



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:	Yes, on behalf of OTNZ-WNA.
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>Occupational therapy New Zealand – Whakaora Ngangahau Aotearoa (OTNZ-WNA).</p> <p>OTNZ-WNA is the professional association that represents occupational therapy/whakaora ngangahau in Aotearoa New Zealand. There are approximately 1200 occupational therapists who are paid members of the association.</p> <p>The mission of OTNZ-WNA is:</p> <p>To support members to excel professionally and promote occupation by providing resources, education and representation.</p> <p>The vision is:</p> <p>Occupational Therapy is accessible and valued by all.</p> <p>Underpinning values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational justice: Fair access to resources to enable occupation / He huarahi ki ngā taonga tukuiho he pūmautanga o te mahi. • Biculturalism: Equity between the tangata whenua (Māori) and the tangata tiriti (non Māori) / Te nohoanga ngā tahitanga o te tangata, ko te kī tūhono mō ake tonu.

- **Integrity:** The quality of being honest and following our principle / Te rangatiratanga o te tika, me te whai ake rā o ngā mātāpono.
- **Professionalism:** High standards that characterise behaviour /Ko te taumata i whāia ko te āhua i wawatatia.
- **Collaboration:** Work together in mutual effort and partnership towards goals / He ringa raupa, ka eke nga hiahia, ka tutuki nga wawata i tumanakotia.
- **Transparency:** Visibility or accessibility of information /Te kitenga ake, te huarahi hoki, o te mohiotanga.

Occupational Therapy is a client-centred health profession concerned with promoting health and well-being through occupation. The primary goal of occupational therapy [whakaora ngangahau] is to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life. Occupational therapists [nga kaiwhakaora ngangahau] achieve this by working with people and communities to enhance their ability to engage in the occupations they want to, need to, or are expected to do; or by modifying the occupation or the environment to better support their occupational therapy engagement (WFOT, 2012).

Occupational therapy is translated as **whakaora ngangahau**. Whakaora means to restore to health and ngangahau is an adjective meaning – active, spirited, zealous. In choosing this translation, the Maori Language Commission is conveying the idea of reawakening, or restoring to health one’s activeness, spiritedness and zeal – occupational therapy.

Refer to OTNZ-WNA website: <https://www.otnz.co.nz/>

Executive Summary:

(Please provide a short summary of the key points of your Submission - 200 words)

Poverty has harmful effects on tamariki/childrens' health and well-being, in a large part because material hardship constrains their participation in culturally valued occupations (i.e., play, school, recreations, and household activities). While the impact of this occupational deprivation is not well understood, we propose that it accounts for the negative impact of poverty on children's long-term physical and mental health, educational attainment, and vocational outcomes beyond the measured impact of poor nutrition, poor quality housing and decreased access to health services. In sum, occupational deprivation due to material hardship impacts their capacity to develop to their potential and contribute their fullest in Aotearoa New Zeland society and economy. Our submission calls for greater understanding of the impact of poverty on tamariki/children's participation in occupations.

Submission Content

The negative health and social outcomes associated with childhood poverty are most often attributed to poor nutrition, cold and overcrowded housing, and lack of access to health services (Boston & Chapple, 2014; UNICEF, 2016). While these factors are undoubtedly important, less attention has been given to the ways poverty restricts children's participation in occupations and how this contributes in the long-term to poor physical and mental health outcomes or to the ways it impacts their capabilities (i.e., their ability to develop their maximum potential and contribute fully in society). The association between restricted participation and human capacities is asserted by Amartya Sen (1999), whose capabilities approach points to a cyclic relationship between the opportunities actually available to people and their physical health (including level of physical activity), cognitive development (e.g., learning, problem solving), psychological development (e.g., identity, self-respect), and the development of social networks, knowledge and skills, aspirations that underpin academic success and vocational outcomes.

Information we have been able to collate from public sources reveals that tamariki/children in Aotearoa New Zealand who live in poverty are more likely than other children to face restricted participation in occupations (i.e., school, play, sports, cultural and household activities). These include restrictions in recreations such as sports (e.g., soccer, swimming, running, netball, dance) due to lack of facilities, lack of finances for equipment and sports uniforms, and neighbourhood level factors (Maddison et al., 2016; Q&A Research, 2014). Compared with other children, those living with material hardship also have less access to active transport options such as riding a bicycle (Q&A Research, 2014; Sport New Zealand, 2018), safe spaces for free play in their neighbourhood (Egan-Birtan, 2012), and restricted participation in creative occupations (e.g., arts, drama, music) (Arts Council of New Zealand Aotearoa, 2015) and social occupations (e.g., time with friends) (Egan-Birtan, 2010; Ministry of Social Development, 2016). There is evidence that children from low socioeconomic backgrounds are less physically active than their peers from wealthier backgrounds, spending more time in passive-based occupations (i.e., watching television, screen time) that brings increased risk to their health (e.g., obesity) (Goisis, Sacker, & Kelly, 2016; Ministry of Health, 2017). For tamariki/children of Māori and Pacific Island ethnicity these restrictions are even more pronounced. International literature echoes the deprivations in children's participation in occupations due to poverty (Ridge, 2011; UNICEF, 2016).

These constraints on children's full participation in occupations breach their fundamental rights to engage in occupations, as outlined in the United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is a form of occupational deprivation, defined as the inability to engage in meaningful occupations due to external factors, which has long term detrimental effects on both development and well-being (Leadley & Hocking, 2017; Whiteford, 2010). In order to reveal the hidden impact of poverty on children's future prospects of contributing to the New Zealand society and economy, collation of data about participation of children experiencing poverty in sports, arts, cultural activities, part time work, levels of physical activity, and screen time are required.

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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.