

EVIDENCE CENTRE UPDATE

EVIDENCE CENTRE
TE POKAPŪ TAUNAKITANGA

UNDERSTANDING WHAT
WORKS FOR TAMARIKI

THE ORANGA TAMARIKI EVIDENCE CENTRE



Kia ora koutou katoa. Welcome to September's edition of our quarterly newsletter. As always, we're excited to share our news with you as we hope to strengthen partnerships and embark on another period of exciting work, dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of New Zealand's children, young people, and their whānau.

Since our last newsletter, we have published work on a variety of topics, including up-to-date evidence on effective support for teenage parents; a survey that looks at how well Oranga Tamariki is supporting its caregivers, and a suite of reports completed with the Voices of Children team at Oranga Tamariki that provide insights into the experiences of education for children and young people in our care.

Our August Evidence Centre seminar saw plenty of discussion around family harm initiatives developed by Police and discussion of the results of the 2018 NZ Crime and Victims

Survey from the Ministry of Justice.

Our next seminar and the eleventh in the series will feature two presentations, one from our colleagues at Inland Revenue - Te Tari Taake discussing the impact of early intervention in child support to improve financial wellbeing for families; the other presenting findings from Oranga Tamariki research on supporting teen parents. The seminar will take place on Friday October 4th at 10:30am. For more details visit our [Eventbrite page](#) or email research@ot.govt.nz.

As always, we love to hear from our friends across the social sector, so please get in touch if you have any questions or ideas. And keep an eye on our research web page for regular updates and interesting publications.

Noho ora mai, 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.



TEEN PARENTS EVIDENCE BRIEF

The *Teen Parents Evidence Brief* provides up-to-date evidence from New Zealand and international literature about effective support for teenage parents, their children and family or whānau.

It includes information about support services and interventions currently in place in New Zealand, indicators of their effectiveness, and outcomes for teenage parents and children engaged with those services.

International literature shows supportive interventions for teenage parents should be early, comprehensive, wrap-around, and strengths-based. Read more from the report findings [here](#).

CAREGIVER SATISFACTION SURVEY

How Well is Oranga Tamariki Supporting Its Caregivers presents the findings of a quantitative survey among the population of

4,000 caregivers and respite caregivers who provide care to children in the care of Oranga Tamariki.

We believe that in the right environment, with the right people surrounding and nurturing them, children can and should flourish. We need to ensure their caregivers have what they need to provide stable, loving homes for tamariki and to identify areas where change is needed. The survey provides a baseline to allow the effects of legislative and practice changes to be monitored. Read the report [here](#).

THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN IN CARE

The Expert Advisory Panel (2015) reported that children and young people who came into the care of Child, Youth and Family (CYF) had high rates of educational disengagement and underachievement.

Oranga Tamariki further explored these experiences and outcomes through a qualitative study of children and young people's experiences, a review of New Zealand government data, and a literature scan of national and international research in a suite of three research reports titled *Experiences of Education for Children in Care*.

Key findings from the research indicate that children and young people in care can often experience exclusion and disciplinary action, which appears to increase with age. These children also often find academic achievement difficult, experience learning difficulties and frequent changes of school, both of which can negatively impact on their learning. Data shows that early intervention with children and young people in care can be beneficial to their educational outcomes. Find the reports [here](#).

Visit our [website](#) to catch up on all of our latest research.

RESEARCH SEMINARS

The Evidence Centre hosts regular seminars, in collaboration with social sector partners. Learn more about our recent seminars showcasing research for those working in areas that impact the lives of New Zealand's children and families.

Insights from Children and Young People's Education: Quantitative and Qualitative Research into Educational Experiences



Educational Insights into Children in Care

Dr. Duncan McCann works in the Analytics and Insights team within the Evidence Centre at Oranga Tamariki. Duncan discussed quantitative research from the IDI on children's educational engagement and achievement for differing levels of care and protection experience.



Experiences of Education for Children in Care

Dr. Karen Harris is a Senior Advisor in the Voices of Children and Young People team at Oranga Tamariki. Karen discussed the project *The Educational Experiences of Children in Care* which provides insights from children and young people, caregivers, social workers, and educators relating to children's experiences, achievements, and outcomes in education.

Understanding the Impact of Offending and How to Prevent Harm



Safer Whānau Initiatives from Police

Bronwyn Marshall is Acting Superintendent, Safer Whānau Business Change Manager at Police. She is currently leading several significant and innovative family harm initiatives. In this presentation, she provides a comprehensive overview of the need for change, and describes some of the initiatives she is leading.



NZ Crime and Victims Survey Findings from the Ministry of Justice

Dr. Michael Slyuzberg is a Principal Advisor in the Research and Evaluation team at the Ministry of Justice. Michael is a researcher and statistician who has lead multiple research projects. Here, he discusses the results of the NZ Crime and Victims Survey, which has received extensive media feedback.

MEET THE TEAM: VALMAI COPELAND



Valmai is one of the Principal Advisors in the Evidence Centre. She grew up in Tokoroa, heart of the Timberlands, in the days when it had the highest average income in New Zealand. The town was a mix of nationalities from around the world. Valmai received a degree in Technology from Massey University, majoring in statistics and computing. She accepted her first job with Statistics NZ in the Christchurch office because she

had never been to the South Island. After five years she moved to Wellington for a 'short stay' in 1980 and has been here ever since. Highlights of her spell in Stats NZ were leading the Time Use pilot study to measure the contribution of unpaid work to the New Zealand economy, and developing an index of real disposable income. Her next career move was to Inland Revenue to work in their evaluation unit. Major projects included developing methods to measure the compliance costs of tax payers, and the evaluation of Working for Families.

Eighteen months ago Valmai joined Oranga Tamariki and reunited with many of her Working for Families colleagues. She has become immersed in a number of projects, with the measurement of harm to children in care providing an understanding of the hard end of our work.

Valmai is interested in all things textile, belongs to a quilt guild, and knits and dressmakes for relaxation. She also loves

the sea and wants to visit all of our Pacific neighbours. On a recent break from work she combined all these enthusiasms by assisting in running sewing workshops for Ni-Vanuatu women in four different locations on Efate, the main island of Vanuatu.

She is passionate about using the right data to tell the stories of those whose information it is, and ensuring it is accurate and appropriate.

I'm thrilled to be working at Oranga Tamariki at this time. This is our time to make a positive difference for children and young people and to put in place an evidence infrastructure that informs development of policy and practice that will provide a firm basis for years.

The Principal Advisor role extends across a wide range of projects at any time. I am currently working on the evaluation of Family Start, working with internal clients on using the insights from our surveys of caregivers, foster carers, and those who receive the Unsupported Child Benefit, research to support the Pacific Strategy and providing methodological advice and support for a number of other projects.

I'm delighted to be setting up the survey monitoring programme which will allow us to regularly and systemically hear from our stakeholders. The report on findings from the survey of caregivers has recently been published and work has started on other stakeholder surveys.

It is a privilege to see the wide range of transformative activities that Oranga Tamariki is undertaking, and to work with the clever and compassionate people who are leading these changes. I am very fortunate to be able to say I love my job, and believe in the value of the work we do.