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Social
Service
Providers

Te Pai
Ora o
Aotearoa



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Community providers welcome pause of harmful Oranga Tamariki contracting process

Te Pai Ora SSPA says it is extremely heartened the Minister for Children, Karen Chhour has called for a pause in Oranga Tamariki’s review of contracts with social service providers. In June last year hundreds of providers were given little notice that their funding would be reduced or discontinued.

“We have evidence that the funding changes over the last year have been putting children and whānau at risk,” says CEO, Belinda Himiona. “The funding review was rushed and chaotic. There was little opportunity for providers to work with Oranga Tamariki to ensure children and whānau were not harmed by funding reductions and uncertainty. In reality, children and whānau were left without vital services they rely on.”

Te Pai Ora SSPA says there appeared to be no transparent process or rationale for many contract changes that had good evidence of their positive impact. Te Pai Ora SSPA raised serious concerns with the Auditor General in July last year and the Auditor General is currently carrying out an independent inquiry of the Oranga Tamariki funding and contracting process.

“These funding decisions have already had real-life consequences” says Ms Himiona. “We have heard stories of children whose move to a stable and loving home has been put on hold. We know of teen mums with nowhere else to go after teen parent units lost their funding. We know of women and children experiencing family and sexual violence left with no lifeline because there are no other supports available.”

“We look forward to understanding what this decision means for the range of organisations who have been impacted by funding changes, some of whom are about to or have already signed new contracts,” says Ms Himiona. “Until now many providers have had confusing and conflicting communication from Oranga Tamariki. While this pause is welcome, the flip flopping needs to stop. The uncertainty and confusion is placing enormous stress on committed and hardworking staff and community providers. Organisations need to be able to focus on what matters most – supporting children and whānau.”

Te Pai Ora SSPA says the decision to pause the review will provide an opportunity to reset the process and the engagement with community providers. “The social sector stands ready to work with the Government to care for children and whānau. We’re expecting the Minister’s decision will allow time for Oranga Tamariki to work with the sector to shape what’s needed and ensure children and whānau are safe and cared for.”

ENDS

Belinda Himiona is available for interviews upon request: ceo@sspa.org.nz | 021 0230 1029



Editor's Notes:

ABOUT SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS TE PAI ORA O AOTEAROA | www.ssipa.org.nz

Te Pai Ora SSPA is a membership-based organisation, representing more than 230 non-profit, community-based social service organisations from around Aotearoa New Zealand. Our member organisations are diverse, including small rural organisations, Iwi and kaupapa Māori service providers, Pacific providers, and large national children's organisations. Our member organisations provide life-changing and often life-saving services and support in their communities.

Te Pai Ora SSPA's full members are funded by government to deliver social services in our communities every day, with a predominant focus on children, rangatahi, families and whānau. Our affiliate members are organisations that deliver social services for these people, and organisations and individuals working in areas aligned to the interests of children, young people, whānau or communities.

Te Pai Ora SSPA's vision is that Aotearoa New Zealand's community-based social services are sustainable, making a positive impact every day in our communities and hāpori, supporting children, young people and whānau to thrive now and into the future. Te Pai Ora SSPA works to strengthen Aotearoa New Zealand's social sector through advocacy and engagement, learning and development, relationships and sector leadership.