

PARENTING

OUR POSITION

Parenting is one of the most important jobs in society today and the overwhelming majority of parents and caregivers provide a healthy and supportive environment, and are committed to the best possible outcomes for their children.

OUR GOAL

We would like to see fewer children's wellbeing compromised by poor parenting; more age-specific parenting information made available to parents and caregivers; a greater number and diversity of parents receiving parenting education and support; acceptance that it is normal for parents and caregivers to seek parenting education and support.

WHAT THE COMMISSION HAS DONE SO FAR

- 2008:** Review of Parenting Programmes.
- 2006:** Grandfathers: Their changing family roles and contributions. Blue Skies Fund report.
- 2008:** Grandparents in Rural Families: Young people's perspectives. Blue Skies Fund report.
- 2009:** Supporting Kiwi Dads: Role and needs of New Zealand families. Research Report.
- 2009:** We're a Family: A study of how lesbians and gay men are creating and maintaining family in New Zealand. Blue Skies Fund report.
- 2009:** Settling In: Parent-adolescent family dynamics in the acculturation process. Blue Skies Fund report.

- 2009:** Pathways Through Parental Separation: The experiences of a group of non-resident fathers. Innovative Practice Fund report.
- 2009:** Childbirth Education: Antenatal education and transitions of maternity care in New Zealand. Families Commission Research Fund report.
- 2010:** Being a Single Mum: Pacific Island mothers' positive experiences of parenting. Blue Skies Fund report.
- 2010:** Submission to ECE taskforce on the review of Early Childhood Education (unpublished).
- 2011:** Investing in the Early Years.
- 2011:** Early Intervention and Support for Vulnerable Families.
- 2011:** Early Intervention and Support for Vulnerable Families, research published.
- 2011:** Submission to the Māori Affairs Select Committee on the Inquiry into Māori Participation in Early Childhood Education.
- 2011:** Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting – An Overview.
- 2011:** Literature Review on Māori Teenage Pregnancy.
- 2012:** Safety of Subsequent Children: International literature review.
- 2102:** Safety of Subsequent Children – Māori children and whānau.
- 2012:** Submission to the Green Paper on Vulnerable Children, research published.
- 2012:** Submission to the Health Committee Inquiry into Preventing Child Abuse and Improving Child Health Outcomes, to be published.
- 2012:** Report on Disabled Parenting (to be published).

COMMISSION'S VIEW

- Parents and caregivers have a critical influence on what children experience and on their future outcomes: cognitive development, language, social and emotional development, health and school outcomes, self-esteem, attachment with others, and future relationships.
- Children who do not get enough care and nurturing may have difficulty as adults parenting their own children. This in turn impacts on society.
- Being a parent is challenging. Many parents feel unsupported and do not have the skills and knowledge to parent well all the time and in all circumstances.

PARENTING CONT'D

- › Parents may need support at different times in the stages of their children's development.
- › Support is available from many sources for parents and people acting in a parenting role. The support comes from networks provided by friends, whānau and extended family. It includes numerous services from the commercial or community and voluntary sector, and extends to government services aimed at families caring for children and young people.
- › The parenting role is diverse; it may include caregivers, grandparents raising grandchildren and foster parents.
- › If parents face chronic stress and struggle to meet basic needs, it is a challenge for them to support their children's learning and development. Parents need to have their basic needs addressed eg, adequate housing and income.

REFERENCES

- › Families Commission (2005) Review of Parenting Programmes
- › Families Commission (2009) Supporting Kiwi Dads: Role and needs of New Zealand families.
- › Families Commission (2010) Being a Single Mum: Pacific Island mothers' positive experiences of parenting
- › Families Commission (2010) Passing It On: The intergenerational transmission of human capital in New Zealand families
- › Families Commission (2011) Teenage pregnancy and parenting: An overview
- › Family and Community Services, Ministry of Social Development – Positive parenting
- › Strategies with Kids – Information for parents
- › Parents Centre (pre birth and support)
- › Kiwi Families (advice for all parents)
- › Parent to Parent (disabilities)

Useful websites

- › Ministry of Education (preschool and school)
- › Plunket (support for 0 to 5 years)
- › Barnardos (childcare and parenting support)