



Manaaki Tāngata
Victim Support

Our mahi
Our heart
Our difference

“

***Just knowing it's
there 24 hours makes
a huge difference to
somebody's life.***

(Family harm client)





24/7
365
days of the year

Making a difference for more than 35 years

Founded in Gisborne in 1986, Victim Support is an independent incorporated society and the major nationwide provider of support services for people affected by crime, trauma, and suicide in Aotearoa.



“

After Victim Support, I felt like I could walk outside my front doors again, out of my house and face the world again.... Feels like people don't know how good Victim Support can be, how much benefit having somebody who listens and cares.

(Family harm client)

Victim Support operates **24/7, 365 days a year**, reaching all of Aotearoa – from urban centres to rural communities. This accessibility is critical to respond to crisis and meet victims' needs: crime and trauma can happen to anyone, any time, anywhere.

Today, we support more than **46,000 clients a year**, and have around **600 staff and volunteers**. We have close collaborations with government agencies including Police, Justice, Te Puna Aonui, Health, Corrections, Social Development, Oranga Tamariki, MBIE and Worksafe, as well as hundreds of other national and local agencies that enhance our service and help connect victims to the support they need.

We've come a long way, but at its heart Victim Support remains a vital community response that connects people to the support they need, for as long as they need it.



46,000+
clients supported
in 2021/22



Our kaupapa

Victims of crime, trauma, and suicide may face long-lasting physical, psychological, emotional, social, and financial consequences. Whānau and friends often don't know how to support victims, and they may even be blamed by society.

We know that only 25% of New Zealanders report crime,¹ and for those who do, few have faith in the justice system and many find it revictimising.² A New Zealand study found that what victims needed most in their quest for justice was support.³

Victim Support fills this gap by meeting victims' needs for emotional and practical support, information, financial assistance, and advocacy – even if they don't report the offence. We understand victims' needs within the justice system and wherever they are on their journey.

Victim Support's mission is to support and empower victims to be safe, heal, and participate at every step of their journey.

¹ Ministry of Justice (2022). *New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey. Key findings. Descriptive statistics. June 2022. Results drawn from Cycle 4 (2020/21) and pooled data of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey.* Wellington: Ministry of Justice. <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/Cycle-4-Core-Report-v0.20-20220628.pdf>

² Victim Support (2019). *Victims' voices: The justice needs and experiences of New Zealand serious crime victims.* https://victimsupport.org.nz/sites/default/files/2020-11/VS-Victims-Voices-Research-Report-Aug-2019_WEB-PRINT.pdf

³ *Ibid*

Our values

Manaakitanga

Respect, generosity, and care for others to strengthen the mana of victims.

Whanaungatanga

Our relationships and our connections to each other, woven together by what we share.

Rangatiratanga

Self-determination of individuals and people and respecting their right to choose their own path.

Kotahitanga

Unity, togetherness, and collective action.

Kaitiakitanga

Guardianship and responsibility.

“

To have that continuity of support was pivotal in our family's ability to start healing.

(Homicide client)

At the end of it, I didn't feel like a victim, I felt like I had some power to do something about it finally.

(Family harm client)



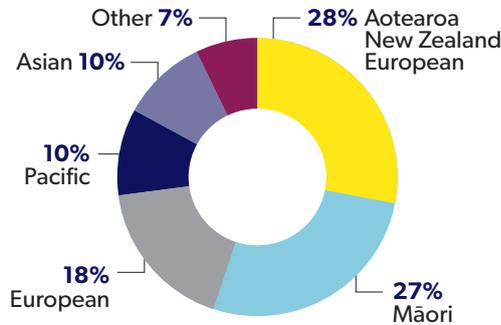
28%
increase in clients
over last 4 years

Current context

We're experiencing **growing demand for our services**, while simultaneously responding to unprecedented events during uncertain times. Despite this changing and challenging landscape, satisfaction with our service remains extremely high.

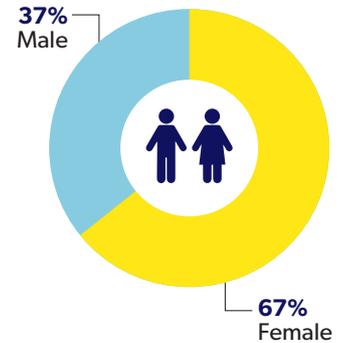
Victim Support helped **46,762 people in 2021/22**, a **28% increase** over the last four years. Our referrals have risen 45% over the last four years to 34,346 in 2021/22. Most of our referrals come from Police, following a criminal incident, although clients self-refer also.

Victims supported by ethnicity*



*Figures to June 2022. Other includes Middle East, Africa, America, Latin America & Australia. Excludes unknown.

Gender breakdown**



**Non-binary/other <1%

In 2021/22 we supported***



18,599	Family violence & harm
6,246	Harassment & intimidation
5,408	Sudden death
5,404	Serious assault
5,055	Burglary & theft
3,732	Road injuries and deaths
3,567	After a suicide
2,775	Following a homicide
1,816	Sexual violence
895	Aggravated robbery
173	Christchurch terror attacks
86	Natural disaster

***Figures for individual categories add up to more than the total number of victims supported due to some incidents being in more than one category.



As demand has grown, so too has our agility. We have deployed large-scale support at short notice in response to significant natural disasters, including the Whakaari/White Island eruption, and the unprecedented terror attack in Christchurch. We are still supporting clients from each of these events today.

The arrival of Covid-19 meant we had to think on our feet to keep clients and support workers safe. Lockdowns and working from home compounded the stress of victimisation for our clients so we had to find new and innovative ways to ensure victims were safe and supported. Clients have told us Victim Support was one thing they could rely on during uncertain times.

We've managed to be agile while responding to our growing BAU and often increasingly complex cases. Strengthening support for victims is essential to keep pace with this changing landscape.

Quality, timely and victim-centric support can reduce the risk of ongoing harm and the impact of trauma, improve victims' participation in the justice system, and give victims the confidence to report crime.

“

Basically, if Victim Support didn't exist the journey could have been a hell of a lot worse. It was traumatic to say the least. But her guidance really helped ease that... without her I wouldn't have made it through.

(Sexual violence client)

That was all it took, was just a weekly phone call saying, 'are you okay? Is the family okay? Financially, how are you guys doing?' And financially we weren't doing very well but she delivered some food parcels, which was very helpful to us.

(Family harm client)

67%

of our frontline workers would be willing to temporarily relocate to another part of the country to support victims if there were a mass casualty event.

“

No explanation required. I would go immediately. It's what we're about.

– a Support Worker



of our clients are Māori

Our Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitment

About one quarter of our clients are Māori and we know that providing the same services in the same way may not enable equitable outcomes for Māori. Our role therefore comes with considerable responsibility to meet this need in ways that will best support and contribute to a future of prosperity for Māori envisaged by Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Our commitment to Te Iwi Māori and our resolve to advance Māori wellbeing has long been reflected in our organisation, including dedicated Māori representation on our Board and our Te Tiriti framework, *Te Whiringa*. We are privileged to have been gifted *Te Whiringa* by our late kaumātua Rawiri Wharemate. *Te Whiringa* is a traditional Māori cloak adorned with red and white feathers – the red symbolising leadership and the white symbolising purity. Victim Support now wears this cloak with a deep sense of responsibility, reminding us to lead with strength and integrity in our important kaupapa.

The four pillars of *Te Whiringa* help us ensure that responsiveness to Māori guides all parts of Victim Support activities and kaupapa.

Te Whiringa



Whanaungatanga
Fostering collaborative relationships

Rangatiratanga
Enabling self determination

Hoki ki te Ūkaipō
Embedding Māori values and culture

Ōritetanga
Facilitating equitable outcomes

Our manaaki

Manaaki tāngata means that we uplift the mana of the people of Aotearoa through support, care, and respect. We do this by symbolically using the korowai (cloak) to embrace individuals, whānau and communities with support, warmth, and care that reminds us of our sense of belonging.

We believe that our clients are the experts in their own lives. They may be struggling with the impact of crime or trauma but they each bring to the situation their own whakapapa, challenges, needs, and strengths.

The Te Whare Tapa Whā model allows us to take a holistic approach and tailor support to the diverse needs of each client and their whānau. This can range from a single contact to provide information or support, to walking alongside clients through a long and challenging court process over months or years.

Our free, around-the-clock, personalised service includes:

- **Emotional support** – someone to listen, provide validation, talk with, and provide support, with regular check-ins for as long as needed
- **Information and advocacy** – to understand their rights and make informed choices
- **Staying safe** – support to obtain Protection Orders, access safe housing, protect themselves from crime, and encouragement to report incidents to Police
- **Practical support** – including making phone calls, guidance with funerals, tangihanga, and the coronial process
- **Justice system navigation and support** – including all court proceedings and help preparing victim impact statements
- **Financial assistance** – administering the Victim Assistance Scheme for victims of serious crime to support their recovery and participation in the justice process
- **Referrals** – to support recovery by accessing local services and counselling.

Victim Support is also contracted to provide:

- **National Homicide Service** – dedicated caseworkers for in-depth, wrap-around support for whānau.
- **Family Harm/Violence Support** – dedicated support for people affected by family harm and violence across diverse genders, cultures, relationships and risk levels, including the Integrated Safety Response and Whāngaia Ngā Pā Harakeke initiatives.
- **Suicide Bereavement Service** – postvention support for people affected by suicide, funded by the Ministry of Health. This service supports over 3000 people annually.



Victim Support takes a holistic, whānau-centred approach using the Te Whare Tapa Whā framework of support.

“

It was her caring nature that came across. You know those people who ring up for surveys and it's just like tick the box? But she was very, very genuine.

(Family harm client)

Court is intimidating. My support worker helped with the process.... The court process was all new to me and I had so many questions and the help I got was great.

(Sexual violence client)



“

When they come across as ‘officialdom’, it puts you on the back foot. She chatted away with me like an old friend, not like an official.

(Family harm client)

Our people, our heart

Our team of highly skilled and passionate staff and community volunteers are ordinary people who make an extraordinary difference. Of our 600-strong team, two-thirds are volunteers. This mixed model enables us to respond 24/7, nationwide, and provides immense value to funders.

Being from the local community, our Support Workers respond quickly and effectively to the needs of victims and provide access to wider local networks. Research tells us that services like Victim Support may help restore victims’ faith in society and show that the community cares through rebuilding trust and fostering human connectedness.⁴ In this way, we combine the dual benefits of a community response with the strength of a national organisation.

Included in the Victim Support frontline workforce are both general and specialist workers (including homicide, suicide, and family harm/violence). Behind the scenes we have staff providing case management, debriefing, ongoing training, and volunteer recruitment. Our Service Coordinators are based in police stations around the country and have a trusted relationship with local police and are a gateway to community organisations.

We deliver with heart



4 Gallo, C., of Sandeberg, A., and Svensson, K. (2018). Victim support, the state, and fellow human beings. *International Review of Victimology*, 25, (1), 91-106.

We also operate a 24/7 Contact Service – a primary point of access to support, which received more than 82,000 calls in 2021/22. Our Contact Service manages the Victims of Crime Information Line on behalf of the Ministry of Justice and is based in our National Office in the Police National Headquarters in Wellington.



82,000+
Contact Service calls
received in 2021/22

Funding

As an independent charity, Victim Support is funded by a combination of contracts for services, fundraising efforts, and philanthropic giving. The Ministry of Justice provides baseline funding as well as contracts for additional victim services. Justice sector funding for Victim Support in 2022/23 is \$11.565 million. This excludes \$3.695 million for victim grants administered by Victim Support under the Victim Assistance Scheme (VAS).

Victim Support also receives funding from the Ministry of Health (suicide postvention) and Police (family harm/violence).



OUR SUPPORT WORKERS' VOICES:



You learn about tragedy and also the humility of people in the darkest hour of their lives.

We are all different but we all have something to give and can make a difference to somebody's life.

I love the awesome support, training, and strong community of Victim Support.



Victim Support is an organisation I truly respect. I think they're part of the reason I'm at the point where I'm at.

(Family harm client)

92%

of our clients rated the support they received as 'helpful' or 'very helpful', with emotional support rated as the most helpful.

“

She wasn't judgemental, which actually gave me some personal power back. It was sort of like, 'oh cool, there's someone on my side, someone who cares.'

(Family harm client)

Even when I said that I was fine, they still made one or two more phone calls just to make sure that I was okay. But that was what impressed me the most and actually gave me strength.

(Family harm client)

Quality and evaluation

Annual consumer evaluation

Victim Support has undertaken an independent consumer evaluation of its service annually for the last 10 years. Results show consistently high satisfaction from victims.

The 2021 evaluation showed 92% of clients 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that support provided by Victim Support was 'helpful' or 'very helpful'. 92% also reported that the service had made a positive difference in relation to one or more of six outcomes. Satisfaction with four drivers of service quality was the highest it's been since 2012. Clients consistency tell us it makes a difference having someone outside their own network, who is non-clinical yet knowledgeable, empathetic yet practical, and who understands the journey through crime and trauma.

Family harm evaluation

Evidence demonstrates a clear need to identify and support victims of 'low risk' and non-intimate partner violence (non-IPV), who may fall through the cracks. We are one of the few agencies who supports family harm/violence victims across all genders and relationship types.

A 2020 independent evaluation of Victim Support's family harm service for 'low risk' IPV and non-IPV victims in Counties Manukau found Victim Support's service was "essential, trusted and effective".

It was key to preventing both further harm (secondary prevention) and escalation in severity (early intervention) because:

- it is available 24/7, allowing for a timely response
- there are a variety of referral pathways and engagement options, including self-referral
- it is open to a wide range of victims
- support is tailored and not time-limited
- there are opportunities for re-engagement.

“

She was very instrumental in a safety plan for me and our family. If it happens again, I won't be mucking around. And that's part and parcel of her empowering me; she's given me some tools, she's given some advice, and they're there in my little tool kit ready to use when I need them.

(Family harm client)



“

In our experience, it almost felt like, ‘okay, well, here is the voice of the victims now. Tick, move on.’ It just didn’t feel genuine.

(Fatal road crash client, Victims’ Voices research)

Victim-centric research and advocacy

Victim Support draws from a strong evidence base, utilising indigenous, local and international academic research and the voices of victims to inform our practice and our advocacy. We advocate for the rights and interests of victims through evidence-based submissions on legislation and policy, consultation with stakeholders to advise on victim-centric policy, media engagement, and original research.

Our 2019 *Victims’ Voices* research with serious crime victims found 59% had no faith in the criminal justice system and 68% felt justice had not been served in their cases.⁵ This was despite the majority of participants’ cases resulting in both a guilty verdict and imprisonment. The research supported the findings of the Chief Victims’ Advisor⁶ and Te Uepū Hāpai i Te Ora⁷ showing the importance of procedural justice for victims.

Participants in the Victim Support research ranked support as the most important of their justice needs. Strengthening support for victims is one of the most critical priorities for improving our criminal justice system, helping victims heal, and eliminating further harm.

5 Victim Support (2019). *Victims’ voices: The justice needs and experiences of New Zealand serious crime victims*. https://victimsupport.org.nz/sites/default/files/2020-11/VS-Victims-Voices-Research-Report-Aug-2019_WEB-PRINT.pdf

6 Chief Victims’ Advisor (2019). *Te Tangi o te Manawanui: Recommendations for Reform*. <https://chiefvictimsadvisor.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/Te-Tangi-Final-PDF.pdf>

7 Te Uepū Hāpai i Te Ora Safe and Effective Justice Advisory Group (2019) *Turuki! Turuki!* <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/turuki-turuki.pdf>



Looking ahead

Victim Support wants to see an Aotearoa where anyone affected by crime or trauma is identified and helped to come forward to report or seek support. Victim Support is a trusted organisation with a strong whakapapa and equally strong future focus. We embrace opportunities to learn and innovate so we can meet the growing need for exceptional support that victims deserve, whether they report crime or not.

We recognise that best supporting our clients to be safe, heal and participate at every step of their journey begins with us. We began our own journey to achieve this in 2020 with the launch of our 10-year strategic plan, *Vision 2030 – Victims at the Heart*. This was informed by our own workforce, clients and stakeholders, who shared with us what we need to focus on going forward:

- capability transformation
- specialist, victim-centric services
- cultural responsiveness
- leadership and collaboration
- increased awareness, trust and confidence
- sustainable and diverse funding.

We have introduced a 3-year roadmap to implement *Vision 2030*, including:

- significant workforce wellbeing initiatives
- an ICT strategy to support the health and safety of our workforce and improve service access to clients
- enhanced victim engagement and research to inform victim-centric services
- embedding *Te Whiringa* into our activities and kaupapa.

Opportunities exist for future Victim Support innovation, including reaching more of the 75% of victims who do not report crime and enhancing the holistic 'toolbox' for victims to facilitate healing outside of the justice system.

Victim Support is proud to play its part in improving New Zealand's justice system and response to victims and, through it, the well-being of New Zealanders.



Victim Support has helped me be braver – which is a journey.

(Family harm client)

Victim Support can be a lifeline. Just that one person who cares can make a difference.

(Fatal motor vehicle accident client)

Just their ongoing willingness to be there and not to give up. Because you can't give up.

(Family harm client)