He korowai aroha, he pā harakeke:

Healing intergenerational trauma through the reclaiming of customary child-rearing practices

Te Atawhai o Te Ao
Independent Māori Institute for Environment & Health

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By Dr Kirsten Gabel
Edited by Dr Rāwiri Tinirau

Author
Dr Kirsten Gabel

Editor

Dr Rāwiri Tinirau

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Photo taken by Dr Rāwiri Tinirau. The tamaiti is Te Matara Jaymee Tinirau-Williams (Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi, Ngāti Rangi, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngā Rauru Kītahi, Ngā Wairiki-Ngāti Apa, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngā Ruahinerangi, Taranaki Iwi, Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Maniapoto). The kahu huruhuru was woven by Pare Paamu Tinirau (neé Blackburn), who is the great-great grandmother of Te Matara. The wahakura was made by men at Whanganui Prison, and was gifted to Te Kōhanga Reo o Ngā Manu Tūī, in Aramoho, Whanganui. The photograph was taken beside the Whanganui River, at Pūtiki Wharanui.

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He kōrero wāwahi: Foreword

Tēnā kautau i runga i ngā tini āhuatanga o te wā.

This publication has been produced as part of the He Kokonga Ngākau Fellowships, an initiative of Te Atawhai o Te Ao that seeks to support and contribute to our research projects and to grow Māori research capability that promotes Kaupapa Māori research. These fellowships have been established to support Māori postgraduate students, practitioners, community researchers, and writers in their writing on kaupapa that have relevance to our organisation and wider community.

Through her doctoral study, **Dr Kirsten Gabel (Ngāti Kahu, Te Paatu)** explored mōteatea, whakataukī, and kōrero pakiwaitara, to uncover customary Māori knowledge on maternities and child-rearing practices. Colonisation, through mechanisms such as legislation and social interventions, has undermined our knowledge and associated practices, which has seen many whānau Māori disconnected from our inherent, collective, and supportive approaches to raising tamariki.

Kirsten's research critically considers the well-being and status of Māori women and utilises Kaupapa Māori and mana wahine theoretical perspectives. In an effort to understand and reclaim our tikanga and mātauranga associated with child-rearing, she is all too aware of the recurring historical and intergenerational trauma caused by colonisation and offers insights into pathways towards healing and recovery through the reclamation of our customary child-rearing practices.

Kirsten has found that whānau Māori raise tamariki in ways that uphold our tikanga, and which reflect our traditional ways of child-rearing. This has included Māori antenatal and child-birthing practices, wānanga hapū that involve inclusive whānau approaches to antenatal and postnatal support, and online forums where learnings are shared by and amongst whānau Māori. Our kāinga, marae, kura, and other spaces are sites of resistance, where whānau Māori are able to revitalise and carry out self-determining practices, based on our own traditions and philosophies. There is also commentary on naming tamariki with Māori and tūpuna names, which echoes previous findings published by Te Atawhai o Te Ao on the Whakatika Survey (Māori experiences of racism), as well as Helen Parker's (2021) research, entitled *Overt and covert racism: Mispronunciation of Māori names and the impact on Māori students.*

This kaupapa aligns well with the Whakarauora Research Project, a Te Atawhai o Te Ao project that promotes the restoration of traditional knowledge. Although the focus of our work is on revitalising Whanganui customary fishing methods, we believe that the recovery and reinstitution of traditional knowledges are critical to healing from intergenerational trauma and we, therefore, welcome Māori research and practice that has this intent.

E te iwi e, purutia tō mana kia mau, kia ita!

Dr Rāwiri Tinirau

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He kupu whakaūpoko: Introduction

This paper reflects on the intergenerational impacts of colonisation on the disruption to Māori (Indigenous people of Aotearoa) child-rearing practices and the historical trauma that has transpired with the imposition of western child-rearing ideologies through successive generations. This paper also discusses responses and resistance of whānau (family, familial grouping) Māori to this disruption and healing that occurs with the reclamation of customary practices.

Whānau structures and child-rearing practices have been an ongoing target of colonisation. Whānau, through successive generations, have been subjected to a coordinated attack involving state policies that denigrated the mana (power, status, prestige, and the potential to provide or remove benefits) of the whānau and intruded on the customary practices on child-rearing, education, and socialisation (Gabel, 2013; Pihama et al., 2014b; Seed-Pihama, 2017; Simon et al., 2001).

This publication considers aspects of our history that have had traumatic and intergenerational impact on whānau child-rearing practices. It also considers some of the resistances that whānau Māori have shown to these impositions. Despite an aggressive campaign of colonisation, whānau have continued to parent in ways that uphold our tikanga (customary practices and protocols) and find spaces of resistance and tino rangatiratanga (self-determination, upmost of authority, sovereignty) within our kāinga (home, homes). Within these spaces of resistances is also space of healing and recovery for the historical trauma experienced by whānau.

Understanding intergenerational and historical trauma in Aotearoa

Historical trauma theory conceptualises the effects of colonial violence on Indigenous peoples. It seeks to articulate how historical experiences of collective trauma impact Indigenous communities. (Brave Heart, 2000; Duran, 2006; Pihama et al., 2014a; Pihama et al., 2019). Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart (2003) defines historical trauma as:

> **Historical trauma (HT) is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences; the historical trauma response (HTR) is the constellation of features in reaction to this trauma. (p. 7)**

While the origins of historical trauma theory centred on the Native American experience, recent endeavours consider its application to other Indigenous peoples (Brave Heart, 2000; Duran, 2006; Pihama et al., 2014a; Pihama et al., 2019). Pihama et al. (2019, p. 1) define historical trauma as "the collective trauma experienced through 'massive cataclysmic' historical events that have been perpetrated intentionally by one group of people upon another" and state that "[h]istorical trauma is perpetrated through deliberate and intentional acts of violence and oppression upon one group of people by another" (Pihama et al., 2019, p. 1). Historical trauma permeates all aspects of our societies, as Pihama et al. (2019) further assert:

> **For Indigenous peoples [trauma] includes the intentional and deliberate acts of violence that we experience through colonisation within all parts of the political, social, cultural and economic structures. (p. 9)**

1. Metaphorically a cloak that envelops with aroha (love).
2. Metaphoric term for the whānau unit. Literally refers to the structure of the flax plant which reflects a child/parent/extended whānau structure, with the young shoots at the centre of the bush which are surrounded, protected and nourished by the older leaves of the flax around them. The young shoots and the leaves immediately surrounding them – ngā mātua (the parents) – are never harvested as it would stifle the growth of the entire plant.

Historical trauma has the manifestation of a 'soul wound' (Duran et al., 1998) embedded in the hinengaro (consciousness) of a person. Pihama et al. (2019) affirm:

> **Historical trauma can be viewed as a 'soul wound,' which sits at the core of generations of Indigenous suffering. […] A range of Māori concepts such as 'patu ngākau' [describes a deep psychological shock, but is related more to the event that caused the shock], 'pouri' [sad; disheartened; mournful], and 'mamae' [hurt; anguish] provide understandings of trauma and its impact upon Māori. (p. 1)**

The importance of engaging with historical trauma theories is highlighted—understanding the trauma provides avenues for healing (Brave Heart, 2000; Duran, 2006; Pihama et al., 2014a; Pihama et al., 2019). In particular, the historical trauma space allows us to unpack and deconstruct not only significant events of physical violence but also some of the social constructions within which our tikanga and underlying spiritual values have been deliberately undermined and degraded. The importance of critical conversations about the effect of this trauma on our mātauranga (knowledges) and tikanga is asserted by Pihama et al. (2019):

> **Historical trauma theory encourages the development of understandings and healing frameworks that are cognisant of collective and historical indigenous experience, particularly in regard to colonisation and its impact. Such frameworks provide the context and starting place for identification of the pathways that will support recovery and healing. (p. 5)**

As Pihama et al. (2014a) further proclaim, it is important to engage in dialogue and discussion on the impacts of colonisation and, by utilising historical trauma theory, we are able "to bring together Māori and Indigenous understandings in a way that enables us to explain and understand the complexities of Māori experiences of trauma and intergenerational transmission" (p. 259). Wirihana and Smith (2019) comment:

> **Māori exposure to historical trauma has had a massive impact on Māori well-being across multiple generations. It began with the loss of entire communities during the land wars and was maintained by the incapacitation of social, cultural, and economic autonomy through land loss and psycho-social domination. Legal imperialism facilitated the loss of language and cultural practices and damaged protective social structures and interpersonal relationships within Māori families and communities. These processes exposed Māori to chronic and complex trauma, precipitating the development of physical and psychological conditions across generations. Moreover, they ruptured the sacredness of relationships between men and women and destroyed the nurturing protective environments required for child-rearing. (p. 5)**

As discussed, the redefining of the positionality of children, undermining of child-rearing practices, and deliberate restructuring of whānau have had significant and traumatic impacts on whānau Māori. The traumatic disruption to our whānau structures and practices has had and continues to have lasting effects on our well-being as whānau. This is evidenced in the consistently appalling rates of domestic abuse, poverty, poor mental and physical health within whānau and in particular, the devastating effects this has on our tamariki.

A key aspect of historical trauma theory is the articulation of the pathways for healing; in a whānau setting, this involves recognising and restoring avenues to reclaiming our spiritualities and our tikanga and re-establishing the honour and status of our children. Pihama et al. (2019) argue that "Kaupapa Māori [Māori ideology–a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society] approaches to trauma and healing must be defined, controlled, and undertaken by Māori for Māori" (p. 1). The authors further contend:

> **Healing must take place on both individual and collective levels to prevent intergenerational**

> transmission of trauma. Māori healing must be based on the restoration of the Māori cultural and healing paradigms that colonisation sought to destroy. (p. 1)

Smith (2019) recently articulated also that the blueprint for healing from trauma lies within our precolonial narratives, tikanga, and understandings of the world. He states:

> The curricula for pre-colonial Māori provided templates for social relationships, science and technology, medicine and health, and environmental, economic, and intergenerational knowledge of significance to the tribe. These traditional accounts provided narratives, cultural metaphors, and templates for surviving and living in the pre-colonial environment. Also included are strategies of resilience for surviving trauma and traumatic events, and responses that include pathways for improved lives and well-being. (p. 2)

This paper outlines some of the ways whānau have sought to resist the impositions of colonial ideologies and reclaim traditional approaches to children and whānau. These resistances exemplify healing and recovery avenues for whānau Māori and serve to illustrate the ongoing strength and resilience of whānau.

Honouring our children: Precolonial child-rearing practices

It is well-established that precolonial Māori societies honoured and cherished children within familial groups (Gabel, 2013; Jenkins & Harte, 2011; Seed-Pihama, 2017; Pihama et al., 2014b). The emphasis placed on whakapapa (genealogy; lineage; descent (genealogical and familial connections and also tātai whakapapa – recital or record of whakapapa) and the interrelationship and continuity of genealogical descent lines placed children in a position of importance within their iwi (tribe; nation), hapū (cluster of extended families, descended from an eponymous ancestor), and whānau, as Smith (1996) asserts:

> In Maori world views, a child is part of a complex system of whakapapa which includes those people immediately around the child and the tipuna [ancestor(s); grandparent(s)] of whom the child is a living manifestation. This system locates the child in a whanau or extended family, in a hapu or enlarged whanau, in an iwi or tribe, and across other iwi. The concept of whanau is regarded as the basic social unit within which individuals developed their core relationships. (pp. 262-263)

Children were seen as a living embodiment of those that had gone before, and an essential element to the ongoing survival of the people. For this reason, children were treasured and indulged, and the adults in their lives strived to provide a conducive whānau environment within which children could grow, learn, and thrive (Makereti, 1938).

The whakapapa connections between children and others within their familial group were complex; from birth, every child was treated according to their interconnecting relationship to others around them. Knowing their whakapapa was a key aspect of their education as it helped form their worldview and established their place within the group. Smith (1996) notes:

> A child is born into a set of complex relationships. They can be tuakana [elder brother (of a male), elder sister (of a female), cousin (of the same gender from a more senior branch of the family)] to others who are much older in age than the child. Similarly, a child on one whakapapa line can be a tuakana to someone, and through another whakapapa line, can be their teina [younger brother (of a male), younger sister (of a female), cousin (of the same gender) of a junior line, junior relative]. (p. 263)

These whakapapa complexities ensured that, regardless of age, children were treated with respect. The intricacies of the genealogical connections meant that a child could be positioned in a senior tuakana line and consequently treated with the level of respect accorded to that position.

These connections also reaffirmed the collective approach to the care and upbringing of an individual child. Due to the many different familial connections to the child, there was a collective interest in the successful raising of that child. This meant significant involvement from an extended family network; the parenting of a child was not solely a role undertaken by the biological parents, as "within traditional Maori society parenting and following through the development of a child were the responsibility of the whanau as a whole" (Pere, 1994, p. 58). Pihama et al. (2019) maintains:

> **Intergenerational support for children also provided protective mechanisms for their wellbeing and therefore for the wellbeing of all the whānau. The wellbeing of tamariki is seen as a core value in any framework of whānau wellbeing. This required the commitment of all whānau members to the care, nurturing and guidance of tamariki. (p. 7)**

This whānau structure and collective approach to raising children provided parents with a supportive environment that allowed them to contribute to the whānau and hapū in other ways, and accept responsibilities within the community. As Pere (1994) notes, such an environment was advantageous for the raising of children and continued growth and development of their parents as members of the wider community:

> **Nga matua [the parents] of the community's young had a support service that many of us envy today. This generation of young men and women in traditional society not only had time to extend themselves in all areas of learning, but were left relatively free to actively develop the economic and physical well-being of the community as a whole. Although these young parents were part of the parenting system, alongside other members of the whanau, the older generations had the greatest responsibility for, and influence over the learning and development of the young. This type of support system enabled individuals to learn a wider range of skills and to develop their own potential and strengths. (pp. 58-59)**

The traditional Māori approach to parenting was a robust system that ensured the well-being of both parents and their children and, ultimately, the wider whānau and community. By providing a nurturing and supportive whānau environment and working collectively to provide the optimum utilisation of an individual's skills, the strength of the community was promoted and, in turn, could flourish (Nepe, 1991).

Thus the collective whānau unit of precolonial times was a foundation for a successful prosperous society. As children were educated and socialised in their immediate environments, they learnt alongside the adults and participated in everyday life of the tribal group. "Children played an active part in many of the formal as well as informal activities of life in the community" (Smith, 1996, p. 266). Children were encouraged particularly to participate and be a part of the tribal environment.

The whakataukī (proverbial saying),

Ka mahi koe, e te tamariki moe pori	***Well done, youngsters who sleep near relatives***

(Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 164)

provides an insight into the everyday conduct of whānau. Children slept alongside their whānau and were privy to the kōrero (discussions; stories) and wānanga (deliberations; traditional form of learning) that occurred in the whare moe (sleeping house). Including children in tribal affairs meant they would grow up familiar with the important aspects relevant to their people (Pere, 1994). Mead and Grove (2003) recall "[i]n Māori society it is recognised that one who stays close to his parents and their friends will probably become well-versed in local history and traditions" (p. 164).

Men had pivotal roles in the education of boys and women in the education of girls:

Ngā tamariki tāne	***Male children follow***
ka whai ki te uretū,	***after the father;***
ngā tamariki wāhine	***female children follow***
ka whai ki te ūkaipō	***after the mother***

(Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 330)

Children were often identified at a young age as having particular talents and strengths and were provided with the appropriate guidance and mentorship to fulfil their potential, usually at the hands of the elders. As Smith (1996) states, "the primary responsibility for the education of children lay with kaumātua (elders), not with their parents" (p. 266). Smith continues:

> **Many iwi had 'sacred' sites within the iwi territory, where children were dedicated in tohi [dedication or baptism rite] rites. These dedications were an integral part of the education of a child, in that the kaumatua and tohunga [expert; specialist] were involved in determining the educational needs and opportunities of their mokopuna [grandchild; grandchildren]. (p. 266)**

The success of a child's personal growth and development was seen as a collective effort.

Nāu i whatu te	***You wove the cloak,***
kākahu, he tāniko tāku	***I made the border***

(Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 319)

Mead and Grove (2003) indicate that "parents provide the long-term daily guidance necessary to develop a child's character while further training is gained from those skilled in certain specialities" (p. 319). Children were cherished and doted upon; their future importance to the iwi was such that whānau worked hard to ensure that from the moment of their birth, they were provided with the opportunities, attention, and respect they needed for their growth and development.

The importance of providing children with the care and attention from early on in their development is also noted:

Ko te rātā te rākau	***The rātā was the tree***
i takahia e te moa	***trampled down by the moa***

(Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 258)

This whakataukī refers to the rātā (*Metrosideros robusta* (Northern), *Metrosideros umbellate* (Southern)—large forest tree with crimson flowers and hard red timber) vine which, if crushed in its infancy, cannot grow straight. It denotes the importance of ensuring that children are provided with the optimum environment with which to grow as "early influences cannot be altered" (Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 258). Pere (1994) claims, "[t]raditional Maori learning rested on the principle that every person is a learner from the time they are born (if not before) to the time they die" (p. 54).

Neglecting, abusing, or dishonouring a child was considered a crime in traditional Māori society, as noted by Makereti (1938), "[t]he Maori never beat their children, but were always kind to them" (Makereti, 1938, p. 137). Mead (2003) comments:

> **Today adults generally tend not to notice the mana of a child, preferring that children are seen not heard. It was not like this in traditional society. Neglect of the mana of the child could result in the parents being punished. (p. 51)**

While the spiritual and physical repercussions of neglecting or abusing a child helped ensure the safety of children, the collective approach to the upbringing of children and the involvement of a number of adults meant children always had love and affection in their lives and enjoyed at all times the love and security of a network of parents. Pere (1994) cites "if children had personality clashes or other communication difficulties with their natural parents they had a range of other 'parents' they could turn to for support and understanding" (p. 66). Jenkins and Harte (2011) also point out:

> Having a team of relatives as carers for children meant that they could be passed on to someone else as a distraction for an unreasonable or unsafe demand. This also meant that there were many people watching caregivers as a further way to ensure care for the children. (p. 27)

Thus, "children were generally well-treated in traditional society and there was great affection accorded to them" (Mead, 2003, p. 52). According to Makereti (1938), children "were fearless, for they met with love everywhere, and in their homes they were petted and loved by their parents and relatives" (p. 146). As reflected in the whakataukī,

He kai poutaka me kinikini atu, he kai poutaka me horehore atu, mā te tamaiti te iho	***The welfare of the children ensures the future strength of the people***

(Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 81)

adults were expected to prioritise the well-being of children as "the welfare of the children ensures the future strength of the people" (Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 81). In this instance, parents are instructed to give the choicest, most nutrient rich parts of their meal to their children to ensure their optimum growth and development.

Mothercrafts: Mātauranga ūkaipō[3]

Mothercrafts is a generalised term describing the basic care provided to an infant by their mother. Although a collective approach was taken to the day-to-day raising of children, the many references made to mothers within whakataukī, mōteatea (lament, traditional chant, sung poetry, a general term for songs sung in traditional mode), pūrākau (traditional story, narrative), and other accounts of our tūpuna indicate that women and children enjoyed close relationships and held each other in high regard. This enduring connection between mother and child is noted in the whakataukī,

He aroha whāereere, he pōtiki piri poho	***The profound love that exists between mother and child***

(Ihaka, 1957, p. 42)

referring to the profound love that exists between mother and child. This refers to the manner in which young children often cling to their mothers for comfort and love. Ihaka (1957) explains:

> Because of a mother's love for her child, the child clings to her. A mother normally treasures her child more than anything else in this world. She would rather suffer than see her child in any form of misfortune. (p. 42)

Mothercrafts were often a shared duty within the whānau, with babies being breastfed by their biological mother and, or by, another female relative. Breastfeeding was undertaken for a good period of time, usually past the first year after birth (Makereti, 1938). Infants slept close to their mother and were breastfed on demand, as denoted by the terms:

Te ūkaipō, te ūkaiao	***The night-feeding breast, the day-feeding breast***

Makereti (1938) also notes that mothers took great care in introducing solid food to their babies:

> A child would still be at its mother's breast when it began to walk, and sometimes for a long time afterwards. A woman first gives the child food when it is nine months or more old, unless she has not much milk, then earlier. (p. 136)

The term kaimānga (term for food fed to young infants, first chewed and softened by an adult before being fed to the infant) refers to the manner with which mothers would prepare food by chewing it and gradually feeding it to their babies:

> When she gives ordinary food to her baby she is careful of what she gives it and masticates it well before giving it to the child, either straight from her own mouth to the child's,

3. mothercrafts


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> or taken from her mouth with the two first fingers and thumb, and so given to the child. This method might be used until the child was weaned, and sometimes afterwards. (Makereti, 1938, p. 136)

Another significant mothercraft was the composing and singing of oriori (instructional chant, composed on the birth of a chiefly child about his or her ancestry and tribal history). Oriori are often referred to as a lullaby; however, they do not resemble those of western cultures. Rather, the oriori was a song composed especially to honour a particular child or children (Pere, 1994). The songs contained stories and accounts of ancestors and were sung to the child from a young age, sometimes even while they were still in the womb. Pere (1994) comments on the special role of oriori:

> Many of the chants and songs that lulled babies and children off to sleep gave detailed accounts of their tipuna. These oriori revealed both the strengths and weaknesses, both the successes and failures of the tipuna. Children could identify very closely with these forebears as being "down to earth", very ordinary beings, capable of both error and achievement. Mythological figures and supernatural influences had very human characteristics and qualities about them also, so that they become part of one's whakapapa. (p. 59)

The importance of passing this knowledge on to children was significant, as "children themselves were markers of history and repositories of knowledge" (Smith, 1996, p. 265). Māori women were noted as traditional composers of oriori, but men were also known to have composed them. Special or high-born children were honoured by the entire tribal group: "Children of great mana were made a fuss of, and special oriori, or lullabies, were composed in their honour and sung by the hapū and the iwi" (Mead, 2003, p. 52).

Oriori thus had a twofold effect of both ensuring the vital lessons and knowledges from the past were maintained for the next generation, and reinforcing the value and tapu (sanctity; sacrality; sacred) of the child, both to the child and to the whānau surrounding the child (Jenkins & Harte, 2011), as "oriori repeated the messages confirming how tapu they were, in the most beautiful language" (Jenkins & Harte, 2011, p. xii). Jenkins and Harte (2011) further note:

> Such positive sounds and treatment surrounded the children from conception, instilling in them love, security, inquisitiveness, and confidence. They had the freedom to fearlessly see and learn about all parts of whanau and hapu life. They became observant, curious, thoughtful, and adept adults able to meet and deal with anything. (p. xiii)

Makereti (1938) also notes that oriori played a special role in the nurturing of children by their mothers:

> A mother could not bear to hear her child cry, especially at night. She would take it up in her arms and croon over it, singing oriori, or lullaby songs, to soothe it. The Maori had many of these songs, and some mothers made up their own, some being very beautiful and poetic. (p. 135)

The use of pūmotomoto (a long flute with a notched open top which is the blowing edge and a single finger hole near the end; fontanelle) and other flutes to transmit oriori and mōteatea knowledge through to children and young babies is also discussed (Te Ara, 2000). Pūmotomoto is a type of flute; however, due to the particular use of this flute to sing to babies, the word has further meaning of fontanelle (Te Aka Online Māori Dictionary, 2021). Pūmotomoto were also used during pregnancy, placed directly onto a mother's stomach so the baby could be sung to in utero. Once born, the song would be sung through the flute directly onto the baby's fontanelle—"the instrument was chanted through and was traditionally played over the fontanelle of an infant to implant songs and tribal information into the child's subconscious" (Te Aka Online Māori Dictionary, 2021, para. 1). It was believed that the child's fontanelle represented a hononga (connection) to te ao wairua (the spiritual world) and the open fontanelle provided the capacity for the pēpi (baby) to absorb information.

We can conclude that parenting practices in traditional Māori society were undertaken using a collective approach, with other female and male relatives in the wider whānau playing important roles. Guardianship was the responsibility of the entire whānau and children were 'parented' by a number of others, not just their biological parents. Importantly, children were seen as an embodiment of their ancestors and the future of the hapū and iwi. Therefore, physical discipline was not a feature. Children were instead treated with the utmost respect, indulged and honoured, and included in everyday activities of the whānau unit.

Colonising our whānau

> **Colonial belief systems impacted Māori society in other major ways, [t]he imposition of the nuclear family unit has undermined Māori structures and consequently weakened traditional educational systems that were dependent on the whānau concept. As a unit, the nuclear family isolates Māori whānau from each other and from the nurturing, knowledge, and support provided within those structures. (Pihama & Cameron, 2012, p. 236)**

The colonial project of the British centred on the imposition of their own worldviews, values, and ideologies that "...involve[d] invasion – at times physical and overt, at times camouflaged, with the invader assuming the role of a helping friend" (Freire, 1972, p. 153). Belich (in Simon et al., 2001) recounts:

> **From the establishment of the first mission station in New Zealand in 1814 until the 1960's, the main official policy of the Pakeha [European settlers of New Zealand] towards Maori was to convert them into Brown Britons. Conversion was cheaper than conquest, but a humanitarian motive should also be acknowledged. To people who could conceive of no higher state than Britishness, making it available to 'natives' seemed an act of enlightened generosity. (p. ix)**

The goal of the colonisers to recreate Māori into their own image required a broad-based attack on our society and worldviews. The inherent belief that the ways of the coloniser were superior to that of the Indigenous people they were invading reflects a paternalistic attitude, and, as Smith and Taki (1993) have noted, "colonial ideology has always portrayed Maori people as perpetual children" (p. 40).

Arrogance underpinned the attitude of the coloniser who failed to recognise an already successful collective parenting approach in existence and chose instead to impose their own idealised perceptions of 'good parenting'. In both a historical and contemporary setting, the state has only ever set expectations of whānau Māori that reflect the entrenched western ideals of 'good parenting' practices—based on vesting primary care for children in a self-sacrificing model of mothering, where men were expected to be outside the home labouring for an income to support their nuclear family, and extended family were excluded from day-to-day caring of children (Gabel, 2013; Mikaere, 1995; Pihama et al., 2014b). Children were also repositioned to fit into a subordinate place in society where they were to be seen and not heard.

The perceived failure of whānau Māori to live up to western parenting ideals resulted in a blanket attack on whānau and their apparent deficiencies in raising children in the eyes of the state. This, in turn, laid justification to society that more and more state intervention and solution-seeking is required (Gabel, 2013).

This section highlights some of the interventions the state sought to impose on Māori society to reconstruct us into the parenting ideologies of western society. It is important to note that these interventions were undertaken with a very comprehensive approach—Christianity, patriarchy, capitalism, and the eugenic intrusion of successive governments combined to form a traumatic and destructive attack on traditional whānau Māori structures and parenting practices. While this paper focuses mainly on historical acts, it is imperative to acknowledge the ongoing repeated advance of colonisation that continues to affect our whānau today.

The impact of native schooling, the labour market, and urbanisation

One of the earliest and most successful colonising tools introduced was the education system. This began in 1816 with mission schools set up with the aim of converting Māori to Christianity (Simon et al., 2001). The Native Schools Act 1867 sought to regulate the manner in which Māori children were receiving education, and the intent was quite clearly stated to be assimilating Māori – "the system had been established in accordance with the 'civilising' agenda of the nineteenth-century state specifically to facilitate the 'Europeanising' of Maori" (Simon et al., 2001, p. 3).

These schools operated separately from public schools until the 1950s, and rested heavily on the values and ideals of English education in the 1800s, which placed all authority in teachers to teach and discipline the children. While whānau contributions to food and clothing were appreciated, adults and elders were not welcomed or considered appropriate teachers to instruct children. Smith (1996) has commented that the 'civilising mission' of the native schooling system, a system that targeted Māori children in order to progress the colonisers' objectives, where "children were the means through which their communities would be civilised" (Smith, 1996, p. 255). Smith (1996) comments further:

> ...the civilising mission of New Zealand's colonial project was to be carried out through the education of Maori children from the development of the first mission schools it was the children who were separated out as a group to be 'educated' and 'civilised'. (p. 256)

Native schools essentially reinforced the notion that children were to be the civilisers of Māori by targeting young children for conditioning. Colonial objectives could be achieved and perpetuated for future generations, thus reinforcing the oppressor's values. Paulo Freire (1972) comments:

> ...a rigid and oppressive social structure necessarily influences the institutions of child rearing and education within that structure. These institutions pattern their own action after the styles of the structure, and transmit the myths of the latter. Homes and schools (from nurseries to universities) exist not in the abstract, but in time and space. Within the structures of domination they function largely as agencies which prepare the invaders of the future. (p. 154)

Separating the children from their whānau was a deliberate and devastating action on behalf of the state that had the effect of not only disempowering whānau structures but replaced with it a foreign ideology of education and socialisation as Smith (1996) states:

> [S]chooling separated children from their whanau in a physical sense, and assumed both the primary role of socialisation and the formalised role of education, thus usurping the roles of kaumatua, tohunga and whanau. (p. 270)

Native schools also facilitated the introduction of corporal punishment, sanctioning European modes of child-rearing as the colonists "…imported the English and Scottish common law principle of reasonable chastisement—that parents, caregivers and teachers could use reasonable force to correct the behaviour of children" (Wood, 2008, p. 32). This saw the promotion of discipline in the form of physical abuse towards children. Wood (2008) reports:

> Many thousands of English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh migrants arrived, including missionaries, who brought with them a belief in the necessity and efficacy of physical punishment of children. This belief was partly based on traditional practice and its apparent effectiveness in getting children to conform to adult expectations, but it was also founded on a religious justification derived from certain passages in the Old Testament. (p. 22)

Māori were encouraged to beat their children, for their own good, as the Christian doctrine of 'spare the rod, spoil the child' was promoted as a spiritually-based justification for doing so, as Wood (2008) further note:

> …during the 'missionary period' [Māori] were subjected to strong, well-intentioned Christian messages about the vital role that physical punishment played in shaping children's moral and spiritual development. (p. 91)

Under this imported common law, the 'control' and right to punish belonged to men and was not just limited to his children but included his wife, servants, and pupils (Wood, 2008). Freire (1972) has noted this particular strategy of imposing an authoritarian approach within the home assists to further reinforce the dictatorial modelling in the wider society:

> …the parent-child relationship in the home usually reflects the objective cultural conditions of the surrounding social structure. If the conditions which penetrate the home are authoritarian, rigid, and dominating, the home will increase the climate of oppression. As these authoritarian relations between parents and children intensify, children in their infancy increasingly internalize the parental authority. (p. 154)

As Selby (1999) notes, a common reason for children receiving punishment was the use of te reo Māori (Māori language). Mikaere (2013) states that "corporal punishment was meted out to any child caught conversing in Māori at school, whether in the classroom or on the playground" (p. 81). Smith (1996) maintains:

> Schooling created disjunction between home and school, which eventually had an impact on the language children spoke at school and at home, on the ways of behaving, on ways of knowing. (p. 270)

As part of the strategy to colonise our language and assimilate the children further, native schools also imposed a new system of naming Māori children and actively changed children's names to fit the patrilineal Christian and surname system (Seed-Pihama, 2017). Seed-Pihama (2017) notes:

> [I]n 1867, the Native Schools Act was put in place as the new mechanism for assimilation. It was in these schools that we saw the devastating impact of policies to wipe out te reo Māori and of tamariki being renamed by their teachers with English names. (p. 125)

Many children were renamed by teachers, had their Māori names transliterated into English; or had their names shortened. This had the effect of reinforcing the male authoritarian role in the family institution. By imposing a system of naming that was based around the adoption of a paternally sourced surname, whānau were forced to reassess tikanga of naming, as Smith (2021) notes:

> As a result of Christian baptism practices, which introduced Christian names and family names, and schooling practices, where teachers shortened names or introduced either generic names or nicknames, many Indigenous communities hid their Indigenous names either by using them only in Indigenous ceremonies or by positioning them as second names. (p. 179)

Seed-Pihama (2017), in her doctoral studies, adds:

> As markers of identity, Māori names became something Māori people were forced to reconsider rather than assume. It quickly became unsafe for our tamariki and whānau to carry those names in the colonial world they had to engage with in order to provide an income for their whānau, to seek healthcare, or to get an education. These impacts of assimilation meant that the many whānau began to feel that Māori names were not beneficial to have within an imperialist society. (p. 127)

Essentially the state, through the native schooling systems, targeted a key marker of the identity and mana of a child—the name they had been imbued with by their whānau.

The Birth and Deaths Registration Act 1924 also made specific regulatory requirements of parents. It further placed responsibility on parents to name their children, a deed that traditionally was not their responsibility or right, but rather belonged to the elder relatives and wider whānau of that child. The express prescriptions

contained in the Birth and Deaths Registration Act reinforced the ideal that only the biological parents of the child had control of this process.

Early schooling aimed to assimilate, not just by imposing new knowledge systems but also by interfering with and ultimately decimating the educational and socialising systems already in place. The prestige of te pā harakeke and the collective approaches to the raising of children was interrupted, contributing to an overall strategy towards the construction of the nuclear family model and a demotion in the status of children within the whānau. Smith (1996) asserts:

> **Schooling brought children to the centre, it constructed new ways of thinking about them, that is, new concepts of childhood, and in doing so, regulated not only childhood and the lives of children but also parenthood, motherhood, fatherhood and other social groupings. (p. 256)**

The process of imposing a nuclear family structure upon Indigenous people has been identified as a common theme within the colonisation of Indigenous people's motherhood. As First Nations scholar Anderson (2016) notes, "European 'family values' were a keystone in the conquest strategy" (p. 60).

The coercion of whānau Māori into nuclear family models proved devastating for our traditions of parenting. Schooling not only reinforced the nuclear family model, teaching the virtues of good housewifery and subservience, but in doing so helped entrench the idealisation of an industrialised society. The state sought to reclassify Māori into economic modes of production based on a nuclear family structure. Hawaiian scholar Trask (1999) asserts that:

> **When industrial capitalism penetrates our societies, our people are driven into the labour market where production takes place outside the family which decline to a mere consumer unit. This sundering of our function also severs our people from their traditional work. The devaluing of traditional cultural kinds of work accompanies the forcing of our people into the labour market. (p. 105)**

Pihama (2001) notes, power relations within whānau changed considerably with a new emphasis placed on the male paternal figure in the family becoming the financial breadwinner for the family unit:

> **...family relationships were altered considerably through Industrialisation. With Industrialisation came a shift in the dynamics between work and family. Work became located separate from the family, from the domestic unit... The family was soon redefined within which there rose the position of 'husband as breadwinner' on whom all the family depended. (p. 160)**

Urbanisation and the policy of separating Māori families into specified urban areas saw a further entrenchment of the nuclear family base within the new industrialised identity for Māori mothers—"housing policy encouraged 'pepper potting'—dispersing the Māori population to prevent residential concentrations" (Phillips, 2015). Robin (1991) notes that this had the effect of undermining mana wahine (female autonomy; female rights):

> **They separated us from the land, the mana of the land... They used the law, the ture Pakeha [Pākehā law]... It separated us from the land and told us that the mana was in the quarter acre section and the job in the factory and the Pakeha money – mana moni [monetary autonomy - monetary policy is an available tool the government can use to control the performance of the domestic economy]. And because our women didn't get much of these things their mana got separated out and wasn't as important... (p. 2)**

While schools served to interrupt the daily interaction of whānau with tamariki, moves were also underway to undermine entirely the familial structures of traditional society. Colonisers believed that "the Maori sense of whanau was seen as the antithesis of what Maori people needed to be if they were to become civilised or modern" (Smith, 1996, p. 277). The collective child-rearing practices of Māori, within which whānau life was the foundation, came under attack. The nuclear

family structure was reinforced as, not just an ideal familial grouping, but the only tangible option for Māori. Mikaere (1995) notes:

> The missionaries and early settlers were convinced that the institutions of marriage and family formed the foundations of civilised society. They sought to remove Māori marriage from within the whānau context and to remould it into a nuclear family arrangement. (p. 230)

As discussed, the housewife role was a significant feature of the education of girls within schools. This was reinforced within the wider population with the introduction of the Native Lands Act 1862, which began to individualise land title and force Māori to live on divided pieces of land. The Raupo Houses Act 1842 was also in force at this time, prohibiting the building of whare raupō (houses made of bulrush), meaning Māori were forced to live in houses resembling more and more of those of their Pākehā counterparts. In the early 1900s, Te Rangi Hīroa (in Department of Health, 1925) notes:

> The communal system of living has been disintegrated by the individualization of land. The crowded cluster of huts is no more... It is becoming difficult to distinguish between Maori habitations and those of white countrymen. (p. 49)

This effectively removed children from their strong supportive living environment, and placing them instead within a model of family that isolated them from their wider whānau and loaded their biological parents with a new, inefficient form of parenting.

Colonising Māori mothercraft practices

One of the schools that was established early on in New Zealand was St Stephen's Native Girls' School in Auckland. This school was established to provide a space to "train the girls 'to become Christian Mothers and probably also help-mates to Christian native teachers'" (Stanley, 1990, para. 4). While Māori girls were taught to be good nuclear housewives, Māori men were taught to be farmers and labourers. Smith (1996) comments:

> The differentiation in schooling between boys and girls had both moral and economic underpinnings. The curriculum was designed, quite explicitly in the 1900s, to fit Maori into the labour market as the semi-skilled, manual, working class. Children had to be taught to know their place and accept a status that was not based on their rangatiratanga, but on their ability to perform certain tasks deemed appropriate for Maori. For boys, this was to be farmers and labourers on other people's farms. For girls, it meant learning to be the wives of farmers and labourers and to perform basic domestic tasks. (p. 277)

Devastatingly, native schools also targeted mothering practices by introducing the subject of mothercraft into the state-ordained curriculum. From a young age, girls began to engage in studies in westernised methods of mothercraft alongside their studies in housework and cooking (Bryder, 2001).

The state directly blamed Māori mothers for the increasingly poor health of Māori children. Māori mothers were perceived to be unable to adequately care for their children and were seen to be ignorant of the appropriate mothercraft methods. This perceived failure of Māori mothers led to a series of state initiatives to provide Māori mothers with set instructions on how to best look after their children.

Instructions to Māori mothers were made clear in a series of publications by Sir Dr Māui Pōmare, then Māori Member of Parliament. The first booklet, published in 1909, entitled *Nga kohungahunga me nga kai ma ratou*, was published by the Health Department targeted specifically at Māori women. The content included advice for pregnant mothers (focusing on their diet) and included also explicit instructions for breastfeeding mothers to ensure the well-being of their children. A bilingual edition was published, entitled *Ko nga tamaririki me nga kai ma ratou* in 1916:

1. *Ko nga Mea hei Maharatanga Iho ma nga Wahine Whakangote Tamaririki.*
2. *Kaua e inu waipiro.*
3. *Kaua e kai tupeka.*
4. *Kaua e harihari i te tamaiti ki nga hui, ki nga tangihanga.*
5. *Kaua e ara-roa i nga po.*
6. *Kaua e mahi i nga mahi taimaha.*
7. *Kaua e kaukau ki roto ki te wai-waho.*
8. *Kaua e kakahu haere i nga kahu maku.*
9. *Kaua e noho pukuriri, erangi kia hara-koakoa.*
10. *Me kai ki nga kai papai—kia pai te makona.*
11. *Me kaukau ki te wai-mahana, kia rua kaukauranga i te Wiki.*
12. *Tiakina te tinana kia mahana tonu.*

(Pomare, 1916, p. 6)

1. *Matters which Suckling Women should keep in Mind.*
2. *Not to take strong drink.*
3. *Not to smoke tobacco.*
4. *Not to take an infant to large assemblies or to tangis.*
5. *Not to sit up late at night.*
6. *Not to do laborious work or lift heavy weights.*
7. *Not to bathe (in open water).*
8. *Not to go about in damp or wet clothes.*
9. *Not to be bad-tempered, but to cultivate cheerfulness.*
10. *To eat only of good foods—till properly satisfied.*
11. *To take bi-weekly baths in warm water.*
12. *To keep the body warm always.*

(Pomare, 1916, p. 7)

There is also reference to the poor state of Māori children's health and attributed blame directly on the ignorance of the Māori mother:

He tokomaha ke nga tamariki Maori e matemate atu ana. E ata mohiotia atu ana he tini nga mea o ratou e mate atu ana i te he marire o te tiaki a nga whaea; penei hoki nga whaea tai-tamariki Pakeha e noho kuware noa iho nei ki nga tikanga mo te whangai me te tiaki i nga tamarikiriki.

Too many Maori children are dying, many of them we know through neglect because their mothers, like many young Pakeha mothers, are ignorant of the right way to feed and care for them.

(Pomare, 1916, p. 1)

The booklets were published in Māori and English and, while the first editions were targeted specifically towards Māori mothers, a later edition revised by Miria Pōmare (wife of Sir Dr Māui Pōmare), took a slightly different approach and referred to parents collectively rather than solely the mothers. Pōmare also added advice for the care a mother should receive and directions for the birthing process.

These booklets, while specifically targeting Māori women and using Māori language, did not draw in any way on traditional Māori methods of mothercraft or tikanga pertaining to pregnancy and birth but rather were based entirely on western prescriptive methods of mothercraft developed by Pākehā male 'experts'. The strategy of this period was to purge whānau Māori of their traditional approaches to infant care and, as Bryder (2001) adds, "by the end of the 1930s Maori mothers were well versed in certain aspects of Western style 'mothercraft'" (p. 79).

The above booklets and the introduction of state sanctioned western mothercraft practices are representative of a significant shift in whānau Māori, which sought to invest responsibility of child-rearing with the biological mother of the child. The severe disruption of the passing down of tikanga ūkaipō (customary practices and protocols of motherhood) meant Māori women became increasingly reliant on state support for their new maternal obligations. Despite the mass production of the above booklets, it is clear that support for Māori mothers was lacking in many regards (Bryder, 2001; Gabel, 2013).

Approaches to addressing child mortality rates amongst Māori focussed squarely on attributing blame to the incompetency of mothers. In 1904, Pōmare was quoted reinforcing blame on Māori mothers for the poor infant mortality rate of Māori that had emerged:

> **Dr. Pomare says that from careful observation and figuring he is able to state that half the Maoris born in New Zealand die before they are four years old. This alarming infant mortality is attributed to the utter ignorance of the Maori mother as to the proper care of her young. ("The Native Population", 1904, p. 5)**

This placed Māori mothers in a dire predicament, having been isolated into the role of a nuclear mother and left without extended whānau support; a further lack of support for Māori mothers within the state system meant they were left to fend for themselves. While the Pōmare booklets went some way in assisting them in learning western methods of mothercraft, the underlying assumption that Māori mothers were ignorant and inadequate in their mothering duties negatively and demeaningly stereotyped Māori mothers. By design, Māori mothers fell short of the expectations of the state.

Criminalising Māori parents

The Education Act 1877 established compulsory schooling for all New Zealand children, and while this original legislation provided some flexibility in its application to Māori attendance at school (Education Act 1877, s10), the subsequent School Attendance Act 1894 did not. School attendance became compulsory for Māori children, and parents who did not ensure their children attended school were liable. In the early 1900s, further provision was made that empowered the state to remove children who did not meet attendance requirements from their parents regularly enough from their parents and place them in industrial schools (School Attendance Act 1901, s19).

These acts also began to define who could be considered parents of children and asserting that the definition of a parent "includes guardians and the householder in whose family a child resides" (School Attendance Act 1901, s2). While this might seem to be a broad definition, in practical measures, the immediate birth parents of the child were in most cases singled out as responsible in court proceedings—the following case was reported in the Marlborough Express ("Anything but school", 1910, p. 6):

> **Willy-nilly, the youth of the Empire must be educated, that they may be efficient citizens, but there are—there always has been—a certain percentage who will neither go voluntarily, nor be led to school. Hence the truant officer, an official created by the necessity of compelling this percentage to go to school. His task is a difficult one, if the experiences of Mr J. Dineen (truant officer for the Wellington Education District) are any criterion. Rounding up the school truants in the city is more or less of a commonplace, work-a-day business—visits to the homes of the delinquents, cautions, with Police Court proceedings at regular intervals as a means of compelling persistant offenders to fulfil their duty. But in the country districts, the daily routine is brightened by a little comedy now and then. For example:**
>
> **There was one (related Mr Dineen to a Dominion representative) a certain Maori youth whose attendance at schools was far—very far—from satisfactory. Cautions, warnings, threats having been found to be vain, the truant officer decided to prosecute,**

and so vindicate the provision of the School Attendance Act. Then a difficulty arose. With characteristic astuteness, the Native community conspired to evade or browbeat the Law. No one would admit being the parent or guardian of the boy. But the "bluffers" were out-bluffed. When the other cases were being taken in Court, the truant officer, in a casual way, referred to this particular case, and suggested that the boy, having no visible guardianship, should, be committed to the Industrial School. Instantly was heard from the back of the Court a lusty protest, and the father of the boy shouldered his way to the front. The feint was successful.

A number of other cases were brought to Magistrates' Courts regarding Māori childrens' truancy. The reasons for the alleged truancy were often matters seen to be unacceptable for the courts, such as whānau not liking the treatment of the child within the school (Gabel 2013; Smith, 1996). These reasons were seen to be failings on behalf of parents rather than good reasons for their child's absences. The real threat of penalty, removal, and nullification of parental rights was a forceful proclamation of the state's authority over Māori children.

These early laws challenged the presumption that whānau Māori authority over the interests of their children; the state asserted through such legislation the belief that decisions on the appropriate manner of raising children belonged with the state. Traditional collective child-rearing philosophies were outwardly rejected by the judiciary, with the ideals and values of European society reinforced within the courts. In 1912, it was decided in the Wellington Magistrates' Court that the care provided by a whānau for a nine-year-old boy was neglectful. The proceedings occurred after the European mother sought custody, despite the child having resided with his whānau Māori for over eight years. The child had been raised by his Māori father's whānau and by all accounts was well looked after, both physically and emotionally and it "was evident that he was much attached to his Maori relatives" ("With the Maoris", 1912, p. 7). However, upon investigation into the child's education, the judge decided to return the child to his mother citing the child "looked well cared for and well dressed but his education was sadly neglected and it was undesirable that he should remain in the custody of the natives" ("With the Maoris", 1912, p. 7). The most significant concern regarding the child's education was his left-handedness; he had not received medical attention for persistently using his left hand for tasks. This was considered to be neglectful treatment and the child was removed from his whānau and given over to his mother: "A scene ensued outside the court when the child was handed over to the mother. He cried bitterly and clung passionately to one of the Maoris" ("With the Maoris", 1912, p. 7).

This case illustrates traditional philosophy of child-rearing being undermined. The whānau had nurtured the child according to tikanga Māori—accepting his left-handedness and not seeking to change him, to chastise him, or punish him for this. They had, in line with tikanga Māori, respected the mana of this child.

These pieces of legislation and the resulting proceedings that emerged in the courts are evidence of a broad and legally reinforced process of colonisation. The attacking of whānau Māori occurred within an imposed legal system that sought to ensure that Māori had no choice but to accept a new system of parental authority over their children.

This particular period of our history reflects a significant and deliberate intrusion into the structure of whānau Māori—the legal enforcing and entrenchment of western ideologies of the nuclear family and the devaluation of children evidence the traumatic impacts upon Māori. Whānau Māori have consequently been forced to endure generations of loss of language, mātauranga, names, and the right to cherish and honour their children in a manner that aligns with tikanga Māori.

He korowai aroha, he pā harakeke: Actions of reclamation, spaces of healing

As discussed, the manner in which our parenting traditions were deliberately undermined and intruded upon has had a profound effect on the well-being of whānau Māori. The trauma associated with having our reo (language), mātauranga ūkaipō, and familial foundations violently disrupted has had and will continue to have a significant impact on whānau health and welfare of our tamariki. Our persistence in seeking to restore tikanga-ā-whānau (customary practices and protocols specific to family) speaks loudly, however, to the strength and resilience of Māori. This section considers key examples where whānau have actively sought to resist state intrusion into the whānau realm and to instead reclaim customary practices in the parenting of our tamariki. It is posited that the continuation and reclamation of these practices provides a space of healing for whānau and for te iwi Māori. Restoring practices that honour our children as cherished and esteemed taonga (tangible and non-tangible, ancestral treasures) within our whānau speaks back to the western narrative that places them in a subordinate position in society. To raise our tamariki unapologetically Māori, imbued in the tikanga and reo of their tūpuna, is in itself an act of tino rangatiratanga that seeks to heal the historical trauma of having had these things taken away in a deliberate and forceful manner.

Te mana o te whānau whānui: The prestige of the wider whānau

The maintenance of collective whānau roles within the lives of our children has been a considerable site of resistance for whānau Māori. Although New Zealand legislation continues to privilege the nuclear family,[4] many whānau continue to approach the raising and caring of children in a collective and holistic manner. Despite the impact of colonisation, we have continued to ensure that our children have space within our Kaupapa Māori environments to learn and be nurtured. Grandparents, in particular, continue to take an active role in the raising of their mokopuna. As Pere (1987) recalls:

> I slept, ate, played, worked and learnt alongside four generations, and was never excluded from anything my grandparents were involved with, including attending celebrations, tangihanga [funeral(s)]. (p. 55)

The role of grandparents in raising children has been the subject of research by Smith (2008), who comments that:

> For Māori, the task of raising grandchildren is considered an honour. It is generally considered that mokopuna raised by grandparents are treasured because they will learn the knowledge of the older generation. (p. 261)

Selby and Milisa (2007) note that "Grandparents will wait with joy and enthusiasm for the birth of their mokopuna" (p. 23). She maintains that this is often because their own children were raised by their parents. It is therefore a practice that continues to be passed down from generation to generation. Selby and Milisa further add:

> ...the strong tradition... of this practice in Aotearoa/New Zealand, one which remains today in many Māori families particularly where the child's grandparents did not have daily responsibility for their own children. It is their opportunity to raise a child from birth. For mothers who wish to continue their careers or pursue further education or who have larger families, they welcome this commitment from their parents to them and their children. (p. 23)

Smith (2008) also notes that it is not only grandparents but other female and male relatives who also often play a significant role in the raising of children:

4. Examples include the Adoption Act 1955; Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Relationships Registration Act 1995; Care of Children Act 2004.

> Grandparents are just one group within whānau that can assume care of children; there are also brothers and sisters of parents, older children of siblings, uncles and aunties who can assume care of children. The broader extended whānau can also offer care for children. Numerous arrangements exist in whānau where grandparents, uncles and aunties can live under one roof or where care of mokopuna is shared between parents and grandparents. (p. 262)

The practice of whāngai (adoption according to tikanga Māori) continues to be a feature of our contemporary parental practice. Although whāngai has been under legislative attack for centuries (Smith, 2012), the practice continues, sometimes in a modified form that incorporates the legal transfer of responsibility to another family member, but often also in a traditional form where the care of a child is a more fluid arrangement. A study of Māori infertility indicated that the practice of whāngai was seen to be the most appropriate way to address infertility amongst Māori and fertility treatment was regarded as a secondary option (Smith, 2012).

Māori are also successfully challenging state intervention in the care of Māori children, with significant pressure over the last three years placed on Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Children) and increased scrutiny and exposition of their practices (Reid, 2019). This pressure has resulted in Oranga Tamariki forming agreements with some iwi authorities to return the care of children to them. While this is still very much a space that requires significant change, the level of pressure and persistence of whānau and those advocating for change has been inspiring and heartening.

The importance of the collective whānau encapsulated within te pā harakeke continues to be a key aspect of resistance to western intrusions. The nurturing of children intellectually, spiritually, and physically, while also ensuring space for children in cultural activities, are defining features of te pā harakeke. It ensures that our children receive the education and mātauranga that affirms their roles as future leaders of the people. Smith (1996) recounts:

> My education within the Maori community in which I grew up was one of constant exposure to open debate and contestability of ideas, to being encouraged as a child to sit in on adult debates and to contribute on the same terms as adults if I wished, to an excitement about new ideas, to a security about our identity and an exposure to kaumatua who valued and appreciated eloquent and substantive debates and whaikorero [formal eloquent speeches usually made by males] on the marae. (p. 113)

The introduction of the western child-rearing ideal that 'children should be seen and not heard' has posed a significant challenge to our traditions of including children in activities; however, it is heartening to observe this ideal rejected in many aspects of our society. Sustaining a collective approach to the raising of our children and sharing our parenting duties with other whānau ensures our children have constant access to the spiritual and intellectual guidance they are entitled to.

Poipoia ki te ūkaipō: Reclaiming customary mothercrafts and honouring our tamariki as the embodiment of our tūpuna

If,
you must be disciplined,
Programmed,
Time adjusted
Sleep patterned
And organised
Then how, my darling mokopuna
Will I sing you stories of your tūpuna
Whilst I cradle you in my arms
Nestled
Against my breast
Breathing in harmony
Through the night

(Hotere, 2011, p. 37)

If,
you must be disciplined,
Programmed,
Time adjusted
Sleep patterned
And organised
Then how, my darling mokopuna
Will I sing you stories of your tūpuna
Whilst I cradle you in my arms
Nestled
Against my breast
Breathing in harmony
Through the night

Hotere

This poem by Hotere (2011) provides a succinct illustration of a key space of resistance for whānau Māori. Within the poem, Hotere speaks to the disruptions that western 'experts' have imposed on whānau. Hotere's positioning in the poem is also significant; the child is her mokopuna and the poem affirms our customary collective whānau approach.

Māori mothercrafts have seen a resurgence and whānau are actively seeking out spaces to access and assert this knowledge. The last five years have seen a resurgence in Māori antenatal and child-birthing practices, and wānanga hapū (wānanga associated with being hapū) have become standard delivery in many districts across the country[5]. These wānanga hapū affirm an inclusive whānau approach to antenatal and postnatal support.

Social media has further enabled dedicated spaces within which whānau Māori have asserted their right to reclaim and reframe our parenting experiences. Kia ora Mama is just one example of a Kaupapa Māori mothering forum hosted as a private group on Facebook. The forum provides Māori mothers with a dedicated, safe, and supportive space to access information and seek advice from other Māori mothers. These spaces, alongside whānau who share their parenting journeys openly on social media, these spaces all exist to reinforce our authority to live unapologetically as whānau Māori.

Naming and reclaiming: Imbuing our tamariki with names that cloak them in the mana motuhake[6] of their ancestors

I give you the name of your Tīpuna
So you may know who you are
I give you a name from your Pepeha [tribal saying]
So you may know where you're from
I give you a name for the times
So you may know how far we've come
I give you a name in hope for the future
So you may know which way to go
Te Pu, Te More, Te Weu, Te Aka, Te Rea, Te Waonui, Te Tipuranga
If you ever lose your way, just whisper your name.

(Rika, 2014)

As discussed earlier, the colonial agenda involved a deliberate assault on the naming of children. This interference saw the changing, shortening, and anglicising of children's names (within native schools) and the legal investment of naming responsibility and obligation in the parents of a child. Despite these interferences, however, there has been a steady reclamation and reaffirmation of our naming traditions over the last few decades, and in particular, the roles of extended whānau within this. Selby and Milisa (2007) comment:

> **Māori also regard the naming of children as an important task and one which should not necessarily be left to the parents of the newborn; more often naming has been the responsibility of the grandparents. This reflects the important role of grandparents, the belief that a child's name is significant, that the child belongs to a wider circle than the parents, that a name can be a gift to a child, that there may be expectations of the child in the future as a result of the gift of the name. (p. 23)**

These naming practices have also evolved to reflect a reclamation of tribal histories and, in particular ancestral names, as Smith (2021) observes:

> **A more recent assertion in Māori naming practices has been to name children again with long ancestral names and to take on new names through life, both of which were once traditional practices. Children quite literally wear their history in their names. (p. 179)**

5. For example, see: Waikato District Health Board: https://www.waikatodhb.health.nz/your-health/wellbeing-in-the-waikato/hapu-wananga/
Northland District Health Board: https://www.northlanddhb.org.nz/our-services/a-z/maternity-services/
Auckland District Health Board: https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/community-health-services/community-health/auckland-dhb-antenatal-classes-pregnancy/
6. Autonomy

The act of naming our children and bestowing upon them significant tribal and ancestral names is not merely an action that occurs at birth, but rather signifies a lifelong statement of resistance. Giving a child significant ancestral or historical names brings with it a responsibility to protect the authority and prestige of that name. For many, this necessitates being particularly assertive with any interactions with non-Māori to ensure names are not mispronounced, shortened, or misspelt. Giving your child a Māori name also requires teaching the child they are not to allow people to denigrate their names. As parents, we learn to be assertive at medical appointments, with school teachers, and with non-Māori acquaintances—to ensure that our children understand that we cannot be tolerant of those that continually mispronounce the taonga that is their name. Selby and Milisa (2007) report:

> **The last decade of the twentieth century has seen a revival and a renewal of pride in many indigenous cultures and with it the return to the use of traditional names for children and less patience with nurses and teachers who stumble over pronunciation of names... incorrect pronunciation is a mark of disrespect for the individual, their family and their ancestors and children in turn have an underlying disrespect for teachers, social workers, doctors and service providers who refuse to correctly pronounce Māori... Māori are unwilling to accept weak attempts any more. They expect an intelligent response and correct pronunciation of Māori names is a mark of respect. (p. 28)**

Honouring our children with the names of their ancestors and other significant names goes some way to restoring and healing the trauma of our tūpuna having had their names stripped from them. The mana that is imbued within a tūpuna name is carried by that child into adulthood. As Seed-Pihama (2017) asserts, "tūpuna names are critical to ensuring not only the legacy of that tūpuna but the continued practice of traditions established by that tūpuna and to the continuation of their mana across generations" (p. 204).

He kupu whakamutunga: Conclusion

This paper has reflected on the intergenerational impact of colonisation on Māori child-rearing practices and the historical trauma that has transpired with the imposition of western child-rearing ideologies within the nuclear family over successive generations. This paper has also discussed some of the responses and resistance of whānau Māori to this disruption and the healing that occurs with the reclamation of customary practices.

As evidenced above, whānau Māori structures and child-rearing practices have been an ongoing target of colonisation. Whānau, through successive generations, have been subjected to a sweeping attack involving a series of state policies that not only denigrated the mana of the whānau but also physically intervened in the tikanga surrounding child-rearing, education, and socialisation.

Still, many of our tikanga-ā-whānau have endured and is evidenced in the resurgence and assertions that occur within whānau Māori across Aotearoa daily within homes, marae, kura (schools), hospitals, and the multitude of other spaces we occupy. The healing that occurs in the reclamation and reassertion of our tikanga, specifically in the honouring of our children, is significant, and as whānau, we must continue to pursue means to further entrench our tikanga in the day-to-day caring of our tamariki.

He kuputaka: Glossary

Use of tohutō (macrons): the introduction of macrons over some Māori vowels, have (1) clarified definitions and (2) made it easier to pronounce Māori words (i.e., knowing where to place the emphasis as you are saying the words). When we quote sources from earlier periods where macrons have not been used, we have not included the macron to remain true to the original text. In the glossary, we have included both versions of the word (with and without macrons).

hapū / hapu (1)	cluster of extended families, descended from an eponymous ancestor
hapū / hapu (2)	pregnancy/conception
wānanga hapū	wānanga associated with being hapū
he korowai aroha	metaphorically a cloak that envelops with aroha (love)
he pā harakeke	metaphoric term for the whānau unit. Literally refers to the structure of the flax (*phormium tenax*) plant which reflects a child/parent/extended whānau structure, with the young shoots at the centre of the bush which are surrounded, protected and nourished by the older leaves of the flax around them. The young shoots and the leaves immediately surrounding them – ngā mātua (parents) – are never harvested as it would stifle the growth of the entire plant.
hinengaro	consciousness
hononga	connection
iwi	tribe, nation
kaimānga	term for food fed to young infants, first chewed and softened by an adult before being fed to the infant
kāinga	home, homes
kaumātua / kaumatua	elders
Kaupapa Māori	Māori ideology–a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society
kōrero	discussion; stories
kura	school(s)
mamae	hurt; anguish
mana	power, status, prestige, and the potential to provide or remove benefits
mana moni	monetary autonomy – monetary policy is an available tool the government can use to control the performance of the domestic economy
mana motuhake	autonomy
mana wahine	female autonomy, female rights
Māori / Maori	Indigenous people of Aotearoa
marae	traditional place of gathering
mātauranga	knowledge(s)

mātauranga ūkaipō	mothercrafts
mokopuna	grandchild; grandchildren
mōteatea	lament, traditional chant, sung poetry – a general term for songs sung in traditional mode
ngā mātua / nga matua	the parents
Oranga Tamariki	Ministry for Children
oriori	instructional chant, composed on the birth of a chiefly child about his/her ancestry and tribal history.
Pākehā / Pakeha	European settlers of New Zealand
pakiwaitara	legend, story
patu ngākau	describes a deep psychological shock, but is related more to the event that caused the shock
pepeha	tribal saying
pēpi	baby
pōuri / pouri	sad; disheartened; mournful
pūmotomoto	a long flute with a notched open top which is the blowing edge and a single finger hole near the end; fontanelle
pūrākau	traditional story, narrative
rangatiratanga	self-determination, upmost of authority, sovereignty
rātā	*Metrosideros robusta* (Northern), *Metrosideros umbellata* (Southern) – large forest tree with crimson flowers and hard red timber
reo	language
tamariki	children
tangihanga	funeral(s)
taonga	tangible and non-tangible ancestral treasures
tapu	sanctity; sacrality; sacred
tātai whakapapa	recital or record of whakapapa
te ao wairua	the spiritual world
te iwi Māori	the Māori people
te mana o te whānau whānui	the prestige of the wider whānau
te pā harakeke	metaphoric term for the whānau unit. Literally refers to the structure of the flax (*phormium tenax*) plant which reflects a child/parent/extended whānau structure, with the young shoots at the centre of the bush which are surrounded, protected and nourished by the older leaves of the flax around them. The young shoots and the leaves immediately surrounding them – ngā mātua (parents) – are never harvested as it would stifle the growth of the entire plant.

te reo Māori	Māori language
teina	younger brother (of a male), younger sister (of a female), cousin (of the same gender) of a junior line, junior relative
tikanga	customary practices and protocols
tikanga ūkaipō	customary practices and protocols of motherhood
tikanga-ā-whānau	customary practices and protocols specific to a family
tino rangatiratanga	self-determination, upmost of authority, sovereignty
tīpuna / tipuna	ancestor(s); grandparent(s)
tohi	dedication or baptism rite
tohunga	expert, specialist
tuakana	elder brother (of a male), elder sister (of a female), cousin (of the same gender from a more senior branch of the family)
tūpuna	ancestor(s); grandparent(s)
ture	law
wānanga	deliberations; traditional form of learning
whaea	term for mother; also: ewe, karawa, kōkā, kokara, tia, tiaka, ūkaipō, whaene, whāwhārua
whaikōrero	formal eloquent speeches usually made by males
whakapapa	genealogy; lineage; descent (genealogical and familial connections and also tātai whakapapa – recital or record of whakapapa)
whakataukī	proverbial saying (author unknown)
whānau / whanau	family, familial grouping
whāngai	adoption according to tikanga Māori
whare	house; building
whare moe	sleeping house
whare raupō	houses made of bulrush

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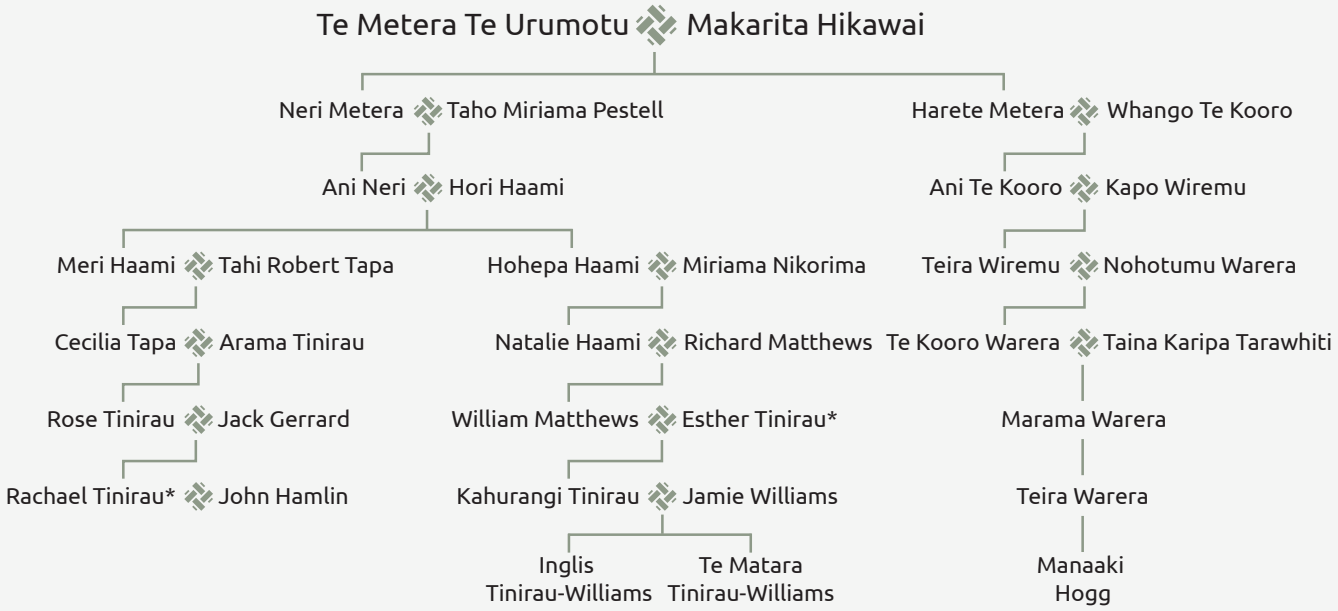
NO
BOIL

Ngā āhuatanga toi: Conceptual design

The photographs throughout this publication were taken at Te Pou o Rongo Marae, Rānana, Whanganui River, by Meri Haami. They feature two whānau connected to Te Pou o Rongo Marae, portraying the intergenerational, extended nature of whānau Māori, and those who are involved in raising their tamariki and mokopuna. These two whānau include: Marama Warera, Teira Warera, and Manaaki Hogg; and Rachael Tinirau, Kahurangi Tinirau, Inglis Tinirau-Williams, and Te Matara Tinirau-Williams. The two whānau are related, through whakapapa, and are descended from Te Metera Te Urumotu, of Ngāti Hineaokapua hapū of Rānana:



* **Rachael Tinirau** was raised as a sister of **Esther Tinirau**, as she was adopted by Regina Marshall and Meterei Tinirau (a brother of Arama Tinirau, who also features in the whakapapa above).

The photographs show these whānau engaged in daily activities on Te Pou o Rongo Marae, in the wharepuni (Tūmanako), in the kāuta (Te Rangimārie), and throughout the marae grounds, including the whānau orchard.

The theme colour of the publication is taken directly from a strand of harakeke, of a colour that is in-between the dark, fresh green leaf, as it transitions through the drying process to a yellow or beige colour. We selected this colour in recognition of our transitional return to traditional practices, thereby beginning a healing journey as intergenerational trauma begins to be addressed.

The kaupapa of this publication is of a pā harakeke, which is a metaphor for whānau and the protection of whānau within the traditional ties of a hapū. This harakeke structure is depicted in the UV overlay on each of the pages, specifically, the weave of a wahakura. This weave begins by bringing together thicker strands, and in forming the top of the wahakura, the strands are split in two, to form a continuation of the same weave,

only finer. This is then woven together at the ends and drawn together so that the wahakura maintains its structural integrity. No glues, stitching or other methods are used to hold the wahakura together; only the skill of the weaver, based on knowledge handed down through the generations and implemented through the weaving practice, ensures it remains intact. You can feel its strength when handling a wahakura, made with skilled hands and hearts. You do not need to treat it like a fragile artifact—it is durable and possesses a simple beauty. Even the gaps within a weave also play their part as they give flexibility to the wahakura. Flexibility in a wahakura, is a strength.

Likewise, the strength of whānau, hapū and iwi comes through the skilled hands of leaders, weaving together the various strands that each of us are. In this sense, leaders are not only those associated with status or role; they include any and all that act out of protection and compassion for their whānau, hapū and iwi. You cannot always tell who the truly skilled weavers of people are, but we look to those that display this leadership in humility, and those that lead within the gaps.

Instead of using imagery of harakeke, we decided to show whānau performing everyday marae tasks to illustrate the fruits and contribution of whānau within the hapū. Specifically, how learning and maintaining these tikanga (and other practices specific to a hapū) addresses intergenerational trauma. The process of learning customary practices helps us to be consciously aware, and to give effect to those innate values that are imbedded within our traditional philosophies and narratives. This publication gives the reader the ability to accept that the pā harakeke metaphor and related practices form part of an established, holistic and Indigenous development system; if our development had not been interfered with by colonisation, Māori would be in a stronger position—specifically, in terms of whānau ora. When we talk about practices, we are not just referring to the task at hand, but also the importance of spending time together as a whānau, so that our children grow up with a strong identity of themselves, and understand what is expected of them (excellence), whilst maintaining respect for others and the environment.


Te Atawhai o Te Ao
Independent Māori Institute for Environment & Health