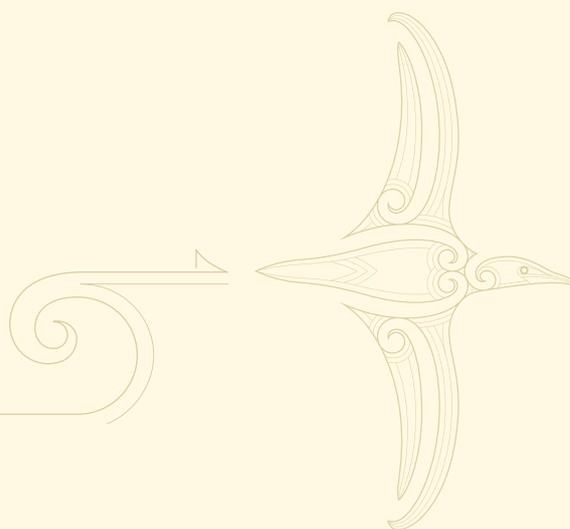


Summary of
**Experiences of
Care in Aotearoa**
2024/25



This is an extract from our report on agency compliance with the National Care Standards (NCS) Regulations – **Experiences of Care in Aotearoa 2024/25.**

The full report is available on our website:
aroturuki.govt.nz/reports/eoc-24-25

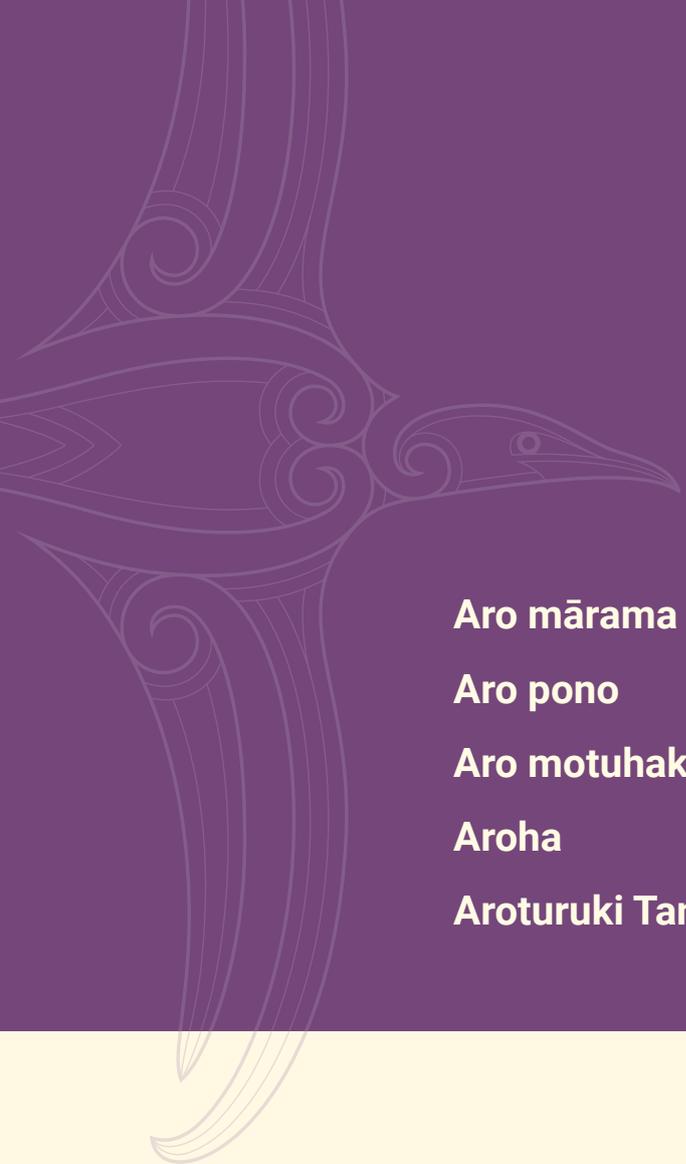


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Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government



Aro mārama

Clear insight

Aro pono

Truthful insight

Aro motuhake

Independent insight

Aroha

Caring insight

Aroturuki Tamariki

Independent Children's Monitor

He mihi

Acknowledgements

Ka nui te mihi ki ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi i raro i te maru karauna, ō rātou whānau, kaitiaki hoki, i kōrero mai mō ō rātou wheako mō tēnei pūrongo.

E mihi ana ki ngā mahi a ngā tari kei te tiaki i ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi. E mihi ana hoki ki ngā tautoko a ngā māngai o ngā hapū, ngā iwi, ngā hoa pātui rautaki, ngā whakahaere Māori, ngā whakahaere kāwanatanga-kore (ngā NGO) me ngā tari kāwanatanga.

We are grateful to the tamariki and rangatahi in care, and their whānau and caregivers, who shared their experiences with us for this report.

We acknowledge the contribution from agencies that have custody of tamariki and rangatahi. We also acknowledge the input of representatives from hapū, iwi, strategic partners, Māori organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs) and government agencies.

Kupu Whakataki

Koinei tā mātou pūrongo whānui tuarima mō te tautuku ki Ngā Waeture a Oranga Tamariki (Ngā Paerewa Maru Karauna ā-Motu me Ngā Waeture Take Hāngai) 2018 (Ngā Waeture NCS). I ahau i tuhi i taku kupu whakataki mō tā mātou pūrongo Ngā Wheako o Te Maru Karauna i Aotearoa tuatahi i te tau 2021, i pōhēhē ahau ka pai ake te tautuku whai muri i te rima tau. Ko tāku i manako ai, he poto ake ā tātou pūrongo e whai ana i ngā raraunga hira e whakaatu ana i te tautuku me te nui haere o ngā kōrero a te hunga mōhio mō ngā mea kei te whai take ki a rātou.

Mai i te rima tau, kei te rite tonu ngā kōrero o ia tau – kāore tonu a Oranga Tamariki i te tautuku ki ngā waeture, ka mutu he iti noa te pai haere. He paerewa mōkito ngā waeture. Otirā, e hāngai ana ēnei waeture ki te maru karauna o ngā tamariki me te rangatahi.

Ko ngā tino take e toru e uru ai ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi ki te maru karauna ko te inu waipiro me te kai pūroi a ngā mātua, te whakarekerekē ā-whānau me te kore manaaki. Pā mai ai te whētuki me ngā whakararu ki ngā taura here nō reira me manaaki. Engari e ai ki ngā tiro tiro a Oranga Tamariki i āna anō mahi kei runga paku atu i te hautoru anake o ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi katoa kei raro i a ia kei te manaakitia tikatia.¹ He auau te whakarerekē i ngā hononga hira o ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi ki ngā pakeke me whakawhirinaki atu rātou pērā i tō rātou tauwhiro hapori. He koretake te whakarite mahere kia pai ai tō rātou wehe i te maru karauna, ka mutu kāore hoki i te tino whiwhi i ngā tautoko mātauranga me te hauora e hiahia ana rātou. Me te aha, ka kitea he maha ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi i raro i te maru karauna i tūkinotia, i whakahapatia rānei.

Kei a Oranga Tamariki me ētahi atu whakahere whai mana maru karauna te here mō te whakatutuki i ngā Waeture NCS. Engari e whakawhirinaki ana rātou ki Te Tāhuhu o Te Mātauranga, Te Manatū Hauora me Te Whatu Ora hei whakaraupapa i ngā ratonga me ngā tautoko mā ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi kei raro i te maru karauna, ka mutu kia tōtika te mahi tahi a te rāngai. Kāore he herenga ā-ture i runga i ērā atu tari kia pērā. I ia hapori e haere ana mātou, ka rongu mātou mō ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi e tatari ana kia whiwhi ratonga mātauranga me te hauora, me ētahi kia whakauru atu ki te kura, ā, kei reira ngā tari kāwanatanga e tohetohe mā wai e utu. Kāore tēnei i te pai.

I kī a Oranga Tamariki kei te tino pokea ana ratonga i tēnei tau, i uaua ai te whakapai ake i ana mahi tautuku. I kī rātou kua piki te maha o ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi kei te tae atu ki a ia mā te 17 ōrau, ā, he tino matatini ake ngā ao o ngā tamariki, ngā rangatahi me ngā whānau.

I roto i te rima tau e pūrongo ana mātou mō te tautuku me ngā Waeture NCS, i manei te maha o ngā pūrongo māharahara me ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi i raro i te maru karauna. Engari ko te mea kei te rite tonu kāore i te eke i a Oranga Tamariki ana mahi katoa. Ahakoa e mōhio ana mātou kua piki haere ngā mahi a Oranga Tamariki, kāore he kōrero mō te ngoikore ki te whakatutuki i ēnei waeture. Ko ngā waeture i whakamanatia i te tau 2019. Me mātua pai ake ngā mahi, kāore i tua atu.

Koinei tā mātou pūrongo manaaki tuatahi mai i te whakarerekē a Minita Upston i te Oversight of Oranga Tamariki System Act, e whakakaha ana i te noho haepapa a ngā tari mō rātou tēnei pūrongo. I kī te Minita i taua "mā ngā whakahau pūrongo tāpiri ka kakama ake ngā Minita ki te whakarite kia pai ake te tautuku a ngā tari hāngai me te whakapiki i te oranga o ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi kei raro i te maru karauna". He mea nui tēnei, ka herea ngā tari ki te tuku kōrero ki ngā Minita whai muri i te whā marama o te putanga o tēnei pūrongo.

He marama te puta o ngā reo o ngā tamariki, ngā rangatahi me ō rātou whānau i roto i tēnei pūrongo. Me pai ake te hunga e manaaki ana, e tiaki ana i a rātou ki te whakatutuki i ō rātou hiahia. Ina whiwhi ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi i ngā tautoko me whiwhi rātou, ka pai ō rātou whakaaro mō ngā rā e heke iho. He ōrite ngā kōrero a te hunga i roto i tēnei pūrongo ki ngā wheako i kōrerohia i roto i ā mātou pūrongo o mua. Ka mutu, he rite tonu ki ērā i roto i te pūrongo mō te āhua o te maru karauna a VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai.²

He 5 tau te pakeke o te tamaiti i te wā i whakamanatia Ngā Waeture NCS i te tau 2019, ā, kua 11 tau ia ināiane. He roa tērā mō te tamaiti, otirā rātou i hiahia kia manaakitia, kia tiakina hoki mō ngā take e kōrerohia ana i konei.



Arran Jones
Tumu Whakarae

¹ E whakaatu ana tēnei i te maha o ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi i whiwhi i ngā tohu hira whānui e iwa a Oranga Tamariki – kei roto ko ngā tohu hira mō ngā aromatawai hiahia, te hanga mahere, te whai whakaaro ki ngā whakaaro o te whānau, ngā whakaaro o te hunga ngaio, te haere ki te kite i ngā tamariki me ngā rangatahi, te kounga o te kōrerorero tahi, ngā arawātea mō te tākaro, kei te tutuki i ngā tauwhiro hapori ngā mahi i roto i ngā mahere tamariki, ka mutu kua tautuhia, kua whai whakaarohia ngā whakaaro o ngā tamariki. Kāore e whakaurua atu ngā tohu e hāngai ana ki te mātāwaka, te taipakeke rānei pērā i te eke ki te pakeke, tērā ka hāngai anake ki ētahi tamariki, rangatahi hoki kei raro i te maru karauna i tētahi wā.

² VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai. (2025). Kei te rongu koe? Are you listening? Ō mātou reo mō te āhua o te maru karauna. voynce.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/State-of-Care-2025-Digital.pdf

Foreword

This is our fifth full report on compliance with the Oranga Tamariki (National Care Standards and Related Matters) Regulations 2018 (NCS Regulations). When I wrote my foreword for our inaugural *Experiences of Care in Aotearoa* report back in 2021, I expected compliance would have improved five years on. I hoped that, by now, we would be producing a shorter report with key data that demonstrated compliance and that the voices of experience would increasingly be talking about what is working well for them.

Five years down the track, our reports are saying pretty much the same thing from one year to the next – Oranga Tamariki continues to not comply with the regulations and improvement has been limited. The regulations are a minimum standard. Crucially, these regulations relate to the care of tamariki and rangatahi.

The three most common reasons why tamariki and rangatahi come into care are parental alcohol and drug use, family violence and neglect. They have often experienced trauma and broken relationships and need to be cared for. Yet Oranga Tamariki has assessed itself as only meeting all of its own performance measures for a little over one-third of tamariki and rangatahi in its care.¹ Tamariki and rangatahi have had frequent changes in important relationships with adults they should be able to trust such as their social worker. There is poor planning for them to leave care, and they haven't always had the education and health support they need. And an increased number of tamariki and rangatahi in State care were found to have been abused or neglected.

The obligation for meeting the NCS Regulations sits with Oranga Tamariki and other organisations with custody and care. But it relies on the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Health NZ to prioritise services and support for tamariki and rangatahi in State care, and for the sector to collaborate effectively. There is no regulatory requirement for these other agencies to do so. In every community we visit, we hear about tamariki and rangatahi waiting for education and health services, some even for school enrolment, while government agencies debate which of them will pay for it. This is not good enough.

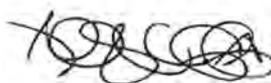
Oranga Tamariki has said it has faced unprecedented pressure on its services this year, making improved compliance a challenge. It says there has been a 17 percent increase in the number of tamariki and rangatahi coming to its attention and that the lives of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau are more complex.

Over the five years we have been reporting on compliance with the NCS Regulations, the numbers of reports of concern and of tamariki and rangatahi in care have fluctuated. But what has stayed constant is the partial level of compliance by Oranga Tamariki. While we recognise the increased demands on Oranga Tamariki, it does not explain the ongoing failure to comply with these regulations. Regulations that have been in place since 2019. Performance can and must be improved.

This is our first care report since Minister Upston amended the Oversight of Oranga Tamariki System Act, strengthening accountability for agencies that are the subject of this report. The Minister said at the time “additional reporting requirements will give Ministers the ability to take decisive action earlier to ensure relevant agencies are improving compliance and enhancing the wellbeing of children and young people in care”. This is an important step, requiring agencies to provide an update to Ministers four months after the publication of this report.

The voices of tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau come through clearly in this report. They want and need better from those responsible for their care and protection. When tamariki and rangatahi get the support they need, they feel positive about their future. The voices heard through this report echo the experiences described in our previous reports. And they are consistent with those reflected in the recent state of care report compiled by VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai.²

A child who was aged 5 when the NCS Regulations came into effect in 2019 is now 11. That is a long time in the life of any child, let alone one who needed care and protection for the reasons reported here.



Arran Jones
Tumu Whakarae | Chief Executive

¹ This is a measure of how many tamariki and rangatahi have all nine Oranga Tamariki universal lead indicators met – it includes lead indicators around needs assessments, planning, consideration of whānau view, the views of professionals, visits to tamariki and rangatahi, the quality of engagement, opportunities for play, that social workers are carrying out the actions in tamariki plans and that tamariki views have been identified and considered. It excludes indicators that are specific to ethnicity or to ages and stages such as transitioning to adulthood, which only apply to some tamariki and rangatahi in care at any one time

² VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai. (2025). *Kei te rongo koe? Are you listening? Our voices on the state of care.* voyce.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/State-of-Care-2025-Digital.pdf

Key findings

There has been no real improvement in compliance with the National Care Standards Regulations

The key findings in our last report were straightforward. We said tamariki and rangatahi were still not receiving the minimum standard of care required by the Oranga Tamariki (National Care Standards and Related Matters) Regulations 2018 (NCS Regulations). We also said we did not expect much improvement in our next report. This has proven correct.

This is because social workers are not always able to work effectively and other government agencies are not sufficiently prioritising access to help

In our 2023/24 report, we pointed to underlying causes of the minimum standard of care not being delivered. This included social workers not being supported to work effectively, and we listed a range of things getting in the way of social workers doing social work.

In 2024/25, social workers continued to tell us they are fatigued by changes and the struggle to deliver without the tools and resources they need to do their work. A shortage of care placements and of services to refer tamariki and rangatahi to, make social workers' jobs even harder.

"We go with what we've got. We're expected to put FGC [Family Group Conference] plans in place and the courts expect x amount to be seen in FGC plans. But we're struggling to do that. We do it ourselves, the mentoring and the community work." ORANGA TAMARIKI SOCIAL WORKER

We also pointed to the lack of priority given to tamariki and rangatahi in care by government services such as health and education. Funding available to Oranga Tamariki or other agencies does not follow the child, and social workers are still having to spend time negotiating for the services and support that tamariki need. This includes things like teacher aide support and access to mental health services. This also has not changed.

Areas of high and low compliance, although Oranga Tamariki developed regulations and should comply with them all

Oranga Tamariki has again assessed itself as partially compliant with the care standards. For around one-third (37 percent) of tamariki and rangatahi in Oranga Tamariki care, it determined a subset of its lead indicators were met.

Oranga Tamariki should strive to comply with all of the NCS Regulations. They were developed by Oranga Tamariki with input from care-experienced rangatahi and other organisations with expertise and experience in delivering care.

We have seen continued good practice and stability in Oranga Tamariki compliance in some areas such as establishing, maintaining and strengthening whānau connection for tamariki and rangatahi in care. However, some measures continue to show low levels of compliance. Compliance continues to be poor with requirements for placing tamariki and rangatahi with approved caregivers, planning care transitions and assessing life skills for rangatahi getting ready to leave care.

We continue to hear about the struggle to access the support tamariki and rangatahi in care need such as health and education services. While we hear about few barriers to accessing primary health, accessing mental health services, in particular, remains a challenge.

"One of our workers still works with [connecting] families to ICAMHS, and it's been months and months. Two years – it's very long." NGO LEADER

Not all tamariki and rangatahi in care are in education. Stand-offs continue between Oranga Tamariki and Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga | Ministry of Education and/or individual schools. Agencies dispute which of them will fund educational supports for tamariki and rangatahi in care, especially those with particular needs. Meanwhile the tamariki and rangatahi miss out, even though they're legally required to be in education.

"Same with education, schools even look at us, if a kid's disengaged, well it's for [Oranga Tamariki] ... There are issues about who's going to fund, they always look towards [Oranga Tamariki]."

ORANGA TAMARIKI KAIMAHI

We encourage Oranga Tamariki to continue with its National Care Standards Action Plan and to use it to lift performance. However, it must both sustain improvements and avoid a decline in performance in other areas.

Again, we emphasise that, to do this, Oranga Tamariki must address barriers to good social work practice and must continue to advocate for access to services across government. This requires it to focus on improving leadership and culture throughout the organisation. It must also focus on practical things to make it easier for social workers to do the fundamentals of their role: to be there for tamariki, understand their needs and help them to have those needs met.

New action plan is expected to improve performance

More positively, in 2025, Oranga Tamariki developed a National Care Standards Action Plan (see Appendix B), which is focused on improving its compliance in priority areas. It is using this plan to target action and track progress. Oranga Tamariki is confident this is improving performance and expects to be able to show some improvement in priority areas in 2025/26. The development of a specific action plan is positive, and we encourage Oranga Tamariki to maintain its focus on it.

Improved compliance may be easier with a more dedicated focus

Open Home Foundation show that improved compliance with the regulations is possible.

"Our policy in general is once a month [to visit tamariki] but that's a minimum. So this young person is getting visited a bit more."

OPEN HOME FOUNDATION KAIMAHI

A key difference is that Open Home Foundation does not have responsibilities for managing the front door – assessing and responding to reports of concern, or for managing youth justice custody. Its ability to focus solely on the quality of care may be one reason it is able to visit tamariki in its care more often.

The challenge for Oranga Tamariki is to find a way to ringfence the resource and effort required to meet care standards. Alternatively, it could delegate and support more responsibility for the care of tamariki and rangatahi to iwi/Māori and community providers.

Areas of focus for future improvement

Once compliance in its 10 priority areas has been achieved and Oranga Tamariki performance has improved, Oranga Tamariki could then focus on additional measures. We have identified the following key issues across five parts of the regulations that may assist Oranga Tamariki, and other government agencies, in considering future focus areas.

Part 1: Assessing needs and developing plans

- We continue to have concerns about the capacity of social workers to do quality work across assessing needs, developing plans and visiting tamariki and rangatahi to ensure their needs are being met and plans are up to date.
- Increasing the frequency of social worker visits to tamariki and rangatahi has been a priority for Oranga Tamariki for several years. We have not seen any change in compliance with the NCS Regulations for social work visits in 2024/25, with one-third of tamariki and rangatahi in care still not being visited as required. However, Oranga Tamariki was able to show an improvement in the proportion of tamariki and rangatahi who were at least being visited every eight weeks between May and June 2025.

- Just over one-third (38 percent) of All About Me plans are current. This is similar to last year, and we continue to hear from caregivers and professionals about the quality and availability of these plans to support the care of tamariki and rangatahi. Oranga Tamariki has made updating All About Me plans a priority in its National Care Standards Action Plan.

Part 2: Meeting health and education needs

- There continues to be a lack of assurance that the health and education needs of tamariki and rangatahi in care are being met. Oranga Tamariki data is questionable, both in terms of quality and what is being measured, and people continue to tell us health and education needs are not being met.
- The responsibility for securing health and education support sits with Oranga Tamariki. Other government agencies such as Manatū Hauora | Ministry of Health, Te Whatu Ora | Health NZ and the Ministry of Education are not required to comply with the NCS Regulations. Requiring other government agencies to comply could be one way of ensuring access to services and support for tamariki and rangatahi in care. In the meantime, funding stand-offs between agencies result in tamariki and rangatahi in the care of the State missing out.
- There appears to have been no progress in ensuring that tamariki and rangatahi have an annual health check as required by the NCS Regulations. No progress was made during the 2024/25 reporting period in identifying what an annual health check should include, although we understand work has since started on this.
- We continue to hear that access to mental health services is particularly challenging for tamariki and rangatahi in care.
- Access to education continues to be denied for a number of tamariki and rangatahi of compulsory school age in care. There is a continued failure to enrol some tamariki and rangatahi in education and a lack of urgency from kaimahi at both Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Education to secure the support needed for tamariki and rangatahi to access education.

Part 3: Supporting caregivers

- Compliance with the requirement to place tamariki and rangatahi with approved caregivers was worse this year, with 64 percent of caregivers being at least provisionally assessed before tamariki and rangatahi enter their care. However, Oranga Tamariki is actively focusing on improving this.
- A shortage of caregivers and a complex and lengthy approval process are contributing to non-compliance.
- Caregivers are more likely to have a support plan, and support plans are more likely to be being actioned by Oranga Tamariki than in previous years. This reflects work by Oranga Tamariki to prioritise support for caregivers following our *2022/23 Experiences of Care in Aotearoa* report.
- Caregivers continue to ask for better information about tamariki and rangatahi when they are placed with them and to have regular visits from their social worker. Caregivers also need adequate financial support and training that fits with their availability and that addresses the needs of the tamariki and rangatahi in their care.

Part 4: Keeping tamariki and rangatahi safe and ensuring they have a say in their lives

- More tamariki and rangatahi were found to have been abused or neglected in care in 2024/25, with 10 percent of all tamariki and rangatahi in care being abused or neglected – that's 530 tamariki and rangatahi. This is an increase from 507 tamariki and rangatahi abused or neglected in 2023/24 and continues the trend seen since we started monitoring the NCS Regulations.
- Fewer tamariki and rangatahi were informed of the outcome of the investigation following an allegation of abuse. Only one-third were informed, where it was appropriate to do so. Not being informed can result in a loss in trust of those who are there to protect them and can make them reluctant to raise future concerns.
- Despite being well-known areas of risk, residences continue to have disproportionately high rates of findings of abuse for tamariki and rangatahi. Although less than 10 percent of tamariki and rangatahi in care spent time in residences, they account for 20 percent of tamariki and rangatahi who were harmed in care.
- Oranga Tamariki has a focus on reducing peer-to-peer fighting in residences. In our visits, we found the underlying culture, including poorly trained staff and unstructured programmes, contributes to an environment where harm occurs.
- Most tamariki and rangatahi in residences, and their whānau who we heard from in our 2024/25 engagements, know how to make a complaint or raise a grievance. This is an improvement on previous years.

Part 5: Care transitions between placements and towards adulthood

- Better planning is needed across all types of care transition and would make a real difference to the experiences of tamariki and rangatahi in care.
- More than one-quarter of tamariki and rangatahi in Oranga Tamariki care transitioned between placements in 2024/25. More than one-third of those transitions were because the previous caregiver was unwilling or unable to continue caring for the child.
- There is limited planning for transitions in care, and many are urgent or unexpected. Tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau tell us they are often not included in planning and do not always know what is happening when they move between care placements.
- Harm has again increased for tamariki and rangatahi who return home. Despite repeated acknowledgements from Oranga Tamariki that it must improve in this area, planning for returns home, and the frequency of social worker visits following a return home, have not improved. Oranga Tamariki prioritised tamariki and rangatahi returning home in its National Care Standards Action Plan in 2025.
- While referral rates to transition support (TSS) are improving year on year, only 63 percent of rangatahi aged 16 in 2024/25 and 77 percent of rangatahi overall were offered a referral.
- Not all Oranga Tamariki social workers understand their responsibilities and do what policy requires to support rangatahi to successfully transition to adulthood. Only 11 percent of eligible rangatahi had a life skills assessment, a further decrease on 2023/24. TSS workers are left filling the gaps, sorting out birth certificates, IRD numbers and bank accounts. This takes them away from working towards bigger goals with rangatahi such as making a career plan, learning to drive, finding somewhere to live and learning how to be a good flatmate.

About tamariki and rangatahi in care

Care population

The population of Aotearoa aged 18 and under is

1.2 million

5,640

tamariki and rangatahi spent time in the care of the State or approved child and family social service during the year 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025.

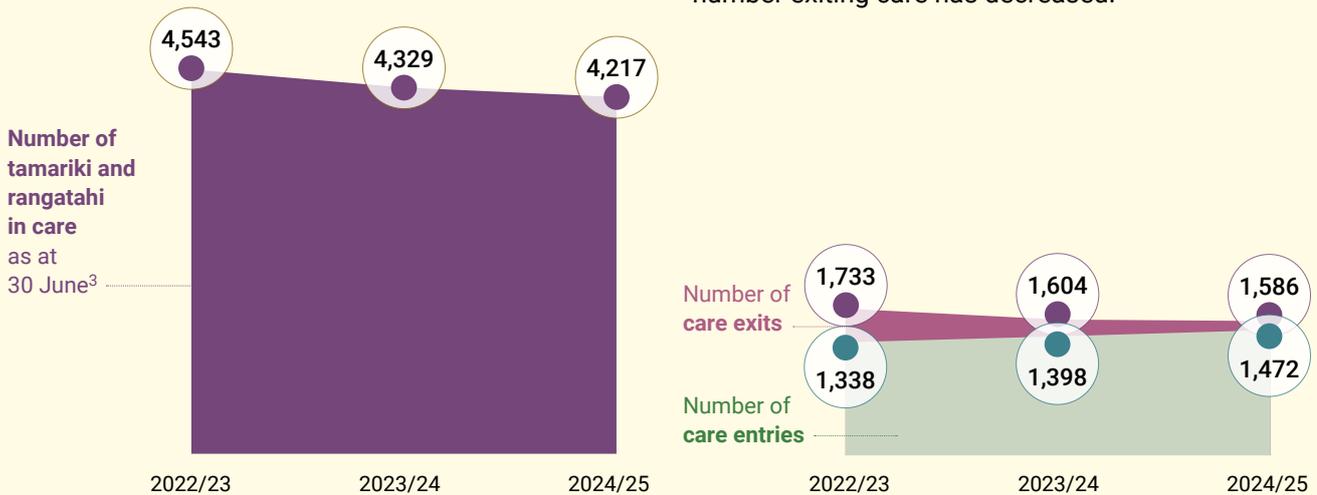
4,217

tamariki and rangatahi were in the care of the State or approved child and family social service on 30 June 2025.

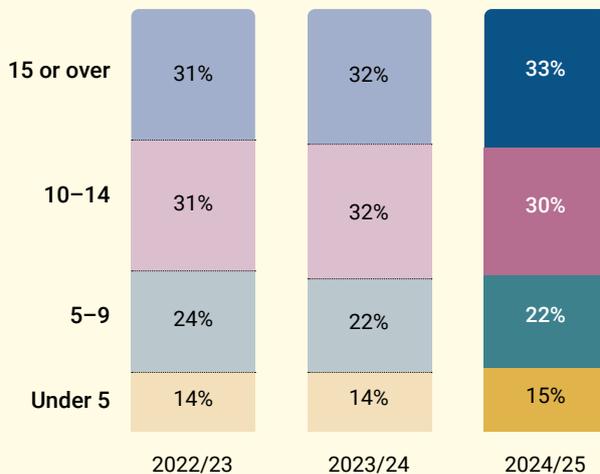
Care entries and exits

The number of tamariki and rangatahi in care has continued to decrease.

The number of tamariki and rangatahi entering care has increased over the past three years while the number exiting care has decreased.⁴



Age



Nearly two-thirds of tamariki and rangatahi in care are aged 10 or over.

There has been a small increase in the proportion of tamariki aged under five and an ongoing increase in the proportion aged 15 or over.

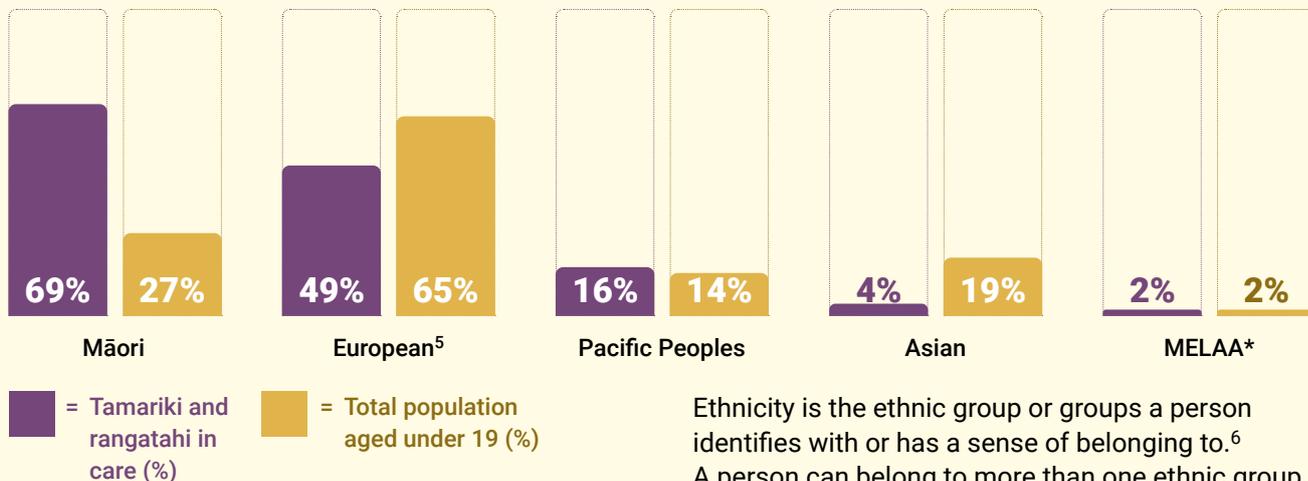
³ Oranga Tamariki was unable to include tamariki and rangatahi in care under short-term care and protection warrants in figures for those in care as at 30 June or during the period 1 July – 30 June.

⁴ Each child could have entered or exited more than once during the reporting period, including under different orders. Entries and exits into care under short-term care and protection warrants are included in these figures.

Ethnicity

The over-representation of tamariki and rangatahi Māori has not changed over the past three years. Around 69 percent of the care population is Māori.

The ethnicities that tamariki and rangatahi in care identify with



Ethnicity is the ethnic group or groups a person identifies with or has a sense of belonging to.⁶ A person can belong to more than one ethnic group.

*Middle Eastern, Latin American and African

Disability

Tamariki and rangatahi in care are three times more likely to be disabled than the general population.⁷

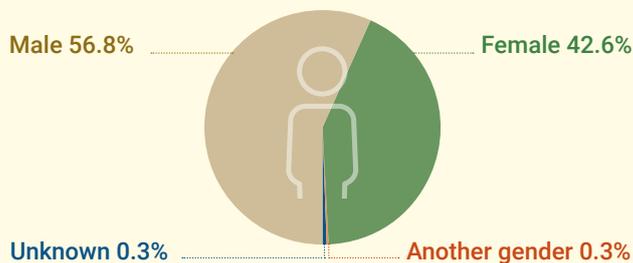
30 percent of tamariki and rangatahi in care are disabled.



10 percent of the total population aged under 15 are disabled.⁸

Gender

There continue to be more male tamariki and rangatahi in care than female.



There has been no change in the gender balance of the care population since last year.

Custody Agency

During the 2024/25 year, around 5,640 tamariki and rangatahi spent time in care. The majority were in Oranga Tamariki custody.⁹



5,580



62



<6

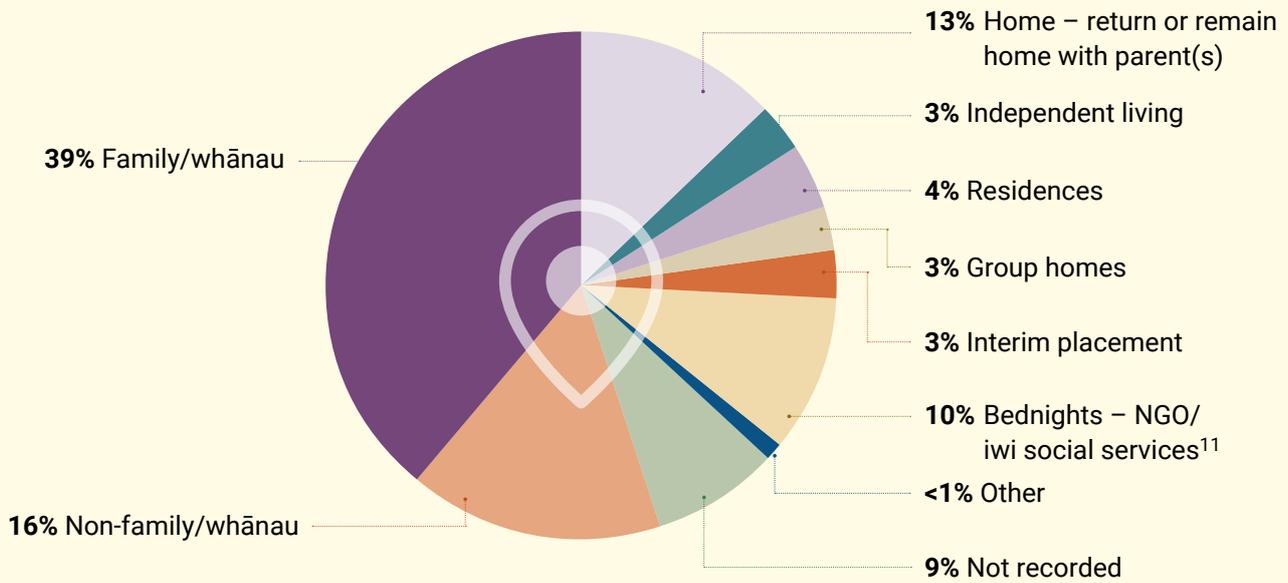


<6

5 This also includes 'other ethnicities' not further defined which account for less than 1 percent of those in care and custody
 6 For younger tamariki, ethnicity is usually identified by their parent or guardian
 7 The general population figure relates to tamariki and rangatahi aged under 15, whereas the in-care figure relates to tamariki and rangatahi aged 0–17. The methodology used by Oranga Tamariki and Stats NZ for disability differs. This may impact on comparability of figures. Oranga Tamariki relies on diagnosed disability, whereas Stats NZ relies on self-reported disability in the New Zealand Disability Survey.
 8 Stats NZ Household Disability survey 2023. stats.govt.nz/information-releases/disability-statistics-2023/
 9 To protect the privacy of individuals, we follow Stats NZ guidelines and do not disclose the exact number of individuals when that number is below 6. This is to reduce the risk that information could be used to identify individuals or learn private information about them.

Placement types

Family/whānau placements have the highest proportion of tamariki and rangatahi in care¹⁰

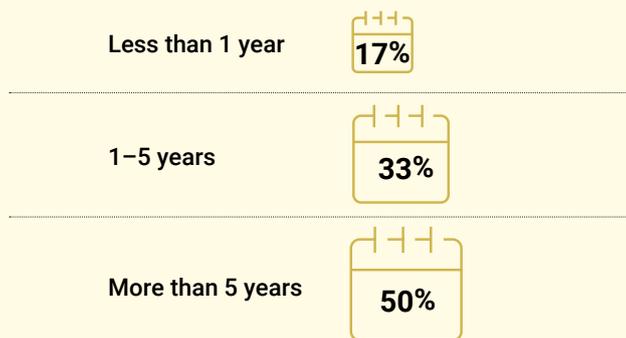


Family/whānau placements have increased since 2024, after declining from a high of 42 percent in 2022. They now account for 39 percent of placements.

The proportion of tamariki and rangatahi whose placement type was not recorded has increased from 7 percent in 2024 to 9 percent. The proportion whose placement is recorded as 'other' has dropped from 9 percent in 2024 to less than 1 percent in 2025.

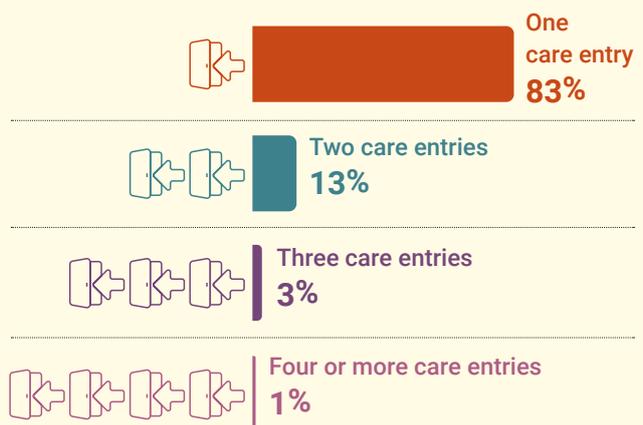
Duration in care and care entries

Half of tamariki and rangatahi in care have been in care for more than five years



There has been no change in duration in care over time.

Most tamariki and rangatahi in care have only entered care once in their lives



The number of care entries is in line with previous years. While most tamariki and rangatahi in care have only entered care once in their lives, 17 percent have been in care more than once.

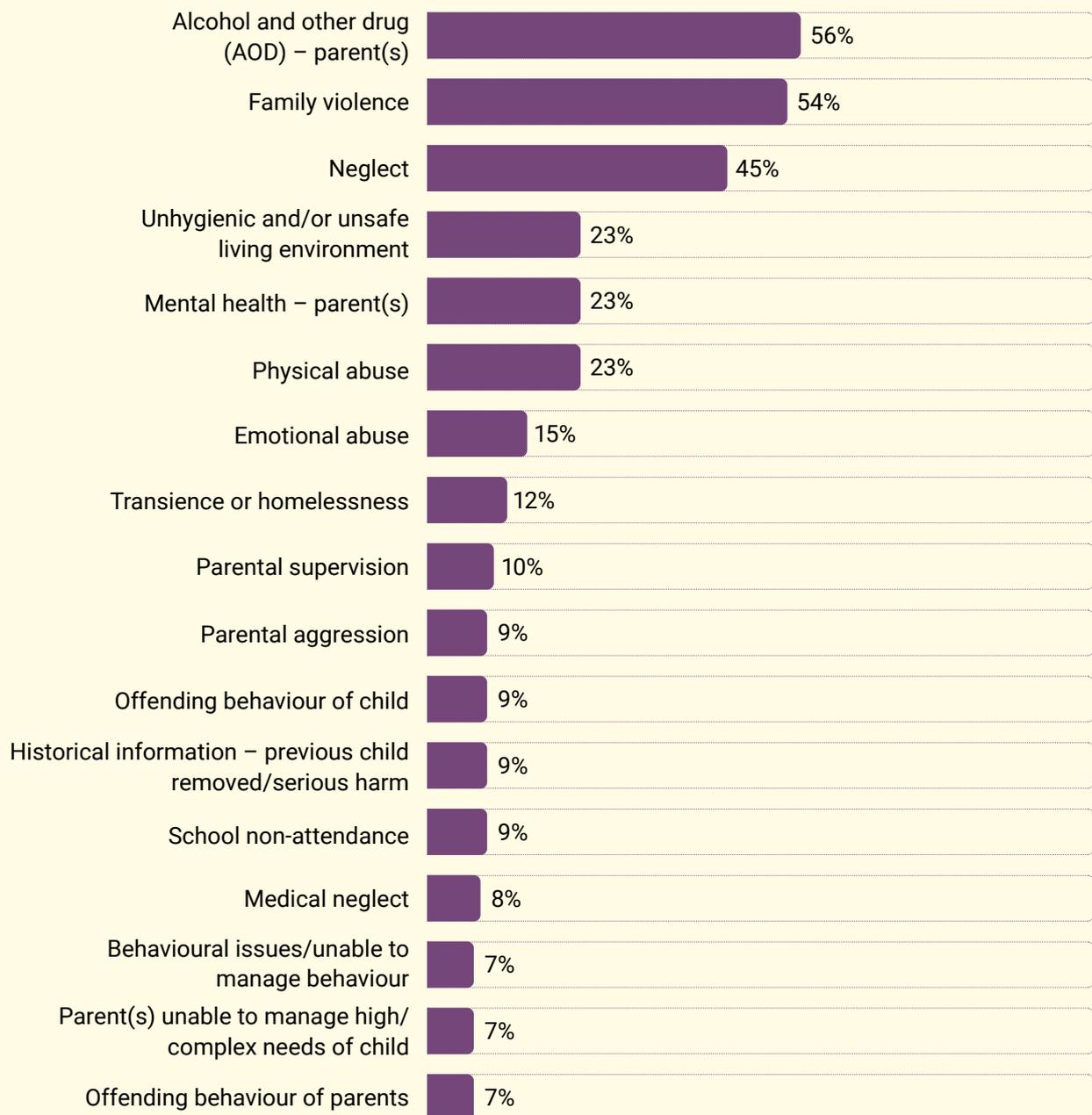
¹⁰ As at 30 June 2025. Because of changes to the Oranga Tamariki data platform, there are differences between the figures shown here and what we have published previously.

¹¹ Oranga Tamariki describes bednights as placements where Oranga Tamariki has a contract with another organisation to provide a placement. Under these contracts, Oranga Tamariki pays for a certain number of beds for a certain number of nights per year. The contract is not tied to a particular child, location or caregiver. The type of placement can vary depending on the type of care the organisation specialises in. This care ranges from 1:1 care for tamariki with higher needs to placements that are similar to family homes.

Reasons for care entry

Parental alcohol and drug issues, family violence and neglect are the most common reasons for tamariki and rangatahi entering care

For more than half of tamariki and rangatahi who come into care, the risk factors that led to the custody application include parental alcohol or drug issues and/or family violence. Neglect is cited as a key concern for almost half of them. Unhygienic or unsafe living arrangements, parental mental health issues or physical abuse are also a key concern in a quarter of all care entries.



This data is based on Oranga Tamariki analysis of a sample of case files of tamariki and rangatahi who had recently been brought into care. Multiple reasons may be recorded for each child.¹²

¹² As reviewers could record more than one concern, the total percentages will add up to over 100 percent. Oranga Tamariki noted that the reviewer's interpretation of the recorded information may not accurately reflect which concerns were the most significant or the complexities of multiple concerns at the time the child came into care.

Change in key relationships – caregivers and social workers



Caregivers

Many tamariki and rangatahi experience changes in caregiver

On average, tamariki and rangatahi had three caregivers during their time in care.



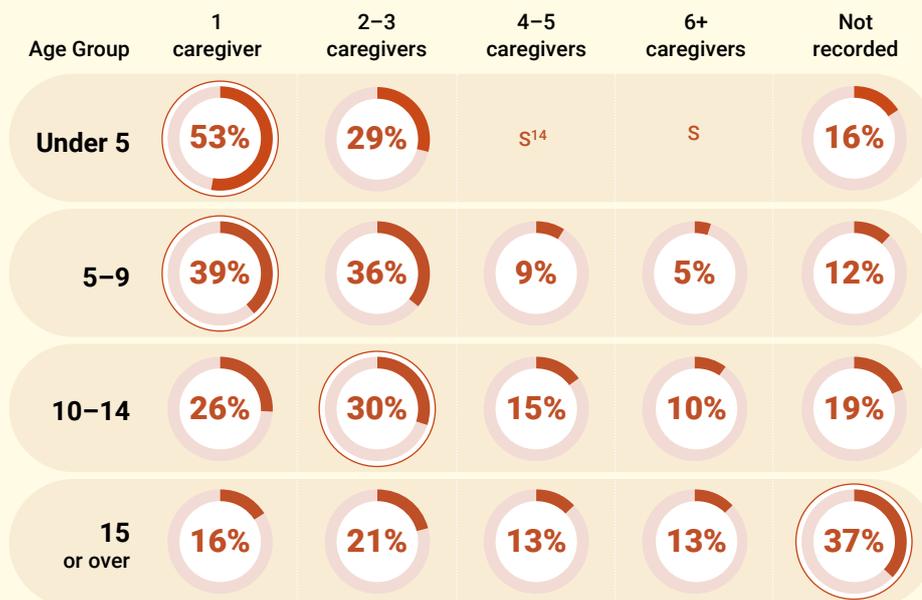
This hasn't changed over time.¹³

For the 2024/25 period, there is a significant proportion of tamariki and rangatahi in each age group where Oranga Tamariki is not able to report the number of caregivers.

Of those aged 15 or over, 13 percent had six or more caregivers and 37 percent have had an unknown number of caregivers.

From the data, we know at least half of tamariki aged 10–14 had more than one caregiver.

At least one-third of those aged under 5 have experienced a change in caregiver, and 14 percent of those aged 5–9 had four or more caregivers during their time in care.



¹³ Figures differ from our previous reporting due to changes in the data provided by Oranga Tamariki.

¹⁴ The letter 's' shows we have suppressed the data. To protect the privacy of individuals, we follow Stats NZ guidelines and suppress (do not disclose) the exact number of individuals when that number is below 6. This is to reduce the risk that information could be used to identify individuals or learn private information about them.



Social workers

Most tamariki and rangatahi have had frequent changes in social worker

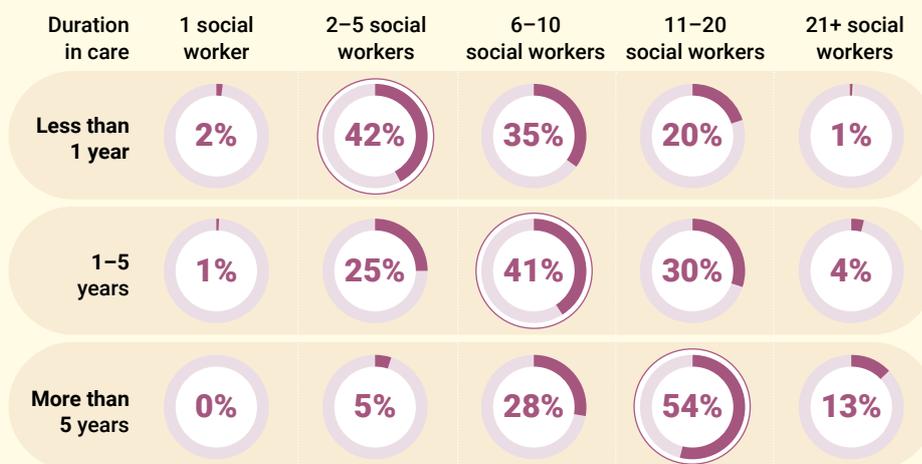
On average, tamariki and rangatahi had 11 social workers during their time in care.



This has not changed over time.

Tamariki and rangatahi experience changes of social workers throughout their time in care.¹⁵ Changes are frequent in their first year in care, with tamariki and rangatahi having an average of seven social workers. Tamariki and rangatahi in care for 1–5 years have had an average of nine social workers, and those who have been in care more than five years have had an average of 14 social workers over that time.

The majority (67 percent) of tamariki and rangatahi who have been in care more than five years had 11 or more social workers over their time in care. The majority (77 percent) of tamariki and rangatahi who have been in care less than one year have had 2–10 social workers.¹⁶



¹⁵ Figures differ from our previous reporting due to changes in the data provided by Oranga Tamariki.

¹⁶ Figures include social workers from before tamariki and rangatahi entered care.

Our approach

The voices of tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and caregivers are at the centre of our monitoring approach

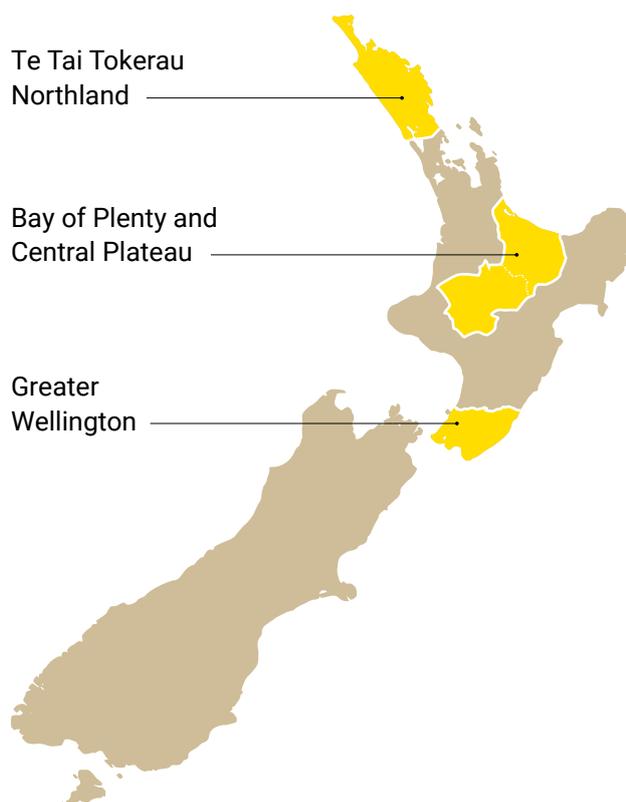
Compliance with the National Care Standards Regulations (NCS Regulations) directly impacts the experiences and outcomes of tamariki, rangatahi,

whānau, and caregivers. For this reason, their voices are central to our report and are highlighted in the use of quotes throughout the text.

Who we spoke with during 2024/25

	Tamariki & Rangatahi	Whānau	Whānau and non-whānau caregivers		
	170	120	80		
Oranga Tamariki	Open Home Foundation	Iwi/Māori social service providers	Non-government organisations	Government agencies	
Kaimahi	Kaimahi	Kaimahi	Kaimahi	Kaimahi	
315	20	130	190	220	

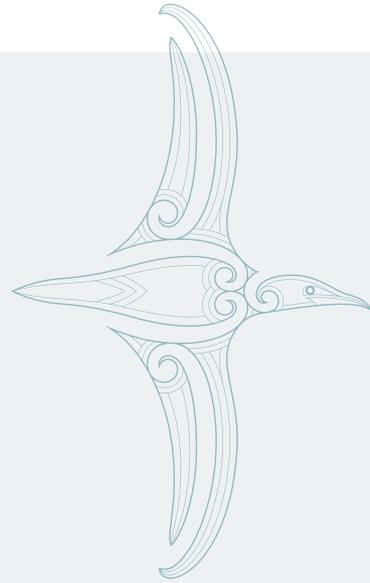
For this 2024/25 reporting period, we visited the following communities:





**Oranga Tamariki
compliance with Parts 1–5
of the NCS Regulations**





What Part 1 of the NCS Regulations requires

Part 1 of the NCS Regulations requires needs assessments for all tamariki and rangatahi when they come into the care or custody of the State or an approved iwi, cultural social service or child and family support service. Needs assessments identify the support tamariki and rangatahi need and are used to inform the development of a plan.

The NCS Regulations require all tamariki and rangatahi in care or custody to have a support plan that sets out how their needs will be met, including who will do what. The regulations are clear that a plan should be developed jointly with the tamariki and rangatahi, their whānau and their caregivers.

Part 1 of the NCS Regulations also requires regular visits to tamariki and rangatahi in care by their social worker to ensure their ongoing safety and wellbeing. Needs assessments and support plans must also identify how often the tamariki and rangatahi should be visited. This requirement recognises that visits need to be planned around individual needs rather than a standardised approach of engaging with children in care every eight weeks.

Summary of Oranga Tamariki compliance

There has been no improvement in the lead indicator measures that Oranga Tamariki uses to measure whether needs assessments and plans are completed and up to date and whether social worker visits are happening when they should.

Social worker visits to tamariki and rangatahi, at the frequency required by the NCS Regulations, have not improved

Social worker visits are vital opportunities to check on the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi in care as well as ensure that actions set out in plans are carried out and that the plans themselves are updated.

The Minister for Children has introduced quarterly reporting on areas where improvement was thought to be urgently needed. This includes reporting on the frequency of social worker visits. Since its introduction in September 2024, the measure used for social worker visits indicates sustained good practice – the first three quarters for 2024/25 showed that 95–96 percent of tamariki and rangatahi were visited at least once in the eight-week period prior to data collection.

However, the lead indicator used by Oranga Tamariki to measure compliance with the NCS Regulations shows that only two-thirds (66 percent) of tamariki and rangatahi in care were visited at the frequency in their plan or a proxy measure of every eight weeks over a 12-month period. While we recognise that the lead indicator does not account for everyday realities such as when visits need to be postponed and are rescheduled outside of the frequency identified in plans, this measure has not meaningfully improved over the five years that we have been reporting on compliance with the NCS Regulations.

In our regional engagements in 2024/25, we heard that concerns remain about the frequency of social worker visits. While tamariki and rangatahi generally said they see their social worker frequently enough, the kaimahi we spoke with had differing opinions. Group home kaimahi, in particular, expressed concern about the frequency of Oranga Tamariki social worker visits. Sometimes this is due to the group home being located away from the social worker's site such as in another region.

There has been no improvement in updating plans for tamariki and rangatahi

Oranga Tamariki lead indicators show no improvement in the proportion of tamariki and rangatahi in care having current plans.

Additionally, as we have previously reported, the lead indicators that Oranga Tamariki use are not aligned with what the NCS Regulations require. The regulations are clear that plans should be updated every six months, but Oranga Tamariki continues to use a 12-month measure.

We again heard this year that funding constraints and caseloads make it difficult for social workers to undertake good social work practice and work in the way they want to with tamariki and rangatahi in care. We also heard that a scarcity of services or higher thresholds to access services limit the effectiveness of needs assessments and plans.

In March 2025, Oranga Tamariki prioritised social worker visits and All About Me plans in its National Care Standards Action Plan, intended to improve the agency's compliance with the NCS Regulations. Oranga Tamariki has shared operational data indicating that, since 1 July 2025, its performance may be improving.

Some of what tamariki and rangatahi told us about needs assessments and plans

““

“The latest [social worker] has been the best ‘cos she actually calls and lets me know she is coming. Before that, I had only seen a social worker once or twice a year.” RANGATAHI

““

“I don’t even know if there is a relationship there at this point ... I never heard from [social worker]. I rung her and she never rings you back or answers. I never had contact with her for three months straight. I don’t know why she was never there when I needed her.” RANGATAHI

““

“My social worker is useless! ... she does her job I guess, contact my family and courts and that but I have to call her! Sometimes like my own lawyer. I reach out to her! [social worker].” RANGATAHI

““

“[I have a good relationship with my social worker] because she understood me when I didn’t think anyone else would have, when I really needed help, she would always be there, she just knows my situation well enough to do something about it.” RANGATAHI

““

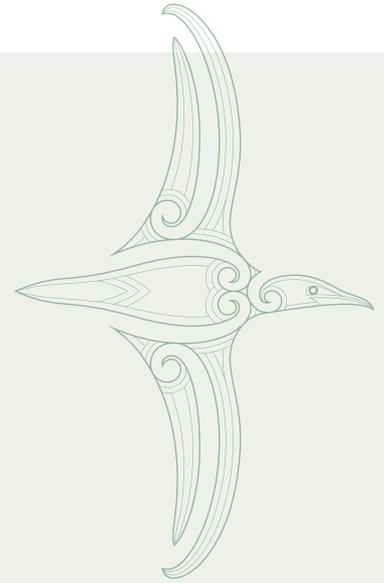
“Listen actually to what we’re saying ... Don’t just sit there and say, ‘yep, I understand’ and then don’t do what we say.” RANGATAHI

““

“[My last social worker would] pick me up, go out for hours. [She would ask] how things are going, how I am doing physically and mentally, what I needed, [she would] give me a full rundown, [cover off my] necessities and wants. With [current social worker], ‘You alive, want anything? Bye.’” RANGATAHI

““

“My voice was heard pretty clearly – there was no point in having that meeting if everyone else had to speak for me, I told them what I wanted – and I did.” RANGATAHI

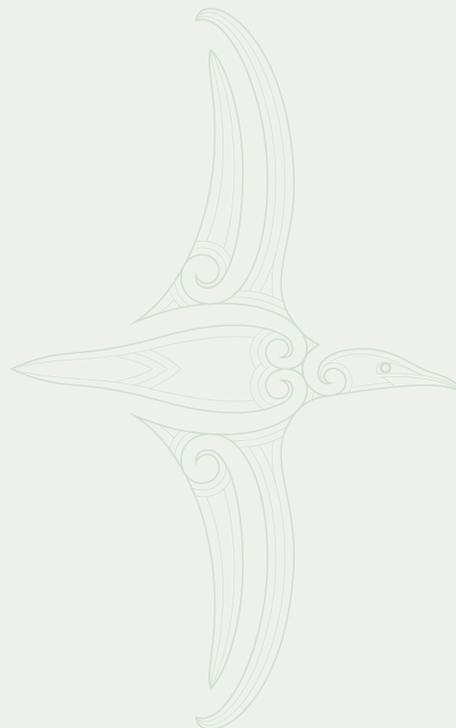


What Part 2 of the NCS Regulations requires

Part 2 of the NCS Regulations is about meeting the needs of tamariki and rangatahi while they're in care, as set out in their plans.

This includes financial and specialist support to maintain their whānau connections and to meet their cultural, recreational, health and education needs.

Tamariki and rangatahi in care must also be able to easily take their belongings with them when they move and be able to keep them safe.



Summary of Oranga Tamariki compliance

There has been no improvement in the lead indicators that Oranga Tamariki uses to measure whether the needs of tamariki and rangatahi in care are being met. Improvements in some year-to-year measures have not been sufficient to lift overall compliance.

Oranga Tamariki data does not show whether health and education needs are being met

As previously reported, the Oranga Tamariki lead indicators on health and education do not measure whether needs are met and compliance with the NCS Regulations is achieved. Oranga Tamariki is only able to assure itself that health and education needs are identified and written into plans by social workers.

There appears to have been no progress during the reporting period to ensure that tamariki and rangatahi in care have access to an annual health check as required by law.¹⁷ That said, our 2024/25 regional engagements show that access to primary healthcare for tamariki and rangatahi in care is generally good. We did hear of a scarcity of general practitioner (GP) services in some regions, but we recognise these are already well known and affect all population groups.

Access to mental health services and education continues to be a struggle for some tamariki and rangatahi in care

Mental health continues to be an area of concern for tamariki and rangatahi in care, with access to services being difficult. In our community engagements, we heard that kaimahi lack confidence in using SACS, Kessler and Suicide (SKS) screens¹⁸ despite Oranga Tamariki policy that requires the use of these screens to assess mental health need in many situations.

We remain deeply concerned that some tamariki and rangatahi in care continue to be denied an education. This includes some tamariki and rangatahi of compulsory school age. We continue to hear about tamariki and rangatahi spending school hours in Oranga Tamariki offices, and there appears to be no urgency for Oranga Tamariki or the Ministry of Education to work together to address this. Every single tamariki and rangatahi aged 6–15 in State care should be in education. The cost of a missed education is too great – both for individuals and for society – and the State must be better than this.

Compliance with Part 2 of the NCS Regulations is generally better in areas where Oranga Tamariki does not need to rely on other government agencies. Establishing, maintaining and strengthening whānau connection, for example, continues to be an area of good practice and high compliance.

¹⁷ As outlined in this section in the full report, Oranga Tamariki has advised that joint work with Health NZ is now underway.

¹⁸ SACS stands for Substances and Choices Scale. The SKS screens are designed to assess mental health and substance use issues among tamariki and rangatahi

Some of what tamariki and rangatahi told us about how their needs are met

““

“I can go to the doctor when [the nurses] don't know how to do something. [The doctor is] cool as.”

RANGATAHI

““

“Pretty grateful for the video calls. I worry about what happens on the outs [outside the residence] and that whānau are okay. I'm happy I get to do the video calls because sometimes I can't remember what they look like, since I have been in here a while.”

RANGATAHI

““

“I cut [whānau] all off. They were holding me back and I want to go forwards, not backwards.”

RANGATAHI

““

“When my brother and sister comes over, we play games. Have a card game, car game and Lego games. Play Roblox. We can play three player with [my] brother and sister on iPad, computer and phone.”

CHILD

““

“Ask the staff to speak to my nan. I get to speak to her as much as I want to.”

RANGATAHI

““

“They haven't put me in school since I've been in care. That was back when I was 11.”

RANGATAHI (AGED 16)

““

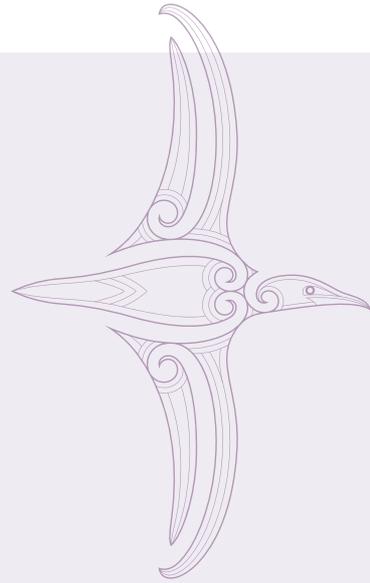
“It sucks, basically – I really want to go back to school.”

RANGATAHI

““

“I went to the dentist. It went good, I was only there for five minutes.”

RANGATAHI



What Part 3 of the NCS Regulations requires

Every caregiver must be assessed and approved before tamariki and rangatahi are placed in their care. Part 3 of the NCS Regulations sets out what must be done before someone can be approved as a caregiver. The same criteria need to be met for whānau and non-whānau caregivers.

To help prospective caregivers decide whether to progress with an assessment to become a caregiver, they must be given information so they and their household understand the role of a caregiver and what will be expected of them.

Once a caregiver is approved, the NCS Regulations require that they are supported to help them meet the needs of tamariki and rangatahi in their care.

The support they will receive must be set out in a support plan. The regulations stipulate that the support plan must be developed as soon as practicable after a decision is made to place tamariki and rangatahi with a caregiver and, if possible, before tamariki and rangatahi are placed with the caregiver. The regulations set out what caregiver support plans must include and how often they should be reviewed.

Summary of Oranga Tamariki compliance

The improvement in compliance with requirements to place tamariki and rangatahi with approved caregivers that we noted in our 2023/24 *Experiences of Care in Aotearoa* report has not been sustained.

Around a third of tamariki and rangatahi are placed with caregivers who are not approved

This year, compliance dropped back to previous levels where around two-thirds of tamariki and rangatahi are placed with an approved caregiver. Oranga Tamariki told us that this data comes from a smaller sample cohort, which makes it more susceptible to year-on-year variations and harder to track changes over time.

A shortage of pre-approved caregivers, coupled with a lengthy and complex approval process, is contributing to non-compliance with placing tamariki and rangatahi with approved caregivers.

There is a balance to be struck between ensuring tamariki and rangatahi are placed in safe environments where their needs are met and the time taken to achieve this.

Oranga Tamariki has taken steps that mean it can provisionally approve more caregivers with a history of offending, where Oranga Tamariki considers it safe for them to provide care for tamariki and rangatahi from their whānau. These changes have not yet led to a change in compliance.

While caregivers are more likely to have a support plan in place this year, they also want more support from Oranga Tamariki

This year, more caregivers had support plans in place. Evidence that Oranga Tamariki social workers are actioning those plans also increased again this year. This follows a commitment from Oranga Tamariki to prioritise support for caregivers following our 2022/23 *Experiences of Care in Aotearoa* report.

Despite this improvement, we continue to hear that caregivers want more support from Oranga Tamariki. Key areas include:

- providing up-to-date information on the needs of tamariki and rangatahi at the time of placement
- ensuring financial assistance meets the needs of caregivers and the tamariki in their care
- making training fit around the needs of caregivers and the tamariki and rangatahi they are caring for
- visiting caregivers as often as required.

The 2024 Oranga Tamariki caregiver survey identifies similar caregiver needs as those we identified in our regional engagements.

The existing priority on ensuring tamariki and rangatahi are placed with approved caregivers and improving support for caregivers, coupled with recent announcements by the Government about further improvements to support for caregivers¹⁹, leaves us hopeful that we may see improved compliance in future reporting periods. We will be looking at how these changes are being implemented and whether they are resulting in better support for caregivers as part of our ongoing monitoring.

¹⁹ Chhour, K. (2025, August 13). Improving support, encouraging new caregivers. beehive.govt.nz/release/improving-support-encouraging-new-caregivers

Some of what caregivers told us about how they are supported

““

“I went through a vigorous process to become a caregiver. There were a lot of meetings and hours. [But] we do have a lot of support.”

WHĀNAU CAREGIVER

““

“We got told about her disability but got limited information around how to work with her needs ... It was really rushed, especially not knowing anything or given any information. We had to do our own research on autism [to be able to work with the child and her needs].”

NON-WHĀNAU CAREGIVER

““

“We had no knowledge of [rangatahi] background. She was basically just handed over.”

NON-WHĀNAU CAREGIVER

““

“There’s a Caring Families programme, Puāwai, that talks about how to support children with disabilities, so we’re learning more and more and it’s fantastic.”

NON-WHĀNAU CAREGIVER

““

“My social worker, she’s really great. She checks in to make sure I’m okay especially around having the boys. She checks in on my week, says hope I enjoyed my week.”

NON-WHĀNAU CAREGIVER

““

“A girl we care [for] regularly had her dental appointment, but it got cancelled. We managed to find another dentist. Nana had to pay and went to Oranga Tamariki to be reimbursed, but that was a struggle.”

NON-WHĀNAU CAREGIVER

““

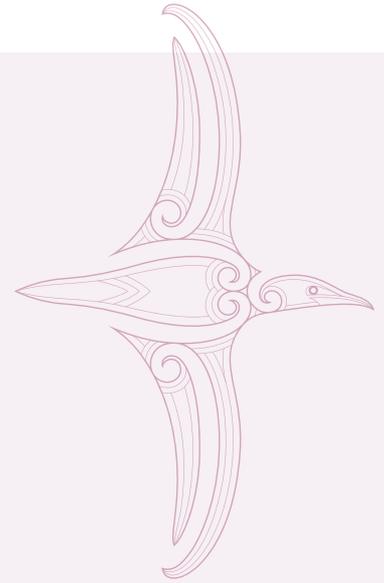
“Sometimes our board payments don’t arrive. We got part of a board payment. I rang and [Oranga Tamariki] said at least you got some of it. We’ve got bills and food shopping too. That happens a lot.”

FAMILY HOME CAREGIVER

““

“When kids are in your care [and there’s] no All About Me plan or exploration into his behaviour, [it’s not right].”

WHĀNAU CAREGIVER



What Part 4 of the NCS Regulations requires

Under Part 4 of the NCS Regulations, Oranga Tamariki and other custodial agencies are required to respond to allegations of abuse and neglect of tamariki and rangatahi in care. In carrying out this response, they must ensure that:

- the response is prompt
- information is recorded and reported in a consistent manner
- where appropriate, the child or young person is informed of the outcome
- appropriate steps are taken with the parties to the allegation, including a review of the caregiver plan.

Part 4 also requires that tamariki and rangatahi must be supported to express their views and contribute to their care experience.

They must:

- receive child-friendly information about what they're entitled to under the regulations
- be supported to speak up if they're not getting the care they are entitled to
- have a way to capture the important things that are happening in their lives
- have the opportunity to find out about their potential caregiver before they go and stay with them.

This section of our report focuses on the safety of tamariki and rangatahi in care and complaints and grievances.

Summary of Oranga Tamariki compliance

The number of tamariki and rangatahi found to have been abused or neglected has increased

The number of tamariki and rangatahi found to have been abused or neglected while in Oranga Tamariki care has risen from 507 in 2023/24 to 530 in this reporting period. This is in the context of the continuing reduction in the numbers of tamariki and rangatahi in Oranga Tamariki care.

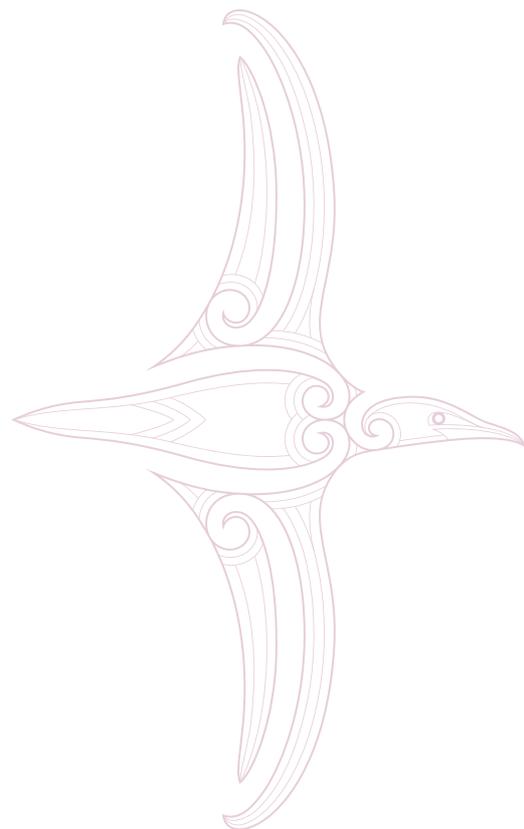
Overall, Oranga Tamariki performance in responding to allegations of abuse has remained similar to 2023/24

The proportion of caregiver plans reviewed in response to reports of concern increased to 81 percent.

Reviews of children’s plans and supports in place to address allegations of harm have also remained high over the past three years, averaging around 90 percent. Reviews of plans are critical to ensure the harm experienced is well understood by those providing ongoing care. This enables the provision of services and supports to address the impact of harm.

However, compliance is poorer in relation to the speed of response, and only one-third of tamariki and rangatahi are informed of the outcome of investigations. In line with this, we heard from tamariki and rangatahi that complaint and grievance processes take too long.

In our 2024/25 regional engagements, most tamariki, rangatahi, parents, whānau and caregivers said they understood the process for making a complaint or raising a grievance. This is an improvement on previous years.



Some of what tamariki and rangatahi told us about expressing their views and their safety in care

“

“No point [telling anyone]. The case leaders, the TLOs, they won't do anything. For all we know, they could be telling [the other staff] to give us another knock.” RANGATAHI

“

“[We] ask about the grievances and the food [at Youth Council]. Residence management is part of it. [Residence manager] is always there ... we all love [residence manager], she is cool as. [It does feel like] they don't care when [we raise things and] it takes a long time to kick in.” RANGATAHI

“

“Most [rangatahi] don't [raise a grievance]. Number one, no need to, and two, it's a snitch form, and three, it's a snitch form.” RANGATAHI

“

“[I] just talk to [practice leader] about [my concerns] ... she does everything she can for us.” CHILD

“

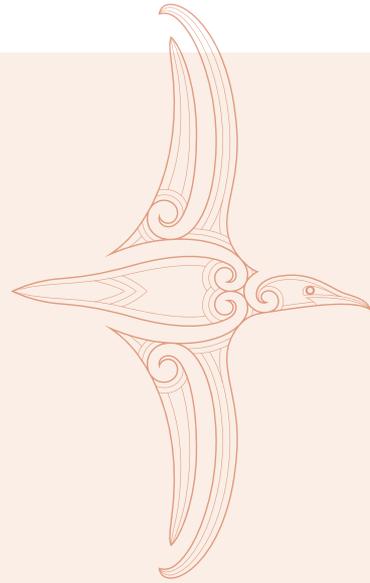
“I do [know my rights], cos of the people around me, they surround me, and they help me.” RANGATAHI

“

“Some [boys] gets bullied, and some don't ... They don't [talk to someone about it]. Because they know that they are going to get a hiding. [Their bullies being] snitched on makes things worser for them.” RANGATAHI

“

“Nothing [would make secure better]. It's just horrible. I don't think there's anything that could fix it. We've put grievances in and nothing ever changes.” RANGATAHI



What Part 5 of the NCS Regulations requires

Part 5 of the NCS Regulations requires that tamariki and rangatahi are well supported during care transitions. This includes transitions between different care arrangements, returning home after being in care and transitioning out of care into adulthood.

Tamariki and rangatahi must understand why they are moving and receive information about where they are moving to before the transition. An assessment and plan must be completed with them and other important people in their life or those involved in the transition – for example, their whānau, their current and/or future caregiver or kaimahi at the residence they are moving to.

Tamariki and rangatahi must also receive support based on their unique needs as identified in their assessment, and transition plans must be monitored during the transition.

For rangatahi who are transitioning to adulthood, an assessment of their life skills is required. This assessment considers whether rangatahi have the knowledge and skills they need to live independently and enables support to be put in place if they don't. The life skills assessment considers practical things like managing money, cooking and driving as well as domains like managing relationships and community support.

Rangatahi transitioning to adulthood must also know about and understand their entitlements once they leave care or custody. For example, rangatahi must be told of their entitlement to receive advice and assistance up until they turn 25.

Summary of Oranga Tamariki compliance

Inadequate planning undermines transitions in care

Similar numbers of tamariki and rangatahi are experiencing a transition in care year on year. More than half of these transitions continue to be unexpected. Where a transition is unexpected, there has usually been limited planning to help prepare tamariki and rangatahi for the transition. We also hear from whānau and caregivers that they are often not involved in planning for transitions.

Planning for placement changes is vital in providing the right support to tamariki, rangatahi, their whānau and caregivers. Some community providers spoke about extensive transition planning, involving a gradual transition with resources in place to support success.

Abuse and neglect of tamariki and rangatahi returning home has increased

The level of abuse and neglect of tamariki and rangatahi returning home has increased this year. Since we highlighted this significant area of risk in our *2023 Returning Home From Care* report²⁰ Oranga Tamariki has acknowledged that this is an area of focus. It is therefore concerning that so many tamariki and rangatahi are still returning home in an unplanned way and without the help they and their whānau need to support a successful return home.

Referrals to Transition Support Services are increasing, although some social workers do not understand their role in supporting transition to independence

Positively, the offer rate for the Transition Support Service (TSS) has increased again this year, and rangatahi engaged with the service continue to tell us it is a positive experience. However, in our regional engagements, we heard concerns that some Oranga Tamariki social workers do not understand their role in supporting rangatahi to transition to adulthood. TSS providers told us that this left them to fulfil the role of social workers, which reduced their ability to provide other support to rangatahi.

²⁰ Aroturuki Tamariki | Independent Children's Monitor. (2023). *Returning Home From Care*. aroturuki.govt.nz/assets/Reports/Returning-Home-From-Care-ACCESSIBLE-August2023.pdf

Some of what tamariki and rangatahi told us about moving between placements and leaving care

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“I was telling my social worker I wasn't ready to go home. I told my dad I wasn't ready, and they just chucked me back ... At least make it one night and then two days ... You don't just shove [returning kids back home] in there.” RANGATAHI

“

“It was shocking. I didn't know [I was moving], my family didn't know. They didn't notify my family, only on the day I was leaving.” RANGATAHI

“

“I've got my 18+ card and work kind of licences. When I was doing all those licences, there was a job course with Te Rarawa [and] Tupu. I got to go. I got all those licences from [Tupu]. I got my driver licence from here, Waitomo Papakāinga. I got all my licences from just around here. They're trying to help me get a full licence.” RANGATAHI

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“I have a passport and got my driver's licence with [transition worker's] help, plus I now have an IRD number and a bank account number. I told them I just want to focus on school for now.” RANGATAHI

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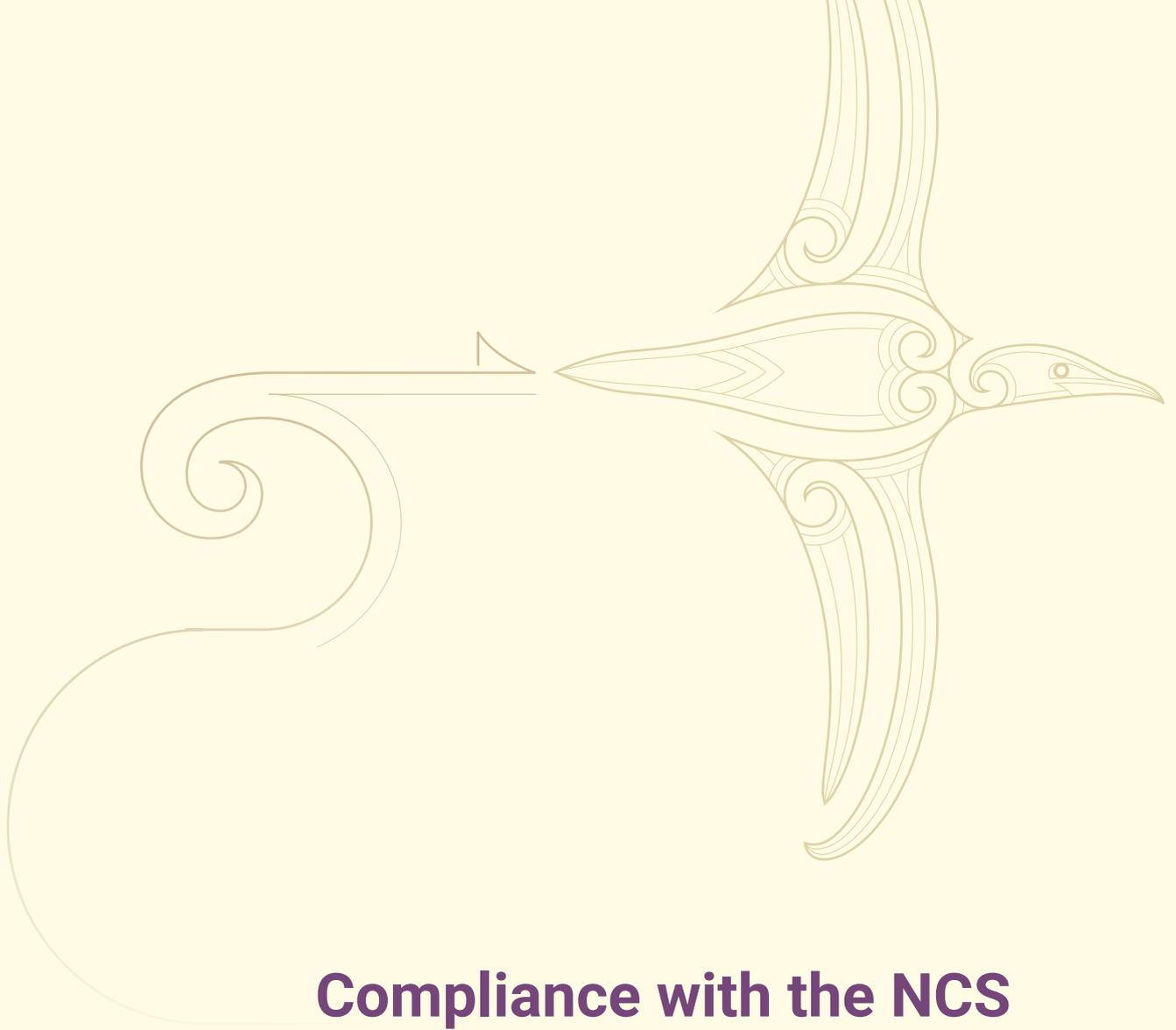
“I practically do it all by myself. Initially, I was in Auckland, in a group home with Reconnect, and I decided to come here so I ran away, packed my bag and came here ... I was already with nan, with no approval from Oranga Tamariki.” RANGATAHI

“

“You can't just chuck a kid somewhere and not have them in the plan, it was just weird.” RANGATAHI

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“I got informed a week or two before [that I was being] moved to my own separate place [then] I got a call the day before, 'pack up' and go right then.” RANGATAHI



**Compliance with the NCS
Regulations by:**

Open Home Foundation

Barnardos

Kōkiri Marae

Summary of Open Home Foundation compliance

Similar to 2023/24, Open Home Foundation is meeting most of the requirements of the NCS Regulations, and in some areas, it has shown consistently full or high compliance.

In 2023/24, we outlined several areas requiring further focus. Of these, we saw improved compliance this year in regular visits to tamariki and rangatahi, actively seeking updates on school attendance and close monitoring of provisionally approved foster parents. We will expect to see compliance continue to head in the right direction for these areas.

While more plans were reviewed this year after findings of abuse and neglect, this requirement

was complied with only 50 percent of the time. Compliance with other requirements for responding to abuse and neglect findings declined this year.

Compliance levels remained similar to last year for annual dental checks for tamariki aged over 2 and the provision of support required for successful transitions. These areas continue to need further focus and more attention.

An additional area of focus is for tamariki and rangatahi to be consistently provided with some information when they enter care, including about their rights to give feedback and to make a complaint and about advocacy services.

Summary of Barnardos compliance

As in previous years, Barnardos has given us examples of its compliance with the NCS Regulations in a summary report and considers itself fully compliant with the NCS Regulations.

We found Barnardos has provided evidence of compliance with the NCS Regulations, including support to address tamariki needs, caregiver and care placement assessment and support,

supporting tamariki to express their views and contribute to their care experience and supporting rangatahi to transition to independence.

Barnardos also provided examples of how it has continued to embed practice changes, including quality assurance processes, workforce capability, an update to the Barnardos Children's Charter, self-audit tools and improved funding data.

Summary of Kōkiri Marae compliance

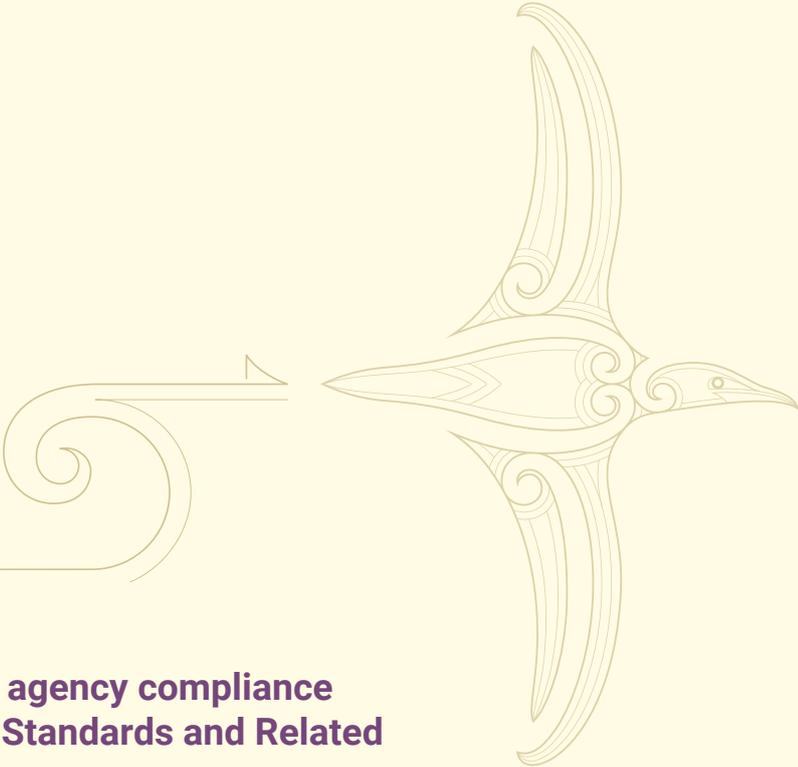
This is the second time we have reported on Kōkiri Marae. Kōkiri Marae was the first Māori organisation to take on custody and care of tamariki. Kōkiri Marae takes a holistic, ao Māori approach to its care and custody.

In our 2023/24 report, we noted that Kōkiri Marae was granted custody at a time when it was not fully equipped for compliance with the NCS Regulations. We also reported that, while Kōkiri Marae was supporting wellbeing and providing appropriate care, it was not fully compliant with the NCS Regulations. Kōkiri Marae also acknowledged last year that it had yet to fully embed compliance with the NCS Regulations in its policies and practices and that this was an area of rapid development.

This year, we have observed a marked increase in compliance with the NCS Regulations by Kōkiri Marae and in its understanding of its obligations under the NCS Regulations. Oranga Tamariki

completed a progress report for Kōkiri Marae in June 2025, which confirmed that Kōkiri Marae has policies in place to enable it to meet most of the NCS Regulations. Oranga Tamariki also commented in its progress report that Kōkiri Marae understands, and is able to support, tamariki needs well. Oranga Tamariki further commented that Kōkiri Marae is transitioning from using Oranga Tamariki practice tools to developing its own tools to replace those over time.

We found Kōkiri Marae has made good progress since our last report and is now meeting most of the NCS Regulations. We recognise that the practices of Kōkiri Marae will develop as it continues to introduce and embed its own practice tools and approaches into its care response. Kōkiri Marae is meeting the needs of tamariki in its custody and has evidenced its focus on ensuring that tamariki are connected to whānau.



Read our full report on agency compliance with the National Care Standards and Related Matters Regulations

Our full report is available to read or download on our website:
aroturuki.govt.nz/reports/eoc-24-25

It includes reporting on the compliance of all agencies with custody of tamariki and rangatahi: Oranga Tamariki, Open Home Foundation, Barnardos and Kōkiri Marae.

If you'd like a hard copy of our full report sent to you, please email us on info@aroturuki.govt.nz



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