

AKO

THE JOURNAL
FOR EDUCATION
PROFESSIONALS



WINTER 2021

THE HAUORA ISSUE

Care, joy, connection

HAUORA FOR EVERYONE
Supporting educators

TE AO MĀORI
Models for mauri ora

CONNECTION
Stories of coming together

Earlier this year, we recognised eleven ECE Heroes – professionals who have gone above and beyond to serve their tamariki and their communities, with extraordinary skill and dedication.

ECE teachers are everyday heroes who love their job – but they don't like their pay. There is still a pay gap of up to 51% between teachers in ECE and their colleagues in schools and kindergartens.

That sort of inequity isn't good for kaiako – and it isn't good for our tamariki either.

The improvements we've seen across the last year – increased minimum pay rates, steps toward pay parity, the return of 100% quality funding and a commitment from the Minister to review the ECE funding model – are progress we've achieved because ECE teachers have come together in union.

But we need to accelerate change in ECE to fix the broken system and pay teachers fairly.

Together, we can build the power to win full parity, centralised ECE funding, lower ratios and more non-contact time.

Together, we have the power to transform early childhood education.

Do you have ECE colleagues or friends? Ask them to join us in union now over at nzei.org.nz/join.





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EDITORIAL

Hauora is for everyone

Kia ora koutou.

It is great to be able to share this issue of *Ako* with you. Hauora seems to be the catch phrase of the last couple of years. That is not surprising after 2020, and the long tail of that difficult year is still being felt. This government has made hauora a key measure of success, which has led to an explosion of the term through public policy. We also find hauora is ever-present in our minds with sector workload issues, the Pūaotanga staffing review and the Teachers' and Principals' Health and Wellbeing Survey.

Through the journey of the last couple of years there has been an increasing narrative that hauora is the responsibility of the individual. While technically true, we shouldn't lose sight of the responsibility that employers must take if they want to support their staff's hauora and help them flourish. There is no better example of this than solutions to manage workload. Yes, the individual does have the choice to not take work home at the end of the day and to learn new technological tricks to streamline processes, but this is just tinkering around the edges. The reality is that for those working in education, there is just too much to do, and without more staffing, more feet on the ground, we will continue to see declining hauora. And hauora should be for everyone.



What this issue of *Ako* does is give a wide overview of what hauora looks like within education, alongside inspiring and encouraging stories. We have two guest experts for our opinion pieces who offer two different hauora models. We ask how the popular hauora model Te Whare Tapa Whā can be used in practice; look at the powerful force of tamariki-led wellbeing; at how early childhood educators use attachment theory to create secure relationships with tamariki, and the barriers they must overcome; look at the ways education leaders authentically support and value staff hauora; and the way art practice can be used to promote everyone's hauora and bring joy.

We hope these stories support you.
Ngā mihi,

Liam Rutherford
National President/Te Manukura
NZEI Te Riu Roa



The hauora issue

*"Ehara taku toa
i te toa takitahi,
engari he toa
takitini / My
strength is not as
an individual,
but as a collective."
– Nō Paterangi,
Ngāti Kahungunu*

This issue explores the ways in which
education professionals create hauora for
themselves and tamariki.





FEATURE | THE HAUORA ISSUE

Let tamariki get stuck in

One of the most powerful forces in tamariki wellbeing is their own voice. Read about how these schools let tamariki lead the way.

01



Two years ago students at Beckenham Te Kura o Pūroto in Ōtautahi Christchurch asked the school for a diversity group. They were a cohort who'd gone through with a child who had come out as a different gender than assigned at birth, and they wanted to talk about equity issues.

For a school with a wellbeing team, and many initiatives to support tamariki-led wellbeing, it wasn't a big ask.

"They were a group of really strong Year 8s wanting to meet fortnightly and talk about how to promote diversity in the school with a teacher who was empathetic," says principal Sandy Hastings. "Not that all of the teachers wouldn't have been supportive – but one straightaway said, 'Yes, I'll come and be there, and sit in with the group.'"

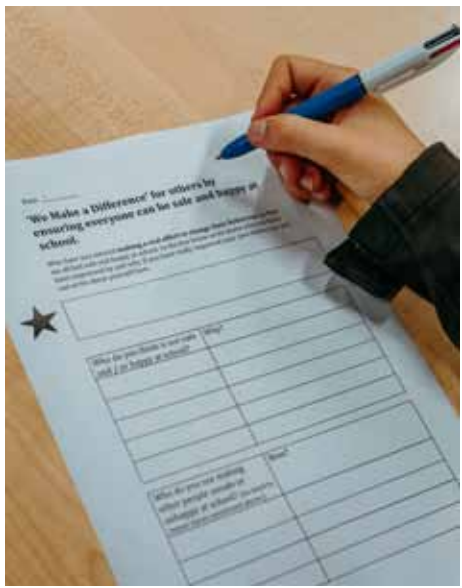
Gender diversity has been a quintessential ako experience for Beckenham staff – teachers learn as much with the learners as the learners do from them. "The work we had to do to get ourselves to a much more professional space around supporting diversity really made us deepen and broaden our practice around what diversity looks like," says Hastings.

"New Zealand is doing some good work at considering cultural diversity and disability and increasingly around neurodiversity, and yet I was embarrassed to have to say when the parent and child first came to talk to me that I had never really thought about gender diversity.

"I realised very quickly I had a big gap in my professional knowledge and understanding, and it wasn't the parent's job to educate me. It was my job to make sure our staff upskilled and learnt so that we could do what we needed to, to support not just that child, but every child who might at some point question their gender."

Aotearoa New Zealand research indicates that by the time they are 20, about five percent of young people will have questioned their gender identity at some stage, and some will have acted to change their assigned gender. "So as a principal of this school of 500 children I have to assume that 25 children are going to at some time in the next five to ten years question their gender identity. Having a child in our school transition was the most amazing experience to have the honour to be a part of.

“The more we do in this space, the more they want. There’s an unmet need.” – SANDY HASTINGS



“If students have a voice, then they feel heard, and if they’re heard then they are more likely to engage, and if they engage they’re more likely to learn.” – SANDY HASTINGS

We learnt so much from being part of that journey,” says Hastings.

Like many schools in Ōtautahi, Beckenham has a strong emphasis on tamariki wellbeing, a legacy of the earthquakes. But a quick look at the school’s website shows a key difference: Beckenham focuses on tamariki-led wellbeing. Under one of many website headings on wellbeing is “Student Involvement”, and the list includes playground mediators, a student council, wellbeing team student leaders, celebration assemblies, cultural presentations, waiata and whare time, and theme days and weeks such as, “We care”, “We make a difference”, and “Keep New Zealand beautiful”. It’s an approach recommended by the Education Review Office in their report *Wellbeing for Success: Resource for Schools*, which found five aspects are vital to successfully promoting and responding to student wellbeing, one being “students are a powerful force in wellbeing and other decisions”.

The initiatives that Hastings is most keen to talk to about are those that bring students and teachers into rich conversations. They acknowledge who the child is, are a way to listen to student voice, and enable students to be active participants in their own learning and wellbeing.

At the start of each school year, students and whānau meet with the child’s home group teacher for a half-hour one-on-one conference. Teachers have a script of questions to ask, so there’s consistency across the school. These concern the child’s strengths and passions and what is likely to engage them; what they find challenging or tricky or might keep them awake at night; and how they best learn – sitting at a desk, sitting with a buddy, with technology, in a quiet space and when do they need breaks?

As tamariki grow, they are able to contribute more but, says Hastings, “It’s surprising if you ask a five-year-old, ‘What do you like about school, what do you like doing, and what supports you in your learning?’ – it’s quite amazing what they can articulate.

“Kids know that they’re good at being kind or maths or making friends, and that other kids are better than them at certain things. But the

more they know that some things are harder, with growing awareness, then there can be growing self-doubt. If a child doesn’t have the right support around them then there can be disengagement with that particular thing – ‘I’ll never be as good as other kids’, ‘I can’t learn as fast as other people, so I’ll never be able to learn’ – all these negative voices.”

A lot of the information gathered by teachers feeds into regular Quality Circle Time activities, and related social and emotional coaching.

For the “high flyers”, as Hastings describes them, the children with differences related to neurodiversity, health and so on, this information is fed into an online form that includes their photo and becomes available to teachers who need it. Relievers receive a clear file with a full page on each child who might be in a class they’re taking. “They can recognise the child so if something happens, they can go, ‘Okay, that’s why they’re doing that and these are the strategies I should use to support them’. It really helps our relievers to better meet the diverse needs of our kids, which might otherwise be invisible.” It’s been a lifeline for children who desperately don’t want to stand out or to be seen as different. The information then goes on the portal to all staff, with the profiles updated, signed and passed on each year to new teachers. “It becomes a really rich document, a record of rich conversations,” says Hastings.

Another tamariki-driven initiative that addresses behaviour involves students in Years 5–8 completing a confidential behaviour survey each term. The survey looks at positives. “A child might say, ‘I’ve been impressed by my friend, he’s started being nice to everyone and he’s kind to me’. Or, ‘She includes everyone now’ – and this is fed back confidentially to the child so that they know that if they try harder their peers notice,” says Hastings.

Concerns are also sought with questions such as, “Is there anyone you see being affected by someone’s behaviour?” Hastings says, “This is where we find out the stuff that teachers often don’t hear about because it’s happening under the

radar – ‘I’m worried about someone because his friends are now playing with other people’, or ‘I’m worried about this person because they’re always sitting by themselves at morning tea, and I ask her if she wants to play and she always says no thanks’.”

“Kids worry but they don’t always know what to do about it. We ask too if there’s anyone you’ve noticed who’s making other people unhappy. Every school has bullying, and this is one of the ways, one of the strategies, we have to deal with it.

“For example, if 15 children comment in the survey that they find a particular child’s behaviour challenging, including using homophobic language, bullying people for being LGBTQ+, and using put-downs, then we can do something about that. We are probably aware that their behaviour is tricky, but what we really find out is that the emotional impact they’re having on the kids is real.



“This helps the teachers to feed back to students what we think might be the best strategies for supporting them. We don’t say to the child, ‘You need to change’. We can say 15 children have pointed out that your behaviour is hurting others, and we need to help you to find some other ways of relating to people because what you’re doing at the moment isn’t serving you very well, and it’s impacting on your ability to form positive relationships.”


Hastings says the work of tamariki-led wellbeing is constant and ongoing. “Children are products of a complex environment, not just a school environment. They might come from homes that have different opinions and values than the ones we promote at school. Student voice is diverse.” And the work is resource intensive – a teacher is released one day a term to feed back to students on the survey, but it “pays dividends”, says Hastings. “If students have a voice, then they feel heard, and if they’re heard then they are more likely to engage, and if they engage they’re more likely to learn.

“If they don’t have a voice and they come to school every day thinking that it doesn’t matter what I think, no one’s going to listen, and so why bother – then that becomes pervasive.” “Parents like it too,” says Hastings. “The more we do in this space, the more they want. There’s an unmet need.”

In Porirua, tamariki-led wellbeing initiatives are also deeply embedded in school practices, with the Porirua East Kāhui Ako putting student voice


“Kids worry but they don’t always know what to do about it. We ask if there’s anyone you’ve noticed who’s making other people unhappy. Every school has bullying, and this is one of the ways we have to deal with it.”






REDUCE MATHS ANXIETY

DO SEE SAY WITH NUMICON





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Photos: Supplied

Above: Porirua College is getting good support now for wellbeing, with students having access to a counsellor, social worker, youth worker, nurses, doctor and community liaison support worker.

at the top of its aspirational Graduate Student Profile: “Everyone has a voice that can change the way things are.”

At Porirua College, where support staff play a key role with a cohort of mainly Māori and Pasifika students, principal Ragne Maxwell is enthusiastic about an intensive whānau approach that sees student leaders at the forefront of initiatives that ensure student voice is heard.

All students are in houses that centre on a physical hub. Year 9 and 10 students have their core classes in rooms off their hub, at which they also have access to food and support from house leaders. The whole school now eats lunch together as part of a pilot of free school lunches. “It’s making a massive difference and we hope it continues,” says Maxwell. “We’re offering good quality meals that we make ourselves, so no one’s getting a cut. There’s been a massive decrease in incidents at lunchtime because we sit down together, students and teachers, we karakia together – and when whānau are together and you’re not hungry, then you don’t go out and hit someone.”

There are multiple student councils (including sports, arts, cultural, service), student mentors in junior classrooms, and opportunities for students to undertake leadership training, which together with the involvement of support staff, make the school a recognised leader in restorative behaviour practices. “A group of students with an issue to sort out are as likely to rock up to the support staff corridor as they are to the Senior Leadership Team,” says Maxwell.

The close relationships also dispel any stigma that might attach to students experiencing resource inequity. Other students or school staff will notice when a student needs extra support with, say, food or uniform items or period products. “They’ll just quietly offer them what they need,” says Maxwell. “The mentoring has really big student buy in.”

But Maxwell has sympathy for primary schools in the area. She says the college is getting good support now for wellbeing, with students having access to a counsellor, social worker, youth worker, nurses, a doctor, and the community liaison support worker, Phil Skipworth, who has been recognised as a Wellingtonian of the Year. (As *Ako* went to press, the school reported with much sadness that Phil Skipworth had passed away.)

“Primary schools need that support too, the guidance staff – it’s essential for primary schools. Students are experiencing trauma at younger and younger ages, and this plays out with increasing levels of violent behaviour. Those children have a need that doesn’t go away just because they’re in primary school. By the time they hit high school, with hormones and so on, and if it hasn’t been addressed at the primary age, then it’s worse. Teachers in the Kāhui Ako are absolutely committed to growing the student voice, but they need the support.”

It’s a sentiment that Dr Lucy Hone from the New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience and adjunct senior fellow at the University of Canterbury agrees with. She’s an expert on wellbeing, and tamariki-led wellbeing, and has worked with schools in communities of practice across the region as part of Grow Waitaha, the government initiative that aimed to strengthen schools and their rebuild following the earthquakes. She emphasises that, “if you want to improve wellbeing in a systemic way then you have to absolutely work in partnership with tamariki



“It’s about moving from the narrow deficit view of students to a more broader, strengths-based understanding of what’s important to them.” – DR LUCY HONE

and whānau. I think the importance of universal, upstream wellbeing initiatives [in early childhood and primary learning centres] is often overlooked.”

“It’s about being child-centred”, she says, and there are a myriad of ways to do tamariki-led wellbeing – buddy coaching, storytelling through specific texts where children then tell their own stories about their strengths, student wellbeing councils, playground design initiatives and so on. She’s a big fan of TKI’s Inclusive Education website and student learner profiles. “They’re a great way to engage students in learning that matters for them, and to identify the ways they learn best, plus they enable educators to grow a more holistic understanding of that student and what defines success for them. They can show what students value and what connections are important to them. It’s about moving from the narrow deficit view of students to a more broader, strengths-based understanding of what’s important to them.” Hone notes that some schools are changing the types of things they are presenting awards for in a bid to promote curiosity, bravery and perseverance.

The Ministry of Education’s Garry Williams, who led the Grow Waitaha project, says the work has been successful in supporting schools to deliver education in new ways. “Grow Waitaha has been about bringing student voice into the conversation, and how to do that – because it works,” he says. Funding for the programme has been extended until 2025.

Teacher Louise Wilson at Mt Pleasant School in Ōtautahi accessed wellbeing PLD from Dr Hone through Grow Waitaha last year. It was a fantastic opportunity, she says, for the teachers who are passionate about wellbeing and student-led wellbeing, but the question is sustainability.



Above: Dr Lucy Hone.

Photo: Supplied

Wilson is a full-time teacher, plus a team leader for Years 7 and 8. “Student-led wellbeing is a passion of mine and lots of colleagues but to find time in a crowded curriculum on a regular basis – it can be a little bit disheartening. We are really exhausted; it’s hard work, to work on child wellbeing, and then our own wellbeing isn’t so good. Burnout is really common.”

Even so, like her colleagues, she loves the work. She’s working with the student council on ways to improve tamariki wellbeing using the Sparklers website, but adapting the activities for the school. A group of Year 8 students will later in the year survey their peers to pick up ideas, and run things like house days for the whole school that are about collegiality and team building. There’s an emphasis on the tuakana/teina concept and the Te Whare Tapa Whā building blocks.

“But it breaks my heart a little that we can’t do more. We see more and more kids with the likes of anxiety disorders coming through,” says Wilson. The phenomenon is a worldwide thing, she says, not unique to Ōtautahi – the pressures on kids are different and changing. “What they’re exposed to, what they see and hear now, it’s different.”

In an ideal world, Wilson says, there would be more time out for teachers from classroom programmes to progress what was learnt with Hone across the whole school, to support teachers to implement the programmes in their classrooms, and to grow the older students who could work with the teachers. “It’s much more helpful if kids have buy-in, and less demanding on teachers. We would let students get their teeth stuck in – so they have a better understanding of themselves and their pressure points, their triggers. The Ministry needs to give us more time.” ●

RESOURCES

TKI Inclusive Education website: www.inclusive.tki.org.nz

ERO report Wellbeing for Success: Resource for Schools: www.ero.govt.nz/publications/wellbeing-for-success-a-resource-for-schools

Together, educators, parents and whānau are going to build an education system that allows all children in Aotearoa to thrive.

The current learning support system is severely under-funded meaning many children are missing out on their right to a high-quality, inclusive education.

We need you to join us by signing up to our campaign Ngā Aukaha All in for Tamariki.

Mā tātou katoa, ngā kaiako, whānau me to tātou hāpori whānui ka hangaia e tātou tētahi pūnaha mātauranga e āhei ai ngā tamariki katoa i Aotearoa kia pūawai.

E tino korekore ana te tautoko ā-pūtea o te pūnaha tautoko akoranga o te wā nei, ā, ko te tikanga o tērā he nui ngā tamariki kāore i te whiwhi i te mātauranga whakaurunga, pai rawa hoki e tika ana.

Me hono mai te katoa ki te eke mai ki Ngā Aukaha All in for Tamariki.

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OPINION | THE HAUORA ISSUE

Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann MNZM, JP

“Not another new bloody model of wellbeing”

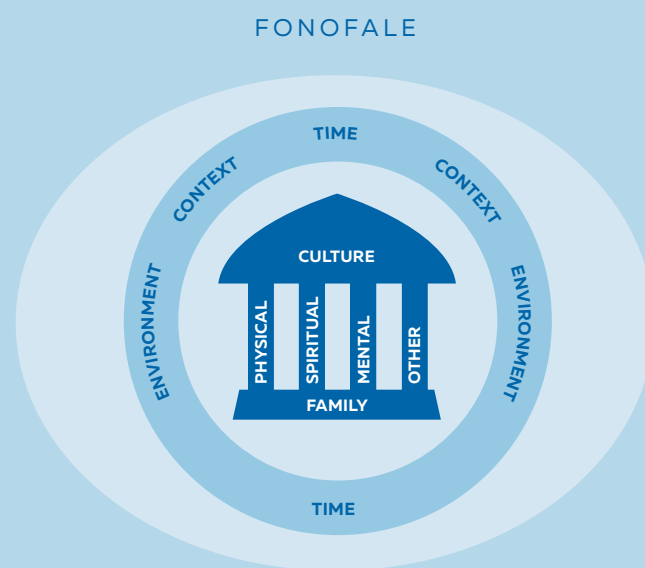
At a recent conference I attended, a speaker at a workshop enthused at a number of models of health and wellbeing. She ran through a myriad of some impressive lineups mostly from America and Europe. She then gushed to a mostly Pākehā audience about these new, innovative, holistic models. I heard a man two seats from me whisper rather loudly, “Not another new bloody model of wellbeing”. I sniggered but was taken aback when the speaker announced that the model she favoured because of its holistic approach from a Pacific perspective was the Fonofale Model.

I recalled a similar reaction from undergraduate nurses when I was teaching at Manawātū Polytechnic in the 1980s. This is where I created and introduced the Fonofale Model. “Not another lot to learn,” they would chime. My answer to students then and to that man in the conference now is, “If the Fonofale Model doesn’t help you – throw it out!”

The most important thing for the Fonofale Model (apart from the name – a dedication to my maternal grandmother) is the viewer or, in this case, the reader. You can read this and use it or discard it. The power lies with you. Seriously. I developed the Model to help provide solutions as there were many models, but most focused on identifying problems without being solution-based.

The foundation of the Fonofale Model is the family – in my case the extended family or aiga with the overarching roof of *Fa’a Samoa*, the Samoan way or cultural worldview of Samoa. My

grandparents taught me at an early age about my *aiga* (extended family) and *Fa’a Samoa* (Samoan way). This was my early grounding along with my sexuality as a fa’afafine, the sense of wellbeing or *Soifua saogalemu* (Peaceful life) and *Fa’asinomaga* (Identity/Belongingness). This is holistic view of *Soifua maloloina* (Well life/Health). I quickly learned, arriving in New Zealand at the age of nine in 1959, that being Samoan and fa’afafine – supported and nurtured by my aiga in Samoa – was not tolerated in New Zealand. And, to some extent, that intolerance exists today. For me, it’s the non-negotiable of what makes me, me.



The Fonofale Model is holistic. The best example of an explanation and application is shown in the YouTube video, “A Pasifika Worldview” by Leisha Williams (youtu.be/ux9sLwmuIUU). The video shows how teachers can apply the Model to assist Pacific learners. It also shows the various ways of approaching the Model, for instance from “outside” to “inside” the fale starting with the Context, Time and Environment, and then the other dimensions. Health professionals tend to focus on the Physical dimension. Church ministers, the Spirituality dimension, whilst youth workers use the Other dimensions. What matters is that all dimensions are addressed.

Covid-19 has shown the huge gap between the health sector and Pacific communities. The mental health issues that have arisen as the result of the pandemic and lockdown are connected to unemployment, inability to pay rents, lack of food and clothing, family violence and absenteeism from schools. Le Toloa was contracted by the Ministry of Education to provide culturally and clinically safe mental health and wellbeing support to Pacific learners, parents and teachers to support positive learning outcomes. Le Toloa has found that health for Pacific people is made of social determinants that sit outside the health sector; a key determinant to health is education. This is the rationale of our work with Pacific mothers, their families and teachers at low decile schools in South Auckland.

The Fonofale Model was applied at the Le Toloa workshops as well as the use of the Samoan proverb which is the namesake of Le Toloa: “*E lele le toloa ae maaui lava i le vai*” (“The Toloa bird leaves its home, the water, and flies all over the world but always yearns to return to its home”). Before being a teacher or a parent, a person is born within a family that identifies with a cultural orientation such as Samoan, Māori, Tongan or Pākehā. The beginning journey to health and wellbeing is knowing yourself, your past, present and future.

Le Toloa’s workshops start with the exercise of writing, “My name is...” All participants must

take part because this is the start of the cultural journey. The result is that many are named after an ancestor, friend, a well-known film star (“My father didn’t know how to spell the name so I was left with his version!”), or as in my grandmother’s name, an event, “meeting” fonofale matai “in house” fale – literally “fonofale i fale”, which was later shortened to Fonofale.

During the exercise there is always an emotional outpour when the participants realise the importance of their name – the context, the time and the environment in which they were named. That they were the messenger of their familial history and the sense of belonging and wellbeing.

Leota Dr Lisi Kalisi Petaia and I worked in Samoa during their tsunami recovery in 2009 and the Christchurch earthquake in 2011. We learned that the mental health of people that were closest to the event and first responders must be addressed first. In our workshops we asked teachers and parents in relation to the pandemic, “What’s your understanding of what is happening; how has this affected you and your family?” The response was to understand the “what”, “why” and “how” of Covid-19 and how to cope. They reported that the language of and delivery by clinicians and health services were not being fully understood at the community level. This feeds the cycle of children not flourishing at school, absenteeism and it means that people are always on catchup.

Assisting parents as the “first teachers” for their children and their teachers at school to continue the work for the health of the children is a collective effort. Schools like Rowandale in South Auckland with support are doing more than their share. The Fonofale Model is a tool for the parents, teachers and communities to assist with the health and wellbeing of their people.

Not another new bloody model of wellbeing – the Fonofale Model is not new. It’s been around for over 30 years. It’s just taken that long for the right people to see and be able to use it. The rest is up to you. la manuia. Soifua. ●

Le Toloa Directors: Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann, Matai and nurse (middle); Leota Dr Lisi Kalisi Petaia, Matai, consultant, forensic psychiatrist and first Samoan and woman psychiatrist in the Pacific (left); Bella Bartley, a senior contract manager (right). Special acknowledgement to Principal Karl Vasau, teachers, parents and families of Rowandale School and other schools in the South Auckland area.



FEATURE | THE HAUORA ISSUE

Unhurried moments of care

Ako talks to early childhood educators about how they use attachment theory to create secure relationships with tamariki, and the barriers they have to overcome.



“When a new family arrives with their child it’s a big deal,” says Caitlin Gubb. “We teachers have the honour of building a relationship with the child and the family at a critical time in their lives. If we get that relationship right, if they feel secure and comfortable, the child will be set up for life.”

Caitlin Gubb is talking about attachment theory and how it is practically applied at Kids’ Reserve in Thorndon, Wellington. The not-for-profit centre provides care and education for tamariki aged six months to five years, and the arrival of a child can be an anxious time for everyone. Returning-to-work parents are adjusting to the idea of giving their child over to new people, the child is beginning in an unfamiliar environment with new adults, and teachers are focused on a smooth transition.

Attachment theory was first developed in the late 1960s and has become a dominant premise in early childhood education. First advanced by English psychoanalyst John Bowlby, the theory contends that tamariki come into the world biologically predisposed to form attachments with others because this will help them survive. When they have secure relationships, young tamariki have confidence that their caregiver will be available, responsive to their needs and provide comfort in times of stress. A child attached to such a secure base will be emotionally satisfied, open to exploration and learning, and have a sense of wellbeing.

At Kids’ Reserve there are two “pods” of under twos, each with nine children and three staff. Each educator is the primary kaiako for three children.

“Each child has a secondary kaiako, but in the initial phase it is very much a one-on-one relationship, with the key kaiako feeding, changing and sleeping the child. The child knows that the kaiako is there for them whenever they need them,” says Gubb.



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Photo: Supplied

This intensive relationship allows kaiako to develop an understanding of the child’s cues such as physical gestures, facial expressions and sounds. It is an approach based around *Te Whāriki* and heavily influenced by the work of Hungarian paediatrician Emmi Pikler, who advocates for adult-child relationships that acknowledge the child as a free and equal human being. Such relationships are trust-filled and involve respectful and unhurried care moments.

“We don’t do anything to our babies. We do things with them,” says Gubb.

At Kids’ Reserve the secondary kaiako is introduced into the equation once the child is settled. “A secure child becomes open to new relationships. They know that the key kaiako is there for them if they feel vulnerable and they start to explore more. They are more open to learning,” says Gubb.

There is a considerable body of longitudinal research to support Gubb’s assertion. Studies show that attachment relationships affect social, emotional and cognitive development. There is also emerging evidence that attachment may play a role in infant brain development. All these factors impact a child’s wellbeing and continue to influence their wellbeing once they have grown into adulthood. This means that supporting secure attachment in early childhood is essential for growing a happy society.

Gubb points to the critical role of whānau in the smooth transition of children into the centre. “Before a child starts at Kids’ Reserve, we’ve had a number of visits and learned as much as we can from the parents about their child’s routines and preferences. We learn how the child communicates their needs and feelings,” she says. Communication with parents is ongoing through the digital tool Storypark and more informally at drop off and pick up times.

“We are lucky that our ratios give us the time for quality interactions with whānau. It’s especially important in the settling in period, because it is often a difficult transition for whānau as well as the child.”

At Ngaio Childspace, families are also central. “It’s important for parents to build trust along with their child,” says Assistant Manager of the Wellington centre, Bridget McBride. “The deeper the relationship with the family, the better it is for the child. We become part of the same journey and the centre becomes a second home for the child and the family.”

Like Kids’ Reserve, Childspace operates on a



Right: Ngaio Childspace kaiako Bridget McBride, with two of her children, Frankie and Archie; Ali Porteous with her son Sammy (below); Hanna Russell with Bridget's son Archie (below right).



Photos: Supplied



“We awhi and respect the uniqueness of each child and their whānau.” – ROSE RANSFIELD



04

primary kaiako model but takes it to another level. The primary kaiako for a group of tamariki moves with them through the age-group-based rooms of the centre, so that tamariki and whānau are supported by the same teacher right up until the transition to school.

“This continuity results in very strong relationships,” says teacher Hanna Russell. “Kaiako build a depth of knowledge about the child and the family, and vice versa. The teacher has a profound understanding of how each child learns, their personality and preferences. Rather than remaining in one area and becoming a specialist in a certain age group, teachers become expert in a particular group of children over time.”

Russell’s colleague Ali Porteous says that establishing a system of continuity reduces disruption for tamariki and whānau. “It minimises the impact of transitions,” she explains. “All that is happening is a movement of place, not a movement in relationships. We don’t see regression in children’s behaviour and learning the way we used to see before we set up this system.”

The Childspace team are keen to discount perceptions that primary kaiako create exclusive relationships between a single teacher and a child. Rather, the primary kaiako initiates and builds the first relationship, before ensuring that other relationships are formed within the room.

“The child learns that there are other adults there who can help them, and that they can be safe when the key kaiako isn’t around,” says McBride. “That way there is not so much pressure on one teacher.”

“Ours is a whole-team approach,” says Russell. “It’s wrap-around that’s the key to continuity. Each child develops strong relationships with the three adults working in their area and someone walking into the space probably couldn’t tell who is the child’s key kaiako.”

Although attachment theory has many benefits for tamariki hauora, critiques point to a Western bias, and the model’s failure to account for other cultural knowledge. Critics argue that the theory was developed at a time when Western families were becoming more urban and nuclear, and ignored the fact that cooperative childcare practices characterise most cultures around the world. Some have questioned whether the theory and the research it is based upon can be reliably applied across diverse communities.

Certainly, early attachment theory focused on a single dyadic relationship between carer

04 At Central Kids Tūrangi, whakawhanaungatanga is the key.



05



05 Tamariki have photographs of their marae on the walls of Central Kids Tūrangi.



06

06 Rose Ransfield, Kaiwhakaako/Head Teacher at Central Kids Tūrangi (top).

and child, a view that contrasts with Māori understandings of attachment. Māori take a wider view of attachment, emphasising the child’s connections to whānau, whakapapa and whenua, and the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* incorporates a te ao Māori approach.

First published in 1996, *Te Whāriki* was the first bicultural curriculum developed in Aotearoa New Zealand. It recognises that “relationships with people, places and things” are critical to learning. Culturally responsive practices occur when “whānau, communities and cultures are brought into the early childhood setting.”

Central Kids Kindergarten in Tūrangi exemplifies the bicultural nature of *Te Whāriki*. All teaching staff are Māori and whakapapa to Ngāti Tūwharetoa. The majority of kaiako were raised by their grandparents. “The world we were nurtured in influences the way we care for the tamariki here,” says Head Teacher Rose Ransfield. “Our experience aligns with *Te Whāriki*. We live that document.”

Ransfield describes an environment where whakawhanaungatanga is the key. That means embracing each child in culturally appropriate ways, recognising their whakapapa lineages, their heritage and their wider relationships to place.

“We awahi and respect the uniqueness of each child and their whānau,” says Ransfield. “It helps that we kaiako are all Ngāti Tūwharetoa with long connections to the town, so we often know the grandparents and great grandparents of our tamariki. We know their stories.”

When tamariki first arrive at the kindergarten, one person is designated as their primary kaiako and they spend a considerable amount of time with them. “If it means the kaiako carries that child around to help them feel settled, we do that,” says Ransfield. Sometimes it can take a week or two before the child feels safe to leave the side of the primary kaiako, but they soon begin to form relationships with others.

“Tamariki will often find the adult they are most comfortable with and that’s fine,” says Ransfield. “However, the primary kaiako will still have overall responsibility and do all the reporting.”

Before they see or hear the awa that runs through their town, Tūrangi tamariki are aware of Pihanga, the mountain that overlooks the settlement.

“Our babies grow up knowing their mountain and their awa,” says Ransfield. “From a young age they can identify their marae from the



Photo: Mark Coote

“Our children’s teachers love what they do, but they are stressed and overworked.” – Virginia Oakly



Photo: Supplied

“Close, affectionate relationships between infants/toddlers and teachers within early childhood settings are of vital significance.” – Dr Raewyne Bary

photographs on the walls of the kindergarten and we build on their identity through waiata, haka and karakia. We link to whakapapa, the awa and the whenua by gathering kai, gutting and smoking fish and doing open fire cooking.”

While early childhood educators are doing extraordinary work to build deep, connected attachment relationships with tamariki, it is important to acknowledge the barriers to attachment that exist across the sector.

At the macro level, a nationwide teacher shortage is having a negative impact on tamariki and educators. Analysis of workforce trends show an increasing number of vacancies in the sector and significant “churn”. In a recent NZEI Te Riu Roa survey, 86 percent of ECE teachers acknowledge that teacher shortages impact negatively on tamariki, with a similar percentage commenting on personal impacts. Large numbers of those surveyed said they felt unable to give tamariki in their centres the time and attention they deserve.

Virginia Oakly, Early Childhood Representative on the National Executive of NZEI Te Riu Roa, says that the teacher shortage and low pay rates across the sector are creating a crisis. “Our children’s teachers love what they do, but they are stressed and overworked, and because of the low pay, other people just don’t want to take jobs in the sector,” she says.

Meanwhile, there is research to suggest that staffing issues create protocols and systems across the sector that also create barriers to effective attachment. The application of attachment theory requires that the children’s natural rhythms set routines, but Dr Raewyne Bary of Massey University surveyed 200 centres and found that organisational structures, rosters and staff rotations compromise the ability of teachers to bond with children. Roster changes make for a lack of consistency in who relates with children and can mean the quality of communication between kaiako is also compromised. Bary’s survey findings also reported widespread prioritisation of tasks over maintaining quality relationships.

“Close and affectionate relationships between infants/toddlers and teachers within early childhood settings are of vital significance,” comments Bary. Instead, she found teachers “constrained in discovering, or finding the ‘gift’ in children by their organisational cultures that prioritised tasks over attachment-type



“We link to whakapapa, the awa and the whenua by gathering kai and doing open fire cooking.”



relationship and development opportunities.”

Whatever model of attachment is used by educators to honour and build relationships with tamariki, and to help them become securely attached, educators cannot provide unhurried moments of care without sufficient staffing and resources, and supportive organisational cultures. The question remains: what cost are we paying as a society by not giving educators the ability to support this critical time in a child’s life? ●



RESOURCES

Video about John Bowlby’s theory of attachment on *School of Life*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LMOnE81mIE

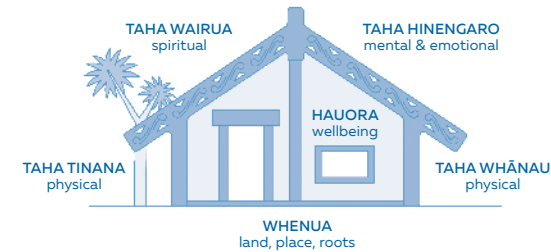
“Early Childhood Teacher-child Attachment: A Brief Review of the Literature” in *He Kupu*: hekupu.ac.nz/article/early-childhood-teacher-child-attachment-brief-review-literature



01



FEATURE | THE HAUORA ISSUE



Te Whare Tapa Whā – the four sides of wellbeing

Education professionals will know the popular hauora model Te Whare Tapa Whā, but what does it mean in practice? *Ako* finds out.

“Kia piki ake te mātau, te mōhio me te māramatanga, whāia te iti kahurangi!” By taking small upward steps, knowledge and enlightenment will be enhanced, and excellence will be achieved!

Te Whare Tapa Whā is a well-known holistic Māori model of wellbeing used widely in schools and kura throughout Aotearoa. The model uses the symbol of the wharenui to illustrate the four dimensions of Māori wellbeing: taha tinana (physical health), taha wairua (spiritual health), taha whānau (family health) and taha hinengaro (mental health). The model reminds us to equally care for the different aspects of our life to support our wellbeing. It was developed in 1982 by Sir Mason Durie and even though the model is nearly forty years old, it continues to support education professionals to develop holistic approaches to hauora and school culture.

What does this mean in practice? *Ako* visited two education organisations – an Upper Hutt primary school and an Ōtaki kura kaupapa Māori –

who have successfully integrated the Whare Tapa Whā model into the heart and soul of how their schools are run. For formerly Māoribank School in Upper Hutt, the change of name to Te Kura o Hau Karetu in February this year is an indication of the school’s commitment to *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, says Principal/Kaihautū Karen Wellington, and to new ways of supporting tamariki hauora. “From my perspective, it’s us contributing to making this right for Māori,” she says. Fifty-nine percent of tamariki at the school are Māori, 30 percent New Zealand European and ten percent Pasifika. The decision to change the name was made on advice from Kura Moeahu of Te Atiawa – Hau Karetu was the original name for the area.

Though the school is predominantly English-speaking, kaupapa Māori, te reo me ōna tikanga, are significant in the culture of the school. “Kaupapa Māori is a big part of how we roll,” says the school’s Deputy Principal and sports coordinator Shea Coxson (Ngāti Kikopiri, Ngāti

TWTW diagram. Illustration by All Right? (2019), www.allright.org.nz/articles/spirituality-and-awe.



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Raukawa). “It’s an important part of our fabric as a school, it’s our lens that we look through.”

Each day begins with a whole-school waiata karakia, and a talk about the “kaupapa mō te wiki”, based on the school’s values. “It’s a really important part of our day,” says Wellington. The school’s four key values are: whakaute (respect), akohia (learning), kotahitanga (togetherness) and atawhai (kindness). “Our whānau have created those values, they’ve come from them,” says Wellington. And when teachers role model and express those values at school with their tamariki, whānau are also supported in their implementation of the values at home.

Five years ago there were many children with serious behavioural problems at the school, but now such problems are rare and hauora across the school has risen. This is due to a series of values-based programmes being implemented over several years, including the Whare Tapa Whā model which was piloted in the Health and Physical Education curriculum area, and then integrated throughout the school.

In 2017, a *Play.sport* pilot project to support teacher confidence and competency in teaching Health and Physical Education saw Shea Coxson work with *Play.sport* coordinator Jarod Summers, and led to a stronger emphasis on Te Whare Tapa Whā throughout the school. “It was about moving away from games and fitness, to actually delivering a health and wellbeing based approach. They supported Te Whare Tapa Whā, which we were familiar with, and they helped us use that model and incorporate it into how we deliver health and

“You have to specifically teach Te Whare Tapa Whā and report on it and set goals against it as well.” – Karen Wellington

PE,” says Wellington. “This has brought it to life for us. It’s like teaching a language. You have to specifically teach Te Whare Tapa Whā and report on it, and set goals against it as well,” she says.

Coxson explains further: “We designed a programme – if the context was basketball, we used Te Whare Tapa Whā to deliver basketball. Each day was something different. If it was whānau, what skills do you need to be successful in basketball, related to taha whānau? For example, sharing the ball, teamwork. What skills do you need to be successful in basketball involving hinengaro? You need strategy or being honest, mental skills. Tinana is self-explanatory. Wairua, we teach values to be successful such as fair play, respect, humility.”

“So we married the context of sport, a practical concept, with Te Whare Tapa Whā. It moves it away from just doing games and fitness to improving the wellbeing, the hauora of the students. It has to be taught specifically,” he says. Getting to know the kids enabled him to tailor the programme to their needs, because some groups are highly competitive and need training on fairness and honesty; other groups lack confidence in physical skills and need support to build that up.

The physical activity strand (called “Movement concepts and motor skills”) is only a quarter of the Health and Physical Education curriculum area, and not the only place where the model can be used. “It doesn’t have to be about sport – it’s about understanding who you are as a person, understanding your wellbeing and needs,” says Coxson. “Te Whare Tapa Whā is the underlying concept of the health curriculum. If all you did was work on tinana, that’s not hauora.”

Since then, Te Whare Tapa Whā has spread across different aspects of school. “We used Te Whare Tapa Whā for goal setting, and the parents have been very positive about that. It goes into our reporting – paper reports twice a year, discussing those goals, that’s a big part of our reporting,” says Wellington. Wairua goals might be learning karakia, leadership goals (rangatiratanga), or giving back to the school in other ways. For example, one girl always picks up rubbish, and says, “Mrs Wellington, I’m looking after the environment!”

Other initiatives support the model’s dimensions of wairua, whānau and hinegaro. The school has a strong commitment to use of te reo in assembly and in class. “We try to normalise te reo, just make it part of everyday life,” says Coxson. The school accommodates a Resource Teacher of Māori, who works in nearby schools, and also



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has a strong association with a Kōhanga Reo next door. “We’re all pretty much on the waka,” says Wellington. Kaumatua associated with the Te Kura o Hau Karetu are Jim Kara and Hine Poa of nearby Ōrongomai Marae. “We’re so lucky to have them,” says Wellington.

The school also uses a “restorative” process for dealing with problem behaviour. “I think of it as kind of like ‘utu’, redressing the balance. We talk about it with both children together. It’s not about punishing that student, but saying how things have happened, how can we restore it, and so lift up the mana of that person again,” says Coxson.

Staff training on dealing with children who have suffered trauma has also helped staff gain understanding of their behaviour. “The trauma has had some real impact on the development of their brain. It’s not the kid’s fault. Having that empathy and understanding from an adult’s perspective helps us to be calmer,” says Wellington.

In 2019, Te Kura o Hau Karetu was presented with the Physical Education New Zealand “Outstanding Physical Education Award”. This was the first time the award had been given to a primary school, and Wellington and Coxson were delighted. “It was huge!” says Wellington. “Although he’s very humble, it was really Shea and Jarod who developed this, not just *Play. sport.*”

Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Rito in Ōtaki integrates Te Whare Tapa Whā into everyday assessment by using a system of reward cards of four distinct colours to represent each of the four aspects of Te Whare Tapa Whā – red for tinana, blue for hinengaro, green for whānau and purple for wairua.

By pouako consistently noticing and acknowledging productive behaviour of tamariki, the poutama principle applies – “*Kia piki ake te mātau, te mōhio me te māramatanga, whāia te iti kahurangi! By taking small upward steps, knowledge and enlightenment will be enhanced, and excellence will be achieved!*” The idea is that tamariki are praised for productive behaviour immediately, praise at kura is backed up at home, and that the system is simple and well-understood at both kura and at home.

The Whare Tapa Whā system specific to Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Rito – and created by whānau of that kura when it began in the 1990s – is Te Whare Tauawhiawhi. When it was first developed, a system of individual kono



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“Te Whare Tapa Whā is the underlying concept of the health curriculum. If all you did was work on tinana, that’s not hauora.”
– Shea Coxson

(woven bowls) for each child with coloured stones (again four colours, representing the four aspects), was used. Stones given to acknowledge productive behaviour were put in the kono to take home and discuss.

Current Tumuaki of Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Rito, Heni Wirihana was one of the parents who developed the system when the school began. “When my children were young, I’d be at home and they came back with their kono, it was beautiful. I’d go wow, ‘tino pai ō mahi! Tino kaha tō taha whānau, maha ngā kohatu, tino pai. He aha ō mahi?’ So it was a good form of reporting and we knew what they were good at, so they got acknowledged at kura and they’d get that same acknowledgement at home,” she says.

But over time, as the kura grew, and whānau became increasingly busy, the task of making kono for each child became too labour-intensive. “To bring it to 2021, we now have those cards, ngā tae kaari,” says Wirihana. Pouako or teachers will write the child’s name on the card and the reason they are being given. The cards are put in named pockets, and then on Mondays, they are put in four kete and celebrated at nearby Rangiātea Church.

“At the beginning of each week, we take those kete and have karakia at Rangiātea. We read out the names from all the kete again. The kids remember that they’ve been acknowledged for work previously. Then we’ll pull out a card randomly, and that child has won a voucher. They’ll get half an hour free time on the iPad, or a break from ohu mahi, for example,” she says.



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Photo: Heeni Collins



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Photo: Heeni Collins

“Ohu mahi” is clean-up work in the classroom, shared buildings or grounds, which children usually have to do at the end of each day. “Most kids love that – they don’t have to come into the kitchen or sweep the steps,” says Wirihana.

Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Rito, with a roll of only 87, is able to keep class sizes small (under 25 per classroom) and several of the staff are former students (raukura). There is also an on-site Kōhanga Reo (Te Kakano o te Kura o Te Rito), and a whare kura (secondary school). So the tuakana/teina principle is strong. And the system of rewarding productive behaviour in each of the four aspects – tinana, hinengaro, whanau and wairua – allows staff to note if a child is not achieving recognition in any of the four areas, or not in any area, and then to offer support.

“It’s my job to say to pouako, this child hasn’t [been recognised], is there a problem? What’s going on? It starts showing up a number of things, it could be there’s not a lot of attendance,” says Wirihana. Being at the heart of Ngāti Raukawa tribal rohe, whānau are influenced by the iwi philosophy of Te Whakatipuranga Rua Mano (the revival of te reo me ōna tikanga, hapū and iwi engagement), as well as the need to develop skills for the modern world. The four-card system is a way to support tamariki hauora from a young age.

While this is a good example of a kura kaupapa practicing Te Whare Tapa Whā (Te Whare Tauawhiawhi), we should not forget that kura kaupapa are generally suffering from a lack of resourcing and committed support from Government. “For the vision to hit the ground, for kura kaupapa to keep developing, it’s not well

“It was a good form of reporting and we knew what they were good at, so they got acknowledged at kura and they’d get that same acknowledgement at home.”

– Heni Wirihana

enough supported. We’re always up against it,” says Wirihana.

Te Runanganui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori spokesman Rawiri Wright confirmed that long waiting lists still exist; supply is not meeting demand. Despite the proven success of kura kaupapa², the Government is not providing the funding needed for kura kaupapa to thrive. “It’s all in our Waitangi Tribunal claim,” he says. The kaupapa Māori education claim is eighth on the Tribunal’s list and so will be heard in later years.³

Professor Meihana Durie, Deputy Vice Chancellor Māori and Head of School, Te Pūtahi-a-Toi (School of Māori Knowledge) at Massey University, says that the Te Whare Tapa Whā model developed by his father, Sir Mason Durie (ONZ KNZM), has been used widely in teacher trainee delivery, and also in the health curriculum across mainstream schools and kura since the 1990s.

While this is positive, there is a lack of research on its application, and he believes that a more mātauranga-centred approach to teaching the concept would add greater depth of knowledge for each of the four dimensions, and an understanding that all the dimensions are interwoven within the whare itself.

Some solutions Durie offers to strengthen its application are to increase the number of Māori teachers in schools, particularly in senior positions (such as principals), and for each school to have a policy of Māori and non-Māori co-chairs of its Board of Trustees. “Then you have real decision-making power to change the system, change the culture of schools,” says Durie.



Photo: Heeni Collins

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Other solutions Durie supports are:

- More funding for kura kaupapa Māori (as above), to build our puna reo, our community use of te reo Māori, and our pool of teachers expert in te ao Māori;
- More funding and support of kaiārahi i te reo – a kaiārahi i te reo claim, initiated by NZEI Te Riu Roa, is now underway;
- More uptake of decolonisation training such as led by Poutama Pounamu (82 primary schools currently engaged), and Te Pumaomao, Nation-Building Seminars;
- More scholarships for rangatahi with Māori expertise to gain tertiary qualifications and enter teacher training;
- A greater emphasis on taha wairua in schools, as advocated by Dr Rongoitekai Ngata, kaiārahi i te reo at two Raumati primary schools (Dr Ngata has attended several traditional spiritual wānanga since 2006 – see his 2014 doctoral thesis on matakite/intuition and mental health)⁴;
- Inclusion of Māori perspectives in the history curriculum, as announced (September 2019) by the Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Education Minister Chris Hipkins⁵;

Notes:

1 Te Whare Tauawhiawhi (2016), Te Kura Kaupapa o Te Rito, Ōtaki (a system of providing positive reinforcement for productive behaviour).

2 Heeni Collins. “Let the uniqueness of the child guide us in our mahi,” *Ako: Summer* 2019. <https://akojournal.org.nz/2019/01/28/let-the-uniqueness-of-the-child-guide-us-in-our-mahi>

3 <https://waitangitribunal.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/Kaupapa-inquiry-programme-App-B-updated-Jan-2021.pdf>

4 Dr Ronald Ngata. *Understanding Matakite*. PhD Thesis (Massey University, 2014). <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/8299>

5 <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/nz-history-be-taught-all-schools>

6 M. H. Durie, “Te Hoe Nuku Roa framework: A Māori identity measure,” *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 104, No. 4 (1995): 461–470.

7 Dr Rangimarie Pere. *Te Wheke: A Celebration of Infinite Wisdom*. (New Zealand: Ao Ako Global Learning, 1997).

- Further uptake of Te Ahu o te Reo Māori, the Ministry of Education programme to build teacher understanding of te reo Māori;
- And stronger community engagement, such as a better system for providing koha for kāumatua and other local hapū and iwi experts; and more whānau reinforcement of te reo Māori, tikanga and decolonisation.

While there are a range of Māori wellbeing models, and some include aspects such as whenua (land), te ao turoa (the natural environment) and whatumanawa (emotions),⁶ Te Whare Tapa Whā is a model which is simple, well-understood, and a good foundation to build on. But don’t be shy of seeking new mātauranga, particularly from local mana whenua hapū and iwi!

To conclude with a quote from Dr Rangimarie Turuki Pere⁷: “The universe of ancient Hawaiki is the universe, and as such, education has no boundaries.” ●

See the online version of this article for a special segment about taha wairua.

Be open-minded about mindfulness

“Meditation calms me down.”
– SI-YEON, YEAR 7

“I can follow my breath all the way in and out. I want to go to sleep I’m so relaxed.”
– SAM, YEAR 5

“Children live in this digital age where they don’t have enough down time. Mindfulness gives them a strategy to be more present.”
– CAROLYN, PRINCIPAL

“Meditation gets your brain back in the chill zone. It helps our kids to develop a positive sense of connection to themselves, others and the natural world.”
– NATASHA, TEACHER

“The benefits [of mindfulness] flow from pupils and teachers to parents and whānau, from classrooms to playgrounds to staff rooms, positively impacting school culture and beyond that into homes.”
– DR CATHERINE SAVAGE, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF IHI RESEARCH

“I truly believe that giving students the understanding and strategies to support themselves in their wellbeing is something every teacher should be doing with their students.”
– NATASHA, TEACHER

“My advice is to personalise your approach; different ways of being mindful work for different staff and tamariki. The thing that works for me is going for a two-hour bike ride! Be open-minded about mindfulness.”
– STEPHEN, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

“I trialled mindfulness with my class and we were so impressed that we integrated it into our school. It’s normal practice for us now.”
– CATHY, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

“We did tummy breathing – after breaks we would lie down and tummy breathe for ten or two minutes. It felt nice and it calmed us.”
– SPARKLERS STUDENT

Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally. It develops our self-awareness, emotion regulation skills and feelings of empathy and compassion. Mindfulness is simple to learn! Try this body scan in either the classroom or the staffroom. Start with some tummy breathing and once everyone is comfortable, have one person read the script in a calm, slow voice. It should take five minutes.

Sparklers Body Scan

Today we are going to try a mindfulness activity by noticing the sensations in your body while you’re relaxing. Sit comfortably, rest your arms in your lap and place your feet flat on the floor. When you’re ready close your eyes.

1. Notice how your feet feel on the floor. Can you feel the weight of your feet? Then focus on your toes and move your attention from toe to toe.
2. Bring your attention to the tops of your feet and toward your ankles. If you are wearing socks, can you feel them on your ankles?
3. Move towards your knees and focus on what your lower leg feels on the way. Do you feel your clothing, or are your legs bare? Move to your thighs. Can you feel them on the chair? What’s this sensation like?
4. Let’s move to where your back is touching the chair. Move up your back to your shoulders and notice if they are tight or relaxed. Take some deep breaths. Whatever you feel, just notice it and remain still.
5. Move your attention to your arms, feeling your elbows, your forearms. Let your attention rest for a moment on your hands. Do they feel light or heavy? Warm or cold? Can you feel each finger?
6. Now go toward your tummy and notice how it feels to breathe in and out. Notice the feeling of air as it passes through your nostrils. Is it warm or cool? Is your jaw clenched or loose? Just notice what you are feeling and continue to breathe through these sensations.
7. Slowly notice your whole body, scanning from top to toe. As you go through your day, see if you can notice some of these sensations in your body.
8. When you feel ready, open your eyes and notice what is around you. ●

This body scan is from Sparklers – a New Zealand-designed, free online toolkit of wellbeing activities for tamariki Years 1 to 8. It’s used by more than 8,000 teachers across the country to support tamariki to learn about their wellbeing, manage emotions and be good friends. Check out the over 70 activities at www.sparklers.org.nz.



FEATURE | THE HAUORA ISSUE

Is Everyone Okay? Hauora for educators

High workloads and insufficient resourcing in a rapidly changing society leads to staff burnout. But these education leaders have found authentic ways to support and value staff hauora.

01

“As a school we’ve been through years of grief,” says Mike Anderson.

“We had the earthquakes and the ongoing fallout from that. We were impacted by the Al Noor Mosque massacre, and now we are into the second year of Covid. On top of that we’ve just completed two and a half years of a major rebuild. We’ve been teaching and learning on a construction site.”

The principal of Waimairi School in Christchurch describes how hauora became the central focus for staff and students. Years of disruption piled pressure on teachers, teacher aides and support staff who were already struggling.

“We’d become a staff of high flyers, performing at unsustainable levels,” says Anderson. “We had slipped into a culture where everyone thought they had to be the most amazing teacher in the world. We were just dialling up on everything and while we were achieving amazing things, it was taking a real toll on everyone. When the external events came along we couldn’t continue.”

Recognising that toll, Anderson and his team applied to the Teacher Lead Initiation Fund to research models of hauora; the step began a journey that radically altered the culture of the school.

“We couldn’t ignore what was happening and just let people burn out,” says Anderson. “We had to find ways to refill our tanks.”

While the situation at Waimairi sounds extreme, it is not unusual. There is research aplenty showing that Aotearoa New Zealand educators, across all sectors, have experienced increased levels of stress and burnout for some years.

Since 2016, an annual survey of Aotearoa New Zealand school leaders undertaken by Deakin University (and commissioned by NZEI Te Riu Roa) routinely found high levels of depression, extreme workloads and burnout amongst principals and senior leaders. In 2019, the survey was extended to teachers and became the *Teachers’ and Principals’ Health and Wellbeing Survey*. Teachers scored worse than their principal colleagues and the general population in nearly all measures. They had higher rates of burnout, sustained levels of cognitive and physical health stress, depressive symptoms and trouble sleeping.

The findings reinforced a 2017 study where a quarter of teachers identified that work was having negative impacts on their mental health, with a fifth reporting negative impacts on physical health. Forty-three percent of those leaving the profession in 2019 cited a lack of work-life balance as the main reason for quitting.

There has been less research into the hauora

The causes of deteriorating educator hauora are many. Some are a result of demands placed upon schools and centres by a rapidly changing society.

of educators in early childhood. A 2018 Child Forum survey found significant deterioration in the physical and emotional wellbeing of ECE workers since the previous survey in 2014. Forty-six percent reported experiencing a work-related injury and physical or mental health problems in the previous 12 months. Mental health issues were associated with exhaustion, overwork, bullying and feeling undervalued.

The causes of deteriorating educator hauora are many. Some are a result of demands placed upon schools and centres by a rapidly changing society. Even when those changes are positive, schools are first to feel the impacts of social change, and in recent years the pace has quickened due to our digitally based society.

Increased inequality also tests the resilience and resources of kaiako. A 2018 UNICEF report ranked Aotearoa New Zealand in the bottom third of OECD countries in inequality in education, with poverty playing a significant role. The report reinforced what educators have been saying for some time: that low incomes, poor housing and transience are major obstacles to educational success of tamariki.

At the same time, our schools and centres are places where society’s cultural shifts are negotiated. As educators embrace *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* and biculturalism, they also are challenged to meet the needs of new groups of children and their families, as Aotearoa New Zealand’s immigration boom reshapes our communities. In 2018, more than 27 percent of our population were overseas born.

Meanwhile, the numbers of neurodiverse tamariki, and tamariki with disabilities in schools, kura and centres continues to grow. A 2020 IHC survey found that 44 percent of education professionals felt they lacked the skills and resourcing to meet the needs of these children. More students with high behavioural needs add to the pressures on teachers. In 2019, 20 percent of teachers experienced threats of violence from students and 30 percent experienced actual violence.

As educators seek to meet the mounting demands, there is a sense that support for teachers in the community is waning. The TALIS 2018 study found that only one third of teachers felt that the teaching profession is valued in society, a decrease of 12 percentage points from 2014.

Diane Wiechern, who is Principal of Favona School in Māngere, agrees that respect for teachers has lessened in recent years.

“Workload expectations come from the top.”

– MIKE ANDERSON





05

“Sometimes you’ve got to stop paddling the waka, take a breather and check if everyone is okay.”

– DIANE WIECHERN



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“The status of the profession has certainly changed, for whatever reason,” she says. “There’s definitely a feeling that while you are busting a gut to do the best for your students, you are constantly under a critical eye. That can be dispiriting for teachers.”

Wiechern also believes that data-driven teaching, exemplified by the now defunct National Standards, has had a major impact on teacher anxiety. “We have a whole generation of teachers who have known nothing else and have measured their performance against results on paper. In some schools you were only as good a teacher as student gains suggested in the data.”

Wiechern says such environments create anxiety for many teachers and even though National Standards has gone, the culture remains. Meanwhile, Covid has had a profound impact on levels of anxiety and tiredness.

“Our teachers have never worked harder,” says Wiechern. “In our community there’s a lack of devices and connectivity, as well as basic issues around food and shelter. That’s meant our staff have had to put in a huge effort to keep engaged with and support students and families. It’s been made harder because, at any one time, we have had up to ten staff absent because of vulnerabilities in

their own families. With the gaps in our circle we have had to find the resilience and strength to pick up the load.”

While those working in schools and centres have long recognised the crisis of educator hauora, the issue has now become a focus for unions and Government. NZEI Te Riu Roa has established Pūaotanga, an independent review into primary school staffing. It is a response to concerns raised by NZEI Te Riu Roa members that current staffing entitlements do not meet the needs of changing schools.

Alongside this, an accord between the Ministry of Education, NZEI Te Riu Roa and PPTA Te Wehengarua includes an agreement to work on issues around workload. The provision of additional teacher-only days and the removal of the arduous teacher appraisal tool are two early results of the workload discussions.

While systemic and resourcing solutions are critical to educator hauora, workplaces have a major role to play as well. Individuals can take responsibility for maximising their own hauora, but there is clear evidence that the best results occur when a school or centre commits to a whole-organisation approach.

University of Auckland researcher Rachel Cann says that the wellbeing of teachers has strong connections to the school’s environment and how supported teachers feel within it. Her interviews of teachers identified three key in-school factors that positively influence wellbeing: feeling valued by colleagues and management; professional development that is meaningful to teachers/meets their needs; and feeling a sense of agency over decisions affecting their work.

Cann believes that leaders who understand the context of individual staff members, and practice the habit of giving positive feedback, build wellbeing in their school.

She says that for educators the workload issue is not just about the amount of work, but the nature of that work. Work that has clear purpose and is fulfilling is quite different from tasks that feel imposed and without tangible reward. The same applies to PLD.

“What individual teachers need varies,” says Cann. “In the same way we differentiate in our classrooms, we need to make sure that support and professional development recognises different teacher priorities.”

Agency is critical. “Having agency contributes to educators’ sense of belonging, of feeling listened to and of being valued,” says Cann. “It’s especially important, where changes are being implemented, that people feel their opinions matter. They are far more likely to have buy-in.”

The number of schools adopting whole-school and kura approaches to hauora has risen over the past couple of years, with many hiring in expertise from external providers. Others have built their own approaches based around the particular needs of their school communities.

Diane Wiechern doesn’t use the term wellbeing to describe the Favona School approach, although wellbeing is what her whole-school approach creates.

“There’s nothing fancy about what we do,” says the principal of the Māngere school. “It’s just about building caring, authentic, healthy relationships.”

A key to that is the “servant leadership” model operating at Favona. Leaders put the needs of the employees first, helping them to be the best they can. It involves senior leaders checking in on individual staff every day.

“It’s about gauging where people are at; what’s going well and what’s not. It’s finding out what people need and when they need it and letting them know that they are valued. It takes time and has to be consistent and genuine.”

For educators the workload issue is not just about the amount of work, but the nature of that work. Work that has clear purpose and is fulfilling is quite different from tasks that feel imposed and without tangible reward.

Staff are encouraged to be aware of the wellbeing of colleagues, and a teacher-only day at the beginning of the 2021 school year was dedicated to this.

“We talked about what our school community had gone through in the previous year and recognised that there was a lot of unresolved grief,” says Wiechern. “We had all missed out on something, but for some of our colleagues the loss was substantial and is ongoing. We have teachers who haven’t seen partners and other family for 12 months because of border closures. There are others who missed out on attending funerals or weddings.”

Wiechern says that recognising damaged resiliency across the school community has helped build a more supportive environment, which is also exemplified in the management approach to workload.

“In the past year we have thrown out quite a bit of our strategic plan. We’ve asked ourselves whether our people were up for new things and where we decided they weren’t emotionally or spiritually ready to take them on, we have put things on hold. Sometimes you’ve got to stop paddling the waka, take a breather and check if everyone is okay. Do we need to slow down or take a different route to reach our goal?” It would be wrong to think that negativity pervades Favona School. Staff have fun together and work hard. Despite everything, they have enthusiastically pushed ahead over the past year to build new Tongan and Niuean enrichment classes.

“I’m very grateful for how our people have gone above and beyond, even when it has been messy and hard,” says Wiechern. “They’ve continued to keep our students at the centre and make a difference for them.”

Waimairi School’s research into teacher hauora has seen them adopt a positive psychology approach. Amongst the first things they did was a baseline survey to measure the psychological capital of teachers, measuring levels of hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism.

“We wanted to see how our staff were doing,” explains Principal Mike Anderson. “If you are running a business with a strong balance sheet and plenty of working capital, you can survive a couple of losses. We needed to know how much psychological capital our people had.”

Staff were grouped based on their scores and a pilot was begun with those holding the most capital. The “Psyncap cafe” operated once a week for this group, where participants unpacked how





“We support each other to be authentic and true to who we are as Māori, working in a mainstream environment.”

– SHEREE MURRAY

Right: Sheree Murray with a group of Te Waihou Rohe kaiako and Whaea Ellen from Te Ara o Maahinakura – Traditional Māori Healing, who has supported them in their hauora journey.



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Photo: Supplied

events of the week had affected their reserves and how they planned to replenish them.

“It was a really practical approach,” says Anderson. “Instead of sitting around and unloading about what went wrong we worked on anticipating obstacles and developing strategies to navigate through the hard stuff.”

Over time, all teachers became involved in the “Pscap cafe”, and learned how to better manage their wellbeing. One of the tools they used was Maslach’s Burnout Inventory, through which teachers were able to clearly identify the causes of pressure. For some, emotional exhaustion was a problem.

“It comes from letting the empathy tap run until there is nothing left,” says Anderson. “Some of our people found that they were giving out so much at school that they had nothing to offer when they got home to their families. They realised that they couldn’t be everything to everyone.”

This tendency to overcommit was most obvious in high levels of what Maslach terms “personal accomplishment burnout”.

“That was the key one with our staff,” says Anderson. “People felt they weren’t achieving to the standards they had set themselves. Actually the standards were unreasonable and they had to change them because it was making them ill.”

Management has actively encouraged teachers to take pressure off themselves. “Workload expectations come from the top,” says Anderson. “We don’t want our people working after 5.00p.m. or at work over the weekends. We don’t expect them to be endlessly analysing data or setting meaningless targets that take up time.”

Management keeps a ready eye on staff who appear to be struggling with feelings of underachievement. “There’s extensive research that shows what workers value most is recognition of small gains. As a management team we take that seriously and positively reinforce those who we know are struggling with personal accomplishment burnout. We take time to notice small gains and comment on them positively. That has a real impact on wellbeing.”

Mike Anderson says that giving staff the skills and agency to manage their professional wellbeing has changed the school from the stressful place it once was.

“Now we have a caring bunch of people who like coming to work in the morning,” he says. “There’s lots of laughter. Of course we have tough days and we deal with difficult things, but it doesn’t change the tone of the school. Compared with a few



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years ago we work less hard and there are fewer things done, but we are much more sustainable and we are still doing quality work.”

In the South Waikato, Central Kids operates a number of kindergartens and early learning centres. The enhancement of cultural identity is central to their mission and the organisation operates a rautaki ahurea (cultural strategy) to enhance the mana and hauora of its many Māori educators.

“As well as the overarching strategy, each of our six rohe put things in place to meet local needs,” says Sheree Murray, a kaiako at David Henry Kindergarten in Tokoroa. Within Sheree’s Waihou rohe, Māori kaiako come together regularly in a mixture of professional and personal time.

“It is a culturally safe space to be in, where we come together to lean on each other,” says Murray. “We support each other to be authentic and true to who we are as Māori working in a mainstream environment.”

That means valuing the whole person, acknowledging that kaiako are also members of whānau, hapū, iwi and marae and that nurturing their hauora benefits our tamariki and our communities.



“Having agency contributes to educators’ sense of belonging, of feeling listened to and valued.”

– Rachel Cann

When the group gets together there is kai and kōrero, and a focus such as accessing specialists in different mahi like wairua, rongoā or mauri. Sometimes the group shares stories about how tūpuna care for themselves, or time is spent together in nature connecting with Papatūānuku.

“We also support each other in building competence in te reo Māori. Central Kids’ kōkiri hī (vision) for 2022 includes having conversational Māori occurring at all levels.”

Murray acknowledges that she and her colleagues experience the same workload challenges, tamariki with high needs and teacher shortages that the rest of the sector faces and that the ultimate solutions are outside the control of the workplace. Nevertheless, she and her colleagues seek solutions and ways to negate challenges that may arise.

“It’s about how we, as kaiako, strategise to address the issues that make things difficult. We consider how we can contribute to change and what we can do collectively and individually so that we don’t get to the point of burnout.” Because, in the end, the hauora of kaiako and all education professionals cannot be separated from the hauora of tamariki. By taking care of kaiako, we take care of everyone. ●



OPINION | THE HAUORA ISSUE

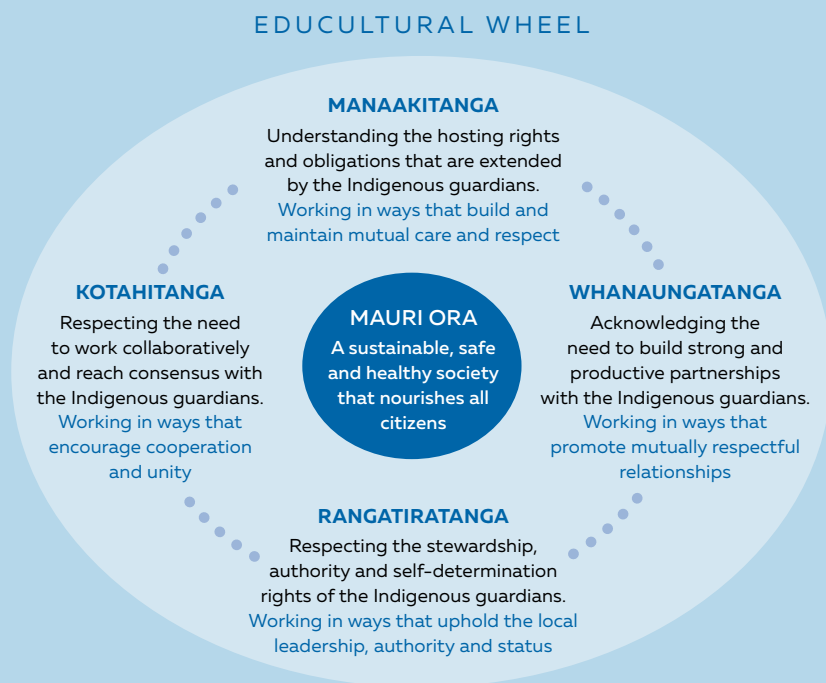
Adjunct Associate Professor Sonja Macfarlane

Global citizenship education – He raraunga o te ao: A Māori perspective

Global Citizenship education (GCED) is UNESCO’s response to the impact of poverty, global warming, inequality and human rights violations which threaten peace and sustainability worldwide. The goal of GCED is to empower learners of all ages to appreciate that these are serious issues and to advocate – both locally and globally – for safer, more wholesome, accepting, inclusive and sustainable societies that support everyone’s hauora. As leaders in our communities, this is an issue of importance to education professionals. I argue in this opinion piece however, that before exploring the “how” of GCED, it is necessary to define what “global citizenship” might mean more broadly, from a uniquely Indigenous Māori position.

Māori, as the tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand, have always expressed kinship with nature through *whakapapa* (genealogy) and *pepeha* (narratives), which connect them to their *tūrangawaewe* (the place where one has the right of residence and the right to stand through whakapapa within one’s own tribal boundary). Through creation stories outlining how the world came to be, our *tūpuna* (ancestors) have ventured, in both metaphor and thought, beyond the shores of Aotearoa by talking about *te ao* (the world), and in doing so, have acknowledged *Ranginui* (Sky Father) and *Papatūānuku* (Earth Mother) for many hundreds of years. *Whakataukī* (proverbs) have continued to heighten the importance of paying homage to *te taiao* (the natural world), and to respecting *te tāngata* (people).

For the former (*te taiao*), creating a safe and sustainable environment that nourishes *te tāngata* is manifested by way of kinship ties through whakapapa to *tūrangawaewe*, and the cultural obligations of taking care of *awa* (rivers), *moana* (ocean), *ngāhere* (forests) and *whenua* (land). *Te reo Māori* (the Māori language) acknowledges kinship with nature even further through the use of the word “whenua”, which – as well as meaning “land” – also translates



as “placenta”, both of which are sources of nourishment for sustaining life for all living things. For the latter (*te tāngata*), cultural constructs like *tika* (being just and fair), *pono* (being genuine and sincere), and *aroha* (being kind and compassionate) are deemed central to guiding interactions with and between people so as to achieve an inclusive and accepting society. Other cultural concepts like *tapu* (unsafe; restricted) and *noa* (safe; unrestricted) serve to protect both environments and people in times of discord and anxiety, wherein ceremony is enacted to restore balance and status. A traditional approach to responding to disharmony and conflict, known as *hui whakatika* (a meeting to put things right) continues to provide supportive and culturally grounded spaces for reaching consensus, reconciliation, resolution and ultimately restoring harmony (Hooper, Winslade, Drewery, Monk & Macfarlane, 1999).

As Indigenous people, Māori will be both the tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand **and** *manuhiri* (a visitor) whenever working, living or travelling, in another location globally. Similarly, Māori are also able to be both tangata whenua **and** *manuhiri* within Aotearoa, whenever they step beyond their own tribal location. It is therefore argued that Māori – and indeed all Indigenous peoples globally – are unique in that they are able to adopt a distinctive position in terms of having both their first nations status (*tangata whenuatanga*) and their rights and obligations as global citizens. The experience of being both Indigenous people and global citizens gives Māori a unique perspective on how we should behave as global citizens. Global citizenship is a universal and shared responsibility, however it needs to come with caveats.

What this means for Global Citizenship education (GCED) is that it is not appropriate to seek solutions to the impact of poverty, climate change, inequality and human rights violations which threaten sustainability and peace worldwide solely from a Western approach. There are lessons to be learned from Indigenous perspectives of “authority” and “place” for all people, and especially for education professionals.

In 2001, Sir Mason Durie championed three

goals for the educational advancement of Māori: *To live as Māori; To actively participate as citizens of the world; To enjoy good health and a high standard of living*. As Durie rightfully points out in the second goal, it is clear that we are all “citizens of the globe”, however in order to be responsive “global citizens”, we must acknowledge and adhere to particular protocols specific to “belonging to place”.

As *manuhiri* in another global location – much like being a visitor in someone else’s home – we must never assume that we have the authority to move in, take over, and start rearranging their furniture. Being a responsive global citizen should not infer unfettered access to, and authority over, others’ global locations, but instead requires people to acknowledge the guardianship and jurisdiction rights of the Indigenous first nations people of that place. GCED must therefore draw from the above imperatives to ensure that the notion of *tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination) pervades for all Indigenous people within their own global localities. Finding ways to honour and educate learners about Indigenous *tino rangatiratanga* in the classroom and staffroom is a way for education professions to themselves be responsive “global citizens” (Jackson, 1992; Durie, 1996; Penetito, 2010).

To that end, Macfarlane’s (2004) *Educultural Wheel* – a framework that supports culturally responsive teaching pedagogy for educators working with learners in Aotearoa New Zealand – has been adapted and offered as a structure for enhancing and informing GCED. Four core Māori worldview values work together to promote a sustainable and healthy outcome at its core: Whanaungatanga, Rangatiratanga, Kotahitanga and Manaakitanga (refer Ministry of Education, 2015).

The central outcome, *Mauri ora* – which literally translates as “flourishing” – sits at the heart of what CGED is striving to achieve; a sustainable, safe and healthy society that nourishes the hauora of all citizens. Given that our world is in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, this goal has never been more timely or urgent. ●

References

A list of references can be found at: <https://akojournal.org.nz/2021/04/27/2528/>

More on the Educultural Wheel can be found at: <https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/content/download/152124/1129270/file/Working%20Together.pdf>

Sonja Macfarlane is Pouhikiahurea (Practice & Implementation Advisor; Māori focus) for the Ministry of Education and Adjunct Associate Professor at University of Canterbury. Sonja would like to acknowledge NZCER Press and UNESCO for the opportunity to present and write on this topic in 2019, and for their permission to draw on content from these earlier publications.

PHOTOGRAPH
Supplied



Joy, Colour, Wonder, Fun, Life: Wellbeing and the Arts

Making art helps us slow down, process our feelings and gives us permission to care for ourselves. *Ako* talks to schools who use art practice to support hauora and bring in joy, colour and wonder.

On the afternoon of Tuesday 5 February 2019, a spark from farming machinery hit the ground in Tasman's drought-scorched Pigeon Valley. It would quickly become one of the largest wildfires in modern Aotearoa New Zealand history, and within two days the staff and students at Wakefield School were watching the sky with growing concern.

"We were surrounded by smoke," says Principal Peter Verstappen. "The air was filled with the sound of helicopters and there was hot ash falling on the school. We're surrounded by hillsides covered in pine trees and we were in the middle of a drought. It was very, very serious."

Early on Friday morning, emergency services moved in to evacuate Wakefield, giving more than 2000 residents an hour to grab the essentials and get out. "By the afternoon, the village was really locked down and there was a cordon of military and emergency services around the village. The most extraordinary visual image which sticks in my mind is that the police and army went door to door to make sure that people were out, and everyone they cleared they put a big X on the door, window or the driveway. Going through the streets afterwards, it was like a plague, like Biblical imagery of these crosses all around," Verstappen says.

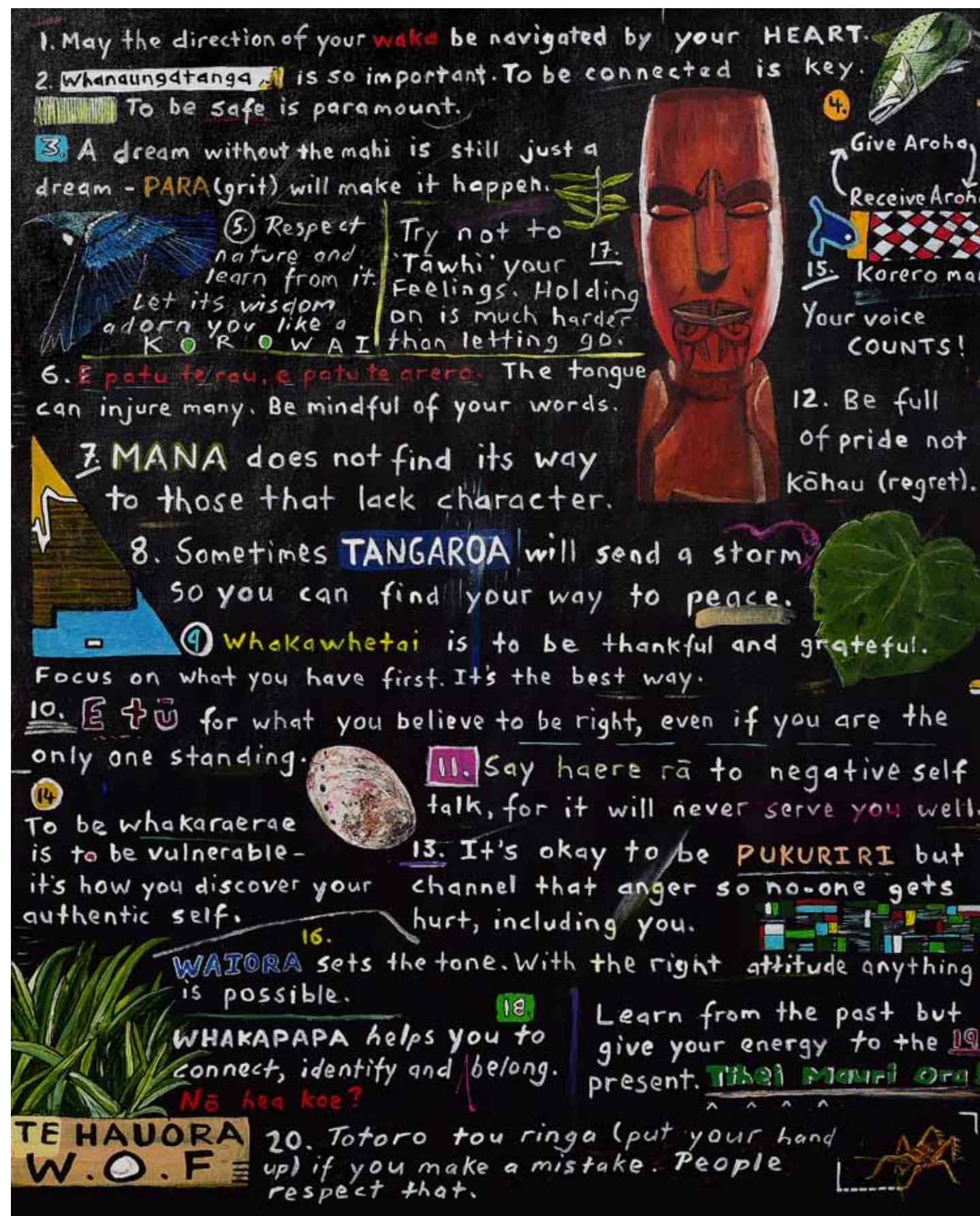
Paul Rangiwhia is a wellbeing advocate who uses art to break down the stigma around mental health, and to help normalise the ups and downs of life that we all experience. The Te Hauora WOF Paul created can be found at: www.paulrangiwhia.com

The evacuees mainly stayed with friends and relations, and people offered space in nearby homes, motor camps and holiday rentals. Staff and students spent a week in a makeshift school in a church community centre, before getting the all-clear to return the following Monday.

"But at that time we were still under a 'red zone', so we had to have enough empty buses on site at school that we could go at a moment's notice if the wind changed direction. We were under those conditions for another week, and then the thing abated. So that was the experience for our children – of packing up, going at a moment's notice, taking precious things," says Verstappen.

Amazingly, the 2316 hectare blaze claimed just one home, but it would take time for some locals to recover from the trauma of the experience. Verstappen had been principal of a school just outside Christchurch when the 2010/2011 earthquakes hit, so knew first-hand that after initial recovery from a traumatic event, issues could "bubble up" later on.

"I knew that for probably the next six to 12 months, this would be something that would be present in the lives of some of our people, or it would come up. So we set ourselves up for that," says Verstappen.





01

“Study after study after study shows that if you don’t get wellbeing right, the learning doesn’t happen.”

– PROFESSOR PETER O’CONNOR

Staff shifted the curriculum focus towards wellbeing, and accelerated practices they had been working on such as mindfulness. “We shifted our lens as educators to be really conscious of where our children and families were at in terms of their hauora,” says Verstappen.

Later in 2019, when the Ministry of Education launched the Creatives in Schools programme, Verstappen immediately saw the potential to help his students. “I know that drama and theatre is a really good way for children and adults to process trauma. Plus it was a great story. It deserved to be retold – to ourselves and to our community.”

The school’s application was one of 34 accepted in the first funding round. At the start of 2020, local theatre producers Lisa and Dan Allan began working with 25–30 senior students in Years 4 to 6. Elphine Murray was in Year 4 and one of a handful of students who wrote scenes for the project, named *FireFlight*.

“Writing was hard, but Dan helped us get good ideas and when I started writing my scene I really enjoyed telling the story. We got ideas by talking with our families, other children and other people in Wakefield, like the fire fighters,” says Elphine. “I loved seeing the actors performing my scene and watching how the children enjoyed it when we played it to the school,” she says.

Dragons, fairies and talking trees found their way into the narrative, giving voice to the feelings triggered by the fire and evacuation. Ryan Price, who was in Year 5, played the part of a dragon.



Photos: HoneyBee Photography

Above: Theatre professionals Lisa Allan and Dan Allan helped students at Wakefield School produce *FireFlight*.



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Photos: Supplied

02 Dragons, fairies and talking trees found their way into the Wakefield School play, giving voice to the feelings triggered by the fire and evacuation.



03

“What we’re saying now is, actually a valid outcome is to enable our children to be calm. Because if they can’t be calm, they can’t learn.”

– PETER VERSTAPPEN

“I thought it was good to tell about the fires because it made us think about how we handled it. When the fire happened my family didn’t have to leave our home but we could see the fires on the hills around us and it seemed a bit like a dragon blowing smoke and flames,” he says.

The project was intended to run from the beginning of 2020 through to about May 2020, when the students had been invited to perform at the Nelson Fringe Festival. But then Covid-19 happened. The students were able to finish putting the performance together by the end of Term 2, but public performances weren’t possible. “It was a little bit disappointing for them, but we videoed it and put it on our website,” says Verstappen.

FireFlight was then scaled up to become the senior school production, run by the teachers and involving 150 students. Creating a piece of theatre from a blank sheet of paper was a big challenge for the students, says Verstappen.

“They were really deeply tied up and invested in the actual process. For a lot of them, they weren’t really thinking, ‘oh this is helping me work through my feelings’, but we’d been a little bit strategic in some of the children we had drafted into that group. I could see for some of them that just the repetition of telling that story in rehearsals, telling it again, and telling it again, and telling it again, they grew more comfortable with talking about it, and recollecting what it had been like.

“Also, by putting that layer of imagination in place, it kind of neutralised some of the trauma in some ways, so we weren’t telling ‘my’

story, we were telling ‘my interpretation’ of my story. And we had that sort of imaginative play element in it, so it made it safer in some ways, and took it out into a calmer and safer space for them.

“So, for kids who are finding it hard to talk about it, or for families for whom it had become a subject that was buried, this was a way of accessing the subject with a degree of safety,” says Verstappen.

Verstappen says the Creatives in Schools programme is excellent but highly contestable. “It would be nice to see something that was funded in a more robust way so we could access that kind of expertise and bring it into schools. I wanted to make sure my teachers got some professional learning out of this, because unfortunately over the last decade or so, professional learning in the arts has been nowhere. It’s just completely vanished,” he says.

“We actually have a whole cohort of teachers coming in now who know nothing about teaching the arts. It wasn’t part of their initial teacher education,” he says.

Verstappen says the experience of producing *FireFlight* gave teachers permission to interpret the curriculum.

“We’re still crawling out from under the rock of National Standards, and that really does blinker a lot of our teachers’ mindsets, in terms of what counts as valid curriculum and what counts as valid outcomes for schooling and teaching. What we’re saying now is, actually a valid outcome is to enable our children to be calm. Because if they can’t be calm, they can’t learn.”



“What we’re talking about here is the power of authentic connection and children being afforded safety and space to bring their whole self into a classroom.”

– DAGMAR DYCK

Verstappen’s view resonates with Professor Peter O’Connor. He is the University of Auckland’s Director of the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation and the driving force behind Te Rito Toi, an online resource which was created to assist schools as students returned to the classroom post-lockdown.

“Study after study after study shows that if you don’t get wellbeing right, the learning doesn’t happen. That is as true for teachers as it is for kids. You want your teachers to be well fed so they can feed others. It’s that simple,” says O’Connor.

With a focus on the arts and wellbeing, over 250,000 Te Rito Toi page views in the first weeks of schools reopening post-Covid-19 and 30,000 Aotearoa New Zealand teachers engaging with the site, O’Connor says it is possible more arts were used to teach that month in schools than in a generation. One of the key questions for O’Connor is how to ensure that educators themselves are doing okay, which is why the website has a whole section about how educators can care for their own wellbeing.

“One of the most interesting things we found is that Te Rito Toi gave teachers permission to care for themselves, to slow down, that they didn’t have to go in and assess, and do all this madness around catching up. They had to accept that they were working in a pandemic, in an ongoing crisis,” he says.

O’Connor’s team researched the experience in South Auckland’s third lockdown.

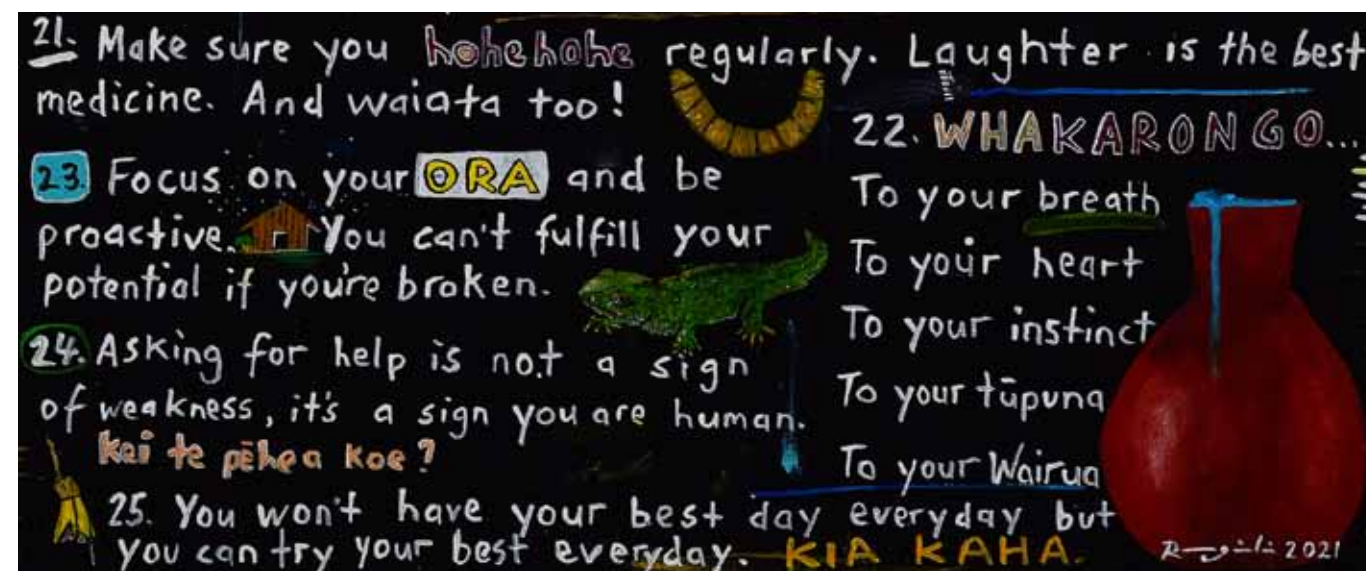
“The children were really scared that their

parents and grandparents were going to die. That’s what they brought into school. The media around Covid is so intense, that the children are coming in with these high levels of anxiety, multiplied in Christchurch because of the terror attack, plus the earthquakes, and now this. And the teachers are dealing with that. And the exhaustion of dealing with young people’s anxieties, real anxieties is enormous,” he says.

O’Connor says that as part of caring for their own hauora, educators should include themselves in the Te Rito Toi activities they do with their students.

“The wonderful thing about the arts is that you should sing with your children, you should dance with them, you should draw and paint with them, you should be involved with the theatre they’re making. The relationship building is in the making together,” he says.

“I’m doing some work with Sistema in South Auckland, which is a stunning philanthropic organisation that teaches kids to be part of mini orchestras. It’s gob smacking. At a concert last year, these two 11-year-old boys played the cello to a packed out arena in South Auckland. There’s one boy playing and he looks behind to his mate, and they’re both perfectly in time with each other – you know that exquisite moment – and the look on his face. If I ever needed to explain to a Cabinet Minister why the arts are important, I’d say that moment of exquisite joy between two young boys knowing they were making something together that was beautiful,” he says.



The work of Te Rito Toi continues to evolve and develop, and a Pasifika strand has recently been added alongside the mainstream English language and Hā Ora (Breath of Life) kura kaupapa resources.

Last year, teacher Dagmar Dyck, who heads the arts at Auckland’s Sylvia Park School, invited O’Connor to see their whole-school student-led inquiry into Aotearoa New Zealand histories and show him how deeply the arts have been integrated into the school’s curriculum.

“I laid a wero down for him,” says Dyck, who recently completed her Masters in Professional Studies in Education. Her research focused on culturally sustaining pedagogies within Visual Arts.

“How we, as Moana people, engage the arts is often as a collective, with a strong focus on storytelling, often reflecting raw, honest narratives. Until now, within arts education, we have only had academics without Pacific heritage write about us. I knew this was an issue as we need to not just tell our own story, but, critically, own it,” she says.

Dyck says there haven’t been any specific resources for Pasifika arts in the school curriculum for at least 15 years, and she saw Te Rito Toi as an opportunity to fill this massive gap by building teachers’ confidence and providing tools to bring Pasifika arts into the classroom. O’Connor quickly embraced Dyck’s challenge to include a Pasifika strand in Te Rito Toi, which includes a videoed session of her leading students in making a lei.

“What we’re talking about here is the power of authentic connection and children being afforded safety and space to bring their whole self into a classroom. Tapasā’s ethos, coupled with teaching the arts, is a wonderful lever for teachers to give of themselves by sharing who they are,” she says.

Dyck says that lei are traditionally made as a gift for someone else. When children are creating a lei the focus is on the time and love put into the process for someone they love, and the sense of wellbeing that comes out of that.

“I think it’s recognising that even if you aren’t of Pacific descent, there are elements of all our cultures where we give for the sake of giving, because it makes us feel good,” she says.

Dyck says a key wellbeing outcome with making leis is the conversation that sits alongside the creative process. “At the end of the lesson we all sat back down in our circle and shared about who the lei was made for and the story behind it, and why they did it. That’s the most powerful thing for me,” she says.

O’Connor says the arts provide a safe space to talk about really deep and significant things that children are bringing into school. The arts are the obvious tool for whole school hauora. “The thing which can’t be underestimated is that the arts bring joy, colour and life to a classroom in a way that nothing else does. It’s the joy, the colour, the wonder, the fun, the laughter, the movement in all the art forms that reconnect us, and that’s their role in society,” he says. ●

Addington lockdown superheroes

*Our family game nights
Sometimes fun, sometimes fights
Camping on the lawn
Waking up at dawn
We won't tell you lies
We've been eating lots of pies
We've been sleeping in each day – it's cool
But still missing all our mates from school
We're all Addington lockdown superheroes*

Between the online classes and all-school Zooms, the students of Addington School in Ōtautahi jotted down words, poems and ideas to describe their experiences of lockdown. These memories were set to music and became a supportive anthem as they returned to school.

The Covid-19 lockdown came just a term after the school community had settled into their post-earthquake rebuild and at a time when the pain of the nearby Al Noor Mosque shootings was still raw. For Principal Donna Buchanan, it was a feeling of “here we go again”, but she and her staff were determined to keep connected with students, with the arts and creativity playing a central role.

“We’ve been through enough at school to know that’s how we fit together. The arts and performing together is what brings us together and makes us feel like we belong,” she says.

Music coordinator Ally Palmer and piano tutor Tom Harris put the students’ words to music and band tutor Matt Stevenson recorded it at his home studio. As soon as the students returned to school after lockdown, they recorded vocals in small, socially distanced groups, then teacher Sheryn Follero used the children’s photos and video clips to make a video.

“It was pretty interesting to see what they came up with,” says Palmer. “To me, it sounded like they were really able to express their frustration and the good parts of [lockdown]. To see their lines become part of the song, I think there was quite a lot of pride for them. I know, especially when photos came up on the video, they were cheering and laughing with each other, a lot of camaraderie as well.”

Buchanan says the music video had a huge



Photo: Supplied

Principal Donna Buchanan, left, and Music Coordinator Ally Palmer, right, with members of the school music programme who helped write the song's lyrics.

impact on the students’ wellbeing. “I sent that [video] everywhere and anywhere to places all round – the ministry office and it went to the Children’s Commissioner. We had a letter from Jacinda Ardern, and it just kept coming. I think the kids just rode the buzz,” she says.

Addington School has long had a community-driven focus on the arts. The music school runs senior and junior choirs, a ukulele orchestra, a Pasifika drumming group and employs tutors for students to have lessons during class time for drums, composition, singing, keyboard, bass, guitar, ukulele and dance, all of which give students a way to express themselves creatively.

The performing arts are a personal passion for Buchanan. In the school’s biannual productions, she leads the performance side, while Palmer brings the music together. However, Buchanan says, there is no expectation on teachers to be experts in the performing arts. “We talk about learning with the kids and being a risk taker. I’m certainly not a dancer, but I show them something, join in, and look like I’m having fun,” she says.

Palmer says that every year for the past 12 years, the students have produced a music album. “Some of the kids write their own songs and we help them bring out their words,” Palmer says. “There have been some special moments ... for kids that struggle in other areas, they’ve got a song.”

Watch the Addington Superheroes video: <https://youtu.be/BOmZbqFBm84>

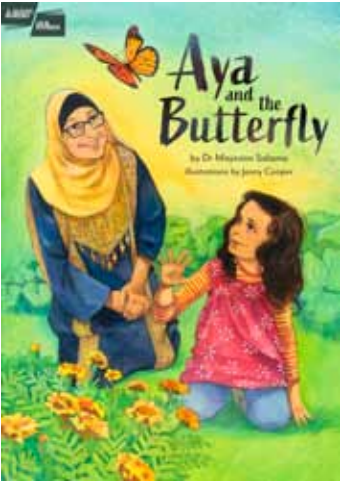
REVIEWS

Aya and the Butterfly Dr Maysoon Salama and Jenny Cooper (Ministry of Education)

Dr Maysoon Salama, who lost her son Atta in the Christchurch mosque shootings, wrote *Aya and the Butterfly* to help children come to terms with grief and change. It is part of a four-book series designed to support, reflect and celebrate the Muslim community in Aotearoa New Zealand, and was developed with the Islamic Women’s Council.

The story opens with Aya visiting the local market with her family. Her granddad is excited to buy some swan plants for their garden, but Aya is sad this year. At home, Aya plants the swan plants with her grandad. Over the weeks they watch while butterflies lay eggs, and then fat caterpillars eat all the leaves. Finally, Aya discovers a chrysalis, “the colours of a butterfly’s wings, folded inside like a secret”. When the butterfly hatches, Aya doesn’t want to let it go; it’s too beautiful. But, with grace, she lets it float into the sky. While the death of Aya’s father is implied throughout the story, it’s not the focus. *Aya and the Butterfly* is a moving and exquisitely illustrated picture book about a young girl saying goodbye to what she loves, learning to let go and to have hope. – Sarah Barnett

Aya and the Butterfly can be downloaded for free and is available in English and Arabic. Print copies will be delivered to early learning services and schools during Term 3: nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Principles/Cultural-diversity-principle/A-Matou-Korero-Our-Stories



A moving and exquisitely illustrated book about a young girl saying goodbye to what she loves, learning to let go and to have hope.

On We Go Catherine Bagnall and Jane Sayle (Massey University Press)

A collaboration between artist Catherine Bagnall and a poet Jane Sayle, *On We Go* is an enchanting and mysterious picture book for adults. Bagnall’s delicate watercolour images show rabbit figures, or people in rabbit disguises, exploring blue-green forests. Sometimes they are dancing between tree trunks, while at other times they sit weeping. The images work well with Sayle’s dreamy



poems to suggest loss, connection and our relationship with the natural world: each page offers us a moment of reflection and contemplation and asks us to pay attention to the world around us. One poem notices, “Between winds / soft sunshine / strands of lemon lichen / across a satin-grey rock bank / and the smell of blackberry / living for a moment / inside the quiet air / on the nameless day”. Bewitching, curious and wonderfully strange, *On We Go* shows how inspiring moments are a source of strength that can help us go on. – Sarah Barnett

Aroha Knows

Rebekah Lipp and Craig Phillips
(Wildling Books)

There are many places in nature that Aroha knows, and in this magical picture book she and her friends explore each one. Aroha knows that spending time in nature makes her feel many wonderful emotions. She and her friends play joyfully on the beach, lie peacefully in the grass, connect with the “sleeping giants” of the forest and feel pride and awe when they reach the top of a mountain. Each place nourishes them in a different way.

Aroha is a wonderful protagonist for tamariki – she’s adventurous, bold, kind and thoughtful. Tamariki will see themselves in Aroha and her friends, and the gentle rhyme of the story makes

it fun to read out loud. At the end of the book a short section tells us how each of the characters are “Guardians of the Earth” – Ollie wants to start his own garden; Charlie wants to eat less meat; Mason wants to save seeds. There is also a section about the different ways being in the natural world can benefit our hauora. A wonderful book on childhood, friendship and our emotional connection to the natural world. **Win one of three book bundles from Wildling Books. Details on page 63.**

– Sarah Barnett

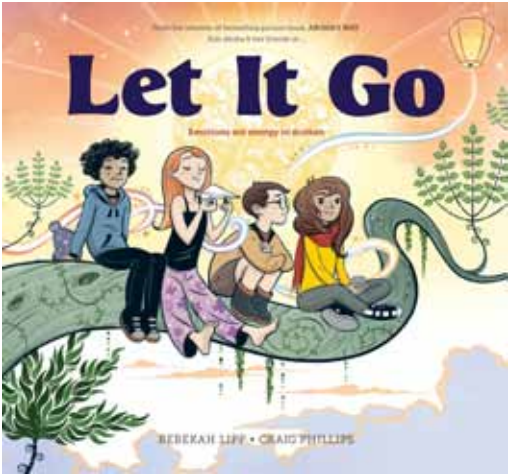
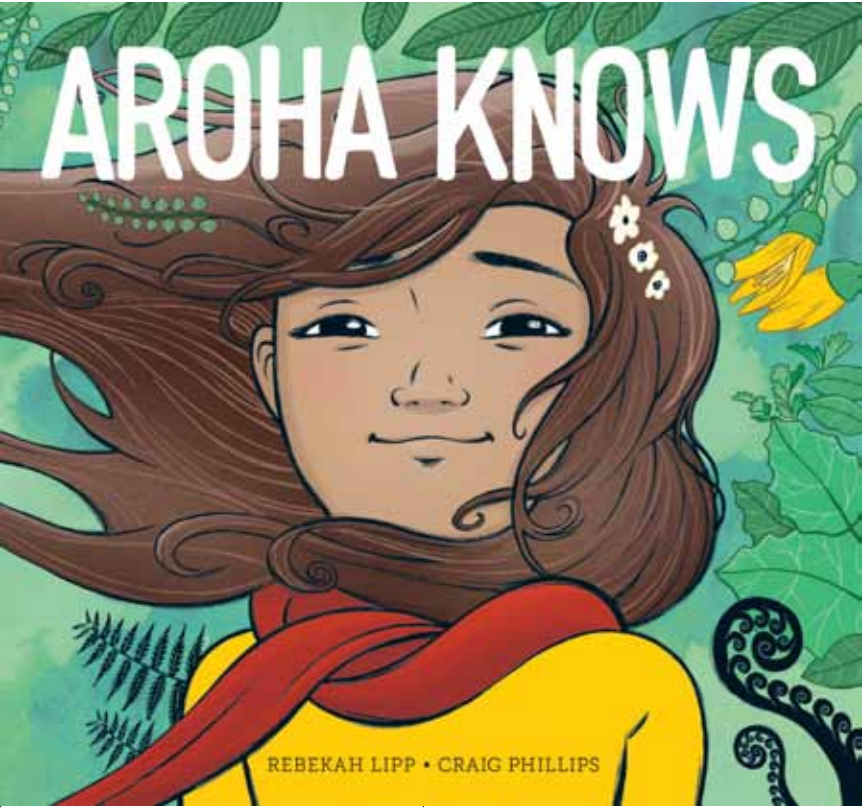
Let It Go – Emotions are energy in motion
Rebekah Lipp and Craig Phillips
(Wildling Books)

In this book, Aroha and her friends each experience a different emotion and

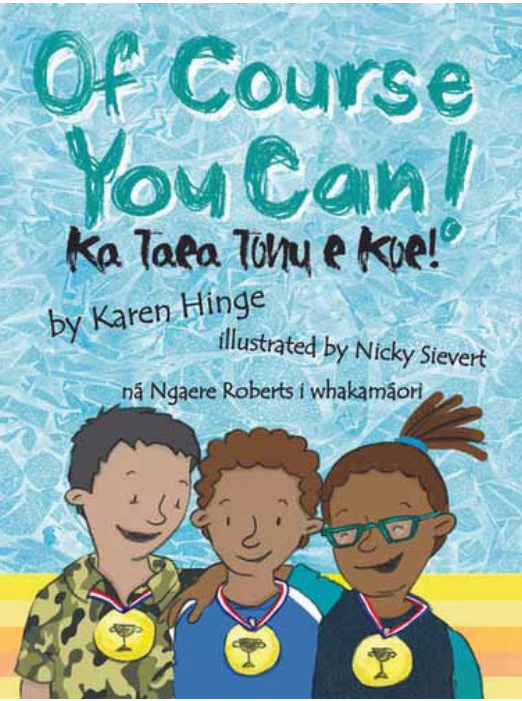
each child finds a unique way to let that emotion go. Ollie feels a heavy sadness, but then he imagines his sadness filling a bright paper lantern and he releases the feeling to the sky. Aroha is visited by anger, Charlie must deal with shame, and Mason is gripped by fear – all big yet everyday emotions!

The dynamic and joyful illustrations show each child transforming as they let their emotions flow through them. “Feelings are just energy in motion ... When it’s time, you’ll know – To let go, let them flow”, the book teaches, and by the end the friends sit happily together on a tree branch. An insightful and encouraging book about finding healthy ways to release emotions with the underlying message that our emotions help us to grow. **Win one of three book bundles from Wildling Books. Details on page 63.**

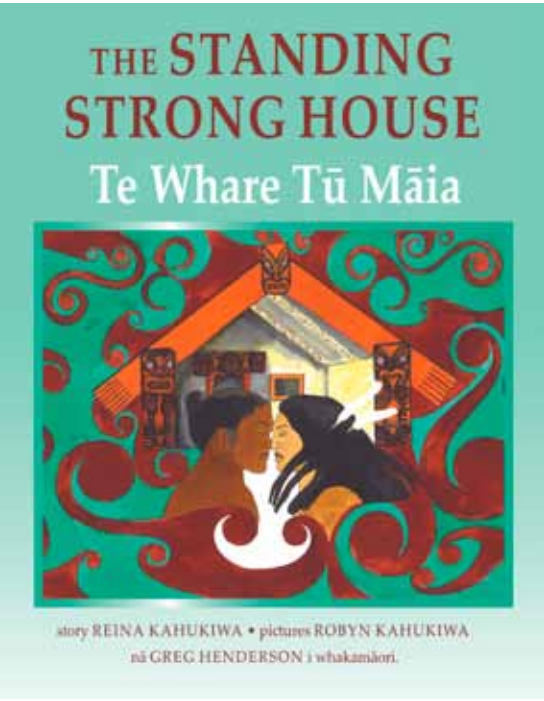
– Sarah Barnett



Tamariki will see themselves in Aroha and her friends, and the gentle rhyme of the story makes it fun to read out loud.



Ka Taea Tōnu e Koe!/Of Course You Can! – a nice, feel-good story, which is relatable for many.



Of Course You Can! – Ka Taea Tōnu e Koe!
Karen Hinge, Nicky Sievert and Ngaere Roberts (OneTree House Press)

This story follows the emotional journey of a student starting at a new school. As well as being new at the school, the character, Jeremy, is in a wheelchair. He feels like he can’t do any of the things his fellow school friends can do such as playing a board game, taking part in kapa haka and joining in with the soccer game. The other students encourage him to take part, coming up with innovative ways for him to join in. They don’t see him being in a wheelchair as a disability. As the story continues, Jeremy becomes more and more excited about school, and happy when talking to his mother at the end of each day.

So many of the feelings Jeremy experiences would resonate with students, whether it’s starting a new

school or feeling different to others in some way. His belief in himself grows as he is accepted, and he can take part in the same everyday activities as the other students. This bilingual story is a nice, feel-good story, which is relatable for many.

– Sarah Macintosh

The Standing Strong House – Te Whare Tū Māia
Reina Kahukiwa, Robyn Kahukiwa, Greg Henderson (OneTree House Press)

The bilingual edition of *The Standing Strong House – Te Whare Tū Māia* weaves together a story of whakapapa, iwi and tūrangawaewae (a place where one has a right to belong through land and descent). This book tells the story of the people of Ngāti Tū Māia and their wharenui through generations, from before settlers arrived, to today.

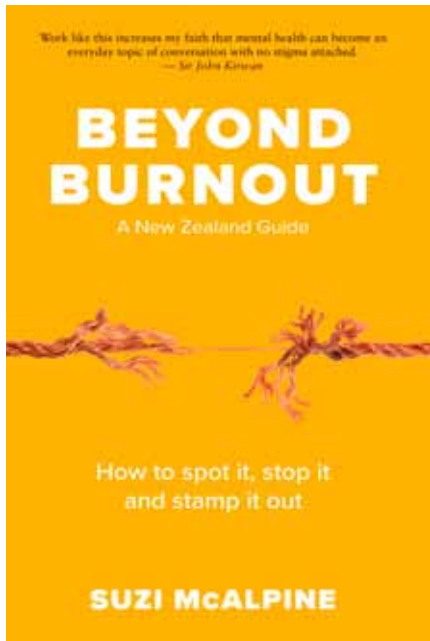
This book connects te ao Māori with the modern world and reminds us that our wharenui will always be a strong

and safe space for its people. And in return, its people will give the whare its mauri, its lifeforce. This is a wonderful book that teaches you about the meaning and representations of a whare and how we can honour our tūpuna. A great book for all learners of Aotearoa.

Ki tēnei pukapuka reorua, *The Standing Strong House – Te Whare Tū Māia*, he kōrero e pā ana ki te whakapapa, iwi, mē ngā tūrangawaewae o tēnei whenua. He kōrero kei roto e pā ana ki ngā uri o Ngāti Tū Māia me tō rātou wharenui nō ngā rā o mua tae noa ki ināianei.

Ka whakakotahi tēnei pukapuka i te ao māori me te ao o ināianei kia maumahara mātou te mana o te wharenui mō te iwi, ā, nā te iwi hoki the whare e whai mauri. Ka whakaako tēnei pukapuka i ngā āhuatanga o te whare me te whakamōhio ki a mātou me pēhea te whakarangatira i o tātou tūpuna. He pukapuka tēnei mō ngā ākonga katoa o Aotearoa.

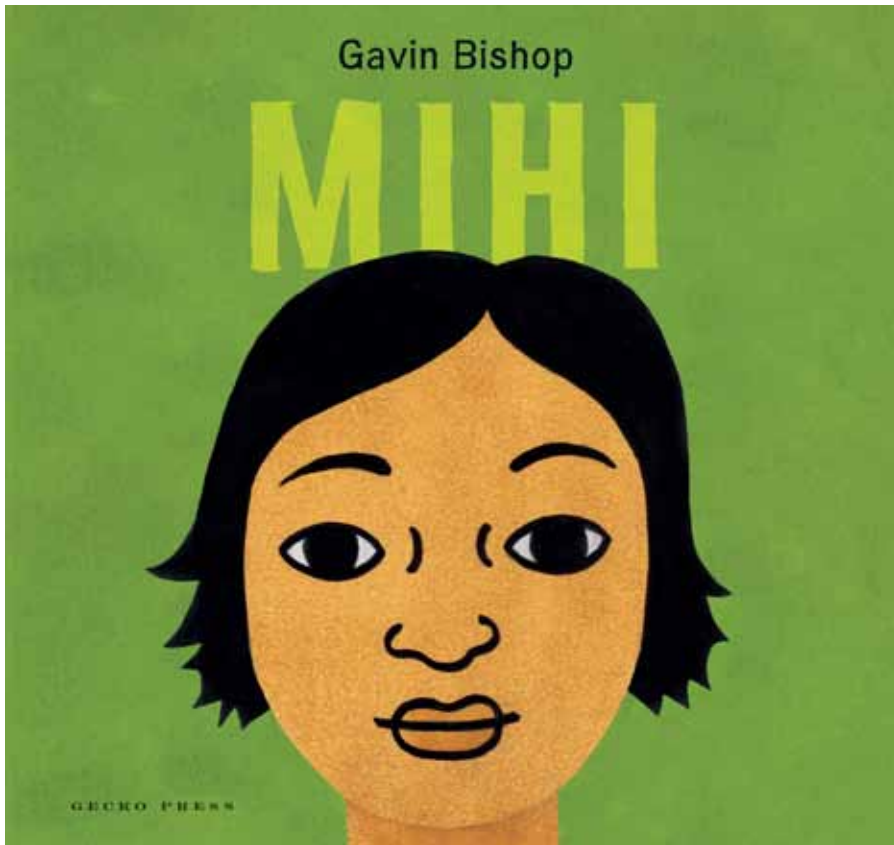
– Jessica Tawhiri



Beyond Burnout:
A New Zealand Guide
 Suzi McAlpine (Penguin Random House NZ)

“Burnout is a state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress related to your professional life,” writes Suzi McAlpine in her new, Antipodean-focused book on burnout. With huge amounts of compassion, evidence and actionable advice, McAlpine describes how leaders and organisations are at the crux of burnout, rather than placing the responsibility on individuals (although she does have a lot of good advice for people who are already burned out). In an easy and compelling read, the book systematically unpacks the root causes of burnout to help “leaders, organisations and individuals” create environments where they can flourish.

McAlpine writes what education professionals already know – that burnout is high in professions “which are passion-driven and caregiving-

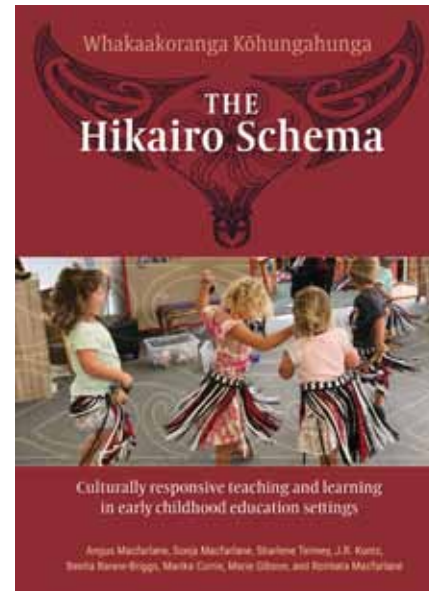


Mihi
 Gavin Bishop (Gecko Press)

Mihi is a board book that introduces ideas of me and my place in the world though a simple mihi or pepeha. Bishop’s beautiful illustrations take young readers through the mihi. A blue sea curls up to carry a waka forward; a fluffy cloud drifts across a steep maunga. As the mihi continues, young readers see “tōku iwi”, “tōku whānau”, “tōku māmā” and “tōku pāpā” and the book concludes with “ko ahau tēnei”: “this is me”. While simple, *Mihi* is a powerful book will help young tamariki understand the way land, history and family create our identity. – Sarah Barnett

The Hikairo Schema: Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning in Early Childhood Education Settings

Angus Macfarlane, Sonja Macfarlane, Sharlene Teirney, JR Kuntz and Benita Rarere-Briggs (NZCER Press)



Many researchers recognise the invaluable gifts te ao Māori has to offer education, particularly in the education and care of our youngest tamariki. *The Hikairo Schema* seeks to take us on a journey of reflection and practice which will assist Early Childhood kaiako to embed mātauranga Māori in their pedagogy, for the benefit of all tamariki.

As kaiako work their way through each of the guide’s six components they are exhorted to apply three key principles to the learning environment and their own pedagogy: relevance, balance of power and scaffolding. At first glance, there almost seems to be a doubling of efforts by applying *Te Whāriki* and this schema to teaching practice. And whilst some readers might view the schema this way,

the bigger barrier to instituting a schema like this may lay in our own journey with mātauranga Māori. Understanding and incorporating an authentic Māori world view may seem like advanced work. However, I think this book makes the case for the opposite. How can we truly and authentically embed te reo or tikanga Māori in our practice if we have not at least attempted to understand the spiritual, emotional, physical and global concepts that underlie Māori language and customs? *The Hikairo Schema* is an excellent resource for those individuals and teaching teams who want to step beyond the minimum and immerse their pedagogy in a Māori world view. In that sense it is a resource for all kaiako.

– Rebecca Mackintosh ●

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Nest Consulting, a popular provider of health and wellbeing education, is giving away a primary or intermediate programme!

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www.nestconsulting.nz/school-programmes

To enter, email: info@nestconsulting.nz with the subject “NZEI Competition” and your school name. In the body of the email include your programme preference and the number of students in the cohort. A winner will be drawn in September 2021 and the prize must be used in 2022. Offer is open to any school based in Auckland who has not used Nest Consulting services prior.



BOOK GIVEAWAY FROM WILDLING BOOKS



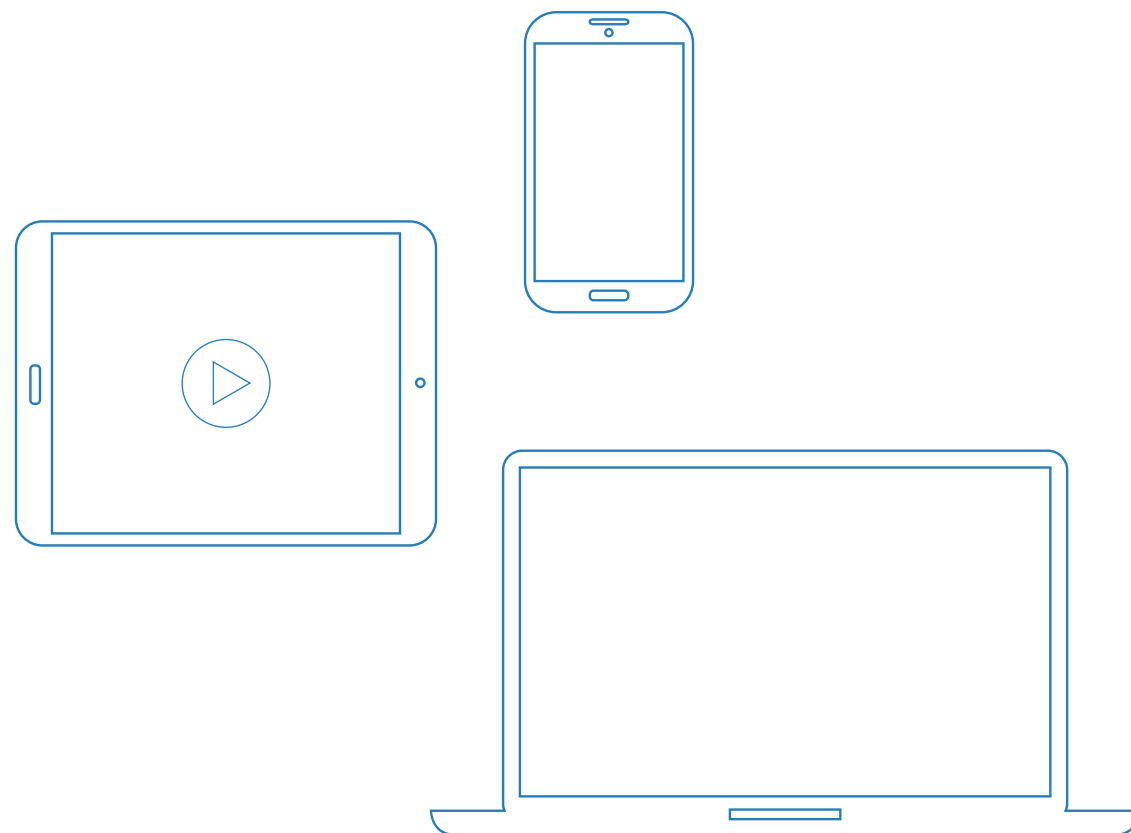
Win one of three bundles of *Aroha’s Way*, *Let It Go* and *Aroha Knows* from Wildling Books, and join Aroha and her friends on their journey to understand their emotions. The books help start conversations about emotions, promote emotional regulation and expand emotional literacy.

To enter send an email to ako@nzei.org.nz by 1 September with “Aroha” in the subject line.

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Pūaotanga

On 10 June, Pūaotanga – an independent report investigating primary school staffing in New Zealand – was launched.

Thank you to those of you who contributed to the more than 2,650 written submissions, and gave oral evidence at one of six hui across Aotearoa.

The report shows clearly that current staffing is not fit for purpose: children are missing out due to high student-teacher ratios, teachers' lack of time to adequately prepare for teaching, and inadequate specialist staffing resources.

With your collective agreement negotiations coming up, these are issues we know teachers and principals will be keen to prioritise.

Read the report in full, including its 36 recommendations for change, at **puaotanga.org.nz**.

NZEI Te Riu Roa commissioned the Pūaotanga Review in response to longstanding concerns about school staffing expressed by union members. The Review was conducted by an independent panel of education experts: Steve Maharey, Whetū Cormick, Dr Cathy Wylie, and Peter Verstappen.



Louise
Learning Support

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Rasela
Kindergarten teacher

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