



**ORANGA  
TAMARIKI**  
Ministry for Children

# GATEWAY ASSESSMENTS

Information for caregivers





Some children who come in to care haven't had the health care and education they need. This can affect how well they do at home, at school, and in life generally.

That's why we organise a full health and education check for every child and young person coming into care.

In this brochure you'll find information about this Gateway Assessment and how you can help your foster child get the support and services they need.

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A Gateway Assessment is an important step towards getting things right. It helps us learn all about your foster child's medical history, any treatment they've had, and what their health needs are right now. We also look at how they're doing at school.

With this information we can make sure that they get all the right support and services. This might be anything from a dental check-up to a hearing test, time with a counsellor, or extra support at school.

## HOW IT WORKS

### Seeking consent

The first thing we do is ask your foster child's parents for permission to seek information about the child's health and schooling and take them through a health check.

### Collecting information

- If the child in your care goes to school or preschool, their social worker will ask their teacher how they're doing with their learning and how they play and get along with others.
- The social worker will ask the school for information on any education checks already done for your foster child.
- The social worker will also seek information about your foster child's health by talking with the health coordinator, usually a nurse at the hospital. The coordinator's job is to collect information that builds a picture of your foster child's health and treatment record. They do this by contacting the child's doctor, Plunket nurse, or the health professional who's looked after them in the past.

- Once they've collected all this information, the health coordinator will contact you and your foster child's parents and social worker to organise the health check.

As you're the person who takes care of the child every day, we'll ask you lots of questions and keep you involved all the way through.

### The health check

The health check will be done by a children's doctor or youth health specialist. They'll look for any health worries, like problems with hearing or eyesight. They might ask about your foster child's diet and how they're feeling generally. The child's social worker will talk to you about who is best to take the child to the health check.

### Getting the right help

After the health check the doctor will talk with you, your foster child and their parents and social worker, about what they've found and what help and support the child might need. This could be anything from seeing a speech therapist to taking medicine or visiting a dentist.

**"The health check helped us to understand Jenna better. We knew Jenna was going to get the support she needed, and now we just watch her shine."**

Foster dad

## **YOUR ROLE IN THE ASSESSMENT**

You can help your foster child by:

- talking to them about what they can expect. We'll have already talked to you about this, but if you have any questions give us a call
- being with them throughout the process if the social worker thinks this will help
- telling your foster child's social worker or health assessor about any worries you have for their health or learning
- sharing your ideas about the services that could help
- letting us know if things change for your foster child, or if there are problems getting the services and support they need.

