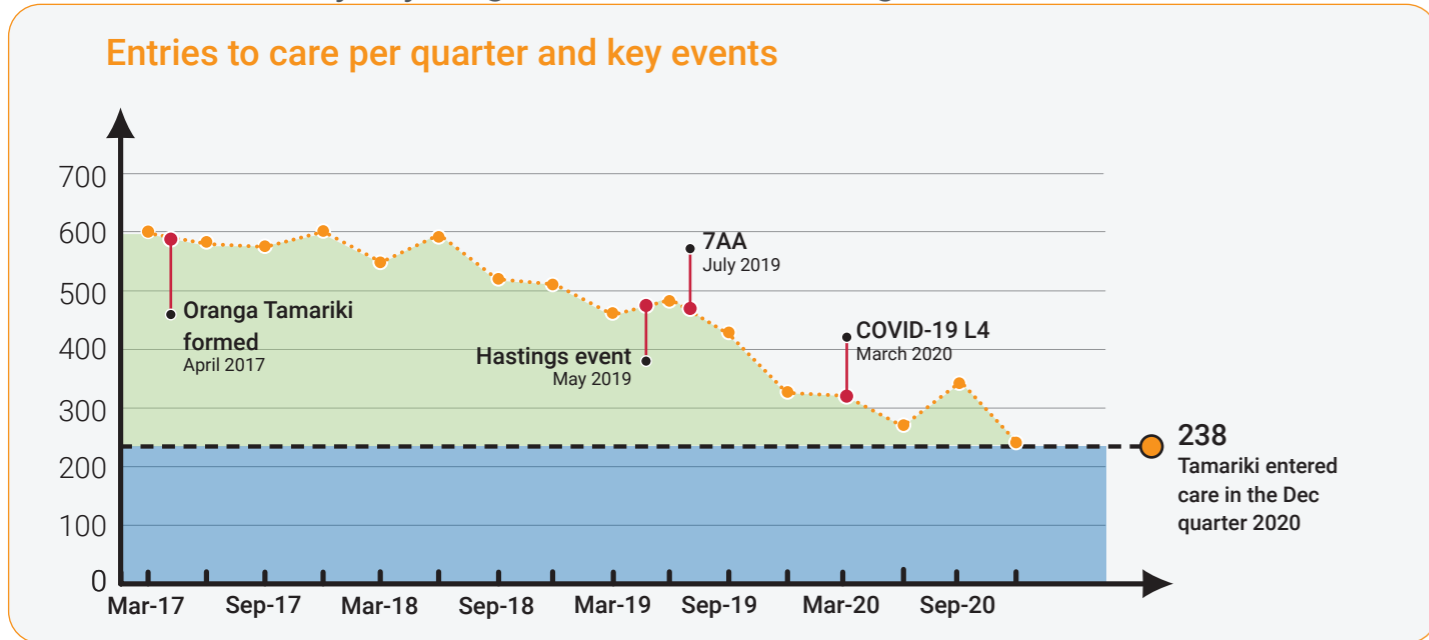


What is happening with entries to care - care means in the custody of Oranga Tamariki, where the majority of children in care are cared for by family and whānau.

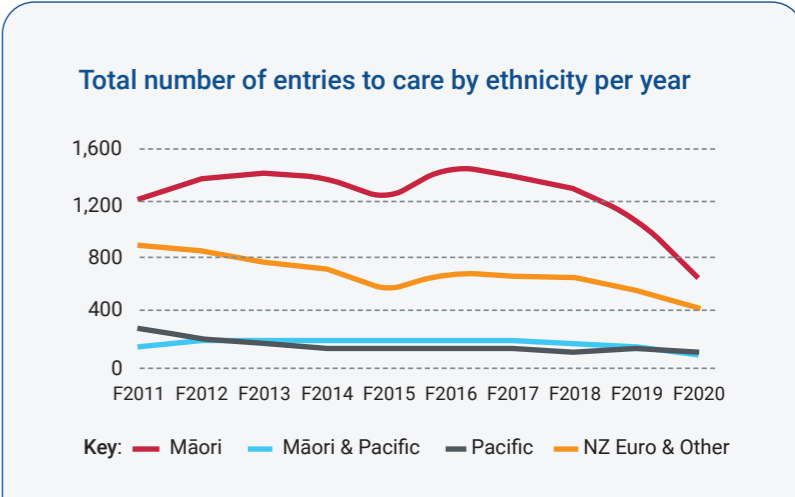
The number of entries to care has fallen significantly over the past three years, with the most noticeable drop happening over the last year. We are unable to say anything about the short or longer term outcomes for those who did not enter care.

May 2021



What has changed in the last three years?

- 2017/18** Increasing investment in early support services and strengthening core social work practice.
- 2018/19** Introducing and implementing the National Care Standards and a framework for cultural competency.
- 2019/20** Focusing on the design and implementation of prototypes and initiatives to support early engagement and assessment, development of intensive response services, and designing and ensuring greater support is provided to whānau/families. Focus on Strategic Partnerships with iwi and how we work with providers.



Entries to care have been declining since Oranga Tamariki was established

Entries into the custody of Oranga Tamariki have decreased since Oranga Tamariki was established. This is a result of a number of factors including the introduction of a range of legislative changes, including section 7AA and related practice guidance.

The largest drop in entries to care is observed for the 0-1 age group.

We analysed whether there have been any general changes to the health and development of all children in New Zealand in the last year which may have contributed to the decrease. This analysis found there were no significant shifts in children's health and development over this time.

The largest decrease in entries to care was for tamariki Māori²

2,395 F2017 ↓ **1,334** F2020 **Children entered care**
(44% or 1,061 fewer than in F2017)

760 Tamariki Māori entered care in F2020
(38% or 460 fewer than in F2019)

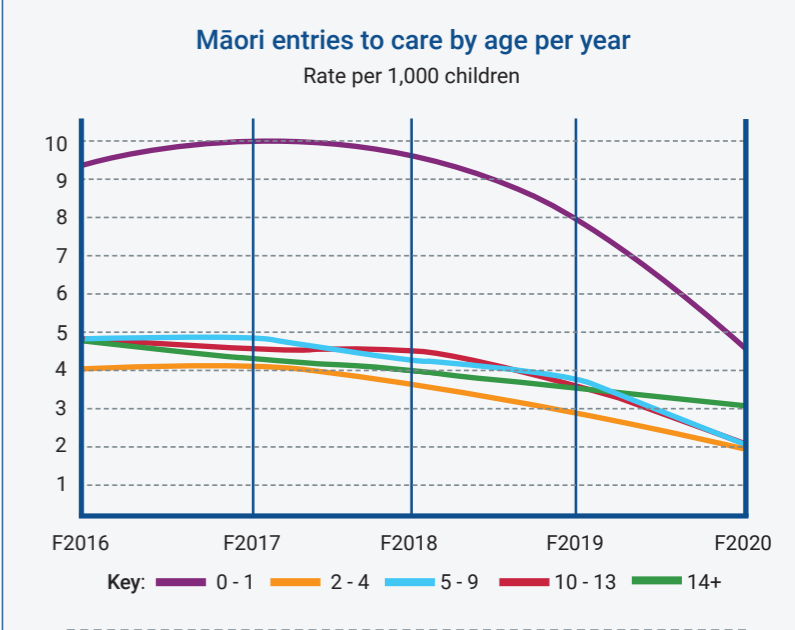
The proportion of entries that were for tamariki Māori decreased over the past three years

68% F2017 ↓ **58%** F2020

Of children in the custody of Oranga Tamariki, 18% remained, with support, in their homes. And of those in out-of-home placements with a caregiver, 71% were with wider family and whānau.

Resulting in

- Signing of nine strategic partnership agreements.
- In addition, Oranga Tamariki has several other treaty-based agreements with iwi and Māori organisations.
- Working differently with strategic partners to better support tamariki.
- Increased level of engagement with whānau, supported by the increased number of kairaranga, and strengthened and more culturally responsive practice guidance.
- Legislative changes in s7AA emphasise working with whānau and keeping tamariki in their care.



Local issues, local solutions, local aspirations

Exploration of practice in three very different sites confirmed there is no one size fits all when working to keep tamariki safe and with their whānau. Every community has unique features which are reflected in the way the sites work with those they serve. The common factor with each local solution was building and strengthening relationships between the community and Oranga Tamariki over a lengthy period of time, often decades rather than single years.

In Blenheim Oranga Tamariki and seven local iwi and the Māori Women's Welfare League designed and developed a partnership. A key focus involves using Family Group Conference with wider whānau members at the early stages of when a concern is reported and working to ensure that if tamariki need to go into care they are placed with whānau. For the past three years Blenheim has had one of the lowest numbers of tamariki Māori in care across the country.

In Whakatāne the site has also worked closely with the community. A number of key relationships have been developed between the site and: the Eastern Bay of Plenty Alliance; Tūhoe; and Te Whānau a Apanui. The multiple relationships reflect the differing nature and aspirations of the groups. A notable feature is building the capacity and capability to manage a response to tamariki and whānau. Key elements of success have been building and exhibiting trust that all involved will work for te tamaiti³.

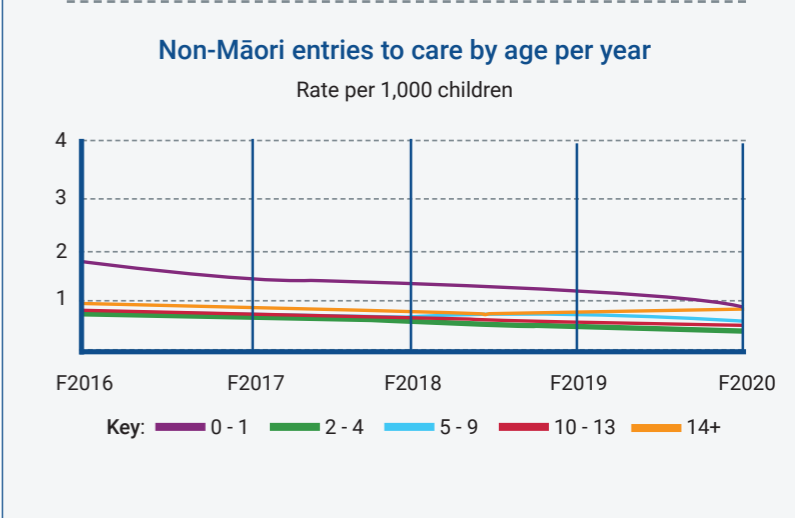
Onehunga is an urban site in Tāmaki Makaurau which has a complex web of community groups and agencies. The Māori population is drawn from many iwi. There is no single point of connection. Again relationships have been built over a lengthy period, and are the accumulation of many years of working with mana whenua. Bringing on board a large group of 14 kairaranga-ā-whānau is the culmination of many years of working with mana whenua to establish an approach to this kaupapa.

The Unsupported Child Benefit may provide an alternative to statutory care

The Unsupported Child Benefit (UCB) is paid to caregivers who are looking after a child whose parents are unable to provide care. The anticipated length of this non-statutory care must be one year or more. Almost all these caregivers are close relatives of the child, usually grandparents or aunts.

In 2021 increases to the UCB weekly payments aligned the payments with those received by caregivers who care for children in statutory care.

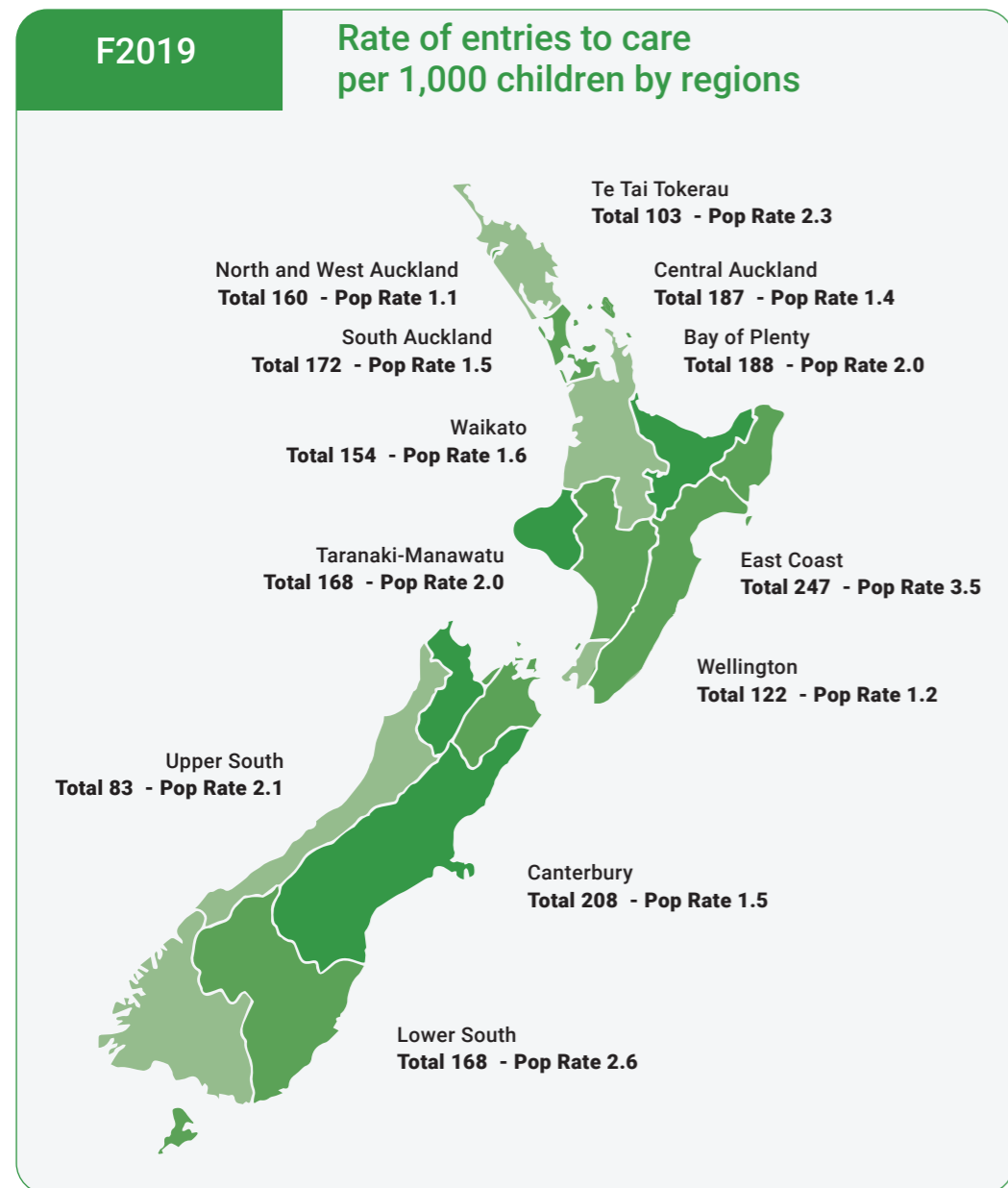
A review of a sample of 100 UCB entries, where there had been a recent Report of Concern (ROC) showed that for the majority (72%), UCB that followed a ROC was supporting whānau with complex issues to provide care, without which further statutory intervention would be likely. It is possible that UCB is functioning as an alternative pathway to entering the custody of Oranga Tamariki early in the care and protection process.



¹ The wellbeing model draws together data on service usage and other indications of need across the social sector into once place, where it is used to form a data-driven view of the apparent wellbeing of each child and young person.
² Includes those who identify as 'Māori' or 'Māori and Pacific'.
³ Evidence to the Waitangi Tribunal, Melissa Pye, 2915 A176

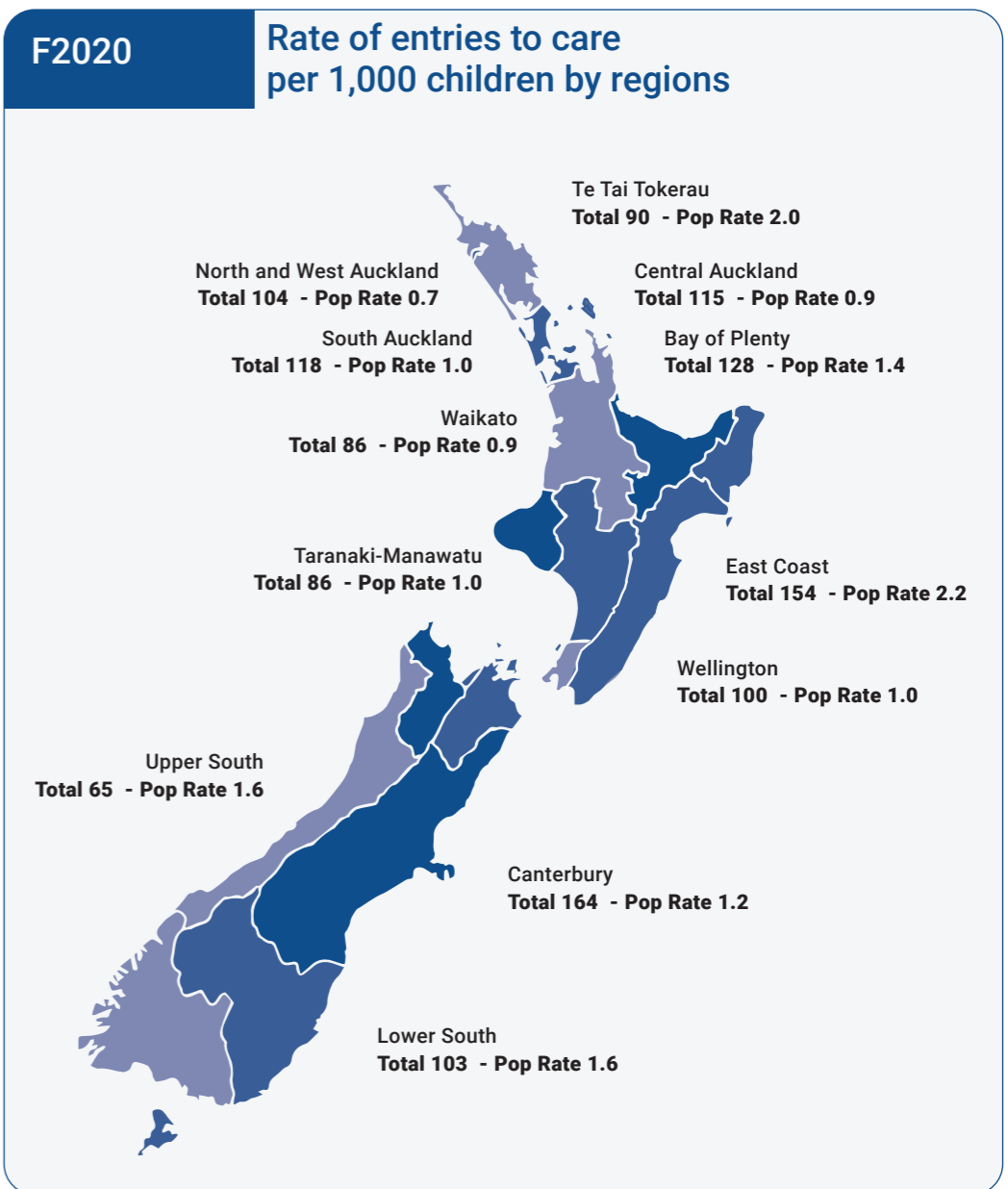
Regional Breakdown

There is significant regional variation in the number and rate at which children enter the custody of the Chief Executive. There is also regional variation in the rate of Reports of Concern per thousand children. Some of the population characteristics found to relate to the rate of engagement in the care and protection system are parental income, socioeconomic decile, recent parental Corrections involvement, crime victimisation and involvement, mental health provider contact/treatment and school disengagement. These indicators show marked regional variation.



Reports of Concern and entries to care and protection custody, by region (including warrants)

Region	Rate of ROCs per 1,000 children		Number of entries to care		Rate of entries per 1,000 children	
	F2019	F2020	F2019	F2020	F2019	F2020
Te Tai Tokerau	87	78	103	90	2.3	2.0
North and West Auckland	42	38	160	104	1.1	0.7
Central Auckland	44	39	187	115	1.4	0.9
South Auckland	58	51	172	118	1.5	1.0
Waikato	59	60	154	86	1.6	0.9
Bay of Plenty	67	65	188	128	2.0	1.4
Taranaki-Manawatu	66	60	168	86	2.0	1.0
East Coast	70	64	247	154	3.5	2.2
Wellington	41	37	122	100	1.2	1.0
Upper South	64	58	83	65	2.1	1.6
Canterbury	55	53	208	164	1.5	1.2
Lower South	50	45	168	103	2.6	1.6
Other	-	-	22	21	-	-
Total	56	52	1,982	1,334	1.7	1.1



Entries to care have decreased across all care and protection regions over the past year

While the rate of entries to care have decreased across sites, there remain differences in rates between sites.

East Coast region experienced the largest decrease in the rate of entries

IN F2019: **3.5** out of 1,000 Tamariki
 IN F2020: **2.2** out of 1,000 Tamariki

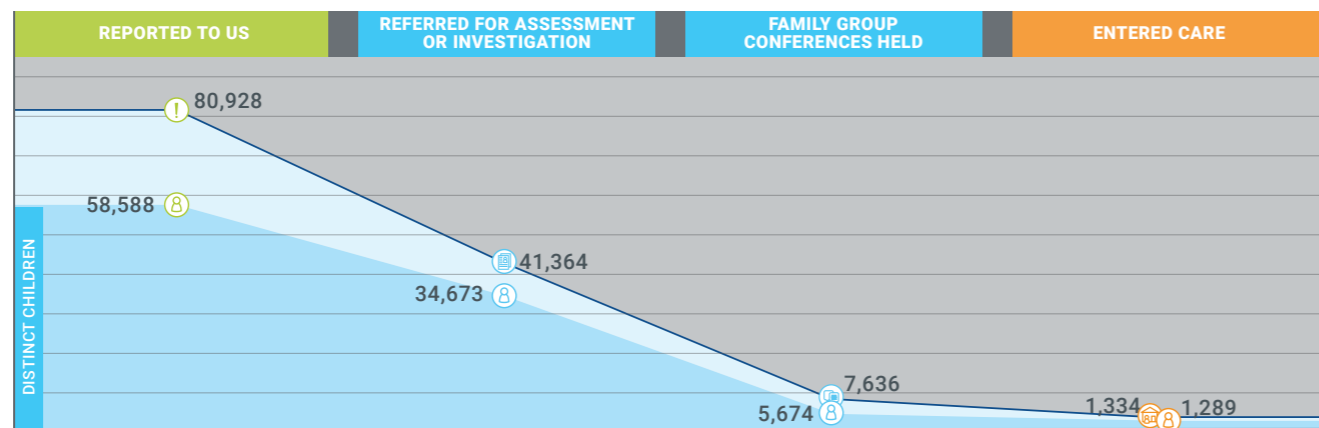
The Lower South and Taranaki-Manawatu regions experienced a similar decrease in the rate of entries

Lower South: IN F2019: **2.6** out of 1,000 Tamariki
 IN F2020: **1.6** out of 1,000 Tamariki
 Taranaki-Manawatu: IN F2019: **2.0** out of 1,000 Tamariki
 IN F2020: **1.0** out of 1,000 Tamariki

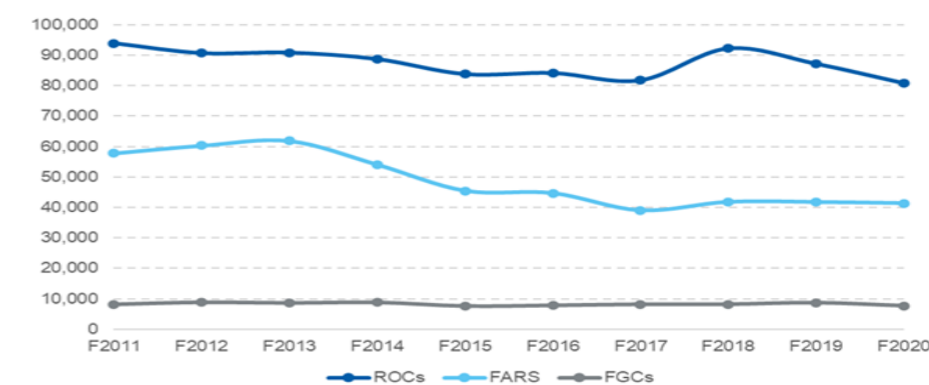
North and West Auckland shows the lowest rate in F2020

IN F2019: **1.1** out of 1,000 Tamariki
 IN F2020: **0.7** out of 1,000 Tamariki

Progression through the care and protection system during F2020



Total Reports of Concern, Assessments and Family Group Conferences by financial year



- Reports of concern have fallen since 2018
- Assessments and Family Group Conferences have remained quite constant since 2018
- Despite the number of assessments and FGCs remaining constant, fewer children are coming into care