

## **Adolescent Māori Mental Health: Emerging Risk Factors**

**Date:** Wednesday 27 April 2016  
**Time:** 2.30pm – 3.30pm  
**Location:** Room 208, Level 2, Te Ao Marama Building

**Presenter:** **Mihiroa Gillies**

### **Abstract:**

In New Zealand, a number of studies have identified that New Zealand Māori are at a higher risk for a range of adverse outcomes compared to non-Māori. Social scientists have offered a range of explanations for these differences, but often lack the data to adequately test these explanations. This study used data from a longitudinal study of New Zealand adolescents to examine the associations between ethnicity (New Zealand Māori versus non-Māori), and rates of psychiatric disorder and suicidal ideation at age 15, 16, and 18 years. The study also investigated whether differences in mental health outcomes between Māori and non-Māori were explained by a range of life-course experiences, including childhood socio-economic disadvantage (living in poverty), childhood family adversity (a range of adverse childhood experiences, such as physical abuse), and adolescent deviant peer affiliation (or teens 'hanging out with the wrong crowd'). Statistical models were fitted to estimate the strength of the associations between Māori ethnicity and psychiatric disorders during adolescence, with these models then extended to see whether any significant associations remained after childhood socio-economic disadvantage, childhood family adversity, and adolescent deviant peer affiliation were controlled for.

### **Biography:**

Mihiroa is of Ngāi Tahu and Ngāti Kahungunu descent, and hails from Rapaki, where she spent her late childhood and teenage years after returning home with her whānau. She studied at UC and taught as a high school teacher for a few years before pursuing a Graduate Diploma and Master of Science in Child and Family Psychology. Her Masters was a collaboration between the Ngāi Tahu Research Centre and the Christchurch Health and Development Study, with Mihiroa studying at Te Rū Rangahau Māori Research laboratory at the University of Canterbury while completing her Masters. She has a particular interest in kaupapa Māori research and psychological practice. Mihiroa is currently practicing as a Child and Family Psychologist, with clients ranging in age from early childhood to adolescence.