

# **KŌNAE** My Records Guide

## **The story behind this website**



**Published: March 2025**

## Before you start



This information may upset some people when they are reading it.



If you are upset after reading this document you can talk to your:

- whānau / family
- friends.

**NEED TO TALK?**

**1737**

**free call or text  
any time**

You can also contact Need to Talk by:

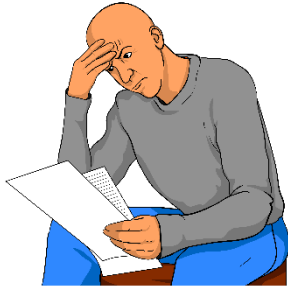
- calling 1737
- texting 1737



It does not cost any money to call / text 1737.



This is a long document.



It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.



Some things you can do to make it easier are:

- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



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## About this document



This Easy Read document is about the website Kōnae – My Records Guide.



The website is found at:

**[www.konae.org.nz](http://www.konae.org.nz)**

The website is called Kōnae for short.



This document tells you the story about why this website was made.



This document is made by the **Citizens Advice Bureau.**



## The **Citizens Advice Bureau**

provides free advice to people about things like:

- **rights**
- how to get the services you need.



**Rights** are things that you should get to live a good life.

For example everyone has a right to things like:

- housing
- being kept safe
- having enough food to eat.





The Citizens Advice Bureau is the kaitiaki / guardian of the Kōnae website.

Our team want to support you to get your records.



The Citizens Advice Bureau is called **CAB** for short.

Where it says **we** / **our** this means the CAB.



This document tells you the reasons why we made this website.



The website will support you to get your **records** from the time you were **in care**.





Here **records** means the information an organisation has kept / made about a person.



Here **in care** means when an organisation is put in charge of a person and decides things like:

- where they live
- who is their:
  - **guardian**
  - carer
- their upbringing.





A **guardian** is an adult put in charge of the care of a person.

A guardian should:

- take care of the person
- keep the person safe.



Kōnae tells you how to get records an organisation has about:

- you
- your whānau / family.





The organisations include:

- the Government
- **faith-based institutions**
- other organisations that have been involved in your:
  - **guardianship**
  - care.



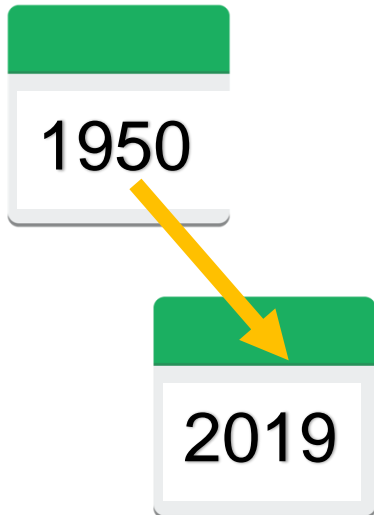
**Faith-based institutions** are run by religious groups like churches.

Faith-based institutions provide care.



**Guardianship** is when a guardian is put in charge of a person.

## The story about the Kōnae website



There were about 6 hundred and 55 thousand people in care in Aotearoa New Zealand between:

- 1950
- and
- 2019.



A person in care can be a:

- child
- young person
- adult.





The places that were involved in decisions about care included:

- children's homes
- hospitals
- youth justice residences
- **borstals**
- children living with a **foster family**
- when the state was a part of:
  - **adoptions**
  - care arrangements with whānau / family.



**Borstals** were places young people were sometimes sent when they did something to break the law.

The young people were aged from:

- 15 years old
- to
- 21 years old.



Borstals were meant to improve behaviour by training young people to do jobs.

Borstals ran between:

- 1924
- and
- 1981.





Here a **foster family** is when a family takes a child into their home to:

- look after them
- keep them safe from harm.



Here **adoption** is a legal word that means:

- a person or a couple becomes the legal guardians of the child of another person

and



- raise the child as their own.



Many people living in care were abused by the people meant to be caring for them.



For a long time people have wanted an investigation into care by:

- the Government
- faith-based institutions like churches.



Here **investigation** means looking into something to find out:

- what happened
- why it happened
- ways to make things better.



In 2017 the United Nations Committee Against Torture called for New Zealand to do an **inquiry** into abuse in care.





An **inquiry** is like an investigation.

The **United Nations** Committee Against Torture is called **UNCAT** for short.



The **United Nations** is an organisation made up of a lot of countries.

The countries work together to try to make the world a:

- better place
- safer place.



**UNCAT** is part of the United Nations.

It works to make sure governments are keeping their people safe from harm.



In 2017 the **survivors of abuse in care** asked for an inquiry.



Here a **survivor of abuse in care** is where a person has been:

- hurt very badly by a person / people while in care
- is now healing from the hurt caused by the abuse.



The Human Rights Commission also asked for an inquiry.



The **Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care** was started in 2018.



In this document the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care is called the **Royal Commission** for short.



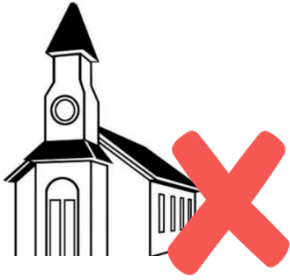
The Royal Commission looked into abuse that happened to people in care.



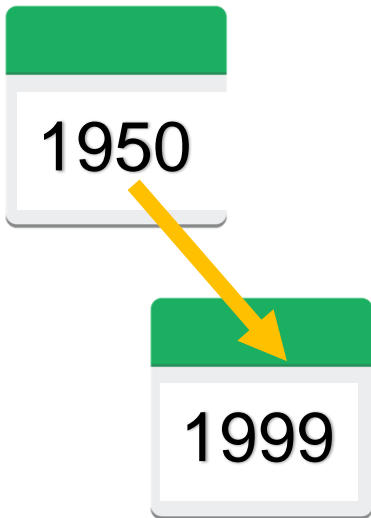
The Royal Commission was not part of the Government.



The Government could not tell the Royal Commission what to do.



The Royal Commission was not part of any faith-based institutions like churches.



The Royal Commission investigated what happened to people in care between:

- 1950
- and
- 1999.



More than 3 thousand people shared their experiences with the Royal Commission.



They hoped talking about abuse in care would stop it from happening.

# What is the Crown Response Office?



The Crown Response Unit is now called the **Crown Response Office**.

The **Crown Response Office** is called **CRO** for short.



The **CRO** was set up in 2018 to look after the government response to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.



The Royal Commission was told that it was very hard for survivors to get their records.



The CRO set up some websites to help survivors of abuse get the information they needed to ask for their records.



The **Survivor Experiences Service website** can be found at:

**[www.konae.org.nz/SES](http://www.konae.org.nz/SES)**



This website was made to support survivors of abuse in care and their whānau / families to share their experiences.



Support for survivors of abuse in care who want to get their records can be found at:

**[www.konae.org.nz/SES-records](http://www.konae.org.nz/SES-records)**



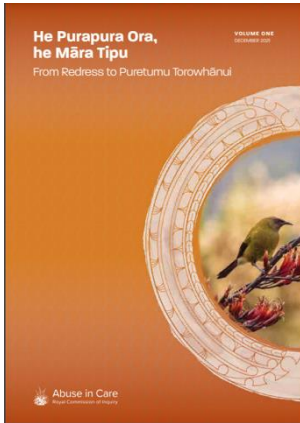
The CRO also works with Archives New Zealand to make it easier for survivors of abuse to get their records.



You can find out more about the CRO at this website:

**[tinyurl.com/7x7uw9yv](https://tinyurl.com/7x7uw9yv)**

# Why was Kōnae made?



The Royal Commission found that survivors were having a hard time getting their records.

The problems people had getting their records included:

- it taking a long time to get the records
- only being able to get some of the information because a lot of information was missing.



The Kōnae website was made so survivors can get their records more easily.



Kōnae has:



- advice about getting your records
- information about your rights to get your records.



Kōnae supports you to learn the right way to ask for your records.



Kōnae cannot give you your records.

## How did the CRO choose a partner to make Kōnae?



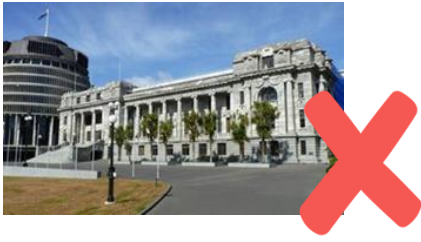
The Royal Commission found that survivors of abuse did not trust a government agency to make a website.



To make a website the CRO needed:

- to find a partner to make the website
- the survivors of abuse to be able to trust the partner
- the partner to be **independent** of the Government.





Here **independent** means that the Government cannot tell an organisation what to do.



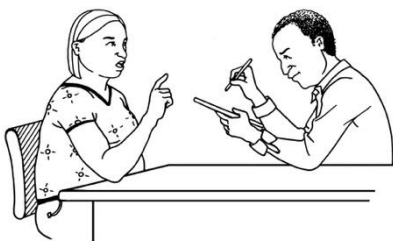
The CRO chose the CAB to:

- be their partner
- make the Kōnae website.



The Kōnae website team includes:

- people with lived experience of abuse in care
- whānau / families of people with lived experience of abuse in care.



The Kōnae website team also asked other people with lived experience of abuse in care for advice on how to make the website.

## What reports did the Royal Commission make?



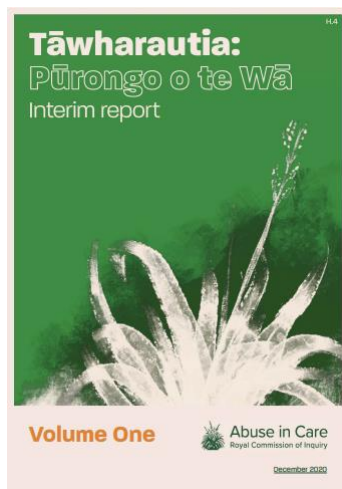
The Royal Commission made reports about what it found out during the inquiry.



The reports are listed below with website links.



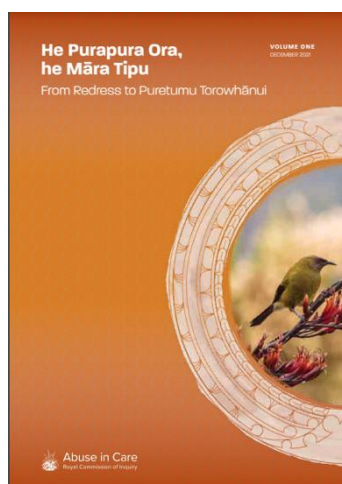
Some of these reports are not in Easy Read.



The Royal Commission interim report can be found at this website:

[www.tinyurl.com/yc75v7x3](http://www.tinyurl.com/yc75v7x3)

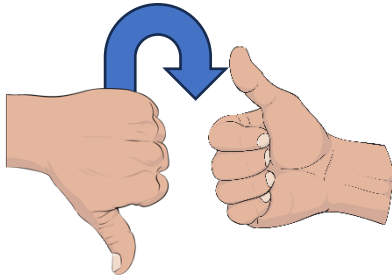
This is a summary of what the Royal Commission found out during the inquiry.



The Royal Commission redress report 2021 can be found at this website:

[www.tinyurl.com/3p4t877v](http://www.tinyurl.com/3p4t877v)

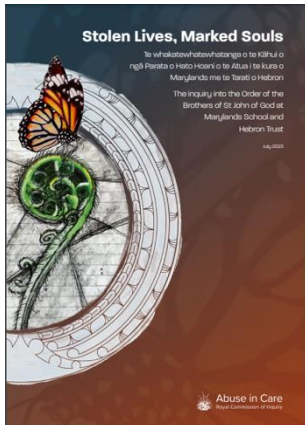
This report includes recommendations for a new redress system.



**Redress** means making something right when something wrong has been done.

Redress for a person who has experienced abuse in care can include things like:

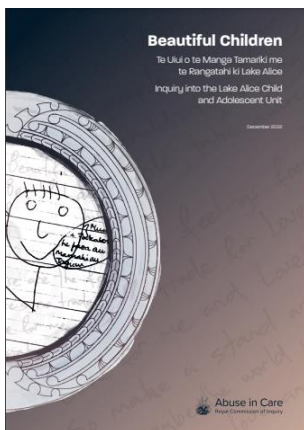
- money to pay for counselling
- money to help them get the support they need to heal.



Other Royal Commission reports include the:

- **Marylands report** which can be found at this **website**:

**[www.tinyurl.com/2hxycw65](http://www.tinyurl.com/2hxycw65)**



- **Lake Alice report** which can be found at this **website**:

**[www.tinyurl.com/4y8v8tbc](http://www.tinyurl.com/4y8v8tbc)**

- **Royal Commission recommendations** which can be found at this **website**:

**[www.tinyurl.com/2jttx59a](http://www.tinyurl.com/2jttx59a)**



- **Royal Commission final report** which can be found at this **website**:

**[www.tinyurl.com/ynpmw7uf](http://www.tinyurl.com/ynpmw7uf)**



**Abuse in Care**  
Royal Commission of Inquiry

You can learn more about the Royal Commission reports at this **website**:

**[www.tinyurl.com/ynpmw7uf](http://www.tinyurl.com/ynpmw7uf)**



## More information



We want to hear what you think about making things better like:

- the information on Kōnae
- making Kōnae easier to use.

You can contact us by:



- **email:**

**[contact@konaee.org.nz](mailto:contact@konaee.org.nz)**

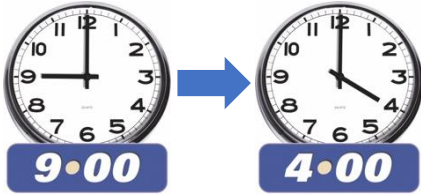
- **phone:**

**0800 367 222**



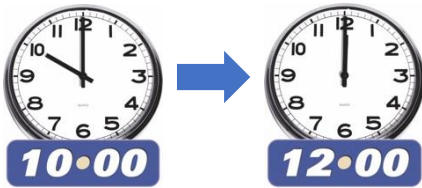


You can call our office during these hours:



- Monday to Friday

9 am to 4 pm



- Saturday

10 am to 12 pm



Voicemails can be left at any time.

We will reply to them when our office is open.



If you find it hard to use the phone  
the **New Zealand Relay** service is for  
people who are:

- Deaf / hard of hearing
- deafblind
- speech impaired / find it hard to talk.



You can find out more about the  
New Zealand Relay service on their  
**website** at:

**[www.nzrelay.co.nz](http://www.nzrelay.co.nz)**



This information has been written by the Citizens Advice Bureau – Ngā Pou Whakawhirinaki o Aotearoa.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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