
Whānau Āwhina Plunket encourages whānau to celebrate this Te Rā O Ngā Tamariki – Children’s Day

This Te Rā O Ngā Tamariki – Children’s Day, Whānau Āwhina Plunket is encouraging all whānau to enjoy quality time with their tamariki.

Chief Executive Amanda Malu said the past year has brought into stark relief the importance of just ‘being’ with whānau and tamariki.

“Over the past year, we’ve seen just how much the small things means to our tamariki – simply spending time with whānau, playing together, going on family walks. These are the things that mean a lot to our children,” Ms Malu said.

“As a day that celebrates our children, and encourages us to all create safe, loving, supportive whānau and communities to help them grow and flourish, Te Rā O Ngā Tamariki – Children’s Day is the perfect time to embrace the simple things and to create those lovely memories.

“There are lots of community events on offer so I encourage everyone to take the time to shower their tamariki with aroha, and show them just how much they mean to us.”

Ms Malu said Whānau Āwhina Plunket has worked hard to support whānau in Aotearoa during the lockdowns over the past year.

“We understood right from the first lockdown just how much the isolation and uncertainty would affect our whānau and tamariki. We quickly came up with other ways to support our clients, and to make sure no parents or caregivers felt isolated or alone,” Ms Malu said.

“This ethos has served us well in subsequent lockdowns – we’ve been able to continue to offer virtual services, and make sure our whānau know we’re still there for them as we move between Alert Levels.”

In April 2020, the organisation rolled out a virtual service for its Well Child services, which prioritised all families and whānau with newborn tamariki from zero to three months, whānau Māori, Pacific peoples with immediate needs.

Some community services also went virtual, including a music and movement class that attracted more than 300 participants via Zoom.

Community Support Coordinator Melissa Charbonneau runs the Mini Beatz play group in Franklin, South Auckland, and has taken her play groups online when they can’t run in-person.

“It’s really important for little kids when they’re in this strange situation, having things happen to them that they don’t really understand, to have that continuity,” Ms Charbonneau said.

“It’s nice to know we can offer something that helps our families, helps take the pressure off, helps the kids feel settled when there’s all this chaos happening around them.”

Te Rā O Ngā Tamariki – Children's Day is on Sunday, 7 March. For more information, visit www.childrensday.org.nz

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