



Taking Back Our Moku Community Meeting Summary Report

Wai'anae Cares

March 26, 2024
Wai'anae High School

Introduction

On February 21st, 2024, driven by the increasing concerns on the rising violence, a group of local residents came together to discuss thoughts on potential actions that could bring hope and support to our Wai'anae Coast community. Over 35 individuals from multiple organizations, unified by a shared commitment to positive change, contributed to a very productive discussion that gave birth to the Wai'anae Cares initiative.

The group wanted to hold an event to engage the community in generating solutions to the issue of violence and other issues and factors related to it. After several meetings, the **Taking Back Our Moku** event was created and held on Prince Kūhiō Day at Wai'anae High School, from 10am to 1pm. The agenda included introduction to the Wai'anae Cares initiative, time for community organizations and community members to share their work and care for the moku, speakers on conflict resolution, uplifting entertainment, lunch, and group work on issues and short-term solutions. Many groups and hands contributed to the planning, preparation, food, and other aspects of the event.

Highlights

- Approximately **90 people were in attendance**. 54 people registered online; many registered in person on arrival.
- **Over 20 community groups and community members** shared their work, contribution to the community, and thoughts on the issues our Moku is facing. These speakers included nonprofit groups, educational organizations both public and private, and hālau hula.
- Invited speakers emphasized the importance of **individual and community healing through connection to 'ōlelo Hawai'i, culture, and 'āina**.
- All in attendance stood up and recited a **Pledge of Aloha**, which highlights individual beliefs and values that embody aloha, honor, and respect for all.
- Kalehua Krug shared about **emotional (dys)regulation** and how the disconnection to culture, land, and identity relates to our emotional intelligence and ability to manage and regulate our feelings and emotions. He offered **cultural education** as the solution to change our community and Hawai'i. Cultural education is not just a hobby but a way to embrace a different worldview that changes the ways we relate to land and each other.
- **9 groups** worked together to discuss and share issues that resonated with them and short-term solutions (3, 6, 9 months) to those issues.
- All in attendance agreed to **hold another meeting in 1 month** to continue this work.

Pledge of Aloha

"I believe that every person has a role in society and deserves to be included and treated with respect in their family, school, and community. I believe that every person should be free to express what is truly in their heart and mind, whether male, female, or in the middle. I believe that every person should be able to practice their cultural traditions and to know and perpetuate the wisdom of their ancestors for future generations. I believe these values are embodied in aloha, which is love, honor, and respect for all. Therefore I pledge to live aloha in everything I do and to inspire people of all ages to do the same."

Issues and Solutions Summary

Participants formed groups to answer the following prompt: "Think of a short-term solution (3, 6, 9 months). Decide which issues resonated with you and offer solutions."

These lists summarize the issues, and priorities among the solutions. Please see the group notes at the end of this report for each group's response.

Issues

- Disconnect between:
 - people and culture
 - people and land
 - people and values or morals
 - youth and community and community organizations
 - kupuna and 'ōpio
 - Within Ohana
- Individual vs collective mentality
- Seeing cultural activities as hobbies
- Emotional dysregulation
- Chronic absenteeism
- Conflict, crime, and violence
- Safe places for youth
- Trauma and mental health

Solutions

- **Provide opportunities for cultural education, connection to culture, and reawakening of cultural practices**
 - Train 'ōpio, makua, leaders, kumu in values (ex. Hale Mua, ʻōlelo no'eau) and appropriate cultural practices
 - Utilize community partners to reconnect
 - Reintegrate culture into DOE and decolonize DOE curriculum; Ho'oponopono in schools; Use outdoor classroom space like gardens
 - Increase awareness of emotional dysregulation, social emotional learning, cultural emotional learning (ex. Road show with Kalehua)
 - By connecting to '5ina- Aloha '5ina programs
 - Create a Hawaiian Cultural Healing Center
- **Provide opportunities for community engagement, community/cultural service**
 - Increase awareness and access to resources- create a hub of services, waianae cares.org, promote everyone's work
 - Utilize community partners as sites for community service
 - Specific events or activities: Concerts, community gardening, Ohana Days, May 2nd literacy event, events like this
 - Consistent, sustainable opportunities
- **Focus on youth and 'ohana as a whole**
 - Create opportunities to nurture youth
 - Positive messaging- posters for positive reinforcement, social media campaign
 - Build pilina (connection and relationships) with and between students
 - Use kupuna to influence 'ōpio, provide mentorship, kupuna to ho'oponopono
 - Youth mental health
 - Ask parents about chronic absenteeism
 - Invite families, do whole family advisory, civic engagement starts in the home
 - Provide transportation to huaka'i

Solution Priorities

- **Provide opportunities for cultural education**
 - Kalehua Roadshow and follow up opportunities to reconnect with culture
 - Embed culture in DOE, decolonize curriculum, have Ho'oponopono in schools
 - Create a Hawaiian Cultural Healing Center
- **Provide opportunities for community engagement and service, and 'ohana engagement and connection**
 - Serving the 'ohana as a whole (kupuna, makua, keiki)
 - Connect kupuna and 'ōpio, ex. talk story sessions like at Get Lit: Literacy is our legacy at Nanakuli public library, May 2nd
 - Host event on April 27- Fun Fest
- **Increase awareness of issues and cultural and community opportunities through social media campaign**
- **Youth mental health** - Collaborate with Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center.

Next Steps

The efforts of the many minds and hands in the room are compiled and shared in this report to all who attended. This information lays the groundwork for our next Wai'anae Cares meeting, proposed to be held on April 27, 2024. In preparation for the next and future meetings we ask:

- Please Sign up for the Wai'anae Cares Newsletter to be updated with the latest efforts. See <https://waianaecares.org/> for a link to newsletter sign up.
- Please Spread the word and invite others to attend, especially 'ōpio
- Please Consider joining one of the Wai'anae Cares committees. They include:
 - Communications
 - Youth Efforts: To support positive community programming.
 - Events/Activities: Highlight existing community events and create new events.
 - Westside Legends: Highlight those who positively contributed to the Wai'anae coast, past and present.

Mahalo

We mahalo all contributors for their efforts:

Wai'anae Moku Navigators, Suzuki Family Foundation, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Kamehameha Schools, Nā Kama Kai, Ma'o Farms, Wai'anae Moku Kupuna Council, Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, E Ala Voyaging Academy, Mākaha Canoe Club, Wai'anae Hawaiian Civic Club, Wai'anae Coast Rotary Club, Wai'anae High School, Ka'ala Farm Inc., Hālau Hula O Kekauihala, Hālau Nā Mamo o Tulipa, Ka Waihona O Ka Na'auao, Kamaile Academy, DOE, Senator Shimabukuro, Representative Cedric Gates, Cross Crabbe, Tiana Wilbur, Samantha DeCorte, Lili'uokalani Trust, Teri Savaiinaea, Kalehua Krug, Dana Newman, Nani Peterson, BK - Stephen, King Kai Kainoa, Gail and Dan Gomes

Group Notes for Short-Term Solutions

There were 9 groups that recorded notes. Team members are named when that information was included. Bolded text represents the priorities for the groups.

Hui 1

1. Looking at cultural activities as hobbies
 - Providing cultural leadership training for po'o of the groups
 - Providing community activities that are consistent and sustainable
 - Classes and/or distribution of 'ōlelo no'eau
2. Disconnect with the 'ohana (multiple)
 - Communication - intentional and follow up
 - Challenging values - kōkua ke kahi i ke kahi
 - Civic/cultural engagement - starts in the home

Hui 2

Reawakening of cultural practices

- Awareness/Access to knowledge and resources
- Developing/reconnecting/grounding to the '5ina
- Social emotional learning programs, cultural emotional learning
- Legal/cultural barriers
- Bridging the gap
- **Kupuna bring/influence 'ōpio**
 - Expose 'ōpio to opportunities. Create opportunities to train 'ōpio and makua.
Ex. Hale Mua trains men in values. We have to train generations and break down barriers.

Hui 3

Team: Samantha

Issues and solutions

- Emotional dysregulation- **Kalehua Road Show** with community partnership. Follow up is a sign up to go to community partners like Ka'ala or E Ala Voyaging
 - 3 months-Touring Wai'anae moku with message
 - 6 months- Mentoring haum5na
- Chronic absenteeism for students
 - 3 months- Ask parents why.
- Conflict resolution, crime
 - 3 months Involving kupuna to ho'oponopono
- Lack of connection to community
 - 3 months- Create hub of resources
 - 6 months- Bring a friend
- Safe place for youth to gather and socialize after hours

Hui 4

Team: Roland, Marcie, Vanessa, Kenny, Angela

Issue

- This violence has got to stop.
- “I”, how do we get to “we”.
- Youth lost connection to morals. Youth are not being nurtured and we are not nurturing them, so create opportunities to nurture them.
- Turn off the telephone, watching funny kine.
- WIS parent and children no more empty promises.

Solutions

- Whole family advisory at the garden. Reintegrating culture into DOE.
- Talk more: will our youth sit down and listen to us?
- **Get Lit: Literacy is our legacy: Talk story session at / with our kupuna at Nanakuli public library, May 2nd.**
- More concerts.
- Waianaecares.org.
- **Youth mental health- collect stories with WCCHC, June/July.**

Hui 5

Team: Rocky, Stacilyn, Tiana, Teri, Philip, Kekai.

Short-term solution

- **Culture and culture education**
- Sustainability
- Community giveback
- Community gardens
- Job opportunities
- **More community opportunities to give back, do so through community service and organizations. Community engagement as a solution.**
 - Start at the community level.
 - More ohana days.
 - Cultural classes.
 - Keiki to kupuna.
 - Culture can lead to economic/entrepreneurial opportunities.
 - Niu, Ulu, Maili learning center through Aloha '5ina program.

Hui 6

Team: Nani

Hawaiian Cultural Healing Center

- First Priority: Healing all trauma - oli, ho'oponopono.
- Second Priority: Identify natural sites to practice - Ka'ala, Makua, etc. Appropriate ceremonial practices.
- Third Priority: Mala regeneration; Nursery at Ma'ili '5ina.

Hui 7

Team: Taylor, Josh, Verna, Cassandra

Commitment to community service/cultural service - Use groups like Ka'ala Farms, Ma'o Farms, Mālama Learning Center, Wai'anae Coast Clean up; Schools require community service. **Talk story sessions with kupuna, keiki** - Cultural activities.

Hui 8

Team: Isaiah, Paul, Nikki, Kanaka, Leinani

3-month solutions

- Transparency and community resource - **Address disconnect of youth to community strength and organizations** - Continue to have community events like this and include the 'ōpio.
- **Address kupuna and 'ōpio disconnect.**
- Mo'olelo.
- Private business sponsorships.

Hui 9

Team: Kaui, Penina, Cedric, Ariel, Kainoa.

3 months

- Huaka'i opportunities.
- Peer to peer influence- swag, hashtags.
- Student engagement.
- Posters- positive reinforcement.
- Wristbands, silly bands.
- **Social media campaign with hashtags.**
- Connecting with DOE cultural workshops during school hours.
- **Host event April 27th 10am Fun Fest.**
- Pilina with haumāna.
- **Ho'oponopono in schools**, training for kumu.

6 months

- **Serving the 'ohana as a whole (kupuna, makua, keiki).**
- Family invite into space.
- Peer-to-peer support, training peer leaders.
- Access to transportation for huaka'i.
- Getting into schools to teach cultural learning.

9 months

- **Embed culture in DOE goals and curriculum** - decolonize DOE curriculum and place culture at the forefront.
 - Outdoor classroom space - Option to come to garden during advisory.
- Access to mentor/kupuna.
- Outreach from different organizations.
- One place to promote everyone's work- stop working in silos.
- Family invite.