

Hon Bill English

Acting Prime Minister

Hon Tariana Turia

Minister Responsible for Whanau Ora



Embargoed until 2pm

8 April 2010

**Media
Statement**

Government welcomes Whanau Ora report

The Government has welcomed the release today of the Whanau Ora Taskforce Report, which sets out options for improving social, education and other support services for families across New Zealand.

“Whanau Ora is one of a number of Government initiatives to help families become more self-managing and take responsibility for their own development,” Acting Prime Minister Bill English and Minister Responsible for Whanau Ora Tariana Turia say.

The Government will formally respond to the Taskforce Report in the next month or so. But Mr English and Mrs Turia made it clear today that while Whanau Ora has the potential to benefit Maori, it will be available to all families in need.

They also confirmed a governance group – including three members of the Whanau Ora Taskforce and three government agency chief executives – has been appointed to manage the programme. It will report to Mrs Turia as Minister Responsible for Whanau Ora. The group is:

- Rob Cooper (chair) is the chief executive of the Ngati Hine Health Trust, a Maori-owned provider of social services in Northland.
- Professor Sir Mason Durie was chair of the Whanau Ora Taskforce, is Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Massey University and Professor of Maori Research and Development.
- Nancy Tuaine of Te Atihaunui a Paparangi (Whanganui) is the manager of the Whanganui River Trust Board and a member of the Whanganui District Health Board.

- Leith Comer, chief executive Te Puni Kokiri
- Peter Hughes, chief executive Ministry of Social development
- Stephen McKernan, director-general, Ministry of Health.

Mr English says it is clear from results in recent years that traditional approaches to helping families in need have not worked that well - and taxpayers are not getting the best value for money.

“We believe there is a better, more effective way of using the many hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars already spent in this area. Whanau Ora will also deliver better results for the families themselves. It recognises the importance of the family and the things that make families special.

“It’s also based on the idea that, with a little help, people are capable of sorting out their own lives – so surely it’s within our grasp as a Government to recognise that and to organise our own services around whanau and family.”

Ministers have agreed that Whanau Ora will be financially neutral – funded by reprioritising existing funding in votes Health, Social Development and Maori Affairs. Those details will be set out in the Budget.

“Rather than having different agencies working with individual family members, Whanau Ora will work with whanau and families as a whole,” Mrs Turia says.

“It will empower them to take control by meeting their obligations and taking responsibility.

“By building on the strengths of the entire whanau, it will require agencies to work together in better and smarter ways to support whanau and families.

“I am confident that Whanau Ora has the potential to help all families, right across New Zealand,” Mrs Turia says.