

SEPTEMBER 2020 UPDATE

The Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre



Vasantha Krishnan
General Manager

Kia ora koutou katoa.

Welcome to September's edition of our quarterly newsletter. What a journey the past couple of months have been!

Despite Aotearoa New Zealand having to stop and start and then adjust to a new kind of normal, the Evidence Centre has remained productive and on the pulse, turning out some interesting new research and data and continuing to remind ourselves that we do this work in order to make a difference for tamariki and whānau across the country – not least in unsettling times.

The Evidence Centre has maintained a flow of research publications over the past quarter and there continues to be unprecedented collaboration among research teams and institutions.

Since June, we have published a report setting out a framework for measuring disparities in the Care and Protection system.

We have also published analysis on mothers with Care and Protection history; an evidence brief that looks at approaches that work well for subsequent children and their whānau; and work on the impact of methamphetamine on the impact of bringing children into care.

During the COVID-19 alert levels Oranga Tamariki also ran a number of rapid 'pulse' surveys of key stakeholders to understand how they were managing, what they were doing differently and what additional supports would be helpful.

Most recently, we have published a report that examines early intervention programmes: Family Start; Social Workers in Schools: Strengthening Families; and Children's Teams.

We've also had to look at developing new ways of working and engaging, many of which will continue in various formats.

Given the current environment our next research seminar will be online. It will feature discussions around our recent evidence scan on international responses to supporting children and young people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please keep an eye out for the webinar invitation, which we'll be sending around shortly, or email research@ot.govt.nz if you'd like to be included on our mailing list.

Take care and thanks as always for your interest in our work.

Noho ora mai, Vasantha.

Our Research Seminars

There's been a hiatus since our last seminar way back in February, but earlier this month we held a smaller event that featured Dr. Iain Matheson discussing four Oranga Tamariki early intervention programmes. The video footage is now on YouTube and you can access this and the presentation slides from our seminar web page. Dr. Matheson's synthesis report is now published on our research page.

Our next Evidence Centre webinar will be a timely one, with members of the Evidence Centre along with Ernst & Young (EY) presenting findings from a recent international evidence scan, *Proactively Supporting Children and Young People During COVID-19 and Beyond*. The presentation will provide attendees with a snapshot of available information on international responses to COVID-19 as at August 2020, including responses about the global challenges facing care and protection and youth justice systems during the pandemic.

Keep an eye out for the webinar registration details on EventBrite page, which we'll be sending around in the next week.

Our Recent Publications

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



COVID-19 SURVEYS

During the Aotearoa New Zealand COVID-19 lockdown we undertook a number of quick 'pulse' surveys with Oranga Tamariki social workers, our caregivers, service providers and with all staff.

We wanted to learn more about how people were managing, what they were doing differently and what extra support they would find helpful.

UNDERSTANDING DISPARITY AND DISPROPORTIONALITY IN THE CARE AND PROTECTION SYSTEM

We have published a short report setting out an approach and framework for measuring disparity and disproportionality in the Care and Protection system.

Alongside this, we have released an initial quantitative exploration of disparities for tamariki Māori who are in the Care and Protection system.

METHAMPHETAMINE AND CARE: WHAT WE KNOW

This short report draws together the information Oranga Tamariki has relating to methamphetamine as a factor in the decision to take a child into care.

MOTHERS WITH A CARE AND PROTECTION HISTORY: CHILD ENTRIES INTO CARE

Analysis providing insight into the likelihood that a mother with a care and protection history will have a child placed in out-of-home care in the first two years of the child's life.

SUBSEQUENT CHILDREN: EVIDENCE BRIEF

This evidence brief is intended to support policy work on the subsequent children legislation.

It was written to provide up-to-date literature from Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally on the needs of, and interventions and approaches that work well for subsequent children and their whānau, particularly for Māori whānau.

TANE WHAKAPIRIPIRI - CARE SUPPORT MODEL

An evaluation to support the understanding of Tane Whakapiripiri and the Care Support Model implementation. Oranga Tamariki invited Barnardos and Key Assets to participate in a co-design workshop.

The resulting model was a specialist group home for up to three tamariki at a time. The aim was to stabilise tamariki and prepare them for a permanent placement, using support characterised by a therapeutic and trauma-informed approach.

EARLY INTERVENTION: A SYNTHESIS OF RECENT RESEARCH AND EVALUATIONS

Early intervention can be described as "identifying and providing effective early support to those at risk of poor outcomes."

The programmes and services examined in this synthesis report are: Family Start, Social Workers in Schools; Strengthening Families; and Children's Teams. Oranga Tamariki commissioned this synthesis when we noticed common themes and messages emerging from research and evaluation reports published during 2019 and 2020.

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

Updated Oranga Tamariki website

The site improvements are great, and the Research function now has a higher profile and our work is easier to find -- but all our research URLs have changed and any bookmarks you have to existing research will need to be updated. The new top-level page for the Evidence Centre is: www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/research/ and you'll find our research reports at www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/research/our-research/. We've also separated out our more analytical reports and published these on their own page, within the Research site: www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/research/data-analytics-and-insights/.

One of the key improvements is the search function and I know our web team are gathering feedback, so please let them know how the new website layout and structure works for you.

Meet Jamie Turner: Principal Advisor, Analytics & Insights



Jamie Turner
Principal Advisor, Analytics & Insights

Jamie is a Principal Analyst in the Analytics & Insights team in the Evidence Centre. Born and raised in Invercargill, she attended Otago University and graduated with a double degree in Arts and Commerce, majoring in Mathematics and Marketing with a minor in Management.

After interning at an aged care provider and then working there for five years, she moved to Wellington in 2017 to be part of the Oranga Tamariki transformation.

Highlights of her time at Oranga Tamariki include doing a deep dive analysis of the Care and Protection and Youth Justice systems; cohort analysis for the planned intensive intervention function; and establishing the Data User Community (DUC) to bring analysts from Oranga Tamariki together to share knowledge and build connections.

She is currently working on a project with the Organisational Strategy and Performance team to create a new reporting suite for our frontline, with the aim of arming our social workers with data that will enable them to improve performance.

Jamie spends most of her time reading fantasy novels. She has a great group of friends and enjoys movie nights, board games, and the occasional karaoke session.

"Despite doing a dry Maths degree and being an analyst, I've always wanted to do something that helps people. My mum is a social worker and having her perspective really helps me to understand the challenges facing the frontline. I'm passionate about using our data to generate insights that will bring change and improve the lives of our tamariki."

I really enjoy working in the Analytics & Insights team and with the wider Evidence Centre. Besides being a great group of people, they're all here for the same reason that I am -- to make a difference to the lives of tamariki."