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Appointment of Assistant Māori Commissioner for Children

Children's Commissioner Andrew Becroft has today announced the appointment of Glenis Philip-Barbara as Assistant Māori Commissioner for Children.

Ms Philip-Barbara, (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Uepōhatu, Clan McDonald) is an experienced senior leader and the first person to be appointed to the newly-created position of Assistant Māori Commissioner. The role starts on November 3.

"It is an absolute honour to step into this leadership partnership with Andrew Becroft," Glenis Philip-Barbara says.

"It acknowledges the importance of Te Tiriti in practice through its very existence and holds as precious the right of tamariki Māori to live as Māori, free from racism in all its forms.

"Our tamariki and mokopuna deserve the very best life that we, as their trusted adults, can give them. This includes ensuring that every tamaiti, every child, has a safe and trusted whānau who will guide and love them, and ensure that their inherent mana is understood, protected and respected.

"Understanding the extent to which this principle is prioritised, appropriately funded and is working successfully for tamariki and whānau in policy and practice is something I want to understand immediately."

Ms Philip-Barbara's appointment is an attempt to build a genuine partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the Office of the Children's Commissioner, Judge Becroft says.

"This is an incredibly important appointment, for tamariki Māori, and for the Office in our own Te Tiriti o Waitangi journey.

"Both Glenis and I share the same ambition for all Aotearoa New Zealand's 1.23 million children and young people, including the 25 percent who are Māori. We want them all to flourish and thrive within their families and whanau and to play an active role in all aspects of community life.

"Glenis will offer a terrific and energetic perspective as a mother of seven, including three whāngai children, a community advocate and a former senior public service leader. She has incredible experience working with children and young people.

"I know she will be constructive, but also she won't flinch from challenge, or the need to speak courageously.

"Although I hope future structures will include a Co-Commissioner for Māori in the Office, the most senior appointment I was able to make at this time was that of Assistant Commissioner.

"There is huge potential for this role to play a pivotal part in building the best future possible for tamariki and rangatahi Māori, indeed for all young people in Aotearoa New Zealand," Judge Becroft says.

ENDS

Media, please note, Glenis Philip-Barbara will be in Wellington on Wednesday and available for interviews.

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