



**ORANGA
TAMARIKI**
Ministry for Children

KEEPING TAMARIKI SAFE

How you can help





We all have a part to play in keeping tamariki safe and helping their parents to provide safe, stable and loving homes.

There are lots of things you can do to help children and their whānau when times are tough or things go wrong.

This brochure has some ideas about what you can do and where to go if you're worried that something's wrong.

Contact
Oranga Tamariki—
Ministry for Children
0508 326 459
contact@ot.govt.nz

Raising tamariki is a big job, and no one can do it on their own.

You could do a lot to help a struggling parent by doing simple things like offering practical help and being there to listen and reassure.

In the early years before tamariki start school, it's easy for their parents to become isolated and for problems to go unnoticed.

The more we look out for tamariki, the safer they'll be. So are you willing to be an extra pair of eyes, looking out for tamariki? If you can't help, do you know someone who can?

HOW CAN I HELP?

It can be hard to offer help without looking as if you're butting in, or stirring up trouble.

But remember, it's even harder to ask for help. Tamariki might be unable to speak up for themselves, and the people involved may be too ashamed, distressed or caught up to approach you. You might have to make the first move.

Offer a helping hand

"When I first got the kids, my best mate's wife came over without me asking and just helped me out with cooking and other stuff I didn't know. I ring her quite often now with questions."

Dad

Share the load

"As parents we all have different needs. My friend down the road is a single mother, so we take her boy every Wednesday, just to give her some time out. She helps us out by looking after my girl when we're working."

Mum

Provide practical help

"We help each other in little ways, like giving our friends' kids lifts and sharing transport, and inviting them to fish'n'chips nights and family meals. That way the kids get to interact, and the parents get some adult time to talk."

Dad

Listen, listen, listen

"The main thing I need as a mum is just someone who is there for me when I need help, and someone to listen to me so I can talk things out. You don't always want to be told how to do things either; sometimes you just need someone who understands."

Mum

Support and encourage

"Honestly, the best thing for me was one time I was so stressed out, and my mum said to me, 'You're doing a great job, you're a great mum'. That meant the world to me."

Mum

WHAT IF I THINK SOMETHING'S WRONG?

If you're worried about a child, a young person, a parent or whānau, you might be unsure what to do about it. Perhaps you've tried to help but have been turned away?

In these situations, it's important that you trust your instincts and speak up.

- You could ask for information and advice from one of the many organisations that specialise in whānau and parenting issues. These include Family Start, Family Works, Stand, Barnardos and Parents Centres New Zealand.
- If you're worried about the safety of a child or young person, or think they're being harmed or abused, **call us on 0508 326 459**.
- We'll work with the whānau to resolve any issues and make sure they get the help and support they might need to provide a safe, stable and loving home.

If you know that a child or young person is in immediate danger, call the Police on 111.

Remember, we all have a part to play in keeping tamariki safe. If the problem's serious it will likely continue – or even get worse – until someone speaks up.

Trust your instincts, be brave and tell someone.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CALL ORANGA TAMARIKI?

1. When you call us you'll talk directly with a social worker. They'll ask you to describe what's going on with the tamariki or whānau you're worried about.
2. They'll look into the situation, find out what may be happening, and decide whether they need to work with the whānau or put them in touch with people in their community who can help.
3. If the social worker thinks the tamariki may be in immediate danger, we'll act straight away. However, it can take a while to assess a problem and find the right solution.

You can ask the social worker to keep the details of your call confidential.

The more details you can provide, the more the social worker will be able to help.



OTHER ORGANISATIONS THAT CAN HELP

Here are some other places you could go to for help and advice if you're worried about a child, a young person or whānau.

Barnardos for child and family services:
0800 BARNARDOS
(0800 227 627),
www.barnardos.org.nz

Barnardos for childcare:
0800 Kidstart
(0800 543 782),
www.kidstart.co.nz

Plunketline – 24-hour help with any parenting issues for children under five:
0800 933 922.

Healthline – 24-hour health advice:
0800 611 116.