

Ministry for Vulnerable Children,
Oranga Tamariki

BRIEFING TO THE INCOMING MINISTER

OCTOBER 2017



**ORANGA
TAMARIKI**
Ministry for Vulnerable Children

FOREWORD

Welcome to the children's portfolio. I look forward to working with you to support the implementation of your priorities and objectives over the next term of Government.

The Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki supports children and young people in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future, as a result of their family environment or their own complex needs. We also work with young people who have offended, or are likely to offend.

We are currently undertaking a major system-wide transformation programme to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable tamariki.

This briefing sets out the core roles of the Ministry, and identifies decisions that will be required from you over the next few months. It then describes our current programme of reforms, and concludes by looking ahead to key challenges and opportunities.



Gráinne Moss

Chief Executive

Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki

CORE ROLES OF THE MINISTRY FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN, ORANGA TAMARIKI

01. The Ministry's core roles include:

- responding to and supporting children and young people, and their families, when they are at risk due to abuse, neglect, self-harm, or behavioural issues
- providing care and protection to children and young people who are in need of it
- delivering family-led decision-making to address care and protection concerns or offending by children and young people
- providing care and supervision for children and young people who have offended or are alleged to have offended
- purchasing services for vulnerable children – this accounts for around a third of our budget
- managing adoptions in New Zealand, including inter-country applications.

02. The Ministry is developing a new operating model that has five core services, which encompass and expand on its core statutory roles. The five core services are: prevention, intensive intervention, youth justice, care support and transition support.

03. We also provide sector leadership of the system to support vulnerable children, through the following new legislative functions:

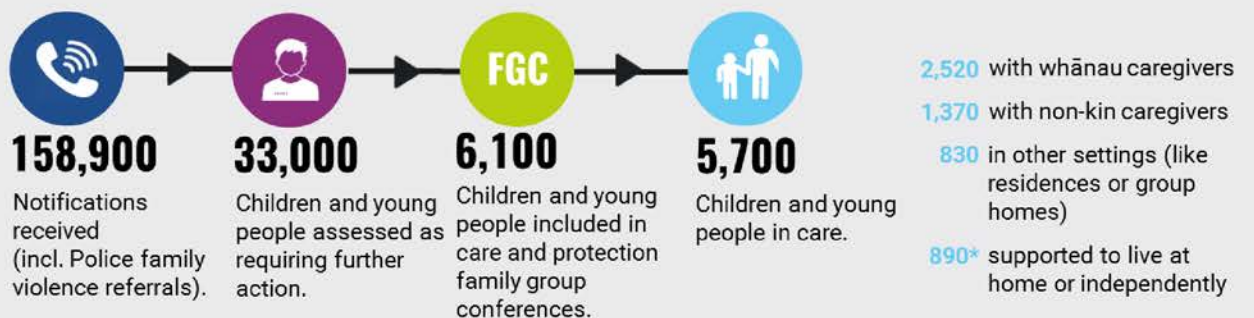
- co-ordinating the Ministry's prevention and early intervention services with other similar Government-funded services (to come into force by 1 July 2019 at the latest)
- ensuring those services operate under a shared strategy and set of outcomes, that there is a common approach to evaluation, and that services are responsive to children's needs (to come into force by 1 July 2019 at the latest)
- co-ordinating the development of the Vulnerable Children's Plan and ensuring the plan has a cross-agency focus on the vulnerable children of most interest to the Ministry.

04. We primarily work with vulnerable children and young people up to 18 years of age and provide some support to older young people who have been in our care. When recent legislative changes come into force, we will be able to provide support for those who have been in our care right up to the age of 25. We have a particular focus on improving outcomes for Māori children who are over-represented in our system; 69 percent of children in State care at the end of June 2017 identified as Māori.

CARE AND PROTECTION

05. Children and young people in need of care and protection are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, harm, ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation. Children and young people come into contact with the Ministry after a concern is raised about their safety or wellbeing (a 'notification').

We receive notifications from the Police, health professionals, teachers, community-based organisations, and concerned family members, neighbours or members of the public. These come through to our contact centre or to sites.



In the year to 30 June 2017 (rounded)

At 30 June 2017 (rounded)

* Subtotals sourced from different datasets, so do not total to exactly 5,700

06. Our job is to make sure these children and young people receive the care and protection they need to be safe from harm. We work with families to help them to provide a safe home for their children. In many cases, families can achieve this with advice and support services, without the need for further intervention.

07. For more serious or complex cases, we hold a family group conference (FGC).¹ This is where key people involved with a child or young person, including their family and whānau, agree on a plan to keep the child safe and identify the support needed to achieve this.

08. Sometimes it's not safe for a child or young person to continue to live at home. For these children and young people, we work to ensure they have a safe, stable and loving place to live; where possible within their whānau, hapū, iwi or family group. This often involves applying to the Family Court for orders that enable the Chief Executive to make decisions, and co-ordinate and fund plans for that child or young person. At the end of June 2017, around 53 percent of children in out-of-home care lived in family/whānau placements, 29 percent were in non-family/whānau placements, 11 percent were placed with Child and Family Support Services, two percent were in family home placements, three percent were in other supported accommodation and fewer than one percent were in a residential placement.²

1. An FGC is a statutory process under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. The FGC has functions and powers set out in the Act, including the power to make decisions and recommendations and formulate plans.

2. Percentages of children in out-of-home care in kin placements in comparable jurisdictions include 49% in NSW and 55% in Victoria (<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/children-care>); however, these Australian figures include informal care placements so are not directly comparable to New Zealand data.

YOUTH JUSTICE

09. Young offenders referred to us by the Police or the Youth Court make up our youth justice population. These are primarily young people aged 14–16 years, but can include children from the age of 10 in some circumstances.

Following recent legislative change, 17-year-olds will be included in the system by July 2019 (except for those charged with specified serious offences).



In the year to 30 June 2017 (rounded)

10. The purpose of the youth justice system is to prevent children and young people from offending or reoffending and to hold them to account for their offending behaviour. The New Zealand youth justice system aims to rehabilitate and reintegrate young offenders and support their families, while holding young offenders accountable and considering the interests of victims. Our system emphasises diversion from courts and custody.

11. We run the youth justice FGC process. This gives the child or young person who has offended or is alleged to have offended, along with their whānau, victims and professionals, an opportunity to make decisions and plans to address the offending or other needs. We help ensure that plans agreed by FGCs or the Youth Court are given effect. We provide residential care for young people who have been detained in custody while their Youth Court matters are progressed or are subject to a court order requiring residential care.

ADOPTIONS

12. We manage the adoption process for children born in New Zealand and in relation to inter-country adoptions. We also enable adopted people and birth parents to access information about an adoption they were a party to. Numbers have fallen for both domestic and inter-country adoptions in recent years; in the year to 30 June 2017, we undertook 247 applicant assessments for domestic and intercountry adoptions, and worked with 94 birth parents regarding adoption.

PURCHASING AND CO-ORDINATING SERVICES FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN

13. We work with the non-government sector to provide services needed by vulnerable children, young people and their families and whānau. Early and intensive intervention for vulnerable families includes Family Start and programmes for social workers in schools.³ Services for those in the statutory system include specialist caregiving and support for young people leaving care. We also invest a small amount on broader prevention initiatives such as the SKIP (Strategies with Kids / Information for Parents) programme.

14. We help to co-ordinate support for highly vulnerable children and young people and their families through the Children's Teams and Strengthening Families models. These models enable local professionals to work together to address the full range of a family's needs in order to reduce their vulnerability.

LEADING GOVERNMENT-WIDE RESPONSES TO VULNERABLE CHILDREN

15. A number of other government agencies provide services to address the vulnerability of children and young people, and have opportunities to identify and address vulnerability early before it escalates. We are working with these agencies to establish a more co-ordinated approach to ensure vulnerable children, young people and their families and whānau are provided the assistance they need, when they need it. This is supported by recent legislative reforms that help clarify the role of this Ministry in the wider system for responding to vulnerable children (see paragraph 3).

3. Includes Social Workers in Schools (SWiS), Multi Agency Support Services in Secondary Schools Service (MASSiSS) and Youth Workers in Secondary Schools (YWISS).

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

16. The Minister for Children currently has assigned responsibility, under the authority of the Prime Minister, for the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, which governs the operation of New Zealand's care, protection and youth justice systems. The responsible Minister has a number of specific statutory duties under that Act. The Minister also has responsibilities under the Children's Commissioner Act 2003.

17. The Minister for Children also currently has some responsibilities relating to the wider system for responding to vulnerable children. These include:

- assigned responsibility for Part 1 of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014, which enables the responsible Minister, after consulting the children's Ministers,⁴ to set Government priorities for improving the wellbeing of vulnerable children. Once these are set, chief executives of the children's agencies must develop a draft Vulnerable Children's Plan setting out how they will work together to achieve these priorities. The Minister approves the draft plan after consulting the children's Ministers. The chief executives must then report annually on progress in implementing the plan
- under recent amendments to the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, a requirement to report to Parliament by 1 July 2022, and every three years thereafter, on whether legislation, government policy and other accountability arrangements ensure that the needs of the children and young people with whom the Ministry is concerned are met, including reporting specifically on Māori children and young people, and whether any amendments to those arrangements are necessary or desirable.

18. More details on the responsibilities currently assigned to the Minister for Children are set out in Appendix 1.



4. Children's Ministers are those Ministers responsible for children's agencies: this Ministry and the Ministries of Education, Health, Justice and Social Development, and the New Zealand Police.

UPCOMING DECISIONS

19. There are a number of areas where we will be seeking your decisions, in the next six months, to advance our current work programme. The following areas relate to changes recently made to the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (the Act):

- **Care standards:** by February 2018, we will provide you with proposals for the content of care standards regulations.
- **Residential settings:** by February 2018, we will recommend an approach to review aspects of the regulatory framework in relation to our residential care settings. (This will include a review of the Oranga Tamariki (Residential Care) Regulations 1996). We need a review to ensure the system can better support and enable a focus on community-based residential options, including community-based options for remand.
- **Transition to independence:** by March 2018, we will recommend an approach for regulations to support the establishment of the new transitions service. The Act enables the development of regulations on transitions advice and assistance and the right for a young person to remain living with a caregiver.

20. We will be seeking your direction on a number of matters that have Budget implications. As soon as practicable, we will discuss possible priorities for funding and seek your direction on the development of detailed Budget proposals. In November 2017, we will provide you with a report on baseline expenditure and recommendations for an investment package for reforms. This represents an important opportunity to decide your priority initiatives for Budget 2018 and to canvass these with your colleagues.

21. Over your first three months in the role, we will also be providing you with more detailed briefings and seeking your direction on a range of policy, governance, service design and operational issues relating to the new operating model.

OUR STAFF AND STRUCTURE

22. The Ministry has 54 sites around the country, and four care and protection residences and four youth justice residences.

23. As at 30 June 2017, we employed 3,423 people, across three clusters:⁵

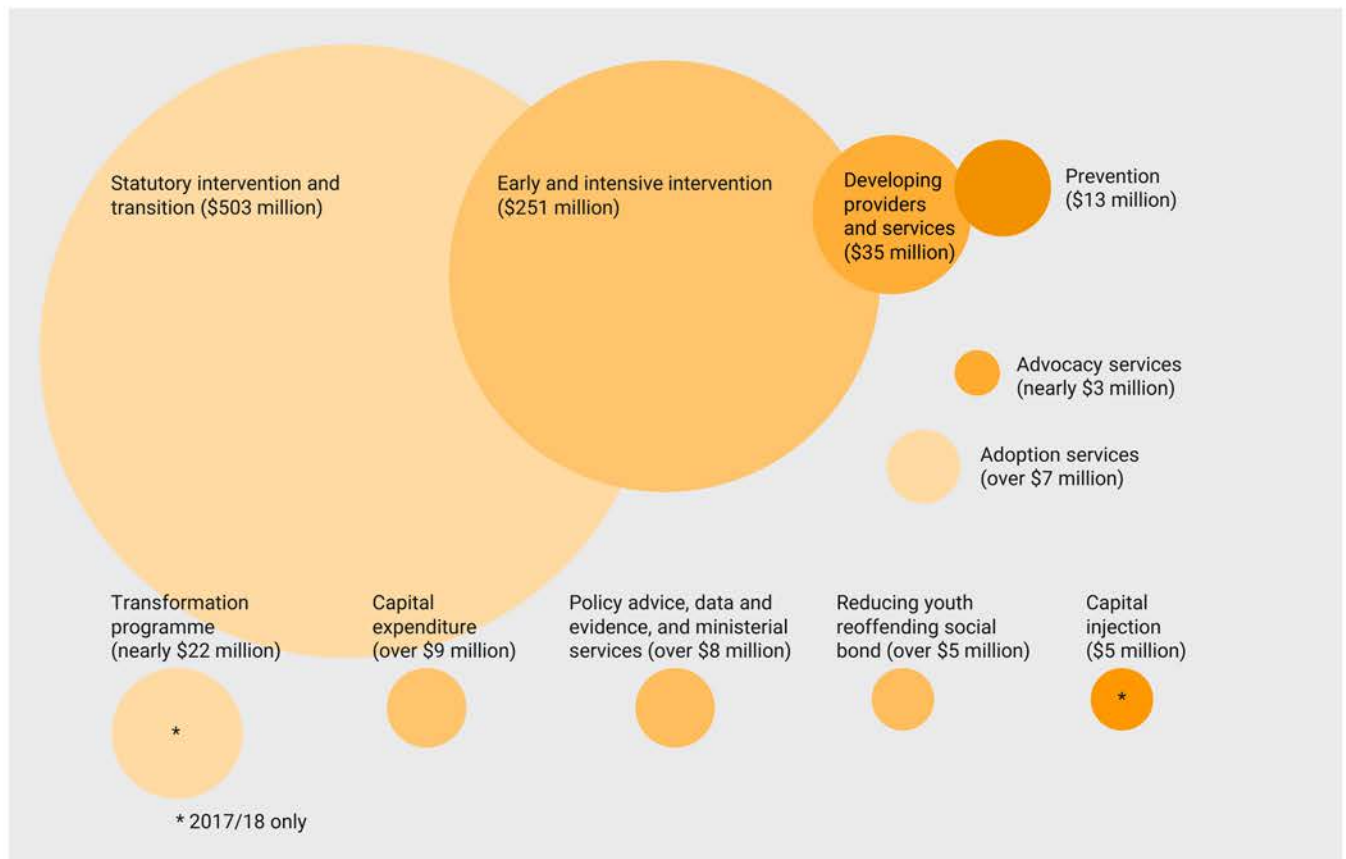
Service Delivery	3,061	Services for Children and Families, Youth Justice, Care Services and Partnering for Outcomes; includes 1,366 frontline social workers
Enabling Functions	248	Policy, research and corporate functions
Voices and Quality	114	Oversight of professional practice and support for children's voices and service design

24. Seventy-five percent of our staff are women. Twenty-six percent identify as Māori and 14 percent as Pacific. Eighty-eight percent work in local or regional sites, with the remainder in national office. The Ministry's leadership team is set out in Appendix 2.

5. Permanent and short term staff (figure excludes casuals, contractors and those on unpaid leave).

OUR VOTE

Vote Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki 2017/18:
Over \$860 million



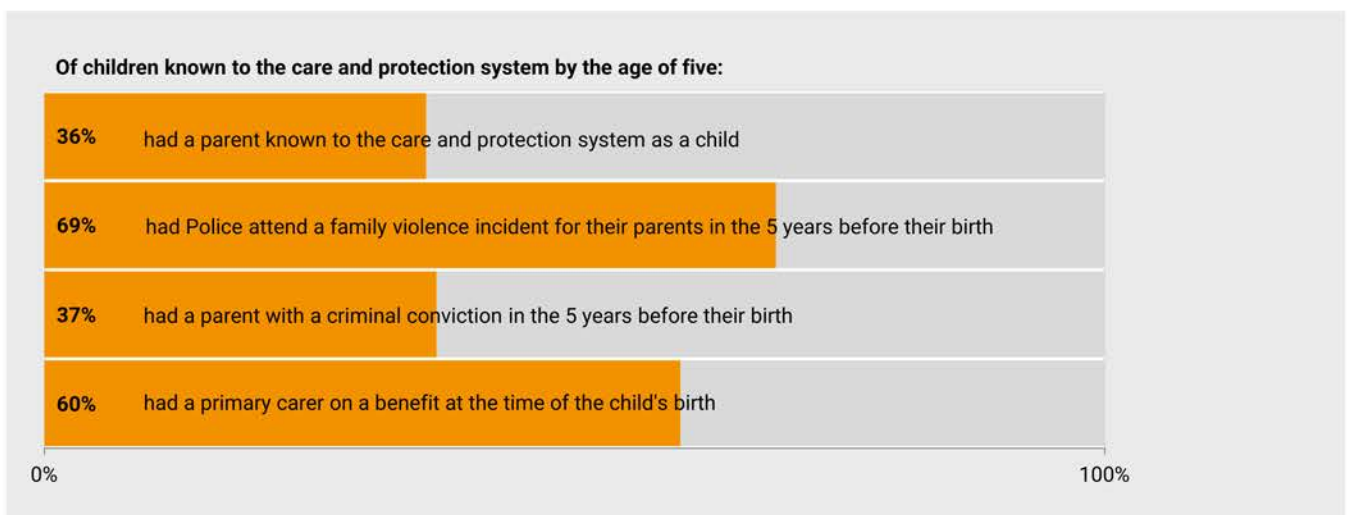
Note: Approximately 70 percent of the Vote funding is for frontline services, the remainder is for enabling services, which include corporate services, centralised shared services, depreciation, capital charges and property related costs. This calculation excludes capital expenditure and non-departmental funding.

OUR BACKGROUND AND REFORM STORY

The extent and nature of child vulnerability mean that we work at the forefront of New Zealand's most complex social issues.

25. Data indicate that two in 10 children and young people in any birth cohort will come to the attention of the statutory care and protection or youth justice systems in childhood; of these, one quarter will require intensive support and a statutory response.⁶

26. Most of the children and young people known to the care and protection system are living in families with multiple and complex needs, such as the combined impacts of long-term unemployment, low income, unaddressed physical and mental health needs, parental alcohol and drug addiction, and family violence. The multiple needs facing vulnerable families mean that we need an effective system-wide response.



Data source: Expert Panel Final Report: Investing in New Zealand's Children and their Families, p42.

27. Some cohorts of children and young people are over-represented in the care and protection and youth justice systems. Māori make up around half of those who come into contact with the system and are twice as likely to be referred to statutory services compared to the total population.⁷ Disabled children and young people are also over-represented.⁸

6. Based on the Modernising Child, Youth and Family Expert Panel's analysis of MSD's 2012 study, Children's contact with MSD services.

7. Modernising Child, Youth and Family Expert Panel (2015) Expert Panel Final Report: Investing in New Zealand's Children and their Families, p43.

Available from <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/investing-in-children/investing-in-children-report.pdf>

8. Expert Panel Final Report, p45.

CHILDREN WHO NEED STATUTORY INTERVENTION OFTEN HAVE POOR LONG-TERM LIFE OUTCOMES

28. Evidence shows that those who experience abuse, neglect and other adverse childhood events are more likely to experience poor life outcomes, such as low educational achievement, unemployment, and/or involvement in the adult corrections system.⁹

REVIEW AND OVERHAUL OF THE OPERATING MODEL

29. In 2015, an independent expert panel found that the care, protection and youth justice systems did not sufficiently meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people nor do enough to improve their long-term life outcomes.¹⁰ The findings were informed by hearing directly from young people who had experience of the agency.

30. In March 2016, the previous Government agreed to major State care reforms and a bold and urgent overhaul of the agency to improve long-term outcomes for New Zealand's most vulnerable children. In April 2017, the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki was established as a dedicated agency focused on vulnerable children and young people.

31. There is a significant programme of reform underway to help achieve better outcomes for vulnerable children. The changes involve our Ministry and the wider system for responding to vulnerable children, and engaging the New Zealand public. The Ministry is actively and regularly seeking the voices of care-experienced children and young people to improve current services and to shape the future.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICES

Below are excerpts from children and young people who have shared their experiences and views of the care, protection and youth justice systems:

"I'm inspired to be more than what anybody thinks."

"No-one should make promises to CYF kids if they're actually not going to live up to it."

"There is a lot of stigma with being a CYFS child."

"That's all I want. Love, affection and support."

"Look widely for support people – it might be their teacher, family, youth worker."

"Support the young person to excel and become a stronger person, help them to take what they've got and make it better."

9. Expert Panel Final Report, drawing on studies by Professor David Fergusson et al.
10. Expert Panel members were: Dame Paula Rebstock (Chair), Mike Bush, Peter Douglas, Duncan Dunlop, Helen Leahy and Professor Richie Poulton.

The new model is founded on six building blocks

32. Our six building blocks describe areas in which the system is intended to operate in a fundamentally different way. The development of some of the building blocks is more advanced than others and it will take time for them all to be fully realised. Implementing the new operating model is expected to take four to five years, and achieving improved outcomes will be a longer-term process. The building blocks are:

- **A child-centred system:** We are working to embed the voices of children and young people into decision-making at both individual and system levels.
- **High aspirations for Māori children and young people:** We are working to reduce the over-representation of Māori children and young people in our system. We will have high aspirations for Māori children and young people, and will work closely with whānau, hapū and iwi to make it happen.
- **An investment approach:** There is strong evidence on ways early intervention can improve future outcomes. We'll consider a lifetime view of the wellbeing of children and aim to intervene early to address their needs.
- **Strategic partnerships:** We recognise that our partners are often well placed to help children and young people in ways that we can't. We will actively build bridges between our partners, and encourage a deeper commitment and more shared responsibility.
- **Practice framework:** We're developing agency and system-wide, trauma-informed practice frameworks to guide ourselves and others.
- **Engaging all New Zealanders:** We are working to raise awareness and encourage all New Zealanders to step forward to support vulnerable children.

Legislative reforms have been made to support the new operating model

33. Recent legislative reforms underpin and give effect to the new model. In 2016, a first set of reforms to the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (the Act):

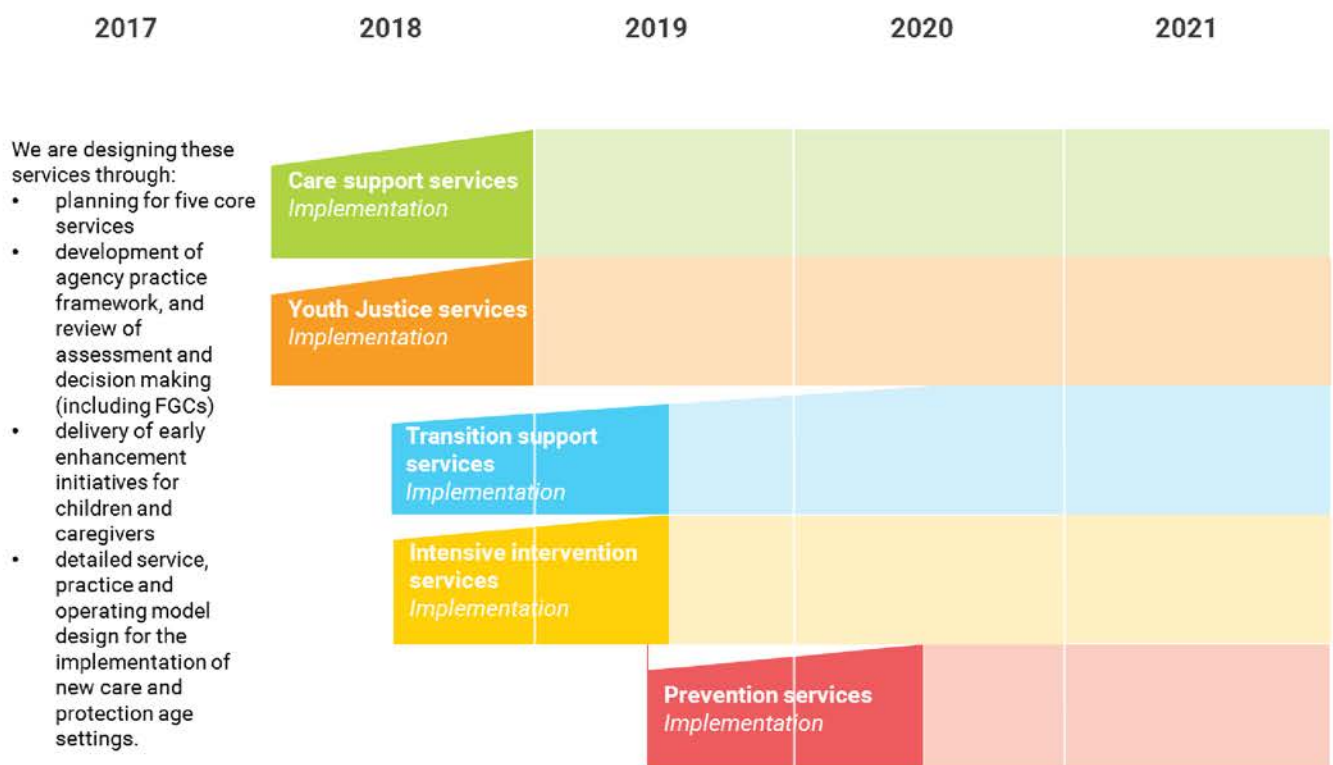
- extended the statutory care and protection system to include 17-year-olds
- strengthened obligations to support children's and young people's participation and supported the establishment of independent advocacy services
- enabled a broader range of professionals to perform functions under the Act.

34. A second set of legislative changes was passed in 2017. Most of these are due to take effect by 1 July 2019 at the latest. The changes include:

- amended purposes and principles of the Act to better ensure children and young people are at the centre of decision-making, while considering them within the context of their families, whānau, hapū, iwi, family groups, and broader networks and communities
- new duties on the chief executive to provide a practical commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi, including a requirement on the chief executive to publicly report at least annually on specific outcomes for Māori children and young people who come to the Ministry's attention, and the steps to be taken in the immediate future
- a requirement for the Minister to recommend the making of regulations, by 13 July 2018, that will set out actions to be taken to ensure children and young people in care or custody receive an appropriate standard of care
- provisions allowing young people in care to remain or return to living with a caregiver until the age of 21, with transition support and advice available up to age 25
- new information sharing provisions intended to promote a culture of child-centred information sharing
- an extension to the youth justice system to include most 17-year-olds
- a requirement for the Ministry to have child-centred complaints mechanisms in place
- the repeal of provisions to voluntarily place severely disabled children in care – we are working with the Ministry of Health to design our future response for these children.

TRANSFORMING OUR SERVICE DELIVERY

35. The diagram illustrates how we are sequencing the design of these services over the next five years.



We are actively developing a child-centred system

36. Core elements of a child-centred approach that are already in place include:

- VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai, an independent advocacy and connection service for care-experienced children and young people
- the new Tamariki Advocate / Deputy Chief Executive Voices of Children role, to ensure child-centredness is a core feature of how the Ministry works
- a centralised compliments, complaints and suggestions process.

We are making early improvements to the design of our services

37. These include:

- **Prevention and intensive intervention:** strengthening existing services; for example, by expanding Family Start to provide national coverage, and integrating Children's Teams into the Ministry and expanding their reach
- **Youth justice:** trialling and expanding evidence-based programmes to reduce reoffending, exploring opportunities to better respond to young people who have committed serious and multiple offences, opening two community-based youth justice homes, and piloting a residential holistic assessment centre in South Auckland
- **Care support:** putting in place a Caregiver Guidance and Advice Line, prototyping caregiver peer support networks, providing trauma training and resources, creating more specialist Caregiver Social Worker positions, and providing targeted support for people caring for high needs children and young people. We are also reviewing financial support for people caring for vulnerable children
- **Transition support:** designing new services for young people transitioning out of care, and youth justice focused transition support services for eligible young people.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICES

Excerpts from the co-design process for site redevelopment. Many talked about their engagement with staff as well as the aesthetic and physical aspects of the site.

"I like seeing my social worker."

"Sometimes you tell your social worker something private that you don't want your caregivers to know about, but they tell them anyway."

"My social worker is too busy to spend time with me. I know she is busy, but sometimes it would be cool if we could just hang out."

We are focused on improving outcomes for vulnerable Māori children

38. Initial changes we have made to create a system that understands and better meets the needs and aspirations of tamariki Māori include:

- making improved outcomes for Māori a core accountability in the new system performance framework for the Ministry
- assessing how to implement the principles of mana tamaiti (tamariki), whakapapa and whanaungatanga across the Ministry ¹¹
- establishing key positions across the agency to ensure the Ministry focuses on improving outcomes for Māori
- at the frontline, work is also underway to support increased whānau participation, to help identify whānau connections for children and young people, as well as to support whānau to develop and own realistic solutions for children and young people.

We want to improve services for Pacific children

39. A Pacific unit has been established to work across the Ministry to build expertise in cultural responsiveness. The Ministry has also established a Pacific Panel to provide thought leadership and champion the engagement process with Pacific stakeholders.

New approaches to working with service providers

40. We are refreshing our strategy for working with community-based organisations, focusing on developing the service delivery partnership model and commissioning approach. We are reviewing the match of supply and demand so we can better meet service gaps.

Engaging the wider New Zealand public

41. The Ministry has recently launched a Facebook page to engage directly with people and demonstrate its values, and has released a series of videos featuring care-experienced young people sharing their stories about help they received from members of the community. We are also planning to use social media to raise public awareness of the importance of the role of caregivers as part of a broader caregiver recruitment strategy.

Changes to the wider system for responding to vulnerable children

42. New legislative provisions, that come into force by 1 July 2019 at the latest, establish the basis for a more effective and co-ordinated system-wide response for vulnerable children and young people and their families. The Chief Executive will be required to co-ordinate the Ministry's prevention and early intervention services with other similar Government-funded services.

43. Changes to the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 make the Chief Executive responsible for co-ordinating the development of the Vulnerable Children's Plan, and change the requirements for the contents of the plan to ensure a cross-agency focus on the vulnerable children of most interest to the Ministry.

44. As well as these legislative changes, the Vulnerable Children's Board, established in 2012, now has responsibility for providing overarching cross-agency governance and oversight of the transformation of New Zealand's vulnerable children's system.

11. Amendments to the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (not yet in force) include a requirement to ensure departmental policies, practices and services have regard to these concepts.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

45. Stabilising our current operations is important for improving the Ministry's performance and service quality. The Ministry has inherited some longstanding issues with current services. In order to provide credible leadership for the wider system, the Ministry needs to become an exemplar of good practice. We are reprioritising funding and leadership expertise to assist sites with significant performance challenges.

46. Over the next year we are focusing on making improvements in the following priority areas, each of which poses opportunities and challenges for the Ministry:

- We are increasing places for children and young people to be when home's not right.
- We are leading a consistent and high-quality approach to social work practice that is child-centred, trauma-informed and effective for Māori as well as other cultures.
- We are working with partners across New Zealand, including iwi and non-government organisations (NGOs), in new ways to build stronger services for our children and young people.

47. There are other opportunities and challenges relating to ongoing funding for the new operating model, and achieving change in the wider system for responding to vulnerable children.

PLACEMENT: PROVIDING A BETTER RANGE OF CARE OPTIONS

48. The success of our system of care is reliant on the availability of a diverse range of care options with well-supported caregivers who can provide the safe, stable and loving home environment children and young people need, and assist them to recover from trauma.

We need greater diversity of caregivers to match the individual needs of children...

49. We are working to improve our ability to locate whānau, hapū and iwi caregivers for children who cannot live at home. We also need more caregivers who can look after children and young people with complex needs who are unable to live with their family or extended family.

50. A caregiver recruitment communications programme will begin with public awareness raising activity in November 2017, followed by more targeted activity in early 2018. We anticipate increased interest from the public in becoming caregivers, but expect that achieving a suitable pool of caregivers will be challenging.

...and achieving the optimum mix of care settings will be a long-term process

51. We need to identify where further investment is required across the care continuum, including for children and young people cared for by family members such as grandparents, aunts and uncles without formally entering care, and for children who have left care and entered permanent placements. Work is also underway to understand how we can best support children and young people in care to achieve their goals and improve their life chances.

PRACTICE FRAMEWORK: CREATING AND EMBEDDING CONSISTENTLY HIGH-QUALITY PRACTICE

52. The work of our frontline staff with children, young people, whānau and caregivers needs to be of a consistently high quality. This is fundamental to improving child wellbeing and also to building and maintaining trust with our partners and the wider community.

53. Our practice needs to be child-centred, collaborative and culturally responsive. Good practice strengthens whānau and includes a focus on prevention and wellbeing. Our staff need to be keen problem-solvers and skilled in evidence-based practice. Critically, we need to be effective for Māori children. While we have exceptional and innovative practice in many of our sites, this is not yet the reality across the country.

We are clarifying practice expectations, and building capacity and capability to deliver on these

54. We have developed a new practice framework for our staff. This describes the core features of practice that need to underpin our work in order to deliver on our mission and values.

55. We are focusing on building capability across our existing practitioner base. The practice standards are accompanied by enhanced professional development resources. A new supervision approach will be launched alongside the practice framework in November 2017. We are also looking to improve our IT tools and other systems to make it easier for social workers to do their jobs.

56. We undertook a first phase of social worker recruitment in August 2017. We are still some way from meeting our target recruitment number and will continue to work to fill existing vacancies over the next several months.

57. We have identified four large sites where demand is currently high, and are currently exploring options to reconfigure operations in those sites to meet the demand.

We are enabling local leaders to drive practice changes and developing new ways to recognise excellence and respond to poor practice

58. We have introduced new delegation levels so local operational leaders have the human resources and financial decision-making rights to allow them to operate effectively. We are also clarifying the responsibilities and accountabilities of site managers, supervisors, team leaders, and leaders for practice quality.

59. A dedicated function within the agency will provide quality assurance around the new practice standards and will assess the extent to which our broader systems and processes enable or compromise quality practice.

PARTNERSHIPS: WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH IWI, MĀORI, OTHER PROVIDERS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Our partnerships with providers need to be strong and effective

60. Building effective partnerships with iwi, Māori, and other community providers is critical to the success of the Ministry. This requires a better understanding and alignment of supply and demand, and may require supporting community partners to build capacity and capability.

61. There is an opportunity to improve how the Ministry works with iwi, Māori, and NGO providers. Nearly three-quarters of our funding for third-party provided services ends this financial year, yet the majority of services will continue next year. Where we are confident that services are delivering well we should move to more medium-term funding arrangements.

62. We will be taking a more deliberate approach to commissioning social services, ensuring that services are well designed to meet the needs of our children (particularly Māori children and young people), successfully implemented, and monitored for effectiveness. We also need to build more strategic relationships with, and between, iwi, Māori, and NGO providers to deliver joined-up responses in communities.

We need to engage with iwi and Māori across all levels of the organisation

63. Māori are over-represented among the children and young people who come to our attention. Because of this, the Ministry needs to better realise the potential of partnerships with iwi and Māori to deliver improved outcomes for vulnerable Māori children.

Early and meaningful engagement with Māori brings a te ao Māori perspective to issues and ensures the Crown properly understands how policy proposals will impact on Māori, including on any rights and interests.

64. The Ministry is taking a multi-level approach to engaging with Māori. We want to partner with iwi and Māori to identify and prioritise areas where additional effort would have the greatest impact on Māori outcomes. This would also help focus efforts and manage capacity constraints on both sides. We already have a wide range of constructive engagements with iwi and Māori organisations across New Zealand for the purposes of co-design and service delivery.

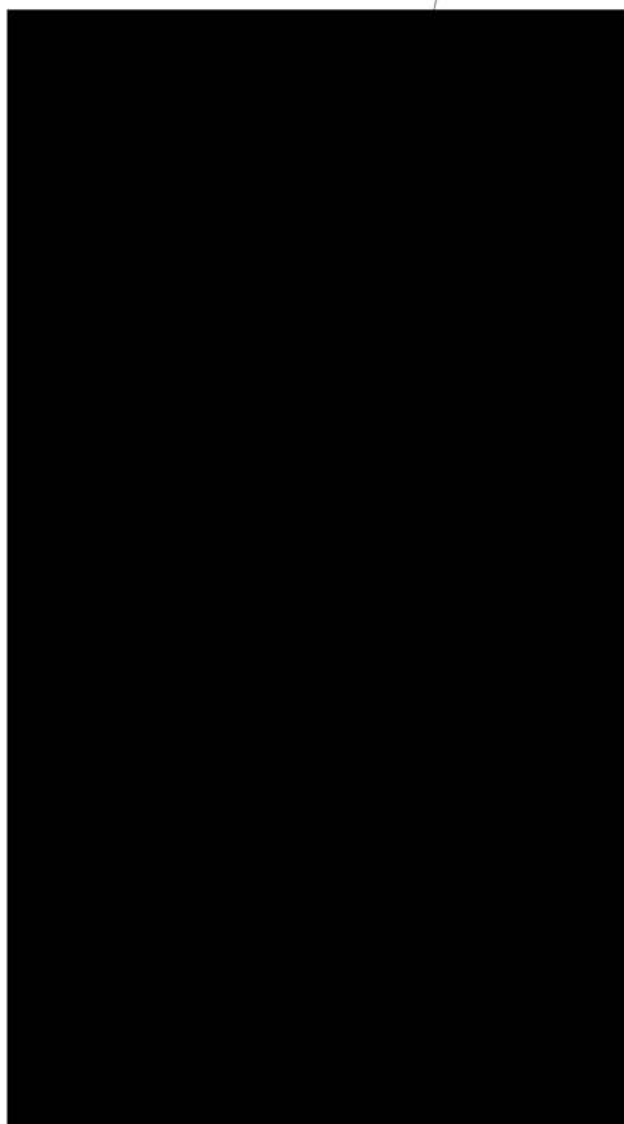
65. We will ensure that the new statutory requirements to provide a practical commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi are reflected in our commissioning framework. In order to meet these requirements, we are considering how we can increase the participation of whānau, hapū and iwi in decision-making in relation to the services we deliver through NGOs. We will also monitor and report on results for Māori.

Engaging New Zealanders in the future system is critical

66. We need to create an environment where people want to work alongside us, and need to build motivation and capacity in more people to support vulnerable children. We recently completed research with 2,900 New Zealanders on public awareness and understanding of child vulnerability, and barriers and enablers to taking action to help a vulnerable child or young person. Findings include that New Zealanders have a view that vulnerability is “extreme”, and too big a problem to solve. The insights are informing our work to engage New Zealanders.

FUNDING THE NEW OPERATING MODEL

s 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act



69. The Ministry is reviewing what is currently known about the efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility of its services and then identifying areas to examine in further detail.

COLLECTIVE AND SUSTAINED EFFORT IS NEEDED FROM MINISTERS AND AGENCIES TO ACHIEVE CHANGE IN THE SYSTEM

70. To be effective, the wider system for vulnerable children must bring together the services provided by different agencies into a coherent response for each vulnerable child or young person. This requires active support and engagement from Ministers and agencies. We are working with agencies on a number of areas to help collectively improve outcomes for vulnerable children (see Appendix 3 for a diagram of current cross-agency arrangements for vulnerable children).

Driving system change through the Vulnerable Children's Plan and system performance framework

71. Preparatory work for the development of the first Vulnerable Children's Plan is currently underway within the Ministry, in conjunction with children's agencies. As part of this, a new system performance framework is being developed to monitor and drive performance across the system.

Making decisions about where to focus our efforts

72. We are developing a model of New Zealand's children and young people and how their wellbeing during childhood connects to adult outcomes. The model maps cross-agency data against four domains of wellbeing (safety, security, wellness, and development), with a fifth domain (stability) to be included in 2018. Over time, as the model develops, it is intended to be used to help inform where further attention should be focused to achieve better outcomes for children.

Guiding best practice for the wider workforce through a System Practice Framework

73. The children's workforce comprises workers from the education, health, justice and social sectors and NGOs, including iwi providers. It is estimated that the children's workforce has around 280,000 workers.

74. The next stage will be a co-design process with other agencies, to develop a framework for system-wide practice with vulnerable children. This will be a collaborative process starting in 2018.

Sharing information to improve our response

75. The new information sharing framework in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 is intended to promote a culture of child-centred information sharing, including before the level of risk to children reaches the threshold for statutory intervention. Part of the framework involving inter-agency exchange of information must be used in conjunction with a code, that the Ministry is required to develop, which will set the parameters for sharing information relevant to a child's or young person's safety and well-being, and provide direction and guidance.

APPENDIX 1: CURRENT ACCOUNTABILITIES, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN

The Minister for Children has responsibilities under:

- the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- the Vulnerable Children Act 2014, and
- the Children's Commissioner Act 2003.

Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

(formerly Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989)

General duties

- The Minister for Children has assigned responsibility under the authority of the Prime Minister for the Oranga Tamariki Act.

Duties under the Oranga Tamariki (Residential Care) Regulations 1996

- To appoint members of grievance panels for residences, to which a child or young person in a residence may complain.

Not explicit statutory responsibility but note that:

- The Oranga Tamariki Act requires the chief executive to establish and fund care and protection resource panels comprising professionals and community members to advise on care and protection cases and care and protection related matters.
- The Oranga Tamariki (Residential Care) Regulations require residence managers to establish community liaison committees with community and professional membership, which have functions relating to the impact of the residence on the surrounding community.

Other responsibilities

- The Minister for Children is the Minister responsible for the Vulnerable Children's Board. This is not a statutory creation.

Specific statutory duties

- To approve the establishment or closing of residences for the care and control of children and young people.
- To make written directions to the chief executive in relation to the provision of financial assistance to caregivers who have taken on the permanent care of a child previously in care.
 - Currently one such written direction exists.
- To make general directions to the chief executive regarding the making of grants or the provision of financial assistance to any community service.
- To recommend the making of care standards regulations by 13 July 2018 and appoint an independent agency or body to monitor and report on compliance with regulations. This is per amendments to the Act which enable regulations to be made prescribing actions or steps that must be taken to help ensure children and young persons in care receive an appropriate standard of care.
- To appoint a person or organisation (independent of the department) to review the outcomes of the complaints mechanism(s) established under the Act (if regulations are made for this purpose).
 - The requirement to establish a complaints mechanism is not yet in force. It will come into force on 1 July 2019 unless brought into force earlier by Order in Council.
- To report to Parliament, not later than 1 July 2022, and at least every three years thereafter, on whether existing legislation, government policy and other accountability arrangements ensure that the needs of children and young people with whom the Ministry is concerned are met and whether any amendments to those arrangements are necessary or desirable.
- To issue a Code of Practice for information sharing to provide guidance and direction to agencies and persons with functions under the new vulnerable children information sharing provisions in the Act.
 - The information sharing provisions are not yet in force. They will come into force on 1 July 2019 unless brought into force earlier by Order in Council.

Vulnerable Children Act 2014

- The Minister for Children currently has assigned responsibility under the authority of the Prime Minister for Parts 1 and 2 (but not Part 3) of the Vulnerable Children Act.
- Part 1 concerns Government priorities for vulnerable children and the development of a Vulnerable Children's Plan.
- Part 2 is concerned with requirements on prescribed State services that are providers of children's services to have child protection policies. Contracts between these State services and providers of children's services must require the provider to have a child protection policy.
- Part 3, which is administered by the Ministry of Education, contains a regime for children's worker safety checking.

Duties under Part 1

- The power, after consulting the children's Ministers (the Ministers of Health, Education, Justice and Police, and the Minister for Social Development), to set Government priorities for improving the wellbeing of vulnerable children. The exercise of this power triggers the requirement for chief executives to prepare the Vulnerable Children's Plan.
- To approve the Vulnerable Children's Plan following consultation with the children's Ministers.

Duties under Part 2

- The Minister does not have any specific statutory responsibilities under Part 2.

The Children's Commissioner Act 2003 (CCA)

- The Minister who has assigned responsibility for the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 has the following functions under the CCA:
 - notification and consultation requirements before recommending the appointment of the Commissioner under the Crown Entities Act 2004
 - the power to request advice from the Commissioner on any matter that relates to the administration of the Oranga Tamariki Act or regulations made under that Act.
 - MSD provides advice and support to assist the Minister for Children to carry out their role as responsible Minister for the Children's Commissioner. This includes providing advice on: the appointment of the Commissioner; the setting of the entity's direction and performance expectations; the monitoring of performance; and advice on machinery of government and budget related matters.

APPENDIX 2: THE MINISTRY'S LEADERSHIP TEAM

Gráinne Moss

Chief Executive, Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki

Anita West

Director, Office of
the Chief Executive

Deputy Chief Executives (DCE)

Voices and Quality

Jeremy Lambert

DCE Tamariki Advocate/Voices of Children

Paul Nixon

DCE Chief Social Worker/Director Professional Practice

Service Delivery

**Celia
Patrick**

DCE
Partnering
for
Outcomes

**Glynis
Sandland**

DCE
Services
for Children
and
Families
(North)

**Alison
McDonald**

DCE
Services
for Children
and
Families
(South)

**Allan
Boreham**

DCE Youth
Justice
Services

**Trish
Langridge**

DCE Care
Services

Enabling Functions

Jen Ritchie-Campbell

DCE Policy, Investment and Evidence

Paul Kissack

DCE Leadership and Organisational Development

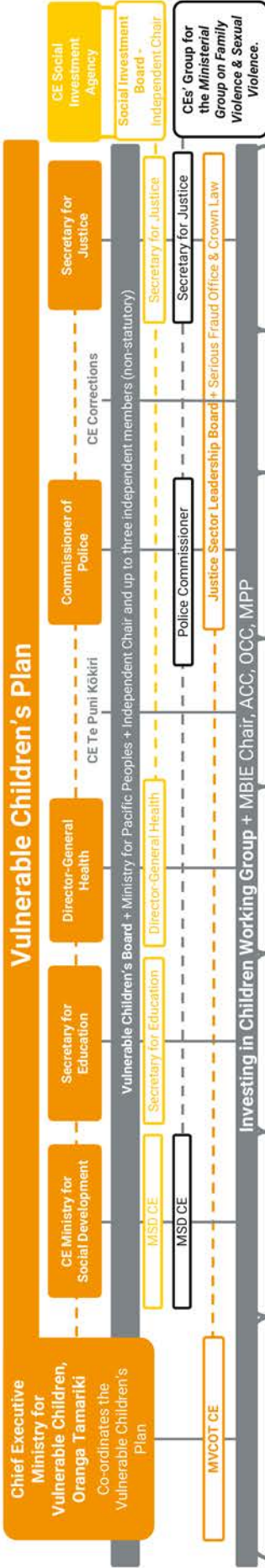
APPENDIX 3: CURRENT CROSS-AGENCY ARRANGEMENTS FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Sets priorities for vulnerable children and approves the Vulnerable Children's Plan, in consultation with **Children's Ministers** (Vulnerable Children Act 2014).
Reports to Parliament on the effectiveness of the vulnerable children's system (Oranga Tamariki Act 1989).

Consulted on priorities for vulnerable children and on the final Vulnerable Children's Plan that commits their agencies to action.
Children's Ministers are those Ministers with portfolio responsibility for one of the children's agencies (as set out in the Vulnerable Children Act 2014).

Work together to develop the draft Vulnerable Children's Plan that commits their agencies to action, and report on this annually.
Children's agencies have core service delivery or statutory functions that impact on vulnerable children and their families and whānau (Vulnerable Children Act 2014).

Vulnerable Children's Plan



Investing in Children Working Group + MBIE Chair, ACC, OCC, MPP

Targets By 2021	Responsibilities	Structures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the number of children experiencing physical and sexual abuse by 20%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce long term welfare dependence - Reduce working-age clients by 25%. Reduce median time to house Priority A clients on the social housing register by 20%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of pregnant women register with a LMC in 1st trimester. 25% reduced child hospital admissions for avoidable conditions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevention to help families & whānau whose children are most at risk. Care and protection for children & young people, and support for caregiver families so children flourish. Youth justice addressing offending behaviours & leaving care or restorative justice, youth justice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work and income support, provide income support, assist job-seekers & potential employers. Social housing - Needs assessment, purchase social housing places, pay supplements & subsidies. Family Violence & Sexual Violence Ministry for Youth Affairs Office for Disability Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and disability system - Stewardship and leadership. Monitor District Health Boards (DHBs). DHBs - Minister's letter of expectations DHB Board DHB CE DHB's Statement of Intent & Annual Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care & Protection, Adoption, Youth Justice, Children's Teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Services partnering with iwi Māori, community groups, volunteers, philanthropists and charities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other services from local government, iwi Māori, community groups, volunteers, philanthropists and charities.
Young people	Services for children & young people	
Code of Practice for Information Sharing	Information sharing	
System Practice Framework	Professional practice	
System performance framework Lifetime Wellbeing Model	Investment & evidence	