
SKIP – Barnardos

Memorandum of Understanding

A public record of the relationship between Barnardos and Strategies with Kids, Information for Parents (SKIP) and the way they intend to work together to achieve their mutual goals.

The Parties

Barnardos New Zealand

Family and Community Services, Ministry of Social Development

Background

In 2004, the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) engaged Barnardos and others in the community sector on how to work together to achieve community-led action on positive parenting. As a result, the Strategies with Kids, Information for Parents (SKIP)¹³ was developed and launched by MSD in May 2004. At Cabinet's request, the programme was to be implemented with national community organisations.

Barnardos¹⁴ is one of New Zealand's largest child-focused non-governmental organisations. Before the launch of SKIP, key staff from Barnardos and SKIP had already been meeting to discuss the development of SKIP and how both organisations could work together long term. In June 2004, Barnardos was funded by MSD to scope how SKIP might be embedded within their organisation. The scoping provided thinking and networking time within Barnardos and this, in combination with ongoing strategic conversations, led to the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Late in 2004, an interim MOU was written with the purpose of 'capturing' the deepening relationship between both organisations.

Benefits of Putting Pen to Paper...

- it documented the framework which had evolved between the two organisations as a kaupapa for their work together;
- benefit from knowing it was to be reviewed - something to check themselves against;
- having a relationship agreement to be used at the forefront of future funding contracts kept relationship development away from the dollars;
- the process of writing the MOU together was also a tool for relationship building between the two organisations.

¹³ SKIP's vision is that all children in New Zealand are raised in a positive way with parents who feel confident about managing children's behaviour as part of a loving nurturing relationship. The SKIP programme has three key strands: strengthening and improving the consistency of existing parent education and support programmes; providing national resources for parents and support workers; and stimulating the development of local initiatives and activities to raise the profile of positive parenting and to better reach parents. SKIP was initially set up as a three year pilot but now receives baseline government funding.

¹⁴ Barnardos' vision is that in Aotearoa New Zealand, childhood is valued and each child's hope and potential is nurtured. Barnardos provides care, education, and support services for children and their families, with services based throughout New Zealand.

Putting it Together...

Both parties wanted their relationship to be at the forefront of any contract they would enter into. The purpose of this agreement, therefore, was to represent the relationship between the two parties. Any subsequent funding contracts would develop later within the framework of the relationship recorded in (not established by) the MOU. This framework would overarch the mechanics of any funding contracts; whereas the the contracts could change over time, the relationship would remain constant.

SKIP and Barnardos looked at various partnership agreements and, in consultation with MSD's legal unit, incorporated aspects from these into a MOU agreement structure. The MOU would allow flexibility – giving a sense of future priorities and representing the relationship between the two parties.

Senior staff members, one from each organisation, then worked together to develop a draft MOU. This process was informed by the internal scoping work that Barnardos had undertaken¹⁵. For Barnardos, the scoping process had resulted in a high level of cross-organisational understanding about SKIP and what it might mean for future ways of working.

The interim MOU was put together in a collaborative way. Early versions of the document were widely circulated for input across both organisations which meant the agreement development process also practically demonstrated the way that both organisations wanted to work together.

“Months of background working led to a sense that there was already a reality to the relationship. By the time we put pen to paper, we already had a very active working partnership.”

- Kim Chamberlain, Ministry of Social Development

The interim Memorandum of Understanding was signed in October 2004 by the Chief Executive of Barnardos and the Deputy Chief Executive, Family and Community Services. The 2004 Memorandum was reviewed in light of the SKIP implementation phase in 2005. Key differences between memorandums included being more specific about Barnardos' aims, stating the values that underpin the way they work together, and a commitment to jointly identifying how to measure success.

Key Agreement Features...

- documents common objectives;
- articulates shared values in relation to the partnership;
- identifies relationship managers from both parties who are responsible for overseeing the partnership and identifying further opportunities to achieve common goals;
- states that staff from neither partner organisation are permitted to represent the other without prior agreement;
- an introduction which sets a context for the relationship – allowing understanding of how the document came about.

Biggest Challenges...

- taking the time to invest right up front in relationship development when you have the pressure of a three year pilot timeframe to get tangible deliverables;
- developing a contracting mechanism that reflected a partnership and capacity building model.

¹⁵ The scoping work was funded by MSD.

Things That Helped...

“Strategic leaders from both organisations have a clear vision which they are willing to share and develop in order to reach their goals but have no fixed preconception of how they will get there.”

*– Kim Chamberlain, Ministry of Social Development:
extract from “Getting the best from both to change the world”*

- strategic leadership from both organisations from the outset;
- a shared understanding and commitment to community development and capacity building;
- key members of the SKIP team had spent time working in the community sector so knew how to effectively engage with the sector;
- key Barnardos staff understood their organisation ‘inside out’ and also had the seniority to make things happen quickly;
- resourcing from MSD that enabled Barnardos to explore how their organisation could engage with SKIP and what would be needed to implement their joint goals. This extra capacity enabled Barnardos to be a stronger ‘partner’ in the agreement development process;
- a shared ongoing commitment to relationship building and to exploring where a partnership approach might lead;
- active encouragement of innovation and doing things differently;
- a strong alignment of the SKIP vision with the core purpose and vision of Barnardos.

“It’s felt like the right people and the right time. Key ingredients have been a little imagination, some time, a shared belief in each other and what we could achieve together, good communication and the ability to take a few risks.”

- Pat Watson, Barnardos New Zealand

What Has Happened Since...

Articulating the way both organisations were already working together through the MOU has supported staff from both sides by affirming the beliefs and values that already existed.

The MOU also provides the back-drop to the formal capacity building contract that has subsequently been developed between the two organisations. The MOU acknowledges Barnardos as a partner **with** MSD rather than a service provider **for** MSD. This resulted in a funding contract that was simpler, less prescriptive and less compliance driven than might otherwise have been expected.

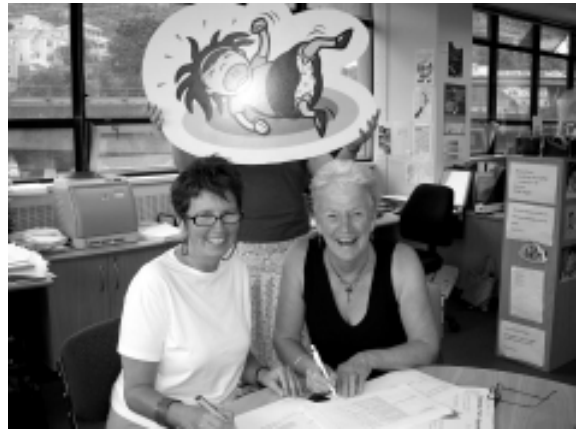
From MSD’s perspective, having flexibility in the contract has assisted Barnardos to be more creative with their SKIP capacity building and enabled them to take advantage of opportunities as they arose eg. SKIP messages and branding were successfully incorporated into the Barnardos sponsored Nought to Five television series hosted by Jude Dobson.

The lessons learnt from their collaboration experience have also informed other strategic relationships that both partners have gone on to develop.

As the collaborative relationship between Barnardos and MSD enters its fourth year the MOU has proven again and again to be a highly effective working model. Both parties have experienced considerable progress and successful outcomes as a consequence.

Best Advice For Others...

- identify strategic leaders and create the space for them to develop relationships;
- have lots of face to face conversations;
- be prepared to challenge each other;
- relax and explore new collaborative ways of working by taking away expectations of delivery and contract performance;
- invest 'up front' in relationship building to save you energy, time and money further down the track;
- focus on what you want to achieve and work backwards;
- you will get the best results if you find ways to harness the best of both government and the community sector.



Kim Chamberlain, Ministry of Social development and Pat Watson, Barnardos New Zealand working on the MOU

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING 2

1. PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Barnardo's New Zealand
Incorporated
85-87 Ghuznee Street
PO Box 6434
WELLINGTON

Relationship Manager:
Pat Watson

Ministry of Social Development
Family & Community Services
SKIP Programme Team
PO Box 12136
WELLINGTON

Relationship Manager:
Gael Surgenor

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. Early involvement with the NGO sector has been a core strategy in the development stage of the SKIP Programme with an emphasis on building collaborative relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders. This strategy and its evolution has been crucial in the successful relationship development between Barnardo's New Zealand ("Barnardo's") and the Ministry of Social Development ("MSD").
- 2.2. The close alignment of Barnardo's existing strategic direction with MSD's SKIP Programme (SKIP) and the span of Barnardo's existing national services enabled both Barnardo's and the SKIP team to see the potential of SKIP to add value to families and communities using the Barnardo's services.
- 2.3. This combination of common strategic objectives, Barnardo's organisational capacity and MSD's genuine engagement with Barnardo's, has provided the momentum for the development of a strong partnership relationship.
- 2.4. This opportunity to collaborate to achieve a shared vision of positive parenting provides Barnardo's with great potential to add value to its existing services, and to contribute to service innovations which support parents. This Partnership increases the likelihood of achieving the SKIP objectives, stimulates leadership from the community sector and contributes to the sustainability of SKIP within the community.
- 2.5. This document provides the framework between MSD and Barnardo's which will enable the parties to proceed with achieving the SKIP objectives using a collaborative approach.

3. COMMON OBJECTIVES AND STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 3.1. MSD and Barnardo's jointly acknowledge a common commitment to all children in New Zealand being raised in a positive way, with parents and caregivers who feel confident and supported in using effective non-physical discipline as part of a loving and nurturing relationship with children.
- 3.2. MSD and Barnardo's are jointly committed to exploring how we can achieve the SKIP objectives together.
- 3.3. The SKIP Objectives are to:
- a) Increase the opportunities for communities to promote positive parenting;
 - b) Increase the consistency and application of knowledge about effective discipline within organisations working with parents, caregivers and children; and
 - c) Increase the number of parents and caregivers who are confident, skilled and knowledgeable about using non physical discipline.
- 3.4 Through this Partnership Barnardo's aims to:
- a) Embed the SKIP strategy within Barnardo's key services in line with Barnardo's Guiding Principle ("Children Come First") and consistent with Barnardo's strategic plan.
 - b) Inspire staff in key services to integrate the 6 principles of effective discipline into their current work with parents, in a supported, consistent and sustainable way
 - c) Enable parents using Barnardo's key services to be confident and knowledgeable in the use of non-physical discipline with their children, so as to further develop positive family relationships

4. PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1. MSD and Barnardo's are jointly committed to developing a genuine collaborative partnership ("this Partnership").
- 4.2. This Partnership will enable Barnardo's to have the capacity to:

- Embed SKIP in a sustainable way within their organisation;
- Take a leadership role in the future direction of SKIP in partnership with MSD;
- Champion SKIP within the early childhood and community sector to promote community ownership of SKIP;
- Identify and foster innovative strategies to promote SKIP in the wider community.

4.3. This Partnership has been established through an open, reflective exchange of ideas between MSD and Barnardo's. This mutually beneficial exchange and the organisational scoping work undertaken by Barnardo's have provided a strong platform for partnership development.

4.4 We recognise partnerships need shared values. The following values are important to SKIP and Barnardo's in relation to this Partnership:

- Honesty, fairness, openness
- Valuing and respecting what each partner brings to the relationship
- Mutual commitment to improving the lives of New Zealand children and their families
- Taking the time needed for the relationship to develop
- Being flexible within the agreed framework to achieve the best outcomes
- Collaborative decision – making
- Sharing ongoing learning, continuous improvement and celebration of success

4.5 As this Partnership matures and develops this will lead to the identification of further opportunities to achieve our common goal.

4.6 To facilitate this Partnership, each party has nominated a Relationship Manager referred to on page one of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The roles and responsibilities undertaken by MSD and Barnardo's may vary according to specific projects but may include: joint decision making, joint strategic planning, participation in stakeholder workshops, and regular meetings.

5.2 MSD and Barnardo's will jointly identify how to measure the success of this Partnership in the following areas:

- The impacts on communities, families and children
- The impacts on partner organisations
- The costs/benefits of a partnership approach

6. DURATION / REVIEW

6.1. This MOU supersedes the MOU between the parties dated 14/10/2004.

6.2 This MOU will evolve further as this Partnership develops.

6.3 Variations to this MOU or subsequent contracts must be agreed in writing by Barnardo's and MSD.

7. DISPUTES

7.1. In the first instance, all disputes will be brought to the attention of the Relationship Managers for resolution.

7.2. If the dispute cannot be resolved at a Relationship Manager level, it will be escalated to the relevant General Managers of the Partner Organisations and failing resolution at that level, to the Chief Executives of the Partner Organisations.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1. Neither party will, without the consent of the other party at any time disclose to a third party information concerning the affairs of the other party, or that are otherwise deemed to be confidential by the other party or where such disclosure infringes the provisions of the Privacy Act 1993 or the Health Information Privacy Code 1994.

9. REPRESENTATION

9.1. This MOU does not permit staff from either Partner organisation to represent the other without prior agreement.

10. FUTURE CONTRACTS

10.1. Where the parties agree that MSD will provide funding to Barnardo's for SKIP services, the parties shall use the Master Services Agreement dated 01/10/2004 (and any applicable variations).

10.2. This MOU does not bind the Partner Organisations to any financial or other liability without further formal documentation.

11. TERMINATION

11.1. Either party may terminate this relationship at any time by giving thirty days written notice to the other party of its intention to do so.

12. SIGNATORIES

Signed for and on behalf of Barnardo's
New Zealand Incorporated by
Murray Edridge, Chief Executive:

.....
Murray Edridge
Chief Executive

Date.....

Signed for and on behalf of Her Majesty
the Queen in right of New Zealand by Richard
Wood, Deputy Chief Executive Family &
Community Services, acting under delegated
authority pursuant to section 41 of the State
Sector Act 1988:

.....
Richard Wood
Deputy Chief Executive,
Family & Community Services

Date