

Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki






# STRATEGIC INTENTIONS

2017–2022





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Presented to the House of Representatives pursuant to section 39 of the Public Finance Act 1989

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# MINISTER'S FOREWORD

We need to do everything we can to keep our young New Zealanders safe, and to give them the successful lives they deserve.

In 2015, I established an independent Expert Panel to provide advice on modernising Child, Youth and Family. The Expert Panel's final report provided robust evidence that the performance of the current system is well below what New Zealanders want for our most vulnerable children and young people.

This report was informed by children and young people who told us about their experiences with the system and their time in care. I'd like to recognise and thank the two Youth Advisory Panels for their input and direction which proved invaluable throughout this process.

In response, Cabinet agreed to a bold and urgent overhaul of the system to ensure that all children and young people are in loving communities where they can be safe, strong, connected, and able to flourish.

In May 2016, Cabinet agreed to the creation of a new children's entity which resulted in the establishment of the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki from 1 April 2017.

The new agency is undertaking significant cross-agency work to develop a new child-centred operating model. We're building a comprehensive set of services for our children and young people from prevention through to early adulthood services, and transforming existing Care and Protection and Youth Justice services. The system will understand the impact of trauma and adverse life experiences, and it will ensure positive long-term outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

These changes will not happen overnight. We anticipate it will take up to five years to embed these reforms.

New Zealanders have the generosity of spirit and the determination to give our children and young people the world-class system they deserve.

With support from all New Zealanders, the Ministry will strive to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people.

**Hon Anne Tolley**  
**Minister for Children**

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INTRODUCTION

I am privileged to be part of the journey of Oranga Tamariki. Our destination is right there within our name - a place where the wellbeing of all New Zealand children and young people is assured.

Reaching the shared goal of oranga tamariki is an ambitious voyage unlike any this country has ever undertaken. To give every child the life they deserve requires change on a massive scale, delivered at ambitious speed. And we are already underway, so we must work on our vessel as we go, building it into something bigger and faster.

We are all leaders in building strong, resilient children and young people, and we are taking action. Only when our children and young people thrive will our country thrive.

These young people are our future parents, doctors, teachers, tradespeople and entrepreneurs. Each and every one has the seed of greatness inside of them, and every New Zealander has a role to play in making sure they are safe, loved, and able to reach their potential.

We know it's not about instant solutions; it's about building a sustainable system and putting children and young people front and centre. It's about showing our communities how that can happen, and giving them the tools to achieve it. We know that when we invest early in ways we know will make a difference; we can do better for New Zealand's most vulnerable children and young people.

Reducing the over-representation of Māori children and young people is a key goal. We will have high aspirations for Māori children, and will work closely with whānau, hapū and iwi to make it happen.

Over the next year we're committed to focusing on the needs of our children and young people and making improvement in the following priority areas:

- We are increasing places for children and young people to be when home's not right.
- We are going to lead 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 going to work with partners across New Zealand, including iwi and NGOs, in new ways to build stronger services for our children and young people.

We have a unique opportunity to learn from the past and achieve these aspirations.

Our role is to recognise and support the great leaders, the great practitioners, the great caregivers, and the great practice, and spread their examples across New Zealand.

**Gráinne Moss**  
**Chief Executive,**  
**Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki**

# STATEMENTS OF RESPONSIBILITY

## Chief Executive’s statement

In signing this statement, I acknowledge that I am responsible for the information contained on strategic intentions for the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki. This information has been prepared in accordance with section 38 and section 40 of the Public Finance Act 1989.



**Gráinne Moss**  
Chief Executive  
Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki  
18 September 2017

## Minister’s statement

I am satisfied that the information on strategic intentions prepared by the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki is consistent with the policies and performance expectations of the Government.



**Hon Anne Tolley**  
Minister for Children  
18 September 2017



# WHO WE ARE

## Our vision

Our vision is that New Zealand values the well-being of tamariki above all else.

## Our purpose

Our purpose is to ensure that all tamariki are living with loving whānau and in communities where oranga tamariki can be realised.

## Our name

The name 'Oranga Tamariki' carries our aspirations for all children and young people, and it is our promise to the children and young people that we serve.

- 'Oranga' is the wellbeing we want to help the children and young people we work with to have.
- 'Tamariki' reminds us that children and young people are descended from greatness. They are born with an inherent mana that can be damaged by abuse and neglect.

We support tamariki, family and whānau to restore their mana, their sense of self, their important connections and relationships, their right to heal and recover, and reach their potential.

## Our values

Our values were gifted to us by tamariki. We honour these values by living them every day. These values are more than just lines on paper, we're bringing them to life, and we invite you to bring them to life as well.

Our six core values are (the Oranga Tamariki Way):

- We put tamariki first – We will challenge when things aren't right for the child or young person.
- We respect the mana of people – We listen, we don't assume, and we create solutions with others.
- We believe aroha is vital – It keeps us focused on what is right.
- We value whakapapa – Tamariki are part of a whānau and a community.
- We are tika and pono – We do what we say we'll do.
- We recognise that oranga is a journey – We understand the long-term impact of our actions today.



## Our role and functions

Our role is to:

- deliver and commission child-centred services that:
  - prevent or respond to incidences of vulnerability
  - support vulnerable children and young people to fulfil their potential
  - promote the integration of services across the system.
- manage a lifetime wellbeing improvement model for vulnerable children and young people
- provide the Government with policy advice on preventing the occurrence of vulnerability, and reducing the intensity and duration of vulnerability for this group, over both the short and long term
- provide leadership of the system to support vulnerable children through the following legislative functions:
  - co-ordinate the Ministry's prevention and early intervention services with other similar Government-funded services
  - ensure 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
  - co-ordinate the development of the Vulnerable Children's Plan and to ensure the content of the plan has a cross-agency focus on the vulnerable children of most interest to the Ministry.



Our functions include provision of the following:

- statutory Care and Protection
- Youth Justice services
- operational adoption services, including in relation to inter-country adoptions and international agreements
- implementation of the Vulnerable Children’s Plan
- funding and contracting services for vulnerable children and young people
- family violence and sexual violence services relating to child victims or perpetrators
- complaint mechanisms and support for grievance panels (for residences)
- policy advice relevant to these functions.

### Our legislative context

We administer the following legislation:

- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 Children’s and Young People’s Well-being Act 1989 (formerly the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989)
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014 - Parts 1 and 2 (which deal with cross-agency arrangements to support vulnerable children and young people, and child protection policies)
- Children’s Commissioner Act 2003
- Adoption Act 1955 (operational administration)
- Adoptions (Intercountry) Act 1997 (operational administration)
- Adult Adoption Information Act 1985 (operational administration).

## OUR OPERATING CONTEXT

### Our background and story

This section provides information on the context in which the care, protection and youth justice system operates, and the origin of the reforms that established the Ministry and which are shaping our future direction. It draws on findings from the Expert Panel Final Report, December 2015.

### The extent and nature of child vulnerability mean that the Ministry works at the forefront of some of New Zealand’s most complex social issues.

A substantial proportion of New Zealand children and young people experience multiple risk factors and issues that put them in contact with statutory services. Two in 10 children and young people in any birth cohort come to the attention of the statutory Care and Protection, and Youth Justice systems in childhood. Of these, one quarter will require intensive support and a statutory response by age 17.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the children and young people referred to the Ministry are living in families with multiple and complex needs.<sup>2</sup> Many of these families are experiencing 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 highlight the necessity of an effective system-wide response.

Of children and young people born between 2005 and 2007 and known to the Care and Protection system by age five<sup>3</sup>:

- 39 percent had mothers who had been receiving a benefit for more than four out of the last five years preceding their birth, and 60 percent had a primary carer who was receiving a benefit at the time of their birth
- 37 percent had a parent who had a criminal conviction in the five years prior to the child’s birth
- 69 percent had parents where there was a family violence incident attended by Police in the five years prior to the child’s birth
- 36 percent had parents who were known to Care and Protection as a child.

### Māori children and young people are over-represented

Māori children and young people make up around half of those who come into contact with the Care and Protection and Youth Justice systems and are twice as likely to be referred to statutory services compared to the total population.<sup>4</sup>

This over-representation is likely to be a consequence of the disproportionate number of Māori children and young people in families with high levels of need and disadvantage. For example, Māori children and young people born between 2005 and 2007 were four times more likely to have a mother who had been dependent on a benefit than non-Māori children and young people.<sup>5</sup>

1 Expert Panel Final Report: Investing in New Zealand’s Children and their Families.  
2 ibid  
3 ibid  
4 ibid  
5 ibid

## Disabled children and young people are also over-represented

Disabled children and young people are over-represented in all layers of the vulnerable children and young people system for a combination of reasons. Without the right support and services, disabled children and young people may be at risk of poor outcomes and can end up in statutory care or involved with Youth Justice. While disability may or may not be a factor in why these children and young people come to the attention of the system, disabled children and young people do have a heightened vulnerability to abuse, neglect and exposure to family violence. This vulnerability continues for disabled children and young people living in out-of-home care.<sup>6</sup>

## Children and young people who need statutory intervention often have poor long-term life outcomes

Evidence shows that those who experience abuse, neglect and other adverse childhood events are more likely to experience poor life outcomes<sup>7</sup>. Data shows that for the cohort of children and young people born in 1990/91, by age 21 those who were known to Care and Protection were more likely to have:

- **left school without at least a Level 2 NCEA qualification** – more than six out of 10 children and young people known to the Care and Protection system left school with less than NCEA Level 2. This compared with three out of 10 children and young people with no Care and Protection contact

- **been referred to Child, Youth and Family because of youth offending** – almost two out of 10 children and young people known to the Care and Protection system were subsequently referred to CYF by the Police because of youth offending. This was seven times higher than those with no Care and Protection involvement
- **been in receipt of a benefit** – nearly seven out of 10 children and young people with Care and Protection contact had been on benefit by age 21, compared with three out of 10 for the rest of the population
- **received a community or custodial sentence in the adult corrections system** – almost two out of 10 children and young people with Care and Protection contact received a community sentence in the adult corrections system by age 21, and just under one in 10 received a custodial sentence. These rates were between five and nine times higher (community and custodial sentences respectively) than children and young people with no Care and Protection contact<sup>8</sup>.

## Listening to children and young people

Oranga Tamariki's child-centred approach is informed by the voices of the children and young people we support. Children and young people told us they:

- crave love
- need lasting relationships
- need to be included in decision-making
- need to belong
- need to be told the truth
- need to connect to their culture.

## What children and young people need

Oranga Tamariki aims to put children's and young people's needs at the centre. Children and young people need different responses depending on their circumstances and characteristics.

### "I need the system to..."

- set me up for the best possible start in life
- identify and respond early when my family / whānau and I need assistance
- find out when someone is worried about me
- understand what help I need to be safe and flourish, and who is best placed to provide it
- work with my family so I can be safe, recover and flourish at home
- if I am unable to live at home, give me stable and loving care that enables me to be safe, recover and flourish
- if I have offended, understand what help I need to take responsibility for my actions, repair the harm and prevent me from reoffending
- if I have offended, help my family / whānau support me to stay on track
- if I have offended and am unable to live at home, give me the support I need to be safe, recover and flourish
- set me up with the knowledge, skills and tools to flourish as an independent young adult
- continue to be there for me as I find my way.

<sup>6</sup> D Miller & J Brown (Oct 2014) We have the right to be safe: Protecting disabled children from abuse, NSPCC.

<sup>7</sup> Refer to: Fergusson, D. M., & Lynskey, M. T. (1997). Physical punishment/maltreatment during childhood and adjustment in young adulthood. *Child abuse and neglect*, 21(7), 617-630 and Fergusson, D. M., Horwood, L. J., & Lynskey, M. T. (1996). Childhood sexual abuse and psychiatric disorder in young adulthood: II. As referred to in the Expert Panel Final Report.

<sup>8</sup> Analysis of the 1990/91 birth cohort. Following references to this cohort are also from this source. Crichton, S., Templeton, R., Tumen, S., Otta, R., Small, D., Wilson, M., & Rea, D. (2015). New findings on outcomes for children and young people who have contact with Child, Youth and Family, Wellington, As referred to in the Expert Panel Final Report.

## The review and overhaul of the operating model

A number of past government reviews have identified significant issues with how the child protection system operates, and have highlighted the need for a child-centred approach, improved structures to support practice, and the need to address social worker caseloads. Child protection systems around the world face similar challenges.

In April 2015, Cabinet established an Expert Advisory Panel to review the existing Care and Protection system. This not only focused on Child, Youth and Family, but looked at all of the system players, including other agencies, the private sector, NGOs, and community groups.

In July 2015, an Interim Report to Cabinet provided a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the challenges facing the system.

In March 2016, following consideration of the Expert Advisory Panel's final report, Cabinet announced major state care reforms and a complete overhaul of Child, Youth and Family to improve the long-term life outcomes for New Zealand's most vulnerable population and to achieve a reduction in the future spend associated with poor lifetime outcomes.

Key findings of the review detailed a need to develop:

- a new child-centred operating model with a greater focus on harm and trauma prevention and early intervention.
- an investment approach using a lifetime investment model for vulnerable children and young people, and evidence of what works to identify the best way of targeting early interventions and to ensure that vulnerable children and young people receive the care and support they need, when they need it.
- direct purchasing of vital services such as health, education and counselling support to allow funding to follow the child, so that young people can gain immediate access to assistance.
- a stronger focus on reducing the over-representation of Māori children and young people in the system.
- changes to the legislative framework to support the transformation.

In response to the review, the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki was established in April 2017 with a wide set of responsibilities including system leadership and acting as a single point of accountability for vulnerable children and young people.

## Legislative reform

Legislative reforms underpin and give effect to the new system. In 2016, a first set of reforms to the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (the Act) was passed. The legislation includes:

- an extension to the provision of the statutory Care and Protection system to young people aged 17 years
- embedding children and young people's views at a systemic and individual level by strengthening obligations to support participation under the Act
- supporting the establishment of independent advocacy services
- enabling a broader range of professionals to perform a wider set of functions under the Act.

A second set of legislative changes were passed in 2017. Most of these will take effect over the next two years. The legislation includes:

- changes to the 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
- provisions allowing young people to remain or return to living with a caregiver until the age of 21, with transition support and advice available up to age 25
- strengthened information sharing provisions to keep vulnerable children and young people safe from harm

- an extension to the Youth Justice system to include most 17-year-olds (those charged with specified serious offences will be dealt with in the adult courts)
- a requirement for the Ministry to have children-centred complaints mechanisms in place.

Provisions in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 will support the improvement of outcomes for Māori through new duties on the chief executive that are imposed to recognise and provide a practical commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi. These duties, due to come into force no later than 1 July 2019, will require the Ministry's chief executive to:

- ensure that the Ministry's policies and practices set measurable outcomes for Māori children and young people who come to the Ministry's attention
- ensure that the Ministry's policies, practices and services have regard to mana tamaiti (tamariki) and the whakapapa of Māori children and young persons and the whanaungatanga responsibilities of their whānau, hapū and iwi
- ensure that the Ministry seeks to develop strategic partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations, with the goal of improving outcomes for Māori children and young people who come to the Ministry's attention, and their whānau
- publicly report at least annually on the measures taken to carry out these duties, including the impact of these measures in improving outcomes for Māori children and young persons who come to the Ministry's attention, and the steps to be taken in the immediate future.



# OUR STRATEGY

Strengthening and stabilising Oranga Tamariki’s current practice is an important first step in order to quickly improve our performance and the quality of services provided to children and young people. We know we must demonstrate strong leadership across the system through a course of action that stabilises those challenging sites and areas of high demand, and positions future resources where they are needed most. We also know we cannot work alone. Our challenge will be to mobilise all those participants across our communities, sectors, and government, to understand the response that is needed, and to work collaboratively in the interests of the child.

For that reason we will be adopting an investment-based, system-based, and community-based strategy to guide our work for the next 5 years. Our medium-term strategy will therefore be to:

- stabilise and strengthen our current practice while embedding and extending fundamental reforms
- use an investment approach that directs resources to areas of need
- adopt a system-based approach that mobilises resources across the system towards a common goal
- take a community-based and partnership-based approach that draws on the expertise and support of all those who work with and close to our children and young people.

## Foundations for a new way of working

As a part of the stabilisation process we have established a set of foundation building blocks to guide our new way of working. They include:

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| A CHILD-CENTRED SYSTEM              | We will seek to embed the voices of children and young people into decision-making at both individual and system levels and ask ourselves ‘Is this the right thing to do for the child?’ at every step of the way.  |
| HIGH ASPIRATIONS FOR TAMARIKI MĀORI | We will have high aspirations for Māori children and young people, and will work closely with whānau, hapū and iwi to make it happen. New ways of measuring our work and regular and transparent reporting will help us and our partners to understand the progress we’re making.   |
| AN INVESTMENT APPROACH              | We will consider a lifetime view of the wellbeing of individual children and young people and aim to intervene early in evidence-based ways to address their needs.   |
| STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS              | We recognise that our partners are often well placed to help our tamariki in ways that we can’t. We will actively build bridges between our partners, and encourage a deeper commitment and more shared responsibility. By building capacity and capability, together we can start transforming outcomes for children and young people. |
| PRACTICE FRAMEWORK                  | We will develop a trauma-informed and system-wide framework to guide ourselves and others working with vulnerable children and young people and their families.   |
| ENGAGING ALL NEW ZEALANDERS         | All New Zealanders have a role to play in providing love, care and support to vulnerable children, young people and their families. We will work to raise awareness and help communities to step forward to support vulnerable children and young people.   |

Our foundation building blocks provide the basis for the design and build of our new operating model that centres on the needs of the child and young person.



Our investment approach

Oranga Tamariki will be using an investment approach as a mechanism to move the system from the reactive focus on short-term safety and offending, to one that considers the lifetime wellbeing of children and young people; prioritises early action to prevent and address child vulnerability; and improves long-term wellbeing outcomes for New Zealand’s children and young people. The objectives of a transformed vulnerable children’s system includes:

- reduction in the need and rate of statutory response due to early prevention and intensive support for children, young people and families
- reduction in the re-instance of abuse and offending, and improvement in the stability of care and transition to adulthood for children and young people
- improved long term outcomes for children and young people and reduced future social, economic and fiscal costs.

Our investment approach will connect our objectives, our clients, and our resourcing, to provide clear recommendations around changes to deliver the greatest possible improvement in outcomes for children and young people, and make the most out of every dollar invested.

Oranga Tamariki has designed and built a ‘first of its kind’ model of New Zealand’s children and young people, and of how their wellbeing during childhood connects to adult outcomes and future fiscal spend. This has involved mapping cross-agency data and observations against key wellbeing domains such as safety, security, wellness and development; with a fifth domain, stability, to come in the next iteration.

Over time as the model matures, Oranga Tamariki will develop future investment plans with more detailed recommendations around investment priorities and how to channel resource where they are most needed.

Our vulnerable population groups

The wellbeing assessment of the vulnerable children and young people’s population indicates three vulnerable population groups:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>STATUTORY INTERVENTION AND TRANSITION SERVICES</b><br><i>(Care and Protection and Youth Justice population)</i> | We are redesigning our care support and transition services. In the short-term, improvements include caregiver recruitment and retention, alternatives to remand, treatment foster care, care standards, new service models in four sites, social worker practice framework and feedback and complaints. Future priorities include better support for children and young people with complex needs.   |
| <b>EARLY AND INTENSIVE INTERVENTION SERVICES</b><br><i>(Intensive intervention population)</i>                     | Current areas of focus aligned to this group are new models for youth justice workforce and practice improvement, operational aspects of raising the age, and the design and implementation of the intensive intervention model incorporating the Children’s Teams. Future priorities will include young people with unsupported and unplanned pregnancies, children and young people exposed to adult mental health issues, substance abuse, intimate partner violence, and other children and young people with apparent complex needs but who are not known to the Ministry. |
| <b>PREVENTION SERVICES</b><br><i>(Prevention population)</i>   | In the longer term we intend to focus more on prevention as a core service. This approach would begin pre-birth and extend through to supporting young people as they transition into adulthood. Current areas of focus include Family Start, access to services, and mental health pathways.   |



## Our system approach

Mobilising the Government's support and resources towards our vulnerable children and young people will require the collective efforts of a number of Departments working together. The investment approach will sit alongside and complement a system wide children's plan (Vulnerable Children's Plan) and, over time, the investment plans of other departments, to form a joined up view of the entire system.

### Vulnerable children's plan

The Vulnerable Children Act 2014 enables the responsible minister to set Government priorities for improving the wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people. After these priorities have been set, children's agency chief executives are required to work together to develop, deliver and jointly report on a cross-agency plan to deliver on these priorities.

As part of reforms to the new operating model for vulnerable children and young people, children's agencies are currently undertaking preparatory work on developing a plan.

Children's agencies are the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the New Zealand Police and the Ministry of Social Development.

A key way of monitoring and assessing the performance of the Vulnerable Children's Plan will be through a new System Performance Framework. The framework will set the performance targets and measures across the social sector that will drive better outcomes for vulnerable children.

## Our partnership and community approach

Oranga Tamariki cannot itself provide the loving stable homes and broad range of support and services that vulnerable children and young people need. The solutions needed and being developed are strongly focused on building the motivation, capacity and capability of all the people who support, engage with and provide services to vulnerable children and young people. This includes children and young people, caregivers, and the wider New Zealand community. The Ministry's three main communication and engagement priorities are to:

- use the voices of care-experienced children and young people to shape the future
- engage directly with and seek support from New Zealanders
- increase the size and quality of our all-important caregiver base.

## Using the voices of children and young people to shape the future

Oranga Tamariki is actively and regularly seeking the voices of care experienced children and young people to improve current services and also to shape the future. A good start has been made at embedding children's voices as central to the organisation and its strategy. The new Tamariki Advocate / Deputy Chief Executive Voices of Children role is designed to ensure co-design remains a core feature of how the Ministry works. Children and young people have driven the design of its brand and values and worked alongside the Ministry and their philanthropic and NGO partners to design and stand-up VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai.

VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai (an independent advocacy service) uses a combined approach of direct service delivery and strategic partnering. It will need to work closely with iwi, urban Māori organisations and Māori leaders to ensure services effectively respond to the needs of Māori children and young people.

There will be a phased implementation over four years to establish the service, build capacity and provide a platform for longer-term development and innovation strategy.

As the service nurtures greater connection between children and young people in care, and as individuals, organisations and communities come to understand the contribution they can make, the capability and capacity of the service will develop further.

## Communicating and engaging with New Zealanders

Oranga Tamariki is progressing work to build trust, confidence and engagement with the broader New Zealand public. We aim to change the public narrative to a more positive one that sees children and young people in care as our potential leaders, doctors, teachers and parents. We are actively building our engagement and communication ability including:

- launching the Oranga Tamariki Facebook page
- releasing the Trails of Taonga series of videos via the new Facebook page
- partnering with Sport New Zealand to connect children and young people in care to sports, recreation and cultural activities.

### Increasing our caregiver base

We will be using social media to raise public awareness of the importance of the role of caregivers as a lead-in to the broader caregiver recruitment activity.



## Strategic partnerships

Oranga Tamariki will engage in strategic partnerships with iwi, Māori and Pacific organisations, service providers, local communities and other government agencies as a primary mechanism for meeting the needs of vulnerable children and young people and families. Oranga Tamariki will also develop innovative and flexible funding approaches and delivery models, to make it easier for children and young people and families to access the right services at the right time.

The key components of this approach will be the development of partnerships that allow providers to co-design the optimal support required for vulnerable children and young people. Provider funding arrangements that focus on outcomes, support innovation and value strong local knowledge and relationships will be needed.

Oranga Tamariki is undertaking an initial analysis of its contracted services and service providers to review the match between service supply and demand. This will allow the development of a prioritised approach to meet market gaps.

## Improving outcomes for tamariki Māori

Oranga Tamariki will drive the creation of a system that understands and better meets the needs and aspirations of Māori. This includes the development of a number of systems, tools and processes to help meet our legislative obligations as well as frontline initiatives.

We are currently assessing how to implement the principles of mana tamaiti (tamariki), whakapapa and whanaungatanga (known as the three pou<sup>9</sup> across the Ministry, in order to ensure we have regard to these principles in the development of policies, practices and services through all levels of the organisation.

We will set measurable outcomes for Māori children and young people who come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki and in doing so, we will know over time how well we are progressing towards improving their outcomes.

We have developed a high-level engagement model with iwi and Māori communities that reflects a multi-layered approach to engagement at site, regional, agency-wide, Chief Executive and Ministerial levels.

We are working on setting the foundations for strategic partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations to help us to deliver on achieving high aspirations tamariki Māori.

On the frontline, work is also underway to support increased whānau participation and to help identify whānau connections for children and young people, as well as supporting whānau to develop and own realistic solutions for children and young people. This includes expanding the Mokopuna Ora programme to South Auckland. This is a partnership arrangement between Waikato Tainui and Oranga Tamariki to keep tamariki connected with their whānau, hapū and iwi and prevent them coming into the statutory care system. Oranga Tamariki is also expanding hui-a-whānau and whānau searching initiatives to 21 sites across the country.

## Working with Pacific communities to improve outcomes

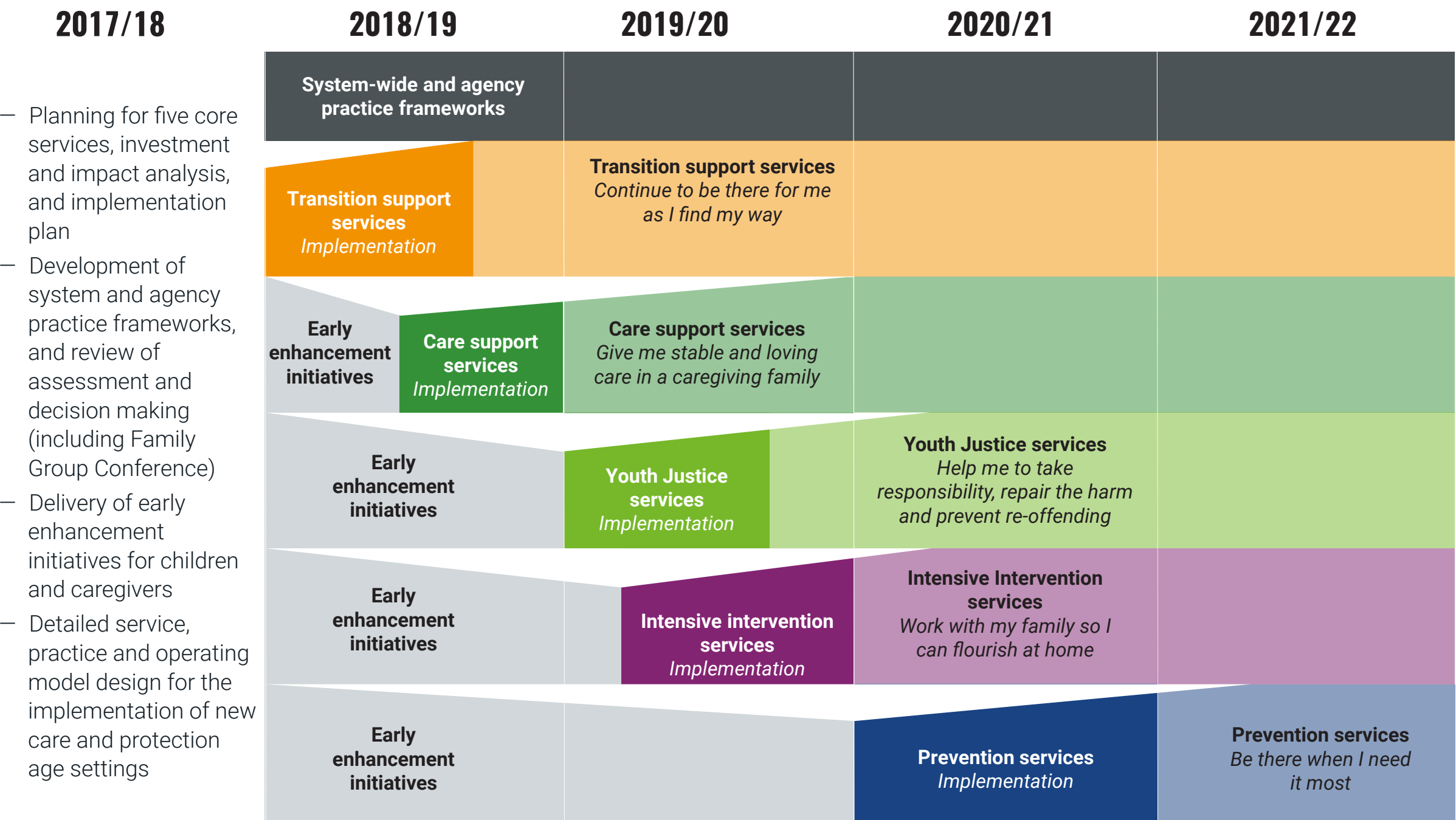
Oranga Tamariki has established a Pacific Panel to provide thought leadership and champion the engagement process with Pacific stakeholders.

To ensure we are delivering effectively for Pacific children and young people, and their families and communities, a Pacific unit has been established. This unit is working across the Ministry to build cultural responsiveness and expertise.

# MAKING IT HAPPEN - TRANSFORMING OUR SERVICE DELIVERY

A transformation programme provides the basis for the fundamental re-design of a complex system, and it will address a large set of long-standing issues. It will do this by taking an iterative approach to the development of five core services; transition support; care support; youth justice; intensive intervention and prevention.

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





**Delivering our services**

The Ministry will deliver its strategy through:

**Statutory intervention and transition services**  
(Short-term focus - 2017/18)

*Transition support services*

We must partner with caregivers and communities to ensure young people who have been in our care get the loving care and support they need to grow into flourishing adults.

*Care support services*

We must provide better experiences for children and young people in our care. This means strengthening the trust between children and young people and their caregivers in a way that enhances their personal and cultural identity. Our new model of care will strengthen the ability of family and whānau to meet the needs of their children and young people at home. Where this is not possible, we will ensure that alternative arrangements are made at the earliest opportunity. This means creating a larger and more diverse pool of caregiver families, who have the capacity, skills, resources and support to build and maintain loving, stable and life-long relationships.

*Youth Justice services*

We want to prevent children and young people from a cycle of offending. To do this we will provide evidence based interventions and services at the earliest opportunity to address the underlying factors that contribute to offending. Our Youth Justice model will involve identify early indicators of potential lifelong offending and working in partnership with others to ensure vulnerable children and young people, and their families receive the services those children and young people require to prevent them from offending and reoffending. We will deliver our interventions through local and national services, youth justice residences, and support for victims of youth justice offending.

**Early and intensive intervention services**  
(Intermediate-term focus - 2018/19 to 2019/20)

Our intensive intervention service involves working intensively with families and whānau to keep their children safe at home or, where there are serious concerns about harm or well-being, making decisions to move a child into a loving and stable family at the earliest opportunity. Our future model will ensure high-quality decision-making and intensive support that prioritises a child’s need for stable and loving care at the earliest opportunity and meets their full range of needs. To do this we will build a quality assessment process to identify the support and services children and their families need.

**Prevention services**  
(Longer term focus - 2020/21 to 2021/22)

Preventing vulnerability is the most effective way to create positive life changes and reduce the likelihood of long-term adverse outcomes. Our prevention responses will focus on the underlying factors that make families and children and young people more vulnerable, and on strengthening families and whānau to provide children and young people with the best possible opportunity to experience a loving and stable home. This new core service will have an explicit focus on early identification of those families with the greatest risk of poor life outcomes and addressing the risk factors to ensure that children and young people thrive. This approach would begin pre-birth and extend through to supporting young people at the time they transition into adulthood. We will build relationships within communities to connect families to evidence-based services which will be provided by partner organisations.

Other government agencies such as the Ministries of Education and Health 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 get vulnerable children, young people and their families and whānau the support they need, when they need it.

The diagram at Appendix 1 illustrates the high-level experience of the future vulnerable children’s system from a children and young person’s perspective.

**Other services**

Oranga Tamariki is also responsible for operational adoption services, international agreements and funding and contracting for vulnerable children and young people services.

**How we will assess the performance of our services**

Oranga Tamariki will progressively develop its performance monitoring capabilities. In particular this will include the better capture of evaluation and insights around children and young people’s experiences, the time we are spending with children, the quality and impact of our services and interventions, and our levels of staff engagement.

**Children’s voices are informing improvements in services and the future system**

The Ministry is actively and regularly seeking the input of care-experience children and young people to improve current services and to shape the future. The new voices of children functions will include engaging actively with children and young people, and creating platforms for them to have direct input to the organisation and system.

Oranga Tamariki has established a centralised feedback and complaints function and processes aimed at improving the consistency and transparency of our services for children and families. New resources have been introduced to help ensure children and young people in contact with us know how they can provide feedback and raise concerns.



We are investigating new ways for social workers to elicit children and young people’s feedback. For example, a new digital tool, *Mind of My Own*, provides children and young people in care with an easy way of providing feedback and information to the Ministry.

The Ministry will also engage with VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai and the Office of the Children’s Commissioner to monitor and evaluate the impact children and young people’s voices have on the organisation and the quality of their experiences with government services.

**Reporting on outcomes for tamariki Māori**

Under recent amendments to the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, due to come into force within two years, the Ministry will be required publicly report at least annually on specific outcomes for Māori children and young persons who come to the Ministry’s attention, and the steps to be taken in the immediate future.

**Better public services 2.0 reporting**

We contribute to the Government’s revised priorities for Better Public Services (BPS) and are the lead agency for the *BPS Result Area 4: Improve the lifetime wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people*. Our target is “to reduce the number of children and young people experiencing physical or sexual abuse by 20% by 2021”.

**Evidence based investment**

In addition to the insights from the investment model, we will evaluate the performance of our existing interventions and their effect on the life-course outcomes of the children and young people that receive these interventions.

This will assist Oranga Tamariki and the wider system to understand what is working for children and young people to support them to get better life outcomes, and where future efforts should be focused. It will also give Oranga Tamariki an understanding of where to redirect investment from what is not working to activities that are achieving better outcomes.





# MAKING IT HAPPEN - TRANSFORMING OUR CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY

In starting any new organisation there are both opportunities and challenges. We understand it takes time to get the right people on board, the right business process in place, and the data to support the right decision-making. We know that we need to strengthen the capability of our people to be more child-centred and shape the expectations of our leaders to support this. We must work with our partner agencies, communities, and with New Zealanders to put tamariki first.

To demonstrate our commitment to the wellbeing of tamariki, we are building a culture that is aligned to the purpose, values and goals of the organisation. We have an opportunity and responsibility to make this a reality.

## People and leadership strategy

Our desired future is one where we demonstrate that our people matter, and that we cannot realise our vision without them. Our workforce needs to be empowered and feel valued, and have the right mix of skills and capabilities we need for success.

In the next five years we will be focusing on three key areas to support our people to live the Oranga Tamariki vision, purpose and way. These are:

- creating an environment where our people are empowered to put tamariki first
- building our capability
- making our people processes effective and easy.

We expect these three areas to evolve as the organisation matures.

We are also developing an approach to build organisational capability and to support the revised Better Public Service 2.0 priorities. This will encompass:

- the development and implementation of a leadership development strategy including talent and succession planning
- a core capability framework which helps all staff operate in a child centred way
- the development and implementation of a diversity and inclusion strategy and plan
- a review of our approach to performance planning and development
- initiatives to shape our culture through the way we communicate, exercise professional judgement and team up to solve business challenges.

## Priority areas

Our particular focus over the coming year will be on the practice framework, increasing places for children and young people to be when home's not right, and on strengthening our partnerships with iwi, Māori, partner agencies and community organisations.

### Practice framework

Consistently high-quality practice is critical for our children, young people, whānau and caregivers. It is also fundamental to building legitimacy with our partners and the wider community so that they are prepared to trust and work alongside us.

Our practice needs to be child-centred, collaborative and culturally responsive. Good practice strengthens whānau and includes a focus on prevention and wellbeing.

We are designing and implementing a new practice framework that describes the core features of practice that need to underpin the work all of our practitioners do in order to deliver on our mission and values. It will comprise a set of principles and practice standards and will set out practice guidance and the knowledge base that underpins the framework.

By 2020, we will have practice requirements, practice guidance and a knowledge base for each of the key points of the journey for tamariki (prevention, intensive intervention, care, youth justice and transitions). These will be implemented iteratively across each of the five core services, starting with transition support and care support in 2018. Our immediate focus is to:

- articulate the core practice elements that will underpin the practice framework at all key points for tamariki
- provide initial guidance and support to sites to begin embedding these core elements in practice
- have an approach to meet the needs of Māori tamariki first and foremost
- have an approach based on Te Ao Māori, theories of trauma, child development, attachment, resilience, and systems thinking.

## Placements

The success of our system of care is reliant on the availability of well-supported caregivers who can provide children with a safe, stable and loving home environment. The care service is currently under considerable pressure due to a lack of placement options for some children and young people in certain locations. Through the Mokopuna Ora and hui-a-whānau initiatives, 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. Over the next year we are planning a caregiver recruitment communications programme which will begin with public awareness raising followed by more targeted activity. Work is also underway to identify where further investment in care is required in the longer term.

High demand for youth justice residential remand placements has also stretched our capacity. In the short term, we are focused on increasing the capacity in the system to safely and effectively provide remand facilities.

This includes expanding capacity at an existing Youth Justice residence, opening new community based homes near Rotorua and in Dunedin with planning in train for three further homes at Palmerston North, Rotorua and Whangarei. In the longer term we are working with the Youth Court to reduce the use of remand and will look to expand community-based alternatives to custodial remand.

## Partnerships

Highly skilled and empowered staff and stronger practice will make a significant difference to the lives of children, young people and whānau. However, we know that we will only achieve our ambitions if we work better with partner agencies, communities, and New Zealanders who share our goals.

This means earlier involvement of partners in our planning processes; sharing learning about what works; combining resources so that we can provide genuine child-centred support; and, continually challenging each other to do better for vulnerable children.

In the next five years, we will build stronger, more strategic partnerships and more impactful service delivery. This will include:

- Closer work with iwi and Māori organisations based on a mutual understanding of priorities with a strong focus on supporting tamariki Māori to achieve their goals
- Moving away from short-term contractual arrangements – so that we can spend less energy on paperwork and more energy on supporting children and young people
- Developing long-term delivery partnerships with organisations and collectives to support children, young people and whānau to achieve improved outcomes
- Helping organisations working in our communities to build the capability and capacity they need to support children and young people

- Supporting the development of new services to fill gaps in current arrangements
- Improving our understanding of the positive impact that services have, so that we can better target our investment and provide partner organisations with the information they need to make more of an impact.

## Health, safety and security

The health, safety and wellbeing of our staff, children we work with, caregivers and our community partners is paramount to supporting the effective delivery of service to New Zealanders. We will achieve our health, safety and security goals by:

- ensuring that our workplaces continue to be safe and fit for purpose for clients, staff and the public
- building a culture of continuous improvement around health, safety and security through active leadership and engagement
- weaving health, safety and security considerations through the design, implementation and review of our services and offices
- understanding the range of activities our staff undertake and the locations they work in, so we can provide the right resources, training and support
- reducing the risk of harm through the proactive identification and management of hazards
- responding effectively and quickly to incidents so that our staff are supported.

## Maintaining stable industrial relations

Positive and stable industrial relations support a high-performing organisation. We will work with unions to ensure our collective employment agreements with staff provide a stable platform as we continue the transformation of our organisation. This includes addressing agreed matters in the Public Service Association (PSA) and National Union of Public Employees *Terms of Settlement*.

## Financial management and capital intentions

We have financial challenges to overcome in order to deliver on our priorities and to ensure all our legislative obligations are met.

The work on our investment approach will identify areas to be examined in further detail for efficiency, effectiveness and the ability to change, as well as how we plan to approach the amendments to systems, people and processes to support the change programme.

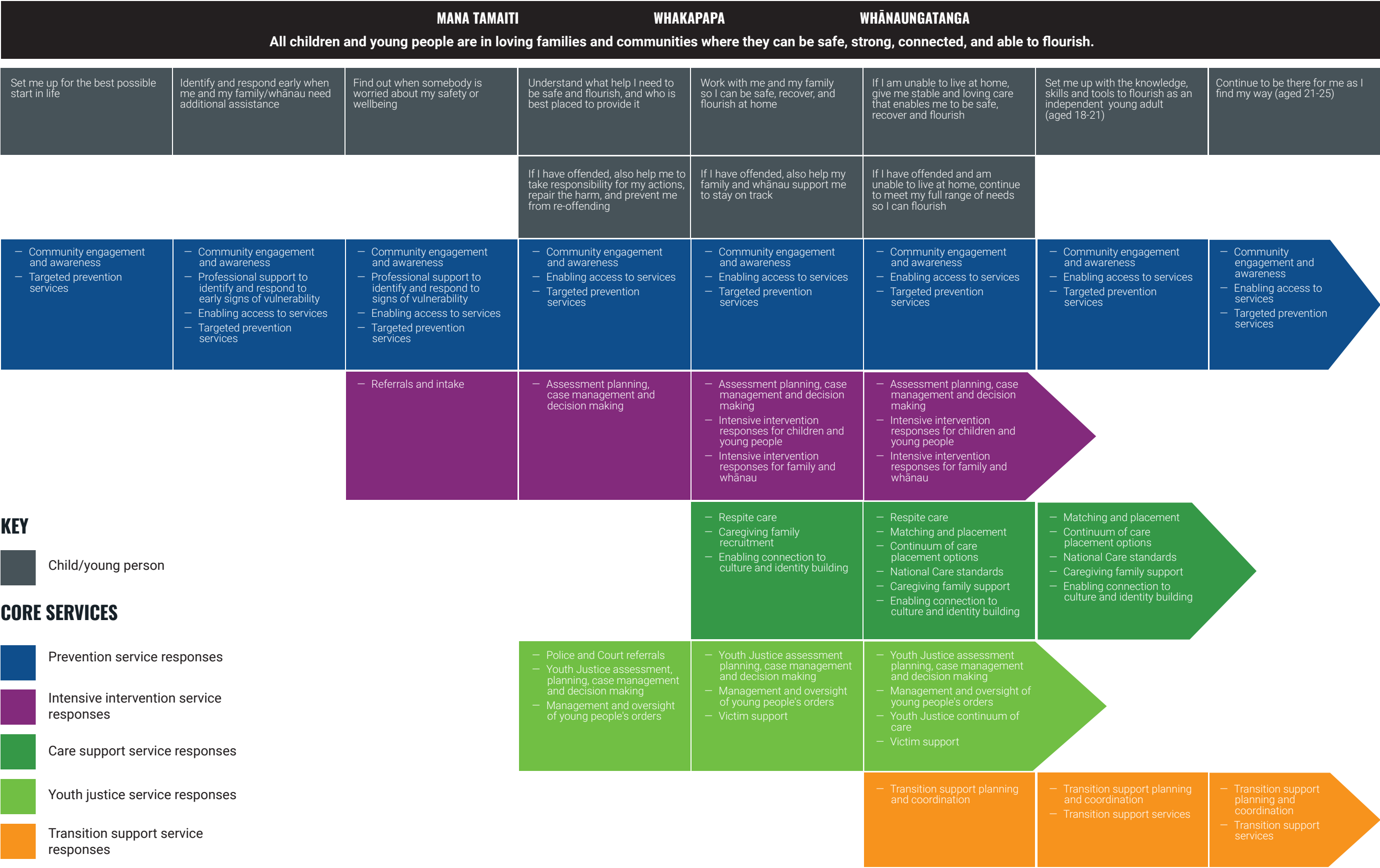
We are likely to require additional funding in order to meet service demand and cost pressures; to further develop and scale up the new operating model and the system platform to develop it; and to continue any successful time-limited initiatives.

## Technology

Over the next two years, we will be investing in digital workplace technologies and data analytics to support our investment approach. Whilst Oranga Tamariki will not have significant capital expenses, our proposed investment in cloud-based technology services will be an operating expense.



APPENDIX 1: HIGH LEVEL EXPERIENCE MAP FOR THE FUTURE VULNERABLE CHILDREN'S TEAM





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