



Care and Protection Blueprint 2003

Acknowledgements

The Care and Protection Blueprint 2003 was developed under the leadership of the Blueprint Development Group, a group of government and non-government people with considerable involvement and interest in the care and protection of children and young people. Non-government representatives on the group were: Ian Calder from Barnardos New Zealand; Buster Curson, a clinical social worker-counsellor and consultant; Donna Matahaere-Atariki from Ngai Tahu Development Corporation; Reverend Alfred Ngaro from Tamaki Family Ministries; Shaun Robinson, formerly of Wesley Community Action, now Presbyterian Support East Coast and Alison Thom from Te Rūnanga A Iwi O Ngāpuhi. Government agencies represented on the group were the Ministry of Social Development; Department of Child, Youth and Family Services; Ministry of Youth Affairs; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education; Te Puni Kōkiri; Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs; Police; and Department for Courts.

We would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of community service providers in Kaitia, Whangarei, Auckland and Christchurch who provided us with information to identify key issues and gaps in the delivery of care and protection services, and who provided suggestions to improve the way in which families, communities and government work together to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.

Blueprint Development Group

Contents

Foreword	1
The Blueprint	3
Links to Key Documents and Other Strategies	9
Context and Issues	13
Vision and Guiding Principles	19
Goals and Actions	23
Plan of Action	25
Closing Message	40

The Blueprint has been placed on the Ministry of Social Development's website as a living document to be continually updated as the action plan is implemented and in response to feedback from the care and protection community. This will ensure that the Blueprint remains relevant and adequately addresses the issues facing the care and protection community on an ongoing basis. A more detailed, revised Blueprint will be published in 2004.

As members of the care and protection community, you might like to consider providing suggestions on ways in which the Blueprint can be further developed and implemented.

Feedback can be sent to:

The Secretariat Blueprint Steering Group
Ministry of Social Development
P.O. Box 12-136
Wellington
or blueprint@msd.govt.nz.

Foreword

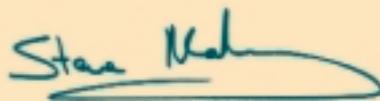
All children have the right to be safe and cared for. Most children will receive the love, care and protection they need from their families and whānau. But when they don't, children should be able to expect that the community and government will work together to provide the necessary support and services. This is the vision presented in the *Care and Protection Blueprint 2003* – working together for the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and their families.

In 2000 the Government asked former Principal Youth Court Judge Mick Brown to review the care and protection procedures of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services. One of Mick Brown's recommendations was the development of a blueprint for the care and protection community to support Child, Youth and Family in providing a superior service totally focused on meeting the care and protection needs of children. The Government agreed with the need for a blueprint, and tasked a group of government and non-government representatives with developing the Blueprint.

I am pleased to present the result of this work, the *Care and Protection Blueprint 2003*. The Blueprint has been developed for the care and protection community. It provides a strategy for improving the way in which families, communities and government work together to meet the needs of children and young people who are suffering from, or at risk of, abuse and neglect.

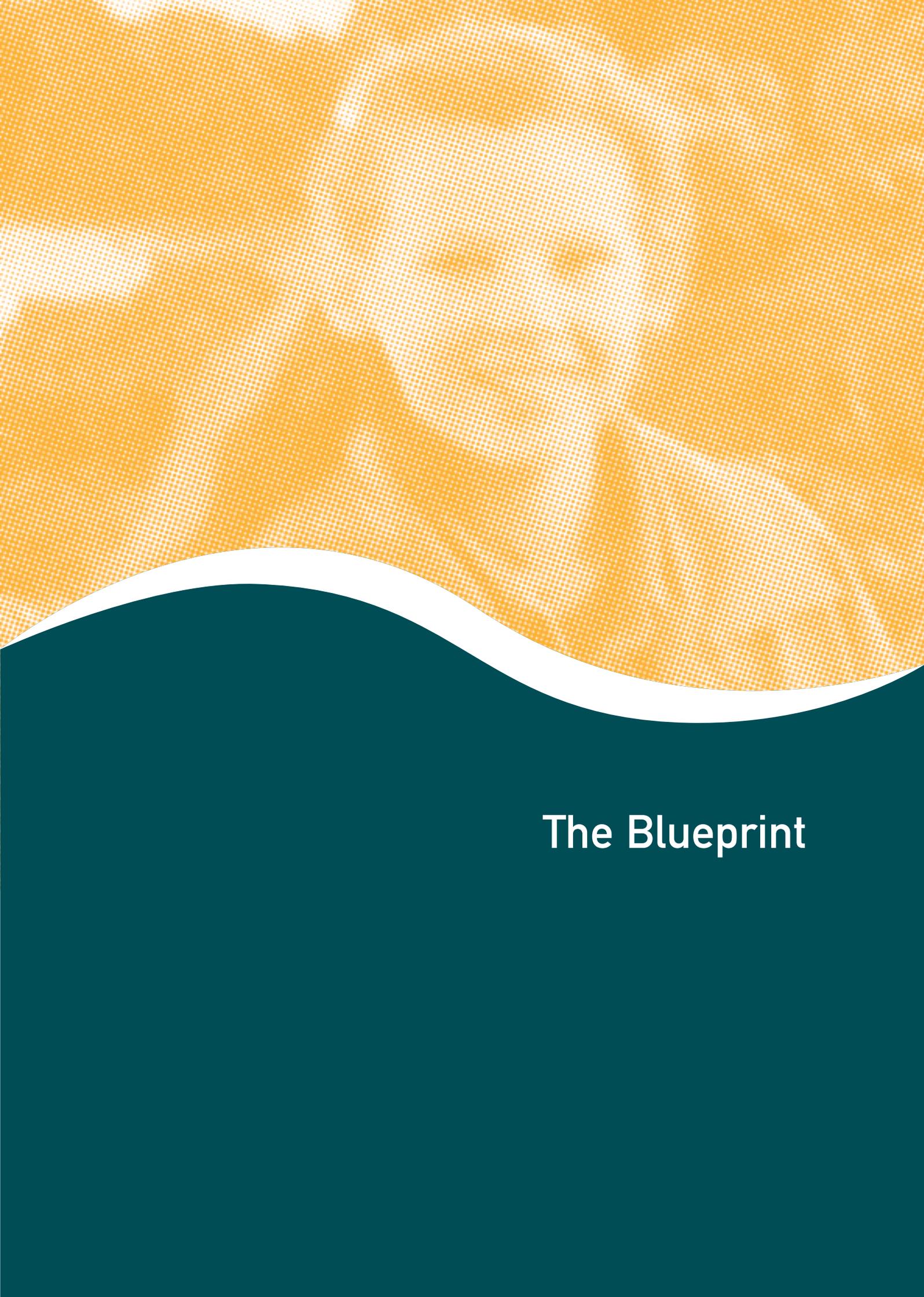
I believe that the Blueprint provides a strong foundation for a well functioning care and protection community and for improving care and protection outcomes for children, young people and their families. Implementation of the action plan will greatly enhance New Zealand's care and protection system through national leadership, a commitment to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families, improved co-operation and collaboration and a clear understanding about good practice.

The Government is firmly committed to ensuring that this Blueprint is successfully implemented and to working with communities to make the Blueprint's vision a reality.



Steve Maharey

Minister of Social Services and Employment



The Blueprint

What is the Blueprint?

The *Care and Protection Blueprint 2003* is a strategy for enhancing the services provided to children and young people who are at risk of, or who have suffered from, abuse and neglect. It has been developed for the whole care and protection community and is aimed at improving the way government and community agencies work together to respond to child abuse and neglect.

The Blueprint:

- takes a broad view of the care and protection community, from primary services aimed at improving child wellbeing through to 'core' child protection services
- reflects the underlying principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- responds to key issues facing the care and protection community
- is focused on building on the strengths of the care and protection community
- is consistent with other cross-sector strategies such as *Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*, the Youth Offending Strategy and *New Zealand's Agenda for Children*

A strategy for enhancing the services provided to children and young people who are at risk of, or who have suffered from, abuse and neglect.

The Blueprint's vision is families, communities and government working together for the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and their families. A set of principles has guided the development of the Blueprint and these principles are also intended to underpin the development and delivery of care and protection policy and services. Four key goals are set out in the Blueprint along with a plan of action for meeting these goals.

The Blueprint is a living document that will evolve as the action plan is implemented and in response to feedback from the care and protection community. Implementation of the plan of action will contribute to the development of a revised and more detailed Blueprint in 2004. The 2004 Blueprint will incorporate some of the elements under development over the next two years, including:

- outcome measures for the care and protection community
- a government investment strategy for care and protection services
- strategies to improve interagency co-ordination, collaboration and communication
- standards for good practice.

Why do we need a Blueprint?

The abuse and neglect of children is a significant social issue in New Zealand. A wide range of individuals and organisations is working hard to combat child abuse and neglect but often they are working in isolation from other agencies and there is no co-ordinated strategy to ensure a comprehensive response to child abuse and neglect. There is a need for a more integrated approach to preventing and addressing child abuse and neglect that is based on a shared vision of how the care and protection community should function.

The need for a blueprint was identified by former Principal Youth Court Judge Mick Brown in his review of Child, Youth and Family Services, and is summarised by a comment a stakeholder made to him:

“The Care and Protection Sector does not have an agreed vision, nor an agreed strategy as to how the vision can be made a reality. We need a clearly defined blueprint for the future, and one which the Government will commit itself to fully resource”¹.

There is a need for a more integrated approach to preventing and addressing child abuse and neglect that is based on a shared vision of how the care and protection community should function.

Who was involved in developing the Blueprint?

The Blueprint was developed under the leadership of a group of government and non-government people with an interest in the care and protection of children and young people, known as the ‘Blueprint Development Group’.

The six non-government representatives on the group were:

- Ian Calder, Barnardos New Zealand
- Buster Curson, clinical social worker-counsellor and consultant
- Donna Matahaere-Atariki, Ngai Tahu Development Corporation
- Reverend Alfred Ngaro, Tamaki Family Ministries
- Shaun Robinson, formerly Wesley Community Action, now Presbyterian Support East Coast
- Alison Thom, Te Rūnanga A Iwi O Ngāpuhi.

Government agencies represented on the group were:

- Ministry of Social Development
- Department of Child, Youth and Family Services
- Ministry of Youth Affairs
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Te Puni Kōkiri
- Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
- Police
- Department for Courts.

¹ Brown, Mick (2000) *Care and Protection is About Adult Behaviour: The Ministerial Review of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services*, Report to the Minister of Social Services and Employment Hon Steve Maharey, p 92.

How was the Blueprint developed?

Much of the knowledge informing the Blueprint was collected during a series of meetings with community service providers in Kaitaia, Whangarei, Auckland and Christchurch. Seven group meetings were held across the four centres. These meetings explored what was working well and what was not working so well, and sought ideas for a vision for the future. The group meetings were followed by approximately 40 one-to-one meetings with individual service providers in each of the centres. In addition, the Blueprint Development Group drew on information derived from less formal discussions with a range of individuals, and a review of local and international literature.

A Blueprint Steering Group will be established to provide leadership and oversight of the implementation and ongoing development of the Blueprint.

How will the Blueprint be implemented?

Each of the ten areas of action outlined in the Blueprint identifies a lead agency responsible for progressing work in that area. The lead agency will ensure that the work is carried out as specified, and that the work is undertaken in a manner which displays:

- a trusting working relationship with open communication and sharing of information
- respect for differing views and a valuing of diverse opinions and different strengths and capabilities
- a focus on developing solutions
- a focus on meeting the care and protection needs of Māori
- consideration of Pacific peoples, other ethnic communities and other diverse groups such as youth
- meaningful engagement with key stakeholders within the care and protection community.

The implementation of actions will also require consideration of the capacity of the care and protection community to respond to and implement the Blueprint, while acknowledging diverse needs.

A Blueprint Steering Group will be established to provide leadership and oversight of the implementation and ongoing development of the Blueprint. The group will oversee work on the areas of action and will promote the Blueprint within the care and protection community.

The group will consist of up to ten non-government people from the care and protection community who have been selected to bring a diverse range of expertise, experience and perspectives to leadership of the Blueprint, together with senior government officials from pertinent agencies.

A monitoring framework for the implementation of the Blueprint is being developed and the Blueprint Steering Group will use this to monitor the Blueprint's progress and report regularly to the Minister of Social Services and Employment.

The Minister of Social Services and Employment will continue to provide day-to-day leadership of the Blueprint and will engage with other Ministers on specific issues as necessary. Progress on the implementation of the Blueprint will be reported to Cabinet on a six-monthly basis.

How will the Blueprint be updated?

The Blueprint will be regularly reviewed and updated as the action plan is implemented and in response to feedback from the care and protection community.

The Blueprint Steering Group will be holding a series of meetings around the country to promote the Blueprint and encourage the care and protection community to actively support the vision and strategy. There will be opportunity in these meetings to provide suggestions on ways in which the Blueprint can be further developed and implemented. Feedback can also be sent to the Secretariat, Blueprint Steering Group, Ministry of Social Development, P.O. Box 12-136, Wellington or blueprint@msd.govt.nz.

The Ministry of Social Development will place the Blueprint on its website – www.msd.govt.nz – as a living document and will document changes on the website following each Blueprint Steering Group meeting. A revised and more detailed Blueprint will be released in 2004.

The Blueprint will be regularly reviewed and updated as the action plan is implemented and in response to feedback from the care and protection community.



Links to Key Documents and Other Strategies

What are the foundations of the Blueprint?

Three documents underpin the Blueprint: the Treaty of Waitangi; the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Blueprint draws on and is consistent with the underlying principles in each of these documents.

Treaty of Waitangi

The Treaty of Waitangi is the founding document of New Zealand. It requires that the Crown protects and responds to the collective and individual interests of Māori wellbeing and development through partnership with Māori. The need for partnership with Māori in developing care and protection services is reinforced by *Pūao te-Ata-tū*, the 1986 report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori Perspective for the Department of Social Welfare. The Blueprint reflects the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi through its emphasis on the importance of Māori playing a key leadership role in the care and protection community and its support for the role of families, whānau, hapū and iwi in providing care and guidance to children.

The Blueprint draws on the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi; the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989; and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989

The Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 is the primary piece of legislation relating to the care and protection of children. The Act includes principles that provide a guide to those working with the Act, which essentially mean that:

- in all care and protection proceedings under the Act, the welfare and interests of the child or young person are the first and most important consideration
- the wellbeing of the child or young person is linked with the wellbeing of their family
- the child or young person should only be separated from their family as a last resort.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

New Zealand ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) in March 1993. The Convention applies to children and young people up to the age of 18 years and states that all children have fundamental rights and freedoms and need special assistance and protection. It includes civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The Convention says that every child has rights to:

- life, survival and development
- actions in their best interests
- freedom from discrimination
- respect for their views.

What is the relationship between the Blueprint and other strategies?

A number of other strategies are currently being implemented that are strongly linked to the Blueprint.

New Directions

New Directions is a comprehensive plan that outlines how the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will change the way it works. The plan recognises that the Department needs to shift its focus to long-term outcomes for children and their families, rather than simply providing immediate solutions to immediate problems. It is also about working more effectively and closely with communities and providers. An essential component of New Directions is the Māori strategy, *Te Pounamu – manaaki tamariki, manaaki whānau*, which outlines how the Department will work towards an outcome where all Māori children will be safe and have opportunities to flourish in their communities. As with the Blueprint, New Directions was developed in response to the recommendations of the Ministerial review conducted by former Principal Youth Court Judge Mick Brown. The two strategies are complementary in that the Blueprint aims to improve the way in which services are planned and delivered across the whole care and protection community, while New Directions is focused specifically on the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services' role within that community.

Action for Child and Youth Development

The Action for Child and Youth Development brings the work programmes of *New Zealand's Agenda for Children* and the *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* under one umbrella, and focuses on improving outcomes for the 0-24 age group. *New Zealand's Agenda for Children* raises the profile and status of children in society and promotes a 'whole child' approach to government policy and service development. The *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* is about how government and society can support young people to develop the skills and attitudes they need to take part positively in society, now and in the future. The strategy promotes a 'youth development' approach. The Blueprint has been informed by both these strategies and is consistent with the approaches promoted in these documents.

Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy

Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy was developed by the Ministry of Social Development in collaboration with a range of government and non-government agencies. The strategy seeks to address family violence in its diverse forms by adopting a multi-faceted approach. It sets out a framework for action that emphasises a co-ordinated government

The Blueprint and New Directions are complementary. The Blueprint aims to improve the way in which services are planned and delivered across the whole care and protection community, while New Directions is focused specifically on the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services' role within the community.

and non-government response to preventing and reducing violence in families/whānau. The vulnerability of children as victims of family violence is acknowledged in the strategy and priority is given to initiatives that educate and support families and others who care for them. The actions outlined in the strategy are closely linked to a variety of other cross-sector strategies, including the *Care and Protection Blueprint 2003*.

The Blueprint links with other strategies: New Directions; Action for Child and Youth Development; Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy; Youth Offending Strategy; and High and Complex Needs Strategy.

Youth Offending Strategy

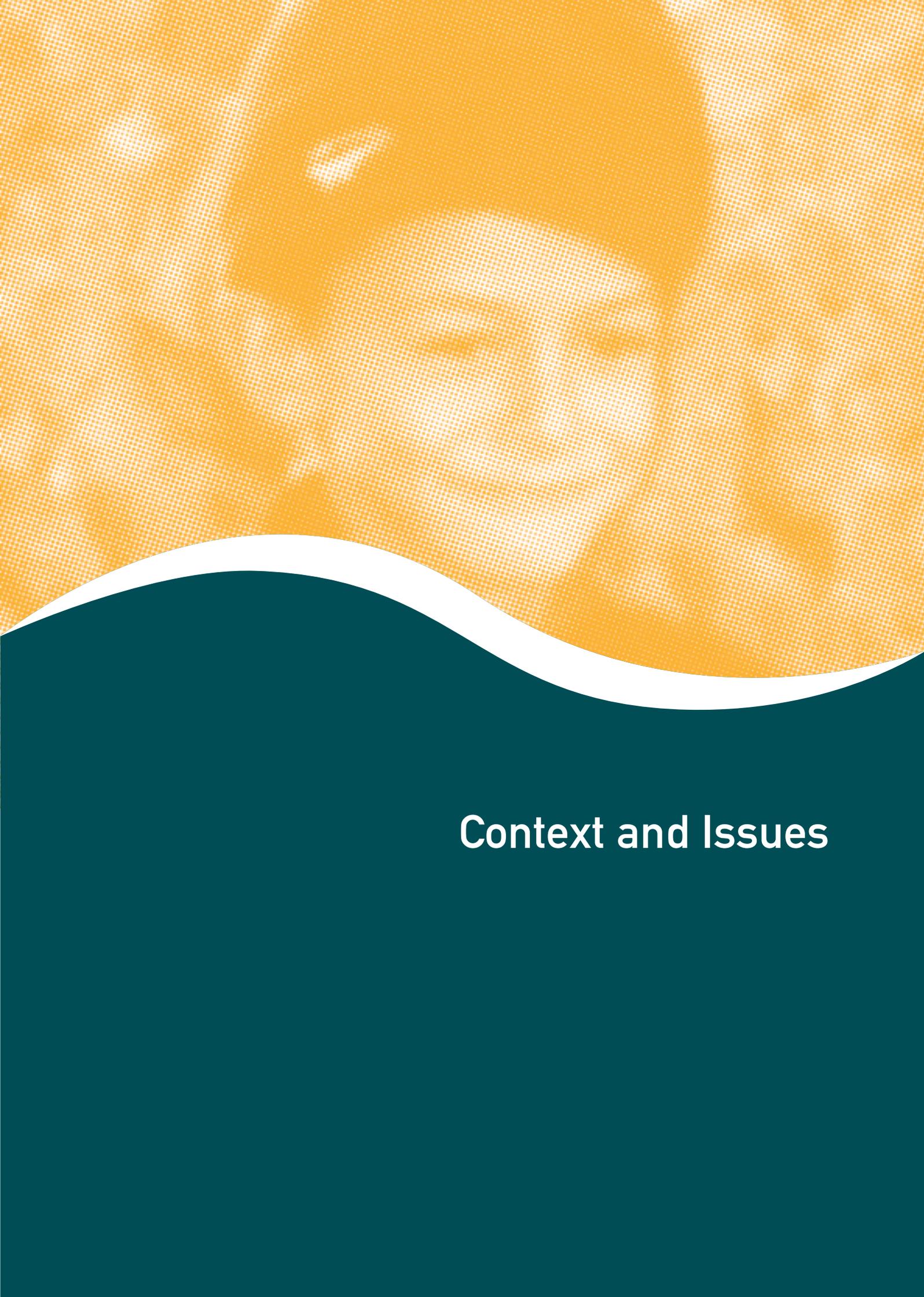
The Youth Offending Strategy aims to prevent and reduce offending and re-offending by children and young people. It guides the government about where to focus its efforts in youth justice policy and helps co-ordinate the local delivery of youth justice services. The strategy includes two focus areas that relate to prevention before offending – ‘early intervention’ and ‘children and young people at risk’ – which aim to proactively create wellbeing in children, young people and their families. Actions in these areas will contribute to, and are consistent with, the vision, goals and actions of the Blueprint.

High and Complex Needs

This is an intersectoral strategy and programme of action developed jointly by the Ministries of Social Development, Health and Education and the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, for children and young people with high and complex needs who require cross-sectoral services in addition to the core services within each sector. As it evolves the programme will:

- strengthen local case management, cross-sectoral co-ordination and collaboration and provide additional resources for use at the local level
- facilitate the development of new joint sector services across two or more sectors where there are groups of children and young people with high and complex needs not catered for in existing services
- develop cross-sectoral individually planned case managed services/support packages for those individual children and young people with the highest and most complex needs.

Other strategies that will inform the implementation of specific Blueprint actions include *In Our Hands* and *Kia Piki Te Ora o Te Taitamariki – The New Zealand Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy*; the *Mental Health Blueprint* and *The New Zealand Disability Strategy – Whakanui Oranga*.



Context and Issues

Care and protection is about responding to children and young people experiencing harm, as well as investing in prevention and building the strengths of families and communities.

What is care and protection?

Children and young people “in need of care or protection” are defined in section 14 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989. They include children and young people who are experiencing (or likely to experience) such things as:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violence or conflict between their caregivers
- emotional or physical neglect
- behaviour which is beyond their, or their caregivers’ control
- lack of stable or adequate care.

Care and protection is about protecting children from suffering harm, ill-treatment, abuse, neglect and deprivation, and ensuring they have the care and protection they need to keep them safe from harm. It involves responding to specific situations where children and young people are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing harm, as well as investing in prevention and building the strengths of families and communities to reduce the likelihood that children will need care and protection services.

What is the care and protection community?

The care and protection community has been interpreted broadly to include any individual, or government or non-government organisation that contributes in some way to preventing and addressing child abuse and neglect. Members of the care and protection community play varying roles in providing care and protection services and services that contribute to child wellbeing.

From this broad perspective the care and protection community will, depending on the issues being addressed, include individuals and organisations which:

- *deliver fundamental social services* such as housing services, income support benefits, foodbanks, and core health, disability support and education services
- *build and develop the strengths and capacity of communities* by delivering programmes such as those funded through the Stronger Communities Action Fund, youth groups and community resource centres
- *build and develop the strengths and capacity of families and whānau* such as parenting programmes, Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-school Youngsters (HIPPY), Family Start, and Parents as First Teachers (PAFT)
- *prevent children, young people and their families from becoming exposed to risks to their physical, mental or emotional wellbeing and develop their strengths* by delivering services such as stopping violence programmes, mentoring, therapy, work skills programmes, life skills development, and community education programmes
- *provide additional support* such as truancy services, reading recovery and anger management programmes

- *identify and protect children and young people in need of care and protection due to serious concerns for their physical, mental or emotional wellbeing, and to ensure ongoing safety* including services involved in the notification and investigation of child abuse and neglect, services responsible for the planning of permanent care arrangements, care services, transition programmes from care to independence, and supervised access.

The work of the government investment strategy will be focused on organisations and services that are at the heart of the care and protection community.

Who are the key stakeholders?

A significant number of individuals and groups of people have a direct interest in working together for the care and protection of children. They can be grouped under the following headings:

- *Children and young people* – as the central users of care and protection services, all services, policies and practices should be focused on meeting the needs of children and young people.
- *Family and whānau* – parents, guardians, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, family and whānau all wrap around children to support and nurture them. Sometimes they require support to fulfil this role.
- *Community* – neighbourhoods, friends, children’s play groups and social sports teams provide informal social networks to individuals, families and whānau. At a more formal level, community organisations have been established specifically to respond to the particular needs of some community members. Other individuals and groups in the community who provide core care and protection services include paid caregivers, iwi and Māori-based organisations, Care and Protection Resource Panels, lay advocates, counsellors, psychologists and individuals requested by the court to provide cultural or community reports. The disability community also has an interest in care and protection.
- *The State* – Child, Youth and Family is the largest government agency delivering, purchasing and funding care and protection services. The Police, Department for Courts and the legal and justice system generally also provide care and protection services, although this is just one part of their core business.

Child, Youth and Family also has a role in developing care and protection policy, particularly as it relates to the services it provides either directly or indirectly through contracting. The Ministry of Social Development plays a key role in developing care and protection policy more generally. Other state agencies that contribute to care and protection outcomes, although

The care and protection community includes any individual or government or non-government organisation that contributes in some way to preventing and addressing child abuse and neglect.

more peripherally, include the Ministry of Education and schools, Ministry of Health, District Health Boards, Ministry of Justice, Housing New Zealand, Department of Corrections, Department of Internal Affairs, and local authorities.

Each of these agencies will have varying roles to play at different points on the care and protection service delivery continuum. For example, schools and early childhood education services in particular contribute to the general well-being of children and young people through their learning and achievement. Teachers also play an important role in identifying and referring children and young people with care and protection needs. Children who are suffering from the effects of abuse or neglect are unlikely to be 'ready to learn' or to reach their full potential in education outcomes.

The Commissioner for Children also plays an important role in the care and protection of children, through monitoring the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services and promoting policies and practices designed to promote the welfare of children. It also acts as an advocate for children.

Diversity needs to be recognised and understood in the care and protection setting.

Acknowledging and valuing diversity

New Zealand is a diverse country with a wide variety of cultural and social groups. This diversity helps to make our country a rich, dynamic and vibrant place. Diversity needs to be recognised and understood in the care and protection setting, as in other spheres of society. People from different cultural and social groups should be encouraged to participate in all aspects of care and protection. Services must acknowledge and affirm different languages, customs, values and cultural practices (unless these are not in the best interests of children). The development of services must also recognise and address disparities between ethnic groups.

Children and their families who have care and protection needs should have access to both mainstream services that affirm their culture and separate services that reflect their cultural preferences and the values of their communities. In particular, services must be provided to meet the care and protection needs of Māori children and their whānau.

Given the significant number of Pacific peoples who are care and protection service users, it will also be important to improve the capacity of both government agencies and Pacific communities to meet the needs of Pacific children, young people and their families.

Other ethnic communities are a growing portion of the New Zealand population, and have a young profile. It will therefore be important to ensure that there is capacity within government agencies and ethnic communities to meet the needs of this diverse group.

What are the main issues facing the care and protection community?

There are many agencies throughout the country that are working hard to address child abuse and neglect and that provide an excellent service to children, young people and their families. However, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed to strengthen the delivery of services.

The key issues facing the care and protection community are:

- lack of a clearly articulated, coherent, shared vision and strategy
- poor public perceptions of and confidence in care and protection services
- lack of focus on outcomes and an inadequate accountability framework
- significant shortage of trained and qualified social workers and other professionals
- lack of capacity by Child, Youth and Family; community agencies; disability support; and other health services to cope with an increasing workload
- agencies not working well together
- inadequate mix of services, from primary prevention services through to core care and protection services
- knowledge gaps about the effectiveness of particular services and what constitutes an 'optimal' range of services
- lack of a clear government investment strategy for planning and funding care and protection services
- lack of consistent data
- legislative provisions not always supporting effective practice.

The vision, principles, goals and plan of action that are set out in the Blueprint have been developed as a direct response to these issues and provide a way forward for the care and protection community.

The majority of the actions are targeted at improving processes and practices amongst care and protection agencies and engaging more effectively with the wider care and protection community. The plan allows for and promotes regional flexibility in the planning and delivery of care and protection services, while at the same time putting in place mechanisms for national leadership and identifying and promoting good practice.

Actions have been grouped around four key themes:

- shared leadership
- focus on outcomes
- working together
- good practice.

The Blueprint provides a way forward for the care and protection community with actions focusing on:

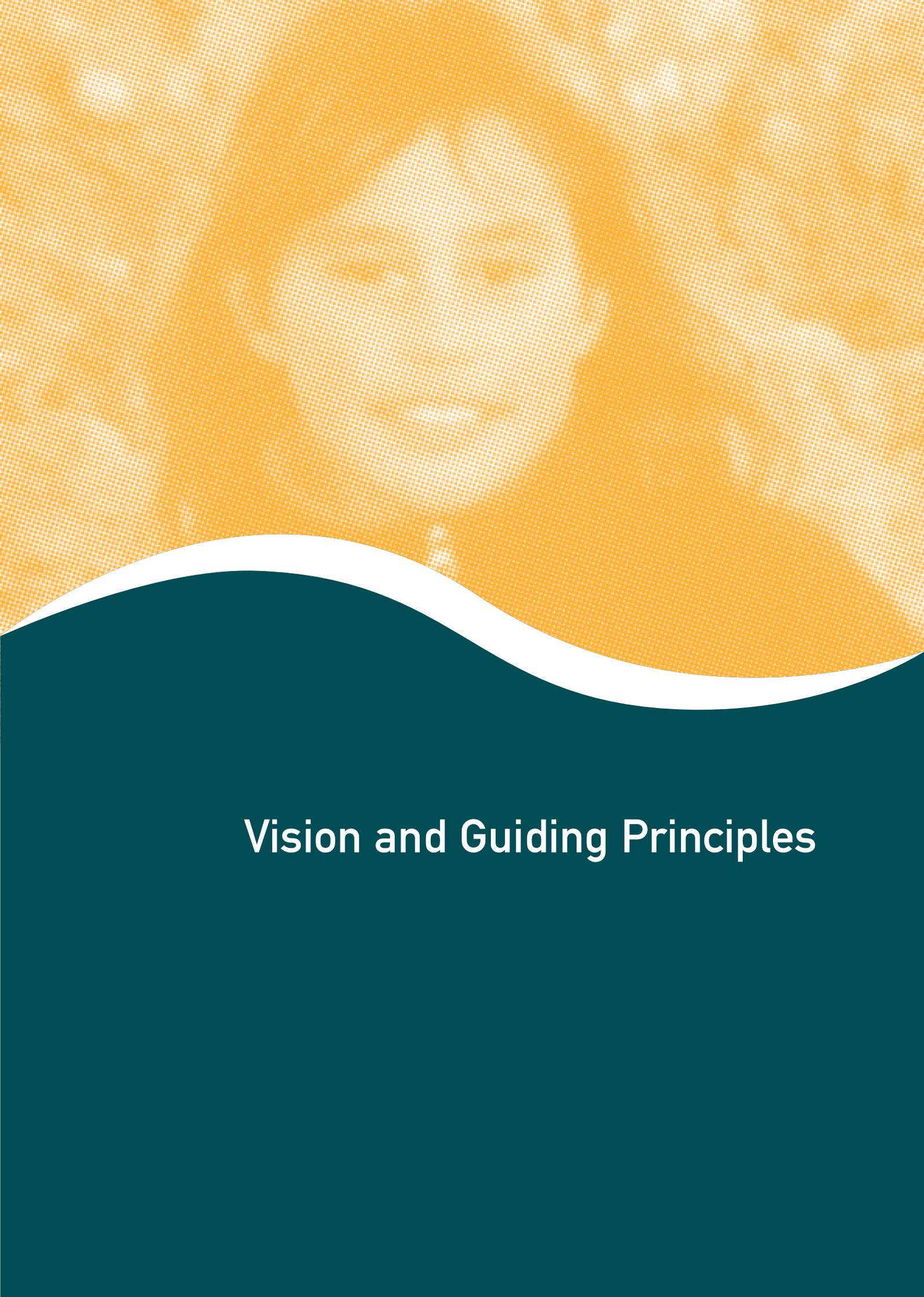
- *shared leadership*
- *outcomes*
- *working together*
- *good practice*

Efforts to improve social conditions must be delivered alongside the implementation of the Blueprint.

The social context

While actions outlined in the Blueprint have been developed to address the issues outlined above, it is important to note that child abuse and neglect occurs within a broader social context. Issues of poverty, social inequality and colonisation, to name a few, have a direct bearing on care and protection outcomes. Societal factors have a significant impact on the skills, strategies or identities that individuals develop, as well as on the support that is available to them as they journey through life.

While dealing with these issues in their entirety is beyond the scope of this Blueprint it is important that such matters be addressed. Efforts to improve social conditions must be delivered alongside the implementation of the Blueprint in order for the care and protection community to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families effectively. *New Zealand's Agenda for Children* and the *Youth Development Strategy* are examples of two strategies that include actions aiming to improve social conditions for children and young people and their families and that will complement the actions outlined in the Blueprint.



Vision and Guiding Principles

Vision

Families, communities and government working together for the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and their families

Our vision for the care and protection community is families, communities and government working together for the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and their families through shared ownership of strengths and problems, and shared development of solutions and strategic directions.

Guiding Principles

All children and young people have a right to be safe and cared for

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people is the primary consideration. Policies and services must be focused on the needs of children and young people, and children and young people must be able to participate in decisions that affect them, according to their ability and level of understanding.

Families and whānau have the primary responsibility for the care, upbringing and development of their children and young people

Policies and services should support families and whānau to care for their children and young people, and should recognise that children and young people need to be seen in the context of their family and whānau. Wherever possible, relationships between children, young people and their family and whānau should be preserved and strengthened. Regardless of their living arrangements, families and whānau always retain a responsibility to participate in the care, upbringing and development of their children and young people.

Communities, hapū and iwi have a responsibility to nurture and promote the wellbeing of children and young people and to support their families and whānau

Children and young people also need to be seen in the context of their community, hapū and iwi, and within the context of their culture. Policies and services must respond to local interests and needs and provide support to communities, hapū and iwi.

New Zealand society as a whole is responsible for the wellbeing of children, young people and families

All New Zealanders should own and take responsibility for the care and protection of children and young people. The state has a responsibility to support communities and families in their role in caring for and protecting children.

Everyone in the care and protection community must work well together to promote the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people

Agencies in the care and protection community must be committed to working with and supporting each other and to sharing their information and knowledge. Policies and services need to be well co-ordinated, well aligned and based on a shared understanding of children's and young people's needs and rights.

There should be an effective continuum of services including community development, preventative and remedial services

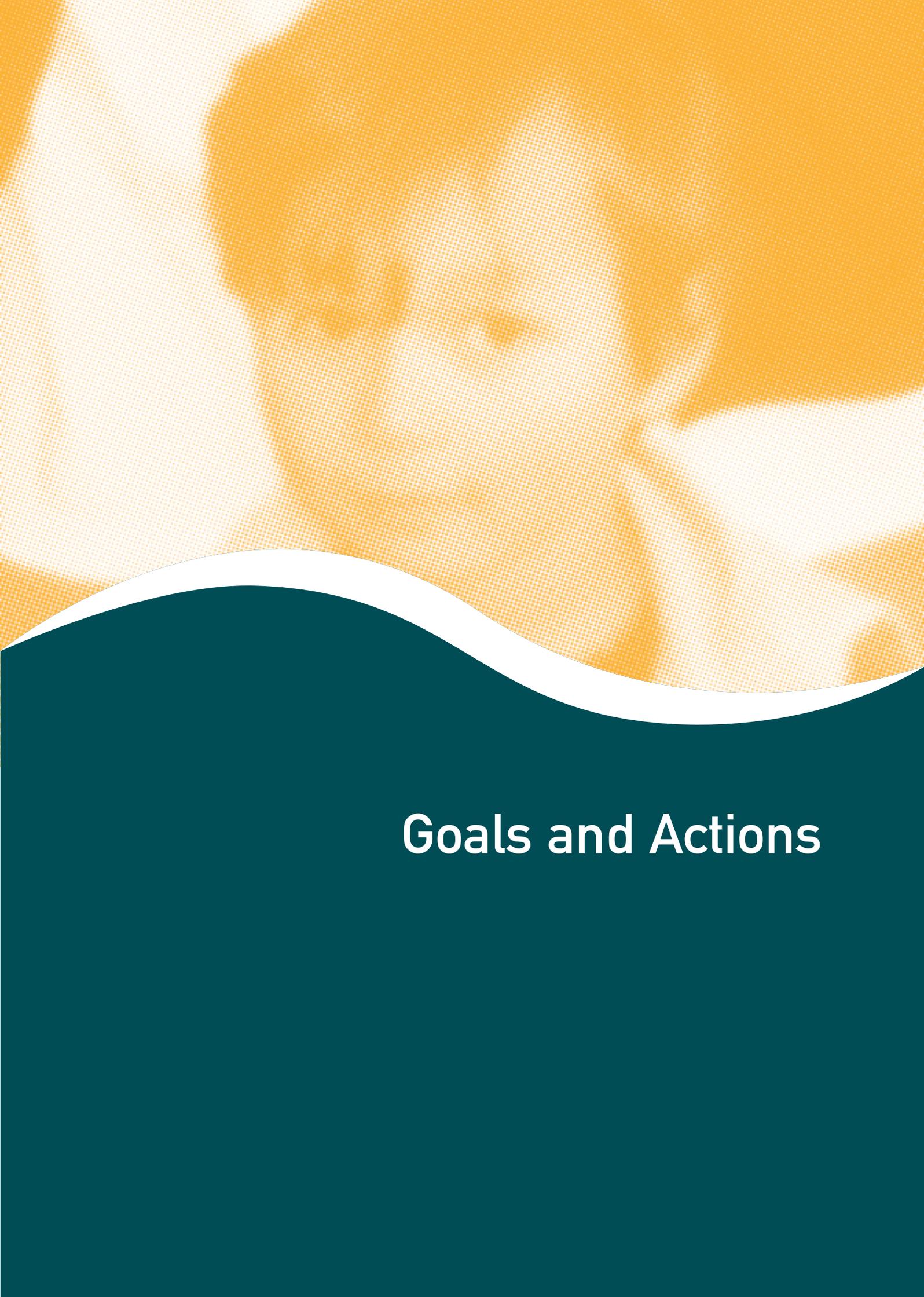
A comprehensive approach to preventing and addressing child abuse and neglect requires a range of services from preventative services aimed at building the strengths of children, young people and their families through to more intensive crisis, care and justice services. Policies and services need to be well planned, drawing on knowledge that families and communities have about the needs of their children and young people. Funding of services should be based on sound service planning and consistent with a needs-based approach.

Policies and services must be flexible and responsive to the diverse needs of children, young people and families

Effective policies and services need to take into account and be responsive to the diverse needs of children, young people and families from all population groups in New Zealand (for example, according to age, gender, ethnicity, geographic location, disability, and social and/or cultural background).

Policies and services must be based on good practice

Policies and services must be needs-based, focused on clear outcomes, and built upon the most up-to-date knowledge and evidence of effectiveness. Innovation, ongoing learning and development should be encouraged.



Goals and Actions

Goal



Area of Action

Four goals have been identified to address the key issues facing the care and protection community.

The plan of action details ten specific areas where action is being taken, or will be taken, to meet these goals.

Goal 1

Shared leadership of the care and protection community



- 1 Develop Māori leadership of, and involvement in, the care and protection community
- 2 Engage Pacific and other ethnic communities in the planning and provision of care and protection services
- 3 Incorporate the views of children, young people and their families into planning and provision of care and protection services

Goal 2

Outcomes drive the provision of care and protection services



- 4 Develop outcome measures for the care and protection community
- 5 Promote and enhance evaluation

Goal 3

Government and non-government funders and providers co-operate to provide an integrated service



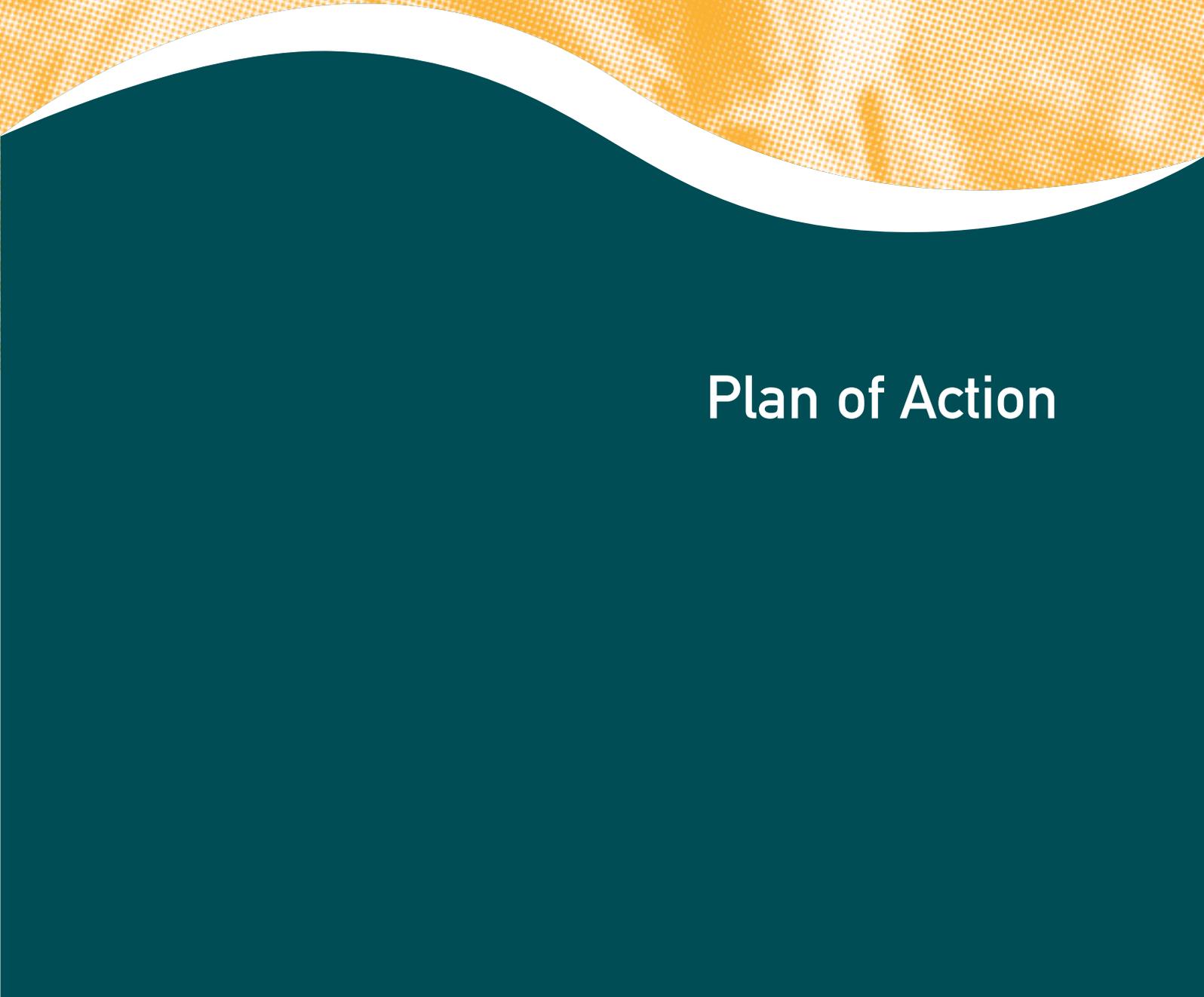
- 6 Improve interagency co-ordination, collaboration and communication
- 7 Develop a government investment strategy for care and protection services
- 8 Address workforce issues
- 9 Review the role of Care and Protection Resource Panels

Goal 4

Good practice is recognised, supported and promoted



- 10 Identify and promote good practice



Plan of Action

Implementation of the Action Plan will develop:

- *outcome measures*
- *a government investment strategy*
- *improved interagency co-ordination*
- *standards for good practice.*

PLAN OF ACTION

Each area of action includes:

- details of the work to be undertaken
- the rationale for progressing the action
- the lead agency or agencies responsible and other agencies that have an interest in being involved
- the timeframe for completing the work
- a summary of progress to date (where relevant).

Where an area of action has strong links with other related government initiatives, these have been noted.

While each action has a government agency assigned to lead it, the meaningful engagement of the community sector will be crucial. The Blueprint Steering Group will monitor and report on the involvement of community groups in the progression of actions.

Many of the specific actions will be completed within the next two years. However, most areas of action will involve ongoing work and further actions will be added as required. The Ministry of Social Development will place the Blueprint on its website – www.msd.govt.nz – as a living document and will document changes on the website as they are made.

Implementation of the action plan will contribute to the development of a revised and more detailed Blueprint in 2004 that will incorporate some of the elements under development in the next two years, including:

- outcome measures for the care and protection community
- a government investment strategy for care and protection services
- strategies to improve interagency co-ordination, collaboration and communication
- standards for good practice.

AREA OF ACTION 1

Māori leadership of, and involvement in, the care and protection community

Rationale

As partners to the Treaty of Waitangi and tangata whenua it is important that Māori are meaningfully engaged in a leadership role at all levels in the planning and provision of care and protection services. Young Māori and their families are significantly over represented as users of care and protection services. A greater leadership role for Māori in the care and protection community is likely to result in services which better meet their needs and are more effective in preventing child abuse and neglect in Māori families.

Māori will be consulted on the ways in which they want to be involved in performing governance, management, purchase and provider functions in the care and protection community.

Responsibility

Lead

Te Puni Kōkiri / Ministry of Social Development

Timeframe

A strategy for improving Māori leadership in the care and protection community will be developed by June 2003.

Links with other government initiatives

Work undertaken on this action will complement other state sector strategies contributing to improved outcomes for Māori, including Child, Youth and Family's *Te Poumanu*, and the Ministry of Health's *He Korowai Oranga* – Māori Health Strategy.



Action details

Develop a strategy to ensure that Māori have a significant leadership role at all levels in the planning and provision of care and protection services. This will involve establishing where, when and in what ways iwi, hapū and Māori communities want to be involved in performing governance, management, purchase and provider functions.



Action details

Establish mechanisms to ensure the views of Pacific peoples and other ethnic communities are incorporated into the planning and provision of care and protection services, including the implementation of the Blueprint.

AREA OF ACTION 2

Engage Pacific and other ethnic communities in the planning and provision of care and protection services

Rationale

The development of care and protection policies and services should reflect the needs and concerns of service users. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Pacific peoples and some ethnic minority groups are high users of care and protection services and/or are unable to access culturally appropriate services. Emerging issues include the specific needs of some refugee and new migrant communities. Establishing mechanisms to incorporate the views of Pacific peoples and other ethnic communities in the planning and provision of care and protection services is likely to result in services which better meet the needs of these communities.

Responsibility

Lead

Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (for Pacific peoples) / Ministry of Social Development

Other

Office of Ethnic Affairs

Timeframe

Mechanisms will be established by 30 June 2003.

Links with other government initiatives

The Blueprint is aligned to the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs' *Pacific Capacity Building Strategy*. As part of the Strategy, Community Reference Groups, comprising people mandated by their communities, have been established in eight pilot regions across the country. The Blueprint Steering Group will work with the Community Reference Groups to determine appropriate mechanisms for engaging Pacific peoples in the planning and provision of care and protection services. Work under this action will also draw on the expertise of the Office of Ethnic Affairs, and work being undertaken by the Ministry of Social Development to develop an ethnic responsiveness strategy to address social development issues for ethnic groups, including refugees and migrants and New Zealand-born generations.

All work undertaken in this area of action will be co-ordinated with related actions in *Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*.

AREA OF ACTION 3

Incorporate the views of children, young people and their families into the planning and provision of care and protection services

Rationale

The development of care and protection policies and services should reflect the needs and concerns of service users – that is, children, young people and their families. It is particularly important to ensure the views of high user groups, such as children and young people with disabilities, are represented. Establishing mechanisms to incorporate the views of children, young people and their families is likely to result in care and protection services that better meet the needs of service users and are more effective in preventing child abuse and neglect.

Responsibility

Lead

Ministry of Social Development

Other

Te Puni Kōkiri; Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs; Ministry of Youth Affairs; Child, Youth and Family

Timeframe

Mechanisms will be established by 30 June 2003.

Links with other government initiatives

The Ministry of Social Development led the development of *New Zealand's Agenda for Children*, which was launched in June 2002. One of the key action areas in the Agenda is 'Increasing Children's Participation.' Action to be undertaken in this area places an emphasis on improving children's opportunities to participate, particularly in government and community decision-making processes that affect them. Work undertaken in the context of the Blueprint will both build on and reflect this commitment.



Action details

Establish mechanisms to ensure the views of children, young people and their families are incorporated into the planning and provision of care and protection services, including implementation of the Blueprint.



Action details

Establish outcome measures to enable the effectiveness of care and protection services in improving outcomes for children, young people and their families to be assessed. This will involve:

- *identifying outcome measures and performance benchmarks for the care and protection community in consultation with stakeholders, including service user groups*
- *identifying the data requirements for measuring care and protection performance in relation to these outcome measures*
- *encouraging consistency between monitoring of providers and the outcome measures*
- *developing a feedback process so that information on outcomes informs practice improvements.*

AREA OF ACTION 4

Develop outcome measures for the care and protection community

Rationale

To date monitoring of care and protection services across the care and protection community has focused more on service outputs than on their impact on children, young people and their families. The development of outcome measures and performance benchmarks will enable the outcomes of care and protection services to be monitored and will provide information on the effectiveness of interventions and programmes. This will lead to improvements in services for children, young people and their families and will improve the basis for making funding decisions.

Responsibility

Lead

Ministry of Social Development

Other

Child, Youth and Family; Police; Treasury; Department of Internal Affairs; Office of Ethnic Affairs

Timeframe

Outcome measures will be agreed by June 2003, with benchmarking to be completed by 30 June 2004.

Links with other government initiatives

This work will take account of work Child, Youth and Family has underway on outcome measures as part of New Directions, and the Pathfinder project (led by the Treasury and the State Services Commission). It will also link to work undertaken as part of the Action for Child and Youth Development work programme to develop regular reporting on how New Zealand children and young people are faring against a range of indicators and other work to improve state delivery of care and protection services.



AREA OF ACTION 5

Promote and enhance evaluation

Rationale

A focus on building a culture of evaluation will enhance the knowledge base about what services are effective in preventing child abuse and neglect, and why. This will lead to improvements in services for children, young people and their families and will help to ensure that funding is being used effectively.

Responsibility

Lead

Ministry of Social Development

Other

Child, Youth and Family; Police;
Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs;
Te Puni Kōkiri

Timeframe

The extent of evaluation practices in the care and protection community will be examined by June 2003.

Existing models and examples of good practice in evaluation, including good practice for Māori and for Pacific peoples, will be identified by June 2003.

A strategy for enhancing evaluation practices in the care and protection community, incorporating priorities for early action, will be developed by December 2003.

Mechanisms for disseminating information about effective services and good practice in evaluation will be developed by December 2003.

Links with other government initiatives

This area of action is linked to actions around research and evaluation identified in *Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy* and Child, Youth and Family and Ministry of Social Development led programmes of research and evaluation.

Action details

Develop mechanisms to promote and enhance the evaluation of services and programmes in order to build knowledge about what services are effective in preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect. This will include:

- *exploring the extent of ongoing evaluation in government and non-government organisations*
- *articulating good practice in evaluation (including good practice for Māori and for Pacific and other ethnic groups)*
- *addressing issues of the capacity of the care and protection community to undertake evaluations.*



AREA OF ACTION 6

Improve interagency co-ordination, collaboration and communication

Action details

Develop strategies to address barriers to interagency co-ordination, collaboration and communication at all levels, and promote information sharing and co-ordination of services between agencies in the care and protection community.

This work will include consideration of the impact of:

- *relevant legislation, such as the Privacy Act 1993 and the Public Finance Act 1989*
- *existing funding, contracting, monitoring and reporting frameworks.*

Rationale

There is currently inadequate co-ordination of care and protection services at every level, leading to unintended duplication of services, problems of information sharing between agencies and gaps in service provision. All of these negatively impact on children, young people and families. Significantly better collaboration is needed to improve the outcomes for children, young people and their families by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the services they receive.

In particular, a co-ordinated approach to the funding of services is required to support collaboration amongst service providers in the care and protection community.

Enhancing and streamlining national systems and processes, and the development of protocols and guidelines between relevant government agencies at all levels should encourage inter-agency co-ordination, collaboration and communication.

Responsibility

Lead

Ministry of Social Development

Other

Child, Youth and Family; Te Puni Kōkiri; Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Youth Affairs; Police; Office of Ethnic Affairs; Department for Courts; Department of Corrections and the Treasury

Timeframe

Strategies and systems for improved co-ordination, collaboration and communication will be established by June 2004.

Progress to date

The Ministry of Social Development has assessed options for the evaluation of voluntary reporting protocols and explored options for improving information sharing about children in need of care and protection. This work has fed into the development of an 'overarching protocol' for information sharing at the case level (led by Child, Youth and Family).

Links with other government initiatives

This area of action is closely linked to, and will be undertaken in conjunction with actions to improve co-ordination, collaboration and communication in *Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*. It will also draw on work being undertaken as part of the State Service Commission's Review of the Centre project, and the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party work on improving resourcing and accountability arrangements. It also links to initiatives such as the High and Complex Needs Strategy.

Work undertaken in this area will also seek to build on the Strengthening Families initiative, as appropriate. The Strengthening Families network of 69 management groups and 44 co-ordinators provides one avenue for pursuing enhanced collaboration.



AREA OF ACTION 7

Develop a government investment strategy for care and protection services

Action details

Develop an investment strategy which

- identifies the services necessary to meet the requirements of children, young people and their families with care and protection needs
- determines the optimal mix of these services within and across sectors
- prioritises government investment decisions.

This work will involve:

- scoping the range of sectors, purchase agents and services to be covered by the investment strategy
- identifying the current range of services
- identifying and quantifying the current and projected demand for services (across both geographic and ethnic communities)
- identifying cost-effective services
- identifying and analysing possible service gaps and any areas of oversupply

Rationale

There is currently no well founded understanding of what services effectively meet the needs of children, young people and their families with care and protection needs, or of who should be responsible for funding and providing these services. Child, Youth and Family is conducting a Local Services Mapping project to prioritise the allocation of its existing care and protection resources at a community level. However, this project will not address the overall level of service need, or the interfaces with other sectors.

Determining the range and mix of care and protection services that maximise the positive impact on targeted children, young people and their families should improve the basis upon which government investment decisions are made and, ultimately, outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The development of a government investment strategy will involve Child, Youth and Family and the health, education and non-government sectors, in the co-ordinated delivery and purchase of services for children, young people and families with care and protection needs.

The strategy may also incorporate advice on the development of sector capability. Ministers will be consulted on a process for involving the non-government sector so that conflicts of interest are avoided.

Responsibility

Lead

The Treasury / Ministry of Social Development

Other

Child, Youth and Family; Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health; Te Puni Kōkiri; Ministry of Youth Affairs and Office of Ethnic Affairs

Timeframe

The optimal range of care and protection services will be defined by July 2004.

A government investment strategy for care and protection services will be developed by October 2004.

Links with other government initiatives

Work in this area of action will draw on Child, Youth and Family's Local Services Mapping project. Local services mapping is a process that involves government and communities working together to identify the needs of local communities and develop services to match those needs. Information gained from this process will help to define the optimal range and mix of care and protection services.

- *determining the optimal range and mix of services for children, young people and their families with care and protection needs.*

It will include:

- *analysis of New Zealand and international literature on service effectiveness*
- *data on service utilisation rates*
- *modelling demand for services*
- *perspectives of communities of interest and professionals*
- *analysis of demographic factors.*

There is a lack of good quality information about the need that exists in the community and the types of services that may cost-effectively meet those needs. The investment strategy will be limited by the quality of information available. Consequently, it will need to be revised from time to time as new information is available.



AREA OF ACTION 8

Address workforce issues

Action details

Identify and examine workforce issues in the care and protection community, and develop strategies for addressing them. These issues include:

- *insufficient qualified staff in some agencies*
- *recruitment and retention difficulties*
- *social work not being seen as a desirable profession by many young people*
- *a lack of information on the demand and supply of skilled workers*
- *poor communication between employers and education and training providers*
- *issues associated with unpaid and voluntary work.*

A Workforce Development Group has been established to undertake this area of action.

Rationale

A high-quality workforce, with an appropriate mix of skills and level of experience, is essential for the provision of quality care and protection services to children, young people and their families. However, there are significant workforce issues facing the care and protection community that need to be addressed in order to develop a high-quality workforce. These issues run across a number of sectors and professional groupings and require consideration from a group working together across the care and protection community.

Responsibility

Lead

Workforce Development Group/
Ministry of Social Development

Other

Employers, training institutions,
and professionals working within
the care and protection community

Timeframe

The Workforce Development Group will meet at least quarterly and its role will be reviewed after 12 months.

A work programme for the group will be developed and will set out further timeframes for progressing this area of action.

Progress to date

The Ministry of Social Development has undertaken a study of workforce issues in the social work sector which the Workforce Development Group will draw on to identify and prioritise key issues to be addressed.

The Workforce Development Group was established in September 2002, based on nominations from the care and protection community. The group is convened by the Ministry of Social Development. Members are:

- Anthea Simcock
- Buster Curson
- Michelle Pascoe
- Moana-o-Hinerangi
- Mokauina Fuemana Ngaro
- Robyn Hamid
- Susi Williams
- Tracie Lee Shipton
- Richard Wilcox.

Links with other government initiatives

The Workforce Development Group will build on existing work, and will link with the proposed Social Workers' Registration Board; Child, Youth and Family's workforce planning project; the Tertiary Education Strategy and the Pacific Workforce Development Strategy. This work stream will also complement the work of the Health Workforce Advisory Committee.

The group will develop its own work programme, prioritising the key issues to be addressed. This will include reviewing the issues identified in the Brown report and by the Blueprint Development Group. It will also identify any gaps in information that is currently available from sources throughout the care and protection community.

The group will develop strategies for addressing the issues, drawing on the knowledge and expertise of the wider care and protection community.

The group will also consider the likely impact of the proposed Social Workers Registration Act and provide advice to the Registration Board on registration criteria.



Action details

Review the role of Care and Protection Resource Panels to consider the following:

- *the purpose of Resource Panels and their key role*
- *the operation of Resource Panels*
- *options for problem resolution.*

This work will include the preparation of a discussion document to canvass views about how Resource Panels are working.

AREA OF ACTION 9

Review the role of Care and Protection Resource Panels

Rationale

Care and Protection Resource Panels were established under the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989. In theory, Resource Panels provide a way of bringing different agencies and communities together, to work in a collaborative way for the wellbeing of individual children in need of care and protection. However, the Brown report noted that the procedures, use and effectiveness of Care and Protection Resource Panels vary considerably from area to area and recommended that their role, effectiveness and reporting lines be evaluated.

Responsibility

Lead

Ministry of Social Development

Other

Child, Youth and Family; Care and Protection Resource Panels

Timeframe

The Ministry of Social Development will report to the Minister of Social Services and Employment by April 2003.

Progress to date

The Ministry of Social Development assessed options for the evaluation of Care and Protection Resource Panels in 2001 and concluded that the conflicting accounts on the effectiveness and role of panels warranted further work in this area.

A series of workshops has been held with Child, Youth and Family staff and Care and Protection Resource Panel members to inform the development of a discussion document. The discussion document was released in November 2002, with feedback sought by early 2003.



AREA OF ACTION 10

Identify and promote good practice

Rationale

Good practice is critical for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and ensuring that services are effective in preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect. A focus on practice standards and mechanisms for sharing information about good practice will contribute to the delivery of high-quality care and protection services.

Responsibility

Lead

Child, Youth and Family / Ministry of Social Development

Other

Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Office of Ethnic Affairs

Timeframe

Literature review on best practice in the delivery of care and protection services will be completed by June 2003.

Standards for good practice in the delivery of care and protection services will be reviewed by December 2004.

Mechanisms for identifying, recognising and promoting good care and protection practice will be reviewed by December 2004.

Progress to date

The Ministry of Social Development has assessed current practices related to the transition of young people from care to independence. This work highlighted issues facing young people exiting care and identified a number of options for improving service delivery. These options are now being examined in detail.

Budget 2002 included \$400,000 for the development of services to assist young people to make the transition from life in care to a life of independence. The funding will enable a limited number of services to be piloted.

Links with other government initiatives

This area of action has strong links with Child, Youth and Family's New Directions programme; the implementation of the proposed Registration of Social Workers Act; and the Blueprint work to address workforce issues. It will also be co-ordinated with actions in *Te Rito – New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*, to develop and implement best practice guidelines.

Action details

Review standards for good practice in the delivery of care and protection services, including good practice for Māori and for Pacific peoples and other ethnic communities. This will involve:

- *reviewing the literature on what constitutes best practice in the delivery of care and protection services*
- *identifying and assessing existing practice standards²*
- *considering the development and implementation of common standards for the care and protection community*
- *establishing mechanisms to promote information sharing and application of good practice standards by organisations delivering care and protection services (for example, through contract arrangements or awards for good practice).*

² The Blueprint Development Group identified two priority areas for development: the identification of options for improved assessment procedures (giving consideration to cultural appropriateness and the potential of multidisciplinary teams); and the development of mechanisms for the routine collection of iwi affiliation data (based on Statistics New Zealand requirements) related to care and protection users.

Closing Message

Achieving the Blueprint's vision of working together for the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and families requires commitment and action from everyone in the care and protection community – that is, every individual and agency that contributes to improving child wellbeing and to preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect.

I am committed to ensuring that the Ministry of Social Development actively leads the implementation of the Blueprint, working collaboratively across the government and community sectors. I seek the support of the whole care and protection community for the Blueprint's vision, goals and actions and the commitment to help make it happen.

I believe that the Blueprint is soundly based and will ultimately lead to significant improvements in care and protection outcomes for children, young people and their families. The Blueprint lays the foundations for a well functioning care and protection community. It is a living document that will evolve as the plan of action is implemented and in response to feedback from the care and protection community.

The Blueprint reflects government and non-government perspectives from across the care and protection community and draws from a mix of theory, literature, policy and practical experience. Many individuals and organisations contributed to the thinking that has informed the Blueprint. On behalf of the Ministry of Social Development, I would like to thank the members of the Blueprint Development Group and those who generously shared their time and experience with them.

Over the next few months we will be talking to communities and agencies about the Blueprint and will be asking you to consider how you can contribute to achieving its goals and actions. We welcome your feedback and any suggestions you may have for the further development and implementation of the Blueprint. Feedback can also be sent to the

Secretariat
Blueprint Steering Group
Ministry of Social Development
P. O. Box 12-136
Wellington
or blueprint@msd.govt.nz

I strongly encourage you to support the *Care and Protection Blueprint 2003* and to play an active role in its implementation.



Peter Hughes
Chief Executive