

Report

Date: 7 August 2020

Security Level: IN CONFIDENCE

To: Hon Tracey Martin, Minister for Children

Report no: REP-OT/20/8/180

Budget 2019 Investment Progress Reporting

Purpose of the report

- 1 This report:
 - 1.1 sets out the steps undertaken to present Cabinet with the first six-monthly progress report (July to December 2019) on Budget 2019 investment in the wider Oranga Tamariki transformation programme
 - 1.2 provides an update on progress to 30 June 2020 in the areas covered by that report
 - 1.3 seeks your agreement to proactively release this cover briefing and the updated report on the Oranga Tamariki website

Recommended actions

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **note** the attached report on our progress on implementing the change initiatives funded through Budget 2019 Investment, focussing on inputs, outputs and lessons learned,
- 2 **agree** that the attached report and this cover briefing be proactively released on the Oranga Tamariki website,
- 3 **note** that the next report back to Cabinet is due in September 2020 and will be prepared for lodging at the first available opportunity after the general election.

Agree / Disagree



Stephanie Preston
General Manager, Change



Date



Hon Tracey Martin
Minister for Children

12/08/2020

Date

You took a paper to Cabinet in November 2019 outlining a framework for Cabinet Oversight of the Implementation of the Oranga Tamariki Operating Model

- 2 As part of Budget 2019, the Minister for Children was invited to report to the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee (SWC) six-monthly (or less frequently subject to Cabinet agreement), on progress in relation to:
 - expenditure
 - workforce recruitment
 - strategic partnership development
 - alignment with strategic intent
 - evidence of impact
 - any other factors.
- 3 Reporting on these factors was to enable Cabinet to retain oversight of how the five operating model initiatives (Improving Outcomes for Tamariki Māori, Intensive Intervention, Care, Youth Justice, Transition Support Services), and the Oranga Tamariki operating model as a whole, are progressing [SWC-18-MIN-0149 refers].
- 4 In November 2019, Cabinet agreed to a framework for oversight of the implementation of the new operating model [SWC-19-MIN-0159 refers]. This outlined that report-backs will be focused on the five transformation initiatives funded through Budget 19:
 - Improving outcomes for Tamariki Māori (\$25m)
 - Intensive Intervention (\$33m)
 - Care (\$530m)
 - Youth Justice (\$212m), and
 - Transitions (\$139m)
- 5 Further, it was agreed that report-backs will initially focus on how funding is being spent (inputs) and the immediate impacts of this spending (outputs). Over time, information on the longer-term effects of this spending (outcomes) will be included, as these become observable.
- 6 The first report-back to Cabinet under this oversight framework, on progress over the six months from July to December 2019, was due in March 2020.

The first Cabinet report-back was drafted but not lodged due to Covid-19

- 7 As agreed by you on 2 March 2020, a draft Cabinet paper was circulated for Ministerial and cross party consultation from 3 March– 16 March 2020 [REP-OT/20/2/031 refers]. This consultation was completed, and you were sent a final copy of the paper to be lodged for the Social Wellbeing Committee on 1st April 2020 [REP-OT-20-03-055 refers], which you signed.
- 8 However due to competing Cabinet Committee priorities during the COVID-19 response and recovery period, and the fact that no decisions were being sought, this paper was not lodged or considered during the following months. Furthermore, your office has confirmed that it does not meet the criteria to be considered a priority for Cabinet consultation before the House adjourns for the election on 6th August.

We are seeking approval to proactively release a report on the progress of Budget 19 Investment on the Oranga Tamariki website

- 9 In the Budget 2019 decision, Cabinet agreed that the transformational changes to the care and protection and youth justice systems enabled through the significant investment of Budget 2019 warranted additional oversight.
- 10 Since 30 June 2020 we have taken the opportunity to update the information that was included in the original Cabinet report-back, with the additional six months of January to June also covered. We have attached this updated report for your information.

Next Steps

- 11 Subject to your agreement, we propose to proactively release the attached report along with this cover note, as part of our commitment to make information on progress on the Oranga Tamariki transformation publicly available.

In-Confidence

- 12 The next report-back to Cabinet is due in September 2020 and will be prepared for lodging at the first available opportunity after the election. Much of the information to be included in that cabinet paper will be the same or similar to the attached report, as it also covers the period to 30 June 2020. Some additional information and data will be available to include by then.

Report on the progress of Budget 19 Spending

July 2020



The Oranga Tamariki Story So Far

Oranga Tamariki was formed as a new Ministry on 1 April 2017 with a bold ambition to transform the care and protection and youth justice systems in line with the findings of the Expert Panel on Modernising Child Youth and Family.

Oranga Tamariki identified three initial priorities to guide its early work:



Loving Places: increasing the number of safe and loving places available for children and young people who can't live at home



Quality Practice: leading social work practice that is child-centred, trauma informed, and effective for Māori as well as other cultures



Stronger Partnerships: working with partners, including iwi and NGOs, to build and commission stronger services for children.

In 2019, significant changes to the Oranga Tamariki Act (1989) took effect, which expanded the Ministry's obligations by:

- introducing the first ever national minimum standard of care for children and young people in state care
- expanding the jurisdiction of youth justice services to cover most 17 year-olds
- enabling young people leaving state care to choose to remain or return to living with a caregiver up to the age of 21
- requiring the provision of advice and assistance, including financial assistance, to young people transitioning out of care and youth justice up to the age of 25
- imposing specific duties on the Chief Executive in order to recognise and provide a practical commitment to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (te Tiriti o Waitangi)

In order to enable the organisation to meet its new responsibilities, in 2018 Cabinet agreed to a new child-centred operating model, which sets out the main services Oranga Tamariki provides, and how it intends to provide them differently from the past.

The Government invested \$1.1BN over four years through Budget 2019 for Oranga Tamariki to fund the improvement and expansion of existing services, and the establishment of new ones, in line with its objectives under the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy to make New Zealand the best place in the world to grow up.

The following pages detail progress made up to 30 June 2020 across five key initiatives:

- transforming the **care system** to improve the safety and wellbeing of children in care (\$525 million)

- investing in the **youth justice** system to include 17 year-olds, and to reduce young people's reoffending (\$212 million)
- providing a service to meet the new entitlement to a supported **transition to adulthood** for young people leaving statutory care or youth justice (\$154 million)
- ensuring a focus on and commitment to a reduction in disparities through **improving outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori** (\$25 million)
- introducing an **intensive intervention** service in to support children and young people at risk of harm to be safe at home with their families and whānau (\$31.6 million).

The Oranga Tamariki Operating Model

What we do

Intake, Assessment and Referral.

Understand what help I need to be safe & flourish, and who is best placed to provide it.

We identify the needs of children and whānau notified to us and find the best help for them

Early Intervention

Identify and respond early when my whānau and I need assistance.

We coordinate support and services for children and whānau showing early signs of need.

Intensive Intervention

Work with my family so I can be safe, recover and flourish at home.

We support children at risk of harm and their whānau to keep them safely at home.

Care

Give me stable and loving care that enables me to be safe, recover and flourish.

We keep children in the custody of the Chief Executive safe and promote their wellbeing.

Youth Justice

Support me to find new pathways.

We support young people, whānau and victims of youth crime to restore their mana.

Transition

Set me up with the knowledge, skills and tools to flourish as an independent young adult.

We prepare and support young people leaving care and youth justice to transition successfully to adulthood.

The Oranga Tamariki Mana Tamaiti Objectives

Underpinning future work, Oranga Tamariki has identified five objectives to ensure its policies, practices, and services have regard to mana tamaiti (tamariki), the whakapapa of tamariki and rangatahi Māori, and the whanaungatanga responsibilities of their whānau, hapū and iwi.

Oranga Tamariki has publicly reported on its progress to improve outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori as at 1 July 2020 in the [first annual report](#) on the measures taken by the Chief Executive in relation to Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act.

Tamariki Māori are connected to, and nurtured by, whānau, hapū and iwi

Ensuring participation in decision making

We will ensure early participation of whānau, hapū and iwi in decisions affecting tamariki Māori

Preventing entry into care or custody

We will work with whānau to prevent the entry of tamariki Māori into state care or a youth justice response

Placing with whānau, hapū and iwi

We will preference placements for tamariki Māori, and their siblings, with members of whānau, hapū and iwi

Supporting identity and belonging

We will support tamariki Māori to establish, maintain, or strengthen cultural identity and connections to whānau, hapū and iwi

Leaving care or custody

We will support, strengthen, and assist tamariki Māori and their whānau to prepare for return home or transition into the community

Looking Ahead

There is more work to do. Māori children are over-represented in Oranga Tamariki's care and often this inequity for Māori begins before birth. Government agencies and the community need to work together to address drivers of harm and to support parents. Oranga Tamariki is focused on the development of early and intensive intervention services across Government agencies and the community to increase support for parents and whānau to prevent children and young people entering care.

The partnerships which are being built with iwi, hapū, other Māori organisations and the community are fundamental to achieving better outcomes for tamariki Māori and their whānau. Oranga Tamariki cannot do this work on its own.

Transforming the Care System

Context

As at the 30 June 2020, there were 5,950 children in state care. Oranga Tamariki was directly supporting over 3,550 caregivers, including both whānau and foster carers. The new National Care Standards took effect on 1 July 2019, setting out the significantly improved standard of care and support that children in care, and their caregivers, are entitled to.

What Oranga Tamariki was funded to do

Oranga Tamariki received \$524.7M over four years to **improve the quality of the care** it provides to children through implementing the National Care Standards.

This work includes:

- recruiting **350 new front line staff** over four years, including social workers to work with children and caregivers
- providing additional **resources and services** to ensure children in care have what they need (for example, specialist services such as trauma support and maintaining contact with their families, culture and identity, toys, books, laptops and bags)
- increasing **recruitment and retention of caregivers** through new partnerships, better support and training, and enhanced information systems
- providing **more placements** for children with very high needs.

What Oranga Tamariki has purchased with new funding (inputs)

The number of Care & Protection and Caregiver social workers has **increased by 150 FTE** over the 12 months to 30 June 2020, and by over 400 since the establishment of the Ministry in 2017. Regional Service Broker roles have been established to develop relationships at a regional level to ensure access to assessments and services for children and young people, particularly in the areas of education and health, as well as 76 youth workers providing further support for young people.

Oranga Tamariki has eight **Whānau care partnerships** with iwi and kaupapa Māori organisations, all of which have expressed a strong desire to support whānau and tamariki at risk of entering care. These partnerships reach nearly half of tamariki Māori currently in care. The partnerships directly provide new placement options which help ensure tamariki Māori can remain as close as possible to their whānau, hapū and iwi, as well as a whānau search function to help find the right placements and ensure tamariki who are not placed with kin are being supported to remain connected to their whakapapa. We expect this number to grow to 20 partnerships over the next four years.

The new **Caregiver Information System**, which will support Oranga Tamariki to improve its support for caregivers, is in the build phase and due for completion in 2020.

A detailed business case for the build of **10 new specialist group homes** has been approved and work has commenced to identify potential sites. The newly established community home, Te Awe, opened in October 2019 to provide short term respite and care for tamariki using a trauma-informed, sensory environment to help reduce anxiety.

What changes have been seen in operations as a result (outputs)

Spending on children in care has risen by 15% as a result of **providing more support**, directly through services such as mentoring and counselling, and indirectly through increases in some financial payments for both caregivers and for our partnered providers.

New guidance on Care Standards was shared with all 4,000 staff, over 22,500 individual resources for children have been provided, and **99% of tamariki in care now have 'All About Me' plans**, to better capture their health, educational and cultural needs.

Support plans and training for caregivers has been expanded, **92% of caregivers have a support plan**, and nearly 500 caregivers have received specialist trauma training in order to care for the highest needs children.

New iwi partnerships have helped to ensure that tamariki are placed with kin wherever possible, and over 80% of Māori children in out of home care are living with whānau, hapū, iwi or Māori caregivers.

What Oranga Tamariki has learned so far

In order to fill the new frontline roles created through Budget 2019 investment, Oranga Tamariki has adopted a broader regional approach to Social Worker recruitment (versus site-specific hiring), ensuring a wider pool of good quality candidates are considered.

Covid-19 forced social workers to adopt new ways of working with children and families, and new technology deployed through the Digital Workplace programme allowed them to stay connected remotely. Oranga Tamariki is currently considering what longer-term changes to working practices might be possible based on experiences during lockdown.

Nurturing tamariki with Kōrero Pukapuka

The Care Standards recognise the importance of children's connections with family, whānau, hapū, iwi, and family group; and lay out arrangements for them to learn and understand their whakapapa. This should all be captured in their All About Me Plan. Even before the Care Standards came into effect, the team at Ngā Parirau, Tauranga East site were hard at work capturing this information. The site started creating Kōrero Pukapuka for tamariki Māori exiting care about a year ago so that they could keep their genograms and pepeha information, says Supervisor Tessa Nottingham.

"They were especially important for tamariki Māori moving to new homes permanently, with either non-kin or whānau, to show how they belong to two different families and make the connections between the two."

Now, they've become into something more, including baby photos and photos of siblings as well as photos of memories and achievements. They're run past kaumātua before being laminated and bound and given to the child or young person.

To get the information for the books, social workers go to whānau during their contact with tamariki and work through with them what they'd like to include.

And just as staff are now able to share relevant parts of the child's All About Me Plan with caregivers and family; Nga Parirau, Tauranga East site shares the kōrero Pukapuka with new caregivers as a way of introducing who the child is.

Tessa says making the books can take time but it's worth it. "It is very rewarding to see the children's faces light up looking at them."

Youth Justice

Context

At the end of June 2020, 150 young people were in youth justice custody. More than 4000 referrals for youth justice family group conferences were made in the twelve months to 30 June 2020.

Since 1 July 2019, the Youth Justice Services team has been **supporting 17-year-olds who have offended** and been referred to Oranga Tamariki for services and support. Between July and December 2019, there was a 22%¹ increase in youth justice referrals and admissions to youth justice facilities. The full impact of raising the youth justice jurisdictional age on Oranga Tamariki services will not be observed until the end of 2020.

What Oranga Tamariki was funded to do

In Budget 18, Oranga Tamariki received \$80.3M over four years to support **community-based services** for the estimated 40% increase in youth justice work due to the inclusion of most 17-year-olds, and a further \$45.8M to meet the current demand for remand placements.

In Budget 19, Oranga Tamariki received \$140M over four years to fund **100 additional youth justice placements**, including 20 beds at Whakatakapokai and 80 beds in 16 'New Build', community-based homes, and the staff required to support these. This funding also covers **pilots of new culturally-based therapeutic programmes** to support young people in youth justice custody to stop offending.

What Oranga Tamariki has purchased with new funding (inputs)

Refurbishment of two 10-bed youth justice residence wings were completed and both have been reopened, one at Te Au Rere in Palmerston North and the other at Te Puna Wai in Christchurch. An additional 39 new community-based remand placements have been put in place, with eight new homes opened and capacity increased at an existing home.

The indicative business case for **new secure residential build options** has been completed and a detailed business case to draw down the capital approved is underway.

A project team has been established to **identify locations for new community-based facilities**. Iwi engagement to co-design the community-based remand facilities will commence shortly.

The Environment Court has approved an application to re-designate Whakatakapokai for youth justice purposes. There will be further work to prepare this facility in the coming months.

¹Compared to the same period 12 months previously. Statistics for the latter half of the year are impacted by Covid-19

A new Director-level post has been established to **enhance the service offer to victims** of offending by young people and to increase engagement and participation as part of a new restorative approach recommended by the Expert Advisory Panel report in 2015.

What changes have been seen in operations as a result (outputs)

Oranga Tamariki, together with other agencies responsible for youth justice, has ensured a smooth transition of 17-year-olds into the youth system. The increased FGC referral rates and court referrals for Social Work Reports have been well-managed whilst service quality has improved through the delivery of new training. Working closely with its partners, Oranga Tamariki has increased the capacity and reach of **preventative and therapeutic support** across the youth justice system.

At the time of writing, Oranga Tamariki is:

- partnering with Police, Corrections and Youth Horizons Trust on Pae Whakatupuranga, one year into a three year pilot delivering Functional Family Therapy (125 referred, 44 started intervention)
- co-designing a Te Ao Māori programme aimed at cognitive thinking and behaviour
- one year into a two year pilot to improve supported bail services by increasing whānau involvement to reduce bail breaches (165 entered programmes)
- piloting a new restorative approach to behaviour management (Whakamana Tangata) in Rotorua, in partnership with the Chair of Restorative Justice at Victoria University
- working with local Police and the community in Huntly on Oranga Rangatahi, an early intervention project, with a view to expanding this approach if evidenced as successful.

What Oranga Tamariki has learned so far

The work to redesignate the Whakatakapokai care and protection residence as a youth justice facility has taken longer than expected due to obligations under the Resource Management Act (RMA). Oranga Tamariki has increased resourcing to support this process, factored RMA timelines into planning for future capital builds, and adjusted the recruitment timeline for the new youth justice staff needed to run this facility.

The experience of establishing new remand homes to date has highlighted the importance of effective engagement with neighbours and the local community. Oranga Tamariki is supporting providers to conduct more active engagement activities (such as face-to-face connections) rather than passive alternatives (such as letter drops).

Supporting rangatahi to find new pathways

Tai* is a 16-year-old who was referred to the supported bail (SB) pilot shortly before his exit from the local remand home. Work began with a key whānau worker whilst in residence to establish a therapeutic relationship. Tai's mum and step-dad had significant concerns about Tai's return home and their need to 'protect' younger siblings from Tai's offending influence

The SB intervention worked with both Tai and his mother to alleviate tension and stress and subsequently reduce risk. The key whānau worker met with Mum four times weekly to support with practical tasks, to be a sounding board and parenting coach, and to help her understand the youth justice system. The SB intervention supported Tai to identify what he needed and wanted to work on and worked at his pace. Immediate goals were supporting the family so that Tai could remain at home, improving Tai's relationship with his Mum, finding an appropriate course for Tai's interests and reducing the risk of him offending. Tai completed rating scales to score his own wellbeing.

On scales reflecting how he was doing in education, physical/emotional health, relationships with family and confidence to make positive choices, Tai scored himself between 45-50% at the start of the intervention.

By the end, Tai gave himself 100% for achievement in Education, Physical/Emotional Health and how confident he felt to make positive choices and his score for family relationships increased from 45% to 90%. Tai reflected that after the intervention he felt more confident, less hopeless and that he had more self-worth. This intervention helped to reduce the risk of Tai breaching bail or offending, improved his whānau relationships, supported him to experience success, and ensured he remained in home (avoiding a residential stay) during the bail period.

Transition Support Service

Context

From 1 July 2019, Oranga Tamariki had expanded obligations to support around 3,000 young people aged 15-24 transitioning out of care into adulthood, to ensure that young people leaving state care and youth justice have the same opportunities in life as any other New Zealander.

What Oranga Tamariki was funded to do

Oranga Tamariki received \$153.7M over four years to work with partners to setup a new Transition Support Service to ensure that care and youth justice experienced young people can get a great start to their adult lives.

This included provision of 175 new transition support workers through NGO partners, 60 supported accommodation places, \$25M to support young people who choose to remain with a caregiver and \$9M to provide advice and assistance including financial assistance.

What Oranga Tamariki has purchased with new funding (inputs)

Oranga Tamariki has established a Transition Support Service partnering with 51 community and iwi and Māori partners to provide **national coverage**. This includes the provision of 78 FTE transition support workers and a central team of 9 FTE.

Supported accommodation services have been established across the country, offering 47 placements to young people requiring more support to develop life skills and gradually transition from fully supported care to independent living. This will rise to 228 placements over the next four years.

A dedicated phone line to offer advice and assistance to young adults up to age 25 has been setup, along with processes to ensure young people get the financial assistance and other support they need.

What changes have been seen in operations as a result (outputs)

As at 30 June 2020, the new service was supporting 741 young people actively working with a transition worker. The number of transition partners and transition workers will continue to grow as young people age-in to elements of the service and others become aware of their entitlements until a 'steady-state' is reached by 1 July 2022.

Between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2020, the Transition Support Service spent over **\$600K on providing financial assistance** to individual young people transitioning from care to independence. This includes \$200K spent by Oranga Tamariki and over \$400K provided to NGOs. The financial assistance included emergencies, health, education, travel, accommodation and other needs. The dedicated phone line has helped over 2500 callers since its establishment, including:

- sourcing emergency accommodation
- securing access to income support, healthcare and counselling services
- support to obtain identification, like drivers' licenses and passports
- provision of financial support (e.g. for emergency food or clothing)

The Transition Support Service has prioritised **working collaboratively across agencies to advocate for young people**. Recent examples include the Student Allowances (State-supported Care Exemptions) Amendment Regulation 2019 under which any Transition Support Service payments (to anyone) are not considered to be 'income'. It is estimated that 136 young people will benefit from these exemptions.

In order to **improve access to employment**, Oranga Tamariki is working with the Ministry for Social Development to access programmes such as He Poutama Rangatahi and Mana in Mahi, and is partnering with employers to provide supported employment placements. Four care-experienced young people have been recruited into the Oranga Tamariki Intern Programme, which runs from January through to the end of September 2020.

What Oranga Tamariki has learned so far

The initial focus for the service has been on those young people with the highest levels of need and young people who have turned 18 since 1 July 2019.

Oranga Tamariki is using information gathered through the year of operations to promote the service more widely, strengthen support for the referral process, and work with young people before they turn 18 to plan for their transition.

Oranga Tamariki is increasing the investment in supported accommodation services based on observed demand for these services nationally.

Helping young adults to move forward with their lives

Whangarei site staff referred 20 year old Wiremu* to the Transition Support Service advice and assistance line, staffed by a specialist team based at the Oranga Tamariki National Contact Centre. Wiremu needed some support and advice about his living arrangements, which were short-term and unsustainable.

The contact centre representative spent time on the phone with Wiremu in order to understand his accommodation needs, identifying Wiremu as eligible to receive emergency accommodation.

Wiremu was provided with accommodation while a referral was made to one of the transition partners so a dedicated transition worker could start to build a relationship with Wiremu and make a plan with him about future living arrangements.

With support and guidance from his transition worker, Wiremu has returned to living with a previous caregiver, under the entitlement to remain or return policy.

Wiremu is now on his way to gain his driver's licence, look for a suitable job, and find an independent living arrangement, with his transition worker walking alongside him every step of the way.

Improving Outcomes for Tamariki and Rangatahi Māori

Context

At the heart of section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act is an expectation that Oranga Tamariki will uphold and protect the familial structures of whānau, hapū and iwi. As signalled in the many reviews and reports since 1986 and as required by Treaty of Waitangi principles, section 7AA requires a change in the way we develop and deliver policies, practices and services to preference improved outcomes for tamariki Māori, their whānau, hapū and iwi within the context of tikanga Māori.

This level of change is overdue and significant.

What Oranga Tamariki was funded to do

Oranga Tamariki received \$25M over four years to provide **Māori-specialist roles**, including Kairaranga ā-whānau.

From baseline funding, Oranga Tamariki continues to change our approach to partnership, commissioning, and procurement, ensuring we work to support the development of strategic partnerships with iwi and provide a function to **consider innovative proposals** from iwi and Māori organisations.

What Oranga Tamariki has purchased with new funding (inputs)

Oranga Tamariki has created **42 permanent Kairaranga ā-whānau positions**. This role aims to enhance whānau participation, build local cultural competency, and help with the establishment of relationships and connections with iwi and Māori NGOs. The recruitment strategy involves mana whenua, which helps ensure a connection between the Kairaranga-a-whānau and mana whenua from the outset.

Oranga Tamariki has signed **five strategic partnerships**³, and is actively working with several more potential strategic partners. Strategic partners have been engaged on key policy work.

What changes have been seen in operations as a result (outputs)

The Kairaranga ā-whānau have been working to **increase participation of whānau and hapū in discussions and decision-making**, provide more opportunities for early resolution of concerns without further statutory intervention, increase engagement of whānau in plans for tamariki, and further the use of culturally responsive practice models, such as hui-a-whānau.⁴

Oranga Tamariki is **funding more iwi and Māori organisations** than ever before and with more money - from \$54.5M per annum in 2018 to \$81.9M by the end of 2020. It has **radically changed its procurement practices** in response to feedback from iwi and Māori partners, and are working to place the Crown and Partners on equal footing. For example, moving away from long written proposals to more face-to-face discussion, and placing more value on community connectedness and cultural competence.

Working with Māori, Oranga Tamariki has developed a set of objectives to ensure that its policies, practices, and services have regard to mana tamaiti (tamariki), the whakapapa of tamariki and rangatahi Māori, and the whanaungatanga responsibilities of their whānau, hapū and iwi. We have created a set of five Section 7AA **Quality Assurance Standards** to be met by our staff when developing operational policies, practices or new services. These standards incorporate key principles of the Treaty of Waitangi such as kāwanatanga and rangatiratanga, active protection and partnership. These complement the Māori Cultural Framework developed in 2018.

What Oranga Tamariki has learned so far

To be effective, the transformation of Oranga Tamariki will require stronger and deeper partnership with iwi and Māori organisations than in the past. There is more to do to ensure that these partners are effectively supported to fully engage with Oranga Tamariki in order to achieve better outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi together.

The [first report](#) on progress made to improve outcomes for tamariki Māori has just been published and can be found on the Oranga Tamariki website.

Kairaranga a-whānau Jodie Treanor is making waves in Greymouth

A sense of belonging and a connection with whānau can be the crucial factor for a child in care, ensuring a good outcome in their life. That's how Jodie Treanor, in the position of Kairaranga a-whānau in Greymouth, knows the difference she is making is positive, tangible, and long-term.

The Kairaranga a-whānau is a role that looks intensively into a child's background and whakapapa, researching family links for suitable caregivers for a young person that cannot stay at home. The role was first introduced at the Blenheim Site in 2009, and has already proved to be vitally important.

Jodie's role involves connecting children with extended family all around the country. She researches family trees, tracking down distant whānau in the hope of forging new family connections.

"Our tamariki deserve loving stable homes, and within the family, whānau, hapū or iwi, we can make sure that any care placement is in the best interest of the child," says Jodie.

In the Upper South region, Kairaranga ā-whānau Louise Heke has seen the difference that hui-a-whānau have made. Families who have worked with the Kairaranga ā-whānau role are less likely to come back into the system.

"A partnership with family is the best. It's important children have a sense of belonging, and it's an empowering position to be able to enable families to engage like this. To be able to implement what our ancestors wanted, what our grandparents fought for," Louise says.

Jodie says she feels very lucky to do what she does. "The Kairaranga ā-whānau role represents a shift in the organisation, recognising our past ways of working didn't speak to Māori Tikanga. There's still some stuff that needs to change, but the change is tangible. It's really encouraging and exciting."

³ Oranga Tamariki has strategic partnership agreements with Ngāi Tahu, Ngāpuhi, Waikato-Tainui, Tuhoe, and the Māori Women's Welfare League.

⁴ See <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/research/our-research/specialist-maori-roles-evidence-synthesis/>

Intensive Intervention

Context

Over the last year, Oranga Tamariki received over 80,000 reports of concern, resulting in around 1,000 children entering care. Over the same period, 1,400 children left care – most returning to whānau or entering adulthood.

Oranga Tamariki is looking to partner with hapū and iwi, and to work with Māori organisations, NGOs and communities, to ensure that children at risk of harm can remain safely at home wherever possible – within their culture and community – and that those in care have the support they need to return home.

What Oranga Tamariki was funded to do

Oranga Tamariki received \$31.6M over four years to work with its strategic partners, iwi and Māori organisations and communities to design a new approach in a small number of initial areas which will provide intensive support to families so that children at risk of harm can remain safely at home with their whānau and families within their culture and community.

What Oranga Tamariki has purchased with new funding (inputs)

Through the first half of the year, Oranga Tamariki undertook **community engagement**, and **designed and developed** the tools and processes to support the setup of intensive intervention services in four areas (Christchurch, Tokoroa, Horowhenua and Ōtāhuhu). These areas were chosen based on the number of children and families that could benefit from the service, with Oranga Tamariki site and partner readiness used as a secondary criterion.

In establishing the new Intensive Intervention function, Oranga Tamariki has **prioritised relationships with iwi and Māori groups**, engaging with them at the outset in the broad design of the service and support provided in their areas.

Alongside the four initial sites, Oranga Tamariki has been working with a range of partners and increased funding from baseline to improve support available to whānau who are at risk of having children and young people taken into state care. This work has led to the identification of six existing collaborations which, with further support and development, could be expanded, thus reaching more whānau sooner. We are also looking to enter collaborative design discussions in other rohe in Financial Year 20/21.

What changes have been seen in operations as a result (outputs)

Oranga Tamariki and its partners will be implementing these new services in Tokoroa in August, Christchurch East in September and Horowhenua and Ōtāhuhu in early 2021. We've set a target that by June 2021, the new intensive intervention function will be working with approximately **400 children and young people and 150 families and whānau**.

What Oranga Tamariki has learned so far

There is a strong consensus about what makes a difference for whānau that need a lot of support to achieve their goals. The characteristics of successful services include credible people who work tirelessly with whānau to alleviate their immediate concerns, and to build trusting relationships that are based on holistic, relational support, which is strengths-based, sustained, enduring and culturally competent, and focused on the needs of whānau. Oranga Tamariki has learned that the key enablers for getting the intensive intervention function in place include:

- existing partnership and operational arrangements between iwi and Māori organisations and people in our sites, particularly where there is already a close working relationship (e.g. supporting FGCs)
- iwi, Māori and community organisations that are: clear on the role they want to play in the design of intensive intervention, have the capacity and capability to perform that role, and are accepting of the roles of others
- existing trusting and collaborative community relationships, including between iwi and Māori organisations, and other community and government agencies
- key staff with existing relationships that can work on the project (e.g. a project coordinator, Oranga Tamariki staff with good relationships with iwi and community organisations)
- capable local social service providers that can engage in the function and deliver it effectively with additional resources and support.

Oranga Tamariki has established a community of practice across the initial sites, in order to ensure that it is leveraging the lessons learned from all involved in developing Intensive Intervention. The experience of the collaborative design process so far will feed into planning for future work across Oranga Tamariki, for example in Early Intervention, as the resource and time requirements for these kinds of activities are now better understood.

What it takes to help whānau thrive

Our own experience, the experience of our partners, and local and international evidence, all suggest that keeping families together requires working more intensively over a longer period of time alongside whānau and much more closely with our community partners.

It's based on establishing a high trust relationship with whānau that have children for whom we have care and protection concerns.

The approach Oranga Tamariki is taking is to work alongside Māori in the way they've been asking for and to mitigate risks to tamariki through supporting and strengthening whānau. "We all know that wherever possible, the best place for a child is in the safe, loving and stable care of their whānau," says Alison McDonald, Deputy Chief Executive Services for Children and Families South.

Oranga Tamariki is collaborating with partners in the service design process and listening to stories and experiences of whānau and local communities to understand what works for them.

Our approach will differ depending on the strengths and nature of the communities and it's important we take time to develop the new services, particularly with local iwi and Māori organisations.

All involved in the current programme of work believe they have a great opportunity to be part of a significant shift in our care and protection system and develop new approaches to keep tamariki at home wherever we can, thus improving the wellbeing of future generations.

"This new approach signals a shift in our engagement with our partners and the real difference we can make through the work we are doing to support whānau. Partnerships lie at the heart of s7AA and our desire to find better outcomes for tamariki and whānau," said Hoani Lambert, Tamariki Advocate Deputy Chief Executive Voices of Children.

