



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.

Key to redaction codes and their reference to sections of the Act:

- **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 Template

This document is intended for individuals or groups who wish to make a formal submission on the child and youth wellbeing strategy.

Please complete this template and email it to: childandyouthwellbeing@dpmc.govt.nz

A guide to making a submission is available on the DPMC website <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/child-and-youth-wellbeing-strategy>

Submissions will close on **Wednesday 5 December**.

Please provide details for a contact person in case we have some follow up questions.

Contact Name:	9(2)(a)
Email Address:	
Phone Number:	
Organisation Name:	[Please include if you are submitting on behalf of an organisation]
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?)	9(2)(a) 9(2)(a) I'm also a parent of two adolescents, and am connected to different community organisations. 9(2)(a) and am a teacher and teacher trainer by profession. I have written this from these perspectives.
Executive Summary: (Please provide a short summary of the key points of your Submission - 200 words)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Need a Focus on effects of technology, internet, social media and gaming under addictions, role in developing sense of self and socialisation, access and inequality. ➤ Need a focus on arts and culture (music, theatre, visual arts, etc., sport) and Maori arts (kapa Haka, carving, waiata) in developing a sense of belonging. ➤ Importance of volunteering and civic engagement in fostering sense of belonging. ➤ Role of School needs to be emphasized, (social hub, key role models other than parents). ➤ Recognise issues that have to do with family and inequality and that addressing these things will improve outcomes for children. ➤ Recognise the importance of addressing learning difficulties as a lot of these kids fall out of education.

Submission Content

I support the Auckland Council submission with the following additions:

According to the census the demographic of Waiheke is predominantly Pakeha but 18% identify as Māori which is one of the highest % of Māori in Auckland communities. Child and adult poverty are an issue for some of our community (not only Maori) and is masked by the fact Waiheke is seen as a desirable residential and holiday location by people who are in higher socio-economic bracket. This can be seen in the fact that the median income of under \$20,000 is reported for 36% of the Waiheke population in the last census, yet we have a decile 7 school. Children who shower at the sports park to save water or because their housing situation is inadequate, go to school with kids whose parents have swimming pools.

I welcome this focus on children and would just like to make sure that we connect these issues with things that affect adults. Child issues should not be separated from family issues (median income, disposable income, housing affordability, access to transportation, healthcare, sport and activities which foster wellbeing such as sport and the arts).

I support the bill and the Auckland Council submission with the following comments.

I particularly support points 18 and 19 of the Auckland Submission which affect our Waiheke youth who are leaving school without qualifications but for whom the time, cost, distance and unfamiliarity with Auckland mean they are not taking up opportunities to work and study and fall between the cracks.

I support Point 20 in terms of harm reduction and feel that online gaming and social media should be included in addictive behaviours that require attention for some of our young people. I think parents of digital natives are caught by surprise at the level of internet and gaming use.

I'd also like a stronger focus on Māori performing arts as fostering a sense of place and belonging. The importance of theatre, visual arts, digital arts and music in fostering social comment and sense of identity are also very important. These should be provided through school or cheaply as cost, particularly for young people, is a barrier to participation.

In terms of the framework generally I have the following comments:

Young people make positive choices about alcohol, drugs, sexual relationships and avoid criminal offending should be under *Happy and healthy* in the outcomes framework.

ADHD, learning difficulties should be added to *Happy and Healthy* as a lot of children who fall through the cracks do so because their learning differences are not understood or recognised.

In *belong contribute and valued* the importance of school and education in providing a sense of belonging should be emphasized. School has the potential to be a stabilising and inclusive environment for kids and we need to recognise the importance of the school environment in fostering skills, how to be a responsible and engaged citizen who takes an interest in civic and environmental life, learns socialisation skills, have the opportunity to learn about the world beyond the simple instrumental need to prepare for future learning. **Schools should be included as a separate item** as schools are often the social hub of

communities and have a leadership role to play in this space. When things go wrong for a child (often due to things outside school), the school has a role in working positively with community agencies, advocating for the child, and generally providing positive role models. It's really important that this role of schools is recognised and **resourced, rather than just assumed to be part of the school's role.**

At the same time, the schools need to understand this role and be limited in their ability to exclude children. This has a very damaging effect on kids who then have no community anchoring point if their home life is inadequate and access to other education or job resources is inaccessible (due to age of child, cost or distance) as is the case on Waiheke and other rural communities where the cost of going to another school or education facility can be prohibitive.

There also needs to be a better equipped safety net to deal with kids who are excluded. We have a number of kids wandering around the island in the 15 to 19 age group, who are neither in school nor working, some have addiction problems, show up on the police radar for vandalism or theft or end up as attempted suicide or suicide statistics.

Specific examples: This year, the local high school has excluded a number of kids. These have ended up in town schools and commuting, locating to a different part of NZ to be with extended family, or enrolled in correspondence school. Many who go to town stop attending as the commute is between an hour and an hour and half per day, often at a cost of over \$20 a day for ferries and trains. Those who are with extended family can be unhappy and feel dislocated from their homes, and those that are at correspondence school fail to keep up as they are on their own trying to make sense of the paperwork. This situation would be comparable to many schools in isolated areas, which have an added responsibility to their students than schools in a location where there is greater choice.

The school is also the place where learning difficulties are picked up and addressed. At the moment **the funding for support of learning difficulties is completely inadequate.** It seems that a lot of these kids may end up not finishing school, not go into education and training.

I am also concerned about Education and online learning need to be addressed. Who is driving the online learning model? Is there a separation between technology providers, software and teacher/curriculum development. From what I can see technology providers such as Apple are driving the takeup of technology within schools with often poorly understood benefits.

Technology is a tool, just like a pen and paper, but I am increasingly seen it used as a mechanism to reduce learning opportunities by mediating everything through a screen.

This is of concern as a) retention and understanding of online material is more difficult.

b) inequality in accessing technology is poorly understood (hardware, software and internet connectivity)

c) There is little work on the effects on the individual's sense of self when their world is increasingly mediated or the effect of being constantly on screen both in school time and

at home. What does it mean for the quality of social interaction, engagement with other practical activities, ability to write using a pen, free time activity choices?

So generally a focus on technology both in terms of education and addiction.

In terms of specific points raised in the Consultation document presented to Auckland Council:

1. What would make this real for you?

A connection between this and other legislation, support for families so life stresses on children are managed, better resourcing of schools for learning difficulties, extracurricular activities, better recognition of schools as the hub of a child's life and support/change of culture/policy direction for schools to recognise this.

In terms of local government, halls should be able to be accessed at low cost or free for children's activities. The Waiheke Local Board has just given the lease of one of it's community halls to a youth organisation to provide activities for young people.

I would be happy to answer any questions or discuss any of the issues further.

Kind regards

9(2)(a)

Please note that your submission will become official information. This means that the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet may be required to release all or part of the information contained in your submission in response to a request under the Official Information Act 1982.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet may withhold all or parts of your submission if it is necessary to protect your privacy or if it has been supplied subject to an obligation of confidence.

Please tell us if you don't want all or specific parts of your submission released, and the reasons why. Your views will be taken into account in deciding whether to withhold or release any information requested under the Official Information Act and in deciding if, and how, to refer to your submission in any possible subsequent paper prepared by the Department.