



MANAAKITIA A TĀTOU TAMARIKI

**Children's
Commissioner**

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For immediate release

Well Child/Tamariki Ora review welcomed by Children's Commissioner

The Children's Commissioner hopes the review of Well Child/Tamariki Ora announced this week will make the programme one of the best things we do for kiwi kids.

"I welcome this review because the Well Child/Tamariki Ora programme is very important in our children's and families' lives," Children's Commissioner Andrew Becroft says.

The Well Child/Tamariki Ora programme is a series of health assessments and support services for children and their families from birth to five years.

"I've been talking about the impact of early intervention for decades now. This assessment programme allows for constructive and positive intervention at the earliest stages of a child's life," the Commissioner says.

"But it needs to get to every New Zealand child. This could be the best thing we do for children in New Zealand."

"It is a key way that our children and families access support for development and learning before major problems arise," the Commissioner says.

All children and families need to be able to access this service in ways that work for them, and through staff and processes they feel comfortable with. The programme enables families to build relationships with child development experts who can support them to provide the best start for their children.

"Even though the programme is working well at the moment, I think we can do even better," Commissioner Becroft says.

"And this review will help that. I applaud the partnership with Māori that the Ministry of Health intends to take.

"Over 95% of families have some involvement in the programme at some time, but it is very important that this review focuses on bringing this number to 100%," Commissioner Becroft says.

"The children who are currently missing out may be the children who need the most support."

The Children's Commissioner encourages the Ministry to carefully consider what kind of support should be provided through the programme.

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“I am very pleased that the Ministry is working with the Ministry of Education and the education sector in this review as I would like to see more joined-up services in child development,” he says.

“The education and health sectors have complementary skills and services but work towards the same goal: making New Zealand the best place for children.”

ENDS

About the Office of the Children’s Commissioner

The Children’s Commissioner is an Independent Crown Entity, appointed by the Governor-General, carrying out responsibilities and functions set out in the Children’s Commissioner Act 2003. The Children’s Commissioner has a range of statutory powers to promote the rights, health, welfare, and wellbeing of children and young people from 0 to 18 years. These functions are undertaken through advocacy, public awareness, consultation, research, and investigations and monitoring. The role includes specific functions in respect of monitoring activities completed under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989. The Children’s Commissioner also undertakes systemic advocacy functions and investigates particular issues with potential to threaten the health, safety, or wellbeing of children and young people. The Children’s Commissioner has a particular responsibility to raise awareness and understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Children’s Commissioner’s activities must comply with the relevant provisions of the Public Finance Act 1989, Crown Entities Act 2004 and any other relevant legislation.