



**Te Kawa Mataaho**  
Public Service Commission

# Better Public Services Result 4: Vulnerable Children

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**Result 4: Improve the lifetime wellbeing of vulnerable children**

## What is the target?

Reduce the number of children experiencing physical and sexual abuse by 20 percent by 2021.

## Why is this important for

### New Zealand?

Every child and young person has a right to grow up in a safe environment. Safety from physical and sexual abuse sets the foundation for positive future physical and mental development, helps children establish effective relationships with their families, communities and iwi, and breaks the negative cycle of deprivation and disadvantage.

### How will we know we are achieving this result?

The target for reducing the number of children and young people experiencing assaults and sexual abuse is ambitious. It will mean reducing the number of children experiencing physical and sexual abuse by 800.

Performance against the target will be measured using the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki data on substantiated physical and sexual abuse.

In addition to the target measure, the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki will also be tracking two supporting measures:

- the total number of children experiencing abuse of any type, including physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect
- the percentage of children who experience a repeat Report of Concern within 12 months.

## **What are we doing to achieve this result?**

Actions to reduce the number of children experiencing physical and sexual abuse will be at the centre of a major programme of work within the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki.

The Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki will lead and be ultimately responsible for achieving the target, but will need cooperation and support from Ministries of Health, Education and Social Development, as well as Police and Corrections.

The Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki will also require active support and feedback from families, communities and iwi to better design and deliver services and support that work.

There is no single way to address this target. Actions will be taken across a number of areas, with the main focus on:

- reducing sexual violence towards children and young people
- reducing family violence directed at, or in the presence of children and young people
- reducing physical violence towards children and young people
- improving parenting skills
- improving sexuality education and promoting healthy practices
- addressing parental mental health and addiction.

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# Better Public Service Result 4 - Case Study: Memorandum of Understanding signed with Ngāti Kahungunu [archived]

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**1 May 2018: The Government announced in January 2018 that the Better Public Services programme would not continue in this form. These pages have been archived.**



Child, Youth and Family and Ngāti Kahungunu recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will see them working more closely together for tamariki and rangatahi.

Child, Youth and Family's Deputy Chief Executive, Bernadine Mackenzie, says it's important to work together with iwi to develop innovative ways to support whānau and make sure children and young people are

kept safe and well cared for.

At the moment, almost half of Ngāti Kahungunu tamariki and rangatahi in Child, Youth and Family care are placed with whānau.

"We know we can do better to find safe placements within extended whānau, but we also recognise we need the help of hapū and iwi to do this. We can't do it on our own."

"That's why signing agreements like these with iwi are so important. It allows us to establish a formalised relationship where we can have meaningful dialogue about the future safety and well-being of tamariki and rangatahi."

This is the fourth MoU of its kind to be signed, following on from signings with Ngāti Porou, Ngāpuhi and Waikato-Tainui.

Ms Mackenzie says previous signings with iwi have resulted in great traction and innovative ideas for supporting whānau and hapū to guide Child, Youth and Family's work with young Māori. "I am confident that we will see similar success by working more closely with Ngāti Kahungunu."

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# Better Public Services Result 4 - Case Study: Art and Aroha [archived]

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**1 May 2018: The Government announced in January 2018 that the Better Public Services programme would not continue in this form. These pages have been archived.**



At the Otahuhu CYF and Schools Art Auction, the three young artists from Fairburn Road School had definitely won over the crowd.

“It’s a tree about love,” they told their audience. “The heart represents how love grows like a tree and friendships blossom. It took three days and we didn’t have to go to any other classes.”

The annual art auction is a creative way to build closer connections between Child, Youth and

Family, schools, teachers, social workers and kids.

Otahuhu’s Child, Youth and Family team provides blank canvases so that each school can create a work of art. Each school is allocated a social worker to liaise with throughout the project. The paintings are then auctioned. This year, 16 schools raised more than \$3,200 to buy extra school resources.

## Care and protection community

“We’re creating art and relationships,” says Otahuhu site manager, Anahila Kanongata'a-Suisuiki.

Child, Youth and Family social worker Marie Daniels teamed up with Mt Richmond School, getting to know the school’s new social worker Melissa Meyer.

“It has been a great icebreaker,” says Melissa. “It’s good to know Marie. If I need support, I can just pick up the phone for help.”

The Mt Richmond children created their painting as a team.

“Some of us needed a bit more support, but we worked together and are very proud of the end result.”

A local real estate business bought the painting for \$500 after Marie pitched the idea to it.

She hopes it will encourage the business to adopt the school and be involved in their events.

## **101 artists**

*One Hundred and One Artists* was painted by 101 children from Otahuhu Primary School. Different shapes and colours are connected to represent friendship and family across cultures.

Their Child, Youth and Family representative was Wendy Wisbey – the differential response coordinator for Otahuhu site.

“All the different shapes, sizes and colours link together. This gives a sense of never being alone and always having a friend – the comfort of which the children have interpreted in their painting.”



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# Better Public Services Result 4 - Case Study: Bringing Ngapuhi children back home [archived]

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**1 May 2018: The Government announced in January 2018 that the Better Public Services programme would not continue in this form. These pages have been archived.**



In the middle of Kaikohe, nestled between a dental surgery and the town's supermarket, sits the home of Ngapuhi Iwi Social Services - New Zealand's largest iwi-led social services provider.

This unobtrusive building in the heart of rural Tai Tokerau is at the centre of an ambitious plan to reconnect Ngapuhi children and young people in state care to their tribal roots.

Last year Te-Runanga-a-Iwi o Ngapuhi signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Child, Youth and Family to work together and make joint decisions when Ngapuhi mokopuna are placed into care or commit criminal offences.

Around 470 Ngapuhi tamariki mokopuna are currently in State care around New Zealand – about a quarter of all Māori children in care. The runanga's aim is to have every Ngapuhi child in Child, Youth and Family care placed with

whānau or at least with hapu members who share a common heritage and culture.

Ngapuhi Iwi Social Services manager Liz Marsden says it's about making sure Ngapuhi children in care can grow up "knowing who they are and where they belong".

Liz, whose own whakapapa includes Ngapuhi, comes from a 20-year background with Child, Youth and Family. She says it's about creating a service tailor-made for Ngapuhi whanau, beginning with the 81 Ngapuhi children in care in Tai Tokerau and then looking to the 248 in Auckland.

“There is a real potential to reduce numbers coming into care, and to reduce their duration in care, by being involved early. We want a continuum of support, from families putting their hands up for help to referrals by statutory agencies.”

That means stepping in before a family reaches crisis point; using whanau hui to challenge families to lift their parenting skills; and to have a network of approved Ngapuhi caregivers at the ready when a child can no longer live at home with its parents.

“Some of these caregivers may never be needed but we want to have them trained and ready, so that if a child needs care they can go straight to one of these caregivers, instead of a temporary placement with strangers they have no connection with.

“It's not that we want to bring all 470 kids back to live up here [in Northland.] It means that if they have to come into care from, for example, Invercargill, we want to keep them with wider whānau within their area, near their schools and other networks.” Marae-based whanau hui also offer a way to work with parents to lift their game, says Liz. “By bringing the whānau onto the marae, we can safely challenge them to get their children back by sorting out their issues and making home safe for their kids.

Marion Heeney, Regional Director for Tai Tokerau Child, Youth and Family, says the two organisations are committed to working together: “This is a huge step forward for Ngapuhi tamariki. We believe it will really make a difference for vulnerable Ngapuhi children if they are able to safely maintain iwi and marae connections, and receive support from their wider whānau and community.

“What's really wonderful is that not only will these children be connected back to their marae, but they will also have an adult in their life who cares deeply about them and will stick by them throughout their life.”

## **Related Case Studies**





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# Better Public Services Result 4 - Case Study: Empowering whanau on marae [archived]

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*Photo shows Papakura Marae CEO, Tony Kake.*

Achieving the best outcomes for a child or young person often only occurs through purposeful, positive engagement and participation from the wider family/whanau. Over the past year Auckland Region Project Specialist, Danny Thompson has supported social workers as a kai korero (facilitator) in over 17 family group conferences, and numerous hui-a-whanau, held on marae.

As a result, he says he's seen really positive outcomes and believes that establishing meaningful and respectful relationships with local marae enhances the way we work with Māori and builds our capacity to achieve robust and well supported plans for children and young people.

Holding hui-a-whanau or FGC on marae is determined by the whanau Danny says, and often they are really appreciative of CYF arranging this at their request. "We've been able to navigate our way through the most difficult and complex Māori cases and achieved good outcomes for mokopuna" he says.

One local marae which is regularly used by our sites is Papakura Marae and Marae CEO, Tony Kake, is really supportive of what is able to be achieved for whanau.

Tony says the marae is absolutely committed to building positive and meaningful relationships and providing an environment that is culturally responsive and enables whanau to feel at ease. For a lot of our whanau the marae and the tikanga on marae eliminates many barriers.

“I think whanau feel more comfortable and feel more empowered. Coming to the marae and being immersed in ancestral connections, wairua and tikanga can only bring positive vibes to a hui” he says. “Hopefully whanau get a sense of neutrality by being on a marae.”

Tony explains everything on marae is based on tikanaga principles and values which are non-negotiable. He says these help to create a place of peace; against violence or arguments. “We are encouraged to have the courageous conversations but not in an argumentative way. I am clear that the Marae want better outcomes for whanau and the marae environment can enable that to happen.”

“I know the team at CYF use this place to try to enable, because at the end of the day I believe that CYF want a positive outcome,” says Tony. “We facilitate so there is clear communication and clear outcomes are agreed. It’s about working in partnership, it’s about working together.

### ***Danny shares a recent case***

*I was recently asked to assist a C&P co-ordinator and social worker to meet the cultural needs of a whanau who there were a number of concerns for. The father was known by NZ Police and Police were asked to be on standby during the pre-FGC hui-a-whanau held at site due to the risk of the whanau becoming volatile.*

*The whanau were resistant to our processes and colluded that the concerns were not valid. However they did agreed to hold the FGC on Manurewa marae and for myself to attend to support their cultural needs.*

*Supported by Manurewa Marae kaumatua and the kai mahi for the father, we were able to move through the FGC without any issues and an agreed plan was formulated to transition the rangatahi back into the care of a whanau caregiver. The environment of the marae and those who led the culturally led process, supported by the social worker and co-ordinator, are what made the difference for this whanau.*

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# Better Public Services Result 4 - Case Study: New Family Group Conference resources [archived]

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**1 May 2018:** The Government announced in January 2018 that the Better Public Services programme would not continue in this form. These pages have been archived.



New resources have been developed to help professionals from other agencies understand why children need them to take part in the Family Group Conference process, what to expect, and what their role is.

The Children's Action Plan and Youth Crime Action Plan reinforce the importance of a multi-agency approach, to address the complex and multi-faceted needs of

vulnerable children and their families.

One of the ways this happens is through the Family Group Conference, which goes to the heart of Child, Youth and Family's work. The conference is all about bringing together whānau and others, to work out the best way for kids to be safe and well cared for. They're a way of involving everyone in a conversation about things that are working well, things that aren't so good, and the things that need to change.

Partner agencies - like health, education, police, Iwi providers and NGOs - are likely to have information about the child, young person or their family, or know about the services and supports that are available to help them. The information they provide will help the family make better

decisions about their children and their future.

The new resources will help professionals understand why children need them to take part in the family group conference process, what to expect, and what their role is.

The resources, available on the Child, Youth and Family website (<http://www.cyf.govt.nz/keeping-kids-safe/ways-we-work-with-families/family-group-conferences-information-for-professionals.html>) include:

- a new brochure for professionals attending a Family Group Conference.
- video clips which feature staff, family members and young people sharing their expertise, and reflecting on their experience with the Family Group Conference process. The video clips cover both care and protection and youth justice, and aim to help professionals (and family members and victims), understand their role and what to expect.

In the year ending 30 June 2013, there were:

- 8,583 care and protection Family Group Conferences - held when there are concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person
- 6,259 youth justice Family Group Conferences, held when a child or young person has offended.

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# Better Public Services Result 4 - Case Study: Social Workers in Schools [archived]

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Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) is a school-based community social work service, that places a social worker right in the school grounds, bringing together a child or young person's home and school life. Services were rolled out in schools across the greater Auckland area and the South Island during term one 2013, and the final stage of the expansion is well under way, completing coverage nationwide. Once this final stage is

complete, an additional 149 new social workers in schools will be in place.

SWiS worker Viv Lyster, works in four Wairarapa schools. She's been doing this for five years; loves her work and loves being able to support children, teachers and families.

"You don't realise how big an impact you can make on kids' and families' lives," said Viv Lyster

"Viv brings an element of realness, she brings parents and the school together and it's very important that she can do home visits. She goes to their place. Viv is also able to tap into other agencies when needed and that's been really helpful," said Margie Sutherland, Principal of South Featherston School.

"Viv works alongside the parents and has a relationship with home...She creates relationships with parents that's hard for us to do because often we are seen as the 'authority' which goes back to the parents' own experience of school," said Dick Brown, Principal of Douglas Park School.

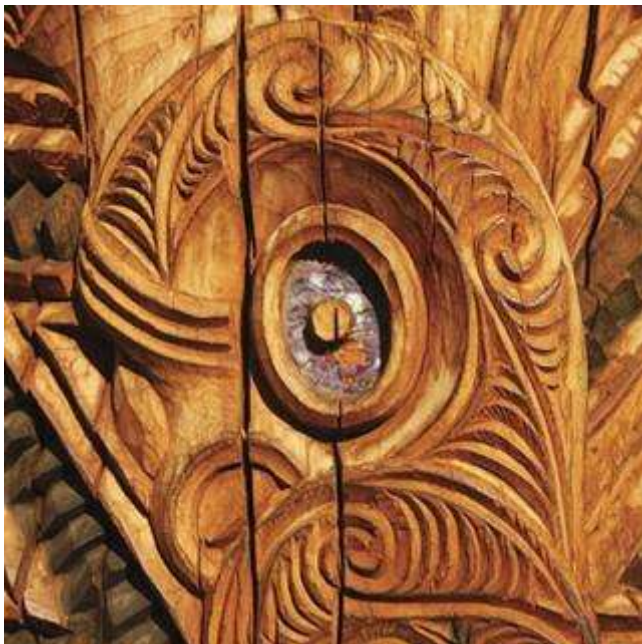


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# Better Public Services Result 4 - Case Study: Strengthening Tai Tokerau [archived]

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Sub-tropical Tai Tokerau sits at the northernmost tip of New Zealand, and is among the most naturally beautiful and culturally significant of our regions.

Sadly, the incredible highlights of the region are not always matched by its social conditions. Many children and young people in Tai Tokerau have significant health, education, social and economic needs. For Child, Youth and Family, concern about Northland's children and young people has been a call to action.

To strengthen services and focus strongly on local needs, a new leadership team has been dedicated to Tai Tokerau (which was previously part of Child, Youth and Family's Northern region, including Auckland).

Tai Tokerau Regional Director Marion Heeney says key goals are to build leadership, organisational culture and local relationships, improve practice quality and strengthen support for local staff.

“Our staff live and work in a very challenging environment,” she says. “There have been some particularly challenging cases during the past 18 months, including cases with multiple young victims and clusters of youth suicides.”

Last year was a particularly difficult one for the town of Kaitaia, with two high-profile sexual abuse cases and multiple child victims. The cases rocked the small town and its closely-connected community.

Marion Heeney says staff rose to the challenge and were commended by the Police for their work with the young victims.

As a result, Child, Youth and Family contracted Te Rarawa to place one of their social workers within Kaitaia College, dedicated to the young people at the school.

The regional team is also engaging with the community, building partnerships and working closely with community organisations.

For example, Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services and Child, Youth and Family have signed up to a partnership to place vulnerable Ngapuhi children with Ngapuhi caregivers wherever possible.

A partnership with Te Aupouri Social Services has seen the Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) programme expanded from five to 30 schools. This means 2,500 far North students now have access to a social worker through their school.

Child, Youth and Family staff are also working with a range of community and government agencies to reduce the incidence and impact of youth suicide on families, friends and the wider community.

Marion Heeney says Tai Tokerau staff have really stepped up to the challenge and worked incredibly hard.

“We’ve made significant progress in our own social work practice and collaborative work with partner agencies over the past 18 months.

“The members of the regional team, several of them coming from outside Tai Tokerau, have made a commitment to live and work here. These folks have fallen in love with Northland and discovered it’s a great place to live and work. We are loving our work up here and the opportunity we’ve had to be part of strengthening our services.

“He aha te mea nui o te ao? Māku e ki atu he tangata, he tangata, he tangata – What is the most important thing in this world? It is people, it is people, it is people.”

## **Key facts**

- Tai Tokerau region of Child, Youth and Family extends from Te Hana to Cape Reinga, the northernmost tip of New Zealand



- 60 social workers\* and the Youth Justice team serve the communities and families of Tai Tokerau from sites at Whangarei, Dargaville, Kaikohe and Kaitaia.

\*Full-time equivalent.

- Key local partners include NZ Police, Northland DHB, Ministry of Education, Te Aupouri, Te Rarawa, Ngati Kahu, Nga-puhi Iwi Social Services, Ngati Hine Health Trust, Whangarei Children's Team, Northland Intersectoral Forum, Family Works Northern, Barnados, Pa O Te Ora and He Iwi Kotahi Tatou Trust.