



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.

An external party holds copyright on this material and therefore its re-use cannot be licensed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.



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?)	I am representing my family, not an organisation
Executive Summary: (Please provide a short summary of the key points of your Submission - 200 words)	I would like to submit a summary of my observations on how the systems we have in NZ Government agencies have worked for me. I have had quite a few problems with my teenage son and have had many interactions with agencies over the last 2 years.

Submission Content

Back ground

My teenage son showed signs of going off the rails when he was around 13 years of age. At this stage I tried to get help and called Police Youth Aid, and CYF, to see if there was any help available. They were not able to help other than refer me to several Community agencies. Both the police and CYF told me that because my son was not in the system they were not in a position to assist.

It wasnt long before he started taking drugs, being suspended from school, running away from home coming to the notice of police and offending. We ended up at numerous family group conferences.

These conferences ended with plans etc.

When my son got to the age of 16 he was in bad shape and self harmed several time to the point where he stabbed himself in the arm and had to be admitted to hospital and operated on to stop the bleeding. He was very lucky to survive this.

9(2)(a)

Observations.

I believe the system we have in NZ dealing with our children and YP is fraught with inadequacies. Its not necessarily the staff in these government departments it goes deeper than that and shows that the system we have is failing our families yp and children. The staff can only do what they are legally charged with doing.

E.g. Police Youth Aid. The name is of this agency does not reflect what it is set up to do. It implies that it is involved with aiding and supporting our youth. In reality it is not. It is there to make sure the young persons or child is held accountatble for the wrong he/she has done. Oranga Tamariki again does not provide assistance for our troubled young people. It only takes the family and young people on a process that once aging holds the young persons accountable. The plans that they put in place from these conferences are very limited in what they can achieve as many of our communities do not have the Community agencies or government support services to cope with the problems. Child Adolescent Family Service has a threshold that is so high our young persons can only get seen if something serious has been done like attempted suicide or harm to someone else.

In my particular case my son was on a downward slide and didnt want to change. He had a large supportive whanau but didnt want their help. He showed signs that he only wanted to do his own thing. However even being held accountable took so long in the meantime lots of damage had been done. Proper mental asesments wernt done to accurately diagnos his mental state.

Suggestions

We need to be honest in what we call our agencies. There is a big disconnect between what we call them and what they are actually set up to do e.g. Police Youth Aid, Oranga Tamariki/CYS

I agree that young people need to be accountable but the governeemnt agencies should be transparent about why they exist and clearly communicate this to our families and young people. For example Youth Aid si not there to provide aid for young people. Police arrest young people and ensure they go to court etc. I dont

have a problem with their role but lets be more honest about what the message is that we are sending.

Family Group Conferences from my perspective do not acheive outcomes that are beneficial to our familes or communities. I wonder if these ever get evaluated to check out the success rate in terms of reducing youth crime, making sure the young person gets the required and necessary help, etc.

There needs to be a set of 2 pronged services in Government. One that looks at the accountability side of a young persons offending, the other that can provide the Professional and practical support when needed. This support needs to be available at the early stage of a young persons slipping off the rails not when he/she has completed gone off the rails.

Communities via Community agencies need to be properly resourced so that services are available to families and young people when needed. Many of our Community services are under resourced and have long waiting lists. The help is just not available when most needed.

Our mental health system for young people is not working. CAFFS is not able to provled anywhere close to the services that are needed. We have a large number of our young committing suicide and coping with other serious mental illnesses. The help is not available.

We as a country are spending millions of dollars on a system that is set up in silos, not communicating and not delivering. This is evidenced by statistics that show our appalling mental illness/suicide rates for young people, our drop out rates in schools and offending rates.\ etc.

Surely there must be a better way to use the funds that have been committed to assisting our families and young people. There just has to be a more efficient way to use the money that is utilised by the government.

Name changes wont change this. The government needs to take a long look at what is happening currently and ensure that families and young people are getting the support and asistance necessary.

Thank you for the opportunity to put in a submission on this matter.

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.