



Te Rūnanga o NGĀI TAHU



plunket
whānau āwhina

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Plunket and Ngāi Tahu honour shared history with new nursing scholarship

Plunket and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu have launched the Mere Harper and Ria Tikini Memorial Scholarship, acknowledging two wāhine toa who were instrumental in starting Plunket and inspiring Plunket's rebrand, both which are being launched today.

The annual scholarship aims to give financial support of \$3,000 to a full-time nursing student, of Ngāi Tahu descent in their final year of study.

Many people know the story of Plunket's beginnings in Karitāne and the work of Dr Truby King – but what they don't know is that's not the full story. If it wasn't for the work of two Māori midwives and healers, Mere Harper and Ria Tikini, Plunket would not be here today. The work of these wāhine toa has been overlooked by the history books, and in Plunket's own story telling – so today's brand launch is also about acknowledging and apologising for this – and raising the story of these women

Plunket Chief Executive and great great granddaughter of Mere, Amanda Malu (Ngāi Tahu) says: "I am proud that Plunket is finally honouring its true whakapapa by celebrating the two Māori women at the very heart of its beginnings. While the scholarship we're launching today with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in Mere and Ria's memory is another way in which we are honouring their legacy, and our shared history, while helping to equip the next generation of Māori nurses."

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu General Manager of Oranga Dr Hana O'Regan says the iwi is excited to be joining with Plunket to help build a new generation of strong Ngāi Tahu nurses at a time when the contributions of the two māreikura wāhine from Puketeraki are being celebrated.

"So often the stories of our wāhine leaders and drivers working in the area of hauora and with whānau and tamariki fall away from the recorded narrative of our histories. It is incredibly important for us to ensure their stories are heard so the value of their legacy can be celebrated for what it is – transformational leadership in areas that mean the most," she says. "As an iwi we are absolutely committed to supporting the important early years of our babies' lives and that of the whānau, so we are eager to build on our relationship with Plunket, an organisation that works with our whānau to provide essential support and education. This scholarship is one part of that story that we hope will become stronger and spread further influencing the lives of our tamariki and mokopuna."

Plunket's new brand shows three hearts coming together to represent Plunket's essential caring role within whānau, with the primary focus being on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the child. The tohu inside the brand has been specifically created for Plunket, the first proudly acknowledges Mere and Ria, and the second symbolises the nurturing and integral relationship with whānau.

Plunket sees 85% of all newborn babies across Aotearoa, of which nearly 20% of are Māori. Plunket wants them, and their whānau to have the best possible experience with our service, Ms Malu says.

"We're doing this because we know we need to do better – and because NZ's health system needs to do better to meet the needs of Māori. We've walked alongside NZ whānau and families for 112 years and we're acknowledging today that we need to do better for whānau, pēpi and tamariki Māori. Plunket will always be here for all Kiwi babies," Ms Malu says. "Our current priority is on achieving equitable health outcomes for whānau Māori while continuing to deliver a universal service for all of NZ. Our brand symbolises how we want to work with our whānau – in partnership, acknowledging their whakapapa, and ours - as we all care for and nurture the babies in our whānau."

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Further information:

Ria Mere Harper and Ria Tikini Memorial Scholarship

Whānau Āwhina/Plunket and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu have partnered to offer an annual scholarship to a full-time nursing student of Ngāi Tahu descent in their final year of study. Candidates will be considered who are especially passionate about child and primary health.

This scholarship is offered in the name of Mere Harper and Ria Tikini two Ngāi Tahu midwives from Karitane who worked together with Dr Truby King in the early 1900's to establish what was to become known as the Plunket service. Eligible applicants can apply for a one-year scholarship of \$3000 which aims to give financial support for a Ngāi Tahu student completing 360 hours of clinical placement, as required by the Nursing Council of New Zealand.

The scholarships are open to any person who:

- Is a registered Ngāi Tahu member
- Is enrolled in their final full-time year of a Nursing degree at a New Zealand University, Polytechnic, Wānanga or Private Training Establishment.
- Can demonstrate a commitment to and/or competence in Māori health and wellbeing studies.

For more information on Mere Harper and Ria Tikini and their connection to Plunket's history, see the Plunket website.

Plunket's rebrand

Intentionally bright and vibrant, Plunket's new brand is a celebration of our past and the bold aspirations of our future. This is the heart of Plunket. It is what we've always been – and will continue to be. This isn't something we will explicitly speak about, rather it is the unchanging touchstone of truth we will always come back to. For 112 years, families and whanau across Aotearoa have trusted Plunket to be there in their time of need and care for their tamariki – it is our goal to remain the trusted source for whanau for the next 100 years and beyond.

The two Tohu within our brand are represented by a whakatauki for each:

Ngā Pae o te Harakeke

The central pattern represents our women of strength, and an acknowledgement to Mere Harper and Ria Tikini. The outer pattern represents the child, parents and grandparents and is likened to Māori structure of the flax bush.

“Acknowledge our ancestors who brought us to this earth.

So we are cared and nurtured for as like to leaves of the flax plant.”



Tūhonohono

The pattern represents the meeting of hands and the embrace of a parent and child and the flowing nature is the journey upon the wind.

“Accept the gift of love and care as our hands meet in unity.

Join me in the belly of the wind as we journey through life.”

