



## **30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child**

### **New Zealand pledge**

**November 2019**

**In light of the commitments we have made under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, as applicable, we have undertaken the following to highlight our commitment to the promotion, protection and realization of the rights of the child in celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention:**

- **What?** Implementation of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, launched in August 2019.
- **Why?** The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy has been developed with input across government and in consultation with the public and a wide range of stakeholders, including children. One of the Principles underpinning the Strategy is that Children's and Young People's Rights must be respected and upheld. These Rights place responsibilities on the government to set up the broad conditions to support child and youth wellbeing, and implementing the Strategy is a way for the government to demonstrate commitment to the convention.
- **How?** The Strategy's Programme of Action sets out 73 actions and 41 supporting actions to be taken by government to improve Child and Youth Wellbeing. Progress on the outcomes of the Strategy must be reported on annually.
- **When?** The Strategy and its implementation is ongoing and required by legislation. The Strategy must be reviewed every 3 years.
- **Who?** The Programme of Action sets out which agencies are responsible for individual actions. Reporting for the time being is the responsibility of the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction and the Minister for Children.

### **The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy**

In August 2019, the Government of New Zealand launched the first Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. This strategy was required to be adopted by changes to the Children's Act 2014, and must be consulted on and reviewed every 3 years.

The Act states that an objective of the Strategy is to assist New Zealand in meeting its obligations under the UNCROC. To acknowledge this aim, one of the underpinning principles of the Strategy is that 'Children and young people's rights need to be respected and upheld'. It is expected that in implementing the Strategy, government agencies will seek to advance the rights of children wherever possible.

The Strategy is accompanied by a programme of action, which lists the actions of government agencies that contribute to the strategy's six outcomes:

- Children and Young People are loved, safe and nurtured
- Children and Young People have what they need
- Children and Young People are happy and healthy

- Children and Young People are learning and developing
- Children and Young People are accepted, respected and connected
- Children and Young People are involved and empowered

## Principles

The four fundamental principles of the Convention align with the principles and outcomes of the Strategy.

| Convention principle                           | Strategy principle   | Strategy outcome  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Non-Discrimination</b>                      | All Children and Young People<br>Deserve to live a good life | Children and Young People are<br>accepted, respected and<br>connected   |
| <b>The best interests of the child</b>         | Children and Young People are<br>taonga                      |   |
| <b>Survival development and<br/>protection</b> | Actions must deliver better life<br>outcomes                 | Children and Young People have<br>what they need<br><br>Children and Young People are<br>loved, safe and nurtured |
| <b>Participation</b>                           |  | Children and Young People are<br>involved and empowered   |

## Actions

The first programme of action sets out 73 actions and 41 supporting actions of government. These actions will be updated regularly as agencies and departments within government initiate, develop and implement policy that contributes to the wellbeing of children, young people and their families.

The Government has given immediate priority to **actions** that will:

- Reduce Child Poverty and mitigate the impacts of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage
- Better support children and young people of interest to Oranga Tamariki (the Children's Ministry) and address family and sexual violence
- Better support children and young people with greater needs, with an initial focus on learning support and mental wellbeing

In particular, these priority actions will contribute to articles 9, 18, 19, 20, 27, and 40 of the Convention.

In addition to the Strategy's priority actions, the government has identified additional policy areas that require immediate focus. These are reducing racism and discrimination, the Early Years (0-6) and approaches that are community-based and whānau-centred.

The work occurring in these policy areas, driven through the strategy, will in particular contribute to articles 2, 13, and 30 of the Convention.

### **Accountability and reporting**

There are legal and operational arrangements in place to ensure collective Ministerial and agency-level governance and accountability for developing and implementing the Strategy. These actions will necessarily be supported by annual government budget processes, as well as work across government to align effort. In addition, the government is working to enable other groups – families, whanau, hapū, iwi, community groups, NGOs, the philanthropic sector, business and local government in their important roles in promoting child wellbeing.

The Children's Act 2014 requires annual Ministerial reporting to Parliament on progress in achieving the child and youth wellbeing outcomes. The six outcomes will be measured by a range of indicators, which will be updated and refined over time, as more data becomes available.