

National Report Summary

ERO publishes evaluation reports on education issues of national importance. This handout is a summary of a recent national report – it captures the key points and highlights findings that you may find useful. The full report is available on our website – www.ero.govt.nz

Teen Parent Units

What did ERO do?

Every three years, ERO reviews Teen Parent Units (TPUs) by talking to host school leaders and teachers, TPU leaders and teachers, and TPU students.

In 2017, ERO investigated the quality of education provided by 24 TPUs and the extent to which they supported positive outcomes for TPU students and their children.

Why did ERO do it?

The [Ministry of Health's latest report on maternity](#) highlights that despite New Zealand's teen pregnancy rates halving since 2008, the rate remains consistently higher for women in low socio-economic areas. Teenagers who give birth during their school years are less likely than their peers to gain qualifications that give them good employment prospects. Consequently, they are likely to have a low income, an increased dependency on welfare and the risk of subsequent poor outcomes for their children.

What did ERO find?

ERO wanted to know:

How effective are TPUs in supporting and promoting positive outcomes for students?

- what are the important features of TPUs that have an impact on student outcomes?
- how effective is the leadership, management and organisation of the TPUs?
- what do the TPUs know about outcomes for individual students?
- how well do the TPUs' processes promote and support student engagement and success?
- what is the quality of teaching and learning at the TPUs?
- how well do TPUs work with their educational and community providers to promote positive outcomes?

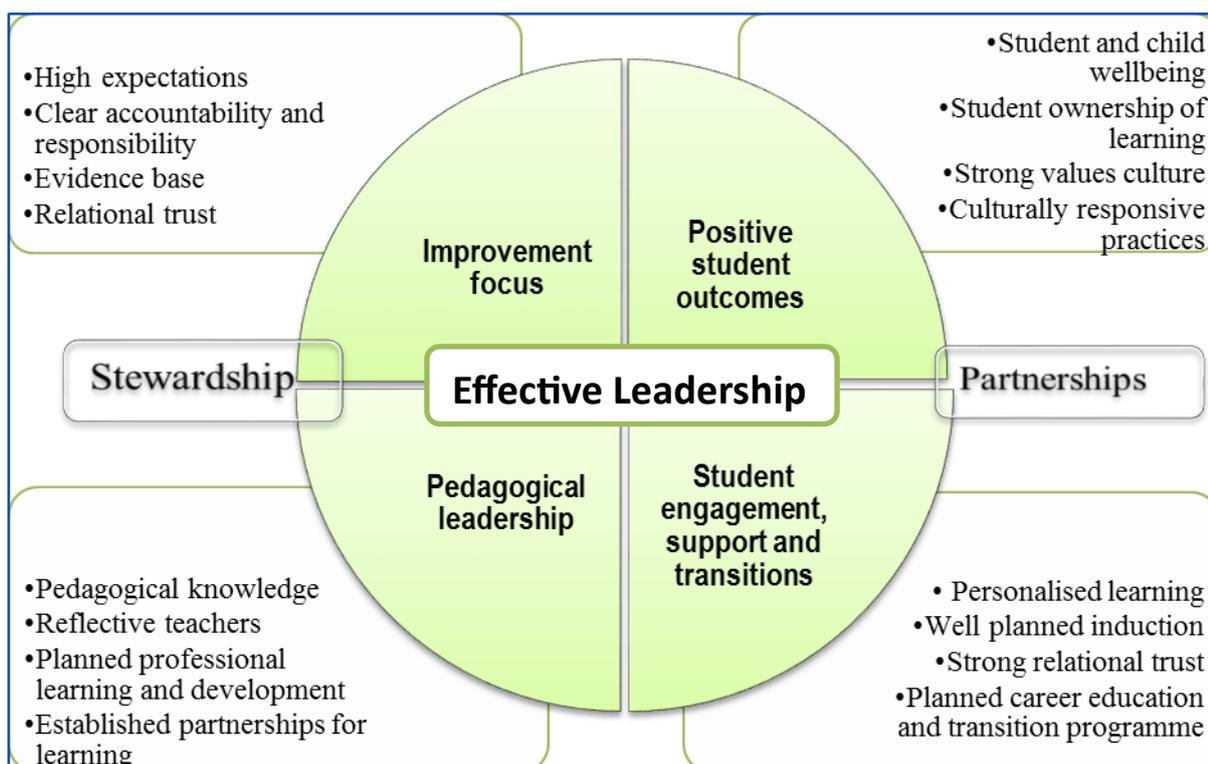
ERO found that:

- there was variability in the TPUs' performance and practices
- a key feature of the highly effective TPUs was the strong pedagogical leadership, knowledge and practices of the leaders and teachers
- students in highly effective TPUs experienced a relevant and meaningful education
- students were treated with respect, acceptance and understanding; creating warm, caring and positive learning environments
- high expectations and levels of engagement by teachers supported student to have a sense of belonging and ownership in developing their pathways
- teachers integrated career education and guidance throughout each student's educational experience, which extended personalised learning
- established partnerships with other agencies and services supported students to overcome learning barriers and seek appropriate support
- students were supported to settle their children into the early learning service before starting their learning programme at the TPU
- a number of systemic challenges remain for TPUs that require a system-level response
- all 24 TPUs struggled with regular student attendance and engagement in their learning; it was a significant challenge for the less effective TPUs
- most TPUs provided wrap-around services for the students, however they did not always review how effective they were in identifying the social, health and wellbeing gains students made over time
- some TPUs could further develop their responsiveness to Māori and Pacific students.

FIND OUT MORE

For more ideas and information, you can read the full report online at www.ero.govt.nz/publications

Key features of Effective Teen Parent Units



What does this mean?

ERO recommends that the Ministries of Education, Social Development, Oranga Tamariki, and Health:

- work together and with appropriate government agencies and community representatives to develop a national strategy addressing teen pregnancy; including a focus on improving the education, wellbeing and health of all young parents and their children
- develop cross-agency plans to better respond to the wide-ranging challenges identified by leaders and teachers working in teen parent education
- develop a set of data-collection tools to promote consistency and enable TPUs, their host schools and government agencies to effectively monitor educational, health, social and wellbeing outcomes of all students and their children.

ERO recommends that the Ministry of Education:

- work with the host schools of the five poorly performing TPUs. Some of these TPUs performed poorly in previous ERO national evaluations (2011 and 2013)
- develop guidance on the level of administration fees paid by TPUs to host schools; including a transparent process for determining the amount and use of the administration fee paid to the host school by the TPU
- actively promote the use of the Teen Parent Unit [Operational Guidelines](#) and [Outcomes Framework](#) with all TPUs and host schools to ensure shared understanding of expectations
- develop comprehensive policy guidelines for assessing the capability and capacity of schools to host future TPUs or programs to support young parents.

ERO recommends that all TPUs:

- use the findings from this report and the Ministry of Education's Teen Parent Unit [Operational Guidelines](#) and [Outcomes Framework](#) to improve their provision of education and support for students and their children's wellbeing
- continue to investigate and respond to the issues affecting student engagement in TPUs, in particular retaining those students who initially enrol but do not attend regularly and achieve positive outcomes
- ensure the breadth and depth of their curriculum provides students with a broad range of courses, activities, and opportunities in line with [The New Zealand Curriculum](#)—key priorities include the development of engaging educational activities that reflect students' strengths, interests, and learning priorities; careers and vocational opportunities; and education relevant to the students' health and wellbeing.

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