



**ORANGA
TAMARIKI**
Ministry for Children

New Zealand Government

Public Consultation on Topic for a Long-Term Insights Briefing

Improving the early identification of, and support
for, children and young people at risk of
maltreatment between now and 2040

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What are your views?

Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Children) is seeking feedback on the proposed topic of our 2025 Long-term Insights Briefing (LTIB) by 5pm on Friday 29 November 2024.

This is the first phase of a two-phase public consultation approach to develop our briefing. You can make your submission by completing the form provided through Qualtrics.

Please include your name, the name of your organisation (if applicable) and contact details in your submission. You may also want to include links to relevant evidence, for example, research references, or outline the values that underpin your comments.

For more information on how we intend to use and publish your feedback, and how we will protect your private information, see Annex 1.

Part One: Who are we and what is a Long-term Insights Briefing?

Oranga Tamariki

Oranga Tamariki is the Ministry dedicated to supporting any child in Aotearoa New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.

Our role includes scanning the horizon for future issues and opportunities, setting long-term strategies for children's policy and advising the Government on changing priorities, policies, funding and other matters that affect how the children's system operates. The Long-term Insights Briefing (LTIB) is one of the ways in which we carry out these roles.

What is a Long-term Insights Briefing?

Long-term insights briefings are a requirement for the public service of Aotearoa. Introduced by the Public Service Act 2020, the briefings must be completed at least once every three years.

Chief Executives in the public service have a statutory duty to produce the briefings independently of ministers. The briefings differ from the advice that the public service provides ministers, and from the accountability and planning documents prepared for Parliament. They are not government policy.

Instead, the briefings are 'think-pieces' on the future. Their purpose is to strengthen the public service's focus on the long term, by making available:

- information about medium- and long-term trends, risks and opportunities that affect or may affect Aotearoa
- information and impartial analysis, including on policy options for responding to these matters.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) guidance recommends the briefings look at least ten years into the future. If you want to learn more about these briefings, please visit the [Policy Project website](#).

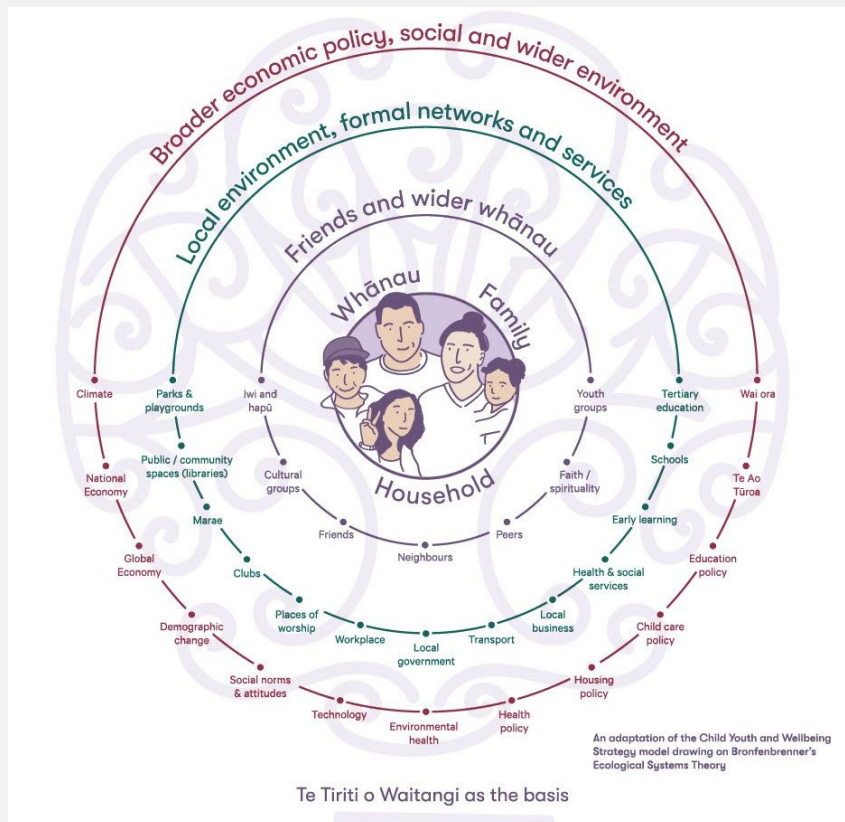
Part Two: What topic are we proposing?

Our proposed topic

We are seeking feedback on the topic:

“How can we improve the early identification of, and support for, children and young people at risk of maltreatment between now and 2040?”

“**We**” includes all the relationships and supports that surround tamariki and children, their parents and caregivers, whānau and families, as depicted in Te Tokotoru – the below ecological model.¹ This includes iwi and hapū, community groups, local and central government.



“**Maltreatment**” includes the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power ([WHO, 2022](#))

“**At risk**” means there is a relatively high chance or probability of a specific child or young person experiencing maltreatment, either now or in the future and whether they have already been maltreated or not. This includes the presence of risk factors, and the absence of protective factors, at the individual, family and whānau and community level. Such factors that are supported by evidence are listed on page 6.

¹ The Auckland Co-Design Lab and Te Puna Aonui, March 2024

Future trends and drivers

We will explore contextual factors (future trends and drivers) that will likely have an impact on how we can improve the early identification of, and support for, children and young people at risk of maltreatment between now and 2040:

- socio-economic disadvantage – living in less favourable social and economic circumstance than others in the same society, including child poverty
- demographic change – population growth, aging, and increased ethnic diversity
- technology adoption – digital platforms, artificial intelligence, automation
- post-Treaty settlements – increased mandates and capacity for iwi to partner with the Crown
- trust in public institutions – perceptions of government quality and interactions, and expectations for more community-led social services
- workforce supply – availability of skilled and diverse social workers and other staff within non-government, iwi, community and voluntary organisations
- urbanisation – more people living in cities and towns remote rural areas
- social norms – prevalent attitudes and beliefs about the value of children and parents (including their race, gender, dis/ability and socioeconomic status), different parenting styles, and of asking for and giving help within communities
- social cohesion – recognition, inclusion and participation of different groups including iwi, pacific peoples, those with disability, and those identifying as rainbow (LGBTQIA+)
- environmental pressures – climate change and related events, natural resource scarcity.

What works

We will review existing evidence about effective early identification and support for children and young people at risk of maltreatment. We will then assess effects, risks and opportunities in relation to what works that might arise from relevant trends and drivers, including for whānau, community and workforce capability, risk assessment, information sharing, policy and system settings.

Societal responsibilities

We will also explore perceptions of the extent to which different layers of society should have responsibility for identifying and supporting children and young people at risk of maltreatment, and how this may be impacted by relevant trends and drivers. These layers include:

- individuals, parents and caregivers
- whānau and family
- iwi and hapū
- community
- local government
- central government.

Proposed scope

We do not propose to explore how to improve:

- formal care and protection for children who are in the custody of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki

- youth justice responses for young people coming into contact with the youth justice system
- responses to family violence and sexual violence specifically.

These issues are being addressed by work that is already underway and we don't want to duplicate, including implementation of the National Care Strategy, the government target to reduce child and youth offending, Te Aorerekura, and the responses to the Royal Commission Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

'Preventing child harm is proposed as a priority under the Government's refreshed Child and Youth Strategy and work is currently underway across government in response to Dame Karen Poutasi's report *Ensuring strong and effective safety nets to prevent abuse of children*.

Our proposed LTIB will focus on what works in the context of trends and drivers until 2040.

Child maltreatment risk and protective factors²

	Parents or caregivers	Whānau and families	Communities
Protective factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a strong sense of belonging and cultural identity – for Māori this can include connections to whānau, whenua and whakapapa. • Create safe, positive relationships with children including secure maternal attachment • Practice nurturing skills and provide emotional support • Can meet basic needs of food, shelter, education, and health services • Are well educated and have steady employment • Enforce household rules and engage in child monitoring • Children have social and emotional competence (e.g. self-control). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have strong social support networks and stable, positive relationships with the people around them • Support parents or caregivers to be present and interested in the child • Model healthy conflict management and coping strategies • Have caring adults outside the immediate family who can serve as role models or mentors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place a high cultural value on children, parenting and caregiving • Can access safe, stable housing • Can access high-quality early learning, nurturing and safe childcare, and safe, engaging after school programs and activities • Can access economic and financial help • Can access work opportunities with family-friendly policies • Can access medical care and mental health services.

² Sourced from *Te Aorerekura: The national strategy to eliminate family violence and sexual violence*; Doidge, J. C., Higgins, D. J., Delfabbro, P., & Segal, L. (2017). Risk factors for child maltreatment in an Australian population-based birth cohort. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 64, 47-60; and the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (May 2024): [Risk and Protective Factors | Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention](#); The Baker Centre (April 2024) [Protecting Childhood: Identifying Risk and Protective Factors for Child Abuse and Neglect :: The Baker Center For Children and Families](#).

Risk factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceive children as a burden (e.g., after unplanned pregnancy) • Are young or single or have many children • Have low education or income • Experience high levels of parenting or financial stress • Don't understand children's needs or development • Were abused or neglected as children • Have drug, alcohol or mental health issues • Have attitudes accepting or justifying violence (e.g. physical punishment) • Have other caregivers in the home who are not a biological parent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have household members in jail or prison • Are isolated from and not connected to other people (e.g., friends and neighbours) • Experience violence • Have high conflict and negative communication styles • Frequently experience food insecurity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of pre-natal care • High rates of poverty and unemployment, and limited educational and economic opportunities • Unstable housing • Easy access to drugs and alcohol • High rates of violence and crime • Low community involvement and neighbours don't know or look out for each other • Few activities for young people • Social and cultural norms that promote physical punishment and distinct gender/sexual identity roles.
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Part Three: Why is our proposed topic important?

What happens early in a child’s life, particularly in the first 1000 days, has a significant impact on their lifelong outcomes. The long-lasting and negative effects of child maltreatment can have a devastating impact on the wellbeing of both the child and their family. These effects include poor educational attainment, reduced earnings, poor mental and physical health, and increased likelihood of intergenerational maltreatment. Opportunities for prevention in the form of early identification and response are, therefore, essential for preventing future risk of harm.

Improved outcomes for children and young people result in reduced costs to government associated with future benefit dependency, health issues, involvement in crime, and reductions in income tax contributions.

The proposed topic is important for us to explore in our role as the government’s lead advisor on the Children’s System, including to coordinate the development of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan under Part 1 of the Children’s Act 2014. The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan requires children’s agencies³ to work together to achieve the outcomes of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy for children of interest to Oranga Tamariki.

The vision of Oranga Tamariki is that all children are safe, loved and nurtured by whānau, hapū, and iwi, supported by thriving communities. One of the ways in which this vision will be realised is through focussing on prevention to significantly reduce flows of children and young people into statutory care and protection. Enabling hapū, iwi, and communities to support the needs of tamariki and whānau and children and

³ The New Zealand Police, and the Ministries of Education, Social Development, Health, and Justice We also work with other agencies that work with children including the Department of Corrections, Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People, Kainga Ora – Homes and Communities, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

families, is less intrusive than statutory responses and is consistent with recommendations in important documents such as Te Kahu Aroha.

The proposed topic of the Long-term Insights Briefing presents an opportunity to explore the opportunities and challenges in preventing child maltreatment in the future and we welcome the involvement of the public of Aotearoa in telling us what that future should look like.

Current state

In 2020, New Zealand ranked 35th out of 41 developed countries in terms of child wellbeing outcomes.⁴ The true picture of maltreatment of children in Aotearoa is, however, not known.

In 2022, around 14,000 children (aged 0- to 19-years) were reported to Police, of these three-quarters were for “acts intended to cause injury” and the rest were for “sexual assault and related offences”. In the same year, there were around 10,500 children (aged 0- to 17-years) where Oranga Tamariki made a substantiated finding of abuse or neglect.

Oranga Tamariki had some level of engagement with almost two out of every five children born in 2005 by the time they turned 18-years-old. Figure 1 (below) shows the level of involvement with Oranga Tamariki by children born in 2005, until age 18-years (noting this does not include children with youth justice involvement).

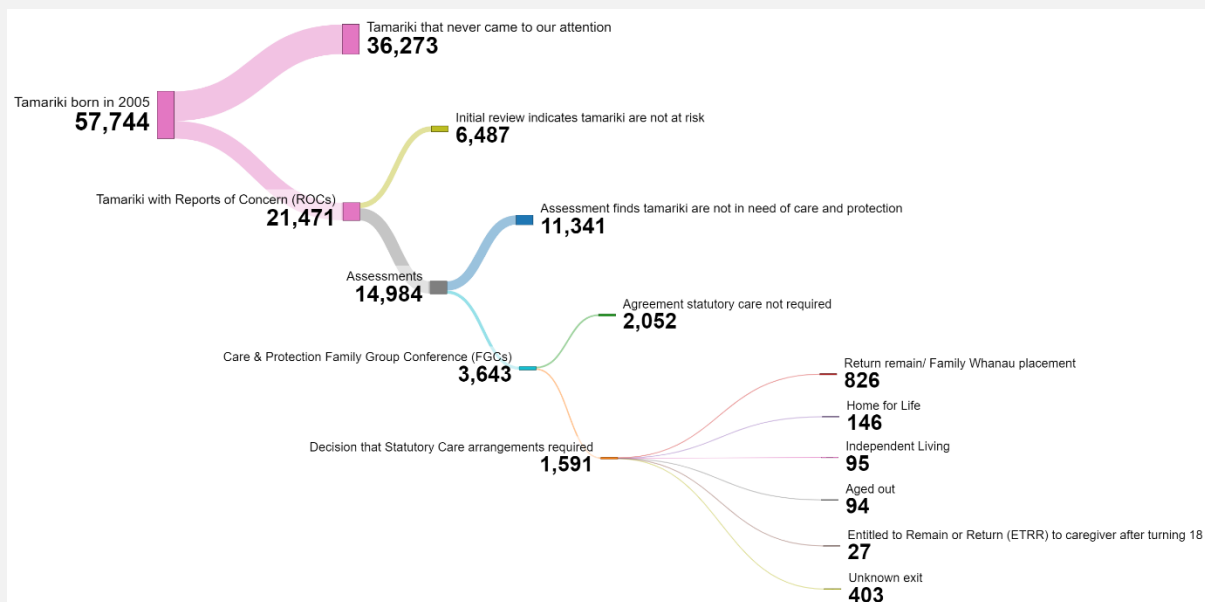


Figure 1: **Care involvement for children born in 2005**, (Oranga Tamariki Draft Strategic Intentions, 2024/25-2029/30)

Most (over 80 percent) core assessments done by Oranga Tamariki were for children who had come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki before (see Figure 2 below).

⁴ Gromada, A., Rees, G., & Chzhen, Y. (2020). Worlds of influence: Understanding what shapes child well-being in rich countries. United Nations Children's Fund.

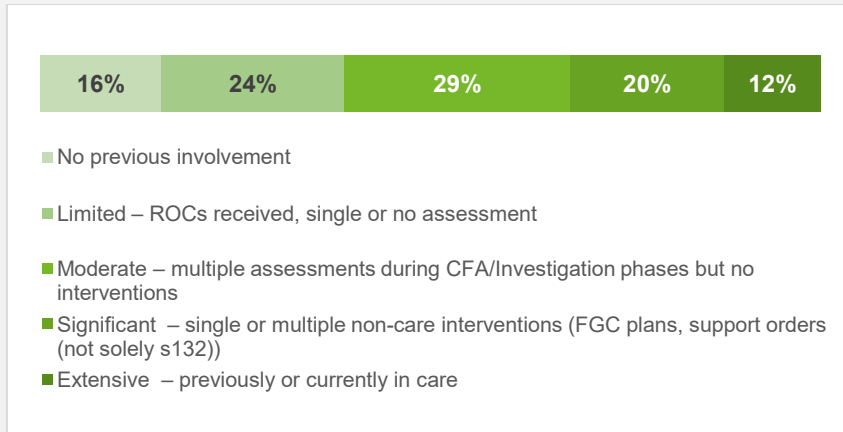


Figure 2: **History of Oranga Tamariki involvement prior to the current assessment**, (Oranga Tamariki, Te Riu Quarterly Performance Deep Dive – Understanding our work in responding to Reports of Concern – June 2024)

Part Four: How will we develop the briefing?

There are two phases of public consultation. This is the first stage, and it is to: (1) decide the topic for the LTIB and (2) input into how we could explore the topic.

We will develop the content and insights for our LTIB, using the focus areas we talked about in Part Two, and by:

- building an evidence base – reviewing local and international literature
- engaging with stakeholders to hear feedback and insights
- identifying and developing steps that could be taken to make improvements.

The second stage of consultation will be on the draft of the briefing in April or May 2025 to prepare for the final version.

How will we work with others?

Public consultation is a critical component in developing the briefing. Public consultation ensures diverse perspectives and expertise are incorporated into the LTIB process, enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of insights. We are committed to the principles of good community engagement including:

- **A commitment to strengthening Māori Crown relationships:** Fostering meaningful partnerships with Māori communities to ensure their perspectives and rights are included in decision-making.
- **Open and transparent engagement:** Maintaining open and transparent communication, sharing information about our processes, including how stakeholder feedback is incorporated and addressed.
- **Genuine and meaningful engagement:** Ensuring our approach to consultation is authentic and considers stakeholder voice, recognises the needs and interests of all participants, and genuinely seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected. We recognise and respect individuals as experts in their own lives.
- **Engaging throughout the process:** Where possible, we will seek stakeholder input at key stages throughout the process, ensuring their insights are integrated at key points and contribute to decision-making.
- **Being responsive and flexible:** We will be responsive and flexible to the needs of stakeholders, adapting our engagement strategies to ensure participation and relevance.

Part Five: How can you provide feedback?

Your input will help shape the focus and direction of our LTIB. The deadline for feedback on the proposed topic is Tuesday 26 November 2024. As part of the LTIB process, we will be collecting feedback in two phases: first, on the proposed topic (during this consultation), and later, on the draft briefing in early 2025.

To share your thoughts on the proposed topic, you can **fill out the brief online survey** ([Click here](#)): We use Qualtrics to collect and manage your feedback. Qualtrics is a secure platform and all information you provide will be stored safely and handled in accordance with our privacy policy.

The questions we are asking feedback on are:

1. Are you submitting this feedback as an individual or part of a group/organisation?
 - a. (If group) Which of the following areas best represents the group/organisation you are submitting on behalf of?
 - b. (If individual) Do any of the below statements apply to you? [I am a caregiver, I am care experienced, I have a professional interest in this topic, other]

2. LTIBs are forward thinking reports aimed at guiding the public service's long-term focus. They provide insights on medium to long term trends, risks, opportunities and impartial analysis for options for New Zealand's future. Our proposed topic is: **How can we improve the early identification of, and support for, children and young people at risk of maltreatment between now and 2040?**
 - a. Is this a suitable topic to be explored in the LTIB? Why or why not?
 - b. What opportunities does early risk identification provide for effective responses?
 - c. What barriers exist now and in the future that may affect early risk identification and effective responses?
 - d. To what extent should different groups in society have responsibility for identifying and supporting children and young people at risk of maltreatment?
 - e. What concerns, if any, do you have about early identification of, and support for, children and young people at risk of maltreatment in the future?
 - f. Which future trends and drivers are most or least likely to have an impact on how we can improve the early identification of, and support for, children and young people at risk of maltreatment between now and 2040?

3. Ethnicity
4. Iwi affiliation
5. Are you interested in being involved in future consultation on this topic?
 - a. Contact details

Annex 1: Use of your submission

Oranga Tamariki will publish a summary of submissions on the scope after the consultation process and intends to publish a draft of the LTIB in early 2025 for public consultation, before publishing the final LTIB in mid-2025. For further details and updates, visit: <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/ltib-2025>

We will use the information provided in submissions to develop our briefing. Oranga Tamariki may contact you directly if we need to clarify any matters you raise in your submission.

Privacy Act considerations

The Privacy Act 2020 establishes certain principles about how agencies, like Oranga Tamariki, collect, use and disclose information about individuals by various agencies. Any personal information you supply in the course of making a submission will only be used for the purpose of helping us to develop, and give policy advice about, Oranga Tamariki's LTIB. Please clearly indicate in your submission if you do not wish your name, or any other personal information, to be included in the summary of submissions and consultations that Oranga Tamariki will publish.

Official Information Act considerations

We will publish a summary of the feedback we receive through this consultation. By making a submission Oranga Tamariki will consider that you have consented to publication of material contained within your submission, unless you clearly specify otherwise in the submission. If your submission contains any information that is confidential, or you wish us not to publish it for another reason, please indicate this at the top of the submission and mark any confidential information clearly within the text.

While we collect submitters' names and contact information, please note that personal contact details and names will not be shared or published through the summary of submissions. Submissions remain subject to requests under the Official Information Act 1982. If you have concerns about your response and name being released, please note this in your submission, with a reason why your name or parts of the submission should be withheld from any future request under the Official Information Act 1982. Oranga Tamariki will take such objections into account and will consult with submitters who have raised objections to the full release of their submission under the Official Information Act 1982. Note that the Official Information Act recognises the privacy of natural persons as a reason for withholding information, such as their contact details.