



11 OCT 2016

Dear

On 13 September 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *The number of the number of "at risk" babies, less than one month old Child, Youth and Family, has taken into its care for the years 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013 and 2012, broken down by District Health Board region of birth.*

Child, Youth and Family always works in the best interests of the child, young person or infant and any decision to remove an infant from their family is a decision that is not taken lightly. As with all actions taken by Child, Youth and Family, the interests of the child or young person are paramount. If no family member is identified as being able to safely care for the infant, then the infant will be placed with an approved Child, Youth and Family caregiver. Wherever possible and appropriate, the relationship between the infant and their family is maintained and strengthened.

There may be times when Child, Youth and Family have care and protection concerns before a child's birth. Where there are serious concerns about the safety of an unborn child the Court will grant orders to place them out of their parent's care when they are ready to leave the hospital, after their birth. This occurs in very serious situations where it is determined that there are no other options for ensuring the infant's safety.

New provisions under the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 that came into effect on 1 July 2016 strengthen guidance on cases involving parents who have previously had a child or young person removed due to abuse or neglect. These provisions apply when parents have no realistic possibility of caring for that child or young person again, or have been convicted of the murder, manslaughter or infanticide of a child or young person in their care and go on to have another child. For further information regarding this and the other changes to the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 is available at [www.cyf.govt.nz/about-us/news/2016/implementing-changes-to-the-children-young-persons-and-their-families-act-1989.html](http://www.cyf.govt.nz/about-us/news/2016/implementing-changes-to-the-children-young-persons-and-their-families-act-1989.html)

Overleaf is a table showing the number of infants in out of home placements aged 30 days or less broken down by Child, Youth and Family operational area for the last five financial years. As discussed with you by phone on 20 September 2016, the Ministry can provide a geographic break down of data by Child, Youth and Family operational area rather than by District Health Board region. You will also note that the data is for infants aged 30 days or less rather than for infants less than one month old. This is due to variation in the length of calendar months.

In certain circumstances low numbers may potentially lead to individuals being identified. Due to these privacy concerns some numbers have been suppressed. Secondary suppression rules have also been applied when required. Suppressed numbers have been replaced by an 'S'. This suppression is in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

You may be interested in further national and local level data on children and young people in care, which is publically available on the Child, Youth and Family website at: [www.cyf.govt.nz/about-us/key-statistics/kids-in-care.html](http://www.cyf.govt.nz/about-us/key-statistics/kids-in-care.html)

**The number of infants in out of home placements aged 30 days or less broken down by Child, Youth and Family operational area for the last five financial years**

| Operational area              | Financial year |            |            |            |            |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                               | 2011/2012      | 2012/2013  | 2013/2014  | 2014/2015  | 2015/2016  |
| Bay of Plenty Operations      | 10             | 22         | 10         | 14         | 13         |
| Canterbury Operations         | 33             | 26         | 21         | 13         | 15         |
| Counties Manukau Operations   | 14             | 20         | 33         | 31         | 35         |
| Eastern Operations            | S              | 7          | 8          | 7          | S          |
| Greater Wellington Operations | 18             | 11         | 14         | 16         | 25         |
| Lower North Island Operations | 6              | 7          | 12         | 7          | 14         |
| Otago/Southland Operations    | 17             | S          | 14         | 9          | 13         |
| Te Tai Tokerau Operations     | 7              | S          | S          | S          | 7          |
| Upper South Operations        | S              | 6          | 6          | 7          | S          |
| Waikato Operations            | 13             | 20         | 14         | 15         | 22         |
| Waitemata Operations          | 33             | 26         | 26         | 35         | 28         |
| Western Operations            | S              | 8          | S          | S          | 6          |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>163</b>     | <b>160</b> | <b>167</b> | <b>162</b> | <b>187</b> |

Notes:

- Out of home placements exclude placement types - 'Independent Living', 'Remain Home' and 'Return Home'.
- These numbers are based on operational data and as such may change over time due to subsequent data entry, therefore data may vary slightly with previously released information.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

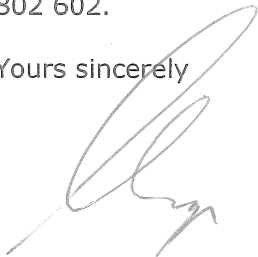
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

The Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter available to the wider public after ten working days. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response regarding the number of infants in out of home care. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Murray Edridge', written over a light grey circular watermark.

Murray Edridge  
**Deputy Chief Executive**  
**Child, Youth and Family**