

Safety: Child abuse or neglect

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A finding of substantiated child abuse (including emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse) or neglect is made after an investigation or assessment has been completed by Oranga Tamariki, and abuse or neglect has been substantiated. Oranga Tamariki receive reports of concern from the courts, education, police, health, non-government organisations, families and members of the public and other notifiers. Abused and neglected children (at levels serious enough to warrant statutory intervention) are more likely to experience problems such as delinquency, teen pregnancy, low academic achievement, drug use and mental health problems [17].

When monitoring outcomes such as child and young people’s maltreatment it is important to consider whether recorded variation is indicative of real variation in the occurrence of maltreatment (i.e., actual exposure of children to maltreatment) [12,19-22]. Monitoring data may be affected by factors that shape recognition, recording and response [28]. For example, this may include increased awareness of the need for the care and protection of children, a growing willingness by communities to contact agencies in family violence situations, high profile media cases, and social marketing campaigns, and/or changes in referral pathways [23,24].

This indicator presents the three-month rolling average for the number of substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect annually, for the Canterbury area (the number of findings does not necessarily represent the number of individuals, as a child or young person might have more than one finding as a result of an assessment or investigation, or might have more than one assessment or investigation in the reporting period).

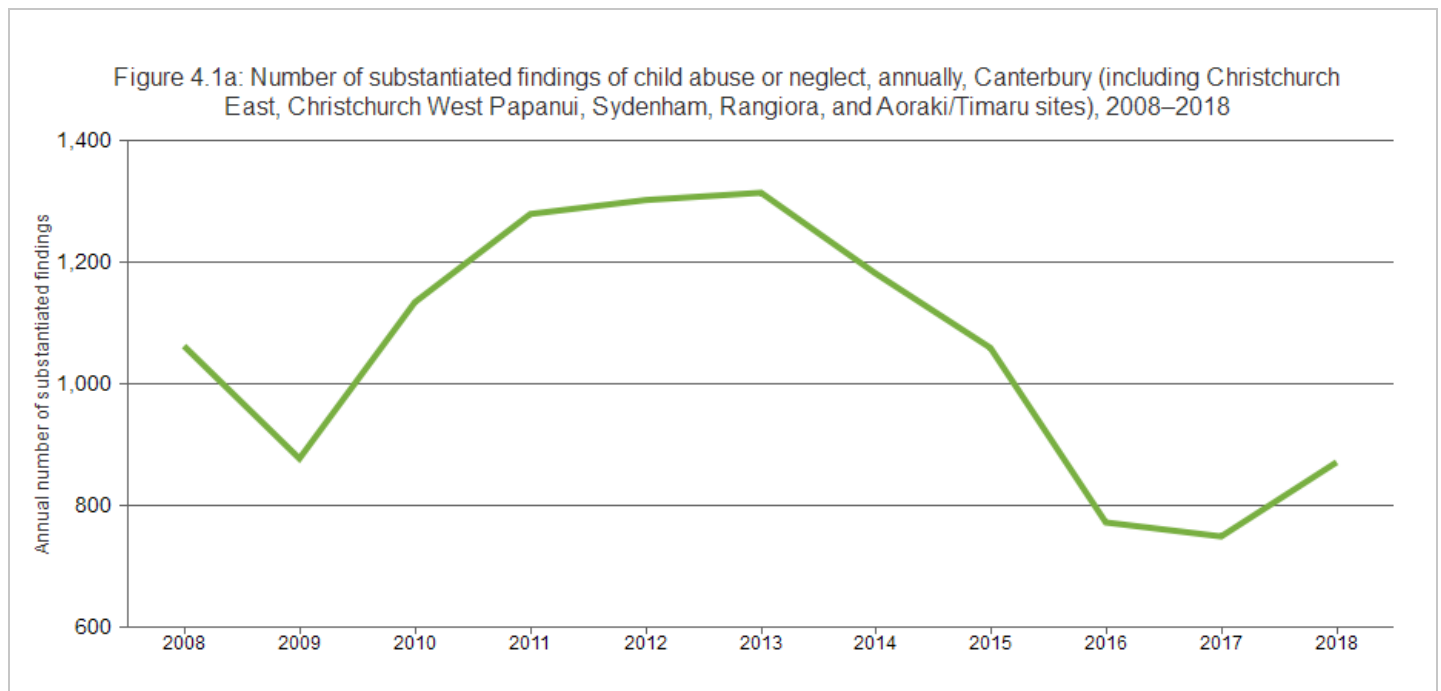
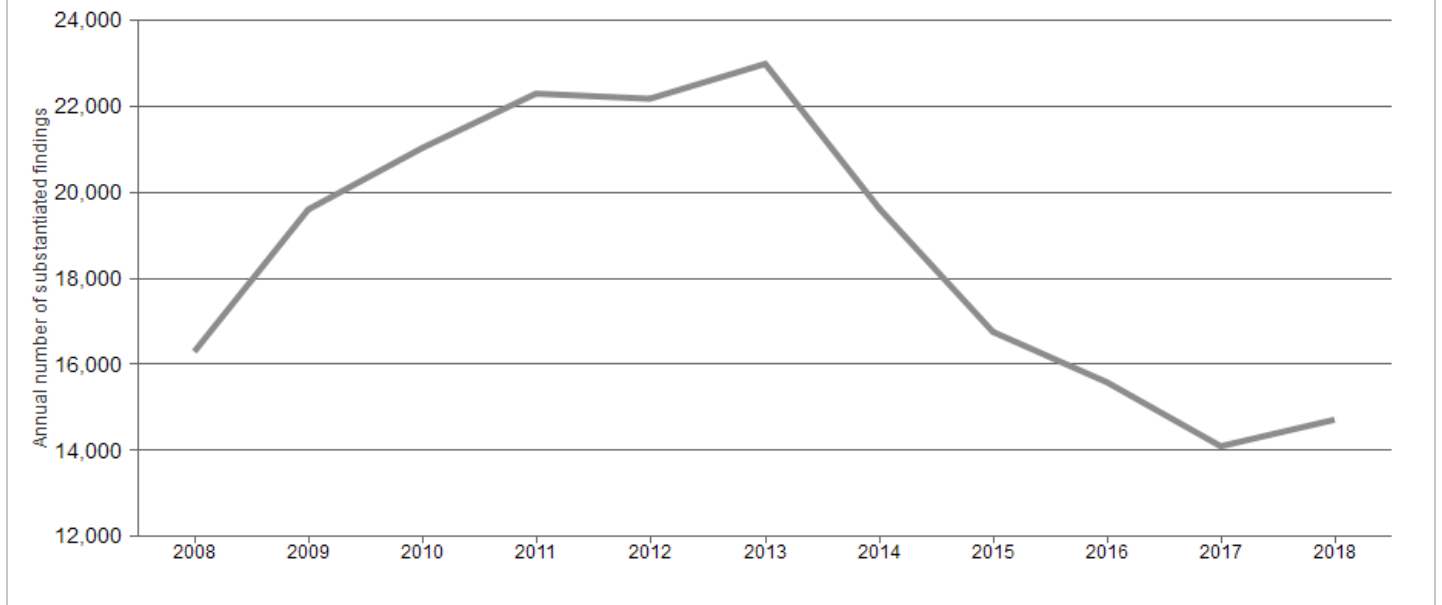


Figure 4.1b: Number of substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect, annually, New Zealand, 2008–2018



The figures show that from 2009 to 2013, Canterbury and New Zealand overall both experienced increasing numbers of recorded substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect. From 2013 to 2017, there was a decline in the number of substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect recorded, both in Canterbury and nationally. However, the 2017–2018 data show an upswing in the number of recorded substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect in Canterbury and in New Zealand overall. The annual number of substantiated findings increased in 2018 to 871 for Canterbury (from 749 in 2017) and to 14,706 for all of New Zealand (from 14,089 in 2017).

Data Sources

Source: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki.

Survey/data set: Administrative data to December 2018. Custom data request for Oranga Tamariki sites including Christchurch East, Christchurch West, Papanui, Sydenham and Rangiora.

Source data frequency: Monthly.

Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/our-wellbeing/index-data>

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