

# Introduction

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This handbook has been developed to assist and support all providers who deliver ‘well child care’ in accordance with the *Well Child/Tamariki Ora National Schedule*. ‘Well child care’ is a term used to describe a screening, surveillance, education and support service offered to all New Zealand children from birth to five years and their family or whānau.

The handbook should be read in conjunction with the following documents: *New Zealand Health Strategy (2000)*; *Primary Health Care Strategy (2001)*; *He Korowai Oranga Māori Health Strategy 2002*; *Pacific Health and Disability Action Plan (2002)*; *Child Health Strategy (1998)*; and *Well Child/Tamariki Ora National Schedule (1996)*.

Primary Health Care is one of five service priority areas in the New Zealand Health Strategy.

The primary objective for Well Child-Tamariki Ora service providers is to support families/whānau to maximise their child’s developmental potential and health status from birth to five years, establishing a strong foundation for ongoing healthy development. Pregnancy and infancy should be seen as key opportunities to act for change.

In order to achieve these, Well Child-Tamariki Ora service providers will fulfil the following obligations.

- Build on the strengths of each family.
- Inform and support parents to gain the knowledge and skills required to understand and manage the various stages of their child’s development.
- Reassure parents through health surveillance and clinical assessment that their child is developing normally, and ensure any health or developmental concerns are referred and addressed in a timely way.
- Promote positive parenting skills and attachment.
- Work with families/whānau to identify their needs for support, and either provide that support or facilitate access to support from other health or community services, especially for those children of families/whānau at risk of adverse outcomes.
- When children/young people are receiving services from other agencies, the service provider will participate in intersectoral collaboration and co-ordination initiatives such as Strengthening Families.
- Promote family/whānau understanding of Well Child-Tamariki Ora service entitlements, and assist them to access the provider’s own or alternative services if this is the client’s wish.
- Provide culturally appropriate services to all children and their families/whānau.
- Provide services in a way that recognises the needs of identified priority groups including Māori, Pacific, children from families with multiple social and economic disadvantage and children with high health and disability support needs.

- Improve integration, coverage and co-ordination of Well Child-Tamariki Ora services for the client population, including increasing uptake of immunisation and overall coverage rates.

The Well Child-Tamariki Ora service is described in detail in the *Well Child/Tamariki Ora National Schedule* (The Schedule) [dot link](#).

- The Schedule divides the care into three parallel streams that are to be delivered as an integrated package of care for each child and their family/whānau. These streams incorporate the key public health concepts of supportive environments, disease prevention, and health promotion.
- The Schedule describes the core screening, surveillance, education and support entitlements (including timing). The Schedule outlines a total of 12 core contacts that every child and their family/whānau are entitled to receive from birth to five years.

This handbook describes each of the components of the Schedule including the age(s) when each component is to be delivered and recommended process for delivering the component. It should be remembered that components are often linked – for example child development is integral to child injury prevention, and a competent practitioner will have a good knowledge of both is essential.