



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

21 SEP 2016

Dear

On 15 July 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *The total numbers of young people exiting Youth Justice and Care and Protection Residences between 2000 and 2016, and the numbers that called for official reviews.*
- *The numbers of young people placed in Youth Justice and Care and Protection Residences, for the years 2000 to 2016, broken down by gender.*
- *The numbers of young people who have run away from their Care and Protection or Youth Justice Residence, for the years 2000 to 2016, broken down by gender.*
- *The numbers of young people who have run away twice or more from their Care and Protection or Youth Justice Residence in the years 2000 to 2016, broken down by gender.*

When concerns are raised that a child or young person is at risk of abuse or harm, Child, Youth and Family has a range of responses depending on the level of need for the child or young person and their family/whānau.

Care and Protection Residences are a safe and secure place where children and young people will go if they are in care and cannot live in the community for a period of time. Children and young people might stay at a residence if:

- there are worries about the child or young person's safety;
- their actions are putting themselves at risk; or
- they are putting others around them at risk.

Child, Youth and Family currently operate four Care and Protection Residences in New Zealand. These are:

- Whakatakopokai, Auckland – 20 care and protection beds
- Eponi, Lower Hutt – 10 care and protection beds
- Te Oranga, Christchurch – 10 care and protection beds
- Puketai, Dunedin – 8 care and protection beds.

Youth Justice Residences provide a safe place where young people can be supported to get their life on track and to become the best they can be.

A young person may be placed into a residence for the following reasons:

- A young person has been arrested by the police and put in the care of Child, Youth and Family until they go to Youth Court.

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- A young person has been remanded by the court and needs to stay at a residence until the court deals with the case. This can take two or three weeks, and could be longer if the charges are denied.
- A young person has been sentenced by the Youth Court for a period between three to six months. If things go well for them in the residence, they may be able to leave the residence earlier. Once they leave the residence, they will be subject to six to twelve month's supervision in the community.
- If a young person is sentenced to prison they may be admitted to a residence for some of this time.

Child, Youth and Family currently operate four Youth Justice Residences in New Zealand. These are:

- Korowai Manaaki in South Auckland – 40 Youth Justice beds
- Te Maioha o Parekarangi in Rotorua – 30 Youth Justice beds
- Te Au rere a te Tonga in Palmerston North– 30 Youth Justice beds
- Te Puna Wai ō Tuhinapo in Christchurch – 30 Youth Justice beds.

National and local level data regarding residences can be found on the Child, Youth and Family website at the following link: <http://www.cyf.govt.nz/about-us/key-statistics/kids-in-care.html>.

The table below provides the number of discharges from Youth Justice and Care and Protection Residences for the financial years 2011 to 2015 and the nine months ending March 2016. A discharge refers to the process whereby the decision to transition the child or young person back to a community placement, this can be to a family home, caregiver or a return home. Planning for that transition considers what supports are deemed appropriate in the community to help the child or young person stay safe in the community. The transition plan should be integrated into the on-going planning and review process as part of a young person's Care Plan.

Please note that young people can have more than one discharge within a period. The number of discharges is lower in the 2015/16 financial year ending March, as this is not full year figures and there are currently ten less beds in Te Puna Wai ō Tuhinapo and Epuni Residences.

Residence	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 (until 31 March)
Care and Protection Residences						
Epuni	42	44	52	50	39	26
Puketai	25	26	18	17	27	10
Te Oranga (C&P South)	14	20	17	31	28	28
Whakatakapokai	39	52	66	49	45	32
Care and Protection Total	120	142	153	147	139	96
Youth Justice Residences						
Korowai Manaaki	233	264	301	304	320	238
Te Au rere a te Tonga	173	168	139	185	232	136
Te Maioha o Parekarangi	87	142	188	212	201	158
Te Puna Wai o Tuhinapo	208	236	222	272	258	132
Youth Justice Total	701	810	850	973	1,011	664
Total	821	952	1,003	1,120	1,150	760

In addition to the numbers exiting residences, you asked for the numbers of young people that have requested an official review. It is unclear what you are referring to so the Ministry has not been able to respond to this question. Please do not hesitate to contact the Ministry to clarify any further information you are seeking.

The number of young people placed in Youth Justice and Care and Protection Residences for the financial years 2011 to 2016, broken down by gender, is available on Child, Youth and Family's website at <http://www.cyf.govt.nz/documents/about-us/key-statistics/kids-in-care-national-and-local-level-data-mar-2016.xlsx>.

You will note that the number of admissions has increased since 2010 whereas youth crime has fallen. It is pertinent to note that the rise in admissions is largely caused by repeat admissions of the same young people.

Absconding relates to a child or young person, in a Care and Protection Residence, who leaves the premises or runs away from staff on an outing, without permission. Escapes custody relates to children or young people on remand or sentenced to a Youth Justice Residence, who leaves the premises without permission or runs away from staff when away from the residence. Any escape is always notified to Police and this may result in the child or young person being charged with escaping custody.

There are occasions where children and young people abscond whilst in the community; for example, on activity outings, access visits or at court appearances. This information is recorded on a child or young person's individual case file and is monitored on a case by case basis; however this data is not collated by Child, Youth and Family in manner that can be centrally reported.

When a child or young person, who is in the custody of the Chief Executive, absconds or escapes from their placement, part of Child, Youth and Family's response is to file a missing persons report with the Police. The Police send through weekly reports to Child, Youth and Family which have the number of open missing person reports as at the date the Police report is sent. This enables Child, Youth and Family to report the number of missing children and young people as at a particular date in time. Information about the Joint Protocol with New Zealand Police and how Child, Youth and Family work with Police to manage missing children is available at:

<http://www.practicecentre.cyf.govt.nz/policy/caring-for-children-and-young-people/key-information/reporting-and-managing-missing-children-and-young-people-in-care.html>

I can confirm that there were no incidents of young people escaping custody from Youth Justice Residence between 1 July 2014 and 31 December 2014. Between 1 January 2015 and 1 June 2016, there were two events of young people escaping custody. One of these events involved two young people escaping from a Residence at the same time. I can advise that in all of the cases of young people escaping custody, the young people were male.

Between 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016 there were eight events of young people absconding from a Care and Protection Residence, of those eight events, nine young people involved were male, and two female. Three of the eight events involved two young people absconding at the same time, and the remaining five one young person absconded.

During this period two young people have escaped or absconded from a Youth Justice or Care and Protection Residences twice or more; both of these young people were male.

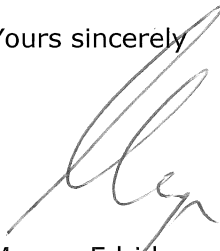
The Ministry is unable to provide absconding data from prior to 1 July 2014 as this was when Residences moved to the Ministry's centralised reporting system. Prior to 1 July all incident reports were held locally at each residence and on individual case files. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act as substantial manual collation would be required in order to provide a response. 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 regarding Youth Justice and Care and Protection Residences 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



Murray Edridge
Deputy Chief Executive, Child, Youth and Family