

Tūpuna Parenting Movement Announces Partnership With Whānau Āwhina Plunket

Tūpuna Parenting, a movement reclaiming traditional, Māori parenting practices to grow pēpi and tamariki into the rangatira of tomorrow, today announced a strategic partnership with Whānau Āwhina Plunket.

The partnership has seen 11 Plunket Kaiāwhina (Māori health professionals) attend Tūpuna Parenting wānanga via Zoom over a period of six months, grounding them in te ao Māori parenting kaupapa. Whānau Āwhina Plunket has 40 Kaiāwhina across the motu and all are expected to participate in this kaupapa over the next two years. The first tauira (students) graduated recently.

Tūpuna Parenting movement founders Elizabeth Emere Harte (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou) and Dr Hirini Kaa (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahunungu) are delighted with the collaboration saying that this is a pivotal move for Māori and that the ways of tūpuna can help all New Zealanders become gentle, respectful and loving parents for their tamariki, just like tūpuna Māori were.

Whānau Āwhina Plunket spokesperson, Waikura Kamo, says the Tūpuna Parenting kaupapa was welcomed by the kaiāwhina.

“For Whānau Āwhina Plunket, partnering with Tūpuna Parenting is a crucial relationship whilst on our pro-equity journey. Joining Tūpuna Parenting on this movement has helped us all to better understand and how best to awhi whānau Māori from a te ao Māori world view. The course is deeply embedded in mātauranga Māori that brings practical relevance to today's modern parenting,” she says.

Kaa says Māori has suffered significant impacts as a result of colonisation, including a societal shift from how pēpi and tamariki (babies and children) were traditionally parented.

“We are currently operating in a deficit model that continues to negatively impact on the future of many of our people. We are changing the narrative to reflect our whakapapa.”

Harte says their tūpuna in pre-colonial times believed pēpi (babies) were born tapu, and born with mana.

“Because of this, our tūpuna were gentle and respectful with their whānau - they treated their pēpi and tamariki with a deep respect. Our mātauranga and academic evidence shows this, and we want to share this with all whānau,” says Harte.

Whakapapa is key to the kaupapa, but also an important part of the organisation. Elizabeth Emere Harte and Dr Hirini Kaa are inspired by the very important intergenerational mahi of both their parents, Helen Mountain Harte (1942-2019) and Dr Hone Kaa (1943-2012). Helen and Hone were both advocates for Māori tamariki across the motu, particularly in the era after Nia Glassie died and the anti-smacking law reform referendum took place (both 2007).

In 2018, Helen and her daughter Liz started Pēpi Penapena (Cherish Babies) to share tūpuna parenting ways in with strong digital focus, as well as sharing the kaupapa with organisations who

support Māori whānau. After Helen passed away, Hirini joined to tautoko the kaupapa and provide his mātauranga and experience as a historian, Anglican church leader and social justice campaigner. Building a movement for the kaupapa was seen as critical for spreading this kaupapa to all whānau, so the Tūpuna Parenting movement has been launched.

Tūpuna Parenting has been funded by Te Hiringa Hauora, Lotteries NZ and the Todd Foundation, and is partnered with Te Aka Ora Trust in Tūranganui-a-Kiwa (Gisborne). Whānau Āwhina Plunket is the first organisation to learn about Tūpuna Parenting through the Ngākau Aroha Parenting learning journey.

Nā ngā ringa aroha, nā te ngākau atawhai, ka ora ai te whānau.

From loving hands, from a gentle heart, comes life for the whānau

About Tūpuna Parenting

There are three Tūpuna Parenting learning journeys targeted to specific audiences that empower parents and whānau to parent in a positive te ao Māori way. These are:

- Ngākau Aroha Parenting - Kaimahi, for kaimahi supporting whānau in a one-on-one environment
- Ngākau Aroha Parenting - Wānanga, for kaimahi delivering support to whānau in a wānanga environment
- Ngākau Aroha Parenting - Iwi/Hapū, customised kaupapa for roopu and whānau in their unique rohe.