

# Prioritising housing services for young people moving to independence from care and youth justice settings

## Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

In-depth assessment



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# Executive summary

**Through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan, Ministers and Chief Executives of children's agencies have made a commitment to prioritise the populations of interest to Oranga Tamariki**

The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan and companion implementation plan set out how children's agencies will advance this commitment.

Oranga Tamariki is just one of many agencies that are jointly responsible for meeting wellbeing needs and improving outcomes for our priority populations. The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan underscores the importance of collectively prioritising the needs of these children, young people, and their families and whānau.

To provide a foundation for this work programme, the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan includes the action for Oranga Tamariki to lead a series of in-depth assessments focused on the housing, health, and education needs of our priority populations.

The purpose of the assessments is to close gaps in our understanding about the experiences of our populations of interest and to set out where further work needs to be done by Government agencies.

**This assessment addresses critical gaps in our understanding about the housing needs of our priority populations**

This document is the first in a series of housing-focused assessments. It provides an overview of the housing needs of young people who are transitioning to independence from statutory care or youth justice placements, with a focus on young people eligible for Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services.

Young people transitioning to independence from care and youth justice placements often have multiple and high needs as well as fragmented personal support systems. These challenges can be compounding for some population groups such as Māori, Pacific, disabled people, and rainbow communities.

**Government's existing housing services and supports are not meeting the needs of this population group**

The adult housing system does not cater to the specific needs of many young people in this cohort. This has contributed to higher rates of homelessness for this population group than the general population and can lead to lifelong housing deprivation.

Currently the only housing service and support specifically tailored to the needs of this population group is delivered by Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services. But the actual housing provided is limited – while there are over 5,200 young people in this population group, Transition Support Services currently delivers 134 supported accommodation placements, most of which are paid for with funds allocated through the Homelessness Action Plan. This means that most young people transitioning to independence are reliant on their personal supports and universal adult housing services.

Government agencies are committed to improving housing outcomes in New Zealand, including through the Homelessness Action Plan, Te Maihi o te Whare Māori – the Māori and



Iwi Housing Innovation Framework for Action (MAIHI), MAIHI Ka Ora – the National Māori Housing Strategy, and the Pacific Housing Initiative.

**To help drive change through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan, this assessment identifies new focus areas**

These focus areas are:

- Supporting rangatahi Māori to return to whānau, hapū, and iwi
- Ensuring supported accommodation is fit for purpose for young people moving to independence from care and youth justice placements
- Reviewing the current model of young parent homes
- Ensuring safe and suitable emergency housing options where longer term housing is not available
- Increasing the uptake of eligible young people’s entitlement to remain with or return to a caregiver.

**As set out in the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan implementation plan, agencies are required to report back within three months on how they will respond to the findings of this assessment**

Relevant agencies will report-back to the Social Wellbeing Board by November 2022 to set out how they will respond to these findings, ensuring real improvements to housing outcomes for young people in this population group. The report back will include Oranga Tamariki, Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, and Ministry of Social Development.

**Young people leaving care have told us that securing a safe, stable place to live is a top priority for them.**

We know that healthy, secure, culturally appropriate, and affordable housing plays a significant role in wellbeing, supporting improved physical and mental health, educational attainment, employment, social cohesion, and connection.

Housing system failures for young people transitioning from care is a critical issue that requires more housing options that are responsive to their needs. In line with Te Maihi o te Whare Māori – the Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation Framework for Action (MAIHI), at the centre of our work needs to be a focus on supporting the strength and resilience of families – te Mauri o te whānau.



# Part A: Purpose and context

## Purpose of this assessment

1. To deliver on action three of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan, this document assesses the housing needs of young people transitioning to independence from care and youth justice settings. It sets out where further work needs to be done by Government agencies to improve housing outcomes for this population group.<sup>1</sup>
2. As specified in the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan implementation plan, agencies will report back to the Social Wellbeing Board in three months on how they will respond to the findings of this assessment. The report back will include a work programme with targets, timelines, and indicators.

## Advancing the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

3. The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan sets out how children's agencies will work together to prevent harm to, and promote the wellbeing of, Oranga Tamariki priority populations.<sup>2</sup>
4. Oranga Tamariki is just one of many agencies that are jointly responsible for meeting wellbeing needs and improving outcomes for our priority populations. The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan underscores the importance of collectively prioritising the needs of these children, young people, and their families and whānau.
5. Action three of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan specifies that Oranga Tamariki will lead a series of in-depth assessments focused on housing, health, and education to address gaps in our understanding and to set direction to improve housing outcomes for this population group.
6. Responding to the findings of the in-depth assessments will require strong cross-agency collaboration and shared accountability as set out in the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan.
7. This assessment is the first in the series and is focused on the cohort of young people who are transitioning to independence from care or youth justice placements who are eligible for Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services. Subsequent assessments will focus on:
  - Children and young people in the custody of the Chief Executive, including their caregivers and families (delivery in October 2022)
  - Children and young people who come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki, including their families (delivery in early 2023).

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<sup>1</sup> This assessment focuses on the housing services and supports that are delivered by government agencies. Separate work would be required to explore options in the non-government support space.

<sup>2</sup> Oranga Tamariki Action Plan is a statutory accountability mechanism that requires the Chief Executives of children's agencies to set out how they will work together to improve the wellbeing of the core populations of interest to Oranga Tamariki. It is a requirement of the Children's Act 2014.

8. The Implementation Plan for the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan sets out practical steps that agencies will take over the short and medium term to promote the wellbeing of our priority populations. Through the Implementation Plan, agencies have committed to ensuring that every young person transitioning from care and receiving Transition Support Services can access temporary accommodation or long-term housing.
9. The Implementation Plan outlines how Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga - the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will advance this commitment, including by:
  - Delivering an additional 80-90 youth focused transitional housing places beginning in late 2022
  - Designing a new supported accommodation service for young people with higher and more complex needs that provides immediate access to safe, warm, and stable longer-term accommodation, along with age-appropriate intensive supports
  - Delivering up to 65 of these supported accommodation places beginning mid 2023.
10. This focus on housing through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan supports the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, which includes the outcome that children and young people live in stable housing that is affordable, warm, and dry. Advancing this outcome is an important part of the vision to make New Zealand the best place in the world for children and young people.

## Context for this assessment

### Significance of kāinga

11. The word 'kāinga' means home, village, or homeland. The Waitangi Tribunal's report on Oranga Tamariki, *He Pāharakeke, he Rito Whakakīkinga Whāruarua*, underscores the significance of kāinga.<sup>3</sup> Tribunal panel member Ahorangi Tā Pou Temara described that "kāinga is home as opposed to a place where one lives". Kāinga is a place where cultural identity is formed and sustained.
12. The Tribunal's report on Oranga Tamariki underscores that te Tiriti o Waitangi guarantees to Māori tino rangatiratanga over kāinga.<sup>4</sup> It finds that the Crown's failure to honour this guarantee has caused significant and enduring disparities between the number of tamariki Māori and non-Māori taken into statutory care.

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<sup>3</sup> He Pāharakeke, he Rito Whakakīkinga Whāruarua (the Oranga Tamariki Urgent Inquiry). [He Pāharakeke, he Rito Whakakīkinga Whāruarua \(justice.govt.nz\)](https://www.justice.govt.nz/maori-tribunal/reports/he-paharakeke-he-rito-whakakikinga-wharuarua)

<sup>4</sup> Article 2 of te Tiriti o Waitangi. The English text "confirms and guarantees to the chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand and to the respective families and individuals thereof the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess".

13. Colonisation and land dispossession displaced many Māori and disconnected them from whānau, hapū, and iwi. This continues to impact Māori and their connections to kāinga and culture. Evidence shows extensive disparity between Māori and Pākehā housing outcomes over decades, including in terms of homelessness; high rental costs compared to income; rates of home ownership and resulting low equity; and intergenerational poverty.<sup>5</sup>
14. The Waitangi Tribunal's inquiry into housing policy and services is examining grievances concerning housing outcomes for Māori. Claimants in stage one of the housing kaupapa inquiry have raised issues about the failure of our housing system. Claims allege Crown failure to ensure an adequate standard of housing for Māori, or to deliver state services, programmes, and support enabling access to adequate housing.<sup>6</sup> Years of insufficient responses to Māori housing issues have had an intergenerational impact on Māori communities.
15. The Government has introduced Te Maihi o te Whare Māori – the Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation Framework for Action (MAIHI) to deliver a system-wide response to Māori housing stress. MAIHI puts Māori at the heart of New Zealand's housing narrative, acknowledges the history of Māori housing, and responds to these needs through kaupapa Māori approaches. At the centre of these principles is Te Mauri o te whānau – the life force of the whānau to build strength and resilience from within. *Figure 1* depicts the guiding principles of MAIHI.
16. Oranga Tamariki has specific legislative obligations under section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 in relation to te Tiriti o Waitangi. At the heart of section 7AA is an expectation that Oranga Tamariki will uphold and protect the familial structures of whānau, hapū and iwi. Section 7AA requires a change in the way we develop and deliver policies, practices and services to preference improved outcomes for tamariki Māori, their whānau, hapū, and iwi within the context of tikanga Māori.
17. In line with Section 7AA(2)(b) of the Oranga Tamariki Act, Oranga Tamariki must ensure that its policies and practices have regard to mana tamaiti and the whakapapa of Māori children and young persons, and the whanaungatanga responsibilities of their whānau, hapū, and iwi.
18. Oranga Tamariki has five mana tamaiti objectives that inform the development of policy. Objective four provides that Oranga Tamariki will support tamariki Māori to establish, maintain, or strengthen cultural identity and connections to whānau, hapū, and iwi. Objective five provides that Oranga Tamariki will support, strengthen, and assist tamariki Māori and their whānau to prepare for a return home or transition into the community.

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. Te Maihi o te Whare Māori – Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation - Framework for Action. 2021.

<sup>6</sup> [Housing Policy and Services Inquiry | Waitangi Tribunal](#)





Figure 1

## Housing is important for wellbeing

19. Healthy, secure, fit-for-purpose, and affordable housing is fundamental to living and working with dignity. It plays a significant role in wellbeing, supporting improved physical and mental health, educational attainment, employment, social cohesion, connection, and belonging.<sup>7</sup> Enabling individuals and whānau to put down roots can support intergenerational wellbeing.
20. For young people transitioning to independence from care or youth justice placements, we know that positive housing experiences are an important part of ensuring safe and stable living arrangements as they move towards greater independence.
21. As part of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan series of in-depth assessments, officials will further analyse the connections between housing, health, and education outcomes.

<sup>7</sup> The study *Growing up in New Zealand* highlights the importance of stable and healthy housing in the first 1,000 days of a person's life. It also demonstrates the impacts of housing on developmental outcomes.



## Increasing housing stress in New Zealand

22. Housing shortages and rising rents, coupled with low incomes and high costs of living, are causing acute increases in housing stress in New Zealand. The social and economic impacts of COVID-19 are exacerbating these issues.<sup>8</sup> Circumstances such as family violence and relationship breakdowns continue to have an impact on housing stress.
23. As at 31 January 2022, there were around 4,700 households in emergency accommodation receiving an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant.<sup>9</sup> The 2018 Census states that 102,000 people were facing housing deprivation. There has also been a significant increase of priority clients on the Public Housing Register.
24. Some population groups in New Zealand are at greater risk of experiencing housing deprivation. Rates of severe housing deprivation are highest among Māori and Pacific peoples.<sup>10</sup>
25. Māori are three times more likely to experience severe housing deprivation than Pākehā.<sup>11</sup> They make up 16.7 percent of the population but represent 50 percent of those on the Public Housing Register and 37 percent of Public Housing tenants.<sup>12</sup> Māori also make up 60 percent of people receiving an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant.<sup>13</sup>
26. Pacific peoples are four times more likely to experience severe housing deprivation than Pākehā and are much less likely to own their own home.<sup>14</sup> According to the 2018 Census, 65 percent of Pacific peoples lived in homes that they did not partially or fully own (compared to 29 percent of European New Zealanders, and 53 percent of Māori). Pacific children face greater barriers to living in quality housing, with 12 percent of Pacific children living in households reporting a major problem with dampness or mould (compared to six percent of New Zealand children overall).<sup>15</sup>
27. Children and young people are also disproportionately affected by housing stress. It is estimated that half of people experiencing homelessness are younger than 25 years,<sup>16</sup> and almost half of the people living in accommodation funded through an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant are children.<sup>17</sup>
28. Disabled people are much less likely to live in a suitable home than other New Zealanders. In 2018, Statistics New Zealand found that of disabled New Zealanders aged 15-64 years, one in ten rated their housing as unsuitable for their needs, compared with one in 25 non-disabled people.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development. 2021. Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

<sup>9</sup> Monthly Housing Reporting - Ministry of Social Development (msd.govt.nz)

<sup>10</sup> MAIHI Ka Ora - National Māori housing strategy 2021-2051. HUD. 2021

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Monthly Housing Reporting - Ministry of Social Development (msd.govt.nz)

<sup>14</sup> Housing in Aotearoa: 2020. Statistics New Zealand

<sup>15</sup> Child Poverty Related Indicators Report: April 2022. Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

<sup>16</sup> Severe housing deprivation in Aotearoa/New Zealand: 2018. Amore, K, Viggers, H, Howden Chapman, Philippa. HUD.

<sup>17</sup> Monthly Housing Update. February 2022. Ministry of Social Development.

<sup>18</sup> Housing in Aotearoa: 2020. Statistics New Zealand.

29. Rainbow and takatāpui youth are overrepresented in terms of housing deprivation and homelessness. A survey by Youth19 found that 38 percent of rainbow young people reported that they experienced housing deprivation, compared to 28 percent of their non-rainbow peers.<sup>19</sup> A survey by Counting Ourselves revealed that nearly one in five trans and non-binary people have experienced homelessness.<sup>20</sup>
30. People experiencing housing stress and homelessness often face other compounding disadvantages, including poverty, experience of trauma, and poor health outcomes.

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<sup>19</sup> Youth19 surveyed 7,721 adolescents from schools and kura kaupapa Māori in 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Counting Ourselves in an anonymous community-led survey for trans and non-binary people living in New Zealand.

# Part B: Focus of this assessment

## Young people moving to independence from care or youth justice placements

31. This assessment examines the specific housing needs of young people who are moving to independence from care or youth justice placements. Of those young people who are transitioning to independence we take a deep dive focus on the population group who are eligible for Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services.
32. As at 31 December 2021 there were 5,253 people eligible for Transition Support Services.<sup>21</sup> This group comprises young people who have been under a care or custody order for a continuous period of three months after the age of 14 years and nine months.
33. We are focusing on this group of young people because they have a high risk of experiencing housing deprivation: they often have multiple, complex, high support needs, as well as fragmented personal support systems. The adult housing system does not cater to the specific needs of many in this cohort. These factors have contributed to higher rates of homelessness for this cohort than the general population,<sup>22</sup> and can lead to lifelong housing deprivation.
34. There are population groups that are outside the scope of this assessment but that face similar challenges. For example, young people leaving care who do not meet the eligibility criteria for Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services,<sup>23</sup> or young people leaving prison with experiences of state care.<sup>24</sup>

### Rangatahi Māori in this population group

35. Māori are significantly overrepresented within the group of young people transitioning to independence from care and youth justice settings. Of young people in this population group, 56 percent are Māori, and 8 percent are Māori and Pacific.<sup>25</sup> This higher proportion reflects the disparity between the number of tamariki Māori and non-Māori that are taken into care, driven by forces of colonisation and structural racism.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>If the number of young people entering care decreases in coming years as projected, the number of young people eligible for Transition Support Services will also decrease.

<sup>22</sup> Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan. 2020-2023. Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

<sup>23</sup> For example, because they may have been in care for less than three months.

<sup>24</sup> In 2021, 630 young people aged 18-24 left prison.

<sup>25</sup> As at December 2021.

<sup>26</sup> [He Pāharakeke, he Rito Whakakīkinga Whāruarua \(justice.govt.nz\)](https://www.justice.govt.nz/he-paharakeke-he-rito-whakakīkinga-whāruarua)

36. Rangatahi Māori are a taonga and are guaranteed protection under te Tiriti o Waitangi. The Waitangi Tribunal's inquiry into Oranga Tamariki underscored that the Crown's role is to support whānau Māori to care for their tamaiti or tamariki so that there is no need for them to be removed from their homes.<sup>27</sup>

## Young people transitioning to independence often have high support needs

37. Evidence has shown that young people transitioning out of care often have multiple and high support needs.<sup>28</sup> A 2018 case review of 16 to 17 year-olds who were in care and met Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services eligibility criteria found that 40 percent had high or very high support needs.<sup>29</sup> A follow-on survey found that:

- a third of the transition cohort (31 percent) had high needs and mental health needs, with the most common being trauma and stress conditions
- a quarter (26 percent) had high needs and exhibited behaviour that put themselves or others at risk of harm
- one in five (22 percent) had high needs and a substance abuse problem, with young people under youth justice orders significantly more likely to have a substance abuse issue
- one in five (19 percent) had high needs centered around or including a disability.<sup>30</sup>

38. The study also found that comorbidity across the broad health-related categories was common.<sup>31</sup> A quarter of the transitioning cohort were identified as having high or very high needs in more than one category (such as mental health, disability, and substance abuse).

39. In a 2018 assessment, nearly one in three young people transitioning from care and youth justice placements had high or very high needs and required some form of supported living arrangement going forward.<sup>32</sup> One in five would require either on-call support or regular (daily or weekly) check-ins. One in ten would require 24-hour support (either in a one-to-one or group supervised setting).

40. The assessment also found that disabled young people were much more likely to require supported living arrangements compared to young people without disabilities.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> [He Pāharakeke, he Rito Whakakīkinga Whāruarua \(justice.govt.nz\)](https://www.justice.govt.nz/he-paharakeke-he-rito-whakakikinga-wharuarua)

<sup>28</sup> Oranga Tamariki is currently working on an agency-wide definition for high needs.

<sup>29</sup> Note that this is as assessed by their social worker. Transitions Cohort Needs Assessment. Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre. 2018. Refer page 37 for definitions of levels of need.

<sup>30</sup> Transitions Cohort Needs Assessment. Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre. 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Transitions Cohort Needs Assessment. Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre. 2018.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

41. Care and youth justice experienced young people often also have fractured support systems. This can be due to strained relationships with their family members, sometimes the cause of the reasons for family separation.<sup>34</sup>
42. At the same time, care experienced young people are the least likely to receive the appropriate assistance from mainstream services (such as housing, health, education, and social services), because these services are not designed to support the complex needs of this cohort.
43. Young people anticipating the move from statutory care are at greater risk of achieving poorer outcomes. This includes over-representation in terms of experiencing:
  - poor quality, insecure housing, and homelessness
  - poor physical and mental health
  - poor educational outcomes, including leaving school without qualifications
  - unemployment, casual or insecure employment, benefit dependence and poverty
  - offending and entry into the adult justice system.<sup>35</sup>

### Young people in this population group are more likely to be parents

44. Young people who are care-experienced are three times more likely than their non-care experienced peers to become a parent by 18 years of age.<sup>36</sup> In a 2021 survey of young people in this cohort, 17 percent of respondents told us they were either a parent and/or hapū or pregnant.<sup>37</sup> Most women who were pregnant were also already parents. Many parents (63 percent) said their child or children lived with them either some or all the time.<sup>38</sup> There is a risk that their children will go on to have future care and protection involvement due to intergenerational multiple and complex needs.

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<sup>34</sup> Experiences of Youth Transitioning Out of Juvenile Justice or Foster Care Systems: The Correlates of Successful Moves to Independence in Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal. Brisson, D; Hope Wilson, J; Medina E; Hughey C; Chassman, S; and Calhoun, K. 2020.

<sup>35</sup> Ngā Haerenga I Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living. Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. 2021

<sup>36</sup> Cohort Analysis to inform Early Intervention Response. 2020. Oranga Tamariki.

<sup>37</sup> Summary results of Just Sayin' 2021. September 2021. Malatest International. The survey was limited to young people between the ages of 16 and 21. 329 of the 331 young people eligible for the Transitions Support Service who participated in the survey were asked the pregnancy and parent questions.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

## Young people transitioning to independence have told us that housing is a top priority for them

45. Young people transitioning to independence have told us that securing a safe, stable place to live is a top priority for them.<sup>39</sup> They have also told us about the varied types of housing that would meet their priorities. This includes independent living (either alone or in flatting situations), remaining with current caregivers, moving in with whānau, staying in a shared Oranga Tamariki living environment (including youth justice residences), and supported living facilities.<sup>40</sup>
46. Rangatahi Māori have told us that connections with culture, whānau, marae, and tūrangawaewae are important. These connections support their cultural identity, access to safe and supportive housing, improved links to employment and study opportunities, and overall wellbeing.<sup>41</sup>
47. Young people have also underscored the importance of wrap-around supports they need alongside housing when they transition from care placements to independence. These included:
- More security regarding income and financial support
  - More choice and better access to effective mental health services
  - Improved engagement from Social Workers and Transition Workers
  - Improved understanding of entitlements, and support for accessing services
  - Ongoing opportunities for engagement, support, and services post youth justice residential care
  - Ongoing, early support for connecting and reconnecting to Māori culture
  - Support for moving into work, education, or training
  - Better information and more responsive support for young people with an intellectual disability.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ngā Haerenga | Transition Journeys Phase one: Voices of rangatahi anticipating the move from statutory care to self-determined living. Schroder, R., Love, C., Goodwin, D., Wylie, S., Were, L., Scown, C., Davis, E., Love, H., Love, D. and O'Neill, D. 2021.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ngā Haerenga | Transition Journeys Phase one. 2021.

## Young people transitioning to independence face a high risk of experiencing housing deprivation

48. A substantial proportion of young people moving to independence from care and youth justice settings have safe and stable living arrangements. In a 2021 survey of young people eligible for a transition worker, at least 75 percent said they had somewhere warm to live, and that they felt safe and settled in their housing.<sup>43</sup> 45 percent of young people were living in a family home.<sup>44</sup>
49. However, the cohort of young people transitioning to independence from care or youth justice placements have a higher risk of experiencing housing deprivation. At least one in ten young people who have transitioned from care or youth justice placements are living in unstable accommodation such as in a garage or car.<sup>45</sup>
50. We know that housing deprivation is more prevalent among some population groups. Māori and Pacific peoples are more likely to experience severe housing deprivation than Pākehā across ages and stages.<sup>46</sup> Access to housing is a critical issue for young care-experienced parents and can be a major barrier to developing a safe environment for their whānau.<sup>47</sup>
51. The adult housing system does not cater to the specific needs of young people in this population group. For example, young people cannot sign a tenancy agreement before they are 18 years old, so they rely on social housing and whānau support to either house them or to secure a tenancy for them. In some cases, they will end up in unsafe emergency housing or boarding house arrangements.
52. The impacts of COVID-19 are continuing to exacerbate some of the challenges for young people. Already high and increasing rates of housing stress and homelessness will be further compounded by the social and economic impacts emerging from COVID-19.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Just Sayin' summary report: survey of rangatahi/young people eligible for a transition worker. January 2021. Malatest international.

<sup>44</sup> These results do not differentiate between young people still in care and those who had left – we expect that those who have left care are experiencing higher levels of housing deprivation. Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> This is likely to be a significant under-estimate because this survey was based on feedback from young people who were contactable and who chose to respond. This may mean it did not receive the views of some groups, for example, homeless young people. Youth Survey Overview Report - Just Sayin'. January 2021. Malatest International.

<sup>46</sup> Housing in Aotearoa: 2020. Statistics New Zealand.

<sup>47</sup> Teen parent homes: "A place that heals". 2018. Point and Associates. Cohort Analysis to inform Early Intervention Response. 2020. Oranga Tamariki.

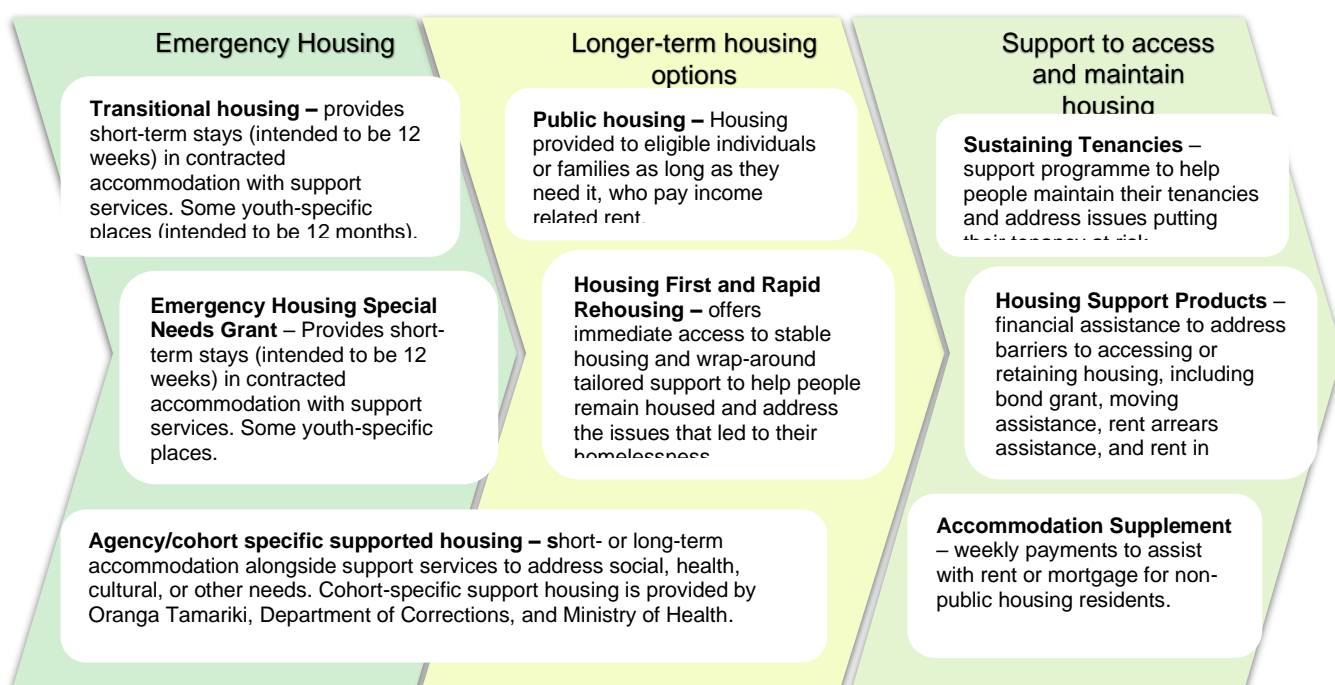
<sup>48</sup> Progress on the Homelessness Action Plan and the Homelessness response to COVID19 Paper and Minute. HUD. July 2020.



# Part C: Current state

## Young people in this cohort are reliant on the universal adult system to meet their housing needs

54. Government agencies provide a range of housing services to eligible cohorts of the general population. This is delivered through a mix of financial assistance, housing, and wrap around supports. Agencies involved in delivery of these services include HUD, Kāinga Ora, Ministry of Social Development (MSD), Ministry of Health, Department of Corrections, and Oranga Tamariki.
55. Some of the key mechanisms for these agencies to address housing need for eligible cohorts of the general population include:



56. Young people who are transitioning to independence from care or youth justice placements may be eligible for these universal adult services, but these products are not tailored to meet their specific needs. This means that the services and supports may not actually work for young people in this population group, contributing to housing deprivation.
57. Currently the only housing service and support specifically tailored to the needs of this population group is delivered by Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services. But the actual housing provided is limited – while there are over 5,200 young people in this population group, Transition Support Services currently delivers 134 supported accommodation placements, most of which are paid for with funds allocated through the Homelessness Action Plan. This means that most young people transitioning to independence are reliant on their personal supports and universal adult housing services.

# Oranga Tamariki provides this cohort with housing assistance through Transition Support Services

## About Transition Support Services

58. Oranga Tamariki initiated Transition Support Services on 1 July 2019 in response to new legislative obligations to stay in contact with and support eligible young people transition to independence out of Oranga Tamariki care or custody.
59. The focus of Transition Support Services is to help young people to maintain and build relationships, networks, and knowledge to support their decision making, plan for their future, and achieve their goals. The service was designed with young people and the community. The service begins before leaving care or custody when social workers engage with young people to plan for what they need when they leave care or custody. Young people being supported in this service can choose to:
- Have a transition worker to walk alongside them up to the age of 21<sup>49</sup>
  - stay living with, or return to live with a caregiver,<sup>50</sup> if that's what they both want, between 18 to 21 years of age
  - get support, advice and assistance from the Transition Support Helpline up to the age of 25.
60. The legal framework for Transition Support Services is set out in sections 386AAA to 386C of the Oranga Tamariki Act (1989). The Chief Executive has the following obligations:
- **Must** provide the entitlement to remain or return to live with a caregiver for eligible young people and their caregivers who choose to opt into this service
  - **Must** provide, or arrange for the provision of support, by way of advice and non-financial assistance. This can include the requirement of the Chief Executive to maintain a relationship with the young person through regular contact with a transition support worker
  - **May** provide advice and financial assistance that the young person will need to achieve independence, if all other avenues have been exhausted. This can include assistance to obtain accommodation, enroll in education or training, or obtain employment.

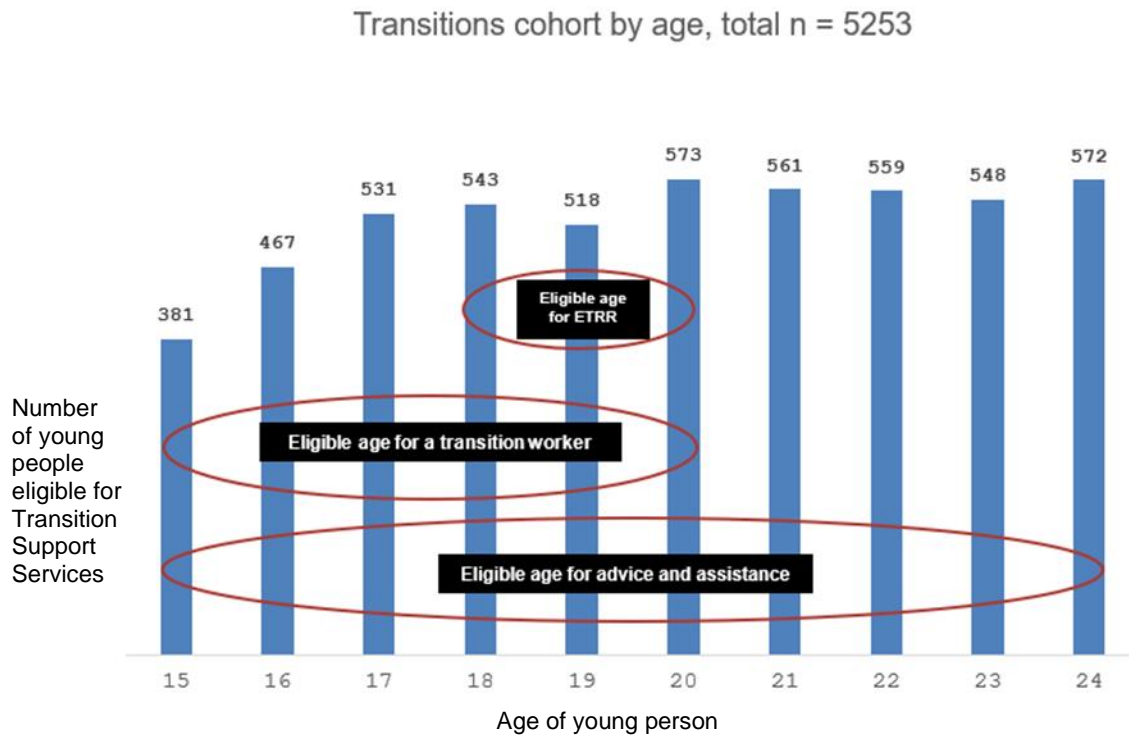
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<sup>49</sup> This support is provided by partners rather than Oranga Tamariki directly

<sup>50</sup> The Oranga Tamariki Act (1989), sets out the interpretation of caregiver under S386AAA to mean either:

- a. a person in whose charge a young person aged under 18 years has been placed under [section 362](#); or
- b. a person with whom a young person who is a young adult (aged 18 years or over but under 21 years) is living under [section 386AAD](#)

61. The exact numbers of eligible young people vary from month to month as young people age in and age out of care arrangements. The numbers below are as at 31 December 2021.



## Preparation and planning for transition

62. To prepare young people in this cohort to transition to independence, Oranga Tamariki supports young people to develop a transition plan, and this can include a plan for housing. In 2021, 62 percent of young people who had left care reported that someone had talked with them and worked out a plan for when they left care.<sup>51</sup>

## Eligible young people have an entitlement to remain with or return to a caregiver

63. The entitlement to remain with or return (ETRR) to a caregiver is the only obligatory provision under the legislation in terms of accommodation support. Young people who have been in care are eligible to remain with or return to living with a caregiver from the age of 18, until they turn 21. This means that young people leaving care have additional support options to help them transition more successfully to independence. There have been approximately 64 ETRR placements in the 12 months to May 2022, which is lower than expected.

<sup>51</sup> Summary results of Just Sayin' 2021. Malatest International.

## Transition Support Services currently provide a limited number of supported accommodation placements

64. Transition Support Services delivers supported accommodation placements in partnership with provider organisations.<sup>52</sup> These placements offer accommodation and tailored wrap around support for eligible young people.<sup>53</sup>
65. Oranga Tamariki was allocated \$20.4 million through Budget 2019 to deliver 200 supported accommodation placements over six years. In recognition that there was a high level of housing need for this population group, \$17.5 million was also allocated under the Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan (the Homelessness Action Plan) to secure an additional 168 supported accommodation placements over four years.<sup>54</sup>
66. As at August 2022, Oranga Tamariki has 134 placements and is on track to deliver a total of 155 placements by the end of 2022/23. Of these, 120 will be paid for with funding through the Homelessness Action Plan, and 35 with funding allocated through Budget 2019.
67. Transition Support Services works with five iwi and Māori providers to deliver supported accommodation placements.<sup>55</sup> Services delivered by kaupapa Māori providers have helped rangatahi Māori with reconnection to their culture and whakapapa. They also provide access to wider services under the provider umbrella that are delivered in a kaupapa Māori way.<sup>56</sup>

## Transition Support Services may provide advice and financial assistance that young people need to achieve independence

68. To support the transition to independent living, Transition Support Services includes a provision for financial support if all other options of universal entitlements have been exhausted. This may include financial support to:
- help young people to find and maintain suitable accommodation,<sup>57</sup>
  - assist in an emergency or crisis, including support for emergency accommodation.
69. Oranga Tamariki also provides a discharge grant of \$1,500 to all young people leaving care, to purchase essential items for independent living.

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<sup>52</sup> Supported housing models follow a harm reduction approach with varying models of support provided based on need. Supported housing is generally for a period of 6 months to 2 years, offering support and empowerment to effectively transitioning to a self-sufficient, independent living situation.

<sup>53</sup> Service providers partner with Oranga Tamariki and Kāinga Ora deliver a range of specialist therapeutic intervention and/or day to day care and support services for young people who are eligible for this provision under Transition Support Services.

<sup>54</sup> This target has since been revised to 120 to reflect the higher cost of placements – see paragraph 80 for further detail.

<sup>55</sup> Four of these placements are paid for with funding from Budget 19, and one with funding through the Homelessness Action Plan.

<sup>56</sup> Evaluation of Supported Living extension pilots. Malatest. April 2020

<sup>57</sup> This may include assistance with bond payments, rent arrears or living expenses.

## Oranga Tamariki provides housing support to some young parents

70. Oranga Tamariki provides support to some young parents by funding a total of 29 placements in six Young Parent Homes throughout the North Island.<sup>58</sup> The homes provide young parents with specialist safe and stable housing. Referrals are made by community partners and from within Oranga Tamariki. Statutory engagement with Oranga Tamariki, or eligibility for Transition Support Services, is not a pre-requisite to eligibility.<sup>59</sup>

## Existing housing supports and services are not meeting this cohort's needs

### Young people in this cohort have told us they face significant challenges accessing the housing supports they need

71. Young people have told us about the challenges they anticipate facing when seeking housing once they transition out of Oranga Tamariki care, including that they:

- Fear discrimination against them when seeking houses in the private rental market, particularly young people leaving youth justice placements or with a criminal record. Some young people talked about past experiences of being discriminated against due to their ethnicity, disability, or sexuality.
- Do not understand what entitlements they are eligible for and how to access the right services for them.<sup>60</sup>

72. Many in this cohort also experience cultural alienation and disconnection from key supports including whānau, hapū, iwi and hapori.<sup>61</sup>

73. In this context of the broader challenges with housing, young people with experience living in Oranga Tamariki supported accommodation have shared some of the strengths of their experiences, including:

- Safety – young people all felt safe in their Supported Living accommodation. Continuity of support, food security and having their own room and a warm environment contributed to feelings of safety.
- Security – young people felt well supported by having appropriate access to financial and social resources. The support they received ranged from practical support, such as transport and advocacy at different agencies, to goal setting and support to achieve goals.

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<sup>58</sup> These homes are in Hastings, Whangarei, Rotorua, Onehunga, Manurewa, and Gisborne.

<sup>59</sup> Other Government agencies also provide this cohort with support, for example the Teen Parent Unit led by the Ministry of Education and the Young Parent Payment delivered by Ministry of Social Development.

<sup>60</sup> Ngā Haerenga I Transition Journeys Phase one. 2021.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

- Stability – many young people talked about feeling more focused and valued than they had previously. Holistic assessments helped assist young people to work through aspects of their lives and set goals.
- Wellness – young people said they were taking steps towards improving their physical and mental health. Delays in accessing specialist assessments and counselling for those who required support for mental health could limit progress but for most young people who had mild mental health challenges, wellness goals were being achieved.
- Development – many young people felt that supported living assessments, goal setting, and support were assisting them to improve their education, skills, or training to move towards employment.<sup>62</sup>

74. At the same time, some young people have also told us they were reluctant to engage with Oranga Tamariki and Transition Support Services due to past experiences of not being listened to, not being given correct information, poor follow through and, when they were referred to services, receiving poor quality services.<sup>63</sup> There may be similar reluctance to engage with other Government agencies, although we do not have data to support this.

## Key system gaps

75. There are limited services and supports that address the specific needs of young people transitioning to independence from care or youth justice placements, and this population group are not prioritised in the housing system. Frontline workers and young people have repeatedly told us that this is a key issue, in particular for emergency housing and supported accommodation.

76. These challenges are more acute for some in this population group. Young people with high needs are finding that there is not enough wrap around support, including supported accommodation, to meet their specific needs.<sup>64</sup> While some might have multiple and complex needs, they often do not meet the threshold of eligibility for support provided through adult systems. Disabled young people have faced similar challenges.<sup>65</sup>

### ***The current model of supported accommodation delivered by Transition Support Services is not fit for purpose***

77. Many young people who have access to supported accommodation services have had a positive experience, including in terms of safety, stability, and wellbeing. Providing supportive housing that is tailored, flexible, and based on tikanga Māori models is an important way to support this cohort, including young parents and their children.

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<sup>62</sup> Evaluation of Supported Living extension pilots. Malatest. April 2020.

<sup>63</sup> Ngā Haerenga I Transition Journeys Phase one. 2021.

<sup>64</sup> Transitions Cohort Needs Assessment. Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre. 2018.

<sup>65</sup> Disability support systems are diagnosis driven, which can exclude people who: do not engage with the medical system; have been assessed but have not yet received a diagnosis; cannot afford an assessment; experience disability but do not meet the criteria for a diagnosis.



78. But we know there is a shortage of supported accommodation placements. While we do not have definitive data to speak to the scope of this problem, we have heard from our service providers that this is a critical issue. At the Transition Support Services regional partner hui in April 2021, this was one of the top identified issues across all community partners.
79. Accommodation options are variable across the country, and some rural areas have no options for supported accommodation at all. Young people in rural areas are significantly disadvantaged by their location and less likely to have required services, including accommodation options, available to them, compared to young people living in urban centres.<sup>66</sup> For rangatahi Māori this can mean risking loss of connections with whānau, hapū, Iwi, and community if they are required to move areas to be placed in housing.
80. The costs of placements are higher than expected, which has meant that in 2021/22 financial year Transition Support Services has delivered fewer placements at a higher cost.<sup>67</sup> Initial modelling was based on delivery of services for young people with low to medium level of need, but most of the demand has been for young people with compounding and high support needs.<sup>68</sup> Broader housing market pressures exacerbated by the impacts of COVID-19 have led to further increases in the costs of placements.

### ***The model for young parent homes requires review***

81. Oranga Tamariki has undertaken interviews with staff from six young parent homes and identified key service gaps.<sup>69</sup> A key theme was that there were insufficient placements for young parents. Providers noted that some young parents are living in motels because of the housing shortage.
82. All the providers expressed concerns relating to the increasing needs of young mothers referred to their services, noting they are arriving with complex, unresolved childhood trauma and issues including addiction, family violence and mental illness.
83. This is creating pressures on the service in terms of the capability of staff to provide this type of intensive support, as well as the model for support. Sometimes the length of stay in the homes is too short to have any meaningful impact for parents who have experienced abuse and trauma. There are also challenges finding appropriate housing for young people transitioning out of young parent homes.

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<sup>66</sup> Transitions Cohort Needs Assessment. Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre. 2018. Some of these issues may have been exacerbated by the impacts of COVID-19.

<sup>67</sup> In 2021/22 financial year, Transition Support Services delivered 136 placements (with 95 of these placements paid for with funding allocated through the Homelessness Action Plan), which was less than the Homelessness Action Plan target of 158 placements.

<sup>68</sup> As at January 2022, the average per placement was \$53,986; placements range from \$18,150 to \$96,226. \$120,000 per annum is the highest level paid to date. This fluctuation is due to the different support needs of individual young people.

<sup>69</sup> Teen Parent homes: “a place that heals”. Current State and Recommendations for future directions. 2019. Point & Associates.



84. Some providers have also expressed concern that the current model is not the best approach for delivery because it can end up separating young parents from their family, whānau, and community connections. In some cases, this also separates young parents from each other as the homes only provide for mothers. For rangatahi Māori this can create disconnections with whānau, hapū, and iwi.
85. An alternative service that is more whānau centered could support and enable young parents to stay living with their family or whānau where it is safe for them to do so.

***Universal emergency housing services are not tailored to support this cohort***

86. The emergency housing system provides temporary accommodation and support for people in urgent housing need. HUD and MSD currently fund and deliver emergency housing system responses through:
- Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants, which assist with the cost of short-term commercial accommodation (usually a motel)
  - Transitional Housing that includes tailored support services and short-term accommodation (in some cases contracted motels).
87. Young people disproportionately access Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants. In February 2022, 18 percent of all recipients were under 25 years old,<sup>70</sup> and 70 percent of people under 30 accessing a grant had a care and protection event as a child.<sup>71</sup> We also know that, on average, people receiving Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants are staying for longer. The average stay in February 2022 was 20.4 weeks.<sup>72</sup>
88. We know that some young people face challenges in accessing emergency housing. We have heard anecdotal accounts of young people being turned away from motels, which may be due to a range of factors, such as lack of suitable housing options, difficulty navigating the system, and discrimination. Even when young people are able to access emergency housing, it is sometimes inappropriate and unsafe for them. We also know that in general people are staying in emergency housing for longer than is appropriate as it is not intended as a long-term housing solution. Some of these same themes were highlighted in the current state assessment of the emergency housing system.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Monthly Housing Update. February 2022. Ministry of Social Development.

<sup>71</sup> Emergency Housing System Review: Assessment of the current emergency housing system and areas for improvement. September 2021. Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Ministry of Social Development These results are not official statistics. They have been created for research purposes from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) which is carefully managed by Stats NZ. For more information about the IDI please visit <https://www.stats.govt.nz/integrated-data/>. The results are based in part on tax data supplied by Inland Revenue to Stats NZ under the Tax Administration Act 1994 for statistical purposes. Any discussion of data limitations or weaknesses is in the context of using the IDI for statistical purposes, and is not related to the data's ability to support Inland Revenue's core operational requirements. We do not have data on the nature of these care and protection events.

<sup>72</sup> Emergency Housing System Review: Assessment of the current emergency housing system and areas for improvement. September 2021. Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Ministry of Social Development.

<sup>73</sup> Emergency System Housing Review: Assessment of current emergency housing system and areas for improvement. 2021. Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Ministry of Social Development.

89. When young people in this cohort are unable to access emergency housing through the universal adult system—or if the emergency housing provided is inappropriate—Oranga Tamariki may provide financial assistance to access alternative emergency accommodation. Transition Support Services will book a motel as a short-term solution while other housing options are explored. In 2021 Oranga Tamariki supported 77 young people with emergency housing placements.

***The uptake of the entitlement to remain with or return to a caregiver is lower than anticipated***

90. The uptake of the ETRR is lower than anticipated (early modelling estimated there would be a 25 percent uptake), although is slowly increasing. This may be due to a range of reasons, including lack of awareness of this entitlement, and because many young people are already living semi-independently or have relocated for study or employment. There have been 64 ETRR placements in the 12 months to May 2022, which is approximately five percent of those eligible (as at May 2022, 1,231 young people were eligible).

# Part D: Driving change through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

## Government agencies are committed to improving housing services and supports

91. There are significant housing initiatives underway across Government to address housing deprivation in New Zealand. Oranga Tamariki will continue working with other Government agencies to ensure these housing initiatives help to meet the specific needs of young people transitioning to independence from care and youth justice placements. Working with family, whānau, hapū, iwi, family groups, and communities to deliver appropriate solutions for young people moving to independence is critical.

### Homelessness Action Plan

92. HUD is leading delivery of the Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan, which was released in February 2020. It seeks to deliver on the vision that homelessness (including people in emergency and temporary accommodation) is prevented where possible, or is rare, brief, and non-recurring. It includes actions focused on prevention, supply, support, and system enablers.

93. The Homelessness Action Plan included an immediate action to invest \$17.5 million over four years to expand the number of supported accommodation placements for young people leaving Oranga Tamariki care or youth justice.

94. It also includes a longer-term action to review and develop further responses for certain at-risk groups, such as young people. As part of this longer-term action focused on young people, HUD secured funding through Budget 2022 for two key proposals:

- Expanding the delivery of youth focused transitional housing (\$20 million over four years)
- a new supported accommodation service for young people who are at risk of homelessness and who have higher and more complex needs (\$20 million over four years).

95. These initiatives will help respond to the housing needs of young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness. Oranga Tamariki will work with HUD to ensure these initiatives meet the needs of young people who have transitioned to independence out of care or youth justice placements.

96. The Homelessness Action Plan includes the longer-term action to explore supported housing provision. This work programme will review supported housing currently available in New Zealand to ensure that people can access the support they need as long as they need it. The review will include a focus on supported accommodation delivered by Oranga Tamariki.

## Emergency housing system review

97. HUD and MSD are conducting a review of the emergency housing system. An initial assessment has found that the emergency housing system is not effectively providing a pathway to permanent housing, supporting people at the right time, addressing housing disparities, or improving the housing and wellbeing of individuals, families, and whānau. It also identified that young people disproportionately access Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants.<sup>74</sup>
98. The review has identified system-wide areas for improvement to ensure that people get the right levels of support and housing suitable for their needs. This includes longer term supported housing options, Māori-led responses, and strengths-based prevention measures.

## Te Maihi o Te Whare Māori – the Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation Framework for Action (MAIHI)

99. MAIHI aims to reform the housing system to provide equitable solutions for Māori. It is based on a set of kaupapa Māori principles (see figure 2) and is founded on strong Crown-Māori partnership. MAIHI places whānau at its centre and recognises that improving outcomes for whānau will increase positive housing experiences for tamariki and rangatahi.
100. Budget 2020 invested \$40 million in delivering housing outcomes for Māori through MAIHI. Government is applying this funding to increase affordable housing options, and to support iwi and Māori providers with community-based housing projects.
101. MAIHI Ka Ora, the National Māori Housing Strategy, uses the MAIHI framework to provide strategic direction for the Māori housing system. The strategy has a vision that all whānau have safe, healthy, affordable homes with secure tenure across the Māori housing continuum. Implementation for this strategy is underway with actions planned out to quarter four 2023.

## Pacific housing initiative

102. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples is delivering the Pacific Housing initiative as part of a Government response to the growing housing needs of Pacific people in Aotearoa. Through Budget 2020, the Ministry received up to \$41.315 million over four years in the Improving Housing for Pacific Families and Communities initiative to lay the foundations and provide skills required for Pacific peoples to gain improved housing conditions and home ownership.

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<sup>74</sup> Emergency System Housing Review: Assessment of current emergency housing system and areas for improvement. 2021. Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Ministry of Social Development.

## **This assessment has identified five focus areas to help drive further change through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan**

103. This assessment identifies five new focus areas for government agencies to help improve housing outcomes for young people transitioning to independence. This section provides an overview of these focus areas. As specified in the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan implementation plan, agencies will report back to the Social Wellbeing Board within three months (by November 2022) on how they will respond to these focus areas.

### **Supporting rangatahi Māori to return to whānau, hapū, or iwi**

104. Transition Support Services will increase the number of Transition hui-a-whānau or Family Group Conferences to ensure whānau involvement in transition planning processes. It will do this by developing new collateral for frontline staff that includes a focus on planning and hui-a-whānau, online training sessions for staff, and engaging with practice leads through hui by the end of September.
105. Hui ā-whānau are a whānau gathering facilitated using Māori methods of engagement and protocols (te reo me ōna tikanga). They are initiated and facilitated by either whānau themselves or Oranga Tamariki staff to engage whānau as early as possible.
106. This approach will help support a sense of belonging, ensuring that rangatahi Māori are receiving a specific and tailored response. This is in line with the MAIHI principles, which are centred around te Mauri o te whānau to build strength and resilience from within.

### **Ensuring supported accommodation is fit for purpose**

107. Oranga Tamariki will return to Ministers with advice for ensuring a fit for purpose supported accommodation service is delivered to young people moving to independence from care and youth justice settings. Oranga Tamariki will report back to the Social Wellbeing Board on the detailed approach and timeframes for this work, as well as the work on young parent homes, in November 2022.
108. The advice will address the shortage of placements, their increasing cost, and variability of supported accommodation placements across the country. It will present options for placements delivered by kaupapa Māori organisations based on Māori wellbeing models, as well as responses tailored for specific population groups such as Pacific young people.
109. This policy work will involve close interagency engagement, and would be closely connected to two main work programmes led by HUD: implementation of Budget 2022 funding allocated to respond to youth homelessness, and the review of supported housing that will provide advice to Ministers on key gaps and issues in New Zealand's current approach.
110. In connection to this work, there is the opportunity to further clarify agency roles and responsibilities for providing supported accommodation to young people transitioning to independence from care and youth justice placements.

## Reviewing the current model of young parent homes

111. As part of the policy work on supported accommodation, Oranga Tamariki will review the current model of young parent homes to identify any changes that should be made to the service to ensure young parents are receiving the support they need.
112. It will identify options to address supply issues, pressures on the service due to the increasingly high support needs of young parents, and the need for improved pathways for parents leaving young parent homes. It will also look at alternative options based on Māori wellbeing models that are whānau-centered.

## Ensuring safe and suitable emergency housing options where longer term housing is not available

113. Oranga Tamariki will continue to work with HUD and MSD to ensure that the specific needs of young people moving to independence from care and youth justice settings are considered through the Emergency Housing System Review. This will include incorporating the perspectives of frontline staff. Key milestones and timelines for this programme will be provided through the report back in three months.
114. The review identifies system-wide risks and pressure points across the whole emergency housing system, and proposes a way forward to reset the system. The current state assessment of the review identified concerns for the wellbeing of young people within this system, in particular exposure to violent behaviour and unsafe environments when in emergency housing.
115. To respond to the urgent need for more suitable youth focused housing options, HUD is working to quickly increase transitional housing for young people. This is modelled on existing transitional housing services and provides additional features that reflect best practice for rangatahi including a longer period of support.

## Increasing the uptake of eligible young people's entitlement to remain with or return to a caregiver

116. Oranga Tamariki is undertaking work to ensure more eligible young people are aware of their entitlement, and caregivers are aware they can be supported to maintain this relationship for longer.<sup>75</sup> This includes the development of new collateral to increase understanding by frontline staff and caregivers, as well as training for caregiver social workers. Providing caregiver social workers with bi-monthly updates on young people eligible for this entitlement will prompt staff to have early discussions with caregivers.
117. Oranga Tamariki has commissioned VOYCE Whakarongo Mai to undertake research with young people to understand what improvements may be necessary to support more young people to take up this entitlement.

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<sup>75</sup> 45 percent of the Just Sayin' (2021) survey respondents did not recall discussing post-care accommodation options with someone from Oranga Tamariki or a transition worker.

## Five focus areas to help drive further change through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

A work programme with targets, timelines, and indicators will be provided through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan report back in three months

### Supporting rangatahi Māori to return to whānau, hapū, or iwi

Transition Support Services will increase the number of Transition hui-a-whānau or Family Group Conferences to ensure whānau involvement in transition planning processes. To do this, Transition Support Services is developing new collateral for frontline staff that includes a focus on planning and hui-a-whānau and facilitating training. It will also engage with practice leads through hui by end of September.

### Ensuring supported accommodation is fit for purpose

HUD is establishing a new supported housing service of up to 65 places for young people with higher more complex needs over four years beginning mid-2023, and delivering 80-90 additional youth-focused transitional places over four years beginning late 2022.

Oranga Tamariki will provide Ministers with separate advice for ensuring a fit for purpose supported accommodation service is delivered to young people moving to independence from care and youth justice settings. This will include looking at options to address challenges finding homes in rural areas. Detailed timelines for this work programme will be provided through the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan report back in three months.

### Reviewing the current model of young parent homes to ensure young parents have their housing needs met

As part of the policy work on supported accommodation, Oranga Tamariki will review the current model of young parent homes to identify areas for change, ensuring young parents have their housing needs met. It will identify options to address supply issues, pressures on the service due to the increasingly high support needs of young parents, and the need for improved pathways for parents leaving young parent homes. It will also look at alternative options based on Māori wellbeing models that are whānau-centered.

### Ensuring safe and suitable emergency housing options where longer term housing is not available

Oranga Tamariki will continue to work with HUD and MSD to ensure that the specific needs of young people moving to independence from care and youth justice settings are considered through the Emergency Housing System Review. This will incorporate the perspectives of frontline staff. Key milestones and timelines for this programme will be provided through the report back in three months.

### Increasing the uptake of eligible young people's entitlement to remain with or return to a caregiver

Oranga Tamariki is undertaking work to ensure more eligible young people are aware of their entitlement, and caregivers are aware they can be supported to maintain this relationship for longer. This includes new collateral to increase understanding by frontline staff and caregivers, as well as training for caregiver social workers. Oranga Tamariki has commissioned VOYCE Whakarongo Mai to undertake research with young people to understand what improvements may be necessary to support more young people to take up this entitlement.



# Appendix one

## Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services data as at December 2021

The tables below describe the demographics of the eligible cohort.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Number	%
Unknown	2	0%
Māori	2942	56%
Māori & Pacific	423	8%
Other	1499	29%
Pacific	387	7%
Grand Total	5253	100%

### Gender

Gender	Number	%
Female	2168	41%
Gender Diverse	20	0%
Male	3064	58%
Unknown	1	0%
Grand Total	5253	100%

### Location<sup>[2]</sup>

Location	Not in care	%	In care	%	Whole cohort	%
Unknown	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Bay of Plenty	430	10%	89	8%	519	10%
Canterbury	520	13%	126	12%	646	12%
Central Auckland	399	10%	108	10%	507	10%
East Coast	329	8%	121	11%	450	9%
Lower South	292	7%	69	6%	361	7%
North and West Auckland	264	6%	73	7%	337	6%
South Auckland	480	12%	127	12%	607	12%
Taranaki-Manawatu	388	9%	98	9%	486	9%
Te Tai Tokerau	281	7%	79	7%	360	7%
Upper South	141	3%	26	2%	167	3%
Waikato	407	10%	94	9%	501	10%
Wellington	228	5%	83	8%	311	6%
Grand Total	4160	100%	1093	100%	5253	100%

### Eligibility for a Transition Worker<sup>[3]</sup>

Age	Not eligible	Eligible	Grand Total
15		381	381
16		467	467

17	6	525	531
18	45	498	543
19	107	411	518
20	302	271	573

### Eligibility for ETRR

Age	Not eligible	Eligible	Grand Total
18	117	426	543
19	131	387	518
20	345	228	573

### Future eligibility for ETRR

Age	Not eligible	Eligible	Grand Total
15	24	357	381
16	37	430	467
17	97	434	531

<sup>11</sup> Legislative requirements mean that some services were available to all eligible young people from 1 June 2019, while others phase in over time for certain groups. The entitlement to live with a caregiver and the duty to maintain contact apply for eligible young people as they turn 18 from 1 July 2019 (until they turn 21), but the advice and assistance component is available from 1 July 2019 to all eligible young people aged between 18 and 25.

<sup>12</sup> This is location as recorded in CYRAS and is therefore more likely to be accurate for those currently in care.

<sup>13</sup> Rangatahi eligible for a transition worker are those that Oranga Tamariki have a duty to maintain contact with.