

RANGITIKEI YOUTH CHARTER

8/06/2019



Preamble-

The Youth of the Rangitikei believe in the values of transparent and open government.

We believe that young people should be spoken with, not spoken for.

Providing real solutions to real problems is crucial to establishing a productive dialogue with those who have the power to make change.

Tackling issues which our communities' young people are faced with should be done in unison with all parties involved.

Youth are the future and should be included in discussions which directly impact our futures.

To this end we propose the following measures:

Drug Use in New Zealand-

Drug abuse is a serious problem amongst the youth of New Zealand. Drug use can cause immeasurable damage to a person's life. We believe drug abuse in our communities can be aided, in part, by:

- a) Funding more government run rehabilitation centres;
- b) Local and national government providing funds which community initiatives can apply for and access;
- c) Encouraging research into medicinal and rehabilitative uses of hallucinogenic substances, including but not limited to:
 - i. Lifting restrictions of pharmaceutical ethics committees to allow adequate trial of potential medicines,
 - ii. Subsidizing the research into the anti-addictive qualities in hallucinogenic substances;
- d) Decriminalising marijuana to enable those who need help to do so without the stigma of law.

Foster Care-

Children in our foster care system have some of the least positive life outcome expectancies of any group in society. This is unacceptable as they also have some of the highest quantities of government intervention and involvement. Potential solutions to this include:

- a) Training all social workers in a multitude of fields including attachment disorders, addiction, etc. To recognise the increased education investment required to fulfil this position, pay should be increased;
- b) Prioritising outcomes which lead to continual, undisrupted, education of the children;
- c) Wrap around support for system leavers who are being 'aged' out of care;
- d) Providing foster parents with a real voice and their own support team;
- e) Increasing support for parents who might be at risk of having their children removed from them, e.g. those with addiction or mental health issues or low-level special need, such as in help, parenting classes, daily visits, etc.

Climate Change-

Carbon emissions and NZ's effect on climate change is a serious problem facing not only our community, but our country/world. This directly impacts the future of our youth. To combat this, we suggest:

- a) Take minor steps into improving transportation in New Zealand, such as developing more bike lanes, promoting sustainable transport, building more carpool lanes on freeways, etc;
- b) Investing into research and production of more sustainable forms of transport, such as hybrid cars, EV's, solar power, and more;
- c) Establishing carbon ratings on products, including imports and foods, modelled after a system such as 5-star electricity ratings, to enable consumers to make more carbon friendly decisions.

Education Reform-

Education has a profound impact on a person's life. Education shapes the lives of our youth and in turn decides our future. We believe our education system is currently not working for the betterment of our youth. We suggest improvements such as:

- a) Focusing education around learning outcomes, not purely assessment;
- b) Making life education in areas such as budgeting, healthy eating, tax payment, and more, compulsory for all year 9 and 10 students;
- c) Integrating NCEA's pre-existing legal studies course into compulsory junior social studies classes, to teach students about the functions of our government;
- d) Adopting university marking for NCEA assessment, e.g. A-F grading.

Community Focused Environmental Initiatives-

Climate change has a serious impact on the youth of New Zealand's future, yet youth voices are rarely heard when developing climate solutions. Taking part in school climate change strikes, and more, only show awareness for a certain period. These activities should be aided by ongoing community initiatives, including but not limited to:

- a) Establishing environmental committees within schools;
- b) Establishing public forums to express climate concerns;
- c) Ensuring small changes are made to schools such as providing access to more recycling bins and waste bins;
- d) Establishing 'walking days' where students are encouraged not to drive to school;
- e) Educating young people on the impacts of climate change so that those participating in climate change awareness events are educated on what they are raising awareness for;
- f) Developing a local business rewards scheme which encourages businesses to reduce their environmental impact.

Free Trade-

The youth of the Rangitikei agree that free trade is crucial to the development of the New Zealand community. We believe we should:

- a) Encourage free trade where possible;
- b) Protect the property rights of New Zealand businesses;
- c) Protect the quality of these agreements by measuring the benefits and harms which they would have to our nation;
- d) Take into account the carbon impact of increased trade between nations.