



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:	Sarah Colcord
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Phone Number:	09 262 5402
Organisation Name:	Manurewa Local Board
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>The Manurewa Local Board is the statutory body that represents the communities of Manurewa, Wattle Downs, Weymouth, Clendon, Wiri, Totara Heights, The Gardens, Randwick Park, and parts of Alfriston. It is one of 21 local boards that sits within Auckland Council.</p> <p>Approximately 82,000 people live in the Manurewa Local Board area. 43% are aged 25 years and under. The population is ethnically diverse, with 37% European, 33% Pacific Peoples, 25% Maori, and 20% Asian.</p>
Executive Summary: (Please provide a short summary of the key points of your Submission - 200 words)	<p>The Manurewa Local Board supports the ambitious, aspirational vision of the proposed framework.</p> <p>There will be a need for a holistic approach to implementing this strategy across a number of sectors, including local government.</p> <p>Given the contribution that local government will be expected to make to the implementation, thought will need to be given to the opportunities for collaboration with central government and whether current levels of resourcing are adequate.</p> <p>Specific feedback on the proposed domains, outcomes and focus areas has been included.</p>

Submission Content

The proposed vision statement and the strategy as a whole

1. The board supports the vision set out in the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. It is ambitious and sets high aspirations to reach for, but this is necessary to overcome the severe levels of poverty and deprivation that currently exist.
2. The strategy will only be successful if it is supported by a robust implementation plan, and an evaluation framework that sets out measurable targets to be monitored and regularly reported on.
3. Implementation of the strategy will require a holistic approach across a range of government departments and agencies, NGOs and more. This presents a number of challenges to overcome, particularly in the area of information sharing.
4. The focus of the strategy should be on reducing inequities, not just inequality.
5. The proposed outcomes framework should be clearer about the role that local government will be expected to play, and how this will be supported and resourced.
6. One of the principles which is proposed as underpinning the strategy is “the rights contained in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child”. However, there is little reference to the rights of children in the proposed outcomes framework.
7. Similarly, the principle of recognising the importance of the Treaty of Waitangi and the Crown-Māori partnership should be carried through more strongly throughout the framework.
8. The links between the wellbeing domains, desired outcomes, and proposed focus areas could be better developed. As it is currently written, phrases and concepts used in the desired outcomes are not always carried through into the proposed focus areas. We have identified some examples of this in the domain-specific feedback below.
9. It would be useful to include more information on the legal status of the outcomes framework. For example, is it something that a child or young person could use to support a complaint if they are not happy with their treatment by a government agency?

Feedback on the proposed wellbeing domains, outcomes and focus areas

Domain 1

10. We support the focus on ensuring that families are able to spend time together, and note that this requires measures to address parents having to spend long hours at work in order to provide for the family.
11. Support for children and young people to recognise and speak out about abuse should be included under focus area 1. If we want children and young people to be free of abuse, they need to be empowered to speak out when they encounter it.
12. The language used in focus area 1 should be broadened to explicitly include children and young people who are not being cared for by families or whānau, such as those in foster care or state care.
13. The focus area around bullying in schools should be widened by using the broader term “victimisation”, which is used in the desired outcome above. We also suggest that the language used here should be stronger – that bullying should be “resolved” or “prevented” rather than merely “addressed”.
14. It should also be noted in this focus area that teachers need to be supported to resolve and prevent bullying issues in schools. Teachers are the most regular, and most trusted, point of contact for students, and the key role they play in identifying and resolving these issues needs to be recognised.
15. Under focus area 3, the need for the community to create safe spaces for positive peer interactions to take place should be noted.

Domain 2

16. We support the focus on affordable, quality housing and reduction of child poverty. Improvement in these areas will be fundamental to ensuring the wellbeing of children and young people.
17. Provision of community facilities and infrastructure, as mentioned in focus area 4, will be one of the key areas for local government to contribute to this framework. We would encourage you to think about how central and local government can work together to achieve this, and whether current levels of resourcing for local government are adequate.
18. We feel that the language used in focus area 6 – “influence the way they get support” is vague and risks being tokenistic. It would be better to state that they should have a meaningful choice of options in the way they receive support.

Domain 3

19. The language used in the desired outcomes regarding supporting age-appropriate decision making should be carried through to the focus areas. It is important that children and young people are not being forced to grow up too soon and make decisions or take responsibilities that should be made by adults.
20. In focus area 7, freedom from discrimination on the grounds of sexuality and gender identity should be explicitly stated alongside ethnicity and disability. These are significant areas of discrimination and victimisation and their importance should be recognised by being explicitly stated rather than included under the catch-all “for any other reason”.
21. We support the promotion of Te Ao Māori and Te Reo Māori in focus area 8, and suggest that greater use of Te Reo Māori in the framework itself would show a commitment to this principle.
22. We feel that focus area 9 should be more explicit about the expectation for how children and young people will be able to influence issues of environmental importance. We suggest adding that children and young people have the right to have their voices heard on these topics.
23. We suggest that, rather than stating that children and young people “participate in decisions” under this focus area, the framework should say that they have the opportunity to participate. We cannot ensure that everyone will participate in decision making, we can only ensure they have the opportunity to do so.

Domain 4

24. We support the desired outcome that children and young people are supported to express themselves creatively, and would like to see this language brought through into the focus areas under this domain, as it does not currently seem to be reflected there.
25. Providing environments for physical activity will be another area where local government will be expected to make a large contribution to the framework. Again, this needs to be looked at in terms of what support and resources will be available to ensure local government is able to fulfil these expectations.
26. We would like to see focus area 13 put more emphasis on preventing offending or negative behaviour rather than dealing with its consequences. There should be reference to strengths based and youth development based approaches to this.

27. We would also like to see reference here to alternative methods for resolving offending and negative behaviour by children and young people, such as community rehabilitation or rangatahi courts at marae.

Domain 5

28. We are concerned that using the phrase “positive choices” around pregnancy in focus area 14 implies a judgement on the part of the state as to the correct or incorrect way to have a family. We would prefer to see reference to making “educated /informed choices”.

29. Domain 2 makes reference to support for young people to be in education or training, but the language used in focus area 16 implies that education is the only option supported. We would like to see this broadened to acknowledge that other forms of training, such as vocational training, also contribute to achieving the desired outcome.

30. We would also like to see the language in this focus area broadened to include more creative educational concepts such as social enterprise and innovation approaches.

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.