



Proactive Release

Submissions on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

August 2019

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has released the following submission received during its public consultation on the child and youth wellbeing strategy.

Some of the information contained within this release is considered to not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

- Where this is the case, the information has been withheld, and the relevant section of the Act that would apply, has been identified.
- Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

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- **9(2)a** – Section 9(2)(a): to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

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Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Submission

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Organisation Name:	Anglican Action
Organisation description: (tell us about your organisation – i.e. who do you represent? How many members do you have? Are you a local or national organisation?)	<p>Anglican Action is a Kirikiriroa-Hamilton based community sector NGO that has been operating for over 20 years. Anglican Action is committed to ‘Justice Through Service’ and working with people ‘on the margins’.</p> <p>The views in this submission have been compiled from 3 teams within Anglican Action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Justice- 14-17 years old, involved in offending often with significant trauma and social disadvantage. • Kids First Whanau Centre- a 6 month intensive residential parenting program for mothers of children aged 0-3 years. • The Hamilton Children’s Team Lead Professional- working with young people aged 0-18years with multiple, complex, unmet needs.
Executive Summary: (Please provide a short summary of the key points of your Submission - 200 words)	<p>Anglican Action is supportive of the strategy and wish to commend the Government for taking the initiative to develop an ambitious vision for our children.</p> <p>The children and young people we work with are all living with a litany of impacts from disrupted development. They live complex lives that include traumatic experiences, often without the opportunity for healing. Resource deprivation compounds and perpetuates these difficulties.</p> <p>It is for this reason that Anglican Action believes there is an urgent need to prioritise children and young people’s wellbeing. Consequently, of central importance to the success of this strategy is the question of how it will be operationalised, measured and resourced in order to be fully achieved. Aligned with this, Anglican Action recommends implementing a ‘child wellbeing impact statement’ that requires all Government policies to account for the impact on children.</p>

Further points:

Due to the complexity of issues facing children in New Zealand, we believe that an important tool to support the implementation of the strategy is to require a ‘child wellbeing impact statement’ for all



legislation and policy changes across the whole of Government. Children must be taken into account when considering tenancy laws, employment laws, environmental protections, te tiriti, changes in funding criteria for ministry of health programs and services, welfare reform, prison reform and so on. Only then can the interests of children be truly prioritized and integrated within the core functions of Government and the strategy achieved at all levels of New Zealand society.

In order to achieve the vision in this strategy, we believe Government and civil society need to create a bi-partisan climate of political patience to allow the children effected by this strategy to grow up before expecting to see results. In order to make an intergenerational difference, the first generation benefitting from the strategy need to be allowed to reach adulthood in a stable political and funding environment.

It is unclear if the strategy adequately addresses issues of inequality, with some children growing up severely disadvantaged. It is also unclear if, or how, the impacts of intergenerational trauma will be addressed. There is great potential within the priorities and vision to share power with marginalized groups and to comprehensively address issues of inequality and intergenerational trauma, the key lies in how these ambitions will be measured. At what point will the vision and priorities be considered fulfilled?

We encourage you to continue being ambitious and bold, and to fully enact the 16 priorities identified. To truly make New Zealand the best place in the world for children, it is essential that structural components of social, cultural, economic and political disadvantage are addressed together with the individual and family level factors that cause developmental disruptions and reduce wellbeing.

Pertaining to priorities 14 and 15, we strongly commend the focus on the early years of a child's life. We believe there is a disproportionate availability of funding being directed to the mid-late teenage years, which is less effective than spending money on the first 1000 days. Further, we are concerned about the financial incentives that push parents to enrol very young children into Early Childhood Education, particularly when compared to the lack of financial support for families to remain at home with their kids. Rostering responsibilities such as nappies, sleep, bottles, within early childhood centres needs to be made illegal as it disrupts the child's ability to form a secure attachment; the primary care model needs to be implemented and comes at no greater staffing cost. Neuroscience evidence regarding child and adolescent development needs to be implemented at all levels of Government policy. These aspects must be addressed in order to achieve all the priorities, though most particularly priorities 10 to 16. We believe that directing funding towards the early years, will, in time, reduce the level of government spending required for correctional programs, homelessness, mental health interventions and so on.

Anglican Action is very supportive of the vision, strategy and direction for comprehensively addressing the needs of children and considers this piece of work the most urgent for the long term wellbeing of Aotearoa. . It has been said that a society is judged by the way in which it treats its most vulnerable members – in this case children. New Zealand's record to date has been less than enviable, with a significant number of children in New Zealand living in poverty. The strategy represents a means to create wellbeing and wellness for children. It is to be hoped that the strategy will soon be implemented.