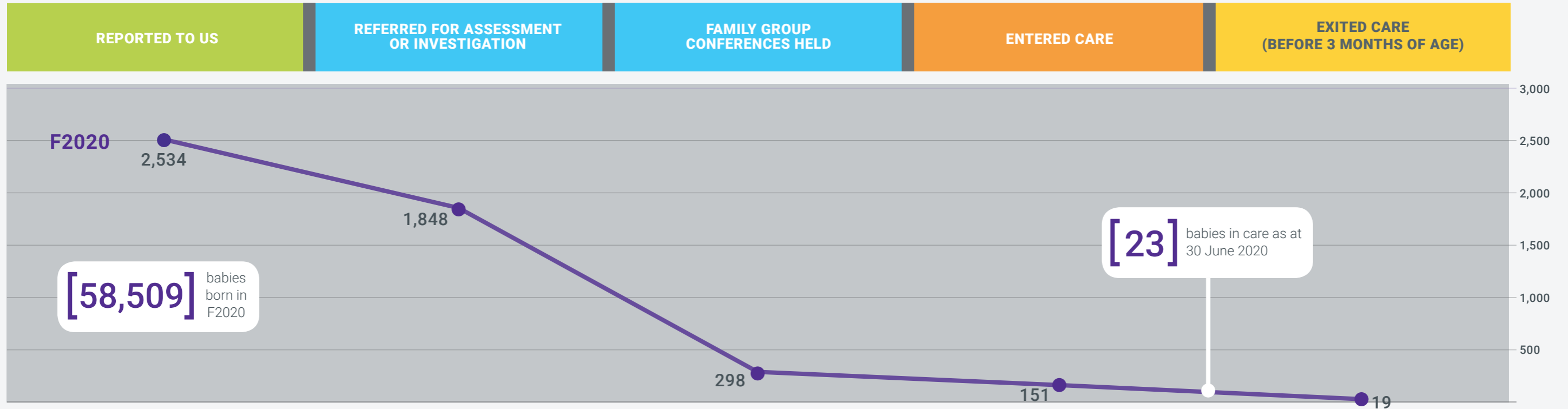


Babies Entering Oranga Tamariki Care

Care and Protection Interactions

The chart below shows the process and flow of children aged **unborn to three months old** through the care and protection system during F2020, from receipt of reports of concern through to eventual exit from care and protection. This is a count of *distinct* children at each interaction point - counting each child only once regardless of how many times they had a given interaction over the period.



Anyone who is worried about a child or young person can make a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki or the Police. This usually happens when they believe a child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed, ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived. Or, they have serious concerns about the child or young person's wellbeing.

When we receive a report of concern we may:

- take no further action where either there is no indication of harm to the child or where the referrer is able to make referrals to support the whānau
- provide advice about support available to the whānau
- refer the matter to other social services including our iwi or cultural social services partners
- complete a child and family assessment or, where concerns meet the Child Protection Protocol, undertake a joint investigation with Police.

An assessment occurs when there may be concerns about the care, safety or wellbeing of te tamaiti. A joint investigation with Police occurs when there are allegations of serious harm which may constitute a criminal offence. Child and family assessments and investigations:

- assess the safety of te tamaiti and identify care or protection needs that could be addressed to reduce the risk of harm to te tamaiti
- identify the strengths in te tamaiti, their parents and family/whānau and environment
- identify unmet needs that contribute to potential harm for te tamaiti
- identify services that could address these needs either during or after the assessment.

During the assessment or investigation, we will usually visit the home of te tamaiti and their parents and whānau, talk with or observe the child and seek the views of others involved with te tamaiti and their whānau. We will arrange a hui-a-whānau or family meeting to bring together the family/whānau to build understanding, discuss the concerns and develop a plan to address these.

If during the assessment or investigation, the social worker believes there are serious concerns which mean the child may be in need of care or protection (as defined in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989) they must refer the matter to a Care and Protection Co-ordinator to convene an FGC. In other situations, a plan might be developed for the family/whānau to be referred to another agency for support or no further action may be taken.

Where the assessment or investigation determines a child is not in need of care or protection but that a family group conference (FGC) may best assist in formulating a plan to address significant wellbeing concerns, we can refer for an FGC under section 18AAA.

Where the assessment or investigation determines a child is in need of care or protection the social worker must refer this for a care and protection FGC. This means that a social worker believes a child is being, or is likely to be, harmed. Those who are legally able to attend the FGC include te tamaiti if appropriate, the current parent or guardians, family/whānau members, and people they invite such as hapū or iwi members, the coordinator, lawyer for child and the police officer or social worker who made the referral. Other people, such as professionals working with the whānau or tamaiti can attend by agreement but their role is to bring information rather than being part of the decision making. At a Family Group Conference, the family/whānau decides if they agree there are care and protection concerns and develops a plan as to how these concerns can be addressed.

Oranga Tamariki can be granted legal custody of a child if a social worker, after completing an assessment, forms a belief that a child needs care or protection, there are no other identified means of the child being kept safe and the parents and/or Family Court agree the child should be in the custody of Oranga Tamariki.

Wherever it is safe and possible to do so, the child's whānau and other people supporting the whānau will be involved in this decision.

A child enters care when the Court and/or the parents agree that Oranga Tamariki needs to have the legal custody (responsibility for the child's day to day care). Having such an order in place does not automatically mean the child will always be removed from their parent's care, but it does give Oranga Tamariki the authority to do so. A child may enter care:

- by agreement – the parents, family/whānau and Oranga Tamariki (either informally or at an FGC) may agree that te tamaiti needs to enter into care for a specified period of time whilst work is done with the family/whānau to support the safe return back home
- by arrangement – in situations where there is not a serious, urgent risk to the safety of te tamaiti, an application can be made to the Family Court for a custody order
- by emergency action – when there is a serious, imminent risk to the safety and wellbeing of te tamaiti, an application can be made by Oranga Tamariki to the Family Court for a custody order.

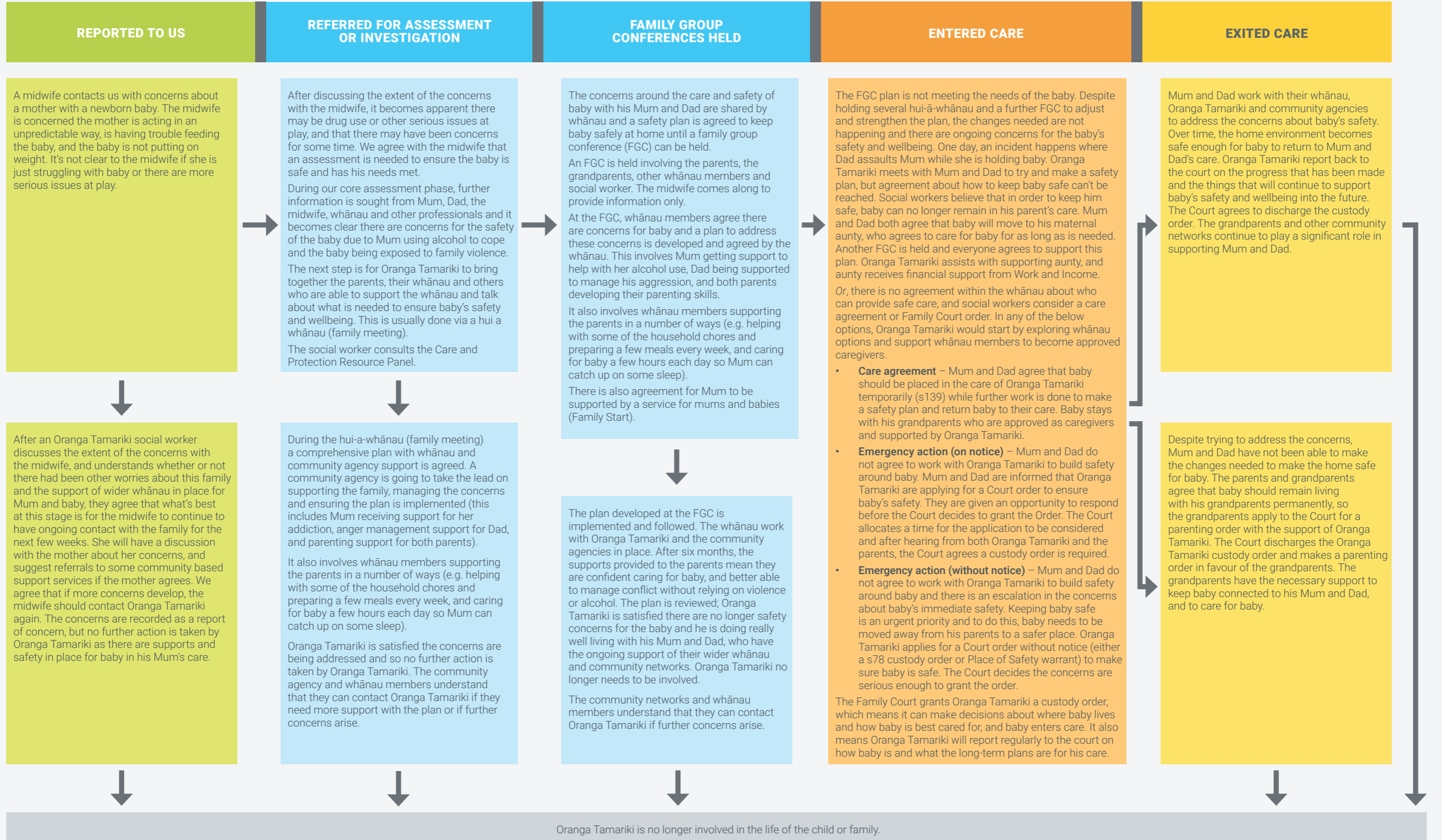
An exit from care occurs when the custody order is discharged or lapses, or a care agreement is ended or expires.

This typically occurs when everyone is satisfied that te tamaiti is safe and there is a long-term plan to support their needs. They may have returned to live with their parents, be living with their family/whānau, or for some tamariki they may be living with another family.

Babies Entering Oranga Tamariki Care

Scenario Example of Interactions with Oranga Tamariki

The chart below provides an example of how Oranga Tamariki may interact with a baby and their whānau throughout the different stages of the care and protection process.

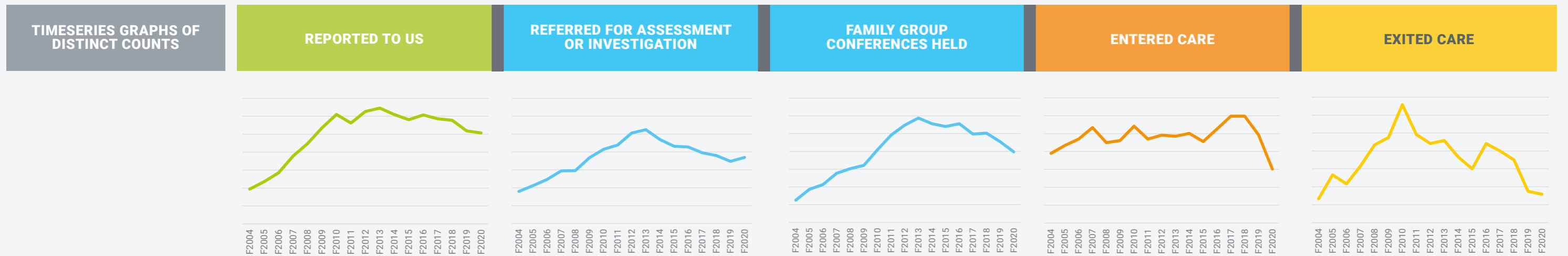


Babies Entering Oranga Tamariki Care

Care and Protection Interactions - By Year

The table and graphs below show the process and flow of children aged unborn to three months old over each twelve month period between 1 July 2003 and 30 June 2020, from receipt of reports of concern through to eventual exit from care and protection. This is accompanied by a count of *distinct* children at each interaction point - counting each child only once regardless of how many times they had a given interaction over the period.

	TOTAL LIVE BIRTHS IN NEW ZEALAND	REPORTED TO US		REFERRED FOR ASSESSMENT OR INVESTIGATION		FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCES HELD		ENTERED CARE		EXITED CARE	
	Live Births	Total Count	Distinct Children	Total Count	Distinct Children	Total Count	Distinct Children	Total Count	Distinct Children	Total Count	Distinct Children
F2004	57,870	1,112	970	979	897	97	94	195	195	16	16
F2005	57,987	1,412	1,177	1,186	1,061	150	140	217	217	32	32
F2006	58,251	1,740	1,426	1,405	1,231	170	160	235	235	26	26
F2007	61,614	2,295	1,890	1,648	1,473	224	208	269	267	38	38
F2008	64,143	2,849	2,236	1,675	1,477	246	227	225	225	52	52
F2009	62,964	3,536	2,676	2,143	1,838	267	241	232	231	57	57
F2010	64,119	4,110	3,051	2,406	2,075	343	307	273	271	79	79
F2011	62,658	3,663	2,812	2,557	2,191	417	369	240	235	59	59
F2012	61,032	3,899	3,134	2,906	2,528	467	411	255	246	53	53
F2013	59,862	3,984	3,228	3,012	2,623	479	441	254	243	55	55
F2014	58,611	3,781	3,048	2,645	2,346	474	417	259	251	44	44
F2015	59,616	3,650	2,903	2,423	2,160	456	405	238	228	36	36
F2016	58,992	3,730	3,036	2,368	2,139	463	417	279	263	53	53
F2017	58,344	3,581	2,930	2,161	1,979	415	373	303	299	48	48
F2018	60,324	3,624	2,887	2,105	1,899	418	377	305	299	42	42
F2019	58,374	3,178	2,592	1,901	1,737	387	341	246	247	21	21
F2020	58,509	3,034	2,534	1,970	1,848	322	298	152	151	19	19



Note: numbers are operational and subject to change.