

VISION

# New Zealand is the best place in the world for children

This will be achieved when all children and young people:

WELLBEING DOMAINS



are **loved, nurtured & safe**

Families, whānau and homes are safe and nurturing

Children and their parents, caregivers, families and whānau are able to spend quality time together

Children and young people are kept safe from accidental injury at home, in the community, on the road and when taking part in sport and recreational activities

Communities, including at school and online, are safe and supportive, with children protected from victimisation



have what they **need**

Children, young people and the adults caring for them have a good standard of material wellbeing, including food and housing

Parents and caregivers, and young people transitioning to adulthood, enjoy quality employment

Young people who are not in education, training or employment receive additional support to gain education and skills and to obtain and maintain employment

Children and young people live in sustainable communities and environments



belong, contribute & are **valued**

Children and young people know who they are: their heritage, their whakapapa and their connection to family, whānau, community, culture, place (tūrangawaewae) and beliefs

Children and young people feel connected to their family, whānau and communities, and are actively included in schools, communities and society

Children and young people are valued and respected for who they are and are supported to have their voices heard

Children and young people are empowered to make age appropriate decisions, and are supported to exercise increasing autonomy as they move to adulthood

Children and young people care about and recognise their responsibilities to others, and contribute positively at home, school and in their communities

Children and young people are empowered to engage on matters of civic and environmental importance



are **happy & healthy**

Children and young people have the best possible physical health, and health status is not a barrier to living a good life

Children and young people experience mental wellbeing, are supported to cope with life's challenges and to heal and recover from trauma

Children and young people have strong networks of trusting, caring relationships with family, whānau, peers, communities and school

Children and young people can play, express themselves creatively, have fun, and have opportunities for down time

Young people take a positive approach to relationships, sexual health and reproductive choices



are **learning & developing**

Children have positive development starting before birth, including through the wellbeing of mothers, families and whānau

Children and young people develop resilience, and emotional, behavioural and communication skills at home and in education, and are equipped to make successful transitions, including to primary school, secondary school, and into adulthood

Children and young people are positively engaged with and achieving in education, and building skills and knowledge for life and learning

Children and young people have developmentally appropriate opportunities outside the classroom that build confidence and important life skills

Young people make positive choices about alcohol, drugs and sexual relationships, and avoid criminal offending

DESIRED OUTCOMES

NOTE: 'Child' and 'children' includes children and young people up to age 18, and, for those transitioning from State care, up to age 25

PRINCIPLES

Our approach to child wellbeing is underpinned by seven principles:

- 1 The inherent dignity and value of children and young people
- 2 The wellbeing of children and young people is interwoven with the wellbeing of the family and whānau
- 3 That networks of loving, trusting, caring relationships are at the heart of children's and young people's wellbeing
- 4 The foundational role of the Treaty of Waitangi and the importance of the Crown-Māori partnership in work to promote the wellbeing of New Zealand's children and young people
- 5 That children's and young people's voices and views should be taken into account in developing and implementing the Strategy and in important decisions affecting them
- 6 The rights contained in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which New Zealand has ratified
- 7 We have collective responsibility to nurture the children and young people in our communities, and to support and value the adults who are caring for them

Sixteen potential focus areas for the first Child Wellbeing Strategy have been identified:

### 1. Children and young people are safe and nurtured in their families, whānau and homes

- Children and young people live in loving homes, connected to relationships and support and are free from abuse, neglect and family violence
- The work of parenting and nurturing children is recognised, valued and supported
- Adults enjoy good mental health, including freedom from severe stress, misuse of alcohol and drugs
- Children and young people in care (including because of offending) have a safe environment and relationships of care, trust and connection

### 2. Children's and young people's physical safety is protected during everyday activities like travel and recreation

- The community and the physical, policy and regulatory environment work together to promote children's and young people's physical safety
- Serious injury and death through road accidents, drowning and other major accidental causes are reduced
- The particular vulnerability of disabled children and young people to accidental injury is addressed

### 3. Children and young people have positive interactions with peers and others outside the home

- Children and young people have safe and appropriate relationships with other children and young people and with adults outside the home
- Bullying in schools and recreational environments is addressed
- Children's and young people's safety online is supported

### 4. Children and young people and their families and whānau live in affordable, quality housing

- Families and whānau can access and afford housing near their work and/or social support structures
- Housing is warm and dry, has space and facilities to meet essential needs and supports good health
- There is stability of tenure for children and young people and families and whānau in rented accommodation
- Housing is supported by quality infrastructure and community facilities to enable good quality of life and positive social connection

### 5. Child poverty is reduced, in line with the Government's intermediate and ten-year targets

- Children, young people and families and whānau have the resources they need to meet children's basic needs, and enable them to participate fully in society
- Rates of child poverty are significantly and sustainably reduced
- Parents' education and participation in paid work is supported, where appropriate
- Once housing costs are met, families have enough income left over to meet their other needs

### 6. Children and young people experience improved equity of outcomes, with services helping address the impacts of poverty, low socioeconomic status and disadvantage

- Services and institutions are accessible, welcoming and respectful to all
- Parents, children and young people have the ability to influence the way they get support so it works best for them
- Core services and systems like health, education, justice and social support are designed and delivered in ways that meet diverse needs and that minimise the costs and stresses of engaging with them
- Universal services identify children and young people facing disadvantage and focus proportionately greater resources, effort and energy on supporting them

### 7. Children and young people are free from racism, discrimination and stigma

- All children and young people are respected and valued for who they are
- No child or young person, or group of children and young people, faces discrimination or stigma on the grounds of ethnicity, disability, or for any other reason

### 8. The cultures of children, young people and their families and whānau are recognised, enhanced and supported

- Whānau centered approaches are recognised and supported, increasing the agency of children, young people and their families and whānau
- Te Ao Māori and Te Reo Māori are actively promoted
- Children and young people see their cultures, values and context portrayed in a positive way

### 9. Children and young people have improved opportunities for civic engagement and environmental awareness

- Children and young people are supported to be positive, valued contributors to civic life and the protection of the environment (kaitiakitanga)
- Children's and young people's individual and collective agency is encouraged, and they participate in decisions that affect them directly and wider society

### 10. Children and young people and their families and whānau are empowered to make healthy lifestyle decisions for children and young people

- Children and young people and those caring for them have the knowledge and resources to make healthy decisions about food, exercise and sleep
- Communities offer access to affordable, nutritious food and environments that enable children to be physically active

### 11. Disabled children and young people have improved opportunities and outcomes

- Disabled children and young people:
  - Are actively included as full and equal participants in every aspect of community and society
  - Have agency and voice in their wellbeing and choices
  - Have access to quality support and services to enable full and equitable participation
- Neurodisability and neurodiversity are recognised, with children and young people receiving quality services and support

### 12. Children's and young people's mental wellbeing is supported

- Families and are equipped to provide a supportive home environment that promotes children's and young people's good mental wellbeing
- Children and young people are supported to build the resilience that helps them navigate life's challenges
- Children and young people with emerging mental health needs are identified and they and their families and whānau receive quality, culturally appropriate support
- Children and young people are free from bullying, substance abuse, self-harm and suicide
- Children and young people are supported to recover from trauma and harm

### 13. Children and young people are supported to make positive decisions

- Children and young people make considered and informed decisions about alcohol, drugs and sexual relationships
- Children and young people consider the impact of their behaviour on others
- Children and young people are supported to be accountable and address the underlying causes of their behaviour if they break the law

### 14. Children experience best development in their "first 1000 days", safe and positive pregnancy, birth and responsive parenting (conception to around 2)

- People make positive, empowered choices about when to have a family
- The environment around parents helps them make positive choices for pregnancy, birth and parenting
- Communities support families and whānau to grow stable, loving relationships of care for each other and for their babies
- Services for parents and babies are accessible, culturally appropriate, meet a range of needs and support parents to build the lives they want for their babies
- Parents' mental wellbeing is supported and care is taken to reduce stress in the lives of new parents

### 15. Children are thriving socially, emotionally and developmentally in the early years (around 2 to 6)

- Parents, families, whānau and communities are supported to provide loving, stimulating environments for children to develop and learn
- Children build resilience, self-control and mental wellbeing
- Children develop effective communication skills to support learning and social success
- Children benefit from high quality early learning
- Children's learning needs are identified quickly, and responded to in a timely way, including through additional learning support and support for family and whānau

### 16. All children and young people have an equal chance to gain the skills, knowledge and capabilities for success in life, learning and work

- High quality education for all children and young people is assured, given the intrinsic value of education, and its role in enabling children to meet their academic and social potential and in ensuring they have options for meaningful work once they leave school
- Children, young people, their families and whānau have a voice and can help shape their learning and skills opportunities
- There is equity in access to quality learning and achievement among children and young people of different socio-economic groups and ethnicities
- All children and young people can take part in a full range of opportunities to develop and express their talents

