

Safety: Child investigations

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Oranga Tamariki receive reports of possible child abuse or neglect from the courts, education, police, health, non-government organisations, families, members of the public and other notifiers. Reports of concern are those reports that include allegations of abuse or neglect including emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse that may constitute a criminal offence. Abused and neglected children (at levels serious enough to warrant official intervention) are more likely to experience problems such as delinquency, teen pregnancy, low academic achievement, drug use and mental health problems [17]. When Oranga Tamariki receive a report of concern, a social worker determines if further action is required and what needs to happen to keep the child or young person safe. All cases receiving an investigation response are worked in consultation with Police, as necessary, following detailed protocols [18].

When monitoring outcomes such as children and young peoples' maltreatment, it is important to consider whether recorded variation is indicative of real variation in the occurrence of maltreatment (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].

The New Zealand referral pathways were changed in 2011, with the introduction of the Police Family Violence Investigation Report system (POLFVIR). In certain circumstances, Police now directly refer to an interagency group that specialises in preventing domestic violence, rather than referring to Oranga Tamariki. These referrals do not require statutory action by Oranga Tamariki and are recorded separately to reports of concern received by Oranga Tamariki.

This indicator presents the three-month rolling average for the number of Oranga Tamariki notifications requiring action, for the Canterbury operational area and New Zealand, from 2008 to 2018 (numbers represent reports of concern {ROC} not clients and some clients may have more than one ROC within an administrative period).

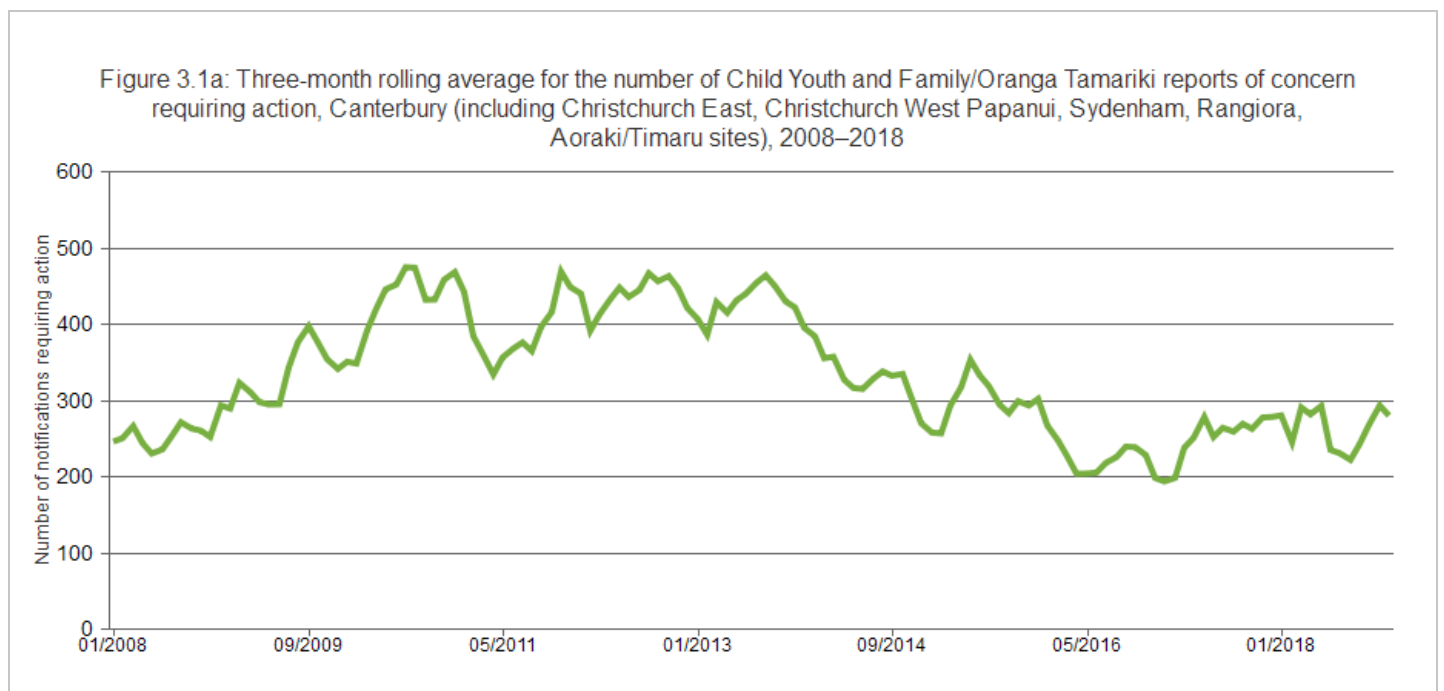
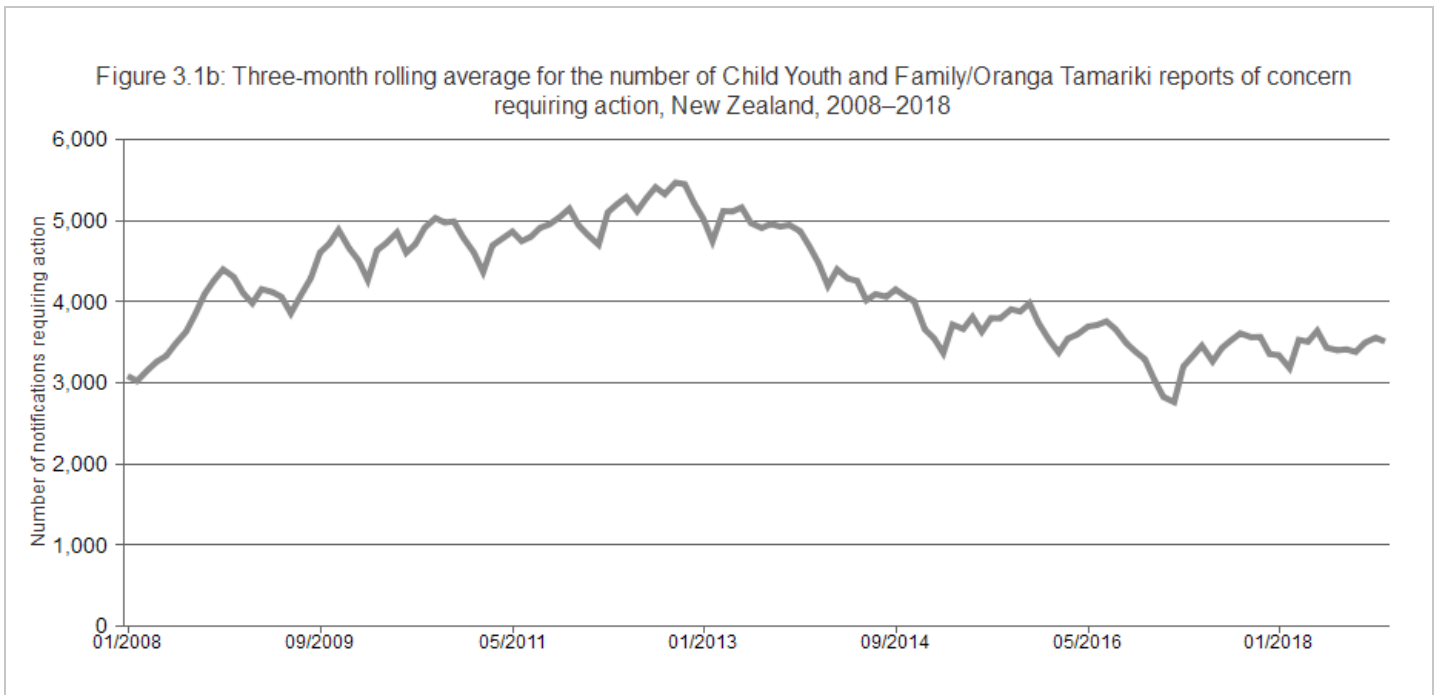


Figure 3.1b: Three-month rolling average for the number of Child Youth and Family/Oranga Tamariki reports of concern requiring action, New Zealand, 2008–2018



The figures show that the number of reports of concern requiring further action by Child Youth and Family / Oranga Tamariki (three-month rolling average) has reduced overall in the last six years, both for Canterbury and for New Zealand overall. The number of reports of concern requiring further action in Canterbury appears to be approximately proportional to New Zealand overall, on the basis of population size, for the period 2013 to mid-2016. However, figure 3.1a shows an overall upswing in the numbers of reports of concern requiring action in Canterbury since the first quarter of 2016. This compares with a pattern of relative stability for New Zealand (Figure 3.1b). In 2018, 41,379 reports of concern requiring further action were made across New Zealand with 3,162 of these being made in Canterbury (up from 39,878 and 3,022 respectively, 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 (base data).

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

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