



Experiences of Care in Aotearoa

Agency Compliance with the National Care Standards and Related Matters Regulations

Reporting period 1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023

The National Care Standards Regulations are the rules that make sure tamariki (children) and rangatahi (young people) are cared for and have what they need. We check that organisations that look after tamariki and rangatahi in care are following the rules.

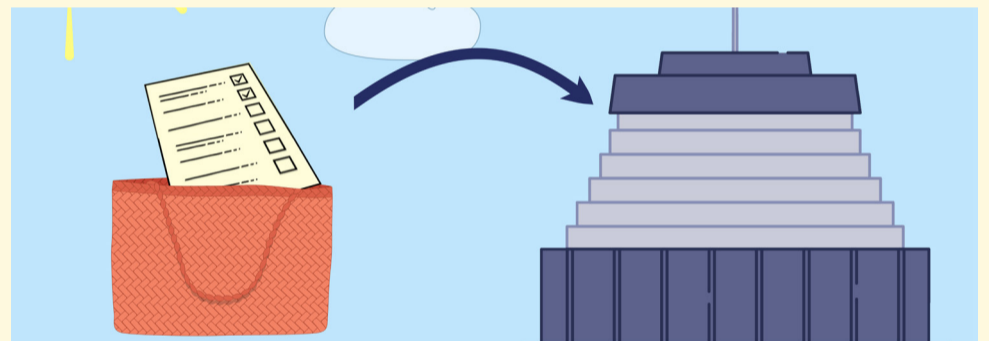


To find out what it's like to be in care, we spoke with tamariki and rangatahi, their whānau and caregivers.

We talked with social workers from the agencies who care for tamariki and rangatahi and we also met with people who support tamariki, such as teachers, police, doctors, nurses and youth workers.

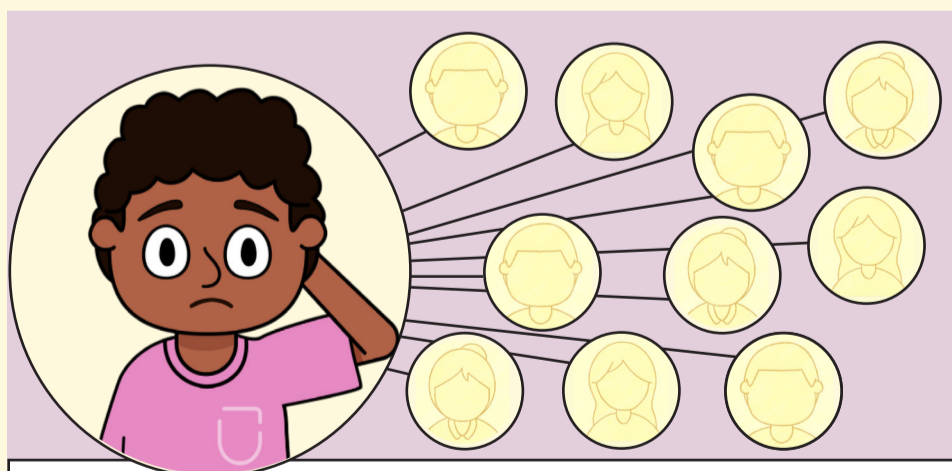


We heard from more than 160 tamariki and rangatahi and over 1,000 other people about how things are going for tamariki and rangatahi in care.



We also gathered data about how well the rules were being followed. Once we collected enough information, we wrote a report that went to the Government. We put it on our website so that everyone can read it.

The main things we learnt about care are:



Social workers are not able to see tamariki and rangatahi as often as they should. There has been no improvement in visits over the past three years. Changes in social worker are also common, on average tamariki and rangatahi will have ten social workers during their time in care.



Tamariki and rangatahi are more involved in decisions about them. There has been an improvement in tamariki and rangatahi being involved in plans and decisions made about their lives. However, we heard from some tamariki, rangatahi and whānau that they don't feel listened to.

Tamariki and rangatahi are less likely to move between homes. On average, tamariki and rangatahi will have four different caregivers while in care. However, Oranga Tamariki data shows that tamariki and rangatahi are moving from placement to placement less than they have in the past. Some of the reasons why tamariki and rangatahi need to change caregivers may be because the right home isn't available, the caregiver might not get all the information they need and there may not be respite available when tamariki and rangatahi and their caregivers need a break.

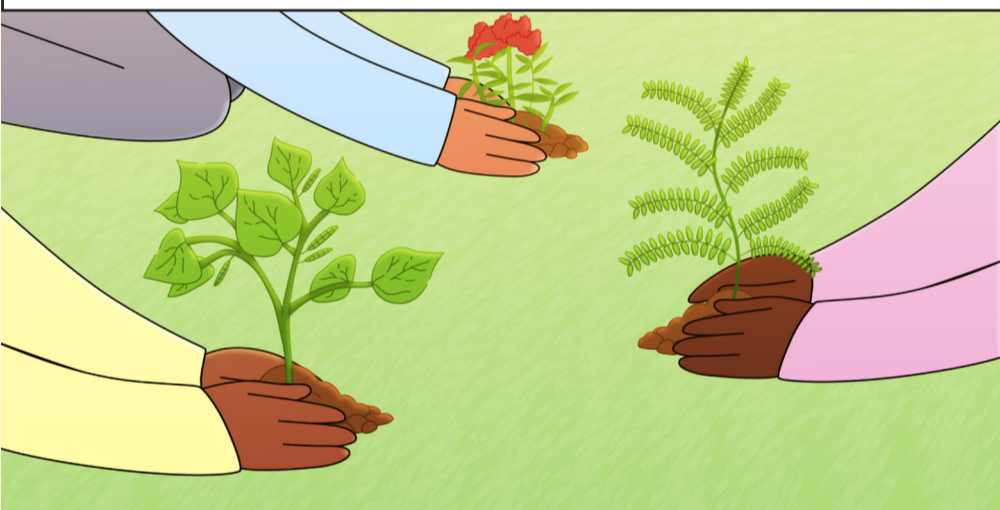


Fewer rangatahi leaving care are being supported. Only some rangatahi had a life skills assessment as part of their move to independence. Even though more rangatahi were offered a referral to transition services, we heard that referrals were often too late, and some rangatahi didn't have a transition plan at all.

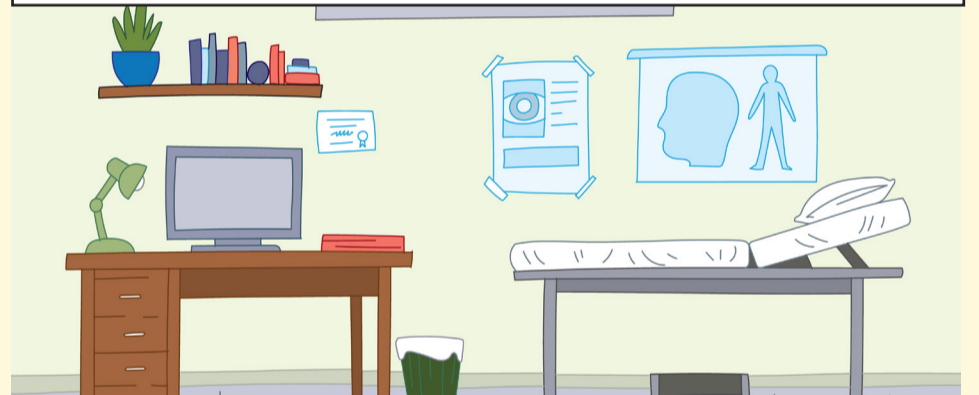
Caregivers continue to need more support. Social workers are visiting caregivers more and creating caregiver support plans. However, the plans don't always get followed and caregivers still don't get the support they need.



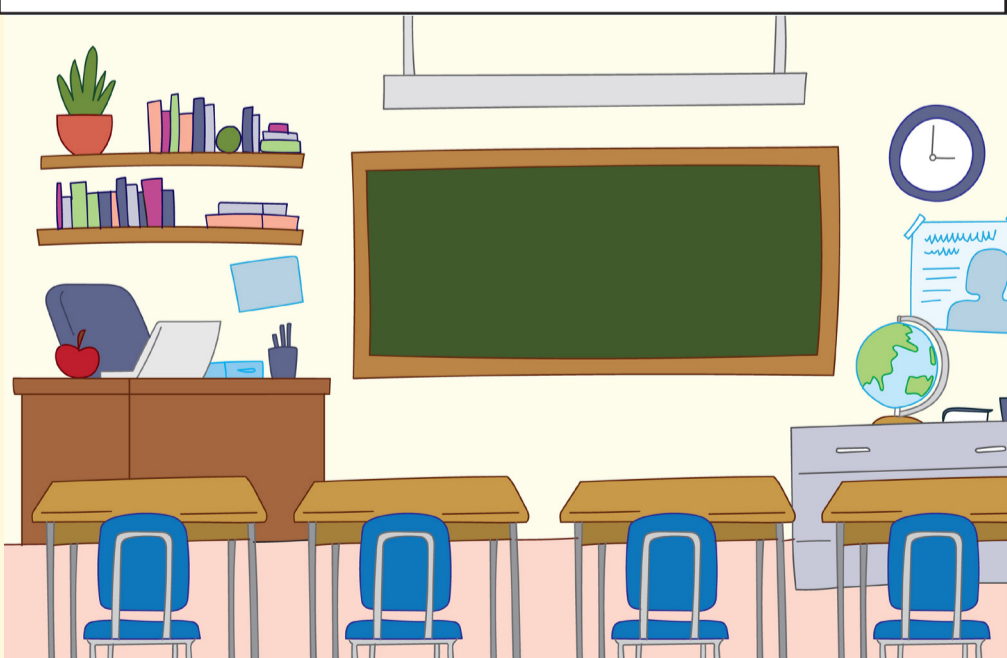
Organisations working together. Over the past three years, we found that organisations that are meant to support tamariki and rangatahi in care don't always work together in the way that they should. However, this year we have started to hear some good examples of how they are coming together to get tamariki and rangatahi the support they need.



Getting support for health and wellbeing. It is not always recorded when tamariki and rangatahi in care are going to the doctor or dentist. Even though tamariki and rangatahi may have plans around their health, we do not know if those plans are followed. We heard how hard it is to get help when tamariki and rangatahi need to see someone about their mental health, and Oranga Tamariki couldn't tell us how many tamariki and rangatahi had mental health checks when they were feeling really low.



Getting help with education. More education needs assessments are taking place, but it's not clear if tamariki and rangatahi are getting extra help at school as a result. Oranga Tamariki can't tell us how often tamariki and rangatahi are going to school but Open Home Foundation can for half of its tamariki and rangatahi.



Oranga Tamariki is starting to know if it is following the rules. Oranga Tamariki still needs to improve how it checks if it is following the rules to meet the needs of tamariki and rangatahi in its care. Open Home Foundation has a good way of checking it is meeting the needs of tamariki and rangatahi in its care.

