



# The Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention

Responding, healing, strengthening

## February Pānui

27 February 2026

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### Introduction from Hon Karen Chhour, Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence



Tēnā koutou,



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Welcome to the February Pānui – the first of 2026 - providing you with highlights and updates on the implementation of Te Aorerekura, the National Strategy for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence across the work of government, providers, and communities.

In this Pānui, you will find updates on the implementation of the Action Plan – including important progress for multi-agency responses, which was my priority as a Minister when I first stepped into the role. We are now moving into the implementation of the best practice model – which, alongside other pieces of work such as the High-Risk Protocol and the Information Sharing Protocol, will help workers to confidently make good and timely decisions about how best to support people at risk of violence.

Recently, the [Coroner's inquiry into the tragic death of 5-year-old Malachi Subecz and the Independent Children's Monitor](#) have reinforced the need for agencies to make faster progress to improve the identification and response to child abuse. Workforce capability, appropriate information sharing, and communication between agencies are important focuses for people working in government and in communities to ensure everyone is responding to children's needs.

There is significant agency work underway related to Dame Karen Poutasi's recommendations, such as the first phase of mandatory training for core children's workers and a new inter-agency hub. This hub has been established to deal with reports of concern, to help ensure at-risk children are being monitored. We need people in agencies talking to each other to ensure children are physically seen and confirmed to be safe. The new in-person hub will co-locate key children's agency staff at the Oranga Tamariki National Contact Centre, so they can quickly access and share information to identify and address risks to children whose sole parent has been incarcerated.

Read more about the inter-agency hub here: [Inter-agency hub, mandatory training to keep kids safe | Beehive.govt.nz](#)

Although they seem a while ago now, for those of you who had time off, I hope the holidays were restful and that your return to work has been smooth. We have a lot of work to do, and I thank you for your efforts – in agencies, organisations, communities, and your homes – to make New Zealand a safer place.

I want to acknowledge the important foundational work done by the outgoing Chief Executive of the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention, Emma Powell. She has been at the helm of this business unit since 2021 and has established the foundations for implementing Te Aorerekura – the National Strategy – which guides our work. Bringing the agencies together to collaborate more effectively to prevent, respond, and heal to family violence and sexual violence is a huge part of the solution, and the current Action Plan is



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fully underway to embed practical improvements.

I look forward to continuing to update you on progress and highlighting opportunities throughout 2026, thank you for your continued interest.

Ngā mihi nui,

Hon Karen Chhour

**Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence**

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## Final Address from Emma Powell, Chief Executive of the Centre



Tēnā koutou,

After four years leading the Centre, I have made the difficult decision to step down from my role as Chief Executive. I will still be working within the family violence and sexual violence sector in my next role – as we all know, there is still much work to be done – but it is time to hand over the reins. It has been an honour to work alongside such incredible, skilled people – I know that my successor will inherit an excellent team who are dedicated to this mahi, and we are well on the way to achieving our goals in the Action Plan.

Since 2021, we have made great strides in setting firm foundations for this work, and we are on our way to achieving significant system shifts in how government agencies, communities, and organisations work together and respond to family violence and sexual violence.

Summing up four years of highs and lows, triumphs and difficulties, in a newsletter introduction is impossible – I had the opportunity to film a final interview with the Centre comms team where I was able to talk at length about some of the lessons learned, and the most pressing issues we currently face. The full interview is just over 20 minutes, so please watch it and share it with others. It was good to be able to shout out a lot of the great progress we are seeing.



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*Final interview, hosted by Deborah Morris – link below.*

**See the full final interview on YouTube here:** [https://youtu.be/j\\_scMH61rNY](https://youtu.be/j_scMH61rNY)

Questions answered include:

- What have we learned about how to work together as a sector?
- Is there enough understanding about family violence and sexual violence?
- What are your key achievements, and what are you most proud of?
- What had you hoped to do, and what parts of the system require more attention?
- What are your views on online harm, and what can be done about it?
- What gives you hope for the future of this work?

I also filmed a short video where I summed up my thoughts and feelings about this work, and the progress I have seen – this is my thank you to you to people in government and right across the motu who have taken action to implement Te Aorerekura and start to change the system so it works for all of the people affected by family violence and sexual violence.



*Final address video – link below.*

**See the short summary video on YouTube here:** <https://youtu.be/GiACYGqrcNQ>



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To end, I will share two quotes that from the first Te Aorerekura hui in 2022, just six months after the launch of the National Strategy. Both are still true. The work we do is complex, there is still a long way to go, but we must believe in our collective vision for a better future.

- *“We acknowledge the pain and harm of individuals, families and organisations for whom the system hasn't worked, and sometimes has caused more damage. We also acknowledge we have not fixed the system yet.”*
- *“We are here because we care. We care because we all want our people in Aotearoa NZ thriving, their wellbeing enhanced and sustained because they are safe and supported to live their lives free from family violence and sexual violence. That is our shared dream... All of this is possible, and Te Aorerekura provides a framework for our collective action.”*

Cam Sherley will be taking over as Acting Chief Executive of the Centre. As I take up my new role as Deputy Chief Executive, System Leadership at Oranga Tamariki, I will continue to advocate for children-centred system change.

Go well.

Ngā mihi nui,  
Emma Powell

**Chief Executive of the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention**

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## Update on Te Aorerekura progress at the Centre

### Keeping People Safe

The Centre is partnering with family violence sites in Hawkes Bay, Tairāwhiti, Rotorua and Auckland City alongside key government agencies (Police, Oranga Tamariki, MSD and Corrections) to prepare for a new phase of strengthening multi-agency responses to high-risk family violence.

The work focuses on creating safer, more connected responses for whānau and families at highest risk of harm and with complex needs - including those with children and young people – who face the greatest risk of serious injury or death.

This initial ‘trial and learn’ phase involves rolling out the new high-risk protocol for assessing and managing high-risk family violence. It is supported by information-sharing guidance, training, resources, and enhanced multi-agency leadership and governance at local, regional, and national levels. Strengthened trusted partnerships are central to this approach. The Centre will monitor what works and what needs adjusting, to guide wider implementation in the future.



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This new phase is a key part of delivering the Keeping People Safe focus area of *Te Aorerekura Action Plan (2025-2030)*.

## **Investing and Commissioning Well**

Last year, the Centre worked with agencies to undertake a Baseline Review of direct government departmental and contracted investment into family violence and sexual violence (FVSV). This work provides a snapshot of how much is invested, in what, for who, and where in the country.

The Baseline Review is an action in the Investing and Commissioning Well focus area of the Action Plan. Its purpose is to establish a shared understanding of current investment to help inform an investment strategy and support alignment with social investment approaches.

The Board has received the Baseline Review Insights Report and this will be shared with Ministers in late March. Following this engagement, the Centre will publish a summary of how Government directly invests in family violence and sexual violence in Aotearoa.

The review does not make recommendations for decisions about funding or service changes. It informs a broader work programme aiming to take a whole-of-government approach to investment to ensure effective investment in services so people get the right support. The Centre will provide a further update once Ministers have considered the report.

In addition, the Social Investment Agency (SIA) is leading work to consolidate existing contracts held by social sector or community organisations with one or more government agencies into a single outcomes-based agreement, administered by the Social Investment Fund.

This is designed to reduce the administrative and compliance burden for organisations, simplify reporting and focus it on outcomes, provide more flexibility to organisations in how they deliver services, and offer an opportunity for shared learning between organisations and SIA about what works for the people and communities they support. Contract consolidation will use existing funding in the first instance.

## **Stopping Violence**

The review of interventions for people who use violence will be completed this year. This timeframe allows for the perspectives of victim-survivors to be reflected in the next steps, incorporating findings from a survey undertaken by the Backbone Collective.

This work will identify what's needed to ensure stopping violence services are effective at enabling behaviour change, and scope opportunities to strengthen the system response.

## **Workforce Capability**

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) has approved new Family Violence skill standards and two associated micro-credentials at Levels 4 and 5 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.



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This is a key deliverable under Shift 3 of the Outcomes and Measurement Framework, which focuses on building skilled, culturally competent and sustainable workforces, including improved career pipelines in family violence and sexual violence work.

In 2024, the Centre partnered with Toitū te Waiora Workforce Development Council, with input from specialist sector representatives, to develop the skill standards and micro-credentials. They are grounded in the Family Violence Risk and Safety Practice Framework and align to Level 4 Essential and Level 5 Entry capability.

Four NZQA skill standards underpin the micro-credentials. They translate the Essential and Entry capability levels of the Risk and Safety Practice Framework into nationally recognised, assessable standards focussed on recognising family violence risk, responding safely within role, making warm referrals, and recording appropriately. Impacts:

- Provides workforces with a nationally recognised pathway to build and evidence capability in family violence risk practice.
- Supports organisations to strengthen frontline capability in family violence risk practice through nationally recognised, assessable standards aligned to the Risk and Safety Practice Framework.
- Supports safer, earlier and more consistent responses for people and whānau experiencing family violence.

The standards and micro-credentials were submitted to NZQA in October and are now approved for delivery by accredited providers.

The Centre is supporting transition into delivery, including early engagement with potential delivery partners so workforces can begin accessing the micro-credentials.

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## Social Investment Fund Round Two now open

Round Two of the Social Investment Fund New Investment pathway is open until 10 March.

### New priority cohort

[In addition to the three cohorts for Round One](#), Social Investment Fund Ministers have added a fourth priority cohort group for Round Two:

*Mothers who experience harm from substance use, and their children, from pregnancy up to age five*

This new cohort is part of the Crown Response to the Abuse in Care Inquiry. Specific funding was allocated in Budget 2025 to prevent entry into care.

Pregnancy and the early years are vital periods for maternal and child health, and wellbeing. SIA analysis found that mothers who experience harm from substance use, and their children, both have high rates of entry into various forms of state care, including Oranga Tamariki care, mental health, disability and Corrections care.



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We are seeking proposals that help to improve life outcomes for the cohort to reduce the need for state care.

## Round Two priority cohorts

This round focuses on four priority cohorts — including the newly added group:

1. Children with a parent currently or recently in prison
2. Children of parents who experienced the care system
3. Children stood down or suspended from school at age 12 or younger
4. NEW: Mothers experiencing harm from substance use, and their children (pregnancy to age five)

## Who can apply

Pathway One is for initiatives that demonstrate a strong social investment approach—clear outcomes, strong learning, and genuine partnership to support people and whānau to achieve lasting change.

## Where you can find more

Head to the [Pathway One: New Investment page of the SIA website](#) to learn more about the new cohort, apply for this investment pathway, and view resources to help you with your ROI application

If you have questions, please contact SIA on [info@sia.govt.nz](mailto:info@sia.govt.nz)

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## New protections for victims of litigation abuse come into force

The [Victims of Family Violence \(Strengthening Legal Protections\) Legislation Act 2025](#) introduces a new type of court order in the Family Court, District Court, High Court and Court of Appeal to address litigation abuse in family proceedings (Litigant Abuse Orders). The Act came into force on 17 February 2026.

A Litigant Abuse Order may be made when the court determines that a party has engaged in conduct intended to annoy, harass, harm, or psychologically abuse another party. This may include a number of acts that form a pattern of behaviour. The order may be applied for by a party to the proceeding or imposed by a judge on their own initiative. In the Court of Appeal, an order cannot be applied for and can only be imposed by a judge on their own initiative.

Where a party has exhibited conduct that the court considers to be litigant abuse, a court order can require that person to seek leave from the court before commencing new proceedings or taking further steps in existing, related and new proceedings.

Orders may be made in relation to proceedings commenced on or after 17 February 2026, as well as those initiated earlier but not yet finally determined. However, only conduct



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occurring after 17 February 2026 may be considered when deciding whether to make an order.

A Litigant Abuse Order will usually last for up three years but can be extended to five years in extraordinary circumstances

For more information, see: [New protections for victims of litigation abuse come into force | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#)

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## Improving Support for Victims in Sexual Violence Family Group Conferences

The Ministry of Justice is leading a pilot with Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children and New Zealand Police to strengthen how sexual violence Family Group Conferences (FGCs) are delivered, with a stronger focus on supporting victims throughout the process.

They are working with specialist providers to deliver training for the professionals involved in FGCs, helping ensure the process is safe and victim-centred. A provider that specialises in supporting victims who have experienced sexual harm will also be available to support victims before, during and after the FGC process. The provider will work directly with each victim to understand what they need at every stage and tailor support accordingly.

The pilot will run from April in Tauranga and Wellington, with an evaluation of the pilot to follow.

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## International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – public consultation

The Government wants to hear from the public and civil society organisations before 19 March 2026 on its draft report under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (the Covenant). The content takes a constructive approach in explaining issues New Zealand is facing and what is being done to address these issues.

The draft report, which is New Zealand's seventh, responds to the recommendations and events following our last examination in 2016.

The Government will submit the final report to the United Nations Human Rights Committee following the consultation process.

### How you can get involved

Your feedback will help to inform the report and provide information about how the Government is upholding civil and political rights in New Zealand.

Submissions are open from **19 February 2026 to 19 March 2026**. You can submit:



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- by completing the online survey of the questions on the [Ministry's consultation hub\(external link\)](#)
- by emailing [humanrights@justice.govt.nz](mailto:humanrights@justice.govt.nz), or
- by post to Human Rights, Ministry of Justice, SX10088, Wellington.

More info: [Public engagement on civil and political rights | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#)

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## Training Opportunities and Events

### 1. Kahukura – training and resources



*Training session with Te Whare Oranga Wairua - Taupo and Te Whare Whanau Purotu.*

### **Rainbow Safe Training**

It's important for Takatāpui and Rainbow people to be safe and welcome every time they access any kind of support after violence.

[Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura](#) offers in-person and online training for those working with Takatāpui and Rainbow people in social services, health, education, justice and community settings. The training, aligned with [E2E Family Violence Workforce Capability](#) principles, supports frontline kaimahi, policymakers and service managers to understand more about family violence, sexual violence and elder abuse in Takatāpui and Rainbow communities.



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## Upcoming Rainbow Safe training delivered by Takatāpui and Tauwi facilitators:

- Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland – 26 Mar 2026 [Click here to enrol](#)
- Ōtautahi Christchurch – 1 May 2026 [Click here to enrol](#)

*“It has been hands down one of the most informative, yet disturbing and mind opening workshops I have been to.” Family violence agency kaimahi, 2020*

Each participant will receive a certificate for the full day training as well as 12 months access to Te Kete Koha – a monthly one-hour lunchtime community of practice hui designed to deepen their practice knowledge.

## Online training modules and free resources to share with communities

Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura also offers [online training modules and resources](#), available to access when the time suits you.

[Free online resources](#) for kaimahi and communities include:

- Rainbow Safe Introduction to Takatāpui and Rainbow communities
- Kōrero Mai, to support caregivers of Takatāpui and Rainbow Tamariki
- Ageing with Pride, helping Takatāpui and Rainbow older people plan for ageing

[Professional development online modules](#) for kaimahi include:

- Rainbow Safe: Takatāpui and Rainbow experiences of violence
- Rainbow Ready – preventing elder abuse

To keep up to date with more upcoming offerings or discuss [training](#) or [supervision and cultural support](#) for your agency, contact [connect@kahukura.co.nz](mailto:connect@kahukura.co.nz)

## 2. Beyond Belief: Understanding Cult Dynamics

**Beyond Belief**  
Understanding Cult Dynamics

A powerful event unpacking cult and high-control group dynamics, coercive control, and the hidden harms impacting children and whānau.

**26 MARCH**  
Fairfield House  
48 Van Diemen Street  
Whakatū Nelson

**Hikitia!** FOR OUR FUTURE

BEYOND BELIEF. Understanding Cult Dynamic - Presenters:

- Anke Richter  
Founder & Director of Decult  
Investigative Journalist
- Willow Duffy  
Founder & CEO of  
Safeguarding Children
- A/Prof Kyle Egoleten  
Associate Professor, University of Auckland  
Lived experience of high-control groups
- Lindy Jacomb  
Founder & Team Facilitator  
at the Olive Leaf Network

**Hikitia!** FOR OUR FUTURE



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Beyond Belief is a one-day event being held on 26 March in Nelson, exploring cult and high-control group dynamics, coercive control, and the hidden harms affecting children and whānau.

Supported by Hikitia!, RISE's ACC-funded primary prevention work, this event is designed for those in the support sector and allied fields. Participants will gain insights into manipulation, coercive control, trauma, and long-term harm, along with practical strategies for safeguarding children and supporting whānau.

Presenters include:

- Willow Duffy – Founder and CEO of Safeguarding Children
- Assoc. Prof. Kyle Eggleton – Researcher, rural GP, and survivor advocate
- Anke Richter – Journalist, author of CULT TRIP, and founder of Decult
- Lindy Jacomb – Founder of the Olive Leaf Network and co-host of Cult Chat

To register your interest, email [Hikitia@rise.net.nz](mailto:Hikitia@rise.net.nz) with “Beyond Belief registration” in the subject line. Please share with anyone who may benefit from this event!

### 3. Family and Sexual Violence: The Intersection



Louise Nicholas and Debbs Murray are bringing their acclaimed workshop – ***Family and Sexual Violence - The Intersection*** to the main centres in March and April of 2026. Louise and Debbs are proud to have worked with local communities who have supported the initiative by providing venues, to directly reduce the price of tickets.

See course-related content information and upcoming workshop details here: [Family and Sexual Violence Intersection | ECLIPSE](#). Tickets are limited.

This workshop is also offered to individual organisations/agencies and networks – email [enquiries@eclipsefamilyviolenceservices.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@eclipsefamilyviolenceservices.co.nz)

#### About the course

The *Family and Sexual Violence: The Intersections* workshop will see Louise Nicholas (Founder of the Louise Nicholas Trust) and Debbs Murray (Founder of ECLIPSE) take you on a powerful journey into their combined lived experiences of both sexual violence and family violence.



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The sharing of these real and raw experiences will unquestionably support greater understanding of appropriately-informed practice responses and provide guidelines to practitioners and responders on the frontline of family violence and sexual violence.

Lived experiences, combined with their specialist practice knowledge, skills and capability help to highlight the extent of family violence and sexual violence perpetration.

Attending this course you'll:

- Obtain a deeper understanding of both sexual violence and family violence indicators and impacts.
- Learn about current and relevant sexual violence and family violence legislation, court processes, and effective support strategies.
- Obtain a deeper understanding of sexual violence in the context of family violence and how this is often missed, minimised or misunderstood as family violence.
- Gain understanding of coercive control as a tactic to coerce primary victims of family violence into acts of sexual violence.
- Develop knowledge of resistance strategies and how victims resist family violence and sexual violence through acts of active submission and active compliance.
- Gain practice tools and guidelines developed by victim-survivors that are embedded with, and informed by, the voice of people with lived experience of sexual violence and family violence.

**ECLIPSE training courses align with the principles of Te Aorerekura, and associated workforce capability frameworks.**

## 4. Postgraduate study options in Violence Prevention

Interested in taking your violence prevention work to the next level, or looking for a good professional development opportunity?

The University of Auckland offers a number of postgraduate courses that are relevant for those working in violence prevention or interested in working in the area. These can be taken as part of a postgraduate certificate/diploma in Health Sciences or Social Work.

Postgraduate courses available in Auckland in Semester 1, 2026.

[Postgraduate study options in Violence Prevention – University of Auckland](#)

Those interested can also apply for the Friendship House Postgraduate Violence Prevention Award, an Award which covers tuition fees.

[Friendship House Postgraduate Violence Prevention Award – University of Auckland](#)



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## About the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention

[The Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention](#) brings government agencies together to align whole-of-government strategy, policy, and investment to eliminate family violence and sexual violence.

These agencies include:

- [Ara Poutama Department of Corrections](#)
- [Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga Ministry of Education](#)
- [Manatū Hauora Ministry of Health](#)
- [Te Tāhū or te Ture Ministry of Justice](#)
- [Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora Ministry of Social Development](#)
- [Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa New Zealand Police](#)
- [Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children](#)
- [Te Puni Kokiri Ministry of Māori Development](#)
- [Te Kaporeihana Āwhina Hunga Whare ACC](#)

[Te Tari O Te Pirimia Me Te Komiti Matau](#) (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet), [Manatū Wāhine](#) (Ministry for Women), [Te Manatū mō Ngā Iwi o Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa](#) (Ministry of Pacific Peoples) and [Te Tari Mātāwaka](#) (the Ministry for Ethnic Communities) are associate agencies.

Visit our website [preventfvsv.govt.nz](http://preventfvsv.govt.nz) or contact us at [contact@preventfvsv.govt.nz](mailto:contact@preventfvsv.govt.nz).

To unsubscribe from this newsletter, please email [contact@preventfvsv.govt.nz](mailto:contact@preventfvsv.govt.nz).

To share stories in the next e-update, contact: [Holly.Blackler@preventfvsv.govt.nz](mailto:Holly.Blackler@preventfvsv.govt.nz).