



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

4 March 2013 – For immediate release

### **New Deputy Children's Commissioner welcomed**

Children's Commissioner Dr Russell Wills today welcomed Dr Justine Cornwall as the new Deputy Children's Commissioner.

"I am delighted to have Dr Cornwall as my Deputy. Her background in Public Policy, combined with her extensive work with NGOs on Family Violence and victims' rights issues will be a huge asset to the work that we do," says Dr Wills.

"Dr Cornwall has extensive leadership, policy and research and evaluation experience from across the Government sector. She comes to the Office of the Children's Commissioner from the State Services Commission where she was a Senior Manager in the Sector and Agency Performance Group.

"Previously she has worked at the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Development and brings a wealth of experience related to children, young people and families.

"She has worked extensively within the Family Violence sector. While at the Ministry of Justice she led a review of the Domestic Violence Act, a review the Victims' Rights Act and the development of services for Victims of Crime.

"As part of the Taskforce on Sexual Violence she supported work to address the needs of sexual violence victims, and a project looking at how to better support child witnesses in the courts. Dr Cornwall also led the first phase of the review of the Family Court.

"She was awarded a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Victoria University of Wellington.

"Dr Cornwall's skills and networks will be invaluable in her role as Deputy Children's Commissioner and are a perfect complement to my skills and networks in health and child protection," says Dr Wills.

Dr Cornwall's appointment as Deputy Children's Commissioner is for 3½ years to coincide with the Children's Commissioner's tenure. Dr Cornwall replaces Dr Jo Cribb who was appointed Chief Executive for the Ministry of Women's Affairs in November last year.

The Deputy Children's Commissioner was created in 2011 following the part-time appointment of Dr Russell Wills who continues his work as a paediatrician at Hawke's Bay DHB while fulfilling his roles as Children's Commissioner.

Ends

For further information or to talk to the Children's Commissioner, Dr Russell Wills, please contact Victoria Parsons, Principal Communications Advisor **027 696 5101**