pushed, Steve conceded that his behaviour was a "little bit aggressive" but equally, he saw no reason to change. He was indifferent to the authority of school.

Allan's childhood was extremely itinerant; he shifted "everywhere" and attended "lots of different schools, too many schools, too many schools" but he rejected that he had found this traumatising; rather he learned to take it in his stride: "told to go to school. Yeah. I went to school. Make a few mates, next minute. Moving. Go to next school. Yeah". Allan then revealed he had been in trouble with the law so serious as to be under curfew "for ages ... have to be in 7 o'clock". When asked why, he declared the cause was mere "mischief I think". Then he adds "to **their** eyes ... I don't even like their rules ... Don't even like their rules". Allan then went on to attack authority figures. He was apparently cynical about everyone including or perhaps especially the police. Policing traffic was merely "for an advantage":

*"They just go and pull up anyone they see. Like it's fun ... at the end of it the family's moving for a bit of money ... probably trying to come from the coast trying to get food for their family a feed and trying to go home and they get caught... their family's starving".*

Allan placed residential movement in a new social world. Rather than being any sort of deviance, moving was a survival strategy of the poor and dispossessed. Allan has through this argument thoroughly recast himself as an outlaw, someone actively opposed to authority.

## **6. Making the best of movement**

Frequent residential mobility is often one of the risk factors or compounding factors associated with adverse outcomes for young people in regard to health, educational achievement, difficult behaviour and substance abuse and subsequent social exclusion.<sup>18</sup> As such it is part of a set of factors leading to youth 'inactivity' or disengagement with education, employment or training.<sup>19</sup> In New Zealand, as elsewhere, there is increasing concern that young people should make a successful transition from school to further education or employment.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Scott, Haynie et al. (2005); Gilbert (2005), Auckland Youth Support Network (2006); DeWit et al. (1998); Cole, Robinson et al. (2006).

<sup>19</sup> MacLaren (2003).

<sup>20</sup> MacLaren (2003); Scottish Executive (2006); Dwyer et al. (2003).

However, not all residential mobility leads to adverse outcomes, but the reasons for this are but partly understood.<sup>21</sup> While it is well recognised that there are different drivers of mobility, the mechanisms that protect frequent movers against exclusion, or lead them to reengage with school, training or employment are less well understood. Researchers have recognised that establishing an array of risk factors may do little more than reduce explanation to a “multi-factorial soup”<sup>22</sup> and they have sought to avoid this by calling for more understanding of developmental pathways at an individual level.<sup>23</sup> There have been limited New Zealand studies of residential mobility in this way and there are theoretical difficulties with it. The metaphor of ‘pathways’ suggests a focus on individual development and cognition and risks underplaying the power of structural constraints. Nor does the idea of ‘pathways’ explain mismatches that have been found between young peoples’ understandings and ‘objective’ reality. Nor are the decisions young people make ‘rational’ in the sense that they align with predictions from rational economic or labour market models.<sup>24</sup>

Such paradoxical findings have emerged from the Building Attachment research programme. Morrison and Loeber (2005) conducted a study into the expectations of teenagers near the end of their schooling in Kawerau and Porirua, which included two of the case study communities.<sup>25</sup> Contrary to predictions from the literature, students in the small mill town of Kawerau did not exhibit lower expectations, but “paradoxically their aspirations are noticeably more positive than their metropolitan counterparts in Porirua”. This paradox is largely resolved by the economics literature through the theory of “returns to investment in further education to show how local unemployment levels raise the probability that youth will choose further schooling over searching for employment”.<sup>26</sup> Our focus on the social networks of young people provided an empirical rather than a purely theoretical basis for understanding such “paradoxical” patterns. Our research builds on this observation, suggesting that not only rational consideration about education and employment, but also and perhaps more importantly, social networks are key drivers of movement decisions.

We do this by focusing on those young people we were able to interview twice and so compare expectations and realities over a 12–18 month period. The framework of our analysis is drawn from Bourdieu’s (1985) insights into the importance of what he calls ‘social capital’ defined as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition”. This recognises the importance of social structure in its recognition of the existence of “durable” networks of “more or less institutionalized relationships”. It recognizes human agency — deliberation and strategising — in its acknowledgement of the importance of “acquaintance and recognition”: individuals use and do what they can with the resources they know about. From the researcher’s view such perceptions may be wrong, partial, confused or self-

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<sup>21</sup> Dong, Anda et al. (2005).

<sup>22</sup> Rutter (1994).

<sup>23</sup> Higgins (2002); Higgins (2003); MacLaren (2003).

<sup>24</sup> Cole, Robinson et al. (2006); Higgins and Nairn (2006); Morrison and Loeber (2005).

<sup>25</sup> Students from two colleges took part in the study. Kawerau College is in the Kawerau case study area. Mana College is not in the Cannons Creek/Waitangirua case study area, although it is a school of choice for some students from that area.

<sup>26</sup> Morrison and Loeber (2005:65, 79).

defeating,<sup>27</sup> but they are nevertheless what individuals perceive they have to work and strategise with.

For young people in our cohort study, networks derived largely from family and school. Peer groups (such as sports groups or gangs) did not appear to be important if they were independent of family and school social formations. We found that family social capital, or resources accessed through family social connections or with family support endowed young people with different (and unequal) formations of actual or potential resources to make the best of the physical and vocational transitions they faced. When families were absent, or had very limited social capital, schools could provide the key resources necessary to compensate.

### ***Strategic use and creation of social capital by families***

At the time of the first in-depth interviews, ten young people were clearly in a position to use the resources available to them through their networks of family and school.

Some families had deliberately used schooling as a mechanism to create and maintain social connections and cultivate the personal attitudes, expectations and knowledge to enhance their children's access to the means of educational, social and material betterment. This was the case in families who had sent children to boarding school, typically at the end of local primary school. Their removal from home had been without trauma. As Max said, it had been "mum's idea", but "I knew I was always going to ...". Max agreed that when he went boarding "I didn't know anyone" although "I think that was a good thing because it forced me to make friends instead of clinging to people". The end result was that he had a nationwide network of friends from families like his own.

It was similar for the girls sent to boarding school. Natalie left for boarding school at 12 and since had returned home only for holidays. This had had no adverse impact. She had relished school social life — "rowing, netball, rugby and hockey" and all her primary friendships were formed there through shared accommodation, self-catering, and social life. Home had become a mere backdrop to school and schoolmates: "Yeah I loved boarding school".

The effect of boarding school was to dislocate individuals from local peers and attach them to fellow boarders in similar family circumstances. Boarding school shaped up expectations and competencies for further education. Those who were at the end of boarding school when we first interviewed them were all confident about their next steps: relocation for tertiary education and training for a career. These expectations were met and when we next interviewed them they were living more or less as they had expected.

The families of a second group of young people — often from business or white collar occupations — had not formally planned to utilise school in such a strategic way but they helped their children exploit any resources that came their way through school. Typically, the young people were conscientious pupils and while they were at school,

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<sup>27</sup> Higgins and Nairn (2006).

family remained the main context for living and the main source of accessing networks that might bring occupational or educational advancement.

For instance Bianca, who was a conscientious pupil, if not excited by school life, enthused about her family closeness. She lived with “Everyone! Mum and Dad and a brother ... my sister just lives up the road from us ... and her husband”. Another sister lived in the nearest town and social life consisted primarily of visiting: “mainly in the weekends Yep. We go down every Sunday ... At times they come up on Friday and stay till Sunday”. For Maurice, family was the main domain of life. His hobbies were actively encouraged and shared with parents and his siblings and their partners provided prospects for future employment.

Some families had even enabled and sanctioned their children’s sexual life. Cath was permitted to have her boyfriend stay overnight regularly. While still at school Diana who was also the Head Girl of her school, moved in with her boyfriend, once her parents had given their imprimatur to the young man: “they didn’t mind. Cos they really like him.... They wouldn’t have let me with do that with any of my other ones though... They wouldn’t have let me with any of my other boyfriends.” Sexual activity had apparently not been a matter of rebellion.

When first interviewed these young people had intentions of making their way in the world of employment, and often had an end in view which might be specific — a wedding organiser, a pilot, a children’s nanny — but the route and even the reality of the goal might remain to be figured out. When interviewed a second time, their general intentions of self-betterment remained but there might have been hitches or second thoughts. In the event health prevented Andrew from pursuing a career in aviation for instance. A stint as a nanny had impressed Bianca with the need for formal qualifications before more such work and Diana was less convinced that secretarial work was an interesting enough first step to becoming an events’ organiser. She was planning other routes to her chosen career with family help. In such cases family often provided resources to fall back on: Maurice went as a trainee manager into a brother-in-law’s firm and Bianca’s mother searched the internet with her daughter to find training possibilities and helped make them realisable in practice.

Sometimes families misdirected children, although continued to be supportive. Cath’s parents had insisted initially on her training as an audiologist because it was lucrative and they were initially strongly disapproving when she withdrew from that course and chose a less obviously vocational education through another university. The family was by then accepting.

Providing support was similar for families like those of Patricia and Rachel who had moved a great deal but always as a family unit. When first interviewed, Rachel intended to use the family’s church networks and travel overseas. In the event, illness delayed her from doing so, but her intentions remained the same when next interviewed. Patricia had been financed into business by the family when she first left school, but when the family shifted again, she was supported to follow further education to become a personal trainer in a gym.

In our study, these sorts of families either deliberately strategised to provide their children with advantageous social and educational networks or if they lacked that

considered and informed strategising, they nevertheless supported their children to pursue careers and did all they could to make aspirations practical realities.

### ***Serendipity and the creation of social capital by young people***

Young people from families with few helpful vocational connections knew only fragments of future possibilities. Their perspectives were in large part limited to family precedent because schooling was intermittent and interrupted, allowing little opportunity to provide a systematic view of any wider horizons.

For such young people, the precedents of parents, siblings and other relatives were models for their own futures. Thus Lindsay pondered on work in local warehouses like her uncle and aunts, Zoe planned work in the local KFC which she knew well from personal patronage, Winifred hoped to train as a hairdresser like her sister, Ernest wanted to “go to war” and continue the family’s military tradition, while Conrad wanted to go fishing like his cousins.

We did not attempt to explore any illegal or criminal connections of families and so we cannot judge whether such precedents were powerful. However, there is circumstantial evidence that they are important: one young man was in gaol by the time of second contact and another in hiding from the police. Both had mounted ‘outlaw’ explanations for their histories of residential movement.

Among those young people we interviewed twice, five had histories of very high levels of residential movement, which they acknowledged as in some way problematic. When first interviewed none of these five had a clear vision of how they would proceed after formal schooling ended and when interviewed a second time, all five were living in circumstances they had not anticipated at first interview. At that first interview these young people either had little plan for the future or plans that were unrealistically grand<sup>28</sup>. Over the period between interviews, the families of these five young people did not play a strategic or particularly helpful role for their children; they had not brokered or mentored their further education or employment opportunities, their social, emotional or sexual life. Rather the key figures for these young people were non-family mentors, sponsors or gatekeepers. Schools were most often, but not invariably pivotal.

For instance, the sisters Teresa and Shirley acknowledged when first interviewed that the family had at best provided salutary examples of what to **avoid**:

*We learned from their mistakes ... my brother ... lived a real tough life. Only because he chose to live it like that. My other brothers they struggled over the years. Now they’ve pulled through ... we realised that we don’t want to live like that. We’ve learned from their mistakes ... getting kicked out of school, getting into drugs alcohol and we thought that looked yuck. So didn’t wanna go there.*

Their older siblings had set precedents for law-breaking on many fronts and as the sisters exclaimed, the unexpectedness of their own transformation from an expected path to reality surprised even themselves. Their example demonstrates that school or

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<sup>28</sup> Morrison and Loeber (2005:77) also found that students in both Kawerau and Mana colleges tended to be unrealistic in their occupational expectations.

training establishments could provide mentors, networks and resources for new and enhanced 'social capital' of individuals. The pivotal event for these two young women was a particular staff member who kindled their enthusiasm for education for the first time since she mobilised it around their existing interest in children. This led to ambitions to train as nannies so that when next interviewed "well, both of us are quite surprised ... we're actually doing stuff". They had hitherto seen nothing beyond what the family offered: "if you'd seen when we were kind of third formers we're like nah I'm gonna stay at home with dad and that was that". They acknowledged that their constant movement had been a problem "then yep cos we moved we moved around quite a lot", but fortuitously perhaps they were finally placed in a course and "when we got to our place — our placement ... oh this lady [teacher]. Damn good lady she is. She was the one who made us determined to do something ... she helped us do our work when we needed the help". They now had an understanding of the 'invisibles' that have to go into successful study: "You have to put the effort in. Yep yep. Yep. You have to stay in one place and put the effort in." By the time of the second interview Teresa and Shirley had again moved, but this time with a focus. They were in the process of completing training and were progressing plans that were detailed, practical and ambitious beyond their concepts a year earlier.

For Lindsay school had been a stabilising force. At the time of first interview she was living somewhat fractiously with her mother. During the following year she was ejected from that household and moved among other family members, but always with school attendance in mind. This meant she never went out of walking distance of her mother's household and had even evolved a harmonious routine of visiting for meals. Her plans for the future were still modelled on the precedents of family in local employment as sorters and drivers in local warehouses but she did now expect to complete schooling whereas at the first interview she had confessed to truancy with family connivance.

School had been even more obviously an active agent for stabilising and maintaining Graham. The restorative justice systems of the school had deflected him from "the wrong crowd" and given him kapahaka ambitions when he was first interviewed. But his grand visions of fame through kapahaka had not materialised. The family unit had broken down and a school liaison officer had stepped in personally to offer support and accommodation. At his second interview Graham was engaged to one of the liaison officer's daughters and teaching kapahaka with other teaching prospects in view.

Another example shows the possibilities that with support, young people were capable of initiative to change. Ernest when first interviewed seemed to be at risk from all the different dislocations in his life. His shifting, his experience of bullying, his trouble with the law and his interest in violence and guns did not seem to hold much promise of accessing advantageous networks or resources. However, placed in a special custodial programme with a strong educational component, Ernest was won round to a different attitude. He spoke of how formerly "I couldn't stand much of school waste of bloody time", so "I thought to myself if I'm gonna get off if I'm gonna leave school I'm gonna get me a job". He searched out a job and a boss who became a mentor and agent for change. When interviewed for the second time Ernest was spending three days a week preparing food in a café and two days in school studying. Ernest attributed this all to his new boss:

*Oh well he was my teacher oh well not a teacher as a teacher. He was teaching me getting me ready. He hooked me up with trade training ... now I'm doing my unit standards. They're for the army ...he's done everything ... I do my unit standards ... and keep a job down and everything.*

## **7. Conclusions**

The diverse patterns observed, particularly in Britain, of young people leaving and then returning to their parental home, of young people remaining at home with parents for longer, and of young people starting their own families while remaining within the household of their own parents or other close relatives, were apparent among the young people we talked to. The young people had various experiences of movement. For some it was unpredictable, circular and complex. It started in childhood and was associated with family disruption, rather than being a planned process. For others, movement was more or less planned, often with family help, voluntary and predictable.

An overwhelming impression is of frequent movement for young people, often unplanned and unpredicted. Many of the 94 in the youth panel and the 34 young people who participated in the in-depth interviews have experienced considerable movement. These findings echo New Zealand census data, which shows that, of all age groups, young people tend to move most often. Through the youth panel and cohort interviews, this research provides context to those statistics, showing that moving is commonplace for young people. Our panel data also suggest that residential movement among young people is at least as high as revealed by census data. Shifting was a routine part of growing up for the majority of the youth panel; over two thirds had moved by the time they were 16. Three quarters of the youth panel moved between 2001 and 2006. From 2004–2006 just over half of the youth panel moved. By the completion of interviews in 2006, one third of the young people were living outside of any of the case study areas. Furthermore, over one third of the youth panel who participated in two or more interviews had experienced change in the composition of their household over the three years, either because of their own or others' residential movement. Those who had never moved were a minority.

The reasons the young people put forward for their movement often emphasised how usual and expected it is in their lives. The main reasons put forward for their movement was for work and lifestyle, although a combination of reasons was usually given, with education and family-related reasons also prominent. Even though most averred they liked the area in which they lived, expressed familiarity with the place and detailed their connections (particularly with friends and family), these factors did not pre-empt movement. Movement away was clearly part of their perceptions of self and their aspirations, although desire for movement did not necessarily negate feelings of attachment to their home areas. Even though they did not know exactly when they would move or where they would go, almost all were looking to leave.

Even if movement is experienced and perceived as expected and commonplace, both the panel and the cohort interviews included those who acknowledged that their track records of very high levels of residential movement were notable and potentially

stigmatising. Although movement is often caused by family movement, this is not always the case. There are young people who move independently of family, or who move between family members. For some, residential movement is inevitably a disruption; it has meant disruption to schooling, friendship networks and even family connections. This study contributes to understanding the ways young people make sense of these different types of movement, and how important or inconsequential movement is in their lives. How they deal with movement has been the focus of this study.

### ***Movement and identity***

A major focus has been to explore the impact that residential history has in an account of one's self or identity. In the cohort study it is notable that young men provided such accounts in systematically different ways to young women. We have drawn upon this to examine not only how young men and women account differently for past 'discreditable' transience, but how they achieve different actions in doing so. This opens new angles on how to understand the mechanism of gender. It has long been recognised that gender is of persisting importance in the shaping of identities.<sup>29</sup>

In the cohort study, young people when confronted with the need to explain frequent residential movement, did provide an account for it. The role of family in this account is pivotal. When movement has been with family, or instigated by family as part of a plan, frequent residential movement is for 'good' reasons and dismissed as a problem and indeed may be represented as good in itself.

When frequent residential movement could *not* be accounted for in these terms and might potentially be seen as for 'bad' reasons, our examination shows that while both young men and young women sought to pre-empt attributions of stigma on the basis of their track records of residential movement, their techniques of doing so were different.

Among the young men, two very different approaches to presenting their identity were seen. Some young men presented their movement as unproblematic and as managing it as ordinary persons would. However, other young men lionised themselves as exceptional or 'extra-ordinary' in some way, and made past frequent residential movement an element subsidiary to this. Young men were more ready to acknowledge such movement as 'not-ordinary' and indeed for 'bad' reasons and associated with deviancy in some form. But they then made themselves into an heroic figure in this context. They pre-empted any pejorative judgement by arguing that they had either redeemed and discovered themselves as 'extra-ordinary' or that they rejected the premise of 'bad' movement along with the other judgements of society. They then became a sort of heroic outlaw and explicitly or covertly mounted counter-criticism.

The young women normalised themselves and tended to explain their movement as normal since it was contained within the context of the strength and importance of family life. They pre-empted any stigma or implication that there was anything specifically 'not-ordinary' to be found by reference back to family. In this case, the fact that movement was across extended family networks rather than with a tight nuclear unit, was the basis of normalcy.

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<sup>29</sup> Wyn and Harris (2004:281).

It does therefore seem that frequent or traumatic residential mobility can be a problematic feature in a sense of identity or presentation of self. Its impact however is not a forgone conclusion. Considerable mobility can still be presented as unproblematic like the young men who described shifting around, even after divisions of family or against their wishes, as ‘doing ordinary’ and without impacting on them as ‘ordinary persons’. However, when residential mobility is so frequent, or so traumatic in impact that it cannot be glossed as an ordinary event, it is a problematic feature of self. In the circumstances of this study, if residential mobility was a problematic feature in this way, it was rapidly recuperated and incorporated as a predicate feature of a self, ‘extraordinary’ in some way. While the circumstances of an interview are different to those of everyday, routine encounters, there is little doubt that frequent movers are required to offer accounts of themselves as newcomers, and it is likely that these routine explanations call upon the same explanatory devices as were offered to us.

Specifically in our data it can be seen that the male accounts valorising the speaker were in some sense competitive while female strategies of normalising can be seen as insistently co-operative. In contrast to the young men who accounted for their past residential movement through a valorising ‘politics of the self’, the young women gave accounts in which they ‘normalised’ their selves through a ‘politics of family’. A family framework not only provided ‘real’ stability to apparently chaotic movement, but explained this movement in normal terms: everybody has a family and family connectedness is normal and benign. In depicting their lives as lived across a lattice of a family connection, they gave coherence and normalcy to what might otherwise appear chaotic and abnormal.

These findings raise further questions. It is not clear from our study how these identity devices and strategies described above survive the exigencies of material and social reality of adulthood. We have little understanding of the systematic effects of these different strategies. Since there is evidence that childhood movement predicts adult movement,<sup>30</sup> is one strategy of accounting for ‘self’ likely to be more resilient in the longer term? What different responses are provoked by these different strategies? What are their larger social effects? Attending to the social actions of the accounting work done in depicting self identity may be a tool to answering these and other such questions. We may thus make clearer the generative machineries of gender as young people (re)make themselves and their social structures.

It is tempting to argue from these apparent ‘understandings’ to social structure: do different sorts of understandings make for different social outcomes for very frequent movers? Are young women better equipped for emerging without long term problems from histories of very frequent residential movement? These larger questions cannot be answered from within our study. However we did also examine what social factors apart from personal understandings operate in making the best of residential movement. We examined this in terms of personal social networks.

### ***Making the best of movement***

Our second focus has been the importance of social networks in using the advantages of residential movement, or mitigating negative effects of movement, in

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<sup>30</sup> Myers (1999); Richardson and Corbishley (1999).

order to access and enhance social capital. Individuals' social networks are their immediate and relevant perceived social structure. Bourdieu envisaged his concept of social capital as a mechanism in the reproduction of inequality. Our cohort study shows how such inequality operates at both micro and macro levels. The highly mobile group of young people we studied fell into one of two groups: those who were able to use residential movement advantageously and those for whom movement was intertwined with other issues that impinged on their access to social capital.

Each young person in the cohort study made the best they could of the residential movement they had experienced. It was after all the only reality they had known in their relatively short lives as children and adolescents. To them it was 'normal' in that it was all they knew. This is not to deny that some of the young people we talked to had a broader vision than others of how movement could be a mechanism to enhance future prospects. But in large part this was due to the knowledge, social and financial assets of their families.

On the one hand there were those whose families were highly conscious and strategic about their social capital and who imbued their offspring with the dispositions and habits to exploit what was available. These young people were therefore able to realistically and advantageously position themselves to access educational and employment structures. Such families used residential movement as a part of that process in strategies like boarding school, residence with kin to permit education outside the home area, or researching training opportunities both in New Zealand and overseas. Parents who had the wherewithal to send children to boarding school endowed these children with a set of connections and an overview of future possibilities that made it highly likely that they would proceed to tertiary education and acquire either professional or trade skills. These young people had a strong sense of future career and business options, were well aware of the range of possibilities open to them, and were actively engaged in selecting which of the possibilities they would pursue. In this sense their world is linear. Families who are highly entrepreneurial will actively help children seek out professional paths.

Other families were not in this way strategic exploiters of their social capital. Some families had very limited social capital or provided access to resources that distracted from education, training and employment. Among these families residential movement was seldom strategic and often little more than chaotic. Their offspring were much more dependent on serendipitous engagement with a gatekeeper who could and would provide the social capital to enhance and broker access to education, training and ultimately material betterment. Most of the brokers or gatekeepers were encountered in the context of schooling.

It is not a new insight that schools can provide a context for disadvantaged young people to catch up with peers who have more resources of social capital.<sup>31</sup> But schooling does not necessarily do this; families do matter. New Zealand research has shown that families may have expectations that their children will succeed at school, but lack the social capital needed to provide their offspring with the context and personal attributes needed to exploit schooling strategically.<sup>32</sup> Families may have social capital that disengages their offspring from school or provides the resources for

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<sup>31</sup> Jones (1991).

<sup>32</sup> Nash (1999); Nash (2000); Nash (2002).

engagement with alternatives like gangs or criminal networks. Or parents may simply disengage with their children and endow little social capital at all.<sup>33</sup> Such problems have been well recognised by government agencies in New Zealand. Indeed, it is a stated aim of the government to equip individuals with the personal skills and connections to make a transition from school to employment, training or further education.<sup>34</sup> This study therefore provides some insights into the dynamics and pathways into employment, training and further education.

Our analysis shows that families can be highly aware and strategic in creating and utilising their social capital: their young people made well-informed choices about where to go and how to achieve their aims. But they not only went from school to employment, training or further education, they went to such institutions as would advantage their long term access to economic capital as professional or highly skilled workers. In contrast, young people whose families did not have this conscious and strategic view of their social capital were handicapped in ways they could not even recognise. But even those who had been highly transient, thoroughly disengaged from their family, whose family was fractured or involved in criminal networks, could be given the social capital to overcome this handicap. It seems that in the natural experiment of real life, one-to-one engagement with a mentor is not only a powerful mechanism for those who are mentored; it is also one that that they consider causal.

Although this study presents information on a small number of New Zealand's young people, it opens up a window on their lives and hints at how they respond to social changes. These young people are diverse in their ethnicities, in their social positions and in the places in which they live. Yet they are all shaped by their movement histories, and their experiences of school and family. It is with the resources accessed and envisaged through these that individuals cogitate and strategise. For the young people in our study, family and school were the two formations of social networks available; through these the future is made 'thinkable' and what is aspired to is made practicable. Individuals had of course still to exercise discretion and initiative, but, regardless of how frequently they moved, those with strong and strategically minded families were far more richly endowed with possibilities than those with no such family. In these cases, in our study, schools could then be crucial since they could be gatekeepers and motivators of individuals for successful vocational futures, despite frequent, problematic or socially dislocating histories of residential movement.

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<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2006).

<sup>34</sup> Clark, Ramasamy et al. (2006); Family Child Youth and Community Unit (2005).

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## **Annex 1: Method**

### ***The cohort study***

To explore the issues of residential movement and attachment to communities in detail, a qualitative longitudinal study of a cohort making the transition from school was undertaken. Participants were 34 young people purposively chosen by local community contacts as notable for their past high residential movement. Contacts were made with young people through schools and training providers, local social service providers, churches and young people's networks. Thirty-two of the 34 young people who were selected for interviews about their residential movement had not participated in the panel interviews.

Participants were between 16 and 18 years old, in or near their final year of schooling at the time of first interview in 2004. At this point the cohort consisted of 16 young men and 18 young women. The fallout rate was considerable by the time of the second interview about a year later; five young men and ten young women were able to be contacted a second time in 2005–2006. Given their past mobility, and that childhood mobility is highly correlated with adult mobility<sup>35</sup> this was predictable in retrospect. Of those who were lost to the study three did not show or declined a follow-up interview, three were not able to be traced and the others were traceable but not able to be contacted either because they were inaccessible (e.g. at sea, in custody or had shifted overseas) or because contact would have breached a privacy request. Between the two interviews the large majority had moved, some more than once. Of the original 34, 28 had changed address in the same area and 24 had moved away from their area. As is evident from the discussion below on panel data this is a notably high level of movement for individuals of this age.

Each young person was interviewed about a range of topics concerning themselves, their community and their plans for the future, with the overall aim of exploring the impact of residential movement on them. Interviews focused on past movement, current behaviours in and out of school, and future intentions. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed and confidentiality has been protected by use of pseudonyms for all personal names. Furthermore, because of the small number of young people involved, family details are sometimes changed and past or present residential location is not specified.

### ***Youth panel***

Three panel interviews were undertaken annually across the four communities between 2004–2007 to provide information about the dynamics of residential movement at both the household and individual levels.

In each case study area all individuals 16 years of age and older who lived in the selected households were interviewed. From that data, a youth panel was constructed by extracting data on 94 young people aged between 16 and 24 years. This was just over one fifth of all individuals interviewed in the panels (22 percent). To be counted in the youth panel, interviewees were 24 years or younger at the time of the last interview.

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<sup>35</sup> Myers (1999); Richardson and Corbishley (1999).

The age range 16–24 was chosen as this encompasses many of the significant milestones and stages (social, developmental and legal) that young people experience. In New Zealand there is no specific age that separates children from youth, instead there are a variety of ages that define the rights and responsibilities of children and young people in New Zealand.<sup>36</sup>

The 94 youth panel participants consisted of 48 from Cannons Creek/Waitangirua, 22 from Kawerau, 21 from Opotiki and three from Amuri. At the end of three years of panel interviews, the 94 young people had been interviewed at least once. Fifty-one were interviewed in 2004, 62 in 2005 and 73 in 2006.<sup>37</sup>

Not everyone participated in the panel for three years. Some moved out of a panel household<sup>38</sup> and were not able to be contacted for further interviews. The young people's movement affected the retention of people in the panel; 11 moved after their first or second interview and their whereabouts could not be traced.

Some moved into a panel household in the second or third panel round and then became part of the panel, hence only one or two interviews were done with them. Similarly, anyone who was already living in the panel households and turned 16 in 2005 or 2006 was picked up in round 2 or 3. At the end of the third round of interviews, 38 young people had been interviewed three times, 25 were interviewed twice and 31 were interviewed once.

Panel data was collected on each participant's past and intended movement, reasons for that movement, their experiences of living in their communities, their attachment to those communities, the households in which they lived and demographic details.

### ***Other data sources***

The cohort study and panel data were supplemented with information gathered from interviews with locally based social service providers in the four case study areas.

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<sup>36</sup> James (2007).

<sup>37</sup> One young person died and is only included in discussion of 2004 data.

<sup>38</sup> The panel households were those selected in 2004 to be part of the panels in each case study area.