

Kindergarten Profile



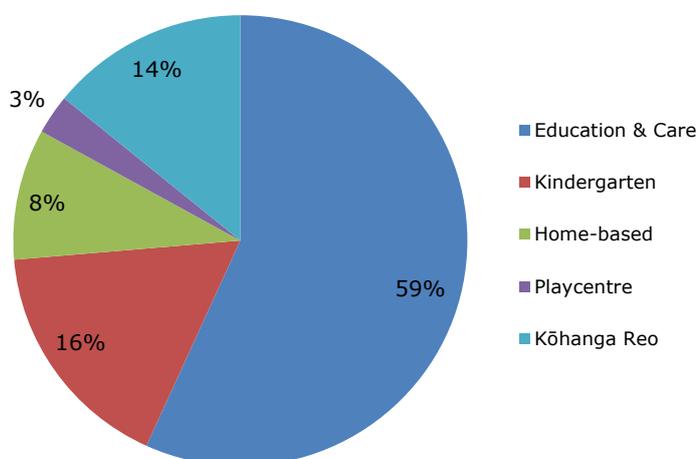
New Zealand Kindergartens (NZK) Incorporated, Te Pūtahi Kura Puhou o Aotearoa, is the umbrella organisation representing twenty-five regional kindergarten associations covering over 445 kindergartens and early childhood education services. Nationwide kindergartens provide services for over 30,000 children as well as support for their families and whānau.¹ Over one-quarter (27%) of all four year olds enrolled in early childhood education in New Zealand attend a kindergarten.²

For 125 years, kindergarten has been committed to providing exceptional early childhood education. Employing qualified, registered teachers, involving parents and whānau and making kindergarten accessible to all families have been the hallmarks of kindergarten since the first service opened its doors in Dunedin in 1889. Kindergartens are community-based, not-for-profit services and have strong knowledge of and ties to local communities. All funding received by kindergartens goes directly to providing high-quality early childhood education. As a non-profit, community-based service kindergarten relies on parents and families to support the provision of services. Parents and families are involved – supporting programmes or as decision-makers serving on committees and governance boards.

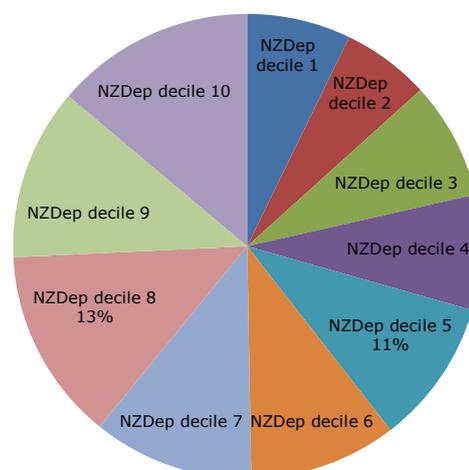
Kindergarten is a leader among early childhood education services and is an active member of national early childhood education bodies including the Secretary for Education’s Early Childhood Advisory Committee and the Early Education Federation.

NZK provides services to all families. 71% of kindergartens are located in communities with NZ deprivation index scores of 5-10 (10 being the most deprived). 39% are located in communities with deprivation scores of 8-10. This means the families and whānau in those communities are likely to face significant barriers to participating in ECE.

Enrolments in services in deprivation index decile 10 areas - 2015



Kindergarten enrolments across deprivation index deciles 2015



¹ Ministry of Education (2017) Education Counts

² Ibid.

Kindergarten Innovation

Kindergarten continually strives to be responsive to community need and ensure all children and families can access high quality early childhood education. Kindergartens today offer a variety of different start and finish times, morning, afternoon and school-day sessions, and services for mixed aged groups. There are over 30 different kindergarten service models among NZK network kindergartens.

- Bilingual kindergartens, including those operated by the Northland and Napier Kindergarten Associations, offer services in te reo Māori and English; other kindergartens offer environmentally focused early childhood education and are part of the national EnviroSchools Early Years programme; Southland Kindergarten Association operates a forest kindergarten.
- In Porirua, Toru Fetū, promotes and integrates three Pasifika cultures and languages at one centre; He Whānau Manaaki Kindergartens is partnering with Pasifika communities, recognising and building on the Pasifika tradition of extended family caring for children, by supporting home-based services Etu Ao. The Rotorua home-based initiative, operated by the Tauranga Kindergarten Association, is working to support the needs and aspirations of Māori children and whānau, and families in low-income communities. Ruahine and Geraldine associations also offer home-based services.
- In Taranaki, Koru Kindergarten is attached to a Teen Parent Unit and others have been established in Nelson and at Waiopahu College in Levin; several kindergartens offer parent support and development programmes alongside traditional kindergarten services including those under the umbrella of the Southland Kindergarten Association.
- Taitoko Kindergarten in Levin operates as a community hub, giving families access to other community agencies such as public health nurses and family support workers. Dunedin and Dannevirke Associations operate community hubs. The Nelson association runs a hospital based service.
- Several kindergarten associations including Northland, Tauranga, Nelson, Ruahine and Napier employ Māori advisors, Pou Whakarewa Tikanga Māori or kaimahi, “to ensure provision of programmes that Māori whānau value with regard to cultural priorities”.
- Many kindergartens have whānau spaces where they host playgroups, offer workshops, and provide access to services and activities for parents and whānau, including the Maungaarangi Kindergarten and Whānau Centre which is on the grounds of Welcome Bay primary school in Tauranga. The centre “provides formal and informal opportunities for parent education”.
- The Wellington based association He Whānau Manaaki Kindergartens operates the Y-Men Project. In the programme, young men who are unemployed and not in training of any kind spend six months undertaking supported placements in Wellington kindergartens. They develop skills, confidence and focus. Many of the Y-Men graduates go on to early childhood education tertiary training programmes, or other study or training programmes.
- Kindergarten associations have and continue to contribute to Ministry of Social Development sponsored programmes including Whānau Ora, SKIP and the Incredible Years.
- Dunedin, Tauranga, Ruahine and a number of other associations offer holiday programmes for children during term breaks.
- Several associations, including Southland, Westport, Kidsfirst, Nelson and He Whānau Manaaki Kindergartens provide all day or long day services in some communities, including spaces for under two year olds.