

# Playcentre Journal



*Welcome to  
our Village*

**ISSUE 161**

Spring | Puna 2019

- Teaching Strategies – Parents as Kaiako
- Engaging Whānau – Maternal Mental Health
  - Loose Parts



Another year has been and gone. While this year may not have been the easiest for some Centres with the amalgamation and new licensing requirements looming, the values of Playcentre continue to shine through at a grass-roots level.

I have been privileged to witness Centres adapting and evolving as they learn to work within these new realms, all while keeping the concept of the 'village' to the fore.

Many Playcentre members juggle many balls – there's work, family, school, kindy, and much more every day to contend with. Yet the amount of innovation coming from Playcentres is incredible.

Our Centre uses Māui as a tuakana for our children. The values we see in Māui are the ones we want our own children to develop – resilience, auahatanga, mana, passion, and so on. And yet, so

often we see these traits within our own adult members too.

Every day on the many Playcentre Facebook pages we see new resources, new ideas, and new passions grow, develop and be shared among us. Playcentre whānau are not afraid to take risks, to try, to grow, and to develop. We think critically, we adapt, and throughout our Playcentre journey, whether it is a long time or just a few short terms, we grow.

As the calendar rolls towards the end of the year, I hope you all take the time to celebrate your successes, and your failures. Look back and reflect on your journey so far. And most importantly, spend the summer regenerating and resting. Roll on 2020.



**Rebekah Lyell**  
**Playcentre Journal**  
**kaiwāwāhi matua**

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If you have an essay, feature story, photographs or research on Playcentre related topics, we would love to read them! For future issues we are looking for submissions on:

- Improving meetings
- Emergent leadership
- Documenting children's voice and thinking
- Tapasā and Te Whatu Pōkeka in action

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## PLAYCENTRE

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**Cover photo:** Titirangi Playcentre

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# A new playground for Karaka

Auckland  
Karaka Playcentre



In August, Karaka Playcentre invited current, past, life members and patrons (and their children) of the centre to celebrate the official playground opening ceremony during its monthly family pizza night. President Pamela Thompson said it had been many years in the making – with lots of planning, consultation, and a heap of fundraising.

We were delighted to have Melanie Kennerley attend our special occasion, and David and Donna Cox from Papakura Rotary Club, who all generously donated towards our playground and centre resources. We also had a very special past member, Juliette Kemp, attend who shared many memories with us when she was a member and patron for the centre when it all began in the Karaka Hall before moving to the piece of land next door.

Juliette pulled out a 1994 Playcentre newsletter with her granddaughter pictured on the front cover surrounded by a wooden block tower, resources we still have in centre today, loved and enjoyed by our Playcentre tamariki.

Pamela Thompson's speech talked about how "our magnificent new

playground is a change from our dear old fort which was a hit for many many decades but well overdue to be replaced." Savings on maintenance will be had!

Karaka Playcentre has reached out to the Karaka community over the past couple of years seeking financial support to build the new playground. A big thank you to all those who have made (in some cases, significant financial contributions) to our fundraising fund. We've had some amazing support from local families and businesses in the community, so thank you so much, we're extremely grateful.

## A huge thanks to those of you in the community who have made a significant financial contribution:

- Jo and Brendan Lindsay
- Rorohara Farms
- Papakura Rotary
- Melanie and Wayne Kennerley
- Juliette Kemp
- Brinks
- Shelley and the team from The General Store
- Urban Soul
- Counties Power
- The generous donations from past members and from our Give A Little Page

## Karaka's new playground in a nutshell

- 1 How much did the playground cost? \$36,000
- 2 How long has it been needed? Over 10 years
- 3 How long did it take to build? Two weeks to assemble / install onsite
- 4 What are its features? Many – climbing walls, wobbly bridge, slides, stepping stones, ladders, fort, swing bars
- 5 How are the children enjoying the playground so far? Loving it!
- 6 Did the children have any say in the design? Parents had the opportunity to review the proposed design and provide feedback.
- 7 What makes Karaka special? Karaka Playcentre is a semi-rural playcentre, meaning that our members and their families are drawn from a number of nearby areas including rural areas. Raising children in a rural environment can be an isolating experience. Playcentre links these families together, so that they can support one another in the important task of raising our children.



# Whanaungatanga in action

## Ko koe ki tēnā, ko ahau ki tēnei kīwai o te kete – You at that and I at this handle of the basket

At Rerewhakaaitu Playcentre, near Rotorua, a pregnant mother wasn't feeling too flash one morning. A tamaiti, Jonty, who has been at Playcentre since he was just nine-days-old, stepped up and took on her role as parent helper that day. Mum Amanda explains.

Jonty, our almost five-year-old, asked on the way to Playcentre who was on duty that day. It was one of our pregnant mums and when we got to Playcentre, he noticed that she wasn't feeling flash that day. He offered to be on duty for her. He made the playdough and ran an activity. He also checked that the cleaning had been done before leaving, and waited for everyone to leave to lock the door.

I had never thought of this for our big kids. As far as I know it hasn't been done at our Playcentre before either. *Te Whāriki* was blown out of the park with the boxes ticked for him and also the other tamariki that understood that he was running the activity.



### Some ideas for tuakana on session

- Allow tamariki to be a part of the health and safety checks
- Support them to check that consumables are stocked up (think paper towels, toilet paper, coffee, paints).
- Help them check everyone has signed in for the day. You could create a secondary sign-in process just for tamariki, eg pictures of tamariki and kaiako, stones painted with names that get moved to a 'present' basket.
- Support tamariki to select and set up resources at Playcentre.
- Provide a camera to allow tamariki to take photos on session and write learning stories together
- Share responsibilities at meal-times. Tamariki can set the table, pour water, serve up kai and tidy up (wiping tables, sweeping up etc).

### Ngā Takohanga e Wha – The Four Responsibilities of leadership framework

**Te whai takohanga – having responsibility;** having designated roles and positions of responsibility.

**Te mouri takohanga – being responsible;** refers to an individual's attitude and actions.

**Te kawae takohanga – taking responsibility;** is about courage, risk-taking, having a go, trying new things.

**Te tuku takohanga – sharing responsibility;** is about relationships, interaction and engagement with others, sharing power, and asking for and providing assistance.

(Developed by early childhood centre Te Kōpae Piripono, as a participant in the Ministry of Education's Centres of Innovation programme)



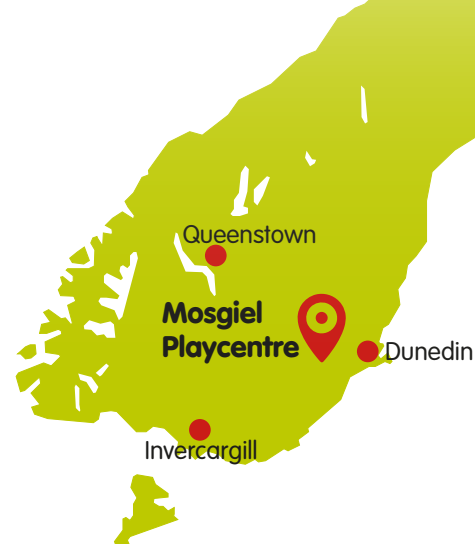
# Space returns to Otago

Southern South Island Region welcomed Space back to our Otago Playcentres, with the new Mosgiel programme beginning in term three. Space facilitator Cathy Andresen discusses the return of the programme.

The session opened with a karakia, mihi and waiata from our region's te ao Māori field worker, Sacha Harbott. Morning tea was enjoyed by the mums of the new Space group, who were then left to meet their facilitators Cathy

Andresen and Philippa Wilson.

Space is generally run over three terms; the first term covering topics around becoming a parent, getting to know your baby, and baby's early development. Term two's



topics explore ideas around brain development, nutrition and movement. Term three focuses on areas of play. Space allows parents to make strong connections with other new parents, as each group remains together and meets weekly during the babies' first year.

It's exciting to be able to bring the Space programme through Playcentre to Mums of new babies in the Dunedin area. Starting babies' education alongside their parents is a great introduction to Playcentre philosophy and can naturally lead into family involvement in Playcentre once the Space course finishes.

Now that Space has returned to Otago we aim to gradually re-introduce the programme through various Playcentres in the region.



## Some topics that Space might cover include;

- sleeping and crying
- establishing attachment
- expressing myself (communication and language development)
- physical development (fine and big muscle coordination)
- becoming a parent
- the beauty of the brain (brain development and early experiences)
- treasure baskets, heuristic play and exploration of play
- a sense of me and others (socialisation)

# Clusters are doing it for themselves!

**The Maungakiekie cluster in central Auckland – which includes Eden-Epsom, Onehunga, Hillsborough, Mangere Bridge and Maungawhau Playcentres – pulled off a cluster first recently by working together to design, erect and ‘man’ (or should that be ‘woman’?) a stand at the recent Auckland Baby and Toddler Show.**

The show took place over three days (Friday/Saturday/Sunday) in August 2019 and was attended by over 12,000 visitors – most of them pregnant or with babies or toddlers in tow. The aim of attending the show was threefold:

- to raise the profile of Playcentre Aotearoa
- to generate leads/new members for the Maungakiekie Cluster
- to test their message at a big event and try working together as a cluster on a PR project

The idea came about after the cluster PR officers started meeting termly to support each other and help lift up one centre that was low on member numbers. Through these meetings a few key points were decided on:

- Word of mouth is the best PR tool for Playcentre.
- The first priority should be looking after your members; happy members equal great advocates. The next best advocates are visitors, even if they don't end up joining; a positive experience on session is invaluable.
- Brand awareness is crucial.
- People need to know that Playcentre is an option. Even if it's not the right time for them, seeing the brand constantly keeps it front of mind.

The cluster was determined to represent, not just the Playcentres



in their own geographical area, but Playcentre Aotearoa. The stand was decked out in Playcentre colours with imagery from the new [playcentre.org.nz](https://www.playcentre.org.nz) website, with support from Playcentre Federation. The team behind the stand consisted of mainly the PR officers from the centres involved, who, between them, had a variety of skills and relevant experience which was used to great effect. In the team there was a graphic designer, a marketing professional/event manager and a customer relationship manager.

Visitors to the stand, volunteers working on it and members of other Playcentres who attended the show commented on how eye-catching the stand was and it was noticeable how very few other stands had facilities and play set-ups aimed at younger visitors to the show. The costs of exhibiting and printing of materials was shared equally among the centres and the stand was obtained at a 'not-for profit' price. Working together as a cluster made exhibiting affordable and the workload manageable (sort of!) and the end result was certainly worth it.

Mira from Onehunga Playcentre, who pursued the idea to exhibit at the show, said "while initially it was a lot of hard mahi, to see the stand come together so beautifully made it all worthwhile. Not only have we created some awesome resources for our cluster moving forward but the relationships we've made between our centres is invaluable. It was a real team effort."



## Highlights of the event were:

- seeing the Playcentre Aotearoa stand come to life in all its yellow and purple glory
  - having a wonderful Arc Assistant Learning Tower as a prize giveaway on the stand (<https://www.arcnzbaby.com>)
  - having over 200 people register to enter the competition for the Arc Assistant
  - offering a comfortable chair next to a baby mat with a hand-made mobile and heuristic basket for mums with young babies, alongside a poster containing ideas for baby play set ups
  - having heaps of playdough and natural materials set up for children visiting the show (there was very little else actually for children!)
  - having quality conversations about Playcentre and the Space programme, sharing experiences and encouraging others to consider Playcentre.
  - working together and building relationships with members from other centres in the cluster
  - creating a suite of printed materials for the cluster that can be used for future events
  - generating immediate requests to visit two centres outside the cluster from a follow-up email sent to competition entrants, and a visitor within the first few weeks to Hillsborough Playcentre
  - creating a blueprint for future events and proving that cooperation within a cluster is better than competition
- Abby Haverkamp from Eden-Epsom commented: "We spoke early about the





need to have a drawcard to our stand, a reason for by-passers to stop and engage with us. The idea to approach ARC NZ Baby to have a giveaway of one of their Learning Towers stemmed from this."

Kate from Maungawhau Playcentre reflects; "To collaborate with PR officers from other centres was invigorating and inspiring; we had a few face-to-face meetings but most other communication was done via WhatsApp and email...there were lots of late night messages and work, but we all played to our strengths and were committed to the project. In the end we created something we were really proud of – it's an exciting new era for the Playcentres in our cluster and the strong relationships we now have can only be a good thing for the future of our Playcentres."

#### Tips for working together as a cluster:

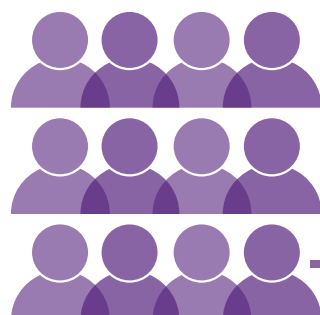
- Be brave! Set the tone. Send the first email and make contact. There are huge benefits to working together across different roles but someone needs to start the conversation. Connect with your cluster PR officers, invite them to your centre and start getting to know each other and the centres in your cluster. How could you work together moving forward?
- Work out your communication style. The Maungakiekie cluster tried using a Facebook group but found



## Interesting facts

### 3 DAYS, 22 HOURS

Meeting new people and promoting Playcentre.

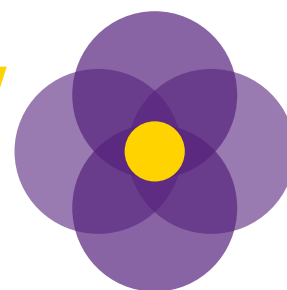


### 12,154 VISITORS

to the Baby Show over the weekend.

### 1 CLUSTER, 4 CENTRES

working together.



### 15 VOLUNTEERS

to man the stand over the weekend.

### 1 GIVEAWAY

an ARC Assistant toddler step stool (worth \$400)

### 2 PLAY SETUPS

(a baby mat with heuristics basket, mobile, books + playdough on low tables with natural resources)

that none of the members were engaging. Options were discussed at a meeting and the decision was made to trial using a WhatsApp group. This was hugely successful and allowed everyone to participate in conversations quickly and easily... crucial when planning a big event and getting things done.

- Play to your group's strengths
- Work out the payment logistics first. If sharing the costs of a large project across centres ensure one centre

has approval from their members to spend the full amount from their centre account before receiving the money from other centres. This helps with logistics and keeps the project moving along.

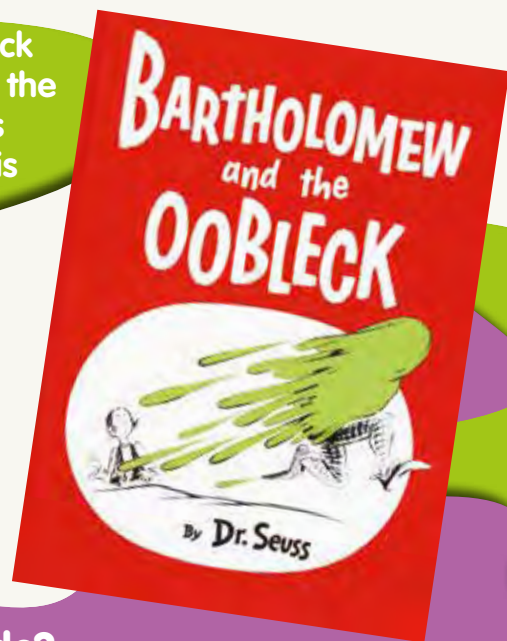
Plans are already underway for next year's show and other PR projects are in the pipeline...so watch this space. If you would like more information about the ideas in this article, please contact [kate\\_garton@hotmail.com](mailto:kate_garton@hotmail.com)



# Oobleck

Oobleck is a classic science experiment. If you haven't seen it in action, whip up a batch. Rebekah Fraser looked into the mess.

This simple concoction goes by many names. But, Oobleck gets its name from the Dr Seuss book *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*, where a gooey green substance, Oobleck, falls from the sky and wreaks havoc on a kingdom. Oobleck is a non-newtonian fluid. That is, it acts like a liquid when being poured, but like a solid when a force is acting on it. You can grab it and then it will ooze out of your hands. Make enough Oobleck and you can even walk on it.



**Oobleck**

- relax –
- experim
- proper
- learn a
- design,
- develop
- and pro
- mixing,
- skills

## The recipe

Two parts cornflour to one part water. That's it! Too wet, add more cornflour; too dry, add more water. You can add colours or other additions like glitter or sand to change the texture.

Dumping a pile of cornflour with jugs of water means mokopuna can make Oobleck themselves.

Use liquid colours and explore colour mixing and colour theory together. Or leave it white.

Oobleck can be frozen to make chalk paint, or left to dry to make powder paint.



## What to do?

- Grab a handful, squeeze it, and let it ooze out your fingers.
- Make a puddle and quickly drag your fingers through it. Can you write your name? Draw a picture?
- Make it glow in the dark! Substitute the water for tonic water with quinine and put it under a black light.
- Put it into a plastic container and shake it or quickly bump it against a table.
- Jab at the Oobleck and then slowly let your finger sink in.
- Put it on top of a speaker and play some low frequencies at high volume (put plastic over the speaker first!)
- Add plastic animals, letters or numbers.
- Provide lots of equipment – fly swats and scissors to make and cut ribbons of Oobleck, spoons, bowls, cups, sieves.
- Tip it down a slope or a marble run.
- Tie a cup to a rafter or branch above you, poke a hole in the bottom and make a pendulum.
- Challenge children to roll a ball. Can they bounce it? Can they keep it from melting?



# KEY OOBLECK

that makes for perfect messy play too. If  
watch today and prepare to be mesmerised.  
that can be washed away with water!



## Oobleck can help children to:

It is a very soothing activity  
ment with and explore the  
ties of the solution  
about colour mixing, patterns,  
texture and rhythm  
to hand-eye coordination  
practise pouring, measuring,  
scooping and beating

## Adults can support children by:

- joining in to show them it's okay to get messy
- telling stories and using chants, rhythms, songs and music while playing
- encouraging them to tell stories and sing while playing
- encourage experimentation
- use descriptive words such as slimy, runny, soft, warm, lumpy, wet.

## Ngā kupu

Hāwareware – slime  
Korihori pōrehe – messy play  
Whakaranu – mix together  
Whakamāpuna – to make float  
Totohu – to make sink  
Riringi – to pour  
E riringi ana koe i te hāwareware  
/Kei te riringi koe i te hāwareware  
– You are pouring the slime

## Clean Up

Warm water will get Oobleck off your skin. It will brush and vacuum off clothes and carpet when dry (be careful though as colour can stain). Wipes off other surfaces with a wet rag.

Do not dump the Oobleck down the drain. Rather, mix it into the soil in the garden, or pop it in the rubbish.

## Te Whāriki

Exploring Oobleck supports learning across all the strands of Te Whāriki. In particular, messy play supports the mana reo – communication strand, where children discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive. Oobleck might also support children's development in the mana aotūroa – exploration strand, where children gain confidence in and control of their own bodies, including active exploration with all the senses and the use of tools, materials and equipment to extend skills.

Oobleck provides satisfying sensory experiences that can stimulate emotional well-being (mana atua). Oobleck is often enjoyed as a group and it supports the mana whenua – contribution strand by providing opportunities for children to work with and alongside others.

## Tikanga

Tikanga varies from rohe to rohe, iwi to iwi. If unsure, consult with your hub's te ao Māori fieldworker. The "little red book" (aka Whānau Tupu Ngātahi – Families Growing Together: Report to the New Zealand Playcentre Federation from the Working Party on Cultural Issues) is also a good starting point for a discussion on tikanga.

## Further reading:

- The website, Science Learning Hub, is aimed at schools, but has lots of transferable information. You can explore topics and concepts, or take part in online PLD. A particularly interesting webinar is about opportunities to use te reo Māori in the classroom by Professor Rangi Matamua <https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/2690-opportunities-for-using-te-reo-maori>
- The *Play Ideas for Playgroups* booklet – which can be found at <http://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/teaching-and-learning/learning-tools-and-resources/play-ideas/> has a whole chapter on messy play, featuring other recipes.
- *Recipes For Messy Play* book. Republished last year by Ako Books.

# Painting – a rich sensory experience

**Pennie Brownlee once said, "Play is not an optional extra. Play is the activity that wires in all of the intelligences, and creative play is the highest form of play". Northland-based early childhood educator Kate Liddington reflects on this quote to help support her practice with infants and toddlers.**

I do not usually advocate for infants exploring with paint. The reasons behind this is that I feel they can have similar sensory experiences with natural, chemical free materials. Water in particular provides infants with similar experiences; when applied to a dry surface something appears that was not there before (much like paint on paper). The contrasting effect of dry and wet can easily be seen and added to with a variety of other materials (brushes, sponges, rollers, poured from containers, and perhaps most importantly fingers, hands, and feet).

With this being said when an infant, well more a young toddler, becomes interested in painting and is relatively past the mouthing stage of development I am more than happy to provide them with the opportunity to explore with paint.

A is 18 months old. We have a very close relationship, know each other well, and mutually engage in respectful and fun interactions with one another. A is interested in exploring textures. She loves water and sand play. She explores outside regularly really getting a hands on experiences with natural materials. Her clothes are rarely dry and clean – a great way to judge how involved she gets in exploring the outdoor environment. This curiosity in textures



## Adults can support children by:

- keeping the painting area tidy and clean
- naming and dating their work
- valuing their art work and treating it with respect
- renewing paints and paper regularly
- talking to them about their work
- making sure there's a safe place to dry and display their work
- allowing them to explore by using the same colour(s) over and over again, mixing different colours together to see what happens and exploring texture by painting on different surfaces including their hands.

## Painting can help children to:

- develop hand, eye, arm and body coordination
- develop finger and hand muscles
- use shape, form and colour to express themselves in ways they do not have words for yet
- experiment with colour and texture
- represent ideas
- show moods and feelings
- begin to develop writing skills.

(Reference: Ministry of Education. (2015). *Play Ideas for Playgroups*. Retrieved from [education.govt.nz](http://education.govt.nz).)

is further explored through her recent interest in painting.

Stefania Giamminuti describes that teachers should "approach each day with an eye that observes, senses that listen, and a mind that records". This encompasses the idea of time and freedom and of teachers really listening and being present in the moment with the child. When we give children our time we are telling them that they are important and what they are doing is important.



When I invite children into a painting experience I like to do so with one or two children rather than a group. I feel that it creates a far more meaningful experience. I can be present to these children painting, really observing them, and being available only to them. I am not worried about mess or time or something else I 'should' be doing. I select a time when I know I can create this free and uninterrupted atmosphere. While the experience is offered by







tiny amount is picked up. This is then rubbed ever so gently onto her thumb. She rubs her fingertips together for some time. Her expression is quite focused.

Next she picks up a brush. Paint is added and she explores making quick flecks of paint on the paper. Different colours are chosen, this is quite thought out. Colours are mixed on the paper firstly with the brush but then fingers become the dominant tool – and why wouldn't they... the feel of paint on skin must be such a relaxing sensory experience. The paint is swirled around and around with fingertips. Fingernails scratching the paper creates new interesting lines and patterns on the paper that are so different to using the brush and smooth fingertips.

Paint now on fingers and hands slowly becomes rubbed together. Squeezed through fingers creating that really squishing sound. Expressions of pure joy.

All of this happens over a long period of time. A indicates when she wants a new piece of paper. She also looks to me often showing me her hands and her work. My role is minimal though; a careful balance of being present, observing, and only being involved when she invites me to.

Painting is such a rich sensory experience. Seeing colours appear on the paper, watching them mix and create new colours. Patterns and shapes created, lines, dabs, dots, swirls, and masses of colour. Mixing. Large



the teacher the rest is child led. There are no cut out shapes or pictures to paint, no predetermined final product, children can choose the paint colours they wish to use and the tools they wish to paint with. Paint can go on the table and chairs and clothing. It is the child's experience, not ours, so why would we restrict it?

### What follows is a description of my observations of A's painting experience:

White paper and paints are set up attractively on the table (aesthetics are so important). A sits down. Her first movement is to carefully dip one fingertip into the paint. Just a

dollops of paint thrown onto the paper but then gently spread around. Quick brush strokes back and forth. The desire to touch and use the body to explore is so strong.

It is difficult to express the magic of this experience through words and photos. It was a time special to just A and myself but which I felt like I should try and share as best as my descriptive abilities allow.

This is another example of giving children time and freedom to explore their interests the way they want to but with an adult fully present in the moment. Here A explores creatively all the while my complete presence further strengthens our relationship.

I really look forward to observing A's artistic and creative journey over her time with me.



### Te Whāriki

Painting can be used to support all strands of *Te Whāriki*. In particular, painting supports the Mana Reo – Communication strand, where children discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive. It also supports Mana Aotūroa – Exploration strand, where children gain confidence in and control of their own bodies. This includes active exploration with all the senses and the use of tools, materials and equipment to extend skills.



# The magic of

Loose parts are open-ended objects and materials that can be manipulated, moved and changed with many possibilities, with no adult-imposed directives on how to use them. The open-ended nature of loose parts, from three to six years, tamariki acquire new gross and fine motor skills, and increasing spatial awareness. They use their bodies for their own purposes. Around the same age, most tamariki can use small parts safely, are curious and creative (Daly and Beloglovsky, 2014).

Children construct knowledge from their experiences and through meaningful interactions with people. Learning theories, which are extended and refined through play and engaging in complex thinking with others, encourage collaborations and cooperations (Daly and Beloglovsky, 2014).

Loose parts also offer a sustainable and economically feasible option for play materials. Loose parts can also include natural resources. Children can learn to value and enjoy the variety and

## Role of the kaiako

- Provide suitable and stimulating materials and resources to engage in loose parts play.
  - consideration of health and safety when ensuring appropriate resources are provided and set up for the tamariki to engage in play (Mawson, 2011).
  - Whanaungatanga can be built through respectful working relationship with learners, whānau, and the community by asking for donations of resources (Ministry of Education, 2011).
  - Natural materials, such as branches and shells, can be collected on excursions which creates stronger bonds and builds connections in our wider community of learners (Ministry of Education, 2015).
- Show an openness to and accept the ideas and solutions suggested by listening to tamariki and valuing their stories, play, and what they have to say (Lee, 2011).
- Create a problem-solving culture and an environment that fosters innovation and creativity (McNaughton and Williams, 2008).



## Examples of loose parts

### Natural resources

Shells, river stones, sticks, leaves, branches, dried flowers, feathers, seed pods, harakeke, pumice, pinecones, tree trunks, vines, conifer needles, sand, mud, straw.

### Large parts

Rope, cable reels, planks, pulleys, fabric, tyres, spouting, PVC pipes, canvas, chains, tarps, boxes, hammers, saws, shovels, barrels, hoses, pallets, bricks, crates.

### Small parts

Clothes pegs, beads, glass gems, recycled containers, milk bottle lids, nuts and bolts, rubber bands, tape measures, funnels, jugs, cups, spoons, cardboard tubes, scarves, string.



# f loose parts



With no specific set of directions, offering multiple uses and outcomes. They possess infinite play possibilities. Loose parts encourages creativity and imagination, as well as deep critical thinking. Between the ages of 3 and 5, engaging in loose parts play encourages the development of confidence in their ability to use their hands, developing oral language, and have an increasing interest in working cooperatively with peers.

Children use people and objects. They draw on existing knowledge to make sense of the world through working with loose parts (Peters and Davies, 2011). Objects and materials invite conversations and interactions, and they

can include an almost limitless variety of treasures that can be easily sourced and are affordable. The beauty of the natural world, which is an important part of tikanga Māori (Hancock, 2004).

## Links to Te Whāriki

The principles, strands and learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki* underpin loose parts play. Some of the greatest benefits for young children include:

### Whakamana – Empowerment

Child-initiated loose parts play enables tamariki to lead their own learning.

### Kotahitanga – Holistic Development

Loose parts play offers a holistic learning environments; opportunities for social, language, cognitive, cultural, spiritual and physical development.

### Whānau Tangata – Family and Community

The availability of parts will reflect natural and material worlds of the local community.

### Ngā hononga – Relationships

Tamariki have opportunities to work collaboratively with and alongside peers and kaiako.

### Mana Whenua – Belonging

Te waihangā hononga: Making connections between people, places and things in their world.

### Mana Tangata – Contribution

Te ngākau makuru: Treating others fairly and including them in their play.  
Te rangatiratanga: Recognising and appreciating their own ability to learn.

Te ngākau aroha: Using a range of strategies and skills to play and learn with others.

### Mana Reo – Communication

He kōrero ā-tinana: Using gestures and movements to express themselves.

He kōrero ā-waha: Understanding oral language and using it for a range of purposes.

He kōrero paki: Retelling and creating stories.

He kōrero pāngaru: Using mathematical concepts with enjoyment and purpose.

He kōrero auaha: Expressing their ideas creatively using a range of materials.

### Mana Aotūroa – Exploration

Te whakaaro me te tūharahara i te pūtaiao: Playing, imagining, inventing and experimenting.

Te wero ā-tinana: Challenging themselves physically.

Te hīraurau hopanga: Reasoning and problem-solving.

Te rangahau me te mātauranga: Making sense of their world through working theories.



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By Fazeema Ciuccariello, Katie Ward (Cambridge Playcentre), and Kara Daly (Playcentre Aotearoa).

# Gagana Sāmoa – Sāmoan Language

Embrace the Gagana (language) by finding ways to use Sāmoan every day. For brand new s  
lava (hello), mālō le sōifua (good health to you) or tōfā soifua (goodbye), fa'afetai (thank you)

## Fa'aleoga o le Gagana Sāmoa – Basic pronunciation tips

Gagana Sāmoa has five vauei (vowels): a, e, i, o, u.

These vauei have the same pronunciation as other Pacific languages, including te reo Māori. Vauei can be short or long. The long vowel sound is indicated with a macron.

a, e, i, o, u (as in the English: are, there, three or two)

ā, ē, ī, ō, ū (as in the English: father, egg, feet, thought, loot)

It is important that the short and long vowel sounds are used, as they distinguish between different words – for example, ava (respect) verses āvā (wife).

Gagana Sāmoa has thirteen konesane (consonants): f, g, l, m, n, p, s, t, v, h, k, r and ['] (glottal stop) The consonants are pronounced like in English, except for the letter 'g'. In Sāmoan, you need to put a 'n' sound in front of 'g' – making it a 'nga' sound, as in te reo Māori, or the 'ng' sound from the English word 'song'.

**TIP:** For more on speaking Gagana Sāmoa, check out the Ministry of Education's resource, *Mua Ō! An introduction to Gagana Sāmoa*. This resource has been designed for use by educators in New Zealand, including those who are new to or beginners at Gagana Sāmoa themselves.

## Upu Fesoasoani | Helpful Words

Talofa lava – Greetings/Hello

Afio mai – Welcome

Tōfā – Bye

Tōfā soifua – Goodbye

la manuia le afiafi – Have a good evening

la manuia le pō – Have a good night

Fa'amolemole – Please

Fa'amalie atu – Sorry

Tulou lava – Excuse me

Fa'afetai lava – Thank you very much

'O ā mai 'oe? – How are you?

Manuia fa'afetai – Fine, thank you

O lo'u igoa o ... – My name is...

O ai? – Who

O le a? – What

O fea? – Where

A fea? – When

Aisea? – Why

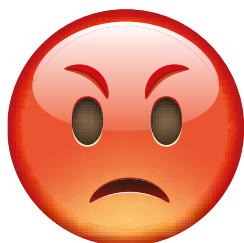




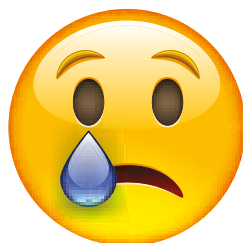
speakers, it might be as simple as using greetings like tālofa  
) or learning other upu fesoasoani (helpful words) daily.



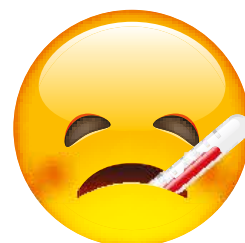
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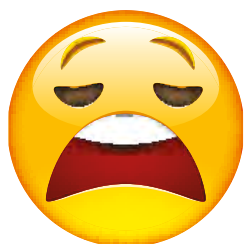
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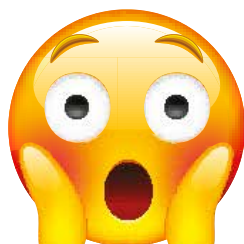
**Fa'anoanoa**



**Ma'i**



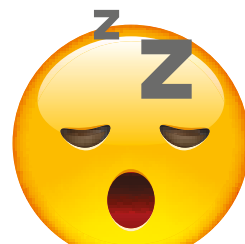
**popole**



**fa'aoyo**



**alofa**



**lelavā**

## Live the values

The values of āiga (family), alofa (love), tautua (service) and fa'aaloalo (respect) are very important in fa'asāmoa (Sāmoan culture), and are integral to learning and using Gagana Sāmoa.

What do these values mean to you? Find ways to put them into practice during Sāmoan Language Week, or better still, make plans to incorporate them into your Playcentre.

You could:

- Prepare a shared tausamiga (feast), or a ti o le malūtaeao /afiafi (morning or afternoon tea), with all your favourite Sāmoan dishes for family and friends as a thank you for all that they do.
- Organise a visit with seniors living in your community retirement homes.
- Volunteer your skills and knowledge to help out a community group, like your lotu (church), or a'oga (school).
- Make a commitment with your family for the year ahead (e.g. improving your Gagana Sāmoa) and take the steps to see it through.

(from Ministry of Pacific Peoples. (2016). *Vaiaso o le Gagana Sāmoa Sāmoan Language Week Education Resource 2016*. Retrieved from <https://mpia.govt.nz>).

## Explore Sāmoan measina (treasures)

Some examples of traditional measina include:

- 'ie tōga (fine mats)
- Tanoa fai 'ava ('ava/kava bowl)
- Siapo (tapa/bark cloth)
- Selu Tuiga (head comb)
- Nifo'oti (hooked cane knife)
- Tatau (tattoo) equipment
- 'ulafala (pandanus lei)

### Reference:

This work is based on the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa's "Sāmoan language activity book" which is licensed by Te Papa for reuse under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International Licence. It also includes information from the Ministry of Pacific People's *Pacific Language Cards*, and *Vaiaso o le Gagana Sāmoa Sāmoan Language Week Education Resource 2016*.

**Encouragement  
and positive  
reinforcement**

# Teaching S

**Allow pauses**

**Meaningful prompts  
but not the answers**

**Follow child**

**Model curiosity  
"I wonder..."**

**Give feedback**

**Minimise negatives  
e.g don't, can't, shouldn't**

**Collaboration  
work together towards a  
common goal**

**Break tasks down**

**Reflective listening  
re-state what tamariki said**

**Check what children mean  
don't assume**

**Inviting play set-ups**

**Remove**

**Responsive and reciprocal relationships**

**Offer alternatives**



# Strategies

**Link to previous experiences**

**Ako  
kaiako is also a learner**

**Children's leads**

**Get down to their physical level**

**Encourage different approaches**

**Books and other media**

**Open-ended questions**

**Active listening  
no interruptions**

**Direct guidance**

**Physical support**

**Less intervention**

**Physical barriers**

**Detailed explanation**

**Encourage inclusion  
"Who has a different idea?"**

**Role model  
non-verbally**

**Positive guidance**

**Scaffolding**

**Describe details  
using rich language**

# 14 things to do when you a

The difference between a 'good-enough' session and a great session lies in  
The better we understand that ro

1

## Know the tamariki and their whānau on session

Great sessions are all about great relationships. The best Playcentre sessions are the ones when a visitor can't tell who belongs to who, because everyone is whānau. Get to know new tamariki by learning their names, passions and interests.

2

## Know your environment inside out

Your environment is part of your team. Find out what resources are available on session and where it is kept.

3

## Set up invitations to play/ provocations to learn

Arrange open-ended interesting materials so that it invites tamariki to explore, investigate, transform, question, examine, participate, touch, feel, and manipulate as much as possible. Set up prior to session and re-present during

4

## Slow do

Get into the of watching tamariki to learn a strengths, are working how you can achieve th

8

## Think out loud

Thinking out loud is about sharing your internal self talk with tamariki. Most things you know, they are still learning. By thinking out loud you provide them with a whole lot of information about the world.

9

## Share stories

Listen to their stories and share your own. Tamariki learn about how the world works, and connect ideas and understanding together to make sense of things through shared stories.

10

## Role model

Children do what they see. Help by demonstrating and role modelling. Help them learn kindness, compassion, playfulness, and more, by modelling those qualities.

11

## Guide, and p

Guide ch behaviour and safegua and rights o child



# re on session at Playcentre

what the adults on session do. As parents we are the teachers on session. The more we know, the better we can do our job.

5

## Own and serve

the business of the session. Observe children carefully about their play, what they are doing on, and help them achieve their goals.

6

## Be playful

Get in boots and all and play. Play is the mahi of our tamariki. When they play, they learn. Playing alongside them values their play and helps build stronger relationships.

7

## Answer questions

It's not about knowing the right answer, but about engaging in conversations. When you respond to children's questions with your own, you show tamariki that curiosity is valid.

Asking open ended questions is your superpower. Be genuinely interested in what tamariki are doing and ask questions to find out more about what they are thinking. Open ended questions require more than a yes or no answer.

12

## Nurture and protect

children's needs positively and the needs of individual children.

13

## Assist tamariki

Hold the paper, pass the glue, push the swing, do as you're told. Help them to achieve something they can't quite yet master on their own.

## Encourage

Help them pluck up the courage to try new things. Encourage tamariki to try out new ideas, even if they don't work out the first time. Encourage them to look for many different solutions.

14

## Do real work

Tamariki love doing real work...baking, cleaning, gardening and more. When they do real work, they build relationships and learn how the world works.

Adapted from work by Dalene Mactier, Playcentre Aotearoa.

# Looking back to move forward: Playcentre funding

This is the third article in a series sharing some of the findings and implications from Suzanne Manning's thesis on Playcentre and policy. If you have questions about this article, or other aspects of Playcentre's history you would like answered, send them to the Journal Editor via [journal@playcentre.org.nz](mailto:journal@playcentre.org.nz). If you would like to read the thesis, it is now available at <http://hdl.handle.net/2292/45982>

## The early learning strategic plan 2019

In 2019 the government is developing a new ten-year strategic plan for the early learning sector. Sub-goal 4.5 is "co-design an appropriate funding model with the Playcentre Federation". As we move into a co-design phase, it is good to look back at how funding policies have affected Playcentre in the past.

## The importance of co-designing policy

Often policymakers have misunderstood Playcentre practice and have been surprised at the effects of the new policies. Yet these results could well have been predicted by Playcentre members. Here I give three examples.

### Quality funding

Quality funding from 1997 included eligibility criteria based on Playcentre-specific qualifications, but by 1999 the take-up rate by Playcentres was only 3.2 percent. This was because only one funding rate could be claimed in any one week, which was fine for a Centre where the same staff are employed throughout the week. However, as Playcentres used forms of group supervision, it was possible for each session in a week to be run by a different supervision team, some not meeting the eligibility criteria. Some Playcentres also operated a 'dual roll' system, where two groups of families would attend different sessions. With two groups operating in one Centre, one group could qualify for quality funding and the other one might not, making the whole Centre ineligible for quality funding. The 'one rate per week' rule made it nearly impossible for Playcentres to claim the higher funding rate.

### Government equity funding

High numbers of rural Playcentres were eligible for equity funding when it started in 2002. It was a relatively



small funding boost, with most eligible Playcentres receiving between \$1000 and \$2000 per year. An evaluation study found that most services used the money for quality improvements rather than increasing enrolments. However there was a participation effect for Playcentres which surprised the researchers:

Unexpectedly, the use of Equity Funding to enhance quality was sometimes associated with gains in the regularity and duration of attendance and parent/whānau involvement. These gains occurred when parent and whānau-led services, particularly playcentres, employed staff to reduce volunteer workloads, when services included parents in activities that interested them, such as excursions and wānanga, when additional staff were employed to work with families, and when improvements were made to resources and the service environment. The Equity Funding use made the service more attractive to parents/

whānau or led to better communication. (Mitchell et al., 2006)

This effect would not have been so unexpected for Playcentre members, as there had been ongoing internal discussion for almost a decade about increasing workloads since the *Before Five* reforms.

### 20 Hours Free ECE

*Ngā Huarahi Arataki* led to the 20 Hours policy, which was designed to compensate teacher-led services for the costs of the new quality requirements while lowering the overall cost to families. Playcentres were excluded because there were no increased costs resulting from *Ngā Huarahi Arataki*, and fees were already very low, so increased funding would have no impact on meeting government objectives. Playcentres would not receive less funding, therefore the Ministry considered that maintaining the status quo was fair and equitable.

Playcentre parents, however, saw





being excluded as undervaluing their contribution, as their costs were time rather than money. The Ministry agreed, but thought that the policy would

still be acceptable as parents were offered free places for their children at a teacher-led service in addition to Playcentre attendance. From a

government perspective, this would increase the number of hours these families participated in early learning, allow the parents to have time away from their children, and not penalise them for choosing to be involved in Playcentre. Although the Ministry had the basic facts correct, they did not understand what motivated Playcentre parents.

Playcentre parents generally did not wish to increase their hours of attendance, and valued the time spent with their children at Playcentre. What they saw as a burden was the administrative workload that had come with increasing professionalisation. Research found that spending time with children was the primary reason for choosing Playcentre as an option:

"We're in Playcentre because we want to spend time with our children not dealing with the piles of paper generated by the Ministry and by ourselves," lamented one centre. Employing paid administrators to deal with paperwork was a solution suggested by many who felt that any



conflict between paid and voluntary positions that could arise would quickly disappear as the advantages of a lighter workload became obvious. (Sparkes, 2001).

Although Playcentres used volunteer labour, centres were happy to pay for administration. As other services were getting a funding increase through the 20 Hours policy, Playcentre parents did not think it was "fair and equitable" that there would be no extra funding to enable a lighter administrative workload. Lobbying from the Playcentre Federation gained a concession in 2006, when the government announced a funding rate increase for Playcentres for administration support.

## Ngā Huarahi Arataki/Pathways to the Future

It is easier to say why a policy will not work well rather than generate new policy solutions. When *Ngā Huarahi Arataki* was developed, the Playcentre representatives voiced their concerns that the draft plan focused on professional early childhood teachers and that parents-as-educators in Playcentres were not being included. They articulated the Playcentre philosophy of valuing parents as educators of their children but were unable to suggest regulations or strategies to support this, and few strategies for Playcentres came out of the plan. This example highlights the necessity of co-design, combining the expertise of sensitive policymakers with the knowledge of organisational members.

## Sustaining small centres

Any funding system designed for Playcentres must cater for services with small enrolment numbers. Many Playcentres are small and/or rural and are an important provider in these communities.

### Before Five

The Before Five funding system was a universal subsidy calculated in hours of attendance per child (bulk funding). The NZPF treasurer calculated that a centre needed about 20 children per session to get enough funding. This was never going to be possible for many Playcentres that operated in rural areas with small numbers of children (less than 20, sometimes less than 10) and only once or twice a week. The suggested weighting for extra costs

due to rural locations never eventuated.

By 1991 many small centres were closing, so a national equity sharing scheme was introduced "to share funds between associations so that all are able to meet funding shortfalls in centres as well as pay for their own support services for centres" (Playcentre Journal Editor, 1991). This equity fund quickly became an accepted part of Playcentre culture, where centres receiving higher amounts of funding paid higher levies, and smaller centres received extra funding. Playcentres in 2008 were paying an average of 30 percent of their funding in levies (Woodhams and Woodhams, 2008). The internal equity system was the main reason that many rural Playcentres were able to stay open.

### Funding that worked for small centres

The top-up payment for small centres announced in the 2004 Government Budget guaranteed an annual minimum level of funding. This met both the Playcentres' need for sustainable funding, and the Ministry's objective of ensuring families in rural areas were still able to access early childhood education. This small centre top-up was not large in monetary terms but was significant in the budgets of the tiny Playcentres, especially when combined with government equity funding and the Playcentre internal equity sharing.

## Playcentre as a Collective

Before 1990, the NZPF received money direct from the government for centre support. With the Before Five system, centres were supposed to 'buy' support from wherever they chose. The NZPF was bypassed, and there was discussion as to whether it would continue to exist. Playcentres decided to retain the NZPF and funded it through levies; that is, Playcentres decided they wanted to remain as a collective organisation. Therefore a funding system must consider not only the costs of the individual Playcentres, but also the costs of the federation.

### Funding parents-as-educators

As the co-design process for funding commences, perhaps we should also be questioning the fundamental differences between teacher-led services and parent cooperatives. In 2019, Playcentre has been restructured into regional hubs with paid staff. Many centres have paid supervisors.

Playcentre Education now deliver the New Zealand early childhood education qualifications, rather than Playcentre-specific qualifications.

What remains constant, however, is that parents still have roles as educators at the centres. They work alongside others with varying amounts of training and experience, and learn about the education of young children. Not every parent is interested in this learning, and not every parent can afford this time; yet for some, it is a life changing experience, and one which helps them form relationships with both children and adults in their community.

In the future, is it Playcentres that should be protected as a separate early learning service type, or is it support for parents-as-educators that should be protected? Imagine, instead, a generic early learning service where registered teachers form the core of the teaching team, and parents-as-educators make up the rest of the team. The funding system would need to allow for this teaching team composition without penalty to the centre, and enabling the parents to be paid when they are part of the teaching team would allow more than just the wealthy families to take part in this learning opportunity. In the words of Anne Meade, this would remove the necessity for an either/or choice for families (i.e. teacher-led or parent cooperative) and allow for a both/and scenario. I think this is a proposal worth discussing.

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# General phrases

Have a go at these simple, everyday phrases.

## Hello

Kia ora

Tēnā koe

## How are you?

Kei te pēhea koe?

E pēhea ana koe?

Kei te aha koe?

Did you know?

**Kia ora**

means

**Thank you**

as well as

**Hello**

## Good

Kei te pai

E pai ana

Ka nui te ora

## Bye

Hei konā

Haere rā!  
(speaker stays)

E noho rā  
(speaker leaves)

► Check out our great audio tips to help with your pronunciation of Māori here: [www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/resources](http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/resources)



*'Kia ita!'*  
**Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori**  
MĀORI LANGUAGE COMMISSION

[www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz](http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz)

# Engaging Centre whānau

**Good communication, consultation and Playcentre whānau involvement are at the heart of good decision-making and building a collaborative relationship with centres and the community. Dalene Mactier discusses engagement.**

The diversity of the community is a strength and by using a range of communication and consultation strategies, we can best meet the needs of our whole community and ensure that the whole community is informed about key proposals, actions and strategies.

An effective engagement strategy ensures that

- All Playcentre whānau is informed and engaged in key proposals, actions and strategies.
- Decisions about Playcentre whānau is made by Playcentre whānau.
- We meet our obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.
- We capitalise on the expertise within our Playcentre community to benefit our centre.

## Defining terms

For the purpose of clarity of the intent to engage Playcentre whānau communication, consultation and collaboration is defined as follows;

- **Communication:** Day to day operation decisions are delegated to office bearers to make and to communicate these decisions to the wider centre as is relevant. Office bearers strive to ensure all Playcentre whānau are well informed, while not overwhelmed with information. It's a fine balance.
- **Consultation:** When operational policy decisions need to be made which will affect the day to day operations of the centre whānau, the core Playcentre team will seek input from all Playcentre whānau and other key stakeholders to ensure all decisions are well informed.
- **Collaboration:** Where creative solutions to complex problems are required, Playcentre teams will involve and collaborate with all Playcentre whānau to develop solutions over time as partners. Collaboration will be used where complex problems could have a major impact on Playcentre whānau and requires buy-in to successfully implement the decision.

## Guidelines

### Communication

Communication with Playcentre



whānau need to be transparent, clear, simple and consistent.

### Consultation

- Consultation is inclusive of relevant Playcentre whānau and other key stakeholders.
- Consultation will take place in a timely fashion in order to provide Playcentre whānau adequate time to engage in the process.

- Relevant information will be made accessible and disseminated to Playcentre whānau and where possible opportunities will be arranged for face to face communication.
- The consultation process as in the diagram will be followed.

### Collaboration

- Collaboration is inclusive of all





Playcentre whānau and other key stakeholders.

- Where possible a Playcentre whānau working group is established to ensure a process of collaboration. Life at Playcentre is 90 percent aroha and 10 percent solving problems. Solving problems can be an empowering learning experience if we follow a good process. On the flip side, if we manage our problem solving poorly a small problem can grow into a mountain.

### All problems are not equal

The first step in following a good process is acknowledging that all problems are not equal – all problems will lie on a continuum from simple to complicated to complex. When we don't follow a good process a small problem can turn into chaos.



### Simple problems

Simple problems are easy to solve. These are the problems where you can follow a step by step process to solve a problem, for example buying a new vacuum cleaner. Check your budget, research your options, recommend an option and get agreement.

### Complicated problems

Complicated problems are ones like building a new playground. Usually you can break it down into a series of simple problems, but this might not always work for you. Success often takes wide consultation, several people working on it and seeking expertise advice along the way. You are bound to run into a number of unanticipated difficulties and each of these will need to be solved on your way to success. You will need to carefully plan, consult and coordinate and manage your time well to pull it off.

### Complex problems

Complex problems are ones like creating a more cooperative culture at the Centre or encouraging more adults to complete the Playcentre qualifications. There is no clear process to follow or an easy fix to your problem. You will need more than one strategy and a strategy that worked once, might

not work the next time. Expertise is valuable but not sufficient.

### Solve with success

We can solve all problems at Playcentre by following an internal evaluation (self review) process;

- notice the problem,
- investigate to gather information about the problem,
- make sense collaboratively,
- prioritise to take action, and
- monitor and evaluate impact

The further along the problem is on the complexity continuum the more in-depth your process will be

### Simple problems

- agree on the desired outcome
- follow the Centre process
- stick to the budget (where relevant)
- get agreement at a meeting
- use meetings, Facebook, email and polls to communicate

### Complicated problems

- identify the stakeholders
- agree on the desired outcome
- seek expertise knowledge early on
- define roles clearly
- consult widely using face to face, written and online communication
- define roles, allocate jobs and task

descriptions

- follow decision making process
- stick to budgets, process and timelines

### Complex problems

Solving complex problems start with whanaungatanga – building strong relationships. Follow all of the above and add a few more strategies

- consult often and continuously until you have a plan of attack.
- look for shared understandings and work collectively to make sense.
- note trends and issues that emerge.
- once you start to implement keep reflecting and reviewing your strategies.
- learn from it. Transformation change is a learning experience.

### Kanohi ki te kanohi

No matter the problem, always return to face to face when an online conversation (email, Facebook or other) becomes fractious. Always remember the belief is that 55 percent of communication is body language, 38 percent is tone of voice, and 7 percent is the actual words spoken. So while online communication can be very efficient, this is only 7 percent of the message!

# Playcentre engagement plan

	COMMUNICATE	CONSULT	COLLABORATE
<b>RATIONALE</b>	Playcentre whānau will be informed of decision where consultation was not required.	Where information is needed to help to make a decision or Playcentre whānau will be indirectly affected by decisions, core team will gather information on views, attitudes and priorities to inform decision-making.	Where Playcentre whānau will be directly impacted by decisions and creative solutions to more complex problems are required, the core team will encourage Playcentre whānau and other key stakeholders to participate in the decision making process through seeking out new ideas and suggestions.
<b>STAKEHOLDERS</b>	Playcentre whānau, Māori whānau group, wider community	Playcentre whānau, Māori whānau group, wider community	Playcentre whānau, Māori whānau group, wider community
<b>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES</b>	To provide balanced, objective, accurate and consistent information to assist Playcentre whānau and other stakeholders to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain information and work directly with Playcentre whānau and other stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and needs are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with Playcentre whānau and other relevant stakeholders to develop alternatives, make decisions and identify preferred solutions, and actively contribute to the final decision.
<b>STAKEHOLDER PROMISE</b>	We will keep you informed.	We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are reflected in the solutions developed and provide feedback on how stakeholder input influenced the outcome, and seek consensus decisions where possible.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the outcomes to maximise a consensus decision.
<b>TOOLS OF ENGAGEMENT</b>	Fact sheets Newsletters, bulletins, circulars Social media	Focus groups Surveys Association meetings Centre meetings Working groups Web tools	Working groups Pilot projects Centre meetings, forums and working groups Polls, online forums and web tools Consensus decision making forums





# NGĀ MIHI

## GREETINGS & SIGN-OFFS

Note that the Māori phrases provided are often not literal translations of the English terms given alongside them. Rather, they are equivalent ways of expressing the same ideas.

### Ngā mihi | Greetings

The following are examples of suitable greetings in correspondence

**Tēnā koe**

Dear Sir/Madam

**E te rangatira, tēnā koe**

Dear Sir/Madam

**Tēnā anō koe**

Greetings again

**Tēnā koe i roto i ngā āhuatanga i te wā**

Greetings to you and the circumstances of the time

**Kia ora**

Hello/Hi

**Kia ora rā**

Hello/Hi

**Kia ora anō rā**

Hello/Hi again

### He whakakapinga | Sign offs

The following expressions are suitable ways of ending the main part of a letter before the concluding salutation. (In Māori there are perfectly polite and do not seem abrupt, as might their literal English translation)

**Me mutu pea i konei**

I'll leave it there

**Kua rahi tēnei**

That's enough for now

**Kāti ake i konei**

Let's leave it there for now

**Ka nui tēnei**

That's it for now

**Ā kāti**

Let's leave it there

### He mihi whakakapi | Concluding salutations

The following are suitable salutations to conclude correspondence

**Noho ora mai rā**

Look after yourself

**Hei konā mai**

Goodbye for now

**Hei konā mai me ngā mihi**

Thanks and goodbye

**Kia kōrero anō au i a koe**

Until I hear from you again

**Māu au e whakamōhio mai**

Let me know

**Ngā mihi**

Thanks

**Nāku, nā**

Yours faithfully, [NAME]

**Nāku noa, nā**

Yours sincerely, [NAME]



'Kia ita!'

Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori  
MAORI LANGUAGE COMMISSION

tetaurawhiri.govt.nz

# Supporting whānau with perinatal wellbeing

Pregnancy can be a wonderful experience, but it also brings many changes and challenges for the whole family. For some expectant or new parents, these challenges can become overwhelming, affecting their daily life and functioning. Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Aotearoa (PADA) is the national organisation committed to eliminating the stigma around perinatal mental health in New Zealand. It has a number of resources on supporting whānau with perinatal wellbeing, and has kindly allowed the *Playcentre Journal* to share them below.

When Rebekah was pregnant with her first baby, she quickly realised she didn't 'feel' like the expectant mothers she'd seen in the media. Instead of a glow and feelings of joy, a "dark cloud" descended onto her and her pregnancy, in part due to hyperemesis gravidarum (severe morning sickness). "I felt like I was a fraud. Everyone I spoke to told me to be grateful or that it was just my hormones. I knew it was something more but instead of

speaking up, I shut up," she said. She struggled through her pregnancy, giving birth to a healthy baby girl. "As soon as she was out, the cloud lifted." That was until she found herself pregnant again, less than six months after the birth. "I cried every day and found myself withdrawing from every thing – my pregnancy, my baby, my husband, my family and friends." A chance run-in with a midwife led to some deeper questioning and support,

and Rebekah was diagnosed with antenatal depression. "Knowing that I wasn't alone, that I was normal, was a huge relief. I came to understand that I wasn't a bad mother for feeling like that. I just wish I'd known that the first time around."

## How to support a parent

- Listen quietly but with interest.
- Try to understand – it's hard for someone who is depressed or anxious to explain how they feel.
- Avoid judging or getting angry – it's no one's fault.
- Be there (this means to be emotionally available as well as physically present). Be patient.
- Help reduce stresses. Offer practical help.
- Give positive words of support, affection and encouragement. Be positive about any accomplishments no matter how small they might seem.
- Don't take what they say personally. Remember that when a person is unwell or stressed they can say things they don't mean, and their mood can change quickly.
- Remain positive. Provide encouragement and lots of positive reinforcement – even if what you are saying seems obvious.
- When reassuring, try not to dismiss a person's concerns. Instead of saying something isn't a problem say, for example, "I can see that is really worrying you – I will be with you to help with that"
- Due to the indecisiveness of depression a person may need guidance and support with decision making– but don't jump in too early with your solutions.
- Offer distracting thoughts or activities, especially if you can see that they are going round and round in circles in their thinking or are overwhelmed by their feelings.
- Help them to get out and have fresh air and exercise. They may not feel motivated to do so but will often feel better if they do.
- Help get regular meals/snacks especially if breastfeeding.
- If they are suffering a lot and not getting better, help them to get help.
- Take seriously any negative thoughts they may have about harming themselves, or their baby, and get help urgently.
- Men are less likely to want to talk but encourage them gently if they seem ready for this. For example, offer some openings for them to talk like asking "it can be tough with a new baby – how's it going"
- Partners need to know that they are not failing their baby or partner if they feel stressed
- Family members often forget that the partner of someone with PND will also be suffering. Remember to offer them your support and help.



## How to support other children in the family

The needs of any other children in the family also require attention. Parents with depression may only be able to care for and cope with the baby. They may not be able to cope with any other demands. Toddlers in particular can be difficult and a depressed or anxious parent may find it even harder to keep up. Older children may feel rejected and confused if they no longer have time with their parent, because they are busy with the baby and depressed. Some one-on-one time with their parent is important. In this situation, help with the baby can be useful.

- Give a simple and brief explanation of behaviour. Don't go into detail about underlying feelings or thoughts.
- It is important to explain that their parent will get better but that you are not sure when.
- Do not blame anyone.
- Explain to children that their parent is being looked after and getting help.
  - Do not look to the children for emotional support. Children should not need to look after their parent – help them feel this is not their responsibility.
  - Don't expect too much of your children – they are also having to adjust.
  - Maintain their routines whenever possible
  - Remember that children have an amazing capacity to 'get through' as long as they have someone they can feel close to

## Queer families

It can happen to queer parents too... By queer, PADA refers to any lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered parent. Sometimes being a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered parent can feel like a pretty invisible position. It's easy for people to make the assumption that because you have a baby, you are in a heterosexual relationship. The transition to becoming a parent is also rife with different kinds of issues, which may present more challenges along the way. Conversely, becoming a queer parent may be a great opportunity to become more comfortable with your own identity, to connect more with your family of origin and to get lots of positive feedback from other people about what a great parent you'll be.

There is not a lot of research out there, but what research has been done suggests that lesbian mothers may experience slightly higher rates of symptoms of post-natal depression.

## What do Queer parents say has been helpful for them?

- Being out to your midwife and doctors. Try it! They'll be more open than you think. If they aren't, then it's quite okay to change and find someone who is more comfortable with you.
- Find support wherever you can. There are often groups of queer parents in the larger cities. Even if you can't make it to meetings, you might be able to get in touch with other queer parents to talk things through.
- Use your information and contacts to find health professionals who suit you. For example, do you know anyone connected with the health field or other queer parents who could recommend a midwife?
  - Belonging to a social network for queer families eg. [rainbowfamiliesnz.org](http://rainbowfamiliesnz.org)
  - Talking explicitly about how to manage role-confusion when you have two Mums or Dads.
  - Deciding in advance what you're willing to tell people about how you created your family.

## Rural isolation

Rural isolation is a unique problem in a number of areas in New Zealand.

Many rural people live large distances away from their nearest town and families can often be quite isolated from one another. There are additional problems when there is a lack of support services nearby. GPs are often quite a distance away and can be busy and overworked. Psychologists and psychiatrists may not be available locally, so support services for women with mental health problems may be quite limited. Extra childcare may not be available.

This geographic and social isolation can lead to anxiety and stress even in women who are well.

It can be hard to ask for help in a small community where everybody knows everybody else.

The internet is becoming a valuable tool for assisting these women. There are programmes trialling online counselling treatment programmes. Isolated women may find these advances help.

## Need help?

If you are worried about yourself, your partner, family or whānau member, or friend, encourage them to talk with their midwife, doctor or other person they trust. Remember to take care of yourself: Having support in your role as a carer is important.

- **Call 111** if you are concerned about their immediate safety
- **Need to talk?** Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor.
- **Lifeline** – 0800 543 354 (0800 LIFELINE) or free text 4357 (HELP).
- **Youthline** – 0800 376 633, free text 234, email [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz) or online chat.
- **Samaritans** – 0800 726 666.

## What the numbers tell us:

Number of births in New Zealand in 2018:

**58,020**

percentage of pregnant women with high levels of depression:

**12%**

percentage of women who suffer with depression in pregnancy who develop postnatal depression:

**50%**

the percentage of pregnant women who develop antenatal depression is up to:

**11%**

the percentage of men who can experience depression after childbirth:

**4.3%**

### References:

The Playcentre Journal thanks PADA (Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Aotearoa) for allowing it to share information and advice from its website [pada.nz](http://pada.nz).



# Waiata mai – Sing to me

Singing and music are two constants in our lives. Music is present in many aspects of our lives – from television and movies, to worship and holidays, celebrations, ceremonies, sports, and even at times of grief. From the day they are born (and even before), parents use music to calm and soothe their tamariki, to express their love, and to engage. So what are the benefits of making sure our Playcentres are singing from the same page?

## The why?

Among other things, music helps children:

- develop creativity and imagination
- build concentration and coordination
- grow listening skills (which are pre-reading skills)
- develop an understanding of language and symbols from their own and other culture's language and speech.
- gain the ability to express feelings through voice and body
- grow rhythm and harmony
- recognise and enjoy sounds, instruments and different music
- value their own cultural music knowledge and participate in the music of other cultures.

In te ao Māori, waiata serve many functions. They are used to support a whaikōrero (formal speech), or sung to express grief and to mourn after a loss. They are used to teach and pass on knowledge, or to urge people to take up a cause, or even to settle historical debates (Higgins and Loader, 2014).



## The how?

Some ideas to introduce music and singing into your Playcentre could include:

- action songs
- learn a new song in a new language – Māori? NZ Sign Language? Mandarin? Fijian?
- listening to a simple rhythm and copying it



- making instruments
- create your own songs – can you write a song about the current schema interest of a tamaiti?
- take a walk and draw a sound map – what can the tamariki hear?
- listen to and imitate sounds around you (animals, sirens, traffic, rain)
- visit a music store, attend a performance or invite a local kapa haka rōpū for a visit
- make your own instruments – poi, rakau, drums, xylophones, windchimes, etc.
- spend some time curating a special Playcentre playlist on Spotify

## Tips

- Sing and play music to children often. Have the right technology (CD player, instruments, Bluetooth speaker etc) handy.
- Emphasise an enjoyable experience,

not a performance of high standards.

- Ask questions like, “how does this make you feel?”.
- Sing in a soft, little voice. This will encourage children to join in.
- To help numeracy and literacy, sing songs with numbers and new words in them.

## The adult's role:

- singing and chanting as often as they enjoy it
- responding when children make up their own songs and chants
- dancing and moving to music with tamariki
- making up chants and songs while doing other activities e.g. at the playdough table
- making music fun and enjoyable
- making a wide variety of music available
- playing instruments and using other musical equipment
- exploring sounds and making music out of any everyday items that come to hand
- providing plenty of opportunities for making music at any time.

## Te Whāriki

Music supports learning across all strands of Te Whāriki. In particular, children's developing musicality is supported in the mana reo – communication strand, where they discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive. Music is a useful activity to encourage children to participate and to feel comfortable with the routines of Playcentre. This is part of the mana whenua and mana tangata strands.

## References:

Ministry of Education. (2015). Play Ideas for Playgroups. Retrieved from education.govt.nz.  
Rawinia Higgins and Arini Loader. (2014). 'Waiata tawhito - traditional Māori songs', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/waiata-tawhito-traditional-maori-songs>

# Te Kākano

Sung to the tune of *You Are My Sunshine*

<sup>C</sup>  
Te kākano

Te aroha

<sup>F</sup> <sup>C</sup>  
Te manawa ngā taonga

<sup>F</sup>  
Ko ngā mokopuna

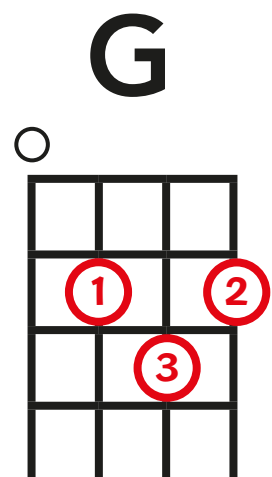
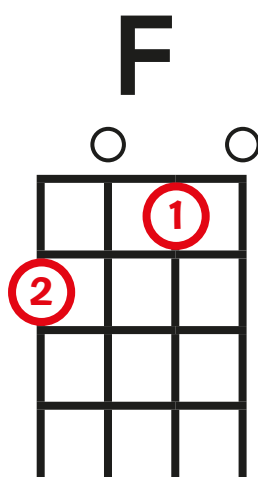
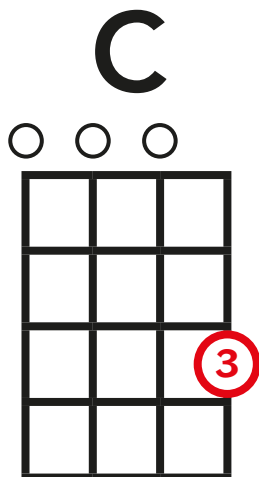
<sup>C</sup>  
Kotahitanga

<sup>G</sup> <sup>C</sup>  
Te kaha o te whānau

## Translated as:

Here lies the seed of Playcentre  
With warmth and sharing  
Love, caring gives the seed growth  
The heart of the seed is the children  
The strength is the family drawing together  
In unity and learning

## Ukulele chords:



# Book reviews

## My First Words in Māori

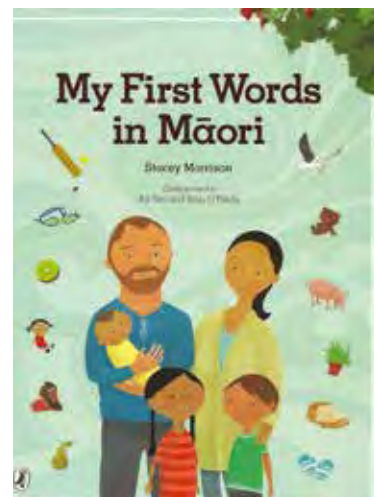
by Stacey Morrison

Help your tamariki to korero Māori with this brilliant first words book by Stacey Morrison, gorgeously illustrated by Ali Teo and John O'Reilly.

My First Words in Māori equips your whānau with the first words you need to speak te reo at home together. With lively pictures labelled in Māori and English, each page introduces the concepts and words children (and any learner of Māori) use as they first begin to talk, get to know people and explore the world around them. Simple phrases to help parents and kaiako trigger more conversations with tamariki are also included.

This is a fantastic book, designed for parents and tamariki to read together. There are plenty of details to point out and name, with topics including tinana – the body, tatahi – the beach, whare – home, kākahu – clothing, kai – food, and much more.

This is the perfect book to bring the Māori language into your home or Playcentre and have fun with tamariki on their language journey.



## Rugby 1, 2, 3, Whutupōro Tahī, Rua, Toru

by Thalia Kehoe Rowden

Timed to tie in with the 2019 Rugby World Cup, this playful counting book is perfect for the littlest rugby fans.

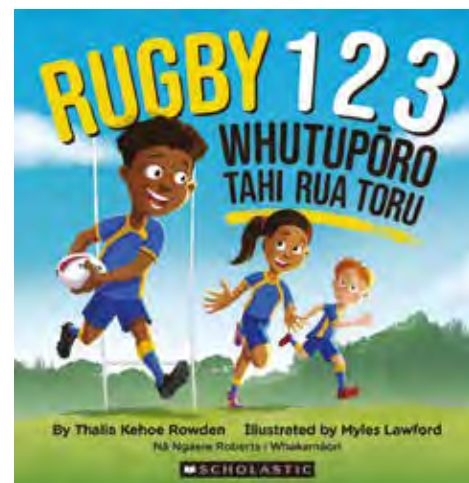
This beautifully illustrated rhyming book features all things rugby – from balls to boots, match officials to spectators. It is absolutely fabulous to see such an inclusive book about what is traditionally a male-dominated sport. There's children of all shapes, sizes and colours, and both boys and girls take to the field as referees and players.

It is also bilingual, with both English and te reo Māori on the same double spread. No need to buy two editions of the same story, Scholastic keeps them together as one. This increases accessibility, while also providing kaiako the opportunity to have a go.

Bold numerals help introduce little readers to numbers, while both the English and te reo Māori words/kupu are present too.

With just a few reads, older Playcentre tamariki will have the book down pat, allowing kaiako to really have some fun with literacy. Can you continue on the counting game?

A wonderful Kiwi picture book that invites everyone to join the rugby ruckus, boots and all, and have some fun with counting.



## Bumblebees Have Smelly Feet

by Rachel Weston

Bee amazed, bee informed, bee delighted by the super-duper, power-packed bumblebee.

Full of fascinating buzz facts, video links, and ideas, this wonderful book is perfect for little readers.

It features information on why bumblebees have whiffy feet, how their bodies work, their super eye power, their family and life cycle, and how we can help this integral insect survive.

Sprinkled throughout the book are gorgeous illustrations of the endearing bee, while there's also plenty of photographs to intrigue young scientists.

The information is accessible and easy to understand, but Weston doesn't talk down to her readers.

Throughout the book Weston asks the reader simple questions that will delight children and make for some rich conversations – what special talent would you like? She's also included some simple experiments that further learning, as well as lots of links to more information.

A charming interactive book that would make a wonderful non-fiction addition to any library.





## RĀRANGI PUKAPUKA – BOOK LIST: SUSTAINABILITY

*Te Whāriki* (2017) encourages kaiako to support young children to have “a sense of themselves as global citizens” (p. 12). One of the taonga of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is kaitiakitanga; meaning stewardship, protection, and preservation. Teaching our mokopuna about the importance of environmental sustainability is about the global social, cultural, and economic well-being of all people – as well as our planet and the biodiversity that relies upon it. Here are some pukapuka to help build ideas and practices associated with sustainability, climate change, critical thinking, identity, community, and kaitiakitanga.

### *A Forest*

by Marc Martin

When a forest is cut down, the consequences are more than anyone could have anticipated. *A Forest* is a simple and powerful environmental parable.



### *Te Tamaiti me te Aihe*

by Robyn Kahukiwa

This book, also available in English under the name *The Boy and The Dolphin*, shares the importance of kaitiakitanga by taking care of the environment and being kind to sea creatures.



### *The Mouse and the Octopus*

by Lisala Halapua

This book tells an old Tongan fable about a mischievous mouse and an unwitting octopus. An origin story, the story teaches fishing lure design and exemplifies the knowledge contained within island communities. It also teaches mokopuna about how the environment sustains us, and fosters an appreciation for the Pacific's unique ecosystem and the need for its preservation.



### *Kate, Who Tamed the Wind*

by Liz Garton Scanlon

A wild wind blows on the top of a steep hill, turning everything upside down for the man who lives here. Luckily, Kate comes up with a plan to tame the wind. With a wheelbarrow full of young trees, she adds a little green to the man's life. It is a simple, lyrical story about the important role trees play, about caring for our world, and about the sustained effort we need to make.



### *Hero of the Sea*

by David Hill

A beautiful biographical picture book about Sir Peter Blake, world-renowned New Zealand yachtsman, adventurer and environmentalist. The book focuses on his remarkable life – from his childhood to Team New Zealand's America's Cup triumphs to his passion for the natural world. It leaves readers to think about how we can all work together to make the world a better place.



### **For kaiako:** *For kaiako: Playcentre: A Resource Booklet of Environmental Learning Activities*

by Playcentre Aotearoa.

This booklet is not very well known and definitely underutilised. It opens with a brief, yet important, discussion about kaitiakitanga in the context of environmental awareness. The concepts of mana, tapu and mauri are discussed, as are traditional practices. It goes on to provide ideas of how to foster kaitiakitanga with mokopuna. The booklet is jam-packed with activities and ideas on how to reduce your Centre's ecological footprint. There's lots of links to websites and books to take your reading further. With ideas for every Centre regardless of where they are on their environmental journey, it is a veritable treasure trove of ideas on how to support our mokopuna to grow up green. Find it in the files section of the 'Playcentre – Environment & Sustainability' Facebook group.



**Other ideas:** *The Lorax* by Dr Seuss, *Song of the River* by Joy Cowley, *Tumeke Tū* by Malcolm Clarke, *Hineahuone* by Xoe Hall, *The Waterhole* by Graeme Base, *Somebody Swallowed Stanley* by Sarah Roberts, *Belonging* by Jeannie Baker, *The Taniwha in Our Backyard* by Malcolm Paterson, *The Waiatarua series* by Ron Bacon, *I Went to the Seaside* by Amanda Jackson.





## BLESSING FOR FOOD

We welcome the food that is before us

Nurtured by Papatūānuku

Nurtured by Ranginui

Food from Rehua

And presented to humanity

Elevated and fixed together by Rongo-mā-Tāne

Fixed!

United!

Affirmed!

*This karakia acknowledges the vital roles of the natural environment and divine elements in creating the food. It gives thanks to Papatūānuku (Earth Mother), Ranginui (Sky Father), Rehua (star associated with summer), and Rongo-mā-Tāne (God of the kumara and cultivated food).*





## KARAKIA MŌ TE KAI

Nau mai e ngā hua e hora nei

I Whakatupua-ā-Nuku

I Whakatupua-ā-Rangi

Tawhia ki ā Rēhua

Ki a tama i Te-Āo-Mārama

E Rongo whakairia ki runga

Kia Tina!

Tina!

Hui ē!

Taiki ē!

*This karakia acknowledges the vital roles of the natural environment and divine elements in creating the food. It gives thanks to Papatūānuku (Earth Mother), Ranginui (Sky Father), Rehua (star associated with summer), and Rongo-mā-Tāne (God of the kumara and cultivated food).*