



## Ngā whakaari ā-whānau | Family and dramatic play

Family and dramatic play helps tamariki to use their imagination to act out familiar and unfamiliar roles, characters and situations. They might pretend to be a parent, doctor, or animal or act out feelings and events. This kind of play can help them to make sense of what is happening in their lives and the world around them.

### Links to *Te Whāriki*

Family and dramatic play provides tamariki with opportunities to contribute their ideas and perspectives, and to take on different roles and responsibilities within play (**Contribution | Mana tangata**). It helps them to develop their language and communication skills, as they interact with others, express their thoughts and feelings, and negotiate with their peers (**Communication | Mana reo**).



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## Family and dramatic play can help tamariki to:

- › use their imagination and be creative
- › explore taking on a role, pretending and acting out ideas
- › express their feelings
- › make up their own stories, songs and chants
- › make sense of the world around them
- › learn and practise social skills such as cooperating and understanding another person's point of view
- › learn language, and practise using it
- › practice and develop manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, responsibility, and self-confidence.

## Adults can support tamariki by:

- › giving tamariki time and space to explore family and dramatic play in their own way
- › following their lead and being interested in their ideas
- › stimulating ideas by reading stories and taking them on outings
- › role-modelling and supporting respectful communication, problem-solving skills, and cooperation
- › using simple te reo Māori phrases to encourage and grow te reo Māori.

## Providing for family and dramatic play

Create a safe and supportive environment with a wide range of props and materials to encourage tamariki to explore and try out new ideas. Adults can offer guidance and support when needed, but also allow them to take the lead and direct their own play. Locating family and dramatic play resources near other materials and equipment, such as play dough and blocks, can enrich the play that occurs. Playdough allows tamariki to imitate the home kitchen setting, while blocks allow tamariki to construct their own accessories such as buildings, roads, shops, puppet, and storytelling theatres.

## Ideas for equipment

- › a wide range of culturally diverse materials and equipment
- › a variety of dress-up clothes and accessories so that they can role play their family whakapapa, e.g. doctors, nurses, police officers, kaumātua, kapa haka, and so on
- › dolls, dolls' clothing, beds, and bedding
- › table, chairs, kitchen utensils, and furniture
- › a clothesline with pegs
- › toy stoves, cash registers, toy petrol stations
- › open-ended resources such as boxes and lengths of material
- › child-height mirror — for safety reasons perspex mirrors are best
- › props e.g. brooms, wands, plastic cups and saucers, pots and pans, doctor and nurse sets
- › writing materials for tamariki to use in their play, e.g. making menus for a restaurant, money for a shop, signs for a road, invitations to a party.