



# MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

*Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora*

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Ms Paora Moyle

[Pmoyle2@yahoo.nz](mailto:Pmoyle2@yahoo.nz)

2 APR 2015

Dear Ms Moyle

On 10 February 2015 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, a series of questions concerning the ethnicity of children and young people in care.

Child, Youth and Family works hard alongside others to build communities where abuse and neglect of children and young people is not tolerated. Like everyone, we want the best for children and young people, and we work with them, their families and communities to help them be safe, strong and thrive.

We have continued to work with iwi, hapu and whānau to strengthen our engagement and ensure better outcomes for children and young people. We have developed Memorandums of Understanding with four iwi to date (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou, Waikato-Tainui and Ngāti Kahungunu) to assist in establishing and promoting collaborative working relationships. A number of other iwi, who have developed working relationships with their local Child, Youth and Family sites, are also looking to formalise these. This is an encouraging trend that will ultimately benefit those children in our care.

I will address each of your questions separately.

As you are aware there are limitations the Ministry encounters for reporting ethnicity data. The letter sent from the Ministry to you of 6 June 2014 refers.

All financial years refer to year ending 30 June.

## Family Group Conferences

In 2012, the Office of the Chief Social Worker undertook a review of Family Group Conferences (FGCs) in both Care and Protection and Youth Justice across New Zealand.

The review findings identified overwhelming support of the FGC as a key decision making process for children, young people and their families. While there are some great examples of practice happening, the review highlighted areas inconsistencies of quality across the country and areas of our practice that required improvement – these changes sat both inside and external to Child, Youth and Family.

To respond to these findings, Child, Youth and Family implemented a project to reinvigorate FGCs. Eight new practice standards were developed to strengthen and improve our FGCs, ensuring that everyone involved with the child/young person, including family/whānau, professionals and iwi, works towards achieving the best outcome for them.

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Please note that the number of children and young people attending FGCs is not the number of FGCs held as there may be more than one child or young person at a single FGC, such as siblings.

*What percentage of new Care and Protection Family Group Conferences (FGCs) held, was for the under 5 age group?*

**Table one: The number and percentage of children and young people involved in Care and Protection FGCs in financial years 2013 and 2014, broken down by age group.**

Age Group	Financial Year			
	2013		2014	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Age 0 to 4 years	2,383	38%	2,270	38%
Age 5 to 9 years	1,598	25%	1,510	25%
Age 10 to 13 years	1,180	19%	1,154	19%
Age 14 to 16 years	901	14%	805	14%
Age 17 years and over	28	0%	32	1%
Unknown	202	3%	178	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,292</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,949</b>	<b>100%</b>

*What percentage of the new Family Group Conferences (FGCs) held for the under 5s, are Māori?*

**Table two: The number and percentage of children and young people involved in Care and Protection FGC in financial years 2013 and 2014 broken down by primary ethnic group.**

Ethnic Group	Financial Year			
	2013		2014	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Māori	1,319	55%	1,260	56%
New Zealand Pākehā	659	28%	597	26%
Pacific People	196	8%	182	8%
Asian	26	1%	38	2%
Other European	9	0%	14	1%
Other/Multiple Ethnicity	174	7%	179	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,383</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Home for Life

The Home for Life initiative aims to provide children and young people with a safe and stable place to call home, where they have the opportunity to build a strong and nurturing attachment to people who care for them. Providing a home where a child or young person feels wanted and valued helps them establish a sense of belonging and promotes their wellbeing.

In 2012, the Ministry undertook an evaluation of Home for Life. It found that the policy is improving outcomes for children and young people in care. The findings showed that there was good leadership on the programme and that providers were working well together with a new shared sense of purpose.

Areas for improvement, which are being implemented into practice, included increasing the numbers of caregivers getting support and recognising differences in needs and expectations between whānau and non-whānau caregivers.

More information about the Home for Life initiative is accessible on Child, Youth and Family's Practice Centre website at:

[www.practicecentre.cyf.govt.nz/policy/permanent-care-and-creating-a-home-for-life/resources/home-for-life-support.html](http://www.practicecentre.cyf.govt.nz/policy/permanent-care-and-creating-a-home-for-life/resources/home-for-life-support.html)

The tables below show to the number of children and young people achieving Home for Life in the 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years.

A Home for Life placement occurs when a child is placed by Child, Youth and Family with a caregiver who is approved to offer a permanent home. Achieving Home for Life occurs when the Chief Executive's custody is discharged in favour of a permanent caregiver.

*What percentage of the children receiving a Home for Life placement, are Māori?*

**Table three: The number and percentage of children and young people who achieved Home for Life in financial years 2013 and 2014 broken down by primary ethnic group.**

Ethnic Group	Financial Year			
	2013		2014	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Māori	259	59%	252	60%
New Zealand Pākehā	134	30%	128	31%
Pacific People	38	9%	24	6%
Asian	S	S	S	S
Other European	S	S	6	1%
Other/Multiple Ethnicity	S	S	S	S
<b>Total</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>100%</b>

*What percentage of those children receiving a Home for Life are under 5 years?*

**Table four: The number and percentage of children and young people who achieved Home for Life in financial years 2013 and 2014 broken down by age group.**

Age Group	Financial Year			
	2013		2014	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Age 0 to 4 years	190	43%	184	44%
Age 5 to 9 years	135	31%	133	32%
Age 10 to 13 years	82	19%	72	17%
Age 14 to 16 years	33	8%	28	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>100%</b>

*What percentage of the under 5s receiving a Home for Life, are Māori?*

**Table five: The number and percentage of children under five years old who achieved Home for Life in financial years 2013 and 2014 broken down by primary ethnic group.**

Ethnic Group	Financial Year			
	2013		2014	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Māori	120	63%	111	60%
New Zealand Pākehā	57	30%	61	33%
Pacific People	11	6%	S	S
Asian	S	S	S	S
Other European	0	0%	S	S
Other/Multiple Ethnicity	S	S	S	S
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100%</b>

Please note, all counts of five or less have been suppressed under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. These are represented in the tables by an "S". The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

I am unable to provide you with the number of caregivers who identify as Māori and the percentage of Māori children placed with non-Māori Child, Youth and Family caregivers, as the Ministry does not record this information in a way that can be reported for the purposes of your request. These details are held on individual case notes and would require substantial manual collation. As such I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

I hope you find this information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsman  
PO Box 10-152  
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Bernadine Mackenzie  
Deputy Chief Executive Child Youth and Family