

# Tikanga in Messy Play

## Korihori pōrehe – Messy play

Tikanga is the little things, but they are important like taking off shoes before entering a whare, avoid sitting on tepu-tables, and ensuring manuhiri – visitors eat first. At Playcentre we follow tikanga – traditions or routines to ensure everything is done in the proper manner and everyone is kept safe from harm.

A couple of reminders are we don't play with kai-food, avoid leaving bags or hats on tables that are used for kai, remember to always say karakia before kai and try to refrain from touching the head of a child, unless invited to, as this relates to the head being a very important part of the body and thus tapu <sup>1</sup>



## Using foodstuffs

Food of any kind should not be used in play. (Sicc) Although using foodstuffs in play is inappropriate, it is sometimes okay when made for the specific purpose of play, e.g., playdough (this is quite different to the dough we use to bake bread).

This also applies to fingerpaint made with cornflour. However, do not use instant puddings or jellies or any other foodstuffs as fingerpaint.

Playing with food is seen by Māori and many others as wasteful. In respect for our ancestors and those who do not have sufficient food to eat, it is important not to waste food <sup>2</sup>

## Glossary of terms – He whakamārama

**Parāoa Poke** – Playdough

**Mahi toi** – Collage

**Mahi-ā-ringa** – Manipulative Play

<sup>1</sup> Cite; From the Report to the New Zealand Playcentre Federation from the Working Party on Cultural Issues. Whānau Tupu Ngātahi - Families Growing Together, Page 31

<sup>2</sup> Cite; From the Report to the New Zealand Playcentre Federation from the Working Party on Cultural Issues. Whānau Tupu Ngātahi - Families Growing Together, Page 37



## Food in our Playcentres

When having morning tea, parents will need to feel comfortable with the routines of their Centre. It is preferable to set aside a specific table for this purpose. If space is at a premium and the food table alternates with another activity, it is really important to keep the two roles separate, that is, avoid combining a play activity at one end with eating at another. Special care should be taken to ensure that hands are washed and that a karakia is performed.

### Points to consider:

- Pains need to be stored seperately from cups.
- Food utensils should only be used for food.
- Tea towels should not be draped over shoulders.
- The bench where food is prepared should not be used for any other purpose.
- The sink for washing dishes would not be used for any other purpose.
- Playing with food is not appropriate.



# Pūtaiao me te tinana

## Science and the body

<https://kupengahao.co.nz/portfolio/panui-whakaahua-putaiao/>

## Respect for the body

### Te tapu o te tinana

Traditionally, everything in the Māori world was either tapu (sacred) or noa (not tapu). The things which are most tapu are the body and especially the head. Also, the ability to bear children is seen as a very special aspect of the womans body and care is taken to respect both the body and body functions.



### Points to consider:

- Care is taken so that the sacredness of the head of the Māori child is not tampered with. Often Pākehā adult will ruffle a childs head as a sign of affection. Māori cultural tapu avoids touching the head.
- The pillow, a resting place for the sacred head, is used for that purpose only. Pillows are for laying the head on; cushions are for sitting on. It may be advisable for your Centre to make clear distinction between pillows and cushions.
- Traditionally in Māori culture women and girls are encouraged to sit with discretion. Women and girls do not step over other people's bodies or legs. They move or walk around so that they do no need to step over others. Awareness of this can mean others can be sensitive and move so as not to make it difficult for them. Some childrens games (e.g leap frog) may offend some and so too may some adults games (certain icebreakers or group mixing games requiring physical contact).

<sup>1</sup> Cite; From the Report to the New Zealand Playcentre Federation from the Working Party on Cultural Issues. Whānau Tupu Ngātahi - Families Growing Together, Page 35

<sup>2</sup> Cite; From the Report to the New Zealand Playcentre Federation from the Working Party on Cultural Issues. Whānau Tupu Ngātahi - Families Growing Together, Page 37