



# MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

*Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora*

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- 1 AUG 2013

Ms Tania

[fyi-request-975-0e57e2d3@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-975-0e57e2d3@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Ms Tania

Thank you for your email of 2 July 2013 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *How many ASD spectrum children, resident in Bay of Plenty, are reported to Child, Youth and Family, for case management, in the last five years?*
- *Any documents or links to publicly available information in relation to this issue.*

The Ministry of Social Development works hard to create community environments where abuse and neglect of children and young people is not tolerated. Child, Youth and Family always works with the best interests of the child or young person in mind and is guided by the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989.

When a notification is received, Child, Youth and Family determines whether further action is required. Not all of the care and protection notifications received by Child, Youth and Family will result in further action as it may become evident early in the process that there are no issues warranting further assessment. In many cases, the family just needs some advice, or to be connected with the right support services. For others, our care and protection teams work with the family to identify the issues and to find a solution.

Children who come into Child, Youth and Family care are some of New Zealand's most vulnerable children. Many have a combination of health and education difficulties that have gone unidentified or untreated prior to them coming into Child, Youth and Family's care. As a result of their backgrounds, children who come into care are often disconnected from regular health and education services, and are more likely to have physical, behavioural, and emotional barriers to overcome. Often the complexity of problems means that no single agency is able to provide the full package of care and services required.

In May 2011, the Government announced a \$43 million funding package to improve services for children in care. This included funding for Gateway Assessments, the expansion of mental health services, early childhood education and specialised parenting support. You can find more information on the gateway assessment at the Child, Youth and Family website at [www.cyf.govt.nz](http://www.cyf.govt.nz).

The Ministry does not hold specific documents about children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. You may be interested in the publicly available information on how Child, Youth and Family works with children and young people on the Child, Youth and Family Practice Centre at:

<http://cyf-practice-centre.ssi.govt.nz/knowledge-base-practice-frameworks/index.html#OurPracticePackageHowweworkwithchildrenandyoungpeople3>

Information on the number of children from the Bay of Plenty region that required Child, Youth and Family intervention and had an Autism Spectrum Disorder is not collected centrally, if held, it is contained in the client's individual record. It would require staff to manually collate and analyse information from individual files to produce this information. Therefore I am unable to provide you with information to satisfy your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

I hope you find this information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsman  
PO Box 10-152  
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Bernadine Mackenzie  
**Deputy Chief Executive Child, Youth and Family**