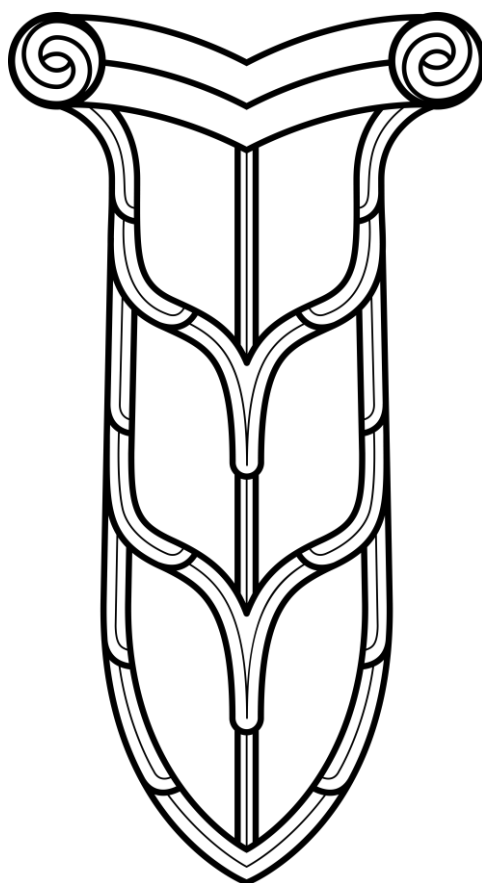




**ORANGA
TAMARIKI**
Ministry for Children



Te Mātātaki 2026: summary



**What tamariki and rangatahi told us
about being in care**

Published: August 2026

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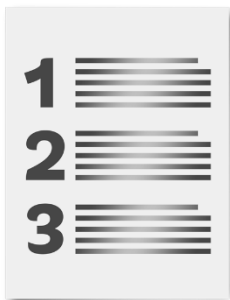
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About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is a **summary** of a report from **Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children** called **Te Mātātaki 2026**.



A summary:

- is shorter than the main document
- tells you the important ideas.



Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children is the part of the Government that takes care of the needs of:

- tamariki / children
- rangatahi / young people.



In this Easy Read **we / us / our** means Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children.



Te Mātātaki 2026 is a report about what we have found out from year 3 of **Te Tohu o te Ora**.



Te Tohu o te Ora is a **survey** we do often to find out about the experiences of tamariki and rangatahi **in care**.



A **survey** is a list of questions used to find out what people think about something.



In care means the tamariki and rangatahi that are being looked after by the Government.



Tamariki and rangatahi in care may live:

- with foster carers / people who look after children in their home for us
- with whānau / family like grandparents
- in a care home / a home where a group of children are cared for by us.



Te Mātātaki 2026 shows we are listening to what tamariki and rangatahi in care have to say.

About the survey



We want to thank everyone who took part in the survey.



We also know there are some people who did not want to / could not take part in the survey.



What you think:

- is important to us
- will support us to make the experiences of tamariki and rangatahi in care better.



The survey ran from September 2024 to May 2025.



Who took part?

Almost half of the tamariki and rangatahi aged 10 to 17 years old in our care were asked if they wanted to do the survey.



Over 9 hundred of them chose to do the survey.

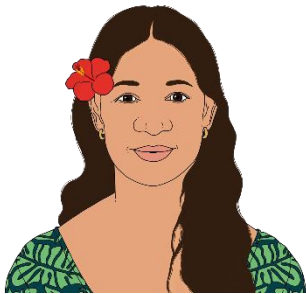


We heard from children and rangatahi who are:

- male / men / boys
- female / women / girls
- another gender like non-binary.

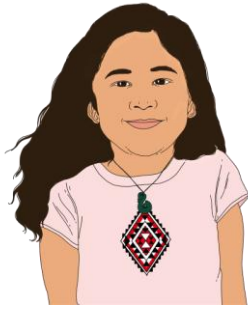


We heard from tamariki and rangatahi from lots of different **ethnicities**.



Ethnicity means your:

- race like:
 - Māori
 - Samoan
 - New Zealand European
- background like whether you:
 - were born in Aotearoa New Zealand
 - moved to Aotearoa New Zealand from another country.



Some of the main ethnicities of the tamariki and rangatahi we heard from were:



- Māori
- New Zealand European
- Samoan
- Cook Islands Māori
- Tongan.





About the questions

We ask the same questions every time we run the survey.



This means we can see if things are getting better.



We added new questions to the survey in year 3 about:

- goals / what tamariki and rangatahi want to do
- identity / how tamariki and rangatahi see themselves
- safety.





We also had 2 places in the survey where tamariki and rangatahi could add their answer in their own words.



We made sure it was safe for tamariki and rangatahi to share what they really think.



Any answers in the survey that showed someone might not be safe were followed up / checked on.

What tamariki and rangatahi told us



A lot of what tamariki and rangatahi told us was **similar** to what we found out in the last 2 surveys.



Similar means something is like something else but it is not the same.



There were more positive / happy answers to some of the questions **compared** to the last 2 surveys.



Compared means to look at the differences between 2 things.



For example you might drink more water today compared to how much water you drank yesterday.



Compared to year 2 of the survey there were more positive answers about tamariki and rangatahi:

- knowing their **whakapapa / ancestry**
- feeling they could talk to their **social worker**.



Whakapapa / ancestry is about knowing your **tupuna / ancestors**.



Tupuna / ancestors are the people in your family who have lived before you.



Here a **social worker** is someone who:

- works for Oranga Tamariki
- supports tamariki and rangatahi in care.



Compared to year 1 of the survey there were more positive answers for tamariki and rangatahi:



- feeling accepted for who they are
- keeping in touch with whānau / family as much as they wanted



- having friends they could talk to
- having chances to learn about their **culture**.



Culture is a way of:

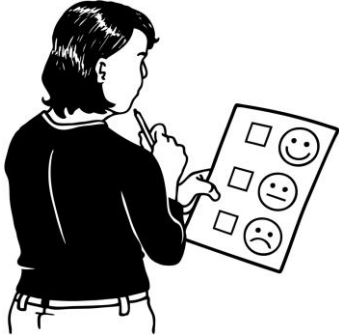
- thinking that a group shares
- doing things as a group.

There are many different cultures in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Some examples of the different cultures are:

- Māori culture
- Pacific culture
- Deaf culture.

Experiences of being in care



Tamariki and rangatahi were asked questions about their experience of being in care.



Most tamariki and rangatahi said:

- the adults they lived with looked after them well all the time
- they felt safe where they lived.



Many tamariki and rangatahi said:

- they had people in their life that loved them no matter what
- the adults they lived with accepted them for who they are
- they felt **settled** where they lived.





Here **settled** means feeling you are:

- comfortable
- relaxed.



Many tamariki and rangatahi said:

- they had a friend / friends they could talk to about anything
- they had somewhere they felt they belonged.



Around half the tamariki and rangatahi said they:

- felt supported to reach their goals
- got to keep in touch with the whānau / family they were born into as much as they wanted





Around half the tamariki and rangatahi said they found it easy to **express their identity**.



Here **identity** is what makes you who you are like:

- your ethnicity
- your language
- what you like / do not like
- the clothes you like to wear.



Identity means different things to different people.



Expressing your identity means all the ways you show who you are.



Around half the tamariki and rangatahi said they got the chance to learn about their culture.



Some tamariki and rangatahi:



- thought they would have a good life when they got older

- said they got to have a say in decisions about their life all the time



- said they knew their whakapapa / family history.

The role of Oranga Tamariki



Tamariki and rangatahi were asked questions about:

- how they got along with their social worker
- if they felt Oranga Tamariki made things better for them.



Around half the tamariki and rangatahi said:

- they felt they could talk to their social worker about their worries
- their social worker did what they said they would do all the time.



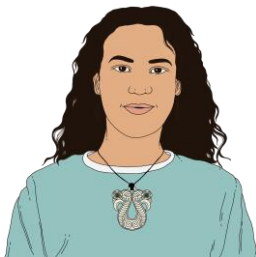
Some tamariki and rangatahi said Oranga Tamariki made things better for them.

Differences across tamariki and rangatahi



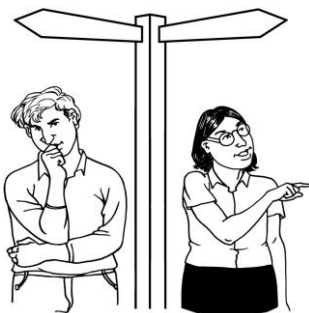
We found sometimes the answers were similar from groups that were the same:

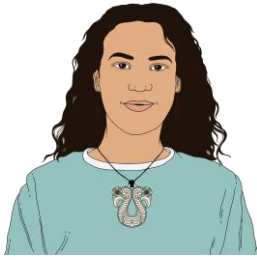
- age
- gender
- ethnicity.



We found that older tamariki and rangatahi were more likely than younger tamariki and rangatahi to say they got to:

- have a say in important choices about their life
- learn about their culture.





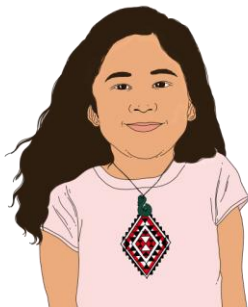
We found that older tamariki and rangatahi were more likely than younger tamariki and rangatahi to say:



- they got to keep in touch with the whānau / family they were born into as much as they liked



- they did not want to keep in touch with the whānau / family they were born into.



We found that younger tamariki and rangatahi were more likely than older tamariki and rangatahi to say that Oranga Tamariki made things better for them.



We found that boys were more likely than girls to say that Oranga Tamariki made things better for them.



Only a small number of tamariki and rangatahi said they were **another gender**.



Another gender means someone is not a:

- boy / man
- girl / woman.

Another gender can be any other gender like:

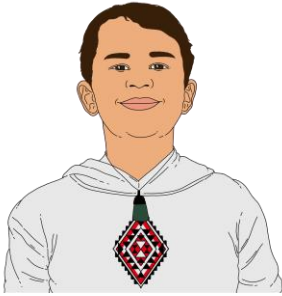
- non-binary
- transgender.



Because they were only a small number it was hard to find out much from what they said.

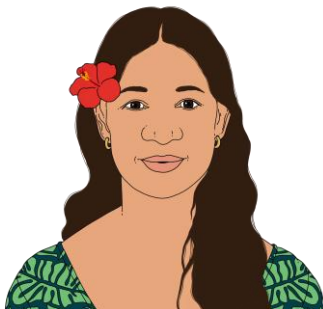


We noticed that many of these tamariki and rangatahi gave answers that were negative / not saying good things.



Tamariki and rangatahi who were more likely to say they got the chance to learn about their culture were:

- Māori
- Pacific peoples.



Tamariki and rangatahi who had at least 1 Pacific ethnicity were more likely to say Oranga Tamariki made things better for them.

In their own words



We added some questions to this survey where tamariki and rangatahi could write what they wanted to tell us.



This part of the Easy Read will tell you what they said to each of those questions.

Do you feel safe where you live now?



2 out of every 10 tamariki and rangatahi who did the survey answered this question with their own thoughts.



They told us about things that made them feel safe.



Things that made them feel safe were living somewhere with no:

- physical violence like being hit
- verbal abuse like being yelled at a lot
- emotional harm like being made to feel bad about themselves.



They also told us about things that made them feel unsafe like:



- changing where they live a lot
- living somewhere for a short time
- missing their whānau / family
- not being accepted for who they are.



Is there anything else you would like to tell us?



2 out of every 10 tamariki and rangatahi who did the survey answered this question with their own thoughts.



Many answers were about different experiences with social workers like:

- being listened too
- the social worker seemed too busy.





Tamariki and rangatahi also wanted to tell us about their rights to:

- contact their whānau / family
- make complaints
- tell us what they think.



Priority areas for action



We have created 4 **priority areas** for action to respond to what tamariki and rangatahi have told us.



Here **priority areas** means things we will look at / do first.



2 of the priority areas are:

- supporting younger tamariki to take part in decisions about their lives
- let more tamariki and rangatahi know about:
 - Transition Support Services
 - how they can be supported as they become adults.





The other 2 priority areas are to:

- make tamariki and rangatahi safer
- support tamariki and rangatahi to have their voices heard more.



We will be doing lots of things to take action in the 4 priority areas.

To support tamariki and rangatahi to be part of making more decisions about their lives our social workers will get more:

- training
- support.





Tamariki and rangatahi will have their voices heard more with new:

- tools
- technology
- ways to tell us what they think.



What they tell us will then be used to support their care needs.



Social workers will be able to better support rangatahi as they grow into adults through:

- new training
- better support for
 - planning
 - sharing information.





We will have a more **accessible**
Report of Concern process for:

- whānau / family
- professionals
- members of the public.



A **Report of Concern** is how anyone
can tell Oranga Tamariki they are
worried about the safety of tamariki.

Here **accessible** means easy for
most people to use.



This will support us to respond to any
worries quickly.



We will create better ways to understand the needs of disabled tamariki and rangatahi in care.



We will also create better ways of recording the needs of disabled tamariki and rangatahi in care.



This will support disabled tamariki and rangatahi by supporting:

- caregivers to know about any disability needs
- us to put the right supports in place.





We will tell more people about:

- Oranga Tamariki Transition Support Services
- **independent advocacy services** from VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai.



Here **independent** means the people who work for VOYCE are not part of Oranga Tamariki.

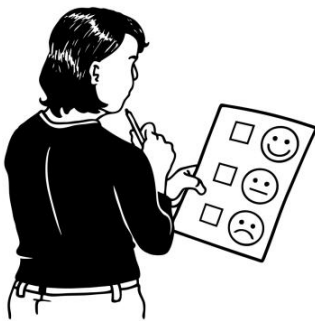


Advocacy services are a group of people who stand up for the rights of other people.



We will offer more ways for tamariki and rangatahi in care to:

- let us know if they are worried about something
- tell us what they think
- ask for advocacy services.



We will keep running Te Tohu o te Ora so we can hear from tamariki and rangatahi about their experiences in care.

Contact us



You can contact Oranga Tamariki:



- through our website at:

www.ot.govt.nz



This website is not in Easy Read

- by **email** at:

contact@ot.govt.nz



- by **phone** on:

0508 326 459





Our phone number will not cost you any money to call.



You can call us at any time.

Our phone lines are open all the time.



You can contact **VOYCE Whakarongo Mai**

- through their website at:

www.voyce.org.nz



This website is **not** in Easy Read.



- by **phone** on:

0800 486 923



You can also contact **VOYCE Whakarongo Mai** by email at:

contactus@voyce.org.nz



You can contact the **Transition Assistance helpline**:



- by email at:

transitionsupport@ot.govt.nz



- by phone on:

0800 55 89 89



This phone number will not cost you any money to call.



You can call them at any time.



This information has been written by Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children.



It has been translated into Easy Read with advice from the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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