

SUMMER 2022/23 UPDATE



Vasantha Krishnan
General Manager

Kia ora koutou katoa,

I want to start by acknowledging the flooding in Auckland and the appalling storm damage in the North Island, and the enormous efforts of many residents, and local and national groups, to support those affected – support which we appreciate will be needed well into the future. Our hearts go out to you all.

Recently the Evidence Centre has been recruiting, and we'll begin introducing our new team members to you this issue. We're also thrilled to welcome Phil Grady as our new DCE – Phil has stellar management credentials and vast experience in health and education which we look forward to tapping into.

Collaboration across government agencies has been a theme of post-COVID working. Evidence Centre analysts are involved in multi-agency projects across a wide spectrum, and one project that's just been finalised is the Long-Term Insights Briefing (LTIB) for the justice sector. We have appreciated the opportunity to bring a young people's lens to this work, which focused on imprisonment in Aotearoa.

Youth Justice has been a recent theme. We've published an evidence brief looking at community-based remand homes – smaller residences for young people on remand, with a focus on providing a safe and nurturing environment.

Our December seminar featured Professor Ian Lambie ONZ presenting his research on youth offending and how the system has failed them. This timely and lively event was well-attended and supported with Oranga Tamariki perspectives on trends and system responses to recent challenges.

We have research in the pipeline on high and complex needs, a successful family focused therapy pilot, and an update to the Caregiver Survey – so keep an eye out on our web page: [Research and insights | Oranga Tamariki — Ministry for Children](#)

Hopefully the remainder of our southern hemisphere summer will help to restore the spirits of our whenua and whānau.

Ngā mihi
Vasantha



Our Recent Publications

The Evidence Centre works to build the evidence base that helps us better understand wellbeing and what works to improve outcomes for New Zealand's children, young people and their whānau.



Read the reports here

Long-Term Insights Briefing for the justice sector:

For the past two years the Evidence Centre has been a part of the team working on the Justice Sector Long-Term Insights Briefing: Insights about imprisonment and what these tell us about future risks and opportunities.



Read the reports here

Community-based remand homes

In 2015, [The Expert Advisory Panel](#) recommended that smaller community-based settings would better support rangatahi while they are on remand and awaiting charges to come before the courts. Following this, a small number of community-based remand homes were established in 2017 and 2018.



Read the reports here

Successful home visiting programmes

Family Start is a home visiting programme for families with children up to five years of age, delivered by community, iwi and Māori organisations across New Zealand. This evidence brief and the companion report with case studies will be used to better support Family Start partners to provide effective services to whānau receiving the programme.



Read the reports here

Child and adolescent mental health services

We know that tamariki and rangatahi in care and protection and youth justice systems can experience complex mental health needs. This evidence brief looks at best practice responses to meeting their needs, including insights from Indigenous research.



Our Research Seminars

Our December seminar featured Professor Ian Lambie ONZ presenting insights and challenges in the youth justice system and ideas for how we can all do better by young offenders, their families and communities.

Ian's presentation was supported by Oranga Tamariki colleagues. Phil Speir from the Evidence Centre provided background and context regarding current trends, and Ben Hannifin, our Youth Justice Director joined to share operational innovations.

Our February seminar features two well-known researchers from AUT. Professor Gail Pacheco and Dr Nadia Charania are presenting their research on Ethnic differences in uptake of child healthcare services in New Zealand.



Resurfacing earlier research

Subsequent children – legislation change

After significant policy and research input, the amendment that partially repealed subsequent child provisions of the Oranga Tamariki Act came into force on 17 December 2022. This amendment has been welcomed by Oranga Tamariki kaimahi and others working in the area.

[Our evidence brief and policy documents can be read here:](#)

NEW STARTERS

The Evidence Centre has been busy recruiting and is delighted to introduce some of our new starters to you:



Lucy Taua'i

Kia ora, Ko Lucy tōku ingoa, I live on a Waikato lifestyle block with my daughter, my husband, and an absolute menagerie of animals.

My career began with nine years in market research, and I have spent the last three years working alongside not-for-profits assisting with their research and evaluation needs and helping them identify and measure impact. Perpetually curious and always learning, it's been great to continue down a career path that allows me to constantly ask the question 'but why..?'

I like to keep my brain busy, so I'm currently enjoying learning Te Reo Māori, and have completed Poupou Huia Te Reo through Te Wānanga o Raukawa this year. Outside of work, I love hiking, running, reading, gin, and patting dogs...I'm always keen for an adventure and trying out new things!



Vienna Yang

I have a PhD in marketing and have previously worked at the Ministry of Transport, Lincoln University and local councils. Some of my past experience includes conducting equity-related research and evaluation work.

I am a Te Reo speaker and passionate about learning and sharing mātauranga Māori. I love to spend time on outdoor activities and walking my golden labrador.



Fiona Dempsey – Senior Analyst, Evaluation and Insights

I am from Wellington and, aside from eight years spent in Auckland, have loved living my life here. I have an Honours, Master's, and PhD in Forensic Psychology, with a research focus on intimate partner violence. I am interested in people and the complex social problems that they face, which is reflected in the wide variety of roles in which I have worked. These include mental health support in the Drug Treatment Units at Arohata and Rimutaka Correctional Facilities, and more recently as a Research Advisor at ACC.

I enjoy drinking wine and coffee (not at the same time, although I haven't tried it!), reading history books, rock music, and walking my dog.



Jonnita Akauola – Analyst, Evaluation and Insights

Tēnā koutou ngā mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa, Ko Pukemaire tōku maunga; Ko Whakama te tōku awa; Ko Te Arawa tōku waka; Ko Te Arawa tōku iwi; Ko Whakaua me Te Awhe ōku marae; No Maketū ahau; Ko Rā Hunkin tōku hoa rangatira; No Ngāti Rakaipaaka ia; E rua ā māua tamariki, ko Michael, ko Kali; Kei Moera mātou e noho ana; Ko Jonnita Akauola tōku ingoa.

I currently live in Moera in Lower Hutt with my fiancé Rā, our tamariki Michael and Kali and our cat Button. I come from an ECE teaching background of seven years and have almost completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Early Intervention. I have a passion for supporting and figuring out ways to do the best I can for our youngest tamariki and tamariki with additional needs.

I love spending time with my whānau and extended whānau, reading, listening to music and podcasts, vege and indoor plant gardening, baking, and have just recently started weight training (who knows how long that one will last!).