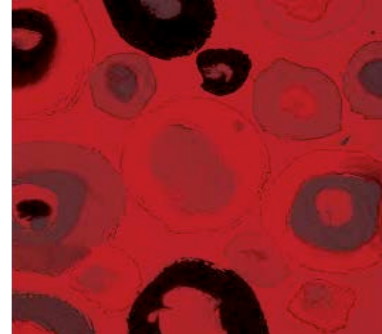




MANAAKITIA A TĀTOU TAMARIKI

**Children's
Commissioner**



Media release – Budget 2017 provides more assurance for kids in care

25 May 2017

More funding for independent monitoring has been hailed by the Children's Commissioner as a significant step forward for children in the care and protection and youth justice systems.

The Government has provided an increase of \$0.5 million in Budget 2017, which will help cover up to 6.4 full-time staff positions for the 2017/18 year.

"This will allow us to increase our independent monitoring and provide greater assurance of the safety and wellbeing of young people in Oranga Tamariki residences", said Judge Andrew Becroft.

"We identified the need for increased monitoring and inspections in our recent State of Care 2017 report. It is very reassuring that this call has been heeded.

"We will be visiting residences, homes and sites more often, giving us more opportunities to listen to the experiences of children and young people in care and to help improve the services they receive.

"Oranga Tamariki is at the start of a 3-5 year journey to transform the lives of children in state care. We look forward to continuing our dialogue with them and providing independent input as they build a world-leading service with the needs of children and young people at its heart.

"We will also be able to increase our work in encouraging government agencies and NGOs to be more child-centred, to emphasise the need to achieve better outcomes for tamariki Maori, and to continue to highlight the major issues facing New Zealand's children.

"We will be recruiting very shortly for the additional roles and will be seeking the best quality staff and investigators experienced in children's rights, interests and welfare.

"This will help us better serve the 5,200 children currently in care and in youth justice residences, to help ensure that they are secure, safe and thriving."

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.

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