

EVIDENCE CENTRE
TE POKAPŪ TAUNAKITANGA

CAREGIVER PULSE SURVEYS

**Understanding Caregiver and Tamariki
experiences during COVID-19**

Published July 2020



**ORANGA
TAMARIKI**
Ministry for Children

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Caregivers were invited to take part in two surveys about their COVID-19 experiences. The first survey was focussed on the wellbeing of caregivers and tamariki during Alert Level 4 and understanding what Oranga Tamariki could do to better support them during this time. The second survey had a focus on understanding the transition from Alert Level 4 (lockdown) to Alert Level 3 and into Alert Level 2.

The first survey opened on 8 April and closed on 13 April. A total of 211 caregivers gave their time to tell us about how they, and the children they care for, are doing. The second survey ran from Friday 8 May to Wednesday 13 May. A total of 425 caregivers responded to this survey, more than doubling the response to the first survey¹. Many thanks to the respondents for giving their time and for the care and aroha they give to the children they care for.

Analysis was carried out jointly by the Evidence Centre and Voices of Children and Young People, with Voices analysing two qualitative questions relating specifically to child wellbeing.

Due to the low proportion of responses, results are indicative only - This was an opt-in survey with a link provided in the twice weekly Caregiver email. The number of responses (211 and 425) amount to was just over 5% and 10% of caregivers (4,000) respectively, consequently, we cannot generalise these findings to all caregivers. In addition, as the survey was online, the number and make-up of respondents may have been impacted by those who are less able or less comfortable using the internet. In addition, people who are more engaged or those with an issue to raise are more likely to respond to such surveys, which may result in a higher proportion of apparent issues.

While we can compare some results between the two surveys, due to the issues mentioned above, we cannot assume that changes in the high-level figures between surveys indicate any real changes for caregivers and tamariki over the period surveyed.

Overview

Both surveys showed that caregivers felt well-supported overall, with most of them doing well, receiving the right amount of information, able to support learning from home and feeling positive about continuing to care for tamariki.

- Most caregivers responding said they are doing OK or better during COVID-19
 - 98% in the first survey and 94% in the second survey
- Most caregivers responding said they think the child(ren) they take care of for Oranga Tamariki are doing OK or better
 - 94% in the first survey and 91% in the second survey
- Around two-thirds of caregivers were very satisfied or satisfied with the support they have received from Oranga Tamariki
 - 68% in the first survey and 62% in the second survey

¹ Not all respondents answered all of the questions, so the counts vary from question to question. The responses, 'Don't know', 'Not sure' and 'Not applicable' have been removed from the analysis where appropriate.

- 54% of caregivers responding said their expenses relating to childcare for Oranga Tamariki had increased (this was only asked about in the second survey)
- 80% of caregivers responding were feeling positive about continuing to care for the child after COVID-19 (this was only asked about in the second survey)
- The majority of caregivers responding said the amount of information regarding COVID-19 was just right
- 79% in the first survey and 80% in the second survey
- 94% of caregivers responding said the child/children they take care of for Oranga Tamariki has/have not yet returned to school (this was only asked about in the second survey)

Key themes

No support needed (seen in survey 1 and 2)

Most caregivers stated they were receiving enough support and appreciated the support and encouragement provided.

However, some caregivers did not know what further support they could ask for from Oranga Tamariki, suggesting information on available support may be useful.

Education (seen in survey 2)

Some caregivers were anxious with how children in care are going to manage transitioning back into school and a new routine. Caregivers want support with this.

Consider online teacher aids for children in care - Due to the unavailability of teacher aides for tamariki with learning needs during Level 3 and Level 4, carers described feeling drained while having to juggle working from home or caring for other children during the pandemic.

Increased pressure on home learning (seen in survey 2)

Some carers did not feel capable or skilled enough to conduct meaningful home-schooling, as this involved a range of social or technical skills they lacked. By this stage, the length of time in lockdown may have brought these issues to the surface more prominently.

Child wellbeing (seen in survey 1 and 2)

Caregivers said that tamariki and rangatahi have generally managed well, with technology such as Zoom and Facebook helping them stay in contact with their whānau.

Respite/Break (seen in survey 2)

Caregivers expressed needing respite/a break from caring for tamariki and home-schooling as soon as possible as they are feeling exhausted.

Communication (seen in survey 1 and 2)

Some caregivers want more communication with their own or the child's social worker as some have had little to no contact during lockdown.

Material support / Financial aid (seen in survey 1 and 2)

Some caregivers wanted to be reimbursed for expenses they had already covered out of their own pocket, while others had current or imminent expenses and wanted help in order to meet these costs.

Requests for material support were related to two themes: ongoing general costs of looking after a child; and home-schooling costs.

The increase in ongoing costs were for: heating, food and power due to the children spending more time at home with their caregivers.

The increase in home-schooling costs were related to: devices for learning (acquiring new ones or repairing broken ones); internet use – more people sharing the Wi-Fi or general increase in usage, expanding limited data capacity – rural internet featured commonly in this; and learning materials, such as apps, stationery, cost of tutoring, etc.

Anxiety with returning to normal (seen in survey 2)

Some caregivers are anxious about their child(ren) having contact with their birth families again and want to know what it will look like (under the protocols explained by the child's social worker) and whether it is safe enough from a COVID-19 perspective to do so. Oranga Tamariki could help now by making sure that caregivers are fully informed about how to connect their child(ren) with their birth families safely.

Analysis between variables showed very little of interest

With the data from the second survey, some analysis was done to see if responses to certain variables were associated with responses to other variables that varied from the average. Please refer to Appendix 5 for a full breakdown of the results. Very little of interest was found through this analysis. Some small differences were identified, such as lower ratings being given by those with an increase or a decrease in expenses and those with "not enough information".

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE FIRST SURVEY

Feedback from caregivers was that there was a need for additional financial support to cover the added expenses imposed by lockdown

Caregivers stated that increased home-based childcare requirements, created by the closure of schools and day care centres, have increased their contact with the foster children and the associated bills – such as food and power. The most frequent request was for financial aid, whether through one-off or ongoing payments, reflective of the added expenses they needed to cover. Some less common, albeit strongly worded responses were received about caregivers being sent to WINZ for financial help and showed an aversion to inter-agency transfers:

“Shopping is an alien experience and goods have increased in price (there certainly aren't any 'specials' around anymore). Given the price increase why hasn't our board payment increased? We should all be on 1.5 board payment or the very least \$50 extra per week/per child for the next few months (this is not going to be over any time soon). We got told to go to WINZ if we are experiencing financial hardship ... typical of OT to pass on their obligations to care for children and caregivers to another agency.”

Lack of communication from social workers was a significant issue being highlighted

The second most common theme was the apparent lack of communication from social workers over this time, especially when in need of resources to effectively care for the children over this time. Disparity between social workers' proactivity – whether the child's, the caregiver's, previous and current – was also highlighted.

“We will struggle with physical space indoors once we can't be outside most of the time. I don't have a laundry and will not be able to get clothing dry unless hung in our living area. We are 6 in 80sq. meters. Feel let down by social workers who haven't answered my requests for help to make this placement logistically possible.”

Caregivers were asking for more resources, such as activity packs, for tamariki

Caregivers frequently talked about needing resources for the children to help ease the requirements of lockdown. These included health-related items, schooling supplies and arts/crafts. Some discussed the subject of caring for kids with learning difficulties and the associated burden of this during lockdown. Other caregivers talked about needing extra resources for themselves, especially care packages and health-related items such as sanitiser

“Alert level 3, just prior to level 4, meant that only the children of essential workers could attend school. It should have included foster children too, to give us all two extra days to get prepped for locking down with high needs children. If we go to Level 3 after lockdown, I really hope schools are open for foster kids to give the carers a break”.

Common sources of difficulties over this time were identified as:

- Having to care for the children while juggling working from home

- Having to adjust to new procedures, like shopping more often.
- Kids displaying heightened emotions during lockdown: disobedience, anger, defiance, regression to past behaviours, breaking lockdown rules, boredom.
- Added bills and expenses

Some caregivers stated that they would just like to get through this, with some needed rest at the end provided by the recommencement of school. Others discussed having had positive experiences with their social workers and Oranga Tamariki.

"I love how the children's needs were catered to in a heartbeat before lockdown occurred. Lots of information on COVID-19 from all services we deal with. Have an awesome rapport with my social worker and the kids' social worker also, and we are in constant contact if needed at any time. Stay blessed, stay home, and stay safe."

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS (SURVEY 2)

Most caregivers and the children in their care were doing OK or better during Level 3 of COVID-19

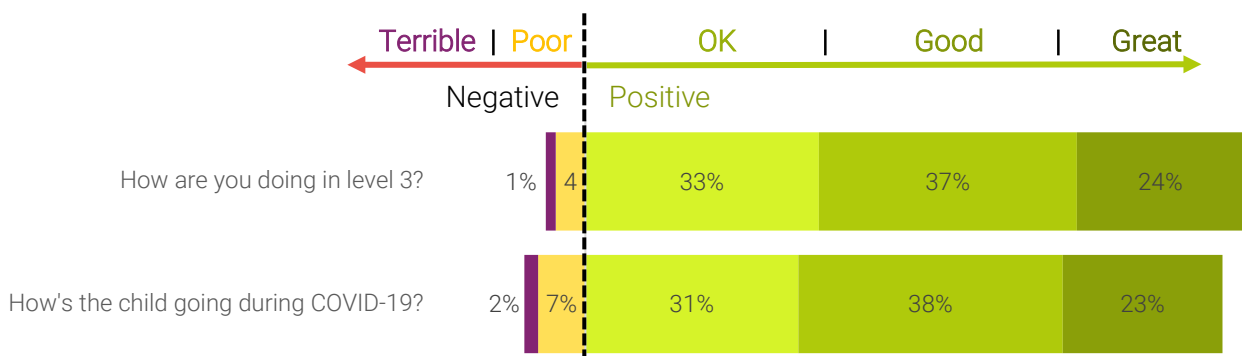
94% of caregivers said that they were doing OK or better.

91% of caregivers also said that they think the child(ren) they take care of for Oranga Tamariki is/are doing OK or better.

Questions:

How are you doing in the current COVID-19 level?

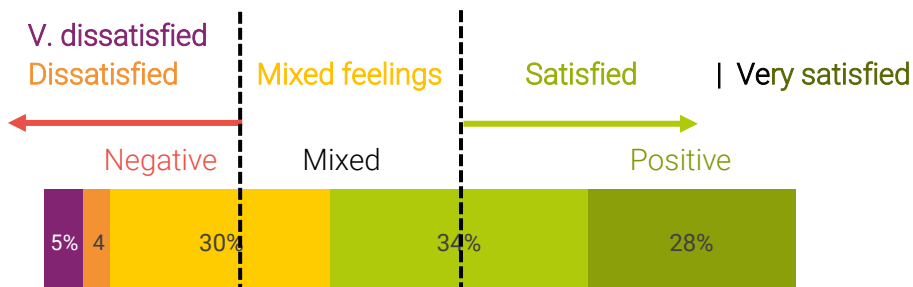
How do you think the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki is/are going during COVID-19?



Most (62%) caregivers were satisfied or very satisfied with the support they have received since COVID-19 began while 29% had mixed feelings

Question:

Since the start of COVID-19, how satisfied are you with the support we have provided you as a caregiver when you are caring for children for Oranga Tamariki?



Just over 80% of caregivers were feeling positive about continuing to care for the child

Question:

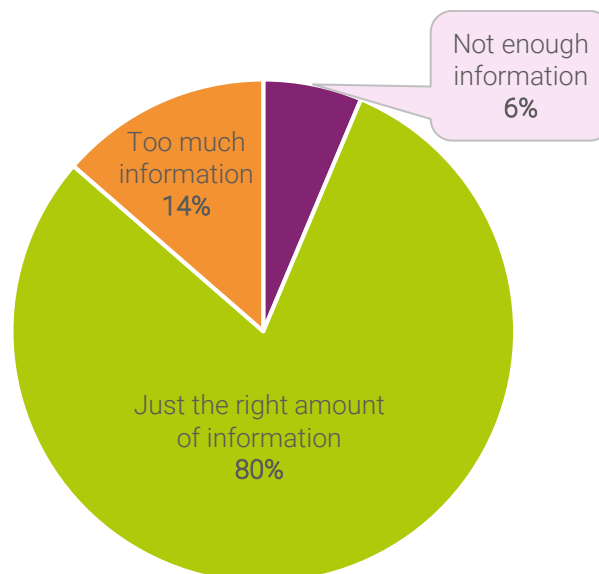
Having taken care of a child/children for Oranga Tamariki during COVID-19 level 4 lockdown and in to level 3, we'd like to know how you're feeling about continuing to take care of this child/children. How are you feeling?



80% of caregivers said the amount of information regarding COVID-19 was just right

Question:

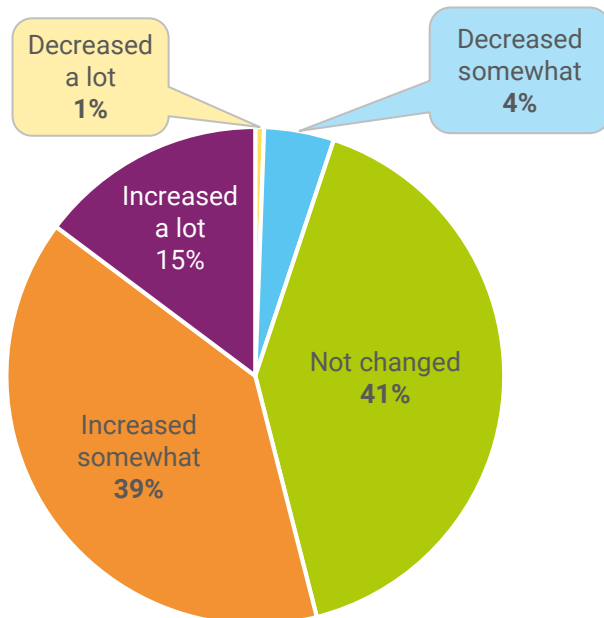
Thinking about the information you have received from Oranga Tamariki in regard to COVID-19 and being at level 3, would you say that there has been...



About half of caregivers said their expenses relating to care of a child for Oranga Tamariki had increased

Question:

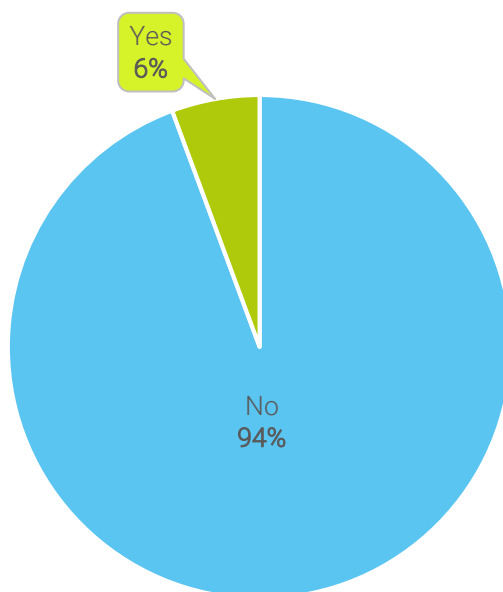
Have the expenses relating to the care of a child for Oranga Tamariki changed since before COVID-19?



Very few (6%) caregivers said the child they take care of for Oranga Tamariki had returned to school

Question:

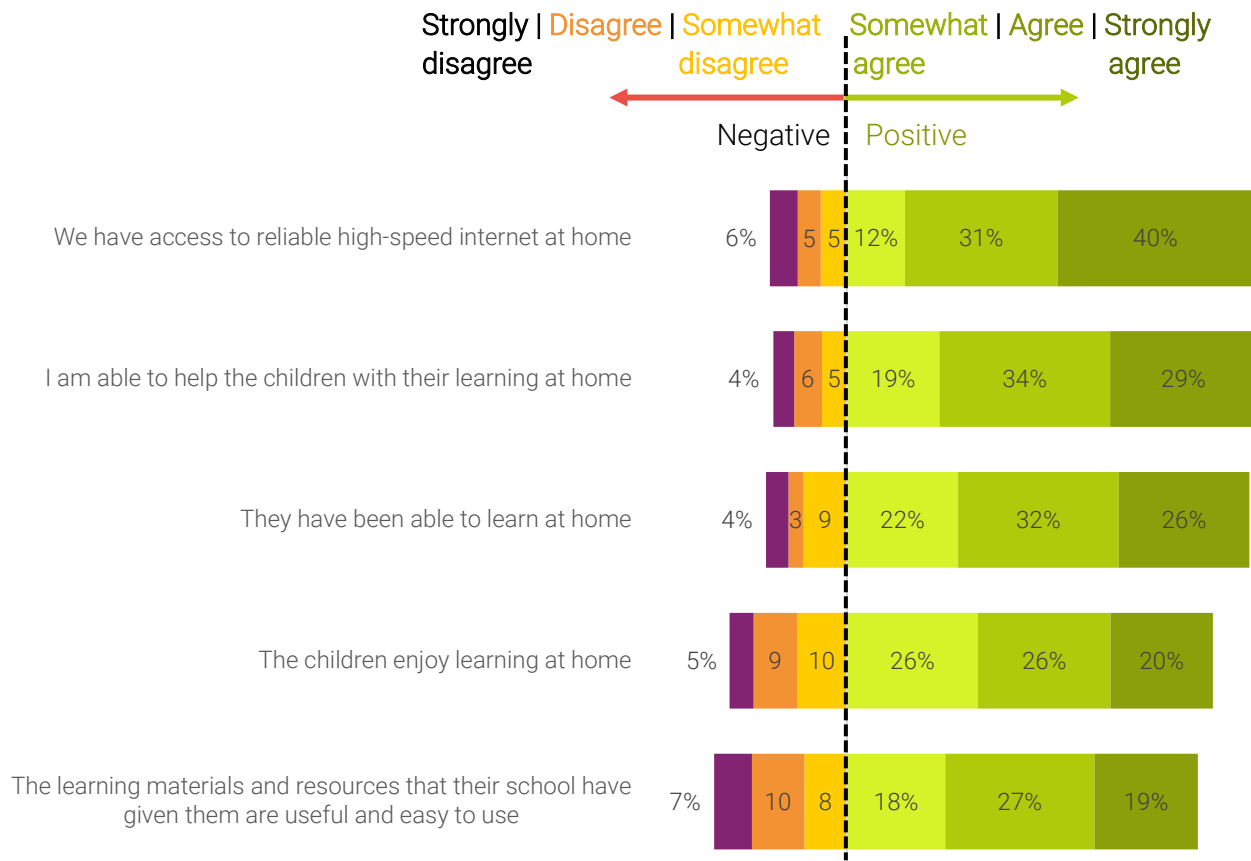
Have any of the children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki returned to school or ECE since the change to level 3?



Most caregivers were positive about home-schooling for Tamariki, however some issues emerged

Question:

When it comes to home schooling the children you care for during COVID-19, how much do you agree with these statements?



Despite the mainly positive responses, some tamariki struggled with home schooling. Caregivers told us that nearly a quarter (24%) of tamariki did not enjoy learning at home, and for a quarter (25%) the learning materials and resources were not useful or easy to use.

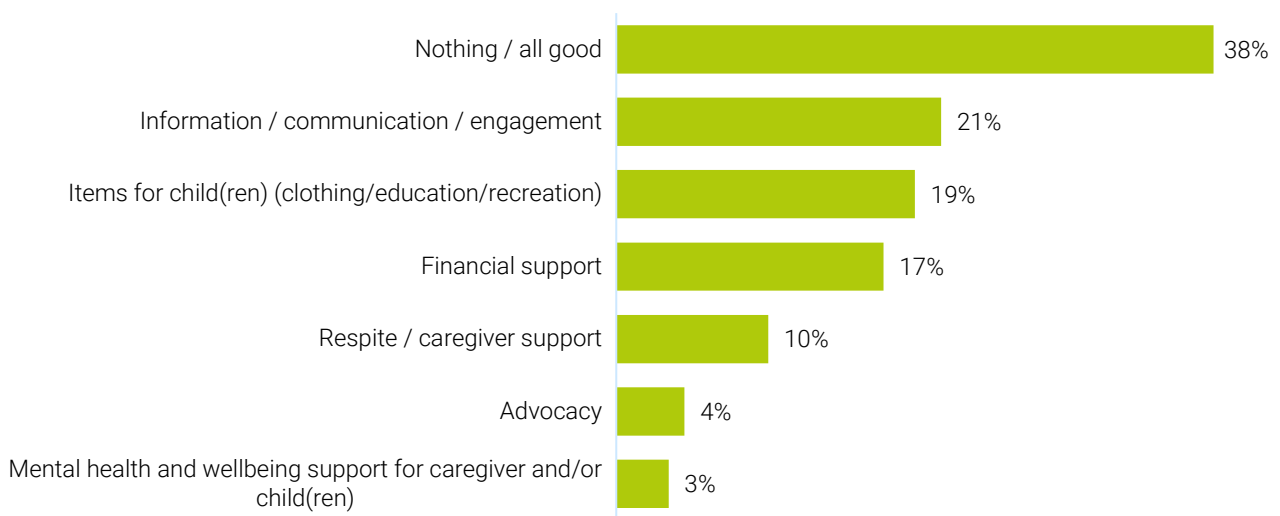
QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS (SURVEY 2)

Note these questions are each analysed separately. Consequently, similar themes are referred to in in multiple questions.

While many caregivers said they had what they needed, increased information or engagement and items for children were the major ways Oranga Tamariki could improve their situation

Question:

How could we help to improve the situation for you as a caregiver? (N=301)



Notes:

% are calculated from the number of mentions of the theme divided by the number of caregivers who commented
% may not add to 100%: a comment may contain more than one theme; rounding; displaying only the major themes

Nearly four out of ten caregivers who responded to this question said that they either already had everything they needed or did not need anything from Oranga Tamariki to improve their situation as a caregiver.

"I think I've been really well looked after thanks. I've had great contact with both mine and the girls' social workers." Māori caregiver, Wellington

There were requests for more contact, and additional or clearer information from Oranga Tamariki. Requests were for more frequent contact, with some caregivers stating that they had not received any contact from their social worker since lockdown. Some caregivers requested clearer information on operating during lockdown and on Oranga Tamariki's procedures.

"We had no contact from our caregiver social worker during lockdown."

Some caregivers wanted items for the children, such as activity packs and clothing. Other items mentioned were recreational equipment, stationery and art supplies, education materials, and food. In some cases, items had been requested but had not yet arrived, or had not arrived in a timely manner.

“More resources, packs, crafts, age-related fun things to do and learn that are not online. Age-related workbooks. It’s hard to supervise for hours while they are on laptops.”

NZ European caregiver, Bay of Plenty

Lockdown had placed financial stress on caregivers which was reflected in comments that Oranga Tamariki could provide more financial support to pay for food, power, and other household costs.

“More financial help. The extra \$3/4 s?? fortnight is not enough to help cover expenses.”

Māori caregiver, Waikato

The need for respite or in-home caregiver support was raised in this and in comments related to other questions. Caregivers said they were either stressed by care responsibilities, had to work full-time while taking care of children, or could not receive the usual day-to-day support during lockdown.

“We just need respite. Two needy kids 24/7 has exhausted us and put a strain on family relationships.”

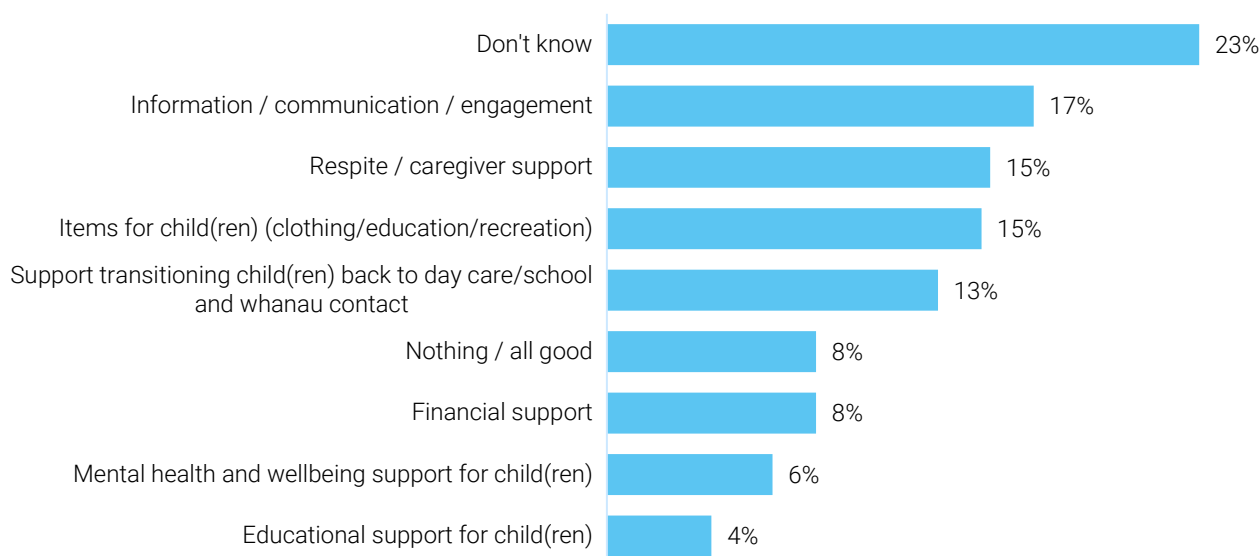
NZ European caregiver, Tasman

Other ways caregivers said Oranga Tamariki could help was to advocate and assist the caregiver to engage with other agencies (advocacy), and to provide technical and emotional support.

Caregivers said there were a range of ways Oranga Tamariki could help caregivers support tamariki in coming weeks and months

Question:

What might you need from Oranga Tamariki to help you support the child/children over the coming weeks and months? (N=295)



Notes:

% are calculated from the number of mentions of the theme divided by the number of caregivers who commented
% may not add to 100% as: a comment may contain more than one theme; rounding; displaying only the major themes

A third of those who commented said they didn't know what support they needed, or that they were 'all good'.

More information, communication and engagement from Oranga Tamariki was the most frequently mentioned area for more support. To better support the child's wellbeing, caregivers would like open and regular communication with social workers while transitioning through the alert levels.

Additional themes were

- further support in understanding the next steps for themselves and their child(ren) around things like FGCs and court proceedings (8 mentions),
- to be listened to and have Oranga Tamariki's trust that they know what they're doing (3 mentions).

"Confirmation of what is happening with FGC, potential reunification, how long they will be in my care." NZ European caregiver, Auckland

Respite services now, or time away for caregivers and tamariki in the future were the next most frequently mentioned area (15%, 44 mentions). Some caregivers indicated they are desperate for respite as some of them have not had a break since before lockdown. Other caregivers said they would like to take their child(ren) out for an activity day or on holiday, once lockdown is over, to give them some fun and to boost their morale. Connecting with whānau and having whānau provide some respite care was also mentioned.

"Maybe the next school holidays I'd like to take them away on an activity holiday for 7 days, this lockdown has been a bit tough being housebound for nearly 7 weeks not being allowed to venture out." Māori caregiver, Wellington

Resources for schooling and entertainment were mentioned in 15% (44) of comments. Items included;

- IT devices and equipment (13 comments)
- Activity and education packs (10 comments)
- Stationery (7 comments)
- Resources for child(ren) to engage in extracurricular activities (6 comments)
- Games and toys (5 comments)
- School uniforms (2 comments)

"Tablet would help as most of their normal homework is online. We own one device (my phone) in a house of 7. I'm not willing to let all the kids have access to my phone, it's too valuable." Māori caregiver, Waikato

Thirty-eight caregivers requested support around the transition from alert level 3 to alert level 2 with children returning to school/day care (or not) and caregivers returning to their workplace (or not). The uncertainties and complexities of transitioning to alert level 2 were a worry for some caregivers. Managing the changing work-life balance and finding childcare were concerns, as was transitioning children back to connecting with their whānau.

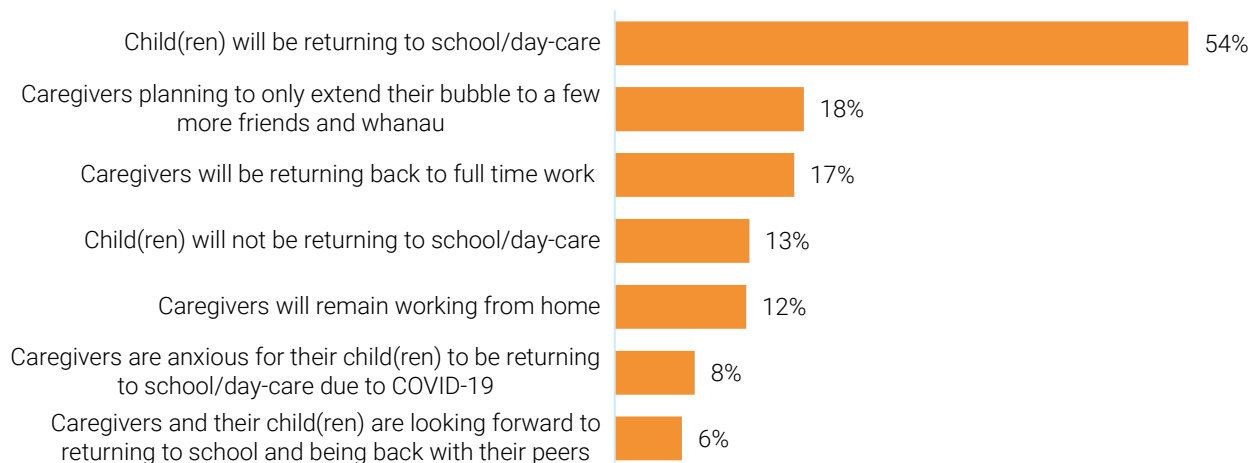
"Just maybe checking in on him at least once a week, to see if he is coping with transitioning back to school and society. May not be able to talk to us but maybe a support person until he is comfortable with himself getting back out into the world again." Māori caregiver, Waikato

Other issues raised were financial support, support to look after children's mental health and wellbeing and support for children whose educational needs were not being met.

Returning to school/ECE was the major aspect of Level 2 for our caregivers

Question:

Please tell us about how you see level 2 working for you and the child/children that you take care of for Oranga Tamariki. We'd like to know for example if you will return to work, will the child return to school, and if support with wider whanau will change. Please tell us if you plan to remain in your isolation bubble for longer and why. (N=330)



Notes:

% are calculated from the number of mentions of the theme divided by the number of caregivers who commented
% may not add to 100%: a comment may contain more than one theme; rounding; displaying only the major themes

The topic mentioned the most (with 267 comments) was returning to school or ECE and day care and whether, or how, children would return. The majority indicated that the child(ren) would return to school or day care, while smaller group said that the child(ren) would not initially return to school or day care.

Caregivers mentioned they had anxieties about the risks of COVID-19 with children returning to school, however, there were also comments that the children were very much looking forward to being back at school with their peers.

"At this stage we won't send our child to school until a few weeks after, just to assess the situation..." Māori and Pasifika caregiver, Bay of Plenty

There were some concerns about how the child(ren) would handle the transition back to school or day care, and that this might happen gradually to reduce stress and make it manageable.

"...he is going to have a slow transition, we're waiting until school has settled and found their routine (two weeks) and then looking at doing a slow transition - one block a day, building up to half day and then full days..." NZ European caregiver, Auckland

There were also some concerns about the availability of day care.

The next most-mentioned topic (with 152 comments) was about how the caregivers' work and home arrangements would be changing significantly with the move to alert level 2. There were 56 caregivers who indicated that they would return to work full time, 41 caregivers stated that they would remain working from home, at least initially. There was a lot of recognition that the move back to 'normality' would be a gradual process, with some alternative ways of working being adopted, at least in the short term, to make the transition as least disruptive as possible. For example, caregivers might stagger their return to work or combine some home working whilst also returning to the workplace.

"We have to go back to work so unfortunately we have no one who can care for him so he will have to return to school even though he does not want to." Māori caregiver, Wellington

The topic of maintaining ‘bubbles’ was prompted for in the above question, resulting in 74 comments about how caregivers’ bubbles might change. Fifty-nine caregivers mentioned that they were still concerned about COVID-19 and would continue to try and keep their bubbles small, only extending this to close family members and friends.

“...Our only concern is that if the child's whanau will be allowed access, we can't be sure that they will take all necessary steps to keep the child away from crowds or situations where she could return to our home and put us at risk by carrying the virus.”
NZ European caregiver, Waikato

Other things mentioned were caregivers generally looking forward to having the support of their friends and whānau in level 2 and the children enjoying more social activities.

School is going well for most of the small number of tamariki who returned to school in Level 3

Question:

How has the child/children said school is going? (N=20)

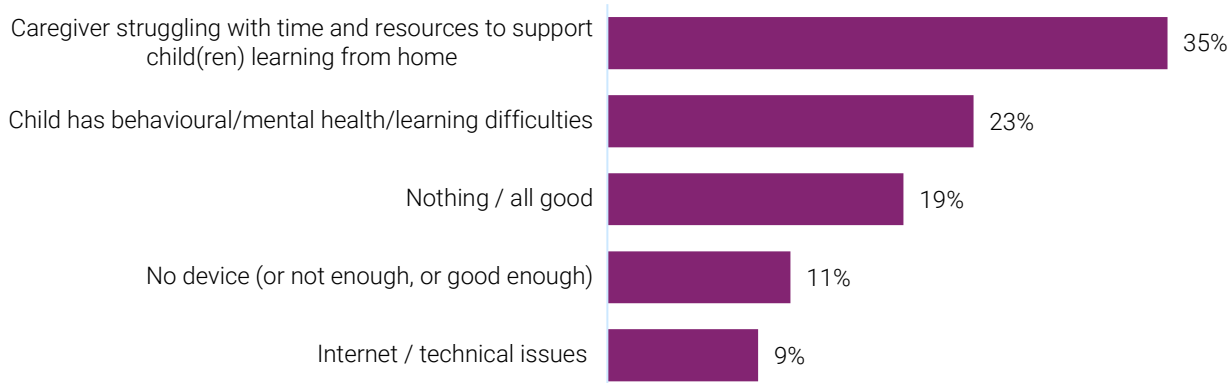
Twenty caregivers responded to this question, in line with the small numbers of children in care who returned to school in Level 3. Fifteen respondents said their child was positive about school and five said they were negative.

“They really like being back (at school), their peer group is tiny, and they are enjoying the materials.” Māori / NZ European tamariki, Wellington

Time, access to devices and resources for learning remained an issue in home-schooling

Question:

Please tell us about any barriers or issues you faced regarding the child/children learning from home and if there is anything you think Oranga Tamariki could do to help support you with this. (N=297)



Notes:

% are calculated from the number of mentions of the theme divided by the number of caregivers who commented
% may not add to 100%: a comment may contain more than one theme; rounding; displaying only the major themes

Caregiver workload

The most common issues identified were related to caregiver’s work-life balance. Some (34) stated they were struggling to balance full-time work, some of it being essential work, with the demands of

home-schooling. Some described having to care for more than one child and the educational responsibilities this brings (20).

Other issues were caregivers just generally being very busy with other commitments at this time (19) and having to become a teacher on short notice, without the necessary training or skills.

"I'm outnumbered by the kids and not a teacher, so this a massive task, there are some learning challenges which make it difficult too." NZ European caregiver, Waikato

Child's psychological state as possible barrier

Caregivers caring for tamariki on a spectrum of learning difficulties, from mild to severe (31), behavioural or mental health issues or other general difficulties with the child(ren) found not having a teacher aide or spending intensive efforts on supporting child's learning were issues (19). This made it difficult for caregivers to assist home schooling. Other caregivers identified the children's general disengagement from school, lack of motivation or being distracted as issues (21).

"Trauma issues, also not assessed, interfere with behavioural issues related to learning. Oranga Tamariki need to provide timely assessments of children's needs when they come in to care." NZ European caregiver, Nelson

Material barriers

As highlighted previously, 'material barriers' has two main aspects;

- not having enough devices for children to learn on, having to share devices, incompatibility with online learning platforms or other faults.
- internet connectivity, bandwidth being chewed up by homeworkers, children or students, problems with rural data or other internet issues featured highly

"Home learning was available on Chromebook. But was unable to get one. So, struggled to support the children. Unsure if they would get more support from the teacher, because I never received any communication from one teacher." Māori caregiver, Gisborne

Two less frequent material barriers were extra costs of home-schooling, like internet, heating, supplies, power (9), and issues with learning packs not being suitable for the child's needs, delays in receiving them, or not enough learning material (9).

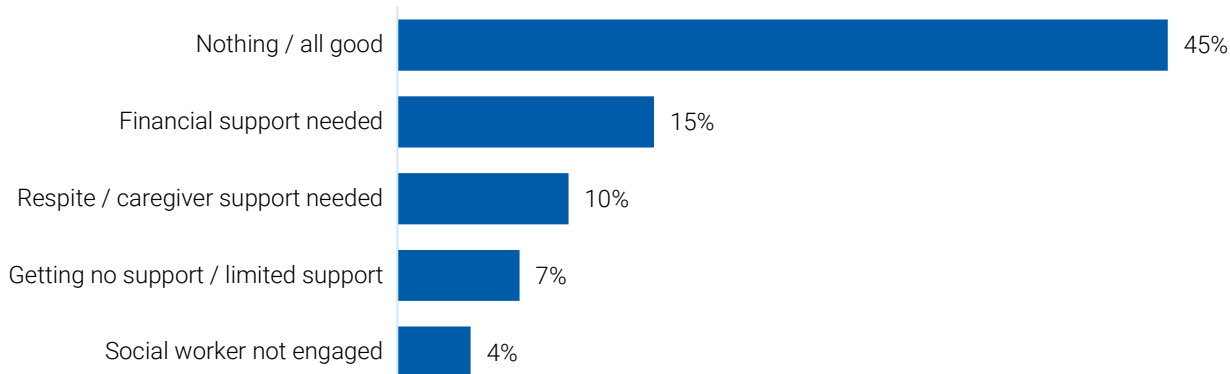
"Increased cost of internet access due to increased usage. Increased food & electricity costs." NZ European tamariki, Otago

A Te Reo Māori related learning issue emerged – two respondents stated that their child's learning was typically done in Te Reo Māori at their usual facility but learning packs or online learning is being done in English, causing some learning difficulties for the child. Other comments related to more specific issues, such as issues with the child's school or the social worker.

Few respondents had anything additional to tell Oranga Tamariki above the information they had already provided

Question:

Is there anything else you want to tell us? (N=139)



Notes:

% are calculated from the number of mentions of the theme divided by the number of caregivers who commented
% may not add to 100%: a comment may contain more than one theme; rounding; displaying only the major themes

Around four out of ten comments indicated that many caregivers had already covered their issues in earlier questions or felt everything was 'Good' and they did not need anything (63 out of 153 comments, 41%).

*"I want to thank you for a wonderful Job you guys are doing, and I understand it's a hard job. I know it's not a concern but a big thank you for all your hard work. Especially through the lock down and making sure we as a caregiver are doing well."
NZ European caregiver, Waikato*

The main high-level topics that respondents had concerns about were related to finance, the need for respite care, ways to support the children and the perceived lack of support offered by Oranga Tamariki. These aspects were explored in earlier questions covered in the quantitative section. A few of the concerns raised were long term ongoing issues.

*"In my 5 years as a carer I find the thought of approaching OT for additional support a very punitive, bordering on traumatic experience. Constant need to escalate to be heard. I am unlikely to ask for any additional support in the future. Caregiver social worker hears me, but C&P hold the power. Names change, but practice remains the same and the lion's share of support funding remains with C&P. Not a good history of experience to share unfortunately."
Māori caregiver, Waikato*

The largest number of specific mentions were about the desire for respite care, both for the child or caregiver's wellbeing.

"He would like to go to another place. He means on a holiday. I had booked us one to the GC (Gold Coast) but unsure if that can go ahead." Pasifika tamariki, Wellington

VOICES OF TAMARIKI (SURVEY 2)

The Voices of Children and Young People (Voices) team had two questions included in the second Caregiver Pulse Survey which was conducted by the Evidence Centre.

These questions were an opportunity for caregivers to share their observations of tamariki experiences (and in some cases, their own experiences) of lockdown and level 3 from the perspective of the tamariki and rangatahi in their care.

The Voices team have analysed the following two questions:

1. If you can, please tell us a little bit about what the child / children has told you about how they have felt about lockdown and how they feel about moving back towards normality?
2. What has helped and / or hindered you to keep the child / children connected to their immediate and or broader whānau during lock down?
 - 425 caregivers completed the survey overall
 - 318 respondents commented on question 1
 - 311 commented on question 2

While there were some issues, tamariki and rangatahi have generally managed well

Question:

If you can, please tell us a little bit about what the child/children has told you about how they have felt about lockdown and how they feel about moving back towards normality?

Caregivers gave detailed descriptions of what tamariki and rangatahi have told them directly as well as their own observations of how tamariki and rangatahi have expressed how they feel through their reactions and behaviours

The responses tended to provide a general description about how tamariki and rangatahi are feeling rather than separating how tamariki and rangatahi have felt about lockdown and how they feel about moving back towards normality as two separate topics.

What caregivers told us

Five main themes emerged from responses to Question One:

- Tamariki and rangatahi are missing everyday life
- Tamariki and rangatahi are missing whānau
- Younger tamariki (under 5's) have experienced alert level 3 differently from older tamariki
- Tamariki and rangatahi have generally managed well
- Some tamariki and rangatahi have had difficulties during lockdown

Tamariki and rangatahi are missing everyday life

Many caregivers described how tamariki and rangatahi are missing their friends. For some, this was associated with wanting to see friends at school and looking forward to going back to school.

Many tamariki and rangatahi shared that they missed being able to go outdoors and go to parks and playgrounds. For some, this included missing sports activities.

Some caregivers described tamariki and rangatahi as being 'bored'. At times this was attributed to them being at home with older caregivers who did not feel they could keep playing / setting up activities.

Some caregivers shared that tamariki and rangatahi were initially excited or happy to be home but over time increasingly missed everyday life.

"She says it's a bit boring because there is only her and I, her Gran."

"They are frustrated that they cannot have contact with their friends, Zoom just isn't the same. They are excited about returning to school/pre-school and getting back into a familiar learning environment"

Tamariki and rangatahi are missing whānau

Many caregivers noted that tamariki and rangatahi were missing whānau and for some, this was impacting their behaviour. Many caregiver comments focused on tamariki and rangatahi connecting with whānau through technology. They noted however, that this was not enough, and that tamariki and rangatahi wanted face to face contact again.

"Our wee fellow has been fine till the last few days, there has been no physical contact with dad and is now getting a bit agitated "

"The child who is struggling the most is pining for his sister and only sees her online which isn't the same as being able to hug her in person "

"All they want is to be round their whānau and go back to normal life "

Younger tamariki (under 5's) have experienced alert level 3 differently from older tamariki

Many caregivers described the specific experiences of younger tamariki. For some, the caregiver stated that the tamariki in their care was too young to either fully understand what was happening or too young to verbalise how they felt.

Some caregivers described how younger tamariki expressed their feelings through their behaviours, such as changes in sleep patterns and an increase in emotions such as anger and sadness.

For some, this period had been beneficial for both tamariki and caregivers, resulting in strengthened relationships and attachments.

"My boy is almost 2. Lockdown has been fabulous for him. We have come to realise he is better suited to one on one attention. He is healthier and his language has come leaps and bounds. He is less stressed. "

"We are caregivers to twin girls and they have just turned 8 months old. Just having everyone else at home and watching them both growing during COVID-19 has made us love these girls so much more and they feel that love, because they wake up with smiles on their faces, knowing that it's the same faces they wake too every time tells me they know who we are and we make them happy."

For some tamariki the change in contact with whānau has been difficult.

"[name] is 10 months old and isn't talking yet, however since broadening our bubble she doesn't recognise whānau she saw daily before lockdown and is shy of them."

Tamariki and rangatahi have generally responded well

Many caregiver responses highlighted how tamariki and rangatahi have generally adapted well to the situation.

"Our child has a very good understanding of the situation. He knows he can go shopping after "lockdown" and visit others. He has grasped hygiene and hand washing skills. Very proud of him. He's a wise old soul. We don't have any concerns. "

Some caregivers highlighted how they had supported tamariki and rangatahi throughout lockdown, to help them understand what was happening.

"She has not said anything about lockdown as we have constantly talked about it and she has trusted us to guide her. "

Many caregivers shared how tamariki and rangatahi have enjoyed being at home and spending time with others in their home. They have enjoyed the increased attention from adults, trying new activities and learning from home.

"He is loving being in our home and having all this time with us. "

"They love lockdown. School on the computer, not having to make school lunches, no uniform. "

In some cases, tamariki and rangatahi have enjoyed being at home so much that they haven't wanted to go back to school.

"Kids say they don't want to go back to school. Would rather stay home. "

"We asked our child earlier today about how she is liking the lockdown. She said she loves school but also loves the lockdown a little more "

Some tamariki and rangatahi have had challenging experiences of lockdown

Caregivers described how some tamariki and rangatahi have found Level 3 to be challenging. For some, this has been demonstrated through a change in behaviour and / or demonstrating challenging behaviours. It has been particularly challenging for tamariki and rangatahi with additional needs.

"We have several siblings in care, the most complex with multiple diagnoses including RAD, ODD and severe ADHD, is struggling most with changes as we move through the levels. "

"She tells me she wants to live somewhere else; she is angry, she is now waking very upset at night and her sleep patterns are hugely disrupted, her play has regressed to more immature themes. "

Lockdown and Level 3 has raised anxieties for some tamariki and rangatahi about lack of control, trauma, going back to school or feeling worried about getting ill

"She has huge anxiety and thrown her back into trauma state again. "

"They have been affected by the COVID-19 experience. They worry about being near other people. "

Some caregivers referred to the need for respite for both themselves and tamariki and rangatahi in their care.

"Behaviour is challenging and there is no respite for both child and caregiver. "

"Child would like respite from me and vice versa. "

Social media and devices have been key in ensuring connection with whānau

Question:

What has helped and / or hindered you to keep the child / children connected to their immediate and or broader whānau during lockdown?

Helped

- Using social media
- Staying connected by phone
- Having whānau as part of the bubble or being able to have visits

Hindered

- Whānau have been difficult to reach by phone or online
- The stress of no contact with whānau
- For some tamariki and rangatahi, where they have been able to connect in person, by phone or online with whānau this has been stressful and resulted in tamariki and rangatahi feeling angry, distressed and unsettled
- Lack of access to data, devices, technology, and/or minutes – for both tamariki and rangatahi and their whānau

What helps keep tamariki and rangatahi connected to their immediate and broader whānau during lockdown?

Many caregivers described using social media such as Zoom, Facebook and Messenger to maintain contact with whānau.

“Chromebook as a game changer. Able to communicate with siblings and classmates.”

“I have made personal text messages and phone calls for the children...Social media and video calls...Technology has helped us during this time to keep these important bonds strong.”

In some cases where whānau did not have internet access, caregivers relied on phone calls to help tamariki and rangatahi stay in contact

“Lots of tries at Skype and Messenger calling with the social worker, but parents are unable to connect [via Skype and Messenger], but we have been having phone calls instead.”

To ensure that tamariki could connect with their whānau some caregivers chose to share their bubble.

“Our OT child's birth parents (intellectual disabilities) have been a part of our bubble all through lockdown. They usually see their son at Kindy, so during lockdown we agreed that they visit our home Mon to Friday for 2 hours in the morning to connect with their son. It has worked really well.”

What hinders tamariki and rangatahi to connect to their immediate and broader whānau during lockdown?

Many caregivers described a lack of contact between whānau and/or parents for a range of reasons:

Tamariki and rangatahi choosing not to contact their whānau and/or parents

“The fact he turns his phone off or he turns it to silent. It's telling us he doesn't want to talk to them then they ring our phones and the conversation is over in 5 minutes but he doesn't have

the heart to tell them he doesn't want to talk to them because he is torn between loyalty and his own happiness."

Caregivers choosing not to contact whānau/parents

"I have no intention of allowing the children to be connected to their whānau, that would create way more trouble for an already declining behaviour situation"

Whānau / parents not connecting with their tamariki and rangatahi

"Mother has not asked about children or requested contact which is sad as daughter had a birthday over lockdown and nothing, no communication or anything from mum."

Many caregivers described the stress caused by connection with whānau

"I thought face-time chats with her sisters might help but they actually caused her to be unsettled and angry afterwards"

"We stopped allowing phone calls as we were abused by the bio parent. The Skype calls are 3-4 times a week which is quite stressful as the children are very young and get stressed."

"Each child in our care comes from different whānau situations where the relationship with the case workers is fractured and the immediate /broader whānau have no connection or desire in wanting to make contact. In some cases, making that connection with immediate / broader whānau creates more issues down the line as hollow promises are always broken and we are left picking up the pieces. The oldest child we have is on the verge of depression, as that child feels no-one from that whānau loves them. Very sad and we are left having to build that child's inner resolve."

For others, sharing their bubble with whānau has caused additional stress

"I included my son and daughter in law in our bubble so [name] could go to their house 2 days a week, this was good for me to work and something for her to look forward to, however she found the different style of care was confusing and increasingly became angry at coming home."

Lack of access to data, devices, and technology for tamariki and rangatahi and whānau has also been a hindrance to connection.

"A lack of phone for them to call their mother on. Our phones don't give us enough calling minutes. Still managed, but it has caused her to be cross."

Poor coordination from social workers has also hindered connection to whānau

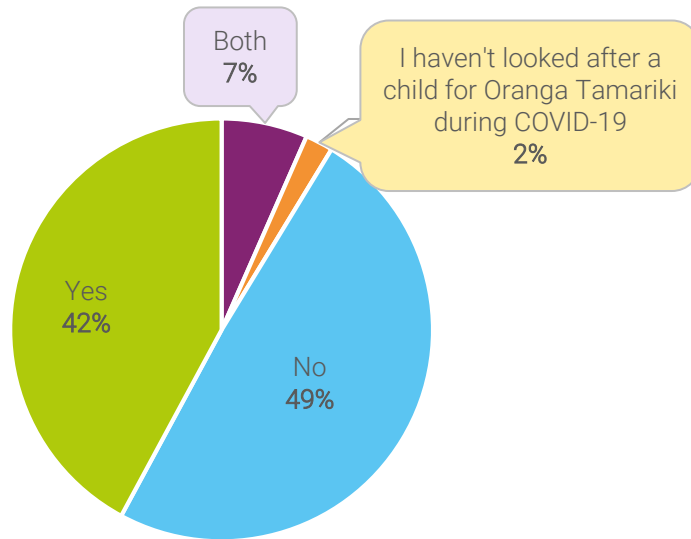
"There has been no scheduled contact...No offer of an alternative was given or sought."

DEMOGRAPHICS (SURVEY 2)

42% of caregivers are related to the child they take care of for Oranga Tamariki

Question:

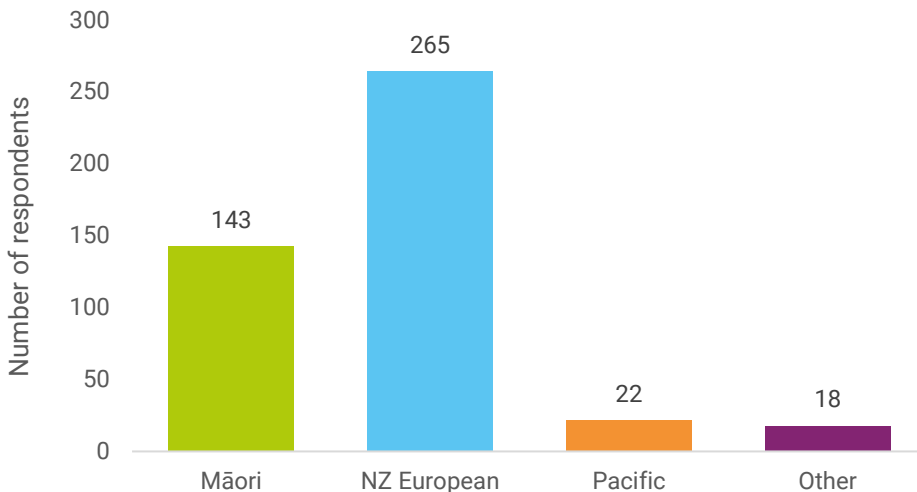
Are you related to the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?



32% of caregivers identified as Māori ²

Question:

Which ethnic group (or groups) do you identify as? Please choose all that apply.

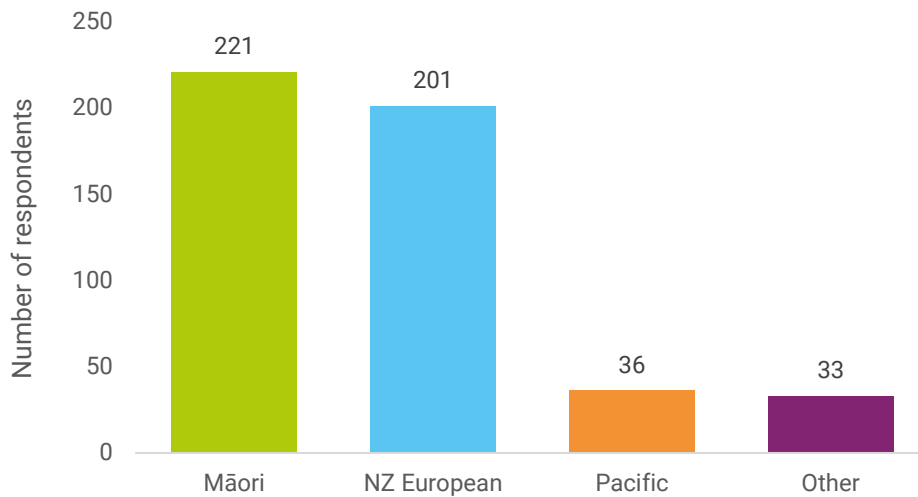


² Note that respondents could choose more than one ethnicity they identify with, as such, the total number of ethnicities is more than the total number of respondents.

Caregivers said that 45% of the child(ren) they take care of for Oranga Tamariki identified as Māori ³

Question:

*Which ethnic group (or groups) does the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki identify as?
Please choose all that apply.*



³ Note that respondents could choose more than one ethnicity they identify with, as such, the total number of ethnicities is more than the total number of respondents.

WHAT NEXT

The Evidence Centre will use the answers, comments and findings to inform other COVID-19 related research.

Caregiver voice is a key component of the continuous improvement approach that the Caregiver Recruitment and Support Service takes to delivering services and practicing in ways that meet caregivers' needs. Caregivers' comments from the Pulse Surveys during COVID have provided important real-time guidance for our work.

- Caregivers commented on the need for activities for tamariki during lock-down - we responded by identifying those caregiving whānau in need and posting out stationery.
- Caregivers noted difficulties keeping children connected to whānau and keeping informed during COVID without mobile phones and data - we responded by identifying those caregiving whānau in need and with the support of the Engaging All New Zealanders team, provided free mobile phones and unlimited calls and data for three months.
- Caregivers commented on the importance of being informed and having regular communication with Oranga Tamariki - we responded with our Caregiver Social Workers making regular phone and email contact and developing multiple support plans with caregivers during the different levels of COVID lockdown. We also provided twice weekly emails to caregivers with information about keeping safe during COVID and accessing supports.
- Caregivers commented on the financial pressure they were facing, and we were able to support caregiving whānau in need by helping with power and internet payments.

Over the coming weeks we'll be responding to the needs that caregivers have shared in the most recent survey.

- Our caregiver social workers will be keeping in regular contact to offer support
- We'll keep providing relevant and timely information for caregivers via email, social media and our website
- Our caregiver social workers will be talking with caregivers about ways to regain energy and take a break. This might include babysitting, childcare, children spending time with whānau who are approved caregivers, or Oranga Tamariki helping to connect caregivers with other approved caregivers who are able to care for tamariki for short periods of time. Oranga Tamariki will also be supporting members of caregiver's whānau or community to become approved caregivers so they can care for tamariki when they are needed. From 1 June caregivers will be able to take up to 20 days paid respite – until 30 June 2021. Our CGSW will be working with caregivers and their colleagues in Services for Children and Families to make arrangements for this to occur.
- Caregivers can connect with the child's social worker to discuss accessing support for day care, counselling, mental health, tutoring, teacher aides, transitioning children back to school, and connecting children with their whānau.

We'll also be making longer-term changes to our services and practice in response to the feedback we have received from caregivers during the COVID lockdown. We understand that caregivers have appreciated regular contact with our caregiver social workers and that this contact does not always need to be face-to-face. Our caregiver social workers will continue to maintain regular contact in ways that work for each caregiver. We'll always meet up in person when needed but we've realised that for many caregivers, regular phone and email contact is just as important and effective.

We'll also be making changes to our communications with more regular emails to all our caregivers that include information that is important for our caregivers to know, provided right when they need it. We will also carry on being flexible and responsive with the funding we have available to meet caregivers' needs so they are able to maintain their wellbeing and provide safe, stable and loving care for tamariki.

Caregiver voice will continue to inform the continuous improvement of our services and practice. We are working to provide a range of opportunities for caregivers to share their experiences, views and needs with us and pulse surveys will continue to be one of these opportunities.

APPENDIX 1: QUALITATIVE TABLE (SURVEY 1)

Questions:

How could Oranga Tamariki help to improve your situation?

How could we help to improve the situation for the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?

How could we help to improve the situation for both you and the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?

If there's anything else we could do to support you during the COVID-19 lockdown, or there is something you're struggling/grappling with, please let us know below.

Group	Theme	Count	% of total
More communication	Regular and proactive engagement with social workers	11	12%
	Helpful guidelines and tips on COVID-19 response regarding wellbeing	4	4%
	Acknowledgement of added stress, extra costs and extra working	3	3%
	More information on financial aid from Oranga Tamariki	2	2%
Financial support	Reflective of added costs, lost revenue due to childcare/added bills	13	14%
	Don't send us to WINZ	4	4%
	Disparity between payments for caregivers and others in society	2	2%
	There has been delays in payments	1	1%
More resources	For child's schooling, hobbies, activities and health	11	12%
	For caregivers shopping and essentials	2	2%

	Health-related resources like PPE gear, sanitiser etc.	2	2%
	For local Oranga Tamariki offices	1	1%
	Care packages	1	1%
	Access to devices	1	1%
Sources of difficulties over lockdown	Social workers	8	9%
	Increased costs, bills and expenses	7	8%
	More frequent contact with child/children	4	4%
	Extra childcare, no school, working from home balance and reduced ability to work	4	4%
	Children find lockdown difficult and display heightened emotions	3	3%
	Crammed housing	1	1%
Support to improve situation	Support discipline	1	1%
	Contact with child's parents/whānau	1	1%
	Support mental health	1	1%
Other	Tokenism displayed	2	2%
	Wanting respite	1	1%
Total		91	100%

Notes:

Themes are aggregated across all questions as the first Caregiver Survey had a low response rate.

% are calculated from the number of mentions of the theme divided by the number of caregivers who commented.

% may not add to 100% as: a comment may contain more than one theme; rounding; displaying only the major themes.

APPENDIX 2: DETAILED QUALITATIVE TABLES (SURVEY 2)

Question:

How could we help to improve the situation for you as a caregiver?

Theme	Count	% of total
Nothing / all good	114	33%
Information / communication / engagement	62	18%
Financial support	51	15%
Items for child(ren) (clothing/education/recreation)	44	13%
Respite / caregiver support	29	8%
Computer / tablet device	13	4%
Advocacy	13	4%
Mental health and wellbeing support (for caregiver and/or child(ren))	10	3%
Less communication	7	2%
Technical support (information/internet/tech items)	5	1%
Total	348	100%

Question:

What might you need from Oranga Tamariki to help you support the child/children over the coming weeks and months?

Group	Theme	Count	% of total
Don't know	Don't know	68	21%
Information / communication / engagement	Open communication lines while we are transitioning back to normal	38	12%

	Further support understanding the next steps for themselves and their child(ren)	8	2%
	To be listened to and have Oranga Tamariki trust that they know what they're doing	3	1%
Respite / caregiver support	Respite / caregiver support	44	14%
Items for child(ren) (clothing/education/recreation)	Support getting electronic equipment for their child(ren)	13	4%
	Activity and education packs to entertain their child(ren)	10	3%
	Stationery	7	2%
	Resources for child(ren) to engage in extracurricular activities	6	2%
	Games and toys for kids to play with	5	2%
	School uniforms	2	1%
Support transitioning child(ren) back to day care/school and whānau contact	Support transitioning child(ren) back to day care/school	20	6%
	Support finding childcare options	9	3%
	Support for child(ren) to connect with their whānau	9	3%
Nothing / all good	Nothing / all good	24	7%
Financial support	General financial support	18	6%
	A care package for themselves and their child(ren)	6	2%
Mental health and wellbeing support (for child(ren))	Support in accessing counselling and child health appointments for child(ren)	11	3%
	Support for child(ren) who are suffering from mental health issues	8	2%

Educational support for child(ren)	Educational support for child(ren)	12	4%
Total		321	100%

Question:

Please tell us about how you see level 2 working for you and the child/children that you take care of for Oranga Tamariki.

Theme	Count	% of total
Child(ren) will be returning to school/day care	179	30%
Caregivers are planning to only extend their bubble to a few more friends and whānau	59	10%
Caregivers will be returning to full time work	56	9%
Child(ren) will <u>not</u> be returning to school/day care	42	7%
Caregivers will remain working from home	41	7%
Caregivers are anxious for their child(ren) to be returning to school/day care due to COVID-19	25	4%
Caregivers and their child(ren) are looking forward to returning to school and being back with their peers	21	4%
Due to caregivers returning to work the child(ren) will be returning to day care	18	3%
Caregivers must organise how their child(ren) will be in contact with their birth families	15	3%
Caregivers are not currently employed with another job	14	2%
Child(ren) will slowly transition back to school/day care	14	2%
The respondent did not explain what Level 2 will look like for them	14	2%
Caregivers will be relying on the support of their friends and whānau	14	2%
Caregivers will be returning to their work gradually and not fulltime	13	2%
Caregivers will not be returning to work	10	2%

Young child(ren) will remain with caregiver either at home or at their work	10	2%
Caregivers are worried how their child(ren) will transition back into school/day care	10	2%
Despite child(ren) returning to school/day care caregivers still need options for after school care	9	2%
Caregivers wish they could have whānau care for their child(ren) instead of returning them to day care	8	1%
Caregivers and their child(ren) will be re-joining social activities	8	1%
Caregivers will not be returning their child(ren) back to school due to behaviour issues	4	1%
Child(ren) have already returned to school	3	1%
Child(ren) do not want to return to school	3	1%
Child(ren) have fallen behind while being in lockdown and caregivers are anxious to turn this around	2	0%
Total	592	100%

Question:

How has the child/children said school is going?

Theme	Count	% of total
Positive statement about returning to school	15	75%
Negative statement about returning to school	5	25%
Total	20	100%

Question:

Please tell us about any barriers or issues you faced regarding the child/children learning from home and if there is anything you think Oranga Tamariki could do to help support you with this.

Group	Theme	Count	% of total
Caregiver's time and resources	Difficulties managing work and home-schooling	34	9%
	Difficulties managing more than one child at home	20	5%
	Caregiver struggling with child's intensive learning needs	19	5%
	Caregiver generally too busy/overloaded to support learning	19	5%
	Caregiver doesn't have the skills to support child's learning	12	3%
Material needs	No device (or not enough, or good enough)	34	9%
	Internet / technical issues	28	7%
	Extra costs	9	2%
	Learning pack, crafts, stationery, other materials	9	2%
Child's state	Child has learning difficulties	31	8%
	Child is disengaged from school	21	5%
	Child has behavioural or mental health issues	16	4%
Other	Issues with school support (info, teachers, packs, help, admin)	9	2%
	Issues with social worker support	5	1%
	Lack of Te Reo Māori online learning resources	2	1%
Proposed solutions	Provide appropriate education packs and stationery	18	5%
	Provide teacher aide, teaching assistant, activities for child(ren)	7	2%
	Provide a device	6	2%

Positive	Nothing / all good	55	14%
Not Applicable	Not an issue that Oranga Tamariki can help with	11	3%
	Not applicable	33	8%
Total		398	100%

Question:

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

If there is anything else, that you haven't already mentioned, that Oranga Tamariki can do to help support you to continue to care for the child/children after this intense and potentially stressful period, please tell us about this below.

Theme	Count	% of total
Nothing / all good	63	41%
Financial support needed	21	14%
Respite / caregiver support needed	14	9%
Getting no support /limited support	10	7%
Social worker not engaged	6	4%
Book/activities for children	5	3%
Child uncertain/worried about school	4	3%
Child(ren) struggling	3	2%
Enjoying family time	3	2%
Impacting other non-related family/individual issues	3	2%
Lack of confidence in the overall response of the organisation	3	2%
Mental health/anxiety/cabin fever	3	2%
Struggling with work vs childcare	3	2%
Lack of information/communication	2	1%

Money stressors	2	1%
Need to trust caregivers	2	1%
Not enough devices	2	1%
Harder to communicate/miscommunication	1	1%
Lack of work equipment/healthy work set-up	1	1%
Not enough info on financial support	1	1%
Paid leave	1	1%
Total	153	100%

APPENDIX 3: RESPONDENT QUOTES (SURVEY 1)

This appendix provides a range of quotes from caregivers illustrating the responses given.

Questions:

How could Oranga Tamariki help to improve your situation?

How could we help to improve the situation for the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?

How could we help to improve the situation for both you and the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?

If there's anything else we could do to support you during the COVID-19 lockdown, or there is something you're struggling/grappling with, please let us know below

Theme	Quotes
More communication	"There's been nothing. No point in contacting the SW - she never gets back. No change from how she has been since coming on board 9 months ago. We had an excellent SW but changed when children reached transition age. Worse initiative ever having a Transition team and mandatory SW change. Further disruption to children with change and the fact the new SW is completely useless. Unmitigated disaster all around"
	"The 'financial aid' email was BS. We have these kids here SO MUCH MORE than we used to, plus it's HARD during lockdown and your answer to 'we need more help', was go to WINZ. EPIC fail."
	"Clarification around how each office applies COVID-19 rules as each office is at their own desertion."
Financial support	"One off payment to help with extra costs related to having children home all the time. Every other person in society seems to be offered extra financial support except caregivers."
	"Vouchers would have been good for moral boost of tamariki i.e. get them eggs for Easter etc"
	"We will struggle with physical space indoors once we can't be outside most of the time. I don't have a laundry and will not be able to get clothing dry unless hung in our living area. We are 6 in 80sq. meters. Feel let down by social workers who

	haven't answered my requests for help to make this placement logistically possible. I'm still waiting on responses and invoice payments from Christmas."
More resources	"Resource packs for activities for the kids pls"
	"Checking out policy around being able to do online shopping regard urgent needs fridge washing car unforeseen problems. Having knowledge that online shopping doesn't take perches order only visa debit card."
	"A device is needed to communicate with both worlds. For example, Oranga Tamariki and the parents of our children been cared for, to continue the relationships that at hand. The need and care of these tamariki are the essentials which are food, clothing, nappies, formula. I speak of these things because they are not always available through this lockdown!!"
Sources of difficulties during lockdown	"Like a lot of info from OT and fostering kids, it all seems to be geared to the fact that foster parents are stay at home parents. We are not - it would be nice to see some info tailored to those of us that are fostering and also have full time jobs and are still working."
	"Caregivers should be given some money to pay for extra expenses having kids home full time - extra food and things to entertain them."
	"There's a lot of information about how the children are feeling etc, what to do for them. But nothing about our wellbeing, or biological children that are also affected by being subjected to the behaviour of the children in care 24/7."
Support to improve situation	"Not too sure, probably not much any one can do it's only a little bit of time left to go on lockdown, but kids are missing their visits with mum and dad."
	"Regression in some behaviours e.g. insisting on staying in pyjamas all day, using dummies all the time not just for sleep and they are 4 and 5 - hitting me if challenged."
Other	"Alert level 3, just prior to level 4, meant that only the children of essential workers could attend school. It should have included foster children too, to give us all two extra days to get prepped for locking down with high needs children. If we go to Level 3 after lockdown, I really hope schools are open for foster kids to give the carers a break."
	"A call to ask how we are doing and support around children's needs. The emails feel like token gestures without any caregiver understanding. Still feels like being part of a tick box system"

APPENDIX 4: RESPONDENT QUOTES (SURVEY 2)

This appendix provides a range of quotes from caregivers illustrating the responses given.

Question:

How could we help to improve the situation for you as a caregiver?

Theme	Quotes
Respite	"Given this was a compulsory lockdown situation it would have been good to be offered some sort of relief in terms of home help. Someone to come in for a couple of hours to mind the kids or cook a meal. We look after 5 mokopuna and while we have coped at times it has been very stressful particularly when trying to keep up with education."
	"We just need respite. Two needy kids 24/7 has exhausted us and put a strain on family relationships."
Financial	"Power cost, food costs etc have all increased and our financial assistance has dropped, add to this I am still working full hours from home however my income has also dropped by 20% so another drop-in income."
	"Additional financial support. The lockdown has been an increase in food costs & activities. Shouldn't have to ask for that."
	"More financial help. The extra \$3/4 s fortnight is not enough to help cover expenses."
Items	"More physical e.g.: books etc resources to help with pre-schoolers. As we have used a lot of ink printing resources online."
	"More resources, packs, crafts, age related fun things to do and learn that are not online. Age-related workbooks. It's hard to supervise for hours while they are on laptops."
	"Provide resource pack as promised."
Communication engagement	"Be in touch. A txt at the start of level 4 isn't enough communication."
	"We had no contact from our caregiver social worker during lockdown."

	"I have only heard from my Caregiver Social Worker twice during this whole time. I think a weekly check in would have been good."
	"Would be nice to either here from the child's social worker or ours. The lack of contact is disappointing"
None, no help needed	"We are all going goo"
	"We have had good support and I am happy with the way everything has gone and is going."
	"I think I've been really well looked after thanks. I've had great contact with both mine and the girls' social workers. "
	"You've all done a great job. Thank you."

Question:

What might you need from Oranga Tamariki to help you support the child/children over the coming weeks and months?

Theme	Quotes
Don't know	"Nothing more than we have been getting."
Information / communication / engagement	"Good communication for us and the children so everyone understands the next steps together."
	"Communication, which we are getting. support for resources - which we are getting. keep doing what ya doing basically. we feel very supported."
	"Confirmation of what is happening with FGC, potential reunification, how long they will be in my care etc..."
	"To listen to what is actually being told to them and then respond not react and blame the caregiver for voicing their opinion."
	"Trust that we know what we are doing and asking."
Respite / caregiver support	"We would be looking at possible respite care to give both him and ourselves a break."
	"Maybe the next school holidays I'd like to take them away on an activity holiday for 7 days, this lockdown has been a bit tough"

	being house bound for nearly 7 weeks not being allowed to venture out.”
	“Childcare support of some kind would be a godsend”
	“More general support that has not been given regardless of COVID-19 or not.”
Items for child(ren) (clothing/education/recreation)	“Tablet would help as most of their normal homework is online. We own one device (my phone) in a house of 7. I’m not willing to let all the kids have access to my phone, it’s too valuable.”
	“Activity pack to keep the kids occupied. I currently have a 30month olds and a 13year old so trying to keep them both plus my own child (10months) occupied without too much screen time is difficult”
	“A good supply of stationery, not random stuff but specific books etc.”
	“The opportunity to be involved in community-based activities when these become available. If they are an extra cost, perhaps some support to help the children be involved in the activities.”
	“Home activities supported.”
	“Board games would have been helpful.”
Financial support	“\$\$\$ to cover extra food, resources, power etc.”
	“Just to appreciate have some tangible recognition re the time and energy caregivers are putting in to ensure the child or children are well supported during these challenging times.”
Support transitioning child(ren) back to day care/school and whānau contact	“Just maybe checking in on him at least once a week, to see if he is coping with transitioning back to school and society. May not be able to talk to us but maybe a support person until he is comfortable with himself getting back out into the world again.”
	“My after school childcare provider has closed down.”
	“Childcare support of some kind would be a godsend.”
	“The ability to get to face to face access visits as quickly as possible.”

	"I have concerns about contact with parents for our one year old and what this would look like."
Mental health and wellbeing support (for child(ren))	"To let the government, know the impact on children's mental health of the huge restrictions and loss that that already traumatised children are experiencing."
	"...To gather ourselves, our thoughts and just reconnect with the whānau whanui."
	"Psychologists advice and support to reintegrate her back to school while managing issues from lockdown triggering trauma again."
	"Both will need therapy to help them adjust to a more structured life again."
Educational support for child(ren)	"He was already behind at school and may need extra help to catch up..."
	"I may need to look at some tutoring for one niece who is not keeping up with maths as well as I thought she was."
	"Learning support...child needing one-on-one teacher support. In his class at school there are 50 students, with 1 full time teacher and 1 part time teacher aide."
	"Support for teen to attend school or class more suitable for her special needs."

Question:

Please tell us about how you see level 2 working for you and the child/children that you take care of for Oranga Tamariki.

Theme	Quotes
Returning to school / day care	"The children will be returning to school they need to get back to normal as much as possible but still keeping hygiene a top priority"
	"We will be staying with school from home only as we have three children with low immunity..."
	"At this stage we won't send our child to school until a few weeks after, just to assess the situation..."

	<p>"...he is going to have a slow transition, we're waiting until school has settled and found their routine (two weeks) and then looking at doing a slow transition - one block a day, building up to half day and then full days..."</p>
	<p>"Luckily, I'm able to work from home till we reach level 1, the children will stay home with me until everyone feels comfortable to go back to school and work. Our caregiver social worker is already supporting us with any issues/needs."</p>
	<p>"He is likely to go back to school once level 2 is going but there needs to be supports organised for him before going back."</p>
	<p>"Struggle for our tamaiti going back to school after losing values time in school."</p>
	<p>"...support with after school care would be helpful. our mokopuna go to a kura in the country and do not have an after-school care faculty connected to the kura. so, I pick them up at 3.30pm off their bus and then need to come home. My job has been supportive but it's not always easy."</p>
	<p>"We will return them to school; however, my work hours will still remain reduced until after school care reopens."</p>
	<p>"We worked thru the lockdown and he went back to school in level 3..."</p>
	<p>"As an essential worker my child has returned to school. It's been the best thing to get back into that routine..."</p>
Caregiver returning to work	<p>"We will be returning to work, and the child will be returning to school."</p>
	<p>"Back to normal routines of work and preschool."</p>
	<p>"I will continue to work from home for some days and reduced social interactions. We have family in our home with health issues and would rather be safe than sorry..."</p>
	<p>"I will continue to work from home as will my partner under level 2..."</p>
	<p>"In level 2 most things return to normal for us – I have to return to working at the office and teens go to school which means toddlers have to return to day care. ..."</p>
	<p>"We have to go back to work so unfortunately we have no one who can care for him so he will have to return to school even though he does not want to "</p>
	<p>"He will return to school, but I am a stay at home mum "</p>
	<p>"I am lucky enough to be a stay at home mum, so we will transition the eldest to school and the middle child will go back to kindy, following direction from her kindy, the youngest will be home with me."</p>

	<p>"We are fine, I'm not currently working so at home full time "</p> <p>"My partner will return to work. I will be staggered back to work..."</p> <p>"I'll work part time; the baby will go back to day care during these days."</p> <p>"I will not be going back to work until the 12 weeks is up."</p> <p>"Luckily I am on maternity for another two months, so we are able to figure this out slowly."</p>
Bubble structure	<p>"Yes, we will be keeping our bubble small and safe "</p> <p>"We put our children first by staying home and keep our bubble small until we are free of COVID-19."</p> <p>"We will make small increases to our bubble in level 2 to include visits with grandparents and extended family and close friends..."</p> <p>"We engaged wider whānau at level 3 in order to support tamariki. This will continue during level 2 and may include further whanau for support..."</p> <p>"...We are also aware introducing bio family immediately adds a whole number of people to our contact list and many we can't trace!"</p> <p>"...Our only concern is that if the child's whānau will be allowed access, we can't be sure that they will take all necessary steps to keep the child away from crowds or situations where she could return to our home and put us at risk by carrying the virus."</p>
Child behaviour and wellbeing	<p>"I'm not confident the school can practicably keep our child safe during this time."</p> <p>"We at this stage will send all the kids back to school but if numbers rise, we will pull them out again like we did at the start of isolation, we pulled the kids out of school just before lockdown."</p> <p>"...Two primary children will return to school and both girls are very excited to see their teachers and friends..."</p> <p>"She will be going back to school as soon as they are open. She is incredibly excited to see her friends, it's essential to her wellbeing as she is a very social person..."</p> <p>"...Because of behaviour and social difficulties, all of the children will remain home schooled until we feel it is safe for everyone to return."</p>

	<p>"We will still need to have our boy home. School has already advised that [name] learning difficulties and behaviour will make it hard for him to cope in the new school environment"</p>
	<p>"We have to go back to work so unfortunately we have no one who can care for him so he will have to return to school even though he does not want to."</p>
	<p>"They said their friends aren't going back and want to stay home so this is an ongoing discussion."</p>
	<p>"...Through this isolation I have noticed they have been finding learning very challenging, with NO support from their teachers..."</p>
	<p>"With 4 in our home high risk medical conditions including kids we may stay in our bubble longer but worry about them getting behind with school. One foster boy has heart issues and one kidney and learning disabilities, so it is a hard decision to make."</p>
Support and connection	<p>"Kids will go back to school while us adults try and rebuild our life and find employment as our business failed to survive lockdown. Family will be hugely important and both kids will spend time with our wider family."</p>
	<p>"I work from home so there will be little change in how I care for the baby, but am hoping for wider support from family with looking after baby for a few hours so I can grab a shower, clean the house, sleep etc."</p>
	<p>"We don't have any wider whānau in New Zealand, so we are looking forward to seeing some of the friends we have made and return to some of the social activities we once enjoyed such as going to church and the library."</p>
	<p>"In level 2 we will visit grandparents, work will probably move back to office, kids will go back to school & kindergarten, will meet with small group of others from church who also attend same school"</p>
	<p>"Unfortunately, I'm not sure how my 1 year old will resettle back at day care on Monday and I'm going back to work... I'd be more worried about him settling the day there. Wish I could have alternative whānau carer."</p>
	<p>"...Not much whānau support as keeping everyone safe."</p>

Question:

How has the child/children said school is going?

Quotes
"They really like being back (at school), their peer group is tiny, and they are enjoying the materials."
"Good but boring - not a lot of kids"
"He likes seeing his friends doesn't speak much of his schoolwork."

Question:

Please tell us about any barriers or issues you faced regarding the child/children learning from home and if there is anything you think Oranga Tamariki could do to help support you with this.

Theme	Quotes
Caregiver's time and resources	"I have two toddlers and a year 2 child. My year 2 child has extra learning needs and so needs 1:1 attention to learn. So, the challenge here is balancing the needs of all children with the educational needs of the year 2 child. One of my toddlers has diagnosed PTSD and requires 1:1 attention. I am one person. How could OT support? Good question!"
	I'm outnumbered by the kids and not a teacher, so this a massive task, there are some learning challenges which make it difficult too.
Material needs	Home learning was available on Chromebook. But was unable to get one. So, struggled to support the children. Unsure if they would get more support from the teacher, because I never received any communication from one teacher.
	Working while helping the children was challenging at times however, we found balance most days. Internet wasn't the strongest, so again balance with who needed to be on video conference would take priority, shared devices but again we made it work so we could all do what we needed too daily as a family.
	Increased cost of internet access due to increased usage. Increased food & electricity costs.
	Child just doesn't like learning at all. He is very anxious over schoolwork even though he can do it. He puts minimal effort into anything he does.
	Trauma issues, also not assessed, interfere with behavioural issues related to learning. Oranga Tamariki need to provide timely assessments of children's needs when they come in to care

Other	<p>The oldest child living with me needs an Individual Education Plan from his school. I have asked repeatedly for this assistance and have been told it will happen, but nothing has actually been produced. I think if OT was to advocate for this on behalf of the child, it would actually happen. The children go to different schools. The quality of the learning materials has varied from almost non-existent to very thorough. The child who has received the most assistance has really enjoyed his learning.</p>
	<p>Our girl couldn't do any work from home for her new classroom it's way too difficult for her. Her device keeps playing up, so we resorted to paperwork lessons to try keep her busy however she's in full immersion Māori and the lessons are in English so it's helping her to read English and answer questions.</p>
Positive effect of resources	<p>We struggled having 4 children and trying to log them into their online classes as we didn't have enough equipment to log them on with as some of their classes overlapped. But Oranga Tamariki sent us some Chromebooks, we have smooth sailing now.</p>
	<p>It has been great been quick delivery of resources for the whole 3, including day care resources.</p>
Proposed solutions	<p>Supplies of stationery and art supplies for learning. Hard to source online without significant delays. Device getting old and restricted learning.</p>
	<p>We didn't have any learning aids for level 4 as it was all sold out. A learning / educational tablet will definitely help.</p>
	<p>A one on one personal virtual tutor would be so helpful.</p>
	<p>They both need tuition from specialist tutors. Social worker knows.</p>

Question:

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Quotes

I want to thank you for a wonderful job you guys are doing, and I understand it's a hard job. I know it's not a concern but a big thank you for all your hard work. Especially through the lockdown and making sure we as a caregiver are doing well.

I just think it is vitally important that the caregiver social workers make contact with the caregivers. I feel I have been really let down in this way. The children's social worker has been wonderfully supportive, and she has been a tremendous help to me. The caregiver social worker hardly knows me.

In my 5 years as a carer I find the thought of approaching OT for additional support a very punitive, bordering on traumatic experience. Constant need to escalate to be heard. I am unlikely to ask for any additional support in the future. Caregiver social worker hears me, but C&P hold the power. Names change, but practice remains the same and the lion share of support funding remains with C&P. Not a good history of experience to share unfortunately.

Thank you for the extra payment for broadband. This has really helped. Perhaps some online help as to technology use. E.g. how to purchase or best online best price stores for clothes. My kids seem to have grown 2 inches each and their shoes and clothes no longer fit.

Have no complaints. The children's social worker is amazing. She's very lovely, caring and a perfect fit for the role. She has a can-do attitude and works in with all involved. My new social worker is a fantastic person. Very warm and supportive.

He would like to go to another place. He means on a holiday. I had booked us one to the GC (*Gold Coast*) but unsure if that can go ahead

Home-schooling has been stressful, frustrating and incredibly time consuming. While there has also been lots of times of enjoyment and a sense of achievement, the time taken away from working on the rural property we are on has never been taken into account with the previous question of costs. We have not spent more money during lock down, but I have lost a large number of productive hours during this time. This has not affected us too much in the scheme of things, but I still don't believe that the costs of reimbursement given by OT covers the cost of time when having a high need (attention wise) child (especially with home-schooling on top).

APPENDIX 5: CROSSTAB BREAKDOWN (SURVEY 2)

Below is a crosstab that looks at the group differences by subtracting the actual response average by the average for the question, it is looking for relationships between variables and responses. Overall average is the average of the first nine questions, i.e. the questions with a five- and six-point rating scale.

	Label	Overall average difference from the total average	How are you doing in the current COVID-19 level?	How do you think the children going?	How satisfied are you with the support we have provided you?	How are you feeling about continuing to take care of the children?	They have been able to learn at home	The children enjoy learning at home	Learning resources the school has provided are useful and easy to use	I am able to help the children with their learning at home	We have access to reliable high-speed internet at home	Amount of information	Have expenses changed?
Scale			Out of 5 with 1 being worst, 5 being best				Out of 6 with 1 being worst, 6 being best					1 not enough, 2 ideal, 3 too much	1 decreased, 3 no change, 5 increased
Total average			3.8	3.7	3.8	4.3	4.6	4.3	4.2	4.7	4.8	2.1	3.6
			Difference from the total average for each question										
Are you related to the child?	Yes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.1	-0.2	0.0	0.0
	No	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
	Both	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	-0.3	0.2	0.0	0.1
Have expenses changed?	Decreased a lot	-0.1	0.2	-0.2	1.2	0.7	-0.1	-0.3	-1.2	-0.2	-1.3	-0.6	
	Decreased somewhat	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	-0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	
	No change	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0	
	Increased somewhat	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	
	Increased a lot	-0.1	-0.3	-0.2	-0.4	-0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	
Amount of information	Not enough information	-0.5	-0.3	-0.1	-1.5	-0.3	-0.2	-0.4	-0.9	-0.6	-0.5		0.3
	Just the right amount of information	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2		0.0

	Too much information	-0.1	-0.2	0.0	-0.1	-0.4	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	0.2		0.0
Ethnicity of caregiver	Māori	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.0	0.1
	Pacific	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	-0.1	-0.1	0.3	-0.1	0.2	-0.1	0.0
	NZ European	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Ethnicity of child	Māori	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pacific	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.1
	NZ European	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0

APPENDIX 6: CAREGIVER QUESTIONNAIRE (SURVEY 1)

The second caregiver survey collected responses during Alert Level 4 of COVID-19. The questions used in the survey are below.

CAREGIVER PULSE SURVEY 1

We want to hear how caregivers are doing in the COVID-19 lockdown, and whether more support is needed. We know it's a different and challenging time, but we hope you will spend 5 minutes to give us some feedback.

The purpose of this survey is to hear how you and the children you care for are doing and if you are getting the support you need. We'll use that to help us improve what we are doing.

The survey is anonymous, no-one will know whether you took part or what you said.

Do you need help now? Some of what you say may be quite specific to you. Because no-one knows which answer belongs to which person, Oranga Tamariki can't answer you directly. If you have an issue that needs to be resolved, please ring the caregiver help line **0508 227 377** or contact your, or the child's, social worker.

This survey relates to the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki. If you are not currently taking care of a child for Oranga Tamariki, your feedback is still appreciated.

1. Are you related to the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Both (if you care for more than one child)
 - I'm not currently looking after a child for Oranga Tamariki

2. How are you doing in lockdown?
 - Terrible
 - Poor
 - OK
 - Good
 - Great

3. How do you think the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki is/are going during COVID-19? If you care for more than one child for Oranga Tamariki and they are experiencing COVID-19 differently, please respond to this question thinking about the child who is doing least well.
 - Terrible
 - Poor
 - OK
 - Good
 - Great

4. How could Oranga Tamariki help to improve your situation?
5. How could we help to improve the situation for the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?
6. How could we help to improve the situation for both you and the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?
7. Thinking about the information you have received from Oranga Tamariki so far, in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic (such as that about financial help, health and quarantine procedures), would you say that there has been....
 - Not enough information
 - Just the right amount of information
 - Too much information
 - Don't know
8. Since the start of COVID-19, how satisfied are you with the support we have provided you as a caregiver when you are caring for children for Oranga Tamariki?
 - Very dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Mixed feelings
 - Satisfied
 - Very satisfied
 - Don't know
9. If there's anything else we could do to support you during the COVID-19 lockdown, or there is something you're struggling/grappling with, please let us know below. Remember that this survey is anonymous - so contact 0508 227 377 or your social worker if you need something now.
10. Which ethnic group, or groups, do you belong to? Please choose all that apply.
 - Māori
 - New Zealand European
 - Pacific
 - Other
11. Which region do you live in?

[Thank you for completing our survey! We really appreciate your time and will consider how we can implement your feedback and ideas to help support you further.](#)

[Please click 'Done' to submit your response.](#)

APPENDIX 7: CAREGIVER QUESTIONNAIRE (SURVEY 2)

The second caregiver survey collected responses during alert level 3 of COVID-19. The questions used in the survey are below.

CAREGIVER PULSE SURVEY 2

We'd like to hear how you and the children in your care are doing in the changing COVID19 levels. We know it's a different and challenging time, but we hope you'll spend 10 minutes to give us some feedback. By telling us about your experience it will help us to improve the support that we are providing caregivers and tamariki in your care.

The survey is anonymous, no-one will know whether you took part or what you said.

Do you need help now? Some of what you say may be quite specific to you. Because no-one knows which answer belongs to which person, Oranga Tamariki can't answer you directly. If you have an issue that needs to be resolved, please ring the caregiver help line **0508 227 377** or contact your, or the child's, social worker.

If you are not currently taking care of a child for Oranga Tamariki, your feedback is still appreciated.

1. Are you related to the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Both (if you care for more than one child)
 - I haven't looked after a child for Oranga Tamariki during COVID-19

2. How are you doing in the current COVID-19 level?
 - Terrible
 - Poor
 - OK
 - Good
 - Great

3. How could we help to improve the situation for you as a caregiver?

4. How do you think the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki is/are going during COVID-19? If you care for more than one child for Oranga Tamariki and they are experiencing COVID-19 differently, please respond to this question thinking about the child who is doing least well.
 - Terrible
 - Poor
 - OK
 - Good
 - Great

5. If you can, please tell us a little bit about what the child/children has told you about how they have felt about lockdown and how they feel about moving back towards normality?
6. What might you need from Oranga Tamariki to help you support the child/children over the coming weeks and months?
7. Please tell us about how you see level 2 working for you and the child/children that you take care of for Oranga Tamariki. We'd like to know for example if you will return to work, will the child return to school, and if support with wider whānau will change. Please tell us if you plan to remain in your isolation bubble for longer and why.
8. What has helped and/or hindered you to keep the child/children connected to their immediate and/or broader whānau during COVID-19?
9. Thinking about the information you have received from Oranga Tamariki in regards to COVID-19 and being at level 3, would you say that there has been...
 - Not enough information
 - Just the right amount of information
 - Too much information
 - Don't know
10. Have the expenses relating to the care of a child for Oranga Tamariki changed since before COVID-19?
 - Decreased a lot
 - Decreased somewhat
 - Not changed
 - Increased somewhat
 - Increased a lot

Now we'd like to ask you some questions about education and home schooling. We'd like to know how home schooling has worked for the children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki and for you during lockdown and now we are in level 3.

11. Have any of the children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki returned to school or ECE since the change to level 3?
 - Yes
 - No
12. When it comes to home schooling the children you care for during COVID-19, how much do you agree with these statements?
 - a. They have been able to learn at home
 - b. The children enjoy learning at home
 - c. The learning materials and resources that their school have given them are useful and easy to use
 - d. I am able to help the children with their learning at home
 - e. We have access to reliable high-speed internet at home

Ratings: Strongly disagree Disagree Somewhat disagree
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly agree Not sure

13. How has the child/children said school is going?
14. Please tell us about any barriers or issues you faced regarding the child/children learning from home and if there is anything you think Oranga Tamariki could do to help support you with this.
15. Since the start of COVID-19, how satisfied are you with the support we have provided you as a caregiver when you are caring for children for Oranga Tamariki?
- Very dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Mixed feelings
 - Satisfied
 - Very satisfied
 - Don't know
16. Having taken care of a child/children for Oranga Tamariki during COVID-19 level 4 lockdown and in to level 3, we'd like to know how you're feeling about continuing to take care of this child/children. Are you feeling...
- Very negative
 - Negative
 - Mixed feelings
 - Positive
 - Very positive
 - Not Applicable
17. If there is anything else, that you haven't already mentioned, that Oranga Tamariki can do to help support you to continue to care this child/children after this intense and potentially stressful period, please tell us about this below. Remember that this survey is anonymous - so contact 0508 227 377 or your social worker if you need something now.

Now some stuff about you

18. Which ethnic group (or groups) do you identify as? Please choose all that apply.
- Māori
 - New Zealand European
 - Pacific
 - Other
19. Which ethnic group (or groups) does the child/children you take care of for Oranga Tamariki identify as? Please choose all that apply.
- Māori
 - New Zealand European
 - Pacific
 - Other
20. Which region do you live in?

Thank you for completing our survey! We really appreciate your time and will consider how we can implement your feedback and ideas to help support you further.

Please click 'Done' to submit your response.