



Abuse in Care
Royal Commission of Inquiry

Whanaketia



THROUGH PAIN AND TRAUMA, FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

He karakia

E tāmara mā, koutou te pūtake o ēnei kōwhiringa, kua horaina nei
E tohe tonu nei i te ara o te tika
E ngaki tonu ana i te māra tipu
Anei koutou te whakairihia ki te tihi o
Maungārongo, kia tau te mauri.

Rukuhia te pū o te hinengaro
kia tāea ko te kukunitanga mai o te whakaaro nui.
Kia piere ko te ngākau mahora
kia tūwhera mai he wairua tau.

Koinei ngā pou whakairinga i te tāhuhu
o te Whare o Tū Te Mauriora.
Te āhuru mōwai o Te Pae o Rehua,
kaimuru i te hinapōuri,
kaitohu i te manawa hā ora,
kaihohou i te pai.

Nau mai e koutou kua uhia e ngā haukino
o te wā, kua pēhia e ngā whakawai a ngā tipua nei,
a te Ringatūkino rāua ko te Kanohihuna.

Koutou i whītiki i te tātua o te toa,
i kākahu i te korowai o te pono,
i whakamau i te tīpare o tō mana motuhake,
toko ake ki te pūaotanga o te āpōpō e tatari mai nei i tua o te pae,
nōu te ao e whakaata mai nei.

Kāti rā, ā te tākiritanga mai o te ata,
ā te huanga ake o te awatea,
kia tau he māramatanga,
kia ū ko te pai, kia mau ko te tika.
Koinei ko te tangi a te ngākau e Rongo,
tūturu ōwhiti whakamaua
kia tina, tina!
Hui e, tāiki e!

To you upon whom this inquiry has been centered
Resolute in your pursuit of justice
Relentless in your belief for life
You have only our highest regard and respect,
may your peace of mind be assured.

Look into the deepest recesses of your being
and discover the seeds of new hope,
where the temperate heart might find solace,
and the blithe spirit might rise again.

Let these be the pillars on which the House of Self,
reconciliation can stand.
Safe haven of Rehua,
dispatcher of sorrow,
restorer of the breath of life,
purveyor of kindness.

Those of you who have faced the ill winds
of time and made to suffer,
at the hands of abusers and the hidden faces of persecutors, draw near.

You who found courage,
cloaked yourselves with your truth,
who crowned yourself with dignity,
a new tomorrow awaits beyond the horizon,
your future beckons.

And so, as dawn rises, and a new day begins,
let clarity and understanding reign,
goodness surrounds you and
justice prevails.
Rongo god of peace, this the heart desires,
we beseech you,
let it be,
it is done.

State and faith-based institutions were entrusted to care for many thousands of children, young people and adults between 1950-1999. The leaders of these institutions had a duty to nurture and protect the people in their care. They failed in their duty and failed to hold abusers to account.

Instead of receiving care and support, an estimated 200,000 children, young people and adults in care were exposed to pervasive abuse and neglect.

Whanaketia – through pain and trauma, from darkness to light – shines a light on what happened and why it happened. The report finds abuse did not occur solely due to the actions of a few 'bad apples', but that it was deeply rooted and enabled across all levels of the systems responsible for providing care.

The average lifetime cost to a survivor of abuse and neglect in care was estimated in 2020 to be approximately \$857,000. The estimated total economic cost of this abuse and neglect between 1950 and 2019 is around \$200 billion. This is more than three times what the government spent on war and rehabilitation during World War II (£615 million in 1946, adjusted for inflation to \$63.2 billion in 2023 dollars).

Many of the factors that contributed to the pervasive abuse and neglect the Inquiry found are not confined to the past. The Inquiry's report says fundamental changes are needed to safeguard the children, young people and adults who are in care today.

Survivors shared their experiences

For decades, survivors repeatedly called for justice but were unheard, disbelieved and ignored. Their experiences were minimised or dismissed.

Survivors were right to call for an Inquiry. The widespread abuse and neglect in State and faith-based care has had a devastating, multigenerational impact on survivors, their whānau and Aotearoa New Zealand as a whole.

In total 3,827 people registered interest with the Inquiry. Overall, 2,797 people shared their experiences and insights. These included:

- > 2,329 survivors
- > 160 witnesses and family members of survivors
- > 158 current or former staff members
- > 150 advocates, experts, leaders and others

The Inquiry acknowledges and thanks all survivors, their whānau, hapū, iwi, communities and support networks who shared their experiences. The experiences received by the Inquiry have been reflected in Whanaketia.

Recommendations for the future

Whanaketia calls for a complete overhaul of Aotearoa New Zealand's State and faith-based care system in social welfare, disability, mental health, education, transitional and law enforcement and pastoral care settings.

The ultimate goal is to ensure that no individual experiences abuse or neglect and that whānau receive the necessary support to lead fulfilling lives.

There are 138 recommendations and three key themes to the final report's recommendations. In summary:

1. Righting the wrongs of the past through:

- a. the State and faith leaders making public apologies and taking accountability for the harm caused to survivors
- b. making the justice system safer and more accessible for survivors
- c. urging the State and faiths to implement the puretumu torowhānui system and scheme without further delay

2. Making care safe through:

- a. creating a new independent safeguarding agency and a new safeguarding law
- b. ensuring that faiths and their leaders will have to abide by the same laws, rules and accountabilities as everyone else
- c. having consistent and comprehensive rules and standards to keep people in care safe
- d. having real sanctions and penalties in law to hold people and organisations to account
- e. having a safe and well-trained workforce

3. Entrusting and empowering communities through:

- a. shifting from State care to local communities caring for each other
- b. giving everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand the knowledge and tools to contribute to preventing abuse and neglect
- c. upholding people's rights

Survivors' dreams for the future

Survivors have been united in calling for State and faith leaders to make public apologies and take accountability for the harm caused to children, young people and adults.

An apology is hollow without real change. The righting of the wrongs must happen. Comprehensive, fair, effective and accessible puretumu torowhānui, holistic redress, must be delivered urgently to all survivors of abuse and neglect in State care and in the care of faith-based care institutions and to their whānau. An independent entity must be established.

Every New Zealander has a role to play

"It is time to challenge New Zealanders. The phrase out of sight, out of mind is no longer acceptable."

SURVIVOR, SIR ROBERT MARTIN

We all have a role to play in ensuring that Aotearoa New Zealand recognises what happened and why, seeks to redress those wrongs, and builds a future where abuse and neglect in care has been eliminated.

To play your part in driving change to Aotearoa New Zealand's care system, you can:

- > share survivor stories to raise awareness
- > influence your community through conversations and community action
- > actively support the need for wholesale change and urgent action
- > hold the government and churches to account to make sure all recommendations are implemented

The report

The report is made up of an introductory volume, nine parts, a survivor experience study and five case studies. Whanaketia should be read in full, along with other reports from the Inquiry to understand the overall picture of abuse and neglect in the care of State and faith-based institutions from 1950-1999.

Whanaketia can be found at www.abuseincare.org.nz/whanaketia

It is available in a range of formats.

The executive summary is also available in a range of alternative formats and te reo Māori.

You will also find summaries or guides of the experiences of:

- > Māori survivors
- > Pacific survivors
- > Survivors of faith-based care settings
- > Women and girls
- > Takatāpui, Rainbow and MVPFAFF+ survivors
- > Disabled survivors
- > Deaf survivors
- > Survivors of mental health care settings

