

**EVIDENCE CENTRE**  
TE POKAPŪ TAUNAKITANGA

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**CAREGIVERS RAISING CHILDREN WITH  
THE ORPHAN'S BENEFIT AND THE  
UNSUPPORTED CHILD'S BENEFIT**

A follow-up survey of caregivers

**NOVEMBER 2021**

**KANTAR PUBLIC**



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A Kantar Public Company



**ORANGA  
TAMARIKI**  
Ministry for Children

## IN-CONFIDENCE

The Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre works to build the evidence base that helps us better understand wellbeing and what works to improve outcomes for New Zealand's children, young people and their whānau.

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# SNAPSHOT 2021

 <p><b>Orphan's Benefit (OB)</b> <b>270</b> caregivers (Any mention: 52% Māori, 11% Pacific, 54% Other)<sup>1</sup></p>	 <p><b>Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB)</b> <b>11,250</b> caregivers (Any mention: 52% Māori, 10% Pacific, 61% Other)<sup>2</sup></p>
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Children	Caregiver support needs
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**Declines in children's activities since 2019**

For **UCB children**, lower participation in te kōhanga reo/pre-school, church, and music


For **OB children**, lower participation in community activities

The COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted participation opportunities, particularly in Auckland



**Child's emotional health and wellbeing**


For **UCB caregivers**, 46% needed support for the child's mental and emotional wellbeing (up seven points since 2019)




**Support needs not met**

**39%** of **OB caregivers** and **43%** of **UCB caregivers** did not have their support needs met


Adequacy of financial support	Awareness of payments
-------------------------------	-----------------------




**Income enough / more than enough to meet everyday needs**  
Increased among **UCB caregivers** receiving a main benefit (up seven points to 52%)



**OB payment enough / more than enough to cover costs**  
Increased among **OB caregivers** (up 13 points to 58%).



**More caregivers have asked MSD for extra help in the last six months**  
(36% of **UCB caregivers**, up seven points since 2019)



**Declines in awareness**  
Extraordinary Care Fund (68% of **OB caregivers**, down 12 points since 2019)

School and Year Start-Up Payment (86% of **OB caregivers** and 88% of **UCB caregivers**, down nine and two points respectively since 2019)

Low awareness of Permanent Caregiver Support Service among **UCB caregivers** (37%) who were eligible

<sup>1</sup> OB Caregivers were able to choose multiple answers in relation to their ethnicity

<sup>2</sup> UCB Caregivers were able to choose multiple answers in relation to their ethnicity

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Introduction

Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) and the Ministry of Social Development are dedicated to helping and supporting all children in New Zealand whose wellbeing may be compromised now, or in the future. Oranga Tamariki also works with young people who may have offended or are likely to offend. Oranga Tamariki believes that in the right environment, with the right people surrounding and nurturing children and young people, they can, and should flourish.

Oranga Tamariki has an interest in children and young people being cared for by caregivers who are eligible for and receive the Orphan's Benefit<sup>3</sup> (OB) or Unsupported Child's Benefit<sup>4</sup> (UCB). The Orphan's Benefit is a weekly payment which helps carers supporting a child whose parents have died, can't be found, or can't look after them because of a long-term health condition or incapacity. The Unsupported Child's Benefit is a weekly payment to help carers supporting a child whose parents can't care for them because of family breakdown.

The OB and UCB rates increased by \$25 per week from 6 July 2020. These increases happened automatically – caregivers didn't need to do anything to receive the increase.

This research was conducted by Kantar Public, an external provider contracted to undertake the survey on behalf of Oranga Tamariki. Research ran between August to September 2021. This is the second time OB and UCB caregivers had the opportunity to participate in a Kantar Public phone survey. Each survey asked caregivers what they need to provide stable and loving homes for children. Comparisons are made with the 2019 benchmark research where relevant.

### Research approach

A telephone survey of 1,300 caregivers receiving either the OB or the UCB was conducted from 11 August to 21 September 2021.

Kantar Public attempted to contact all caregivers receiving the OB resulting in 120 phone interviews. The response rate for OB interviews was 51%.

For caregivers receiving the UCB, a stratified random sample was used to select Māori and non-Pacific caregivers, with a census approach used for Pacific caregivers. This enables robust subgroup analysis by ethnicity. In total, 1,180 phone interviews with caregivers receiving the UCB were conducted. This gave a 56% response rate. Results are also weighted where appropriate to represent the population of caregivers.

Around 25% of OB caregivers and 35% of UCB caregivers are caring for more than one child through the benefits. If this was the case, caregivers were asked to answer questions about one nominated child. The nominated child was determined through whose birthday was next.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/orphans-benefit.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/unsupported-childs-benefit.html>

## Research findings at a glance

The table below summarises the views of caregivers relating to different characteristics of the nominated child in their care. Statistically significant increases and decreases since 2019 are marked with an arrow.

**Table 1: Results at a glance – situation of the child**

Situation of the child	OB %	UCB %
<b>Relationship with caregiver:</b>		
Living with whānau/family	95	88
Living with grandparent	49	59
<b>Nominated child's ethnicity identified as:</b>		
Māori	56	69
New Zealand European	45	48
Pacific	18	18
Asian/Other	13	14↑
<b>Nominated child's age:</b>		
Under 14	39	66
14 and over	61	34↑
<b>Child's wellbeing (rated by caregiver):</b>		
'Excellent' or 'Very good'	66	63
Not very good' or 'poor'	7	10↑
<b>Activities child is engaged in:</b>		
Social engagement with friends	87	82
Te kōhanga reo/pre-school activities (under 5s)	71*	71↓
Sport	67	66
Community activities	43↓	52
Cultural activities	47	50
Church activities	25	33↓
Music	36	32↓

\*note: small base size, treat result with caution

The table below summarises the views of caregivers relating to the situation of the caregiver. Statistically significant increases and decreases since 2019 are marked with an arrow. Stars denote new questions in the 2021 survey.



Table 1: Results at a glance – situation of the caregiver

Situation of the caregiver	OB %	UCB %
<b>Caregiver demographics</b>		
Receive a main benefit	50	54↑
Older caregivers (65+)	25	21↑
<b>Role viewed as:</b>		
Rewarding	87	88
Stressful	66	67
<b>Support needed to care for child:</b>		
Any support needed in the past 12 months	74↓	81
Type of support needed:		
<i>Education and schooling</i>	38↓	48
<i>Child's mental and emotional health</i>	47	46↑
<i>Responding to child's behaviour</i>	40	44
<i>Financial support</i>	33	41
<i>Any learning difficulties</i>	31	37
<i>Transport</i>	20↓	22
★ Did <u>not</u> receive the support they needed	39	43
★ Main sources of support received		
<i>Health services</i>	35	35
<i>School or specialist education</i>	36	24
<b>Income adequacy</b>		
Income is enough or more than enough money to meet everyday needs	67	58↑ (if main benefit)
OB/UCB payment is enough or more than enough to cover costs of raising the child	58↑	49
Caregiver uses their own money to cover the costs of raising the child	78	80
Sought extra financial support from MSD in the last 6 months	24	36↑
<b>Extraordinary Care Fund</b>		
Aware of Extraordinary Care Fund	68↓	69↓
★ Applied for the Extraordinary Care Fund	25	25
Costs applied for under the Extraordinary Care Fund:		
<i>Sports</i>	41	43
<i>Technology</i>	42	36
<i>Extra tuition</i>	26	31
<b>School and Year Start-Up Payment</b>		
★ Aware of School and Year Start-Up payment	86↓	88
School and Year Start-Up payment enough to cover necessary costs	58	57
Costs applied for under the School and Year Start Up:		
<i>Uniform</i>	76	73
★ <i>Stationery/Books</i>	69	64
Costs not covered by School and Year Start Up payment:		
<i>School camps/trips</i>	22	26
<i>Uniform</i>	26	24
<i>School fees</i>	35	22
<i>Devices/technology</i>	31	20
★ <b>Permanent Caregiver Support Service</b>		
Aware of Permanent Caregiver Support Service (PCSS)	NA	37

★ = new question in 2021 survey

## Orphan's Benefit findings

Below is a summary of the key changes in survey results since the 2019 benchmark, along with key results to new questions asked for the first time in 2021.

### Engagement in community activities for OB children has declined over the last 12 months

Participation in community activities has declined for children being cared for by OB caregivers (43% in 2021, down 12 points since 2019). Declines in participation were also seen for church activities (25% in 2021, down eight points since 2019). The drop in the rate of participation may be in response to COVID-19 and lockdowns.

### OB caregivers were less likely to need support in the last 12 months than in 2019

Three in four (74%) OB caregivers needed some kind of help in the last 12 months, a decrease of nine percentage points since 2019. This stems from fewer caregivers needing help with education and schooling (down 13 points to 38% in 2021), and transport (down 13 points to 20% in 2021).

New data shows that nearly four in ten (39%) OB caregivers who needed support did not feel they received that support.

### Perceived adequacy of the Orphans Benefit has improved since the \$25 rate increase

Nearly six in ten (58%) caregivers viewed the Orphans Benefit as 'enough' or 'more than enough' in 2021, an increase of 13 points since 2019. Nearly four in ten (38%) caregivers still feel the payment is not enough.

### Awareness of the Extraordinary Care Fund has dropped, but application rates remain steady

Nearly seven in ten (68%) caregivers are aware of the Extraordinary Care Fund (down 12 points from 2019) and 25% have applied for the Fund.

New data on the costs covered by the Extraordinary Care Fund shows costs associated with technology (42%), sports (41%), and extra tuition (26%) were the most common.

### Awareness of the School and Year Start-up Payment has declined

Less than nine in ten (86%) caregivers are aware of the School and Year Start-up Payment in 2021 (down nine points since 2019).

New data shows three in ten (30%) caregivers aware of the payment felt it was not enough to cover the necessary costs. The most common costs covered by the payment relate to uniforms (76%), and stationery/books (69%). Conversely, costs not felt to be covered by the payment mostly related to school fees (35%), technology (31%), uniforms (26%), school camps/trips (22%), and extra-curricular activities (21%). Uniforms were seen in both categories because caregivers can prioritise what supplies to spend the payment on.

### The strongest predictors of OB caregiver stress relate to support needs and financial pressures

Alleviating the stress associated with a caregiving role is an important way of supporting the quality of care a child receives and the continued commitment from the caregiver. High levels of caregiver stress are most related to these factors (when prevalent):

1. The caregiver needing help with the nominated child's intellectual difficulties (16% needed support in the last 12 months).
2. The caregiver needing to contribute their own money to help cover the costs of the nominated child (78% did this, with 46% doing it 'a lot')

3. The caregiver needing help with responding to the nominated child's behaviour (40% needed support for this).

## Unsupported Child's Benefit findings

Below is a summary of the key changes in survey results since the 2019 benchmark, along with key results to new questions asked for the first time in 2021.

### **The demographic profile of nominated children in 2021 is slightly older and has a higher proportion of 'other' ethnicities**

Around one in three (34%) nominated UCB children are aged 14 years or over, an increase of four percentage points since 2019.

While most nominated UCB children continue to be Māori (69%), NZ European (48%), and Pacific (18%), 2021 saw a significant increase in nominated UCB children who were another ethnicity (including Asian) (up six percentage points to 14%).

### **UCB caregivers' views of the nominated child's wellbeing has worsened slightly reflecting the older age profile of the children**

One in ten (10%) caregivers rated their nominated child's wellbeing as 'not very good' or 'poor', an increase of three points since 2019. The older age profile of nominated children in the 2021 survey has likely contributed to this because, in both surveys, perceptions of a child's wellbeing declined as the child's age increases.

### **UCB children are less engaged in some activities than in 2019, a possible reflection of COVID-19 lockdowns**

Declines in nominated children's participation in three activities are evident since 2019: te Kōhanga reo/pre-school activities (down 12 points to 71% of children aged under five), music (down six points to 32%), and church activities (down four points to 33%).

### **The UCB caregiver demographic profile in 2021 is older and skewed towards those receiving a main benefit**

Just over half of UCB caregivers receive a main benefit (up nine points since 2019 to 54%). This will partly be related to the higher proportion of older caregivers (aged 65 years and over) in 2021 (up five points since 2019 to 21%).

### **More support is needed for the child's mental and emotional health in 2021**

Nearly half of caregivers needed support for the child's mental and emotional health (up seven points since 2019 to 46% in 2021). Support for education and schooling (48%) and responding to the child's behaviour (44%), as well as financial support (41%) remained important.

New data shows that around four in ten (43%) caregivers who needed support did not feel they received that support.

Māori and Pacific caregivers were more likely to report needing support than caregivers who identified as an 'Other' ethnicity, especially in terms of financial needs, transport, whānau visits, cultural needs, legal needs, and language skills. However, Māori and Pacific caregivers were also more likely to feel they didn't receive the support they needed.

### **Income adequacy has improved for UCB caregivers receiving a main benefit, but remains unchanged for other caregivers**

Since 2019, the proportion of UCB caregivers receiving a main benefit who consider their total income to be inadequate has declined by seven percentage points to 46%.

More than a third (36%) of UCB caregivers sought extra help from the Ministry of Social Development in the past six months – this is an increase of seven points compared to the 2019 benchmark survey.

Māori and Pacific caregivers continue to be more likely than other caregivers to report that their income is inadequate to meet every day needs, and that the UCB payment is not enough to cover the costs of caring for the nominated child.

### **Awareness of the Extraordinary Care Fund has dropped, but application rates remain unaffected**

Seven in ten (69%) caregivers are aware of the Extraordinary Care Fund (a drop of 11 points since 2019) and 25% have applied for the Fund.

New data on the costs covered by the Extraordinary Care Fund show costs associated with sports (43%), technology (36%), and extra tuition (31%) are most covered.

### **Over a third of caregivers aware of the School and Year Start Up payment feel the payment is not enough**

Most caregivers (88%) continue to be aware of the School and Year Start Up payment.

New data shows 35% of those aware of the payment feel it is not enough to cover the necessary costs. The most common costs covered by the payment relate to uniforms (73%), and stationery/books (64%). Conversely, costs not felt to be covered by the payment most commonly relate to school camps/trips (26%), uniforms (24%), school fees (22%), and technology (20%).

Uniforms were seen in both categories because caregivers can prioritise what supplies to spend the payment on.

### **Awareness of the Permanent Caregiver Support Service is low**

Less than four in ten (37%) caregivers whose child came into care through an Oranga Tamariki long term care agreement are aware of the Permanent Caregiver Support Service. Social workers and Oranga Tamariki/CYFS are the most common sources of awareness (39% and 23% respectively).

### **Māori and Pacific caregivers are especially prone to low awareness of the financial support available**

Māori and Pacific caregivers are more likely than other caregivers to be unaware of the Extraordinary Care Fund and the School Year Start-Up payment, and Māori caregivers are more likely to be unaware of the Permanent Caregiver Support Service.

### **The strongest predictors of caregiver stress include high support needs**

Based on measures included in the survey, the four strongest predictors of higher caregiver stress are when:

1. Support is needed for the child's mental and emotional health (46% needed this in the last 12 months)
2. The caregiver is Māori (52% of caregivers)
3. Support is needed for whānau visits (20% of caregivers)
4. The caregiver is caring for multiple children (35% of caregivers)

## What implications are there for Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Social Development?

Research suggests the UCB/OB rates, and more general benefit increases, have had a positive impact on improving income adequacy for OB caregivers, and UCB caregivers receiving a main benefit. However, more attention is needed to ensure the financial resources provided to OB and UCB caregivers is reflective of the true costs caring for a child.

There was a decrease in the number of caregivers who were aware of the Extraordinary Care Fund and School and Year Start Up Payment. This decrease in awareness suggests a need for more communication to caregivers about its availability.

Greater access to services and support is needed to address and improve the wellbeing of caregivers and the children in their care. Since 2019, there has been a rise in the need to support caregivers who are caring for children with emotional and mental wellbeing issues. COVID-19 may have played a role in exacerbating underlying mental health concerns. Research also shows that support for UCB children's emotional and mental wellbeing is a key factor in reducing caregiver stress, along with support for whānau visits. Likewise, to support OB caregivers' levels of stress, caregivers need better support when a child in their care is experiencing intellectual difficulties.

A focus on better meeting the needs of Māori and Pacific caregivers is needed. Māori and Pacific caregivers shared a greater need for both financial and non-financial support. Furthermore, Māori and Pacific caregivers were more likely to feel their support needs hadn't been met and were less likely to be aware of the different types of support available.

# BACKGROUND

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## Introduction

Caregivers fulfil a vital role in raising children and young people by preventing children and young people from becoming part of the statutory care system. At the same time, caregivers are trying to provide stable and loving homes.

Oranga Tamariki -The Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) and the Ministry of Social Development are dedicated to supporting all caregivers in the statutory and non-statutory care system. Oranga Tamariki also has responsibilities to know about children and young people who live with caregivers. This survey is a follow-up study based on the benchmark research commissioned by Oranga Tamariki in [2019](#). It was commissioned to research caregivers eligible for and receiving the Orphan's Benefit (OB) and Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB) and aims to further build the understanding of both children and their caregivers. This research was conducted by Kantar Public, an external provider contracted to undertake the survey on behalf of Oranga Tamariki

## Background

### The OB and UCB

The OB and UCB provides financial support to caregivers for the costs of caring for a child. A single adult or couple become caregivers when a child's parents are unable to provide a home for the child. Often these caregivers are relatives, grandparents, whānau, or friends of the family.

Caregivers who receive the Orphan's Benefit<sup>5</sup> at the Ministry of Social Development must have a child who has experienced one of the following eligibility criteria:

- natural or adopted parent(s) or stepparent(s) have died
- parent(s) can't be found, or
- parent(s) can't look after them because of a long-term health condition or incapacity.

For the UCB<sup>6</sup>, a child will have experienced events that have led to a family breakdown, where the natural or adopted parent(s) or stepparent can't care for them. Some children are referred by Oranga Tamariki, and it may have been agreed at a Family Group Conference, hui, or cultural service meeting, that there has been a family breakdown.

Where Oranga Tamariki plays a role in the child's welfare, the Ministry of Social Development assesses the evidence, including evidence provided by Oranga Tamariki to determine whether a family breakdown assessment is needed.

Where a child is not currently in the care of Oranga Tamariki, caregivers can directly apply to the Ministry of Social Development for financial support. A family breakdown assessment is required to determine if the eligibility criteria are met. Barnardos New Zealand carries out assessments for the

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<sup>5</sup> The Ministry of Social Development. (2019). website: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/orphans-benefit.html>

<sup>6</sup> The Ministry of Social Development. (2019). Website: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/unsupported-childs-benefit.html#null>

Ministry of Social Development as to why a child cannot live with their parents. Parents and others, such as teachers, social workers, children, and caregivers, may be included to help in the assessment.

The Barnardos assessment is to gain an understanding of the family situation. They make recommendations on whether a family breakdown has occurred and to what extent the child is unable to live with their parent(s). Using these recommendations along with other evidence, the Ministry of Social Development makes the decision on who meets eligibility for receiving the Unsupported Child's Benefit.

Caregivers' income does not affect entitlement to the OB or the UCB. These caregivers are required to be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident aged 18 or older.

### **On-going support**

Caregivers who are eligible and receive the OB or the UCB for raising a child have access to additional financial resources. They:

- automatically receive a weekly Clothing Allowance
- automatically receive Holiday and Birthday Allowances
- can apply annually for a School and Year Start-up Payment
- can apply up to three times a year for the Extraordinary Care Fund, and
- may be entitled to a one-off Establishment Grant.

There are other supports available that are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Some supports involve assessing how much income the caregivers earn, and are income-tested, to determine entitlements.

Caregivers raising children who have gone through a Family Group Conference or have been in a statutory placement may have additional and different supports available, like the Permanent Caregiver Support Service, which lays out an action plan specifying the on-going support needed. The action plan may stipulate a regular review. This is to ensure that on-going support and funding is maintained for the care of the child.

### **Changes in support since 2019**

The OB and UCB rates increased by \$25 a week from 6 July 2020. These increases were automatically paid – caregivers didn't need to do anything to receive the increase.

The following changes have been announced:

- Providing OB and UCB caregivers with Birthday and Christmas Allowances
- Amending the eligibility criteria to enable short-term caregivers to access the OB and UCB. This is in response to the uncertainty that often exists around the length of time caregivers need to provide care to children

### **Legislation related to the care of children**

Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Social Development work alongside various Acts and legislation for children living with caregivers, which include the:

- Social Security Act 2018, specifically Subpart 5 – Orphan’s Benefit s43, s44, s45, and Subpart 6 – Unsupported Child’s Benefit s46, s47, s48.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/whole.html>
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (Children’s and Young People’s Well-being Act 1989), specifically Part 2 - Family Group Conferences s20-s38.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1989/0024/latest/DLM147088.html>
- Care of Children (COCA) Act 2004  
<http://legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2004/0090/latest/whole.html>
- Child Support Act 1991.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1991/0142/latest/whole.html>
- Income Tax Act 2007.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2007/0097/latest/whole.html>

## Research Objectives

The survey of Orphan’s Benefit (OB) and Unsupported Child’s Benefit (UCB) receivers will help inform Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) management and policy makers by capturing the views and perspectives of caregivers raising children and young people.

The survey included the following topics:

- The profile and needs of children and young people
- The extra help that is needed for children and caregivers, and where children and caregivers may be receiving help from
- The awareness of the School and Year Start-up Payment and Extraordinary Care Fund
- The financial costs and challenges for raising a child

## Methodology

**Overview:** Caregivers receiving the OB and UCB were invited to take part in a telephone survey. The contact details were drawn by the Ministry of Social Development from their operational database in July 2021. All recipients of the OB and a stratified sample of UCB recipients were invited to take part in the survey. In total there were 1,300 responses, 120 for the OB and 1,180 for the UCB, with an overall response rate of 55% and an average interview length of 19 minutes.

**Target population:** The population of caregivers receiving the OB was approximately 270. Māori made up about 45% of all the caregivers in this population. The population of caregivers receiving the UCB was approximately 13,000. Nearly half of this caregiver population are Māori.

## Questionnaire development process

The questionnaire largely followed the final survey designed for the 2019 study.

New areas covered in the 2021 study include:

- Reasons why the nominated child came into the care of their caregiver (for OB caregivers)
- The costs caregivers applied for under the Extraordinary Care Fund



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- Whether the School and Year Start-up Payment is perceived to be enough to meet school-related costs
- The costs the School and Year Start-up Payment is used to cover
- Additional school-related costs not covered by the School and Year Start-up Payment
- Whether caregivers received support in any non-financial areas, and where they went to get this support
- Awareness of the Permanent Caregiver Support Service.

The following questions were removed in the 2021 study:

- Household composition
- Where the nominated child lived before they came to live with the caregiver
- Awareness of the clothing allowance
- Perceived effort to apply for the Extraordinary Care Fund
- Perceived effort to apply for the School and Year Start-up Payment
- To what extent the caregiver agrees they have enough money to care for the child(ren) in their home
- Whether the caregiver is in paid work
- The impacts of the child (on caregiver work situation and living situation).

The Oranga Tamariki team highlighted new areas of interest for the 2021 study, and Kantar Public (formerly Colmar Brunton) worked in consultation with the team to finalise the questionnaire design. This was followed up with a telephone pilot of 30 caregivers.

### Overview of interview method

The research process involved two steps:

- Step One: Pre-notification letter and information sheet from Oranga Tamariki advising caregivers about the upcoming phone survey and giving them the option to opt-out of the survey. These were mailed to caregivers on 5 August 2021.
- Step Two: Phone interviews. Trained interviewers phoned caregivers who had been sent a pre-notification letter that sought their agreement to take part in the survey.
  - The interviewer team included interviewers who were fluent in te reo Māori, Tongan, Samoan and Cook Island Māori.
  - Where needed, call-backs were made to conduct the interview at an appropriate time. Up to 10 calls were made to a telephone number to secure the interview.
  - Caregivers were given the opportunity to opt-out at any point during the interview.

No incentive to encourage participation was used for the phone survey.

## Response rate

The response rate for the telephone survey with caregivers receiving the OB and UCB was 55% using a base of all attempted phone contacts made, excluding invalid numbers and non-qualifiers. This is lower than 2019 (60%).

A total of 120 caregivers receiving the OB completed the telephone interview. A response rate of 51% was achieved for the total population, excluding invalid numbers and those who no longer had an eligible child living with them. When this base was further adjusted<sup>7</sup> to an estimated number of eligible caregivers receiving the OB, the response rate increased to 52%.

A total of 1,180 caregivers receiving the UCB completed the telephone interview, a response rate of 56% was achieved for the total population. When this base was further adjusted to an estimated number of eligible caregivers receiving the UCB the response rate increased to 57%.

## Data weighting

The survey responses were weighted at the analysis stage to ensure that the survey responses represented each population of caregivers.

Further information on the methodology can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

## Notes about the report

### Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit survey findings

The report is divided into two sections – the first section reports on survey findings of caregivers receiving the OB and the second section reports on the survey findings of caregivers receiving the UCB.

### Reporting of results

- The word 'caregiver' is used for ease of reference throughout the report to refer to all carers receiving the OB or UCB.
- The word 'child' is used for ease of reference to refer to children and young people who are raised by these caregivers, including the nominated child with the next birthday that the carer was thinking about when answering questions.
- The term 'Māori' is used throughout this report. This refers to all caregivers who selected Māori as the sole ethnic identity or any one of their ethnic identities in the phone survey. The same approach was used to define Māori children.
- For the OB, 'non-Māori' refers to all caregivers who have not selected 'Māori' for any of their ethnic identities. The same approach has been applied to children. The small number of responses from Pacific people means that reporting for this subgroup is not possible.
- For the UCB, the term:
  - 'Pacific' is used to refer to all caregivers who selected any of the following: Samoan, Cook Island Māori, Niuean, Tokelauan, and Tongan as their sole ethnic identity or any

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<sup>7</sup> This involved an estimate of the proportion of numbers where contact could not be made with the respondent (e.g., 'no answer') that would be eligible for the survey.

one of their ethnic identities. This approach was also used for defining Pacific children.

- 'Other' is used throughout this report to refer to all ethnicities other than Māori or Pacific. This term excludes any caregiver who specifies Māori or Pacific as one of their ethnic identifiers. This approach has been applied to classifying the ethnicity of children to 'Other'.
- The base sizes shown on all tables and charts use unweighted data. The statistical reliability of results is determined by these unweighted base sizes. The percentages in the tables and graphs use weighted data to ensure the survey results are representative of the population.
- The percentages identified in the tables and graphs may not add to 100%. This is due to rounding error or because respondents were able to give more than one answer to some questions.

### Statistical significance of subgroups

Statistically significant differences are highlighted or commented on in this report.

- Unless otherwise stated, all references to significant differences refer to the difference between the reported result of a particular subgroup and the reported result(s) of the remaining subgroup(s), for example, caregivers who receive a main benefit versus those who do not. Where no highlighting has been used or no commentary about the subgroup is included, it can be assumed that differences are not statistically significant nor are they appropriate.
- Subgroup analyses of caregivers receiving the OB or the UCB used bi-variate analysis to explore the relationship between their responses.
- Statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level are presented. This difference is probably a true difference and is not due to random variation.
- In the tables, **green font** and **red font** have been used to highlight the reported result of the subgroup that are **higher** and **lower** than the other subgroup(s).
- In the tables and charts, green and red arrows/triangles are used to highlight where the reported result in 2021 is **higher** or **lower** than in 2019, at a total sample level.

### Subgroup analysis

Subgroup analysis of caregivers receiving the OB in this report focuses primarily on differences by:

Caregiver receiving the OB for:

- Ethnicity: Māori versus non-Māori
- Child ethnicity: Māori versus non-Māori

And, for caregivers receiving the UCB the focus is on:

- Ethnicity: Māori, Pacific and Other
- Child ethnicity: Māori, Pacific and Other
- Other child demographic variables: gender and age

- Other caregiver demographic variables: age, income, and whether in receipt of a main income from the Ministry of Social Development.

### Stepwise logistic regression

Forward stepwise logistic regression was used to identify the best predictors for caregiver stress. Results of this analysis are shown in the report on pages 27 (for OB) and 59 (for UCB). Details of the regression approach are contained in the appendices.

# PART 1: CAREGIVERS RECEIVING THE ORPHAN'S BENEFIT

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# ORPHAN'S BENEFIT: WHO ARE THE CAREGIVERS?

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## Socio-demographic characteristics

The purpose of this section is to establish a picture of caregivers from their own voice. Understanding the socio-demographic characteristics of caregivers, and their household and family context is important in applying evidence to inform policy and will also help in targeting resources. This section helps to:

- identify who the caregivers are
- understand the demographic characteristics of caregivers, which includes ethnicity, age, paid work, benefit, and income
- learn about caregivers' household characteristics (household size/composition and region)
- know more about the relationship between caregiver and the nominated child.

The results presented for the OB are weighted by the caregiver population of Māori and non-Māori.

Caregivers could select more than one ethnicity for both themselves and the nominated child they care for. Around nine in ten (88%) children living with caregivers have some of the same ethnicity as their caregivers.

### Summary of characteristics of caregivers receiving the Orphan's Benefit

The demographic profile of the 2021 survey sample is broadly similar to the 2019 profile.

Around half (52%) of caregivers identified as Māori, one in nine (11%) caregivers identified as Pacific and two in five (42%) identified as NZ European.

Around half (52%) of caregivers who participated in the survey were aged 55 years or older. Non-Māori caregivers were older than Māori caregivers, with 55% and 48% respectively aged 55 years or over.

Just under half (48%) of caregivers are under the age of 55, with one quarter (25%) aged under 45 and 23% aged 45-54 years. Just over half (52%) were aged 55+, an increase of 11 percentage points from 41% in 2019.

Half (50%) of caregivers receive a main benefit<sup>8</sup> from the Ministry of Social Development.

The income distribution of caregivers is wide ranging. Just under half (47%) have an annual income of up to \$43,000; the same amount (47%) have an annual income higher than this. Additional analysis shows that grandparents (or great grandparents) have lower incomes (56% of grandparents receiving the OB have an annual income of up to \$43,000 compared to 37% of other OB caregivers).

Three in four (74%) caregivers have only one child in their care who they receive a benefit for. This may be more common for non-Māori caregivers (78%) than Māori caregivers (70%), but the difference is not statistically significant.

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<sup>8</sup> A main benefit refers to a caregiver receiving either a Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support, Supported Living Payment, Youth Payment, Young Parent Payment, Emergency Benefit, Emergency Maintenance Allowance, Jobseeker Support Student Hardship, Veteran's Pension or New Zealand Superannuation.

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Most Māori caregivers (74%) live in one of five regions: Te Tai Tokerau, North and West Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty and East Coast regions. Conversely, there is a wider geographic spread of non-Māori caregivers, with the highest numbers in Auckland and Canterbury.

Table 3: Selected characteristics of caregivers receiving the OB by Māori and Non-Māori

Characteristic	Total 2021 (n=120) %	Total 2019 (n=125) %	Māori caregivers 2021 (n=55) %	Non-Māori caregivers 2021 (n=65) %
<b>Caregiver ethnicity</b>				
Any Māori	52	51	100	-
Any Pacific	11	12	6	17
Samoa	4	4	2	6
Cook Island Māori	4	4	4	5
Tongan	1	2	-	3
Niuean	2	2	-	5
Other Pacific	-	2	-	-
Both Māori and Pacific	3	3	6	-
NZ European	42	48	23	62
Asian	4	4	-	8
Other	8	6	3	12
<b>Caregiver age</b>				
Under 25	1	4	2	-
25-34	14	15	11	18
35-44	10	12	11	9
45-54	23	27	29	17
55-64	27	19	28	26
65-74	23	18	21	25
75+	2	5	-	5
<b>Main benefit</b>				
Receive main benefit	50	53	51	49
Don't receive main benefit	50	47	49	51
<b>Income</b>				
\$30,000 or less	21	19	17	25
More than \$30,000 and up to \$43,000	26	32	32	20
More than \$43,000 and up to \$65,000	26	22	30	22
More than \$65,000 and up to \$90,000	11	12	9	14
More than \$90,000	10	12	8	12
Don't know	3	3	-	6
Refused	3	1	5	2

Base: All caregivers receiving the OB

Source: Q16a and Q16b (income), Q28 (ethnicity). The Ministry of Social Development operational data (caregiver age, main benefit status).



Table 4: OB caregiver household characteristics

Characteristic	Total 2021 (n=120) %	Māori caregivers 2021 (n=55) %	Non-Māori caregivers 2021 (n=65) %
<b>Number of children in care*</b>			
1 child	74	70	78
2 to 4 children	23	26	20
5 or more children	3	4	2
<b>Region**</b>			
Te Tai Tokerau region	11	14	8
North and West Auckland region	21	13	31
South Auckland region	3	2	5
Waikato region	9	11	6
Bay of Plenty region	15	23	8
Taranaki-Manawatu region	7	7	6
Wellington region	5	5	6
East Coast region	8	12	2
Upper South region	2	-	5
Canterbury region	10	7	14
Lower South region	4	1	6
Area outside region	4	3	5

Base: All caregivers receiving OB

Source: The Ministry of Social Development operational data (number of children in care and region).

\*Number of children in 2019 was asked in regard to household composition, so data is not comparable with the 2021 data.

\*\*Regions have been changed in 2021, so data is not comparable to 2019

## Most caregivers are related to the child

As was the case in 2019, most (95%) caregivers in 2021 are related through family/whānau relationships to the child. Half (49%) of all relationships are grandparents or great-grandparents raising a grandchild. One in four (27%) caregivers are aunts, uncles, great-aunts, or great-uncles of the child.

While both Māori and non-Māori caregivers are most commonly family relatives of the child, non-Māori caregivers are more likely than Māori caregivers to not be related to the child (9% vs 0%).

Table 5: Caregiver relationship with child (Q5)

Relationship	Total 2021 (n=120) %	Total 2019 (n=125) %	Māori caregivers 2021 (n=58) %	Non-Māori caregivers 2021 (n=67) %
Grandparent or great-grandparent	49	46	54	45
Aunt or uncle or great aunt or great uncle	27	26	28	26
Brother or sister	12	17	11	14
Niece or nephew	1	-	2	-
Cousin	-	-	-	-
Child always knew caregiver as mother or father	1	1	-	2
Stepparent / step grandparent	4	2	4	5
Whāngai	-	-	-	-
Other relative	1	1	2	-
<i>Any relative (nett)</i>	95	92	100	89
Some other relationship	4	5	-	9

Base: All caregivers receiving OB

Source: Q5. "Which of the following best describes your relationship with (child) when they came to live with you?"

# ORPHAN'S BENEFIT: WHO ARE THE CHILDREN IN CARE?

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## Introduction

This section profiles children and young people in the care of the caregivers receiving the Orphan's Benefit (OB) who participated in the phone interview. It provides the context for subsequent sections.

At the time of the survey, children, and young people in the care of caregivers receiving the OB could be up to and including the age of 18 years. For ease of reference, the term 'child' or 'children' has been used to refer to children and young people of all ages.

Prior to the 2019 study, children living with caregivers receiving the OB had not been studied. This survey attempts to understand some characteristics of the children who are unable to live at home.

The information is:

- based upon the child that was nominated to be the subject of the survey. Where caregivers receive the OB for more than one child, the child with the next birthday was selected at the sampling stage. At the start of the interview, the interviewer named the child with the next birthday and asked the caregiver to talk about them when answering the questions.<sup>9</sup> This child is referred to as the 'nominated child' in this report
- from the caregiver's perception of the selected child
- the child characteristics the caregiver provided.

## Characteristics of the nominated child

The demographic profiles of the nominated children in the 2021 and 2019 surveys are broadly similar.

Almost nine in ten (88%) children share at least some of the same ethnicity as their caregiver. This is similar to 2019 (93%).

Over half (56%) of nominated children were identified as Māori, and a further 18% were identified as Pacific. Over four in ten (45%) were identified as NZ European.

Comparison of the nominated child and caregiver ethnicity profiles reveals there are similar proportions of Māori children (56%) and Māori caregivers (52%). Upon further analysis, most (87%) Māori children nominated for this survey were under the care of a Māori caregiver.

Analysis of Pacific children is not possible due to the small population size and the small number of caregivers who participated in the survey.

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<sup>9</sup> It is important that caregivers were asked to consider a nominated child when answering the survey questions to avoid caregivers choosing to focus instead on their most difficult experiences which may be with another child. By nominating a child, we can be more confident that the survey results reflect a representative view of experiences for the quarter of caregivers with more than one child in their care.

Table 6 shows the gender profile of the nominated child living with caregivers receiving the OB which is slightly skewed towards boys (56% compared to 44% for girls).

Three out of five (61%) children were 14 years or older, one in four (25%) were 10 to 13 years old and one in seven (14%) were under 10. For this survey, there were no children under three. The age distributions of boys and girls are similar.

**Table 6: Demographic characteristics of nominated child**

Characteristic	Total 2021 (n=120) %	Total 2019 (n=125) %	Māori children 2021 (n=61) %	Non-Māori children 2021 (n=57) %
<b>Child ethnicity</b>				
Any Māori	56	59	100	-
Any Pacific	18	15	15	23
Samoa	6	7	5	9
Cook Island Māori	8	4	7	9
Tongan	2	4	-	5
Niuean	2	2	1	3
Other Pacific	1	1	2	-
Both Māori and Pacific	8	6	15	-
NZ European	45	43	32	63
Asian	7	4	-	16
Other	6	8	4	9
<b>Child's gender</b>				
Boy	56	51	47	67
Girl	44	49	53	33
<b>Child's age</b>				
0-2	-	-	-	-
3 to 4	3	3	6	-
5 to 9	11	10	10	12
10 to 13	25	30	27	23
14 to 17	56	54	50	62
18	5	3	7	3

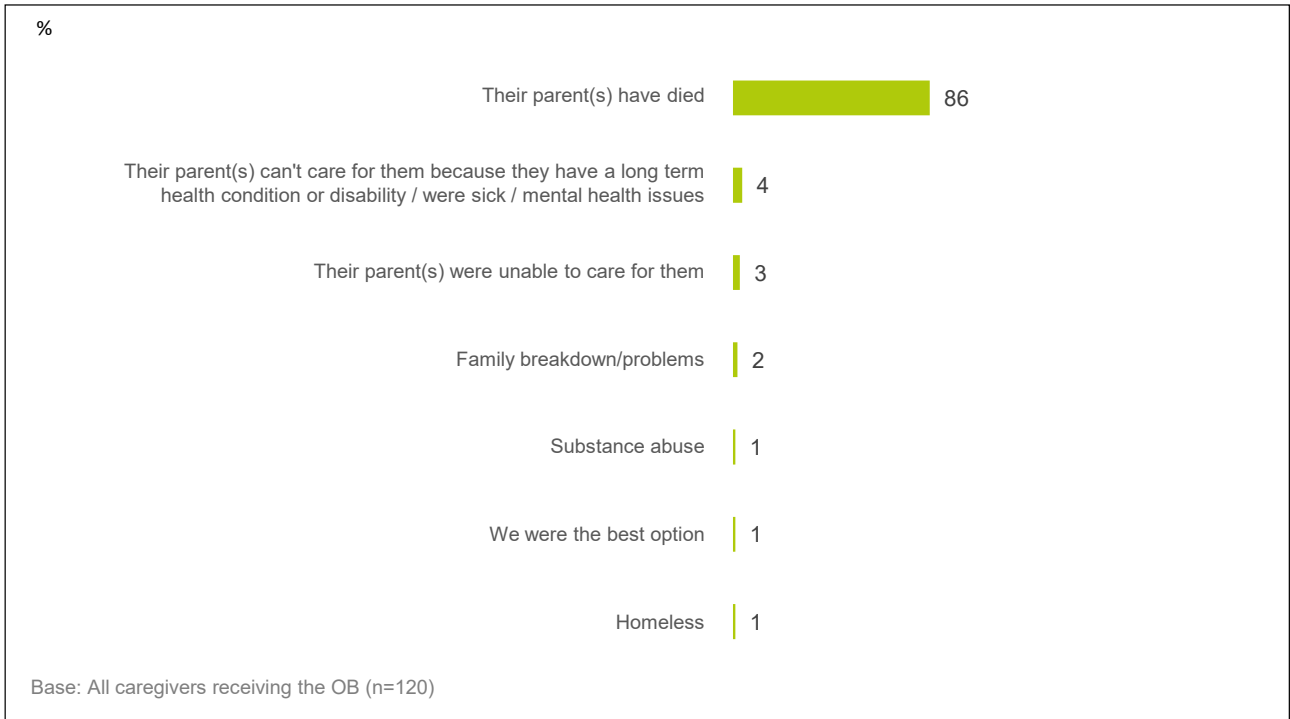
Base: All caregivers receiving OB

Source: Q27 (ethnicity) and the Ministry of Social Development operational data (child's gender and age).

## Most children have come into their caregiver’s care as their parents have died

The reasons for the nominated children coming into the care of their caregivers was explored for the first time in the 2021 survey. Death of the parent(s) was the reason for the majority (86%) of the nominated children. A few children have come into the caregiver’s care for other reasons, such as a parent being unwell (4%), or unable to care for the child (3%). The table below shows why nominated children came into the caregiver’s care. There was no sub-group differences to note.

Figure 1: Reasons OB children came into the care of their caregiver (Q8a)



# ORPHAN’S BENEFIT: HOW IS THE CHILD?

## Introduction

This section captures the caregiver’s perspective on the child’s wellbeing, and their interaction with the environment around them, specifically:

- In the last 12 months, how do caregivers rate the wellbeing of the child in their care?
- What activities are children involved in outside of home?

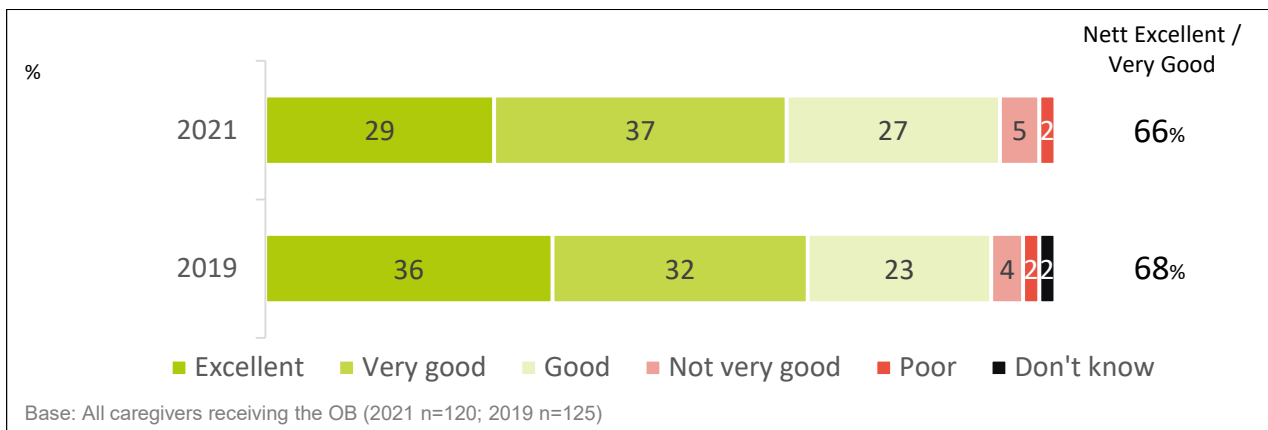
This is useful for gaining an initial understanding of the child’s overall wellbeing and their ability to participate in activities.

## Two in three caregivers rate the child’s overall wellbeing as excellent or very good

Caregivers were asked by interviewers to rate the nominated child’s wellbeing over the last 12 months. Where the child had come to live with them within the last 12 months, caregivers were asked to consider the time since the child entered their care. Each caregiver has their own view of what wellbeing is to them, and their rating of wellbeing reflects this.

Two thirds (66%) of caregivers rated the child’s wellbeing as ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’, with a further 27% rating their wellbeing as ‘good’. This is similar to 2019 (68% rated the child’s wellbeing as ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’). There were no sub-group differences of note.

Figure 2: Child wellbeing (Q20)



## Over half of children take part in sports

Caregivers were asked what activities the nominated child has been involved in over the last 12 months. Initially, caregivers were prompted with seven activities identified in the table below. In the 2021 survey, they were also given the opportunity to expand on what cultural activities the nominated child took part in (using caregivers’ own words). Caregivers could give multiple responses.

Results are broadly similar between the 2021 and 2019 surveys.

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There was a very small number of caregivers with nominated children under 5 years in the survey. These children made up 3% of all nominated children. Most of these children (71%) participate in pre-school activities, including some being involved in Te Kōhanga Reo.

Nearly all caregivers shared that their child participates in at least one activity outside the family home. Almost nine in ten (87%) nominated children spend time engaging socially with others and friends as an out of home activity. Two in three (67%) children were involved with sports, and just under half (47%) were involved in cultural activities. Kapa Haka was the most common cultural activity that the nominated children participate in (23%).

**Table 7: Participation in activities of nominated child by their identified ethnicity (Q26)**

Activity	Total 2021 (n=120) %	Total 2019 (n=125) %	Māori children 2021 (n=61) %	Non-Māori children 2021 (n=57) %
Spending time with friends	87	85	84	91
Te Kōhanga Reo*	71*	71*	71*	-
Sports	67**	59	62	74
Cultural activities	47	45	<b>59</b>	<b>34</b>
<i>Kapa haka</i>	23	-	<b>35</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Māori / Culture groups</i>	7	-	12	2
<i>Cook Island dance group</i>	2	-	-	4
<i>Marae</i>	2	-	2	2
<i>Samoan groups</i>	1	-	-	2
<i>Cultural festivals / performances</i>	1	-	-	2
<i>Tongan groups</i>	1	-	-	2
Community activities	43↓	55	49	37
Music	36	32	44	26
Church activities	25**	33	22	30
None	5	3	4	5

Base: All caregivers receiving Orphan's Benefit

Source: Q26. "In the last 12 months, which of these activities has (child) been involved in outside the home?"

↑↓

indicates a significant increase or decrease from 2019

\*Based on caregivers caring for a child under 5. Please note small base size (n=4) for 2019 and 2021 – treat results with caution

\*\*Change since 2019 is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level

### Subgroup differences

Six out of ten (59%) nominated Māori children in the study are involved in cultural activities, with 35% taking part in kapa haka. This is a significant activity for Māori children compared to non-Māori children.

# ORPHAN’S BENEFIT: WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION FOR CAREGIVERS?

## Introduction

Caregivers receiving the Orphan’s Benefit (OB) have different backgrounds and circumstances. They have different approaches to raising children and cope with raising children differently. This section aims to understand how caregivers are finding the raising of the nominated child, and the effects it has had on them and their family. It will help to understand the kinds of support caregivers receiving the OB need.

This section explores the caring experiences of caregivers, with a focus on answering:

- How do caregivers view caregiving? Do they view caregiving as rewarding and/or stressful?
- What are the biggest predictors of caregiver stress?

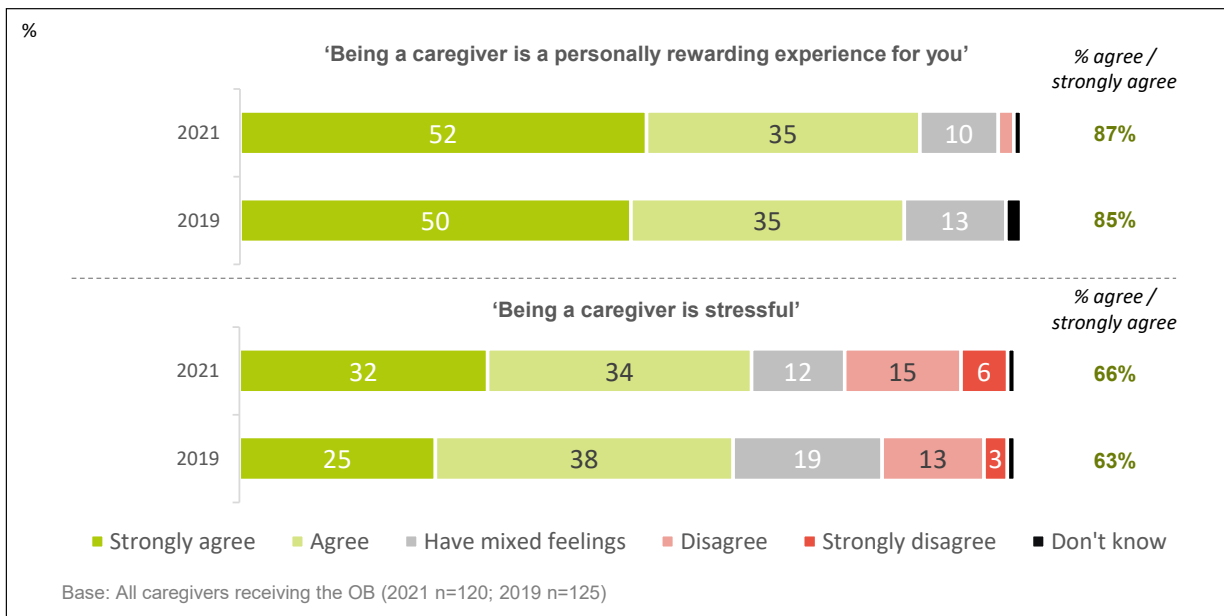
## Caregiving is a personally rewarding experience for most caregivers, but two thirds continue to find it stressful

Caregivers receiving the OB were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with caregiving being personally rewarding. Almost nine in ten (87%) caregivers agreed or strongly agreed that caregiving is a personally rewarding experience, while 10% had mixed feelings. This is similar to 2019 (85% and 13%, respectively).

Two thirds (66%) of caregivers agree or strongly agree that being a caregiver is stressful. One in ten (12%) caregivers held mixed feelings on how stressful caregiving can be, and a further 21% disagreed that caregiving is stressful. This is again broadly in line with 2019.

Almost two in five (58%) of all caregivers found that being a caregiver is personally rewarding and stressful. This compares to 53% in 2019. (See Figure 3). There are no sub-group differences of note.

Figure 3: Caregivers’ views of their experience as a caregiver (Q17)





## Support needs for children's intellectual and behavioural difficulties, and the need to draw on personal finances to cover costs, are the strongest predictors of caregiver stress

A regression analysis was carried out to understand the drivers of stress for caregivers receiving the OB.<sup>10</sup> The outcomes of this analysis are different to what we saw in 2019 because we have included more variables in the 2021 analysis and some of the variables used in 2019 are no longer available due to questionnaire changes.

For caregiver stress, the predictors explain 29% of the variation which suggests that there are factors not measured in the survey that relate to caregiver stress.

The statistical analysis of the predictors included in the model revealed that the strongest predictors of higher caregiver stress (in order of strength) are when:<sup>11</sup>

1. the caregiver needed help with the nominated child's intellectual difficulties
2. the caregiver has needed to add some of their own money to help cover the costs of the nominated child
3. the caregiver needed help with the nominated child's behaviour

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<sup>10</sup> Regression analysis is a statistical process for analysing the relationships between two or more variables. The specific process used here is called stepwise as it has a step-by-step systematic method to understand the importance of a 'driver' (the independent variable) by measuring its contribution to explain the variance in another variable (the dependent variable) in context of other independent variables. The dependent variable is stress in a binary form.

<sup>11</sup> Note, due to the small sample size of caregivers receiving the OB (n=120), this multi-variate analysis is less robust than for caregivers receiving the UCB and should be viewed as indicative only.

# ORPHAN'S BENEFIT: WHAT ARE OUR CAREGIVER'S SUPPORT NEEDS?

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## Introduction

The Orphan's Benefit (OB) is to help caregivers support children whose parents have died, are unable to be found or are unable to care for them due to incapacity. This benefit entitles caregivers to a range of financial supports to assist them in providing for the child. Caregivers also have access to non-financial services to help children remain in their care.

This section explores the use of appropriate and effective financial and non-financial support. The findings will help to better target services and prevent children from entering statutory care.

Caregivers' views cover:

- the non-financial support they have needed in the last 12 months.
- the adequacy of their income, in particular the OB.
- the financial support they have needed and accessed in the last 12 months. This includes extra help from the Ministry of Social Development to cover costs.
- the awareness of, and whether additional support is accessed through, the Extraordinary Care Fund Grant, and the School and Year Start-Up payment.
- the practice of supplementing financial support provided by the Ministry of Social Development with the caregiver's own money.

## Decline in support needed since 2019

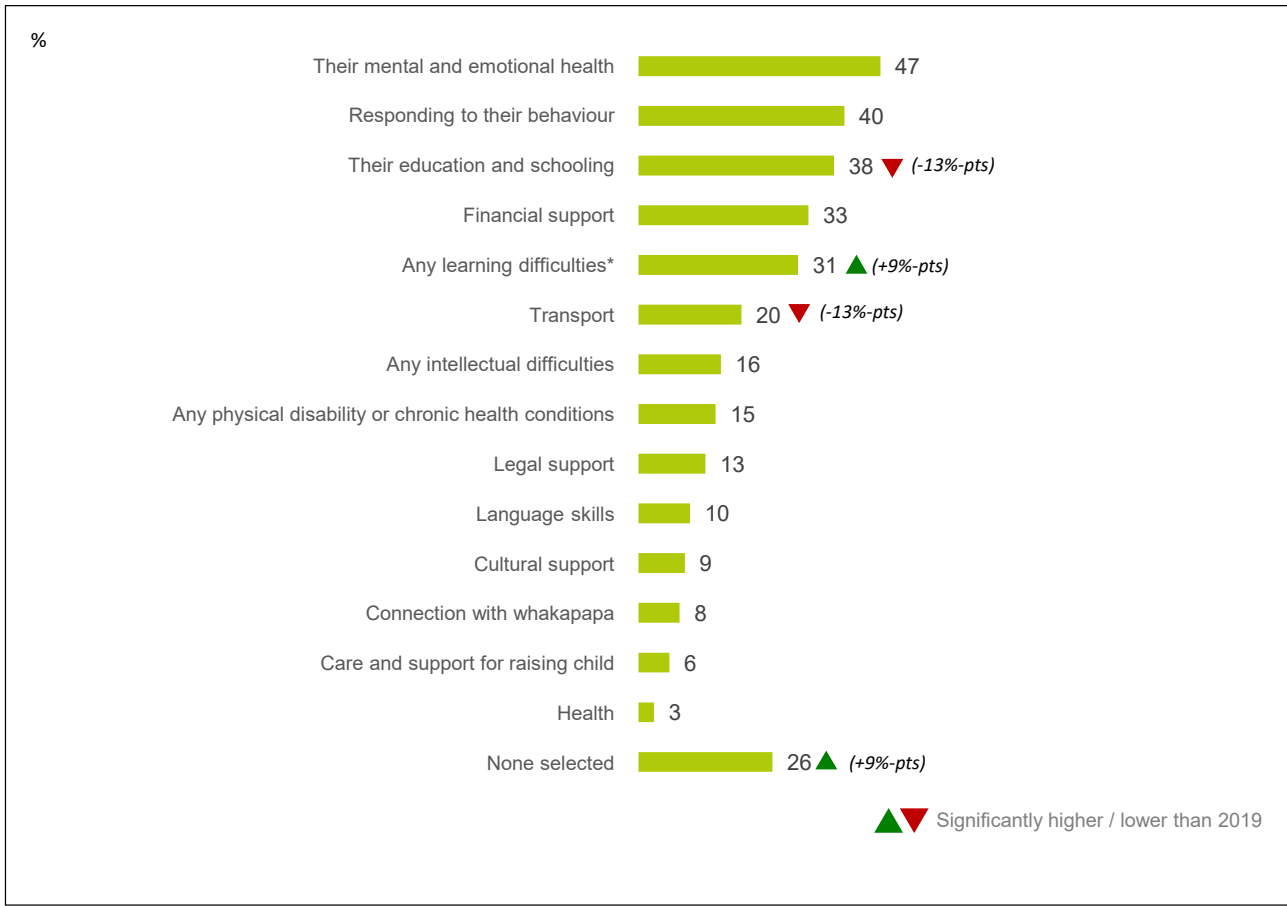
Caregivers were asked what they needed help with in the last 12 months. They were prompted with 12 possible needs and were given the opportunity to mention any other types of need. In 2021, caregivers were prompted with two needs for the first time – 'connection with whakapapa' and 'financial support'.

Three-quarters (74%) of caregivers indicated they needed help with at least one thing. This has declined nine percentage points from 83% in 2019.

The child's mental and emotional health was the most common need for support expressed by caregivers (47%). Around four in ten caregivers have needed extra help with the child's behaviour (40%), or their education and schooling (38%). Around a third of caregivers needed financial support (33%) or indicated that the child has learning difficulties that they needed support with (31%).

In 2021, fewer caregivers have needed extra help with education and schooling (38%, down 13 percentage points from 51% in 2019), or with transport (20%, down 13 percentage points from 33% in 2019). The decline in the proportion needing help with any learning difficulties may be affected by changes to the question wording and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4: Support needs in the last 12 months (Q18)



*Sub-group differences*

Caregivers aged under 45 were more likely to need financial support (59%), than caregivers aged 45+ (24%).

Caregivers of Māori children were more likely than caregivers of non-Māori children to need extra help with:

- cultural support (14% versus 2%)
- connection with whakapapa (14% versus 2%).

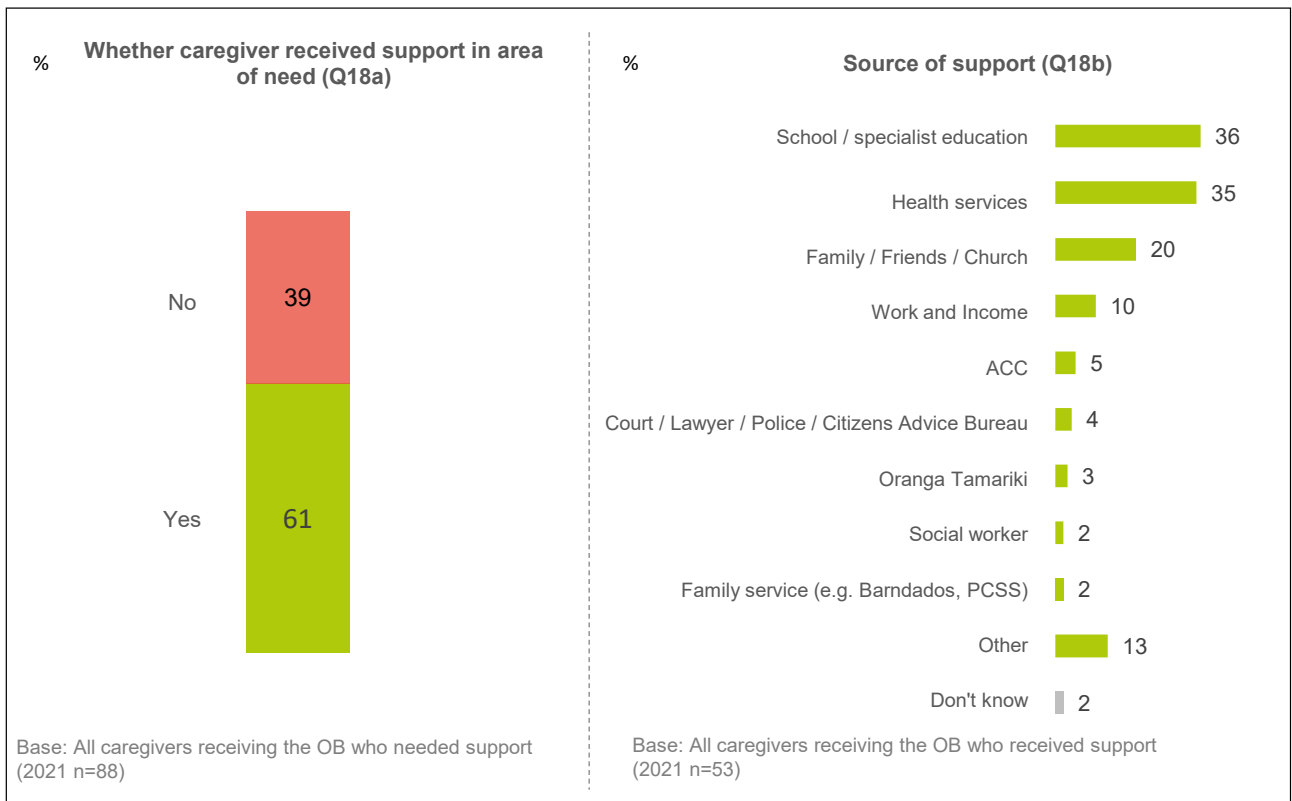
Caregivers of girls were also more likely than caregivers of boys to report needing extra help with cultural support (16% versus 3%).

## Three in five caregivers received support in an area they needed it in

Caregivers were asked if they received support in any of the areas of need that they mentioned above. Six in ten (61%) caregivers said that they had received such help.

These caregivers were then asked where they received this support from. Over one in three (36%) went to a school or specialist education service (such as a tutor) for extra support, while a similar amount (35%) received support from a health service (such as a GP, mental health service, or other medical specialist). One in five (20%) caregivers used their personal networks, receiving support from their family, friends, or church. There are no demographic differences of note.

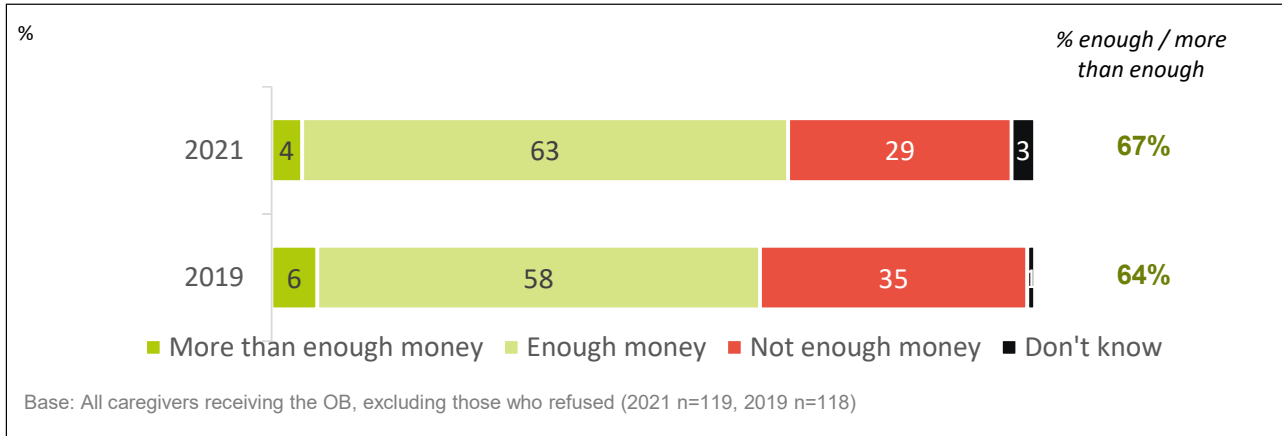
Figure 5: Support received by OB caregivers



## Caregivers with a lower income are twice as likely as those on higher incomes to feel that their income is inadequate

Caregivers were asked if their total income is adequate for meeting their daily needs for things like accommodation, food, clothing, and other necessities. Two-thirds (67%) of caregivers said they had enough or more than enough money to meet these everyday needs, while three in ten (29%) said their total income was not enough. The changes since 2019 are not statistically significant.

Figure 6: Caregivers' views on their income being enough (Q10)



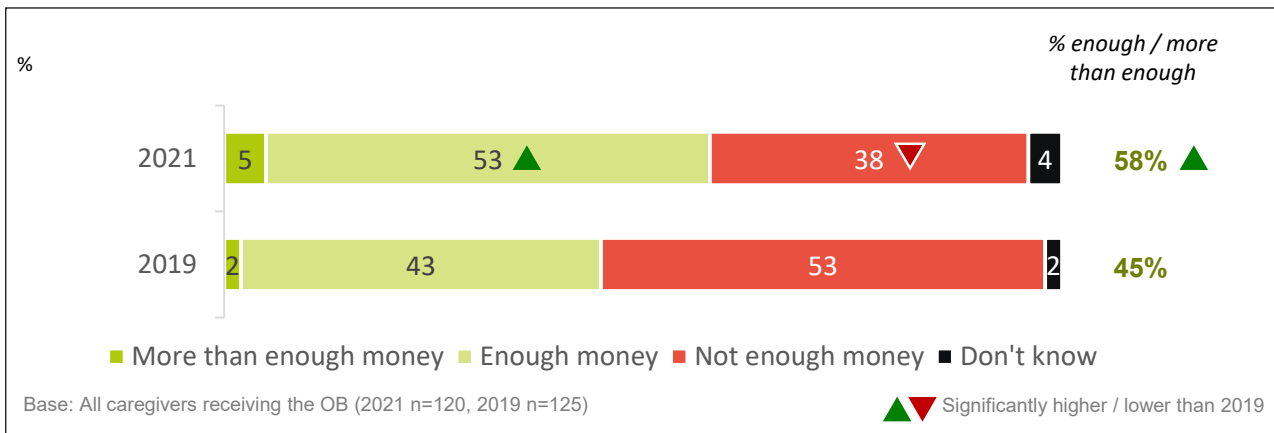
### Subgroup differences

The income level of caregivers continues to play a strong role in how they view the adequacy of their income to meet the needs for daily living. Just over two in five (42%) caregivers living on lower incomes of \$43,000 and below stated their income is insufficient. In comparison, about one in five (19%) caregivers earning an income over \$43,000 said they lacked enough income for everyday costs.

## More caregivers feel that the Orphan’s Benefit is enough to cover the costs of care compared to 2019

The OB is paid to caregivers for looking after a particular child. Caregivers now mostly feel that the OB is enough for the costs of raising that child. Six in ten (58%) caregivers said the money is enough or more than enough while 38% said that the money is not enough. This has declined 13 percentage points since 2019 (53%). The increase in the perception that the OB is enough to cover the costs of care is especially high among non-Māori caregivers (up 18 points to 63% in 2021).

Figure 7: OB is enough or not enough to cover the costs of care (Q11)



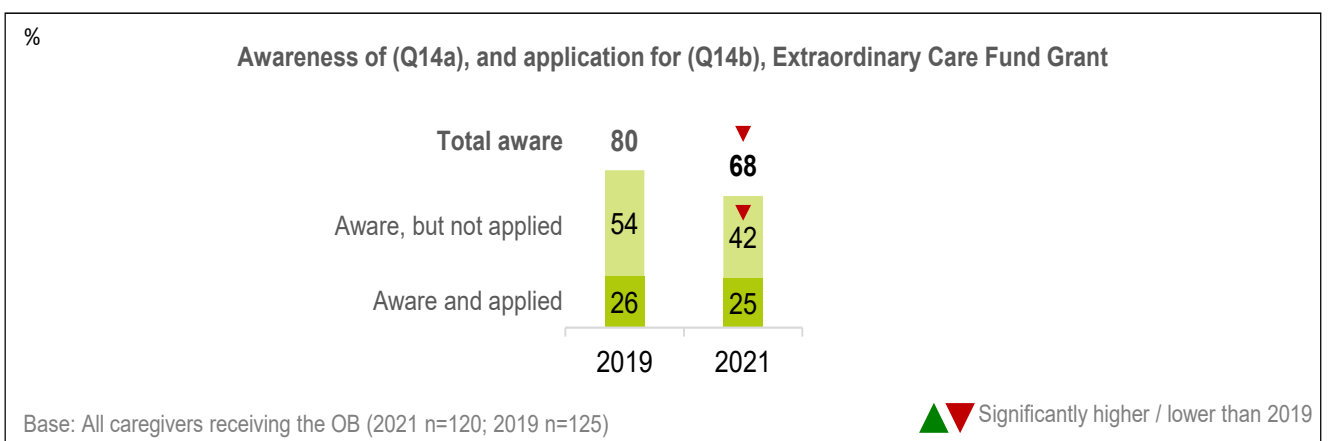
## Awareness of the Extraordinary Care Fund has fallen since 2019, but self-reported application remain steady

The Extraordinary Care Fund is to help with the costs of children who show promise in a particular area, or who are experiencing difficulties. In 2018, the Ministry of Social Development began to send a reminder letter to caregivers receiving the OB that informed them of the Extraordinary Care Fund.

Seven in ten (68%) caregivers participating in the survey were aware of the Extraordinary Care Fund. This has fallen 12 percentage points from 80% in 2019.

One in four (25%) caregivers had applied or tried to apply for the Extraordinary Care Fund. This is consistent with 2019 (26%).

Figure 8: Caregiver awareness and application for the Extraordinary Care Fund



### Subgroup differences

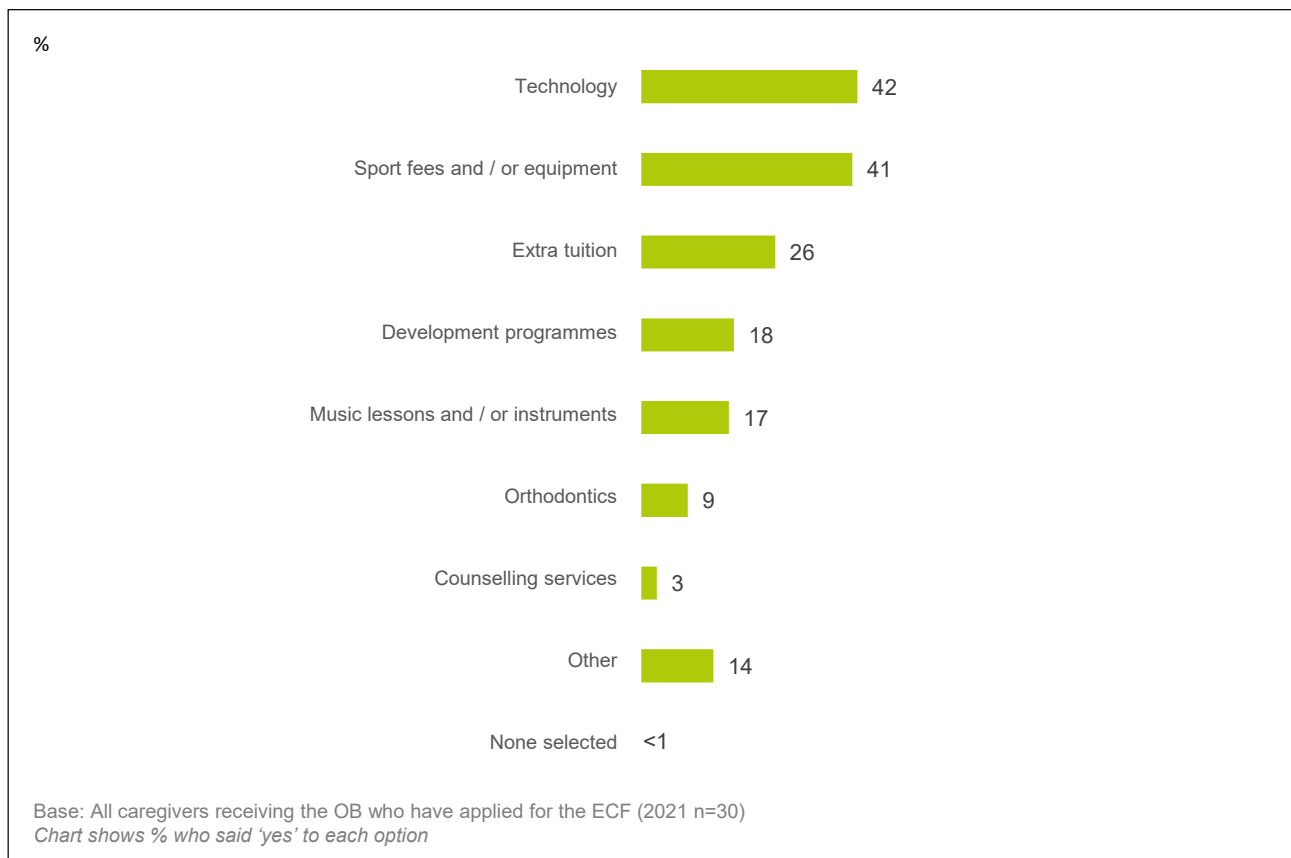
The decline in awareness of the Extraordinary Care Fund is especially high among:

- non-Māori caregivers (down 26 points to 58% in 2021)
- caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 (down 20 points to 58%).

## Technology and sports fees / equipment are the most common costs applied for under the Extraordinary Care Fund

In the 2021 survey, caregivers who had applied for the Extraordinary Care Fund were asked what costs they covered with the grant. Four in ten caregivers applied for the grant to cover the costs of technology (42%) or sports fees / equipment (41%). One in four (26%) caregivers applied for the grant to cover the cost of extra tuition for the child in their care.

Figure 9: Costs applied for under the Extraordinary Care Fund (Q14d)



### Sub-group differences

Due to the small sample size, sub-group analysis is not possible for this question.

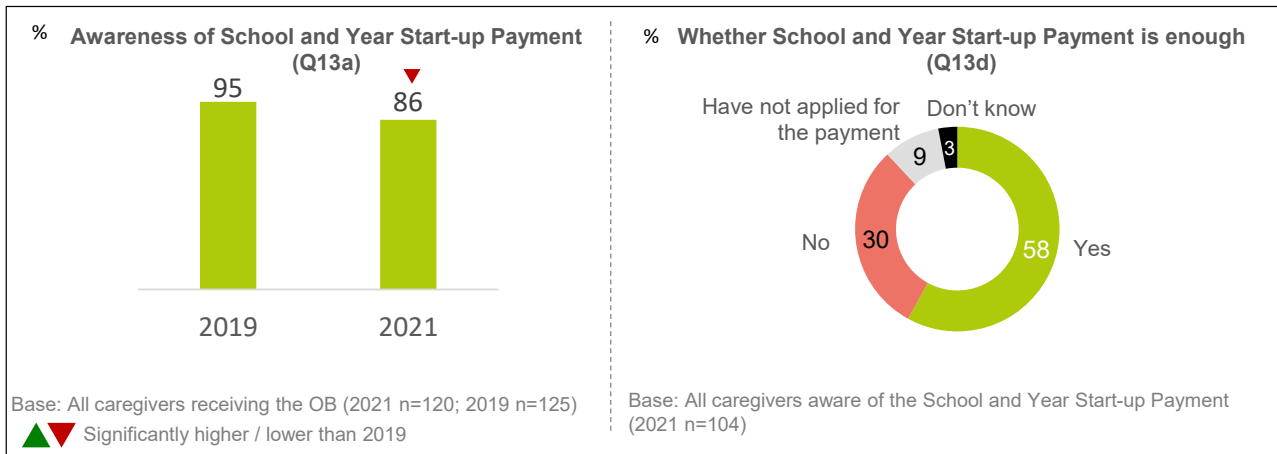
## Awareness of the School and Year Start-up Payment has dropped, and just over half feel the payment is enough

At the beginning of each school year, caregivers can apply for a one-off School and Year Start-up Payment. This payment is to help caregivers receiving the OB with pre-school or school related costs such as school clothing, school fees, and stationery. An individual application is required for each child the caregivers receives the OB for.

Each year, the Ministry of Social Development sends a reminder letter about the School and Year Start-up Payment to caregivers getting the OB. More than two in five (86%) caregivers are aware of the School and Year Start-up Payment, although this has fallen nine percentage points from 95% in 2019. However, the majority of those aware of the payment do apply for it (just 9% of those aware of the payment said that they have not applied for it).

In the 2021 survey, the adequacy of the School and Year Start-up Payment was explored for the first time. Less than six in ten (58%) caregivers aware of the payment feel that it is enough to meet the school-related costs of the child in their care. Almost one in three (30%) feel that it is not enough.

Figure 10: Caregiver awareness and applications for the School and Year Start-up Payment



The decline in awareness of the School and Year Start-up Payment is especially high among:

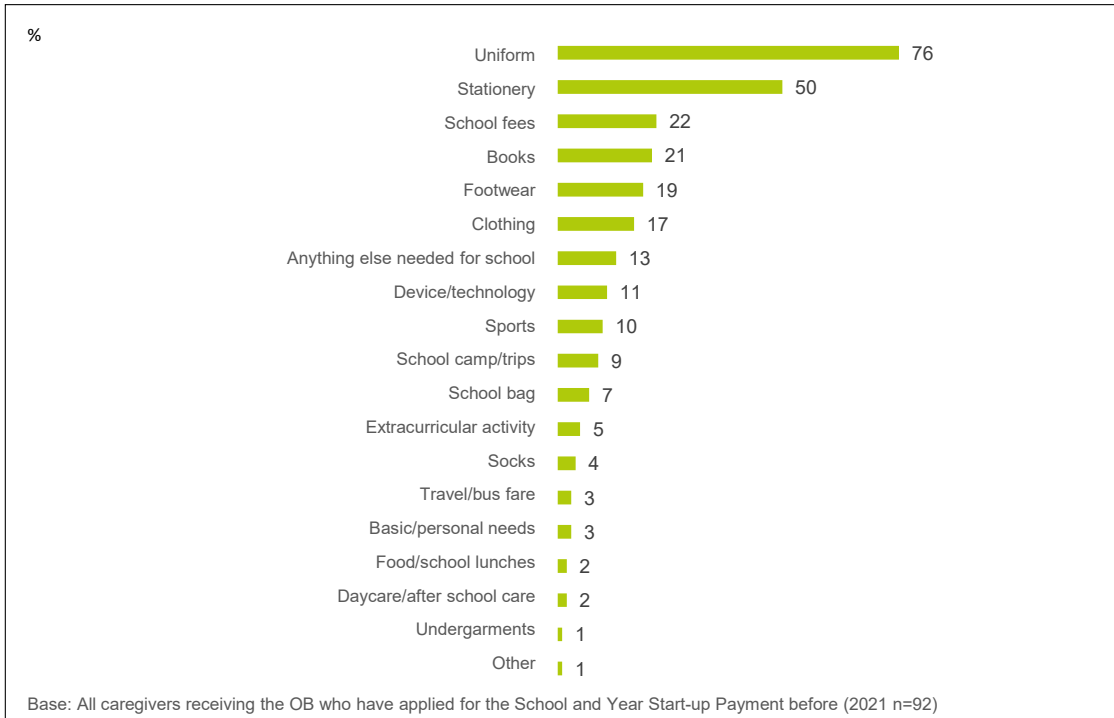
- Māori caregivers (down 13 points to 80% in 2021)
- caregivers who receive a main benefit (down 13 points to 84%).



## The School and Year Start-up Payment is predominantly used to cover yearly school essentials

In the 2021 survey, caregivers who had applied for the School and Year Star Up Payment before were asked what school-related costs they used the money for. For most caregivers, the payment helped cover costs for required items like uniforms (76%) or stationery (50%). Around one in five caregivers used the payment for school fees (22%), books (21%), or footwear (19%).

Figure 11: Usage of the School and Year Start-up Payment (Q13e)



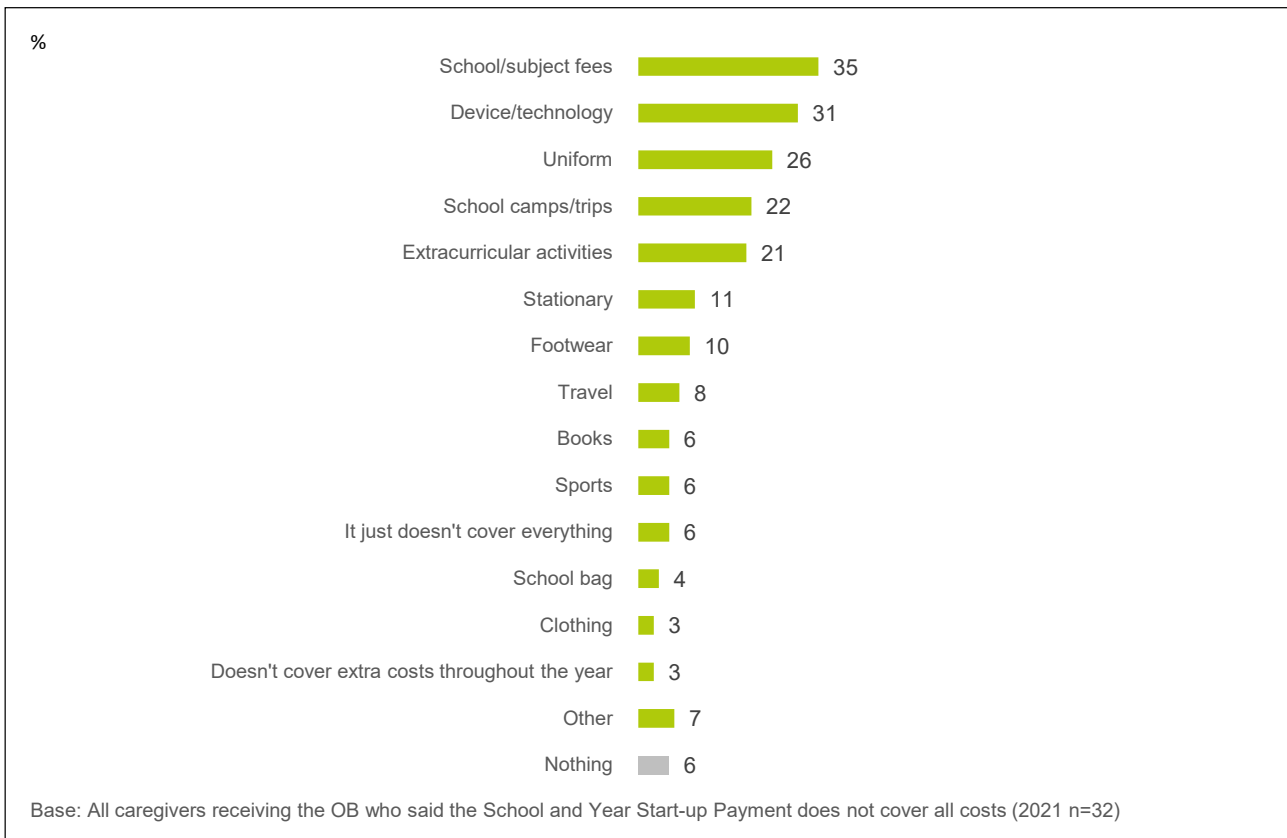
### Sub-group differences

Caregivers with an income over \$43,000 were more likely to use the payment for stationery (66%) than caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 (41%).

## The School and Year Start-up Payment is not considered enough to fully cover costs like fees and technology

In the 2021 survey, caregivers who said that the School and Year Start-Up Payment was not enough to meet the school-related costs of the child in their care were asked what additional costs were not covered. Proportions of over three in ten caregivers said the payment does not cover school / subject fees (35%) or the costs of technology / devices required for their child (31%). Proportions of around one in five caregivers said the payment is not enough to cover the costs of uniforms (26%), school camps / trips (22%) or other extra-curricular activities (21%).

Figure 12: Costs not covered by the School and Year Start-up Payment (Q13f)

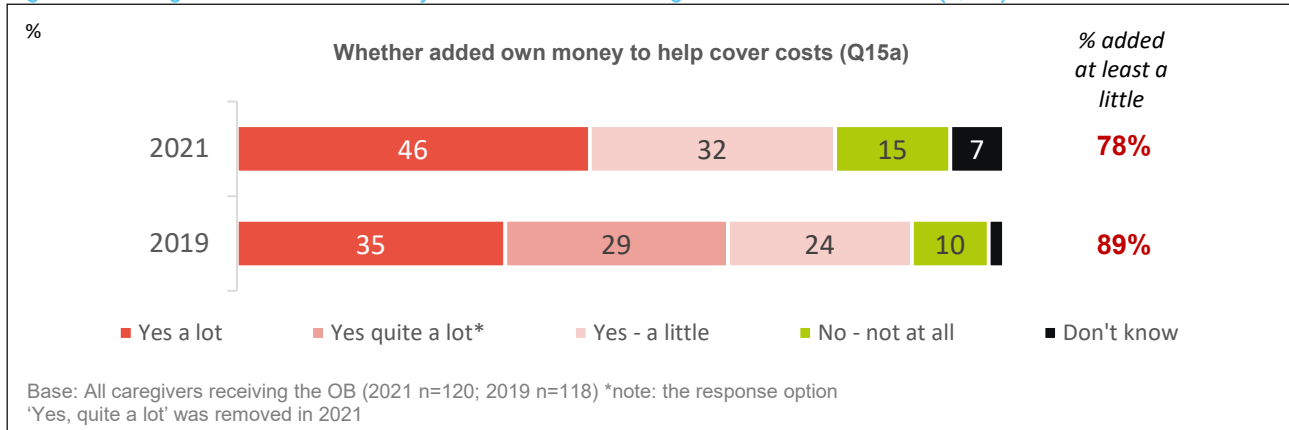


## Most caregivers use their own money to cover the costs of care

Most caregivers (78%) continue to say they make additional contributions from their own income to support a child that they receive the OB for.

The reader should take care in comparing 2019 and 2021 results due to the change in scale (see footnote in chart).

Figure 13: Caregivers added own money to cover costs of caring for the nominated child (Q15a)



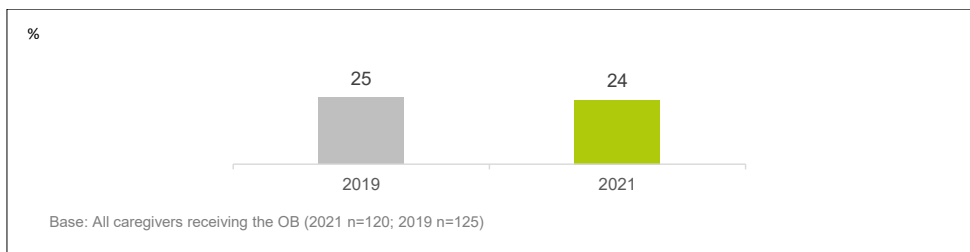
### Sub-group differences

Caregivers who believe the OB does not provide enough money to care for the child were more likely to contribute 'a lot' of their own money to help cover costs (68%), compared to caregivers who responded that the OB provides enough / more than enough money (33%).

## One in four caregivers sought additional support from the Ministry of Social Development

Caregivers were asked if over the past six months they have asked the Ministry of Social Development for extra help to cover the cost-of-living expenses. A quarter (24%) of caregivers said they had needed to request further financial support. This is consistent with 2019 (25%).

Figure 14: Caregivers ask for extra help to cover living expenses (Q15)



### Subgroup differences

A request for extra help from the Ministry of Social Development is more likely to be made by:

- caregivers receiving a main benefit (39%) compared with caregivers not receiving a main benefit (10%)

- caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 (36%) compared with caregivers with an income over \$43,000 (13%).

## **PART 2: WHAT ARE THE VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF CAREGIVERS RECEIVING THE UNSUPPORTED CHILD'S BENEFIT?**

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# UNSUPPORTED CHILD'S BENEFIT: WHO ARE THE CAREGIVERS?

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## Socio-demographic characteristics

The Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB)<sup>12</sup> contributes towards the cost of caring for a child whose parents can't care for them because of a family breakdown. Oranga Tamariki seeks to build a picture of the context and circumstances encountered by caregivers who receive the UCB and the children in their care. This is important when using evidence to inform policy and will help Oranga Tamariki in better targeting the resources caregivers need to raise children.

This section profiles the caregivers receiving the UCB who responded to our survey. It outlines the results of the following questions:

- What are the demographic characteristics of caregivers receiving the UCB?
- What is their current financial situation?
- What is their relationship to the child in their care?

The results presented here are weighted to ensure our sample of caregivers who completed the phone interview (n=1,180) matches the population of caregivers receiving the UCB. For more details on the weightings used in the results see page 12.

### **Demographic profiles are broadly similar between 2019 and 2021, but with more older caregivers and caregivers receiving a main benefit in 2021**

Around half (52%) of the UCB caregivers who responded to our survey identified as Māori with half (50%) identifying as New Zealand European. One in ten (10%) caregivers identified as Pacific. This is in line with 2019.

Those aged 55 years and over represent just over half (51%) of UCB caregivers. New Zealand European caregivers are significantly more likely to be 55 years and over (55%), while Pacific caregivers are more likely to be under 55 years (59%). The 'Other' ethnicity is made up of predominantly New Zealand European (86%).

The age profile of caregivers is older than in 2019, with more caregivers aged 65 years or older (21% vs 16% in 2019).

Reflecting the older profile in 2021, just over half (54%) of caregivers now receive a main benefit from the Ministry of Social Development (up nine percentage points from 45% in 2019). Māori (59%) and Pacific (58%) caregivers are more likely to receive a main benefit than caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (47%).

When asked about their annual income, one in four (24%) caregivers reported it as being greater than \$65,000. Māori (76%) and Pacific (79%) caregivers are more likely to have reported their income as being under \$65,000 than caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (67%).

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<sup>12</sup> The Ministry of Social Development. (2019). Website: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/unsupported-childs-benefit.html#null>

Just under half (45%) of caregivers reported that they have an annual income of less than \$43,000. Around one in five (19%) caregivers said that they have an income of \$30,000 or less. Further analysis revealed that four out of five (83%) of these caregivers earning an income of \$30,000 or less receive a main benefit from the Ministry of Social Development.

Additional analysis shows that grandparents (or great grandparents) have lower incomes (53% of grandparents receiving the UCB have an annual income of up to \$43,000 compared to 35% of other UCB caregivers).

For two thirds (65%) of caregivers receiving the UCB, there is only one child living in their household that they receive a benefit for. Māori and Pacific caregivers are more likely to live in households with two or more children (both 39%, vs 28% of caregiver identified as an 'Other' ethnicity).

A good geographic spread of the caregiver population participated in the phone survey. Geographic differences reflect the ethnicity distribution of the New Zealand population as well as the identified ethnicity of caregivers receiving the UCB. Māori caregivers typically live in Te Tai Tokerau, Bay of Plenty, and North and West Auckland; and Pacific caregivers live in Auckland.

**Table 82: Caregivers receiving the UCB and their profile by ethnicity**

Characteristic	Total 2021 (n=1,180) %	Total 2019 (n=1,175) %	Māori caregivers 2021 (n=408) %	Pacific caregivers 2021 (n=127) %	Other caregivers 2021 (n=368) %
<b>Caregiver ethnicity</b>					
Any Māori	52	51	100	18	-
Any Pacific	10	11	4	100	-
Samoa	4	4	1	35	-
Cook Island Māori	4	4	1	43	-
Tongan	2	2	1	16	-
Niuean	1	1	*	8	-
Other Pacific	1	1	1	11	-
Māori and Pacific	2	3	4	18	-
NZ European	50	50	29	14	86
Asian	2	1	1	1	2
Other	9	7	7	9	12
<b>Caregiver age</b>					
Under 25	1	1	1	2	1
25-34	8	10	9	9	7
35-44	14	12	17	21	11
45-54	26↓	30	24	27	27
55-64	30	31	32	29	29
65-74	19↑	14	16	11	23
75+	2	2	1	*	4
<b>Main benefit</b>					
Receive main benefit	54↑	45	59	58	47

IN-CONFIDENCE

Don't receive main benefit	46↓	55	41	42	53
<b>Income</b>					
\$30,000 or less	19	22	21	25	15
More than \$30,000 and up to \$43,000	26	23	27	27	25
More than \$43,000 and up to \$65,000	27	22	28	26	27
More than \$65,000 and up to \$90,000	12	13	11	8	12
More than \$90,000	12	13	11	10	16
Don't know	2	6	1	2	3
Refused	1	1	1	1	2

Base: All caregivers receiving UCB

Source: Q16a and Q16b (Income), Q28 (ethnicity). The Ministry of Social Development operational data (Caregiver age, main benefit status).

↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease from 2019

**Table 9: Household characteristics of caregivers receiving the UCB**

Characteristic	Total 2021 (n=1,180) %	Māori caregivers 2021 (n=408) %	Pacific caregivers 2021 (n=427) %	Other caregivers 2021 (n=368) %
<b>Number of children in care*</b>				
1 child	65	61	61	72
2 to 4 children	30	32	34	26
5 or more children	5	7	6	2
<b>Region**</b>				
Te Tai Tokerau region	7	10	1	5
North and West Auckland region	24	23	58	17
South Auckland region	4	3	2	4
Waikato region	9	10	3	9
Bay of Plenty region	14	17	9	11
Taranaki-Manawatu region	8	8	3	10
Wellington region	5	4	8	5
Upper South region	4	3	1	6
East Coast region	8	11	2	5
Canterbury region	11	6	7	18
Lower South region	4	1	1	7
Area outside region <sup>13</sup>	3	3	5	2

Base: All caregivers receiving the UCB

Source: The Ministry of Social Development operational data (number of children in care and region).

\*Number of children in 2019 was asked in regard to household composition, so data is not comparable

\*\*Regions have been changed in 2021, so data is not comparable to 2019

<sup>13</sup> Areas outside regions refers to areas that are part of New Zealand, but do not fall within the regional geographical boundaries listed such as the islands off New Zealand. For example, Stewart and Chatham Islands.

## Nine out of ten caregivers are related to the child in their care

Similar to 2019, most (88%) caregivers in 2021 are related to the child they are raising; and six in ten (59%) are grandparents or great-grandparents raising grandchildren. Other family relationships such as aunt, uncle, great aunt, and great uncle are more common among Pacific and Māori caregivers compared with 'Other' caregiver ethnicities.

While family relationships are the most common type of relationship for caregivers across all ethnic groups, caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity are more likely to not be related to the child. This 'Other' group are most likely to identify as New Zealand European (86%).

**Table 10: Caregivers' relationship to nominated child (Q5)**

Relationship	Total 2021 (n=1,180) %	Total 2019 (n=1,175) %	Māori caregivers (n=408) %	Pacific caregivers (n=427) %	Other caregivers (n=368) %
Grandparent or great-grandparent	59	58	59	45	61
Aunt or uncle or great aunt or great uncle	21	22	26	34	13
Brother or sister	3	4	2	4	3
Niece or nephew	1	-	2	1	1
Cousin	-	-	-	-	-
Child always knew caregiver as mother or father	1	3	1	2	2
Stepparent / step grandparent	4	*	4	8	2
Whangai	-	-	-	-	-
Other relative	1	3	2	1	1
<i>Any relative (nett)</i>	88	86	94	94	80
Some other relationship	11	11	6	5	18
Don't know	*	*	-	*	*

Base: All caregivers receiving the UCB

Source: Q5. "Which of the following best describes your relationship with (child) when they came to live with you?"



# UNSUPPORTED CHILD'S BENEFIT: WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?

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## Introduction

This section provides a demographic context for the children and young people whose caregivers are receiving the Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB). At the time of the survey, the age of these children could be up to and including 18 years. For ease of reference, the term 'child' or 'children' has been used to refer to children and young people of all ages.

Prior to 2019, there was little recorded or reported information on the children in the care of caregivers receiving the UCB. This section attempts to understand children from the perspective of the caregiver who is answering questions with respect to the nominated child in their care.

In instances where caregivers receive the UCB for more than one child, the child with the next birthday was selected. At the start of the interview, the interviewer named the child with the next birthday and asked the caregiver to talk about them when answering the questions.<sup>14</sup> This child is referred to as the 'nominated child' in this report.

It is important to note that the information presented in this section is:

- the caregiver's perception and views of the nominated child
- the characteristics the caregiver shares about the child.

## Characteristics of nominated child

### Demographic profiles are somewhat older than in 2019, and with more children of Asian/other ethnicity

As with their own ethnicity, caregivers were given the choice to respond with more than one ethnicity for the nominated child. Caregivers reported the ethnicity of their nominated child as being predominately Māori and New Zealand European.

Seven out of ten (69%) children are identified as having Māori ethnicity, nearly half (48%) as New Zealand European and nearly one in five (18%) are identified as Pacific. There are more children of Asian/other ethnicity than in 2019 (up six percentage points to 14%).

The ethnicities of caregivers (see table 9) and their nominated child (see table 12), reveals that there are more Māori children (69%) than Māori caregivers (52%), and more Pacific children (18%) than Pacific caregivers (10%).

Nominated children are in the older age-groups with 88% aged 5 to 18 compared to 12% under 5 years old.

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<sup>14</sup> It is important that caregivers were asked to consider a nominated child when answering the survey questions to avoid caregivers choosing to focus instead on their most difficult experiences which may be with another child. By nominating a child, we can be more confident that the survey results reflect a representative view of experiences.

The 2021 age profile is older, with 34% of nominated children aged 14 years or older (up four points from 28% in 2019).

The gender of the nominated child is evenly split between girls (49%) and boys (51%). Further analysis showed that the age profile of boys and girls were similar.

Compared to 2019, nominated children were more likely to be identified as either an Asian or 'Other' ethnicity, and are more likely to be aged between 14 and 17 years.

**Table 11: Profile of demographic characteristics for nominated child**

Characteristic	Total 2021 (n=1,180) %	Total (n=1,175) %	Māori children 2021 (n=664) %	Pacific children 2021 (n=460) %	Other children 2021 (n=210) %
<b>Child ethnicity</b>					
Any Māori	69	68	100	56	-
Any Pacific	18	19	15	100	-
Samoa	7	8	5	38	-
Cook Island Māori	7	7	5	39	-
Tongan	3	4	3	18	-
Niuean	2	2	2	10	-
Other Pacific	2	2	2	12	-
Māori and Pacific	10	11	15	56	-
NZ European	48	48	37	25	93
Asian	5↑	3	5	5	7
Other	10↑	6	11	12	6
<b>Child's gender</b>					
Boy	51	51	52	42	47
Girl	49	49	48	58	53
<b>Child's age</b>					
0-2	6	5	6	5	5
3 to 4	6	8	7	5	5
5 to 9	27	30	27	24	27
10 to 13	27	28	28	34	27
14 to 17	32↑	28	31	30	34
18	2	1	1	3	3

Base: All caregivers receiving UCB

Source: Q27 (ethnicity), The Ministry of Social Development operational data (child's gender and age).

↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease from 2019

## Nine in ten children share some aspect of the same ethnicity as their caregiver

As was the case in 2019, most (87%) children in 2021 share some of the identified ethnicities as their caregiver (versus 88% in 2019). Seven out of ten (71%) children of Māori descent also have a caregiver with Māori heritage, and five out of six (83%) children identifying with New Zealand European shared this ethnicity with their caregiver. For children identified as being of Pacific ethnicity, the shared ethnicity reduced to 44%.

Table 12: Alignment of ethnicity for nominated child and caregiver (Q27, Q28)\*

Ethnicity	% of children for whom the child's ethnic group is the same as the caregiver's ethnic group	
	2021	2019
Any Māori	71% (n=664)	70% (n=697)
Any Pacific	44% (n=460)	47% (n=438)
<i>Samoan</i>	41% (n=205)	36% (n=202)
<i>Cook Island Māori</i>	45% (n=179)	41% (n=171)
<i>Tongan</i>	42% (n=96)	28% (n=94)
<i>Niuean</i>	35% (n=46)	49% (n=39)
<i>Other Pacific Island</i>	19% (n=32)	43% (n=37)
NZ European or NZer/Kiwi	82% (n=480)	83% (n=488)
Asian	24% (n=67)	24% (n=35)
Other	45% (n=99)	45% (n=67)

Base: All caregivers receiving the UCB (1,075)

Source: Q27 (child's ethnicity) and Q28 (caregiver's ethnicity)

\*Data in this table uses total ethnicity (with no prioritisation)

## More than one in four children enter a caregiver's care through an arrangement with Oranga Tamariki

The reported processes for a child entering care with caregivers are varied. Over half (56%) of children had some form of Oranga Tamariki involvement<sup>15</sup> in the process of them entering care with their current caregiver. One in four (24%) caregivers receiving the UCB said they became a permanent caregiver through an Oranga Tamariki Long-Term Care Agreement (previously Home for Life)<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> This includes caregivers who reported that the child came into their care via Oranga Tamariki Long-Term Care Agreements, a Family Group Conference, through a Family Breakdown Assessment, or through Oranga Tamariki with no further information given.

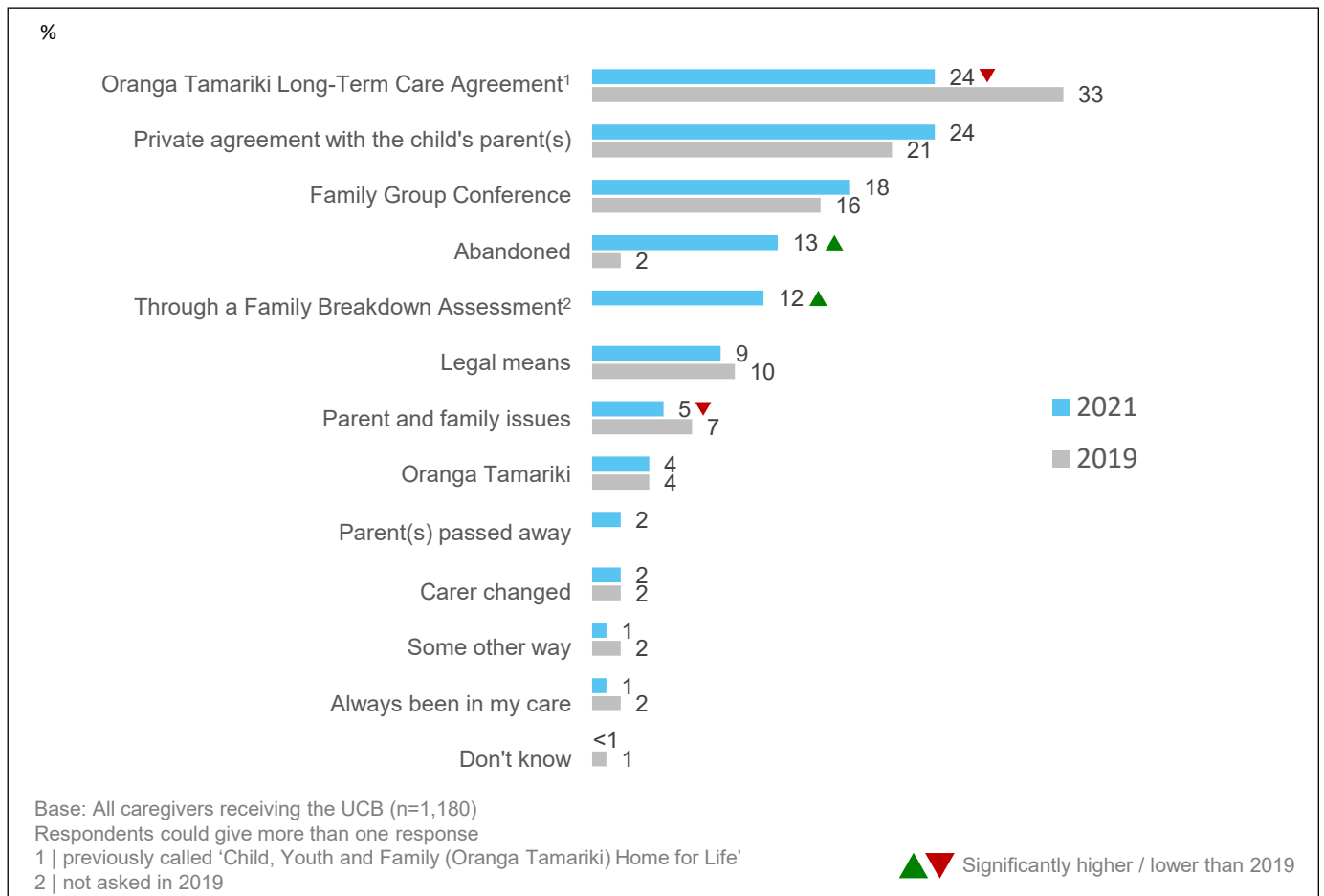
<sup>16</sup> The Oranga Tamariki Long Term Care Agreement process is a legal matter. It involves applications being made to the Court to discharge the Ministry's orders and apply for parenting and guardianship orders under the Care of Children Act. When children are unable to live with their own natural or adopted parent(s) or stepparents, carers may decide to provide the child a home and family for life. The carers take on the day-to-day responsibility of parents. Some Long-Term Care Agreement caregivers will become the child's legal guardian, often in addition to the child's birth parents.

A further one in four (24%) caregivers reported taking on the responsibility of care as part of a private agreement with the child’s parent(s), and almost one in five (18%) took responsibility of the child through a Family Group Conference.

Just over one in ten (13%) caregivers reported that the nominated child had been abandoned before coming into their care. A similar amount (12%) said that the child came into their care as the result of a Family Breakdown Assessment. Note, this was a new category added in the 2021 survey.

Compared to 2019, more caregivers reported that the child came into their care as a result of abandonment.

Figure 15: Pathway of child for entering caregiver’s care (Q6)



Sub-group differences

The identified ethnicity of the child appears to play a role in determining the pathway to care and the care arrangements made for their caregivers. There was a private agreement between the parent(s) and caregiver for more than one in four Pacific (27%) and Māori (26%) children compared with only 14% of children of 'Other' ethnicities.

Half of children came into the care of their caregiver due to risk of harm and neglect, or substance abuse issues

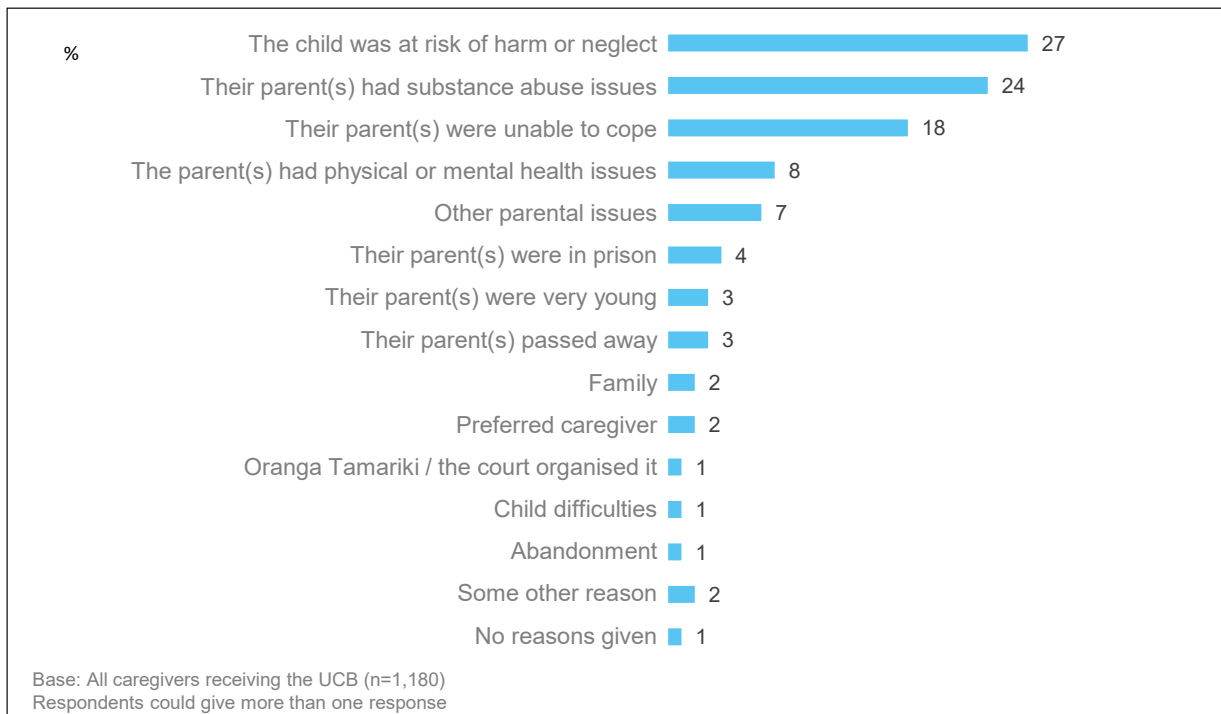
Caregivers receiving the UCB identified different reasons for why a child needed to come into their care. Often multiple reasons were given. Respondents answered this question without any prompting of response categories. However, interviewers were given six specific categories to use in

recording the responses, plus an 'other' category. Verbatim responses were collected for the 'other' category and grouped into similar responses.

Results are not compared with 2019 because some of the response categories in 2019 were prompted.

In 2021, around one in four caregivers highlighted that the child was at risk of harm and neglect (27%), or that the parent(s) had substance abuse issues (24%). Almost one in five (18%) said that the parent(s) were unable to cope. Fewer than one in ten mentioned that the parent(s) had physical or mental health issues (8%), were in prison (4%) or were very young (3%).

Figure 16: Reasons behind why the child needed to enter the caregiver's care (Q8)



The verbatim responses were grouped into themes which are described below with caregiver's quotes:

- Parental issues (7%) with some of these arising from relationship breakdown and the inability to provide for the basic needs of the child. Some caregiver quotes include:

*"The mother and father were unfit to look after their children."*

*"His mum was sick, and dad didn't have a stable home for him due to his priorities."*

*"Parents deemed unsuitable to care for her."*

*"Her parents didn't want her. I already had an older child of theirs."*

- Family issues (2%) with some of these arising from family breakdowns or the child being uplifted from the family. Some caregiver quotes include:

*"There was a breakdown of the family unit."*

*"Family dynamics broke down."*

*"She got taken off her mother."*

*"Family breakdown – the siblings were playing up."*

# UNSUPPORTED CHILD'S BENEFIT: HOW IS THE CHILD?

## Introduction

This section captures the caregiver's perspective on the child's wellbeing, and their interaction with the environment around them, specifically:

- In the last 12 months, how do caregivers rate the wellbeing of the child in their care?
- What activities are children involved in outside of home?

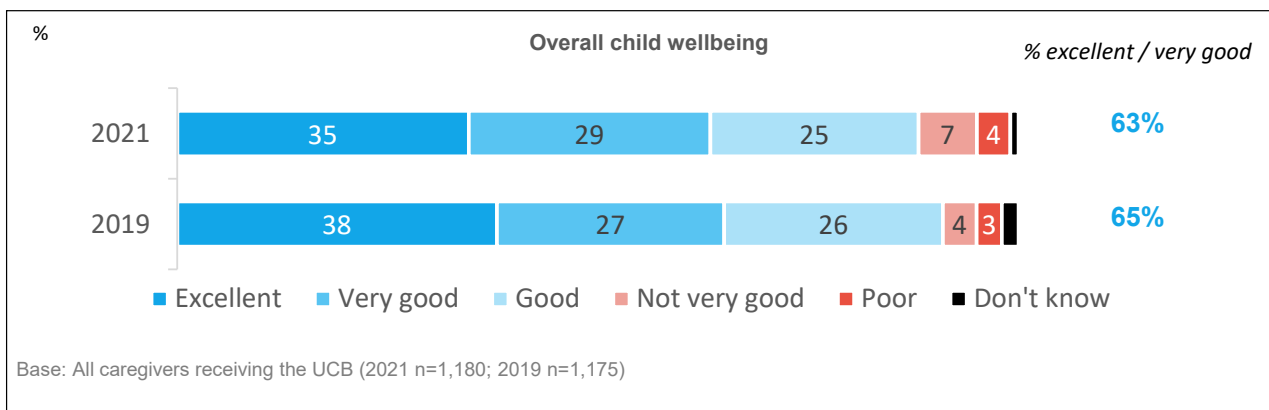
This is useful for gaining an understanding of the child's overall wellbeing and their ability to participate in activities.

## Most children are viewed by caregivers as having 'good' or 'excellent' wellbeing, although the proportion viewed as having 'not very good' or 'poor' wellbeing has grown

Nine in ten (89%) caregivers receiving the Unsupported Child's Benefit rate the overall wellbeing of the nominated child in their care in the last 12 months as 'good', 'very good', or 'excellent'. This result includes situations where the child more recently entered their care. In these situations, caregivers considered the child's wellbeing from the time since the child came to live with them.

Over three in five (65%) caregivers rate the wellbeing of the child as 'excellent' or 'very good', with an additional 25% rating their wellbeing as 'good'. One in ten (10%) children have a wellbeing standard which is reported to be 'poor' or 'not very good' (up three points from 7% in 2019).

Figure 17: Caregiver views of nominated child's wellbeing (Q20)



The increase in 'poor' or 'not very good' ratings is especially high among:

- caregivers of children identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (up 5 points to 12% in 2021)
- caregivers of children aged 5+ (up 4 points to 11%)
- caregivers of Māori children (up 4 points to 10%)
- caregivers with an income over \$43,000 (up 4 points to 10%).

*Subgroup differences*

The child's age continues to have a negative relationship with their overall wellbeing. As children become older, the caregiver rating of their wellbeing declines, with 54% of children aged 14 years and over perceived to have 'very good' or 'excellent' wellbeing. In comparison, 74% of children under two are rated as having 'very good' or 'excellent' wellbeing.

The poorer perceived wellbeing of older children, and the higher proportion of older nominated children in the 2021 survey sample, has contributed towards the increase in "poor/not very good" ratings shown earlier.

Caregivers with a nominated child identified as Māori (66%) are more likely than non-Māori children (59%) to rate the child's wellbeing as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

## Most nominated children participate in a range of out-of-home activities

Caregivers that receive the UCB were asked what activities the nominated child has been involved in over the last 12 months. Caregivers were prompted with seven activities identified in the table below. They were also given the opportunity to expand on the cultural activities the nominated child took part in (using the caregiver's own words). Caregivers could give multiple responses.

Most caregivers reported that the nominated child participates in at least one activity outside of the home. The most common activity is spending time with friends – 82% of nominated children do this. Two-thirds (66%) participate in sports, and around half participate in community (52%) and cultural (50%) activities. Kapa haka (27%) is the most common cultural activity.

Seven in ten (71%) children aged under 5 participate in Te Kōhanga Reo or pre-school activities. This is lower than in 2019 (83%) and continues to be lower than the national average of 97% participation rate of children under 5 in early childhood education.<sup>17</sup>

Compared to 2019, fewer children went to church (33% versus 37%) or took part in music (32% versus 38%) activities. This decline is evident across all child ethnic groups.

**Table 13: Participation in activities of nominated child by their ethnicity (Q26)**

Activity	Total 2021 (n=1180) %	Total 2019 (n=1175) %	Māori child (n=664) %	Pacific child (n=460) %	Other child (n=210) %
Spending time with friends	82	85	81	77	90
Te Kōhanga Reo / pre-school activities**	71↓	83	72	62	66
Sports	66	63	67	71	60
Community activities	52	55	54	54	46
Cultural activities	50	51	58	58	26
<i>Kapa Haka</i>	27	-	34	23	10
<i>Marae</i>	5	-	7	2	2
<i>Pasifika culture / groups</i>	4	-	4	15	1
<i>Māori / Culture groups</i>	4	-	5	4	2
<i>Te reo Māori</i>	4	-	5	2	1
<i>Tangi</i>	1	-	2	1	1
Church activities	33↓	37	33	51	24
Music	32↓	38	35	39	22
None	3	2	2	4	7

Base: All caregivers receiving the UCB

Source: Q26. "In the last 12 months, which of these activities has (child) been involved in outside the home?"

\*\* Only those with children under five were asked this question.

↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease from 2019

<sup>17</sup> Source : <http://education.govt.nz/our-work/our-role-and-our-people/education-in-nz>



*Subgroup differences*

There were differences in participation based on the child's ethnicity:

- Māori (58%) and Pacific (58%) children were more likely to have taken part in cultural activities than children identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (26%)
- Pacific (39%) and Māori (35%) children were more likely to have taken part in cultural activities than children identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (22%).

Participation rates for children under 5 years were higher compared to those 5 years and over for:

- music (42% versus 31%)
- te reo Māori (11% versus 2%).

Participation rates for children aged 5 years and over were higher compared to under 5-year-olds for:

- sports (69% versus 38%)
- kapa haka (29% versus 12%).

There were also a number of differences by gender:

- cultural activities (56% of girls versus 45% of boys)
- church activities (38% of girls versus 27% of boys)
- kapa haka (31% of girls versus 23% of boys).

There were also a number of differences by region:

- spending time with friends (91% of children in Canterbury versus 81% of those elsewhere)
- sports (75% of children in Bay of Plenty versus 64% of those elsewhere)
- church activities (39% of children in North and West Auckland versus 31% of those elsewhere).

# UNSUPPORTED CHILD’S BENEFIT: WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION FOR CAREGIVERS?

## Introduction

Caregivers receiving the UCB have different backgrounds and circumstances that play a role in how they view raising a child when the parents are not able to. This section provides an understanding of how things are going for caregivers and their attitudes towards raising the nominated child. It provides an idea of what types of support could be offered to make life easier for them and the children in their care.

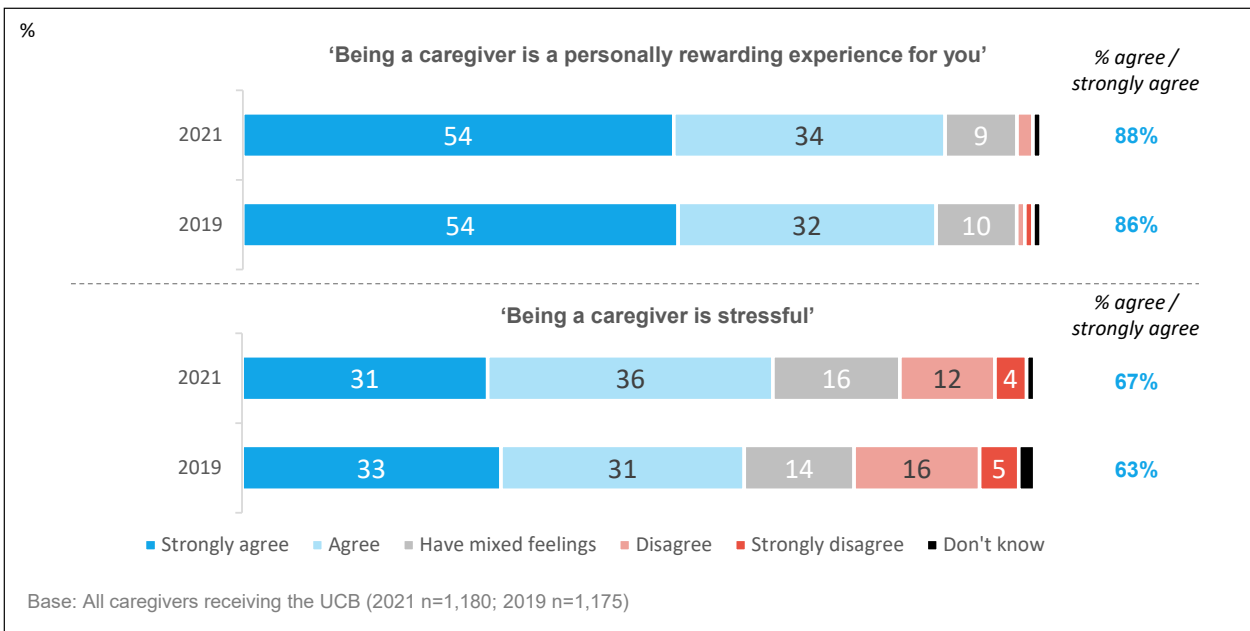
This section covers:

- how caregivers view caregiving, and how rewarding and/or stressful it is to raise a child for whom they receive UCB
- what the biggest predictors of caregiver stress are.

## The caregiver experience is increasingly both rewarding and stressful

Caregivers were asked if they agree or disagree that caregiving is a personally rewarding experience. Nine out of ten (88%) caregivers said they found it rewarding raising the child, and two out of three (67%) caregivers agreed that being a caregiver can be stressful. These figures are similar to 2019. Around six in ten (58%) caregivers found being a caregiver to be both rewarding and stressful (up from 52% in 2019).

Figure 18: Caregivers’ views of their experience as a caregiver (Q17)



### Subgroup differences

Pacific caregivers are more likely to find raising a child rewarding (94%) than Māori caregivers (88%) or caregivers who identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (86%).

Caregivers are more likely to find raising a child stressful when the caregiver:

- identifies as an 'Other' ethnicity (78%), compared to Māori (59%) and Pacific (64%) caregivers.
- is not receiving a main benefit (71%). Caregivers receiving a main benefit find caregiving less stressful (63%).
- has an income higher than \$30,000 (68%). Caregivers with an income up to \$30,000 find caregiving less stressful (59%).

## Need for support, caregiver ethnicity, and multiple children are the strongest predictors of higher caregiver stress

Regression analysis was used to provide a more detailed understanding of the drivers of stress for caregivers receiving the UCB. The approach is explained in more detail in [Appendix 3](#).

The outcomes of this analysis are different to what we saw in 2019 because we have included more variables in the 2021 analysis and some of the variables used in 2019 are no longer available due to questionnaire changes.

The predictor variables explain 20% of the variation in caregiver stress. This suggests that there are other factors that have not been measured in the survey that cause caregiver stress.

The analysis shows that the strongest predictors of higher caregiver stress, in order of strength, are when:

1. Support is needed for the child's mental and emotional health
2. The caregiver is Māori
3. Support is needed for whānau visits
4. The caregiver is caring for two or three children.

# UNSUPPORTED CHILD'S BENEFIT: WHAT ARE OUR CAREGIVERS' SUPPORT NEEDS?

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## Introduction

The Unsupported Child's Benefit is to help caregivers financially support children whose parent(s) are unable to care for them because of a family breakdown. Family members (including the child) and professionals participate in a family assessment to confirm that there has been a family breakdown. Not all caregivers attend or participate in the family breakdown assessment.

In situations where the child has had a Family Group Conference, hui or cultural service meeting with support from Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Social Development makes the decision on whether a family breakdown assessment may or may not be carried out. Children who have had a Family Group Conference may also have agreements around additional financial support for their care.

The UCB entitles caregivers to other financial support to assist them in providing for the child. Caregivers also have access to non-financial services.

This section explores the use of financial and non-financial support. The findings will help to better target services and prevent children from entering statutory care. It will help with understanding how to target services effectively and improve financial assistance for caregivers raising children unable to live with their parent(s). This covers caregiver views on:

- what non-financial support caregivers identified that they needed in the last 12 months
- the adequacy of their income, particularly the UCB
- the financial support they have accessed in the last 12 months. This includes extra help to cover costs from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)
- awareness of additional support and whether this is accessed through the Extraordinary Care Fund Grant and the School and Year Start-Up payment
- supplementing financial support provided from the Ministry of Social Development with their own money.

Note, the OB and UCB rates increased by \$25 a week from 6 July 2020. These increases happened automatically – caregivers didn't need to do anything to receive the increase.

## Caregivers have greater need for support with their child's mental and emotional health compared to 2019

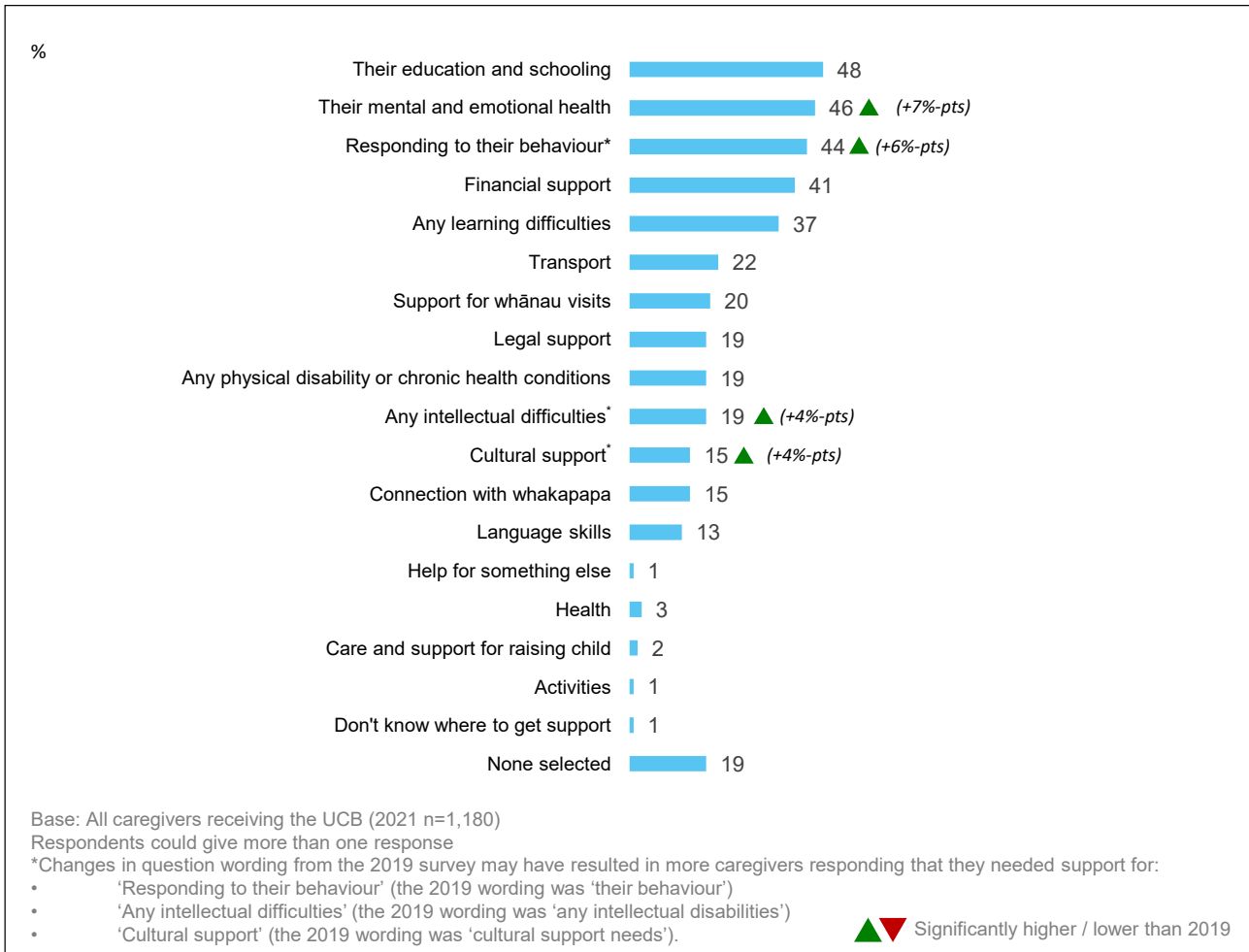
Caregivers were asked what they needed help with in the last 12 months. They were prompted with 13 possible types of support and given the opportunity to mention some other types of support needed. Eight in ten (81%) caregivers indicated they required help with at least one of these supports.

Education and schooling remains the most common type of support needed (48%). Just under half (46%) of caregivers said they needed help with their child's mental and emotional health, an increase

of seven percentage points since 2019. Note, the other increases in the chart may have resulted from changes in question wording (see footnote in chart).

Around four in ten caregivers needed help with their child’s behaviour (44%), financial support (41%), or their child’s learning difficulties (37%).

Figure 19: Support needs in the last 12 months (Q18)



The increase in support for the nominated child’s mental and emotional health is especially high among caregivers of children aged between 10 and 17 years (up seven points to 52% in 2021).

This increase is evident across all ethnicities.

Subgroup differences

There are differences in support needs based on the ethnicity of the caregiver:

- Pacific (51%) and Māori (45%) caregivers were more likely to need support with financial needs than caregivers identified as an ‘Other’ ethnicity (33%)
- Pacific (30%) and Māori (26%) caregivers were more likely to need support with transport than caregivers identified as an ‘Other’ ethnicity (14%)
- Pacific (26%) and Māori (22%) caregivers were more likely to need support with whānau and family visits than caregivers identified as an ‘Other’ ethnicity (15%)

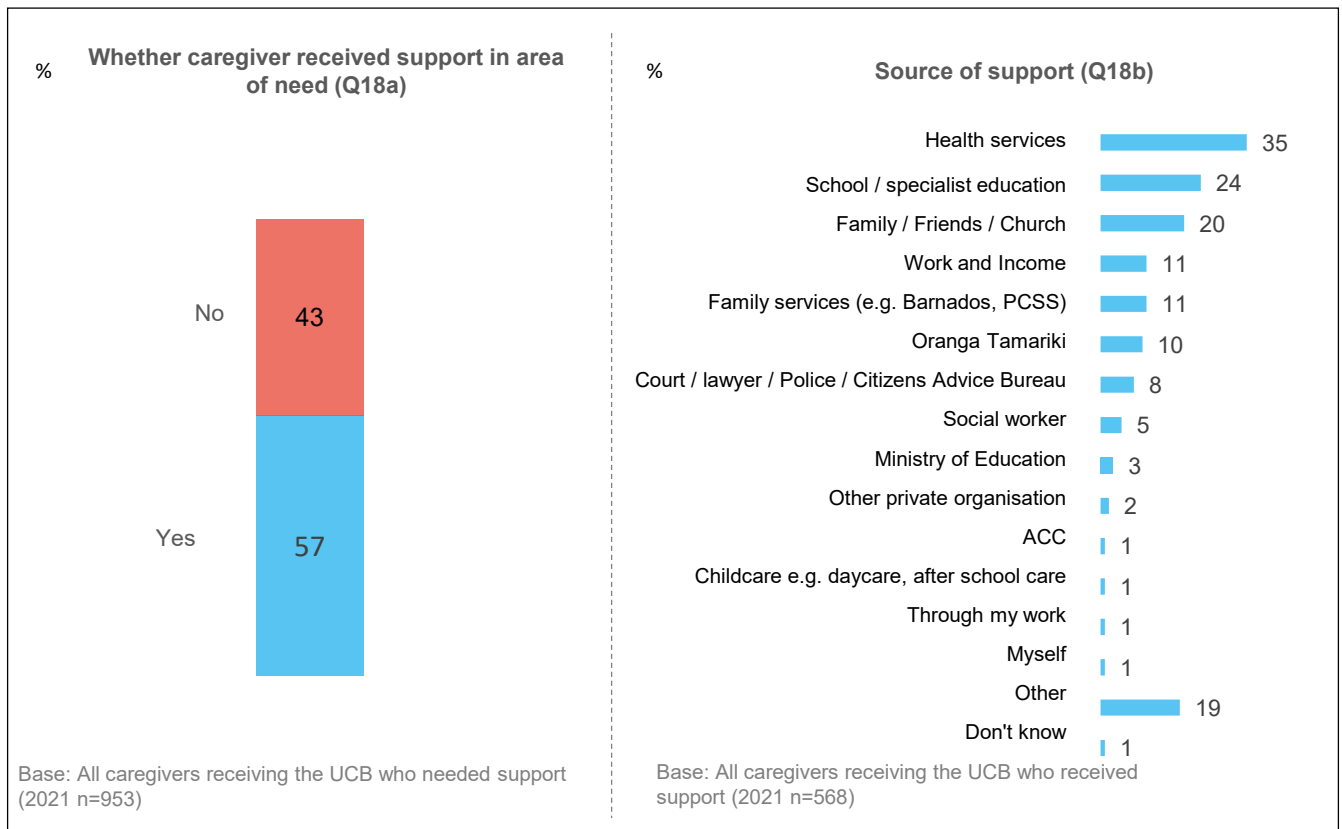
- Pacific (26%) and Māori (19%) caregivers were more likely to need support with cultural needs than caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (7%)
- Pacific (24%) and Māori (21%) caregivers were more likely to need support with legal needs than caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (16%)
- Pacific (23%) and Māori (17%) caregivers were more likely to need support with language skills than caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (5%).

## Over half of caregivers received support in an area

UCB caregivers who mentioned that they needed help in any of the areas covered in the previous question were asked whether they received support. More than two in five caregivers did not receive any support.

Almost three in five (57%) said that they received support. These caregivers were asked where they got that support from. For one in three (35%) of these caregivers said support was received from health services, such as a GP, mental health service, or other medical specialist. One in four (24%) caregivers received support from a school or specialist education service, and one in five (20%) received support from their personal networks (friends, family or church).

Figure 20: Support received by UCB caregivers



### Sub-group differences

Not receiving support is more likely to be reported by:

- caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 (50%), compared with caregivers with an income over \$43,000 (36%)

- caregivers caring for a child aged under 10 years (48%) compared with caregivers caring for a child aged 10+ (39%)
- Māori (45%) and Pacific (45%) caregivers, compared to caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (37%).

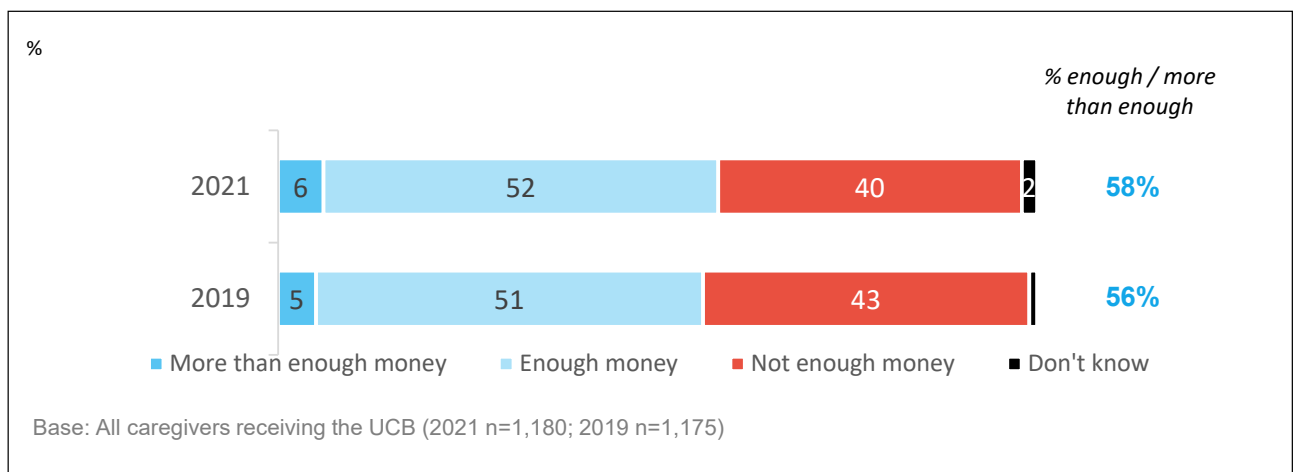
There were differences in where caregivers received support from, based on their ethnicity:

- Caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity were more likely to have received support through a health service (43%) than Pacific (29%) or Māori (30%) caregivers.
- Pacific (34%) and Māori (26%) caregivers were more likely to have received support from their family, friends, or church than caregiver identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (10%).
- Caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity were more likely to have received support through a family service (such as Barnardos or PCSS) (17%) than Pacific (5%) or Māori (8%) caregivers.
- Pacific caregivers were more likely to have received support from a social worker (13%) compared to caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (2%), or Māori caregivers (8%).

## Overall income adequacy was similar to 2019, but has improved among those on a main benefit

Caregivers were asked if their total income is adequate for meeting their daily needs for things like accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities. Almost three in five (58%) caregivers said they have enough or more than enough money to meet these everyday needs. Four in ten (40%) shared that they don't have enough money for these everyday needs. At a total sample level, the slightly more positive results in 2021 compared to 2019 are not statistically significant. However, the proportion of caregivers receiving a main benefit who feel that their income is not adequate has declined from 2019 (down seven percentage points to 46%).

Figure 21: Caregiver views on their income being enough (Q10)



### Subgroup differences

Income level continues to play a strong role in caregivers' perceptions of the adequacy of their total income. Over half (53%) of caregivers with an income of up to \$43,000 believe the money is insufficient. This compares to 29% of caregivers with an income of over \$43,000.

Additionally, the following groups are more likely to say the money is not enough to meet everyday needs (40% for the total sample):

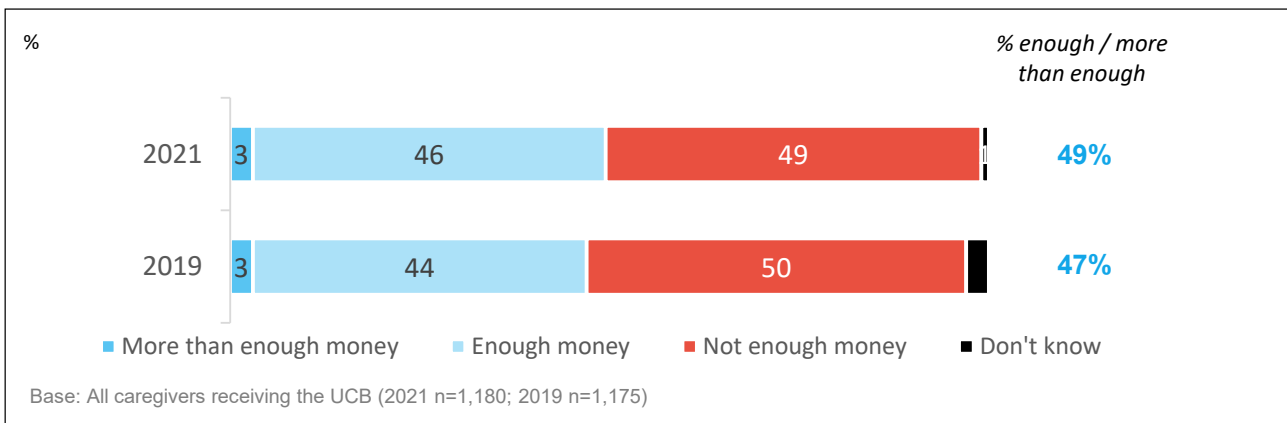
- Pacific (46%) and Māori (44%) caregivers, compared with caregivers identified as an ‘Other’ ethnicity (33%)
- Caregivers receiving a main benefit (46%), compared with caregivers who do not receive a main benefit (32%).
- Caregivers living on the East Coast (53%), compared with caregivers living elsewhere (38%).

## Half of caregivers feel the UCB covers the cost of the child’s care

The UCB is given to caregivers for looking after a particular child. Caregivers were asked if the UCB is enough to financially provide for the nominated child and covers the costs of caring for them. As in 2019, caregivers were divided in their views on this.

Half of all caregivers (49%) who participated in the survey shared that the money is not enough to cover the costs of care, while the same amount (49%) said that the money received from the Ministry of Social Development is enough or more than enough.

Figure 22: UCB is enough or not enough to cover the costs of care (Q11)



### Subgroup differences

The higher a caregiver’s income is, the more likely they are to perceive the UCB as adequate to cover costs. Caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 are less likely than those with an income above \$43,000 to perceive the UCB as being adequate (43% versus 55%).

Further analysis shows that the following groups are especially likely to believe that the UCB is not enough to cover the costs for caring for the child (49% for the total sample):

- Pacific caregivers (56%), compared to Māori caregivers (50%) and caregivers identified as an ‘Other’ ethnicity (46%)
- Caregivers receiving a main benefit (52%), compared to caregivers not receiving a main benefit (45%).

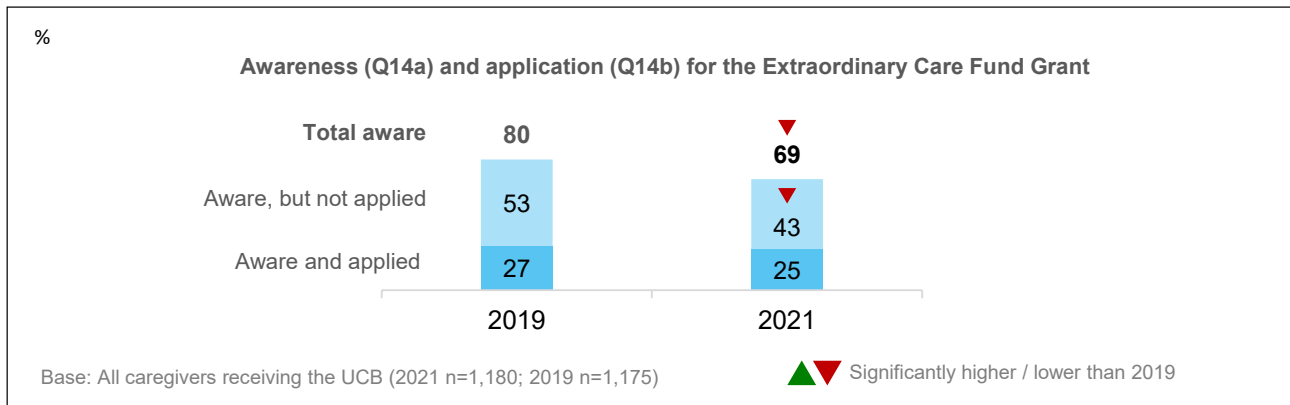


## Awareness of the Extraordinary Care Fund has dropped since 2019

The Extraordinary Care Fund is to help with the costs of children who show promise in a particular area, or who are experiencing difficulties. The Ministry of Social Development started sending reminder letters to caregivers informing them of the Extraordinary Care Fund in 2018.

Caregivers were asked if they were aware of and had applied for the Fund. Seven in ten (69%) caregivers were aware of the Extraordinary Care Fund, down 11 percentage points from 80% in 2019. However, one in four (25%) had applied (similar to 2019).

Figure 23: Caregiver awareness application for the Extraordinary Care Fund



The decline in awareness of the Extraordinary Care Fund is especially high among:

- caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (down 15 points to 75% in 2021) and Māori caregivers (down seven points to 66%)
- caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 (down 14 points to 62%)

The decline is consistent across caregivers based on their age, or the age of the nominated child.

### Subgroup differences

The following caregivers were most likely to be unaware of the Extraordinary Care Fund Grant (29% of the total sample):

- Pacific (39%) and Māori (32%) caregivers, compared with caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (24%)
- Caregivers caring for one child (33%) compared with caregivers caring for more than one child (23%)
- Caregivers with an income of up to \$43,000 (69%), compared with those with an income of over \$43,000 (23%)
- Caregivers caring for a child under 5 (57%), compared with caregivers caring for a child aged 5+ (26%)
- Caregivers caring for a Pacific child (35%) and caregivers caring for a Māori child (32%), versus caregivers caring for a child identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (19%)
- Caregivers receiving a main benefit (34%), compared with those not receiving a main benefit (24%).

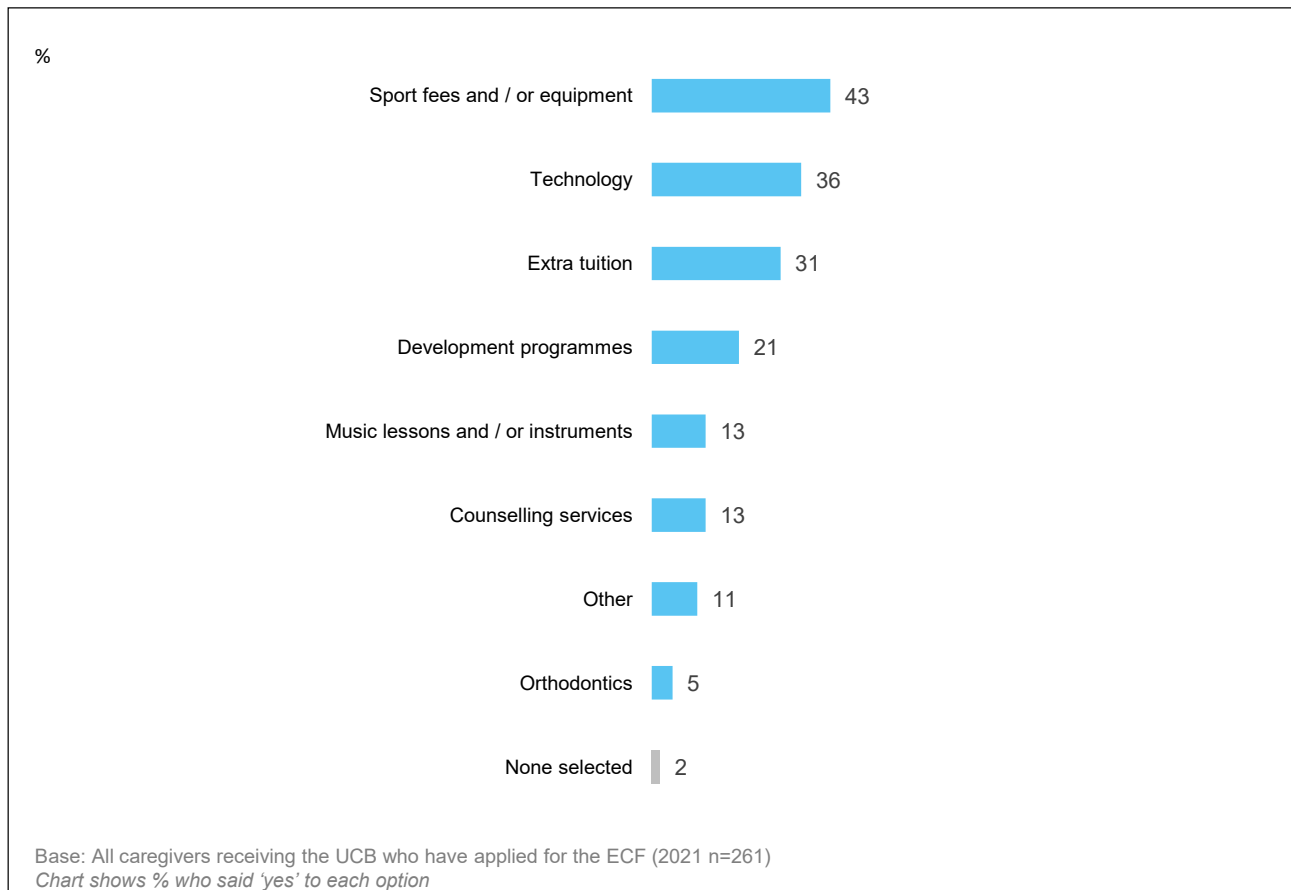
Applying for the Extraordinary Care Fund Grant (25% among the total sample) is higher for:

- caregivers not receiving a main benefit (29%), compared with those receiving a main benefit (21%)
- Caregivers caring for a child aged 5+ (28%), compared with caregivers caring for a child under 5 (3%).

## Sports, technology, and extra tuition were the most common costs caregivers apply for under the Extraordinary Care Fund

In the 2021 survey, caregivers who had applied for the Extraordinary Care Fund were asked what costs they had applied for under the Fund. Over four in ten (43%) caregivers applied for the fund to cover costs for sports fees and / or equipment, while 36% applied to cover the costs of technology. Three in ten (31%) caregivers needed the money to help cover the costs of extra tuition for the child in their care.

Figure 24: Costs applied for under the Extraordinary Care Fund (Q14d)



### Sub-group differences

Caregivers who receive a main benefit were more likely to have applied to cover the costs of technology (45%) than caregivers who do not receive a main benefit (28%).

There are differences in the costs applied for under the Extraordinary Care Fund based on the ethnicity of the caregiver:

## IN-CONFIDENCE

- Pacific (40%) and Māori (37%) caregivers were more likely to have applied to cover the cost of extra tuition than caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (24%).
- Pacific (40%) and Māori (26%) caregivers were more likely to have applied to cover the cost of development programmes than caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (16%).

There are differences in the costs applied for under the Extraordinary Care Fund based on the ethnicity of the child:

- Caregivers of Pacific (46%) and Māori (42%) children were more likely to have applied to cover the cost of technology than caregivers of a child identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (21%).
- Caregivers of Pacific (49%) and Māori (33%) children were more likely to have applied to cover the cost of extra tuition than caregivers of a child identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (23%).
- Caregivers of Pacific (27%) and Māori (15%) children were more likely to have applied to cover the cost of music lessons and / or instruments than caregivers of a child identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (6%).

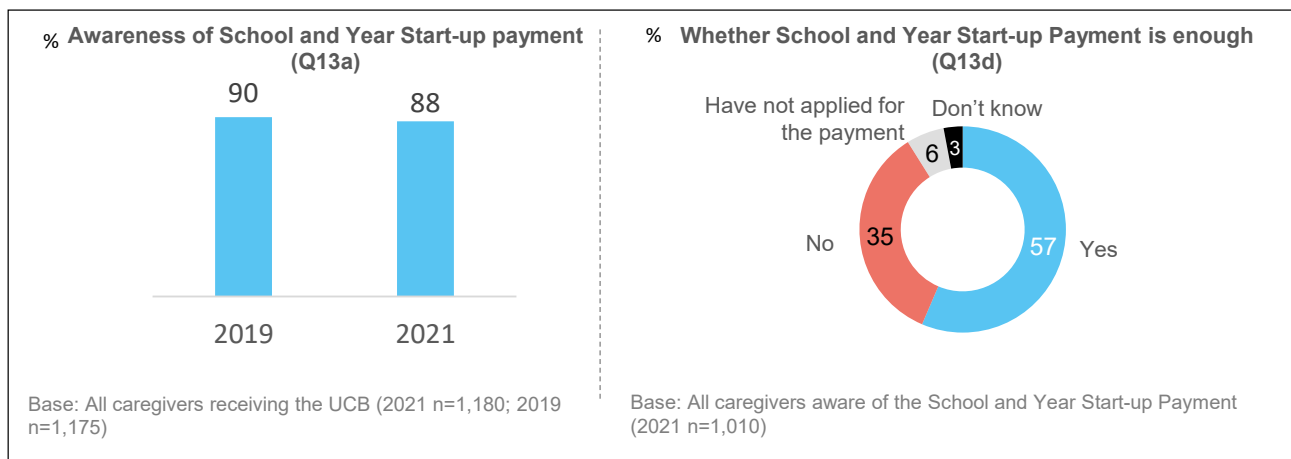
## Most caregivers are aware of the School and Year Start-up Payment, but more than a third think it is inadequate

At the beginning of each school year, caregivers can apply for a one-off School and Year Start-up payment. This payment is to help caregivers receiving the UCB with pre-school or school related costs. These costs are for school clothing, school fees, and stationery. Where caregivers have more than one child who they receive the UCB for then an individual application for each child is required.

Each year the Ministry of Social Development sends a reminder letter about the School and Year Start-up payment to caregivers receiving the UCB. Almost nine in ten (88%) caregivers were aware of the School and Year Start-up Payment, consistent with 2019 (90%).

In the 2021 survey, caregivers who were aware of the payment were asked whether they thought the payment was enough to cover the necessary costs. Almost six in ten (57%) caregivers felt that the payment is enough, while 35% felt that it was not. Relatively few (6%) caregivers aware of the payment had not applied for it before.

Figure 25: Caregiver awareness and application for School and Year Start-up Payment



### Subgroup differences

There are differences in caregivers' awareness of the School and Year Start-up Payment based on ethnicity and age of the child in care:

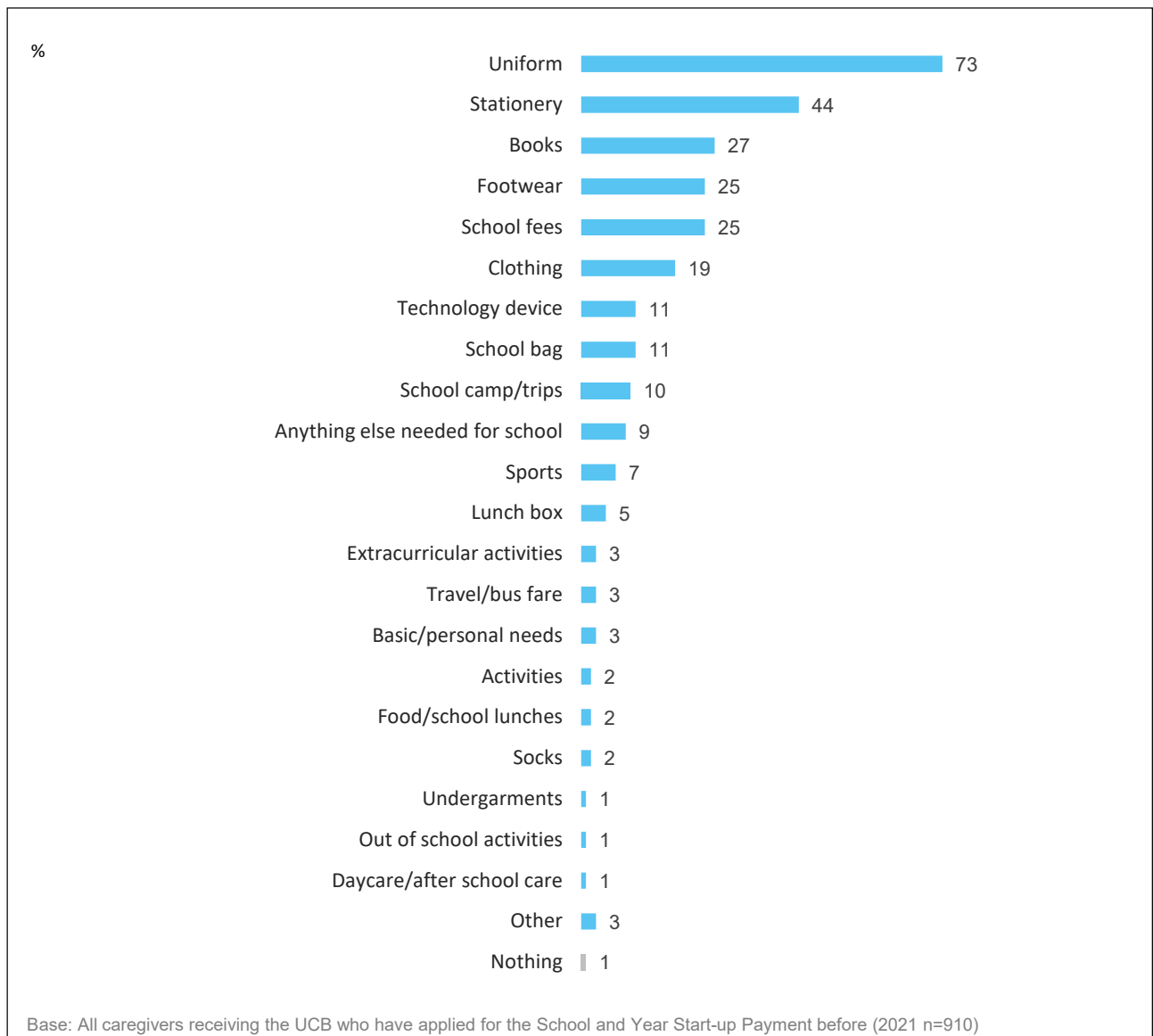
- Caregivers of a child aged under 5 (64%) compared with caregivers of a child aged 5+ (91%)
- Caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 (83%) compared with caregivers with an income over \$43,000 (92%)
- Pacific caregivers (84%) and Māori caregivers (86%) compared to caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (91%)
- Caregivers of a Pacific child (84%) compared with caregivers of a Māori child (87%), or caregivers of a child identified as being an 'Other' ethnicity (92%)
- Caregivers receiving a main benefit (86%) compared to caregivers not in receipt of a main benefit (91%).

Caregivers of children aged 10+ are more likely to feel that the School and Year Start-up Payment is not enough (41%), compared with caregivers of children aged under 10 (23%).

## Most caregivers use the School and Year Start-up Payment to cover the costs of uniforms and to a lesser extent stationery

Caregivers who had applied for the School and Year Start-up Payment before were asked what costs the payment covered. Almost three in four (73%) caregivers used the payment to cover the costs of uniforms, and more than four in ten (44%) used it to cover the costs of stationery. Around one in four caregivers used the payment to cover the costs of books (27%), footwear (25%), or school fees (25%).

Figure 26: Costs the School and Year Start-up Payment is used to cover (Q13e)



### Sub-group differences

Caregivers who do not receive a main benefit are more likely to have used the School and Year Start-up Payment to cover stationery (49%) than caregivers who do receive a main benefit (40%).

There are differences in what caregivers used the payment to cover, based on their ethnicity:

- Caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity were more likely to have used the payment to cover the costs of school fees (29%), than Pacific (20%) or Māori (21%) caregivers.
- Caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity were more likely to have used the payment to cover the costs of devices / technology (15%), than Māori (5%) or Pacific (12%) caregivers.

There are differences in what caregivers used the payment to cover, based on their age:

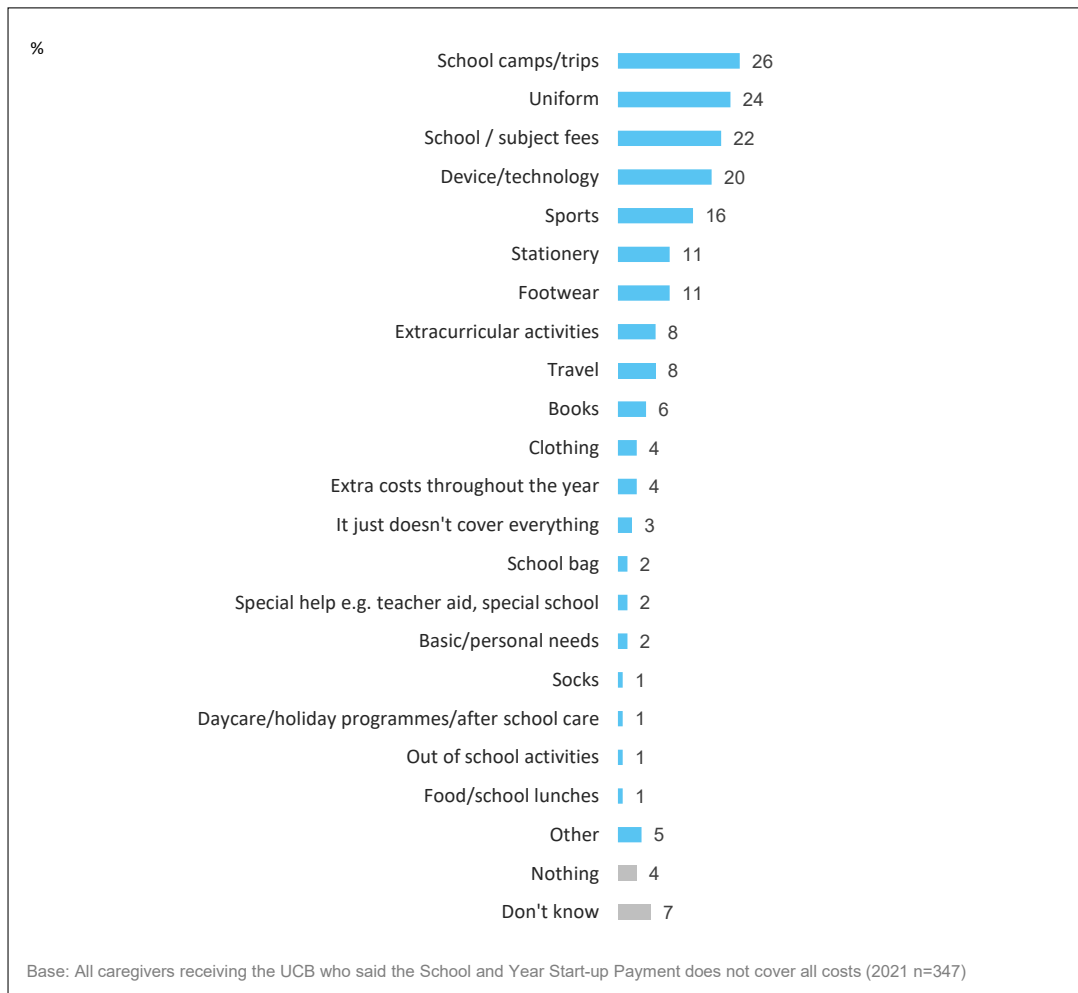
- Caregivers aged under 55 were more likely to have used the payment to cover the costs of stationery (53%) than caregivers aged 55+ (31%)
- Caregivers aged 55+ were more likely to have used the payment to cover the costs of stationery (31%) than caregivers aged under 55 (22%).

## One in four caregivers feel the School and Year Start-up Payment is not enough to cover the costs of school trips, or uniforms

As discussed earlier in the report, 35% of UCB caregivers felt that the School and Year Start-up Payment is not enough to meet all the school related costs of the child in their care.

These caregivers were most likely to feel the payment is insufficient to pay for school camps/trips (26%), uniforms (24%), school or subject fees (22%) and devices/technology (20%). Uniforms were seen in both categories because caregivers can prioritise what supplies to spend the payment on.

Figure 27: Costs that the School and Year Start-up Payment is not enough to meet (Q13f)



*Sub-group differences*

Caregivers who do not receive a main benefit were more likely to say that the School and Year Start-up Payment is not enough to cover the costs of stationery (16%) than caregivers who receive a main benefit (7%).

There are differences in what caregivers felt the payment is not enough to cover, based on their ethnicity:

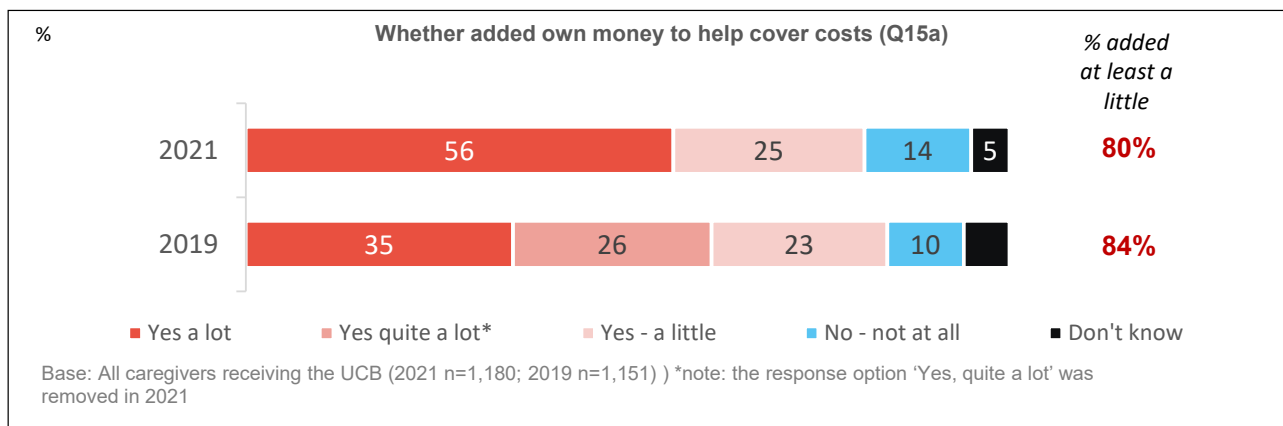
- Pacific (14%) and Māori (11%) caregivers were more likely to say that the School and Year Start-up Payment is not enough to cover the costs of extracurricular activities than caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (3%).
- Caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (24%) and Māori caregivers (19%) were more likely to say that the School and Year Start-up Payment is not enough to cover the costs of devices / technology than Pacific caregivers (6%).

## Eight in ten UCB caregivers use their own money to help them cover costs

Caregivers were asked whether they have had to personally use their own money to add to what they get from the Ministry of Social Development to cover the costs of raising the child. Eight in ten (80%) said they have added at least 'a little', consistent with 84% in 2019. Almost six in ten (56%) caregivers said they have had to use 'a lot' of their own money.

The reader should take care in comparing 2019 and 2021 results due to the change in scale (see footnote in chart).

Figure 28: Whether added own money to help cover costs



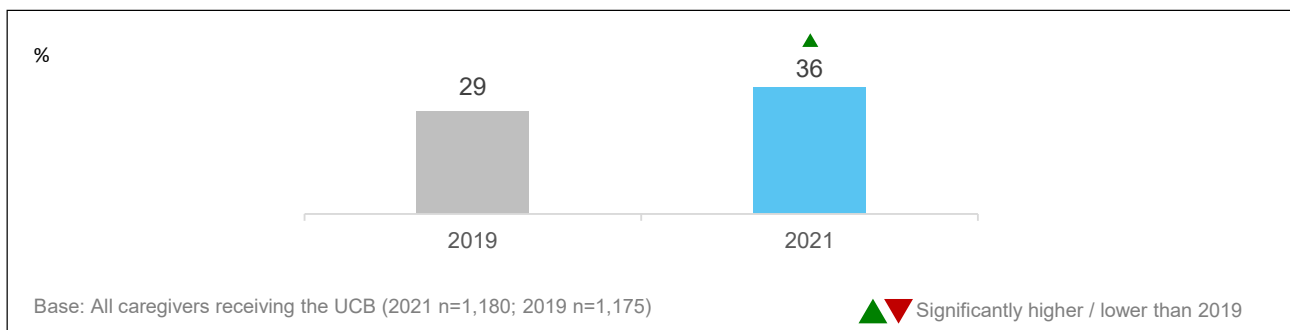
*Subgroup differences*

Caregivers with no main benefit (60%) were more likely to say they add 'a lot' of their own money to supplement what they get from the Ministry of Social Development than caregivers receiving a main benefit (51%).

## More caregivers have sought extra financial support from the Ministry of Social Development than in 2019

Caregivers were asked if over the past six months they have asked the Ministry of Social Development for extra help to cover costs. Over one in three (36%) caregivers asked for further financial support from the Ministry of Social Development. This has increased seven percentage points from 29% in 2019.

Figure 29: Caregivers asked for extra help to cover the costs of living expenses (Q15)



The increase in asking for extra help to cover costs is especially high among:

- caregivers of children aged between 5 and 9 years (up 11 points to 40% in 2021)
- caregivers of girls (up 11 points to 38%)
- caregivers aged under 45 (up ten points to 42%)
- caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 (up nine points to 50%)
- caregivers who identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (up nine points to 27%)
- caregivers of Māori children (up seven points to 39%).

### Subgroup differences

Caregivers who are more likely to have asked for extra help from the Ministry of Social Development are:

- caregivers receiving a main benefit (50%), compared to caregivers not receiving a main benefit (18%)
- caregivers with an income up to \$43,000 (50%) compared with caregivers with an income over \$43,000 (25%)
- Māori caregivers (42%) and Pacific caregivers (38%), compared to caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (27%)
- caregivers of a Pacific child (40%) and caregivers of a Māori child (39%), compared to caregivers of a child identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (25%).



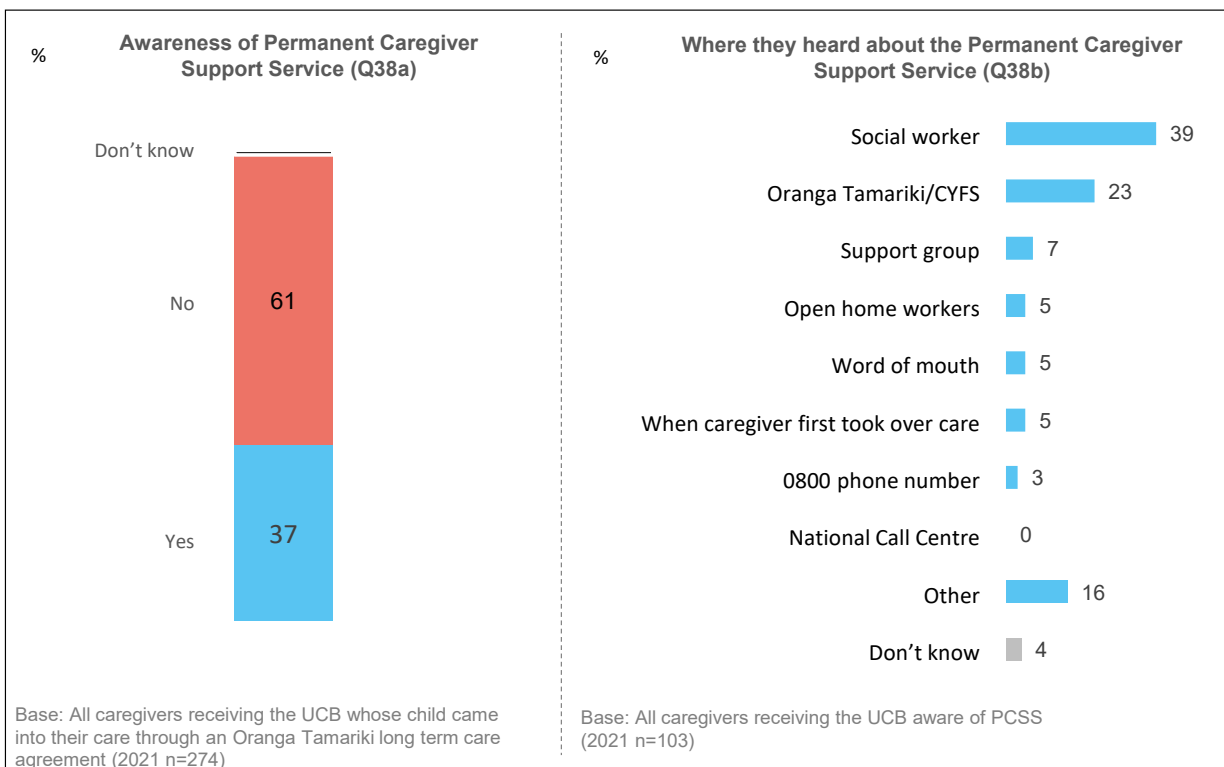
## Awareness of PCSS is low, with social workers being the main source of awareness

The Permanent Caregiver Support Service (PCSS) administers and coordinates financial and other assistance to permanent caregivers who provide permanent homes for children who have been in the care of Oranga Tamariki or an approved non-government organisation.

Caregivers whose child came into their care through an Oranga Tamariki long term care arrangement were asked if they were aware of this service. Just under two in five (37%) of these caregivers were aware of the PCSS.

Four in ten (39%) caregivers aware of the PCSS heard about the service from a social worker, while one in four (23%) say they heard about it from Oranga Tamariki.

Figure 30: Awareness and source of knowledge of the Permanent Caregiver Support Service



### Sub-group differences

The following groups of caregivers are more likely to be unaware of the PCSS:

- Māori caregivers (72%), compared with caregivers identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (48%) or Pacific caregivers (46%).
- Caregivers aged 55+ (70%), compared with caregivers aged under 55 (54%).

Pacific caregivers were more likely to have heard about the PCSS through a social worker (77%) than Māori caregivers (36%) and caregivers who identified as an 'Other' ethnicity (40%).

# APPENDICES

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## Appendix 1: Survey documents

## Pre-notification letter

IN-CONFIDENCE

29<sup>th</sup> July 2021

<Addressee's Name>  
 <Address Line 1>  
 <Address Line 2>  
 <City>, <postcode>

(Dear) Tēnā koe, -----(name)

**Have your say – give feedback on getting the Orphan's Benefit / Unsupported Child's Benefit**

Up and down the country, caregivers like you provide loving homes for tamariki (children) and rangatahi (young people).

Oranga Tamariki think it is important to hear what you have to say on matters that affect you and the children in your care. While Work and Income (MSD) manages the payments, Oranga Tamariki advises Government on what carers need and how it's working for them.

We've asked Colmar Brunton, an independent research company, to survey caregivers and get your feedback. This is your chance to say what is important to you.

If you're selected, a Colmar Brunton interviewer will call you sometime in August to early September 2021 to ask if you want to take part in the survey. The survey will take about 15 minutes over the phone. Your answers will be anonymous.

**Why do we want to talk with you?**

We want to know about your experiences and how the Orphan's Benefit / Unsupported Child's Benefit supports you. This will help us better understand these payments, and the needs of children and young people in your care.

**Taking part is voluntary**

You don't have to take part if you don't want to. Choosing not to take part won't affect any payments you get from Work and Income (Ministry of Social Development) or any other government department.

**How has your feedback been used so far?**

We conducted similar research in 2019. Thanks to feedback we received, these changes were made:

- → Holiday and Birthday allowances for Orphan's Benefit / Unsupported Child's Benefit Caregivers. Payments will range from \$101 to \$132 for each allowance.
  - → The Holiday Allowance will be available from and paid this December
  - → The Birthday Allowance will be available from next January and paid in the month of child's birthday.
- → A \$25 increase to the weekly rates of Orphan's Benefit / Unsupported Child's Benefit since July 2020.
- → The Orphan's Benefit / Unsupported Child's Benefit is now available to caregivers who may provide care for less than 12 months.

**You can talk with us about the survey**

We've included an information sheet about the survey for you. If you've got more questions, please call us. Our contact details are in the information sheet.

We value your feedback, and look forward to hearing your thoughts.

(Yours sincerely/faithfully) Nāku noa,

Abby Johnston  
 Manager  
 Evidence Centre, Oranga Tamariki

IN-CONFIDENCE ¶

## INFORMATION SHEET: PHONE SURVEY ¶

You may be asked to take part in a survey on caregivers getting the Orphan's Benefit/Unsupported Child's Benefit. You can choose to take part in this survey or not. This information sheet will help you decide. ¶

### Who will be talking with you? ¶

We've asked Colmar Brunton, an independent research company, to do this survey. If you're selected, a Colmar Brunton interviewer will call you and ask you if you agree to take part. If you say yes, they'll do the survey with you. ¶

### What will happen when you take part? ¶

If a Colmar Brunton interviewer calls you during August to September 2021, they'll introduce themselves, talk about the survey, and tell you the phone interview will be recorded if you agree to take part. This phone interview will take about 20 minutes. ¶

You'll need to say if you want to take part or not when they call. ¶

### How will we protect your identity? ¶

Your answers will be anonymous. The only people who will know what you say are the people who talk with you over the phone and the people who will analyse the results. No material that could identify you personally will be used in any reports. ¶

### Child safety ¶

It's important for you to know that in the unlikely event that anything you say makes the interviewer concerned about the safety of the child in your care, they have to report it to a professional. They'll tell you before they do this. ¶

### How will we tell you about the results? ¶

The results of the survey will be put into a report. This report will be published on the Oranga Tamariki website: [www.orangatamariki.govt.nz](http://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz) ¶

### More Information ¶

If you have any questions about the survey, you can talk with Lily or Colin who [are researchers at Oranga Tamariki](#). If you tell them (or Colmar Brunton) about any issues or concerns you have, these will be confidential. ¶

Lily Deane → → → → → [Colin Hewat](#) ¶  
[Lily.Deane@ot.govt.nz](mailto:Lily.Deane@ot.govt.nz) → → → [Colin.Hewat@ot.govt.nz](mailto:Colin.Hewat@ot.govt.nz) ¶  
 → → → → → 027-282-30760 ¶

For information about the Orphan's Benefit or the Unsupported Child's Benefit, please contact Work and Income (MSD) on 0800-559-009 or [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz). ¶

*Questionnaire*

(GREETING BASED ON SAMPLE ETHNICITY VARIABLE. IF MĀORI: Kia ora/ COOK IS: Kia orana / TONGA: Mālō e lelei /FIJI: Ni sa bula/NIUE: Fakaalofa lahi atu / SAMOAN: Talofa lava/TOKELAU: Malo ni)/Good morning/afternoon/evening. May I please speak with (FROM SAMPLE: CAREGIVER NAME).

I'm calling about a letter you were sent from Oranga Tamariki about a survey to find out your views on the (FROM SAMPLE: Orphan's Benefit/ Unsupported Child's Benefit) and your experiences as a caregiver.

My name is .....from Colmar Brunton, a research company.

Do you remember getting sent a letter about this survey?

**IF DON'T REMEMBER LETTER GO TO 'A'.**

**IF REMEMBER LETTER GO TO 'B'.**

**A:** That's okay. I can explain what you need to know. Is now a convenient time to talk?

**B:** Great. Is now a convenient time to talk?

**ASK ALL:** First, can I just check, are you currently the main caregiver of (FROM SAMPLE: CHILD'S NAME)?

**IF YES, CONTINUE.**

Our survey is about the (FROM SAMPLE: Orphan's Benefit/ Unsupported Child's Benefit), and we'd like to talk with you about your opinions of the support you get for (FROM SAMPLE: CHILD'S NAME).

**IF ANOTHER PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD IS MAIN CAREGIVER, ASK TO SPEAK TO THEM AND RE-INTRODUCE.**

**IF CHILD NO LONGER LIVES WITH THEM, CLOSE NQ CHILD.**

There are no right or wrong answers. We're just interested in what you think. Everything you say is confidential. Only Colmar Brunton and researchers at Oranga Tamariki will have access to your individual answers. The survey will take about 15 minutes depending on your answers.

Taking part is voluntary and it won't affect any payments you get from Work and Income. If you are willing to do the survey, I can talk to you now or arrange a time to call you back.

Are you willing to take part in the survey?

**YES, CONTINUE OR ARRANGE TIME TO CALL BACK.**

**NO, THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW, CLOSE REF.**

Thank you for agreeing to take part. Just to let you know, our calls are recorded for training purposes.

**DO NOT PAUSE. CONTINUE TO NEXT SCREEN UNLESS RESPONDENT ASKS ABOUT RECORDING.**

**IF NECESSARY:** The recording is used to check that I have carried out the survey correctly.

**IF NECESSARY:** All recordings are stored securely and can only be accessed by authorised staff.

## Household composition

First I have some questions about you and the people in your home.

- Q4 **IF SAMPLE IDENTIFIES RESPONDENT GETS ORPHAN'S BENEFIT OR UNSUPPORTED CHILD'S BENEFIT FOR ONLY ONE CHILD:** We would now like to understand your experiences with being a caregiver of (CHILD'S NAME FROM CONTACT LIST). We've been given their name on the list provided to us.

**IF SAMPLE IDENTIFIES RESPONDENT GETS ORPHAN'S BENEFIT OR UNSUPPORTED CHILD'S BENEFIT FOR MORE THAN ONE CHILD:** We understand you may get the (Orphan's Benefit/Unsupported Child's Benefit) for more than one child, but we need to ask you questions about just one child for this survey. Their name has been chosen from a list provided to us.

Is it okay if I use (CHILD'S NAME)'s name throughout this survey?

Yes – use the name stated	1	<b>DS: Use child's name in text substitution</b>
Use name given by respondent (e.g., shortened name or nickname)	2	<b>DS: Use name entered in text substitution</b>
No	3	<b>DS: Use 'the child' instead of child's name in text substitution</b>

**IF CODE 2: INTERVIEWER TYPE IN CHILD'S NAME GIVEN BY RESPONDENT. CHECK SPELLING IF NEEDED.**

**IF NO:** That's fine. When I say 'the child' in this survey, I'm talking about the child for whom you get the (Orphan's Benefit/Unsupported Child's Benefit).

- Q5 Which of the following best describes your relationship with (CHILD'S NAME) when they came to live with you?

**READ IF RESPONDENT HASN'T ALREADY TOLD YOU. CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

Grandparent or great-grandparent	1
Aunt or uncle or great aunt or great uncle	3
Niece or nephew	11
Cousin	12
Brother or sister (DO NOT READ: step or biological)	5
Whangai	11
Some other relationship (specify)	8
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Child ALWAYS known respondent as mother or father	10
<b>DO NOT READ</b> Don't know	9

**Q6 ASK UCB CAREGIVERS ONLY. OB SKIP TO Q8a:**

How did the child come into your care?

READ UNTIL ANSWER GIVEN.

Through a private agreement with the child's parent(s)	1
As a result of a Family Group Conference	2
Through an Oranga Tamariki long term care agreement (previously called "Home for Life")	3
Through a Family Breakdown Assessment	7
Some other way (please specify)	4
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Don't know	5
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> They have always been in my care	6

**SKIP TO Q8**

**ASK UCB CAREGIVERS ONLY**

**Q8** We understand that children are not always able to live with their parents for different reasons. Are you able to please tell me the main reason why [CHILD'S NAME] came into your care.

**DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY**

Their parent(s) were unable to cope	
Their parent(s) were very young	
Their parent(s) were in prison	
Their parent(s) had substance abuse issues	
The parent had physical or mental health issues	
The child was at risk of harm or neglect	
Or some other reason (specify)	

**ASK OB CAREGIVERS ONLY**

**Q8a** We understand that children are not always able to live with their parents for different reasons. Are you able to please tell me the main reason why [CHILD'S NAME] came into your care.

**DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.**

Their parent(s) have died	1
Their parent(s) can't be found	2
Their parent(s) can't care for them because they have a long term health condition or disability	3
Other reason (specify)	4

## Financial Support

Now I have some questions about your income to help us understand some of the costs and challenges that caregivers experience. Remember, everything you say is confidential. Your answers will not affect any payments you're getting.

- Q10 We would like to understand how well your total income meets your everyday needs for things like accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities. Would you say it is...

**READ WITHOUT PAUSING. CODE ONE ONLY**

**DS: REVERSE CODES 1 TO 3 FOR 50%**

More than enough money	1
Enough money	2
Not enough money	4
<b>DO NOT READ: Don't know</b>	5
<b>DO NOT READ: Refused</b>	6

- Q11 We would like to understand if the [Orphan's Benefit OR Unsupported Child's Benefit] you get for looking after [CHILD'S NAME] is enough to pay for the costs of caring for them. Would you say the benefit is...

**READ WITHOUT PAUSING. CODE ONE ONLY**

**DS: REVERSE CODES 1 TO 3 FOR 50% IN LINE WITH Q10**

More than enough money	3
Enough money	2
Not enough money	1
<b>DO NOT READ: Not applicable</b>	4
<b>DO NOT READ Don't know</b>	5

- Q15 Over the past 6 months, have you asked Work and Income for extra help to cover the costs of caring for [CHILD'S NAME]? For example, extra financial help could mean food grants, emergency dental treatment, or money borrowed for appliances, clothing and bills.

Yes	1
No	2
<b>DO NOT READ: Refused/ Don't know</b>	3



IN-CONFIDENCE

Q15a Over the past 6 months, have you personally had to use your own money to add to what you get from Work and Income to cover the costs of caring for [CHILD'S NAME]?

**IF YES:** Would you say you've had to do this a lot, or a little?

**CODE ONE ONLY.**

Yes – a lot	1
Yes - a little	3
No - not at all	4
DO NOT READ: Don't know	5

Q16a This next question is about your weekly income from all sources. This includes all money you get such as salary or wages, self-employed income, child support payments, or money from the Government.

Please only include income for you and your partner, if you have one.

What is your combined weekly income after tax? Please stop me when I get to your answer.

**READ UNTIL ANSWER GIVEN. CODE ONE ONLY.**

Up to \$500	1	<b>GO TO Q14a</b>
Over \$500 and up to \$700	2	<b>GO TO Q14a</b>
Over \$700 and up to \$1,000	3	<b>GO TO Q14a</b>
Over \$1,000 and up to \$1,300	4	<b>GO TO Q14a</b>
Over \$1,300	8	<b>GO TO Q14a</b>
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Don't know	9	<b>ASK 16B</b>
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Refused	10	<b>GO TO Q14a</b>

Q16b It may be easier for you to answer about your annual income. Are you able to tell me your combined income in the last 12 months before tax or before anything else was taken out? Please stop me when I get to your answer.

**READ UNTIL ANSWER GIVEN. CODE ONE ONLY.**

\$30,000 or less	1
More than \$30,000 and up to \$43,000	2
More than \$43,000 and up to \$65,000	3
More than \$65,000 and up to \$90,000	4
More than \$90,000	8
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Don't know	9
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Refused	10

Q14a An 'Extraordinary Care Fund Grant' can be applied for through Work and Income. This Grant is for a child showing promise through high achievement for a particular skill or talent, or a child who experiences difficulties impacting their development. Before today, were you aware of the 'Extraordinary Care Fund grant'?

Yes	1	<b>ASK Q14b</b>
No	2	<b>GO TO Q13a</b>
Don't know	3	<b>GO TO Q13a</b>

Q14b Have you ever applied, or tried to apply, for the 'Extraordinary Care Fund Grant'?

Yes	1	<b>Ask Q14d</b>
No	2	<b>GO TO Q13a</b>
Don't know	3	<b>GO TO Q13a</b>

Q14d Please tell me whether the things I read out are costs that you applied for under the Extraordinary Care Fund. Just answer yes or no for each.

**DS: SET UP AS YES, NO, DK FOR EACH.**

Sport fees and/or equipment		1
Music lessons and/or instruments		2
Technology		3
Counselling services		4
Development programmes		5
Extra tuition		6
Orthodontics (e.g. braces)		7
Other (please specify)		8

Q13a You can apply to Work and Income for a 'School and Year Start-up Payment'. This one-off payment is to help with pre-school or school costs at the beginning of each year. Before today, were you aware of this payment?

Yes	1	<b>GO TO Q13d</b>
No	2	<b>GO TO Q15</b>
Don't know	3	<b>GO TO Q15</b>

Q13d Is the School and Year Start-up Payment enough to meet the school related costs of the child in your care?

Yes	1	<b>ASK Q13e</b>
No	2	<b>ASK Q13e</b>
Have not applied for the payment	3	<b>GO TO Q17</b>

Don't know	4	<b>GO TO Q17</b>
------------	---	------------------

Q13e What types of school related costs did you use the payment for?

**ASK IF CODE 2 (NO) AT Q13d:**

Q13f What additional school related costs does the payment NOT cover?

**RECORD VERBATIM**

## Views about being a caregiver

Q17 Now we'd like to know your views about being a caregiver. For each statement I read out, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, have mixed feelings, disagree or strongly disagree.

**READ STATEMENT AND IF NECESSARY ASK.** How much do you agree or disagree?

**DS: INCLUDE DON'T KNOW CODE.**

**READ. CODE ONE ONLY IN EACH ROW**

Being a caregiver is a personally rewarding experience for you	
Being a caregiver is stressful	
You trust the authorities to do the best for children and young people in their care	

## Support and services

Q18 It's understandable that people may need support when caring for children. In the last 12 months, have you needed support with any of the following for [CHILD'S NAME]? Please answer yes or no for each.

Have you needed help for...

DS: BEFORE LEGAL SUPPORT, WORDING NEEDS TO BE: In the last 12 months, have you needed help for...

**DS: ROTATE EXCEPT FOR LAST CATEGORY. SET UP AS YES, NO, DON'T KNOW FOR EACH.**

Their education and schooling	
Responding to their behaviour	
Their mental and emotional health	
Any physical disability or chronic health conditions	
Any intellectual difficulties	
Any learning difficulties	
Transport	
Language skills	
Cultural support	
Legal support	
<b>ASK UCB ONLY:</b> Support for whanau visits	
Connection with whakapapa	
Financial support	
Help for something else (specify)	

**ASK IF SAID 'YES' TO ANY OF Q18. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q20**

Q18a Have you received support for any of the areas you mentioned?

Yes	1	<b>GO TO Q18b</b>
No	2	<b>GO TO Q20</b>

Q18b Where did you go to get support?

**RECORD VERBATIM.**

--

### Child's Need and Wellbeing

Q20 We would like to ask a few questions about the child in your care so we can understand more about your experiences with caregiving. In the last 12 months, would you say [CHILD'S NAME] wellbeing was poor, not very good, good, very good, or excellent?

IF CAREGIVER SAYS CHILD CAME TO LIVE THEM WITHIN LAST 12 MONTHS, SAY: Since the child came to live with you, would you say their wellbeing was poor, not very good, good, very good, or excellent?

**CODE ONE ONLY**

Poor	1
Not very good	2
Good	3
Very good	4
Excellent	5
<b>DO NOT READ</b> Don't know	6

Q26 In the last 12 months, which of these activities has (CHILD'S NAME) been involved in **outside the home.**

**READ ALL. CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

**DS: ROTATE CATEGORIES (EXCEPT NONE AND DK)**

Spending time with friends	8
Sports activities	1
Music activities	2
Church activities	3
Community activities	4
Cultural activities (please specify)	5
<b>ASK IF CHILD UNDER 5 FROM SAMPLE:</b> Kōhanga reo / pre-school activities	6
DO NOT READ: None of the above	
DO NOT READ: Don't know	

Q27 And, which ethnic group, or groups, does (CHILD'S NAME) belong to? You can say more than one.

**READ. CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

Māori	1
Samoan	2
Cook Island Māori	3
Tongan	4
Niuean	5
Chinese	6
Indian	7
New Zealand European	8
Other (please specify)	9
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Don't know	10
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Prefer not to say	11

**ASK IF Q27 = 1. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q27b**

Q27a What are the name(s) of [CHILD'S NAME]'s iwi (tribe/tribes)?

**CODE ALL MENTIONED. IF 'OTHER' USED CAREFULLY CHECK SPELLING WITH RESPONDENT.**

DS: INCLUDE TOP 80 IWI IN ALPHABETIC ORDER USING DROP DOWN APPROACH (SEE EXCEL SHEET). INCLUDE OTHER (SPECIFY), AND DON'T KNOW CATEGORIES.

## Caregiver demographics

These next questions are about yourself to check we've interviewed a range of people.

Q28 Which ethnic group, or groups, do you belong to? You can say more than one.

**READ. CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

Māori	1
Samoan	2
Cook Island Māori	3
Tongan	4
Niuean	5
Chinese	6
Indian	7
New Zealand European	8
Another ethnic group (please specify)	9
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Don't know	10
<b>DO NOT READ:</b> Prefer not to say	11

**ASK IF CODE 1 AT Q28. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q30.**

Q29 What are the name(s) of your iwi (tribe/tribes)?

**CODE ALL MENTIONED. IF 'OTHER' USED CAREFULLY CHECK SPELLING WITH RESPONDENT.**

DS: INCLUDE TOP 80 IWI IN ALPHABETIC ORDER USING DROP DOWN APPROACH (SEE EXCEL SHEET). INCLUDE OTHER (SPECIFY), AND DON'T KNOW CATEGORIES.

**ASK IF Q6 = 3**

Q38a Caregivers who are permanently caring for children who have been in Oranga Tamariki care can request support from the Permanent Caregiver Support Service (PCSS). Before now, were you aware of this service?

**CODE ONE ONLY**

Yes	1	<b>ASK Q38b</b>
No	2	<b>GO TO Q35</b>
Don't know	3	<b>GO TO Q35</b>

Q38b How did you first hear about the Permanent Caregiver Support Service?

**READ ONLY IF CLARIFICATION NEEDED. CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

National Call Centre	1
Open home workers	2
Social worker	3
0800 phone number	4
Some other way (please specify)	5
Don't know	6

Q35 Oranga Tamariki may do more research on caregivers getting the (Orphan's Benefit/ Unsupported Child's Benefit). Are you happy for us to give Oranga Tamariki researchers your name so that they can invite you to consider taking part in future research? Everything you have said today and your identity will be kept confidential.

Yes	1
No	2

Q36 Oranga Tamariki researchers would like to join your survey responses to data held by the Ministry of Social Development. Are you happy for your name to be linked to your survey responses and made available to Oranga Tamariki researchers?

Yes	1
No	2

**THANK AND CLOSE.**

Thank you very much (**Māori:** Kia ora rawa atu/ **Samoa:** Fa'afetai / **Tongan:** Malo 'aupito/ **Cook Island:** Meitaki ma'ata / **Niuean:** Fakaau lahi) for taking part in this interview. We really value the time you have made for this survey and your feedback. In October, the survey results will be shared in a report published on the Oranga Tamariki website



## Appendix 2: Methodology

**Sampling frame:** The sampling frame for the survey was the Ministry of Social Development operational database of caregivers receiving the OB and UCB. Caregivers who had no contact details recorded were excluded from the survey. After these exclusions, there were approximately 260 caregivers receiving the OB and 12,000 caregivers receiving the UCB that were eligible to participate in the survey.

The database from the Ministry of Social Development contained contact details of caregivers receiving the OB and the UCB, which enabled us to mail pre-notification letters and to phone caregivers.

**Sample selection:** All caregivers receiving the OB were invited to participate in the survey by letter. They were then contacted by phone interviewers. A sample of caregivers receiving the UCB stratified by ethnicity was selected, as summarised in the table below. All Pacific caregivers and a random sample without replacement of 1,771 remaining caregivers, Māori and non-Māori, were sent a pre-notification letter and contacted.

Table 14: Census and Sample Selection of Caregivers

Strata	Number selected	Selection approach taken
OB	256	Census approach
UCB – Māori	827	Random sample without replacement
UCB – Pacific	829	Census approach
UCB – Other	688	Random sample without replacement
Total number sent pre-notification letter	<b>2,600</b>	

Table 15: Call outcomes for caregivers receiving the OB and UCB by ethnicity

	All caregivers	OB	All UCB caregivers	UCB – Māori	UCB - Pacific	UCB - Other
<b>A: Invalid numbers</b>						
Unobtainable – disconnected numbers	134	18	116	35	46	35
Wrong number	16	2	14	7	6	1
<b>B: Valid phone number, but no successful contact made</b>						
No answer	41	5	36	12	9	15
Busy/engaged tone	2	0	2	0	1	1
Answer machine	304	36	268	124	85	59
<b>C: Valid number, successful contact made</b>						
Soft appointment (with contact in household)	138	14	124	49	50	25
Hard appointment (with named caregiver)	125	10	115	41	46	28
Language barrier unresolved	65	5	60	2	54	4
Contact refusal (from person who answered the phone)	75	8	67	25	23	19
Caregiver refusal	223	31	192	70	58	64
Not available in survey period	87	5	82	29	27	26
Completed interviews	<b>1300</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>1180</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>388</b>

<b>D: Non-qualifying</b>						
Child no longer lives with them	40	2	38	13	13	12
Total attempted phone contacts	2,550	256	2,294	792	825	677
Response rate (based on all attempted contacts, excluding A and D)	<b>55%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>62%</b>

The Ministry of Social Development data supplied by Oranga Tamariki to Kantar Public was the source of the weighting matrix. For the OB, weighting was by Māori and non-Māori (Pacific, New Zealand European, and Other). For caregivers receiving the UCB, responses were weighted by Māori, Pacific and Other. Table 3 shows the unweighted and weighted profiles of caregivers.

Table 16: Weighting scheme

Subgroup used in weight scheme	Unweighted		Weighted	
	n=	%	n=	%
OB – Māori	44	3.38	12	0.89
OB – non-Māori (i.e., Pacific, NZ European, Other)	76	5.85	15	1.13
UCB – Māori	385	29.62	650	49.97
UCB – Pacific	407	31.31	83	6.42
UCB – Other	388	29.85	541	41.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>100</b>

## Data weighting

### Margins of error

All surveys are subject to sampling error. The maximum sampling errors associated with the two main groups of caregivers in this survey are covered separately.

### *Orphan's Benefit*

While the survey approached all caregivers receiving the OB, that is an attempted census, it is possible to calculate an estimated margin of error that treats respondents as a random sample of the population.

Based on a total of 120 caregivers participating in the phone interview, the results shown for caregivers receiving the OB are subject to an estimated maximum margin of error of plus or minus 6.3% at the 95% confidence level. That is, there is a 95% chance that the true population value of a recorded figure of 50% actually lies between 43.7% and 56.3%. As the sample figure moves further away from 50%, the estimated margin of error will decrease. As there were a high number of interviews achieved in proportion to the total population of OB caregivers (47%) this was considered in calculating the margin of error.

### *Unsupported Child's Benefit*

A total of 1,180 caregivers receiving the UCB chose to participate in the phone interview. Taking into account the design effects introduced by the disproportionate sampling stratification by ethnicity (Māori, Pacific Peoples and Other), an 'effective' sample size of 869 resulted. This effective sample size results in a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 3.3% for caregivers receiving the UCB. This means there is a 95% chance that the true population value of a survey result of 50% lies

between 46.7% and 53.3%. As the survey result moves away from 50%, the margin of error decreases.

### Non-sampling error

Non-sampling errors arise in two ways – from systematic and random causes. Systematic error (called bias) makes the survey results unrepresentative of the target population by distorting the survey results in one direction. For example, poor coverage of the target population, non-response bias, interviewer wording of questionnaire leading to ambiguity, interviewer bias or processing errors. A careful consideration of the survey wording and scripts for interviewers, pre-testing and piloting has minimised some sources of non-sampling errors. Weighting of results compensates for non-response bias and better ensures caregiver responses from the phone survey are representative of the total population.

### Notable survey limitations

The relatively small population size of caregivers receiving the OB limits analysis of sub-groups, even when just under half (47%) of the caregivers have participated in the phone survey.

A stratified sample of caregivers receiving the UCB were selected and surveyed. Like any survey, issues related to coverage, non-response and sample variation (margins of error) mean that compared with a census, the findings from a sample may not exactly represent those of the target population. Having said this, a high response rate to the survey (55%) provides considerable confidence that these risks are minimal. The risks to representativeness are further minimised by weighting the population by the ethnicity of caregivers as described above.

This report is based on caregiver-reported information, and this should be taken into account when reading the report. As noted earlier, one child was the focus of each caregiver interview. This potentially introduces a bias into the research as caregivers with more than one eligible child may respond for the more challenging of these children. To mitigate this effect, caregivers were asked to think of the child for whom they receive the OB or UCB who had the next birthday. In addition, the sampling unit for the survey was the caregiver consequently children cared for by these caregivers do not have an equal chance of representation. Hence, child related findings may not be representative of all those children who qualify their caregiver for the OB or UCB.

### [Appendix 3: Regression analysis for Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit – detailed explanation](#)

To understand the strongest drivers of stress for caregivers receiving the Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit a regression analysis was carried out. A forward stepwise selection method was used for the regression analysis because this method addresses multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is when multiple variables in a regression are correlated or related to each other. Stepwise regression inspects which variables really contribute to predicting caregiver stress and excludes those that don't. Variables were entered into the regression model one at a time, based on the significance of the score statistic that best improved the overall fit of the model. The method stopped when no more variables could improve the model fit significantly. The variable that entered the model first was the most important predictor in driving caregiver stress.

Twelve variables were included in the model:

- Child's age
- The number of children in the care of the caregiver

- Overall child wellbeing
- Caregiver age
- Caregiver ethnicity
- Types of support needed in the last 12 months to care for the child
- Household income
- Whether the Benefits are enough money to cover the costs of caring for the child
- Whether the caregiver's total income is enough to meet every day needs.
- Reasons why the child came into the care of the caregiver
- Whether the caregiver has had to use their own money to cover costs for the child
- Whether the caregiver has had to ask Work and Income for extra help

For caregivers getting the Orphan's Benefit, the predictors explain 29% of the variation in caregiver stress. This suggests there are factors not measured in the survey that cause caregiver stress.

For caregivers receiving the Unsupported Child's benefit, ten predictor variables explained 20% of the variation in caregiver stress, which suggests there are factors not measured in the survey that cause caregiver stress.

*Note, due to the small sample size of caregivers receiving the Orphan's Benefit (n=120), the multi-variate analysis is less robust than for caregivers receiving the Unsupported Child's Benefit. Therefore, the results should be viewed as indicative.*