



Our Ancestors

**enjoyed loving
whānau
relationships**



***E Tū
Whānau!***

Te Mana Kāhā o te Whānau



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CONTENTS

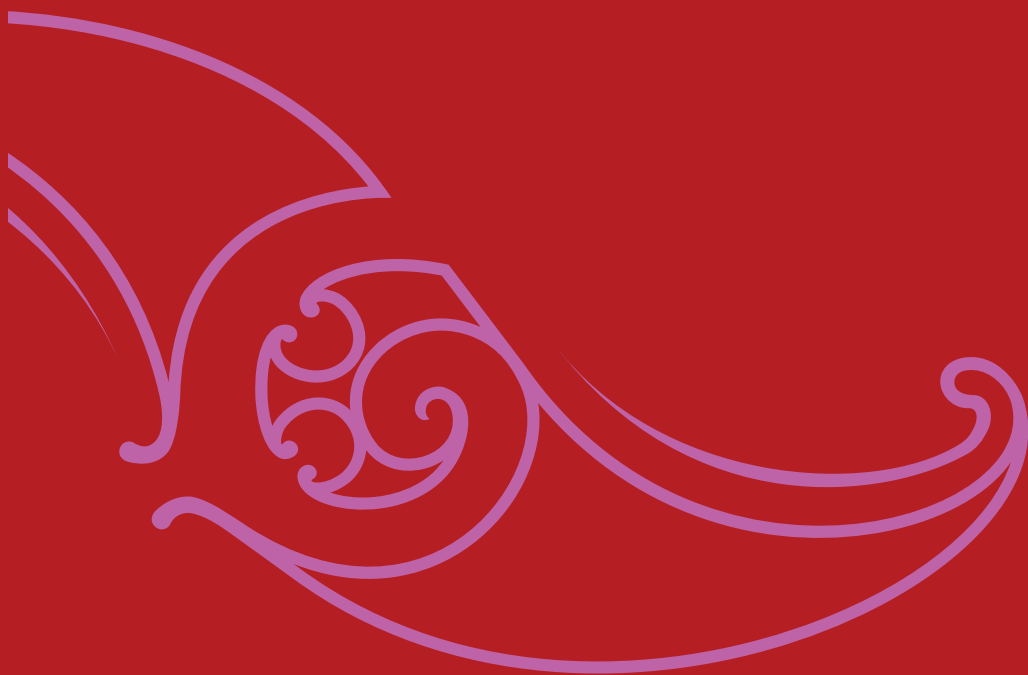
1. Violence within whānau is not traditional	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction• The evidence• Drawing on our past to shape our future	
2. Tamariki were cherished, nurtured and safe	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tamariki were celebrated as precious additions to whānau, hapū and iwi• Parents nurtured tamariki to feel safe, secure and confident• Violence against children was not condoned• Tamariki were raised and educated collectively to be independent, knowledgeable and actively involved in their whānau	
3. Our wāhine ancestors were strong, influential and valued	19
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mana wāhine – women had power and influence in traditional Māori society• Women performed a wide range of roles, including leadership roles• Survival depended on harmony and collaboration – wāhine and tāne valued each other's roles within the collective	
4. Our tāne ancestors were tender fathers	31
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tāne were tender, loving fathers• Men had an important parenting role	
5. Balance, harmony and tikanga ensured strength and survival of the collective	39
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tikanga kept order and protected whānau, hapū and iwi• Collective responsibility and tikanga prevented violence	
6. Further support and information	45
7. List of early European observers	46
8. References	47



Earle, Augustus 1793–1838: Native family. London, lithographed and published by R. Martin & Co [1838]. Ref: PUBL-0015-07. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

**Violence
within
whānau
is not
traditional**

1



Violence within whānau is not traditional

Ngā hiahia kia titiro ki te timatatanga, ā, ka kite
ai tātou te mutunga

You must understand the beginning if you
wish to see the end

Introduction

Although our ancestors engaged in tribal warfare, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that traditional family life was characterised by loving whānau relationships where:

- women and men had clear and complimentary roles and responsibilities
- children were valued as precious taonga and treated accordingly
- men were gentle, loving, nurturing fathers
- the whānau unit was strong and harmonious and there were punishments for those who upset this balance.

The evidence

There is a range of information from Māori academics and others that validates these assertions and suggests that, not only was there harmony and positive parenting within traditional Māori families and society, there was also intolerance of any form of whānau violence. The evidence comes from our own Mātauranga Māori and also from the observations of the early European settlers in Aotearoa.

The knowledge from our oral histories (purakau), waiata and whakatauki has been passed from one generation to another. This knowledge is precious – it sustains whakapapa and it preserves our histories and heritage – helping us to understand the tikanga, values, whanaungatanga and wairua that shaped whānau, hapū and iwi life at the time and maintained stability and balance.

Numerous early recorded observations by European settlers also reflect the harmonious domestic life experienced by Māori at this time. Although these comments are filtered through a Western lens with a strong cultural bias, the observations of these early Pākehā are still very revealing.

“I saw no quarrelling while I was there. They are kind to their women and children. I never observed either with a mark of violence upon them, nor did I ever see a child struck.”

Reverend Samuel Marsden (1765–1838) chaplain, magistrate, agriculturalist, missionary (from J R Elder, *The letters and journals of Samuel Marsden 1765–1838*)

The freedoms given to wāhine and tamariki, the affectionate parenting style, the nurturing role of men and the collective parenting responsibilities of the whānau surprised them. At that time family life in Western society was characterised by strict discipline and rigid roles for family members within a nuclear unit where men exercised the greatest power.

Drawing on our past to shape our future

Time has moved on and we live in a very different world today where our people enjoy many successes but also face significant challenges. The disruption and effects of colonisation have impacted negatively on Māori and this is reflected in the poor outcomes experienced by many whānau. Unfortunately, over time a great deal of myth and misinformation about our ancestral legacy has been perpetrated and these stereotypes remain today. It is important that we know and can reclaim the truth about who we are.

“If you teach children for long enough that their ancestors were violent, abusive savages, after a while, they are likely to believe you. This in itself can be a cause for shame and self-loathing. When they become adults, they may use this myth as a convenient excuse to beat up women and children.”

Dame Anne Salmond (Nov 2016, NZ Herald) historian, writer and Distinguished Professor of Māori Studies and Anthropology at the University of Auckland

We can learn, heal and move forward by looking to the past. What we know is that there are many rich and powerful aspects of our traditions and culture that make Māori strong as individuals, as whānau, as a collective people. If we can focus on these strengths, reclaim them and make them relevant for our lives today then we will have a lot to look forward to.

“ ...We have the potential to be the best that this country can see and have... I want us to be able to fill ourselves up with the wonder of who we are because, if we knew how wonderful it was to be who we are, then there is only positive stuff in front of us... ”

Katie Murray (Te Rarawa, Te Aupouri) E Tū Whānau Māori Reference Group

This booklet shares some of our history and values; what we have been told about the tikanga, aroha, mana manaaki, kōrero awhi, whanaungatanga and whakapapa that kept us strong, protected whānau from harm, and has the power to do so again.

E TŪ WHĀNAU – TE MANA KAHA O TE WHĀNAU

**Tamariki
were
cherished,
nurtured
and safe**

2



Tamariki were cherished, nurtured and safe

The information we have about our ancestors tells us that a child's place in the world was secure and celebrated and it was central to the wellbeing of whānau, hapū and iwi. Traditions, legends, whakapapa and karakia helped to establish and nurture the role and place of children.

Tamariki were celebrated as precious additions to whānau, hapū and iwi

A range of rituals and ceremonies marked the birth of a child, symbolising their importance within the whānau and binding them together.

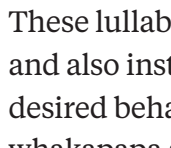
Waiata oriori (lullabies) were composed, often by the child's grandparents or parents, and sung to babies to help reinforce the whakapapa, spiritual connections, expectations and importance of this new life.

"It was sung repeatedly so that all listeners learned it and knew the whakapapa and qualities of the child and thus, the special treatment they required. They were a poetic and repetitive way to fix personal, whānau and cultural messages in the minds of the listeners."

Helen M Harte and K Jenkins (2012) *Traditional Māori Parenting*



Māori girls on a raft, Kai Iwi Creek. Ref: 1/2-001460-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.



These lullabies were often inspirational and also instructional – highlighting desired behaviours and reinforcing whakapapa and identity to the children and also to the adults listening. One classic example which is still sung is ‘Pinepine te kura’, composed for the young Te Umurangi, a descendent of the great Ngāti Kahungunu chief Te Whatuiāpiti.



PINEPINE TE KURA

Pinepine te kura, hau te kura,
Whanake te kura i raro i Awarua;
Ko te kura nui, ko te kura roa,
Ko te kura o tawhiti na Tuhaepo!
Tenei te tira hou, tenei
haramai nei;
Ko te Umurangi, na te
Whatuiapiti.
Nau mai, e tama, ki te taiao nei,
Ki' whakangungua koe ki te
kahikātoa,
Ki te tumatakuru, ki te tara
ongaonga;
Ngā tairo rā nāhau, e Kupe,
I waiho i te ao nei.
Piki ake, kake ake i te toi huarewa,
Te ara o Tawhaki i piki ai ki runga;
I rokohina atu ra Maikuku-
makaka,
Hapai o Maui, he waha i pa mai,
‘Taku wahine purotu!’ ‘Taku tane
purotu!’
Kōrua ko te tau, e.

(First section of Waiata Oriori)

LITTLE TINY TREASURE

Little tiny treasure, treasure of
renown,
The treasure who came from
below Awarua;
The noble treasure, the famous
treasure,
The treasure from afar off, the
treasure of Tuhaepo!
A strange visitor is he, lately
arrived here:
He is Te Umurangi, descended
from Te Whatuiapiti.
Welcome, O son, welcome to this
world of life.
You are to be ritually
strengthened with the kahikātoa,
With the tumatakuru and the
taraongaonga;
These were the thorny
obstructions that you, O Kupe,
Bequeathed unto this world.
Climb up, ascend by the
suspended way,
The pathway of Tawhaki when
he ascended on high,
And there found Maikuku-
makaka,
Attended by Hapai of Maui, and
greetings were uttered:
‘My beautiful lady!’ ‘My
handsome man!’
A tribute for you two, O loved
ones.

(First section of Waiata Oriori)

Parents nurtured tamariki to feel safe, secure and confident

The loving care given to babies and children by parents (and all adults) is reflected in a number of observations by early European settlers.

“The children here appear to be treated with a great degree of parental affection. They are robust, lively, and posses, in general, pleasing countenances; their actions are totally unrestrained by cloathing, or bandage, which must undoubtedly lay the foundation of their future hardihood and healthy constitution.”

John Savage (1770–1838) surgeon, traveller, writer

“The children are generally very easy, open and familiar at the first interview, and show an anxiety to pay every little attention in their power to the strangers. There can be no finer children than those of the New Zealanders in any part of the world. Their parents are very indulgent, and they appear always happy and playful and very active.”

Reverend Samuel Marsden

“Both parents are almost idolatrously fond of their children; and the father frequently spends a considerable portion of his time in nursing his infant, who nestles in his blanket, and is lulled to rest by some native song... The children are cheerful and lively little creatures, full of vivacity and intelligence. They pass their early years almost without restraint, amusing themselves with the various games of the country.”

George French Angas (1822–1886) artist, naturalist, writer

Tamariki were included in public life and encouraged to learn, to question and participate. Their connection and importance to the past and the future was acknowledged and respected. This is a very different parenting approach to the prevailing Western viewpoint at that time – that ‘good’ children were ‘seen but not heard’ – and so was surprising to these observers.

“The chiefs take their children from their mother’s breast to all their public assemblies, where they hear all that is said upon politics, religion, war etc., by the oldest men. Children will frequently ask questions in public conversation and are answered by the chiefs. I have often been surprised to see children sitting amongst the chiefs and paying close attention to what was said. The children never appear under any embarrassment when they address a stranger whom they never saw. In every village the children, as soon as they learned any of our names, came up to us and spake to us with the greatest familiarity.”

Reverend Samuel Marsden

“The chief aim, therefore in the education of children being to make them bold, brave, and independent in thought and act, a parent is seldom seen to chastise his child...”

Edward Shortland (1812–1893) doctor, administrator, scholar, linguist

Violence against children was not condoned

Violence against children was not condoned, and any violence against an individual was experienced as violence against the whānau and the hapū. Violence also harmed the atua (spiritual world).

“... the pre-contact socialisation methods of children were based on philosophical beliefs which begin in the spiritual world. All Māori whakapapa to Io Matua and nga atua. This relationship meant that, for children, they were ata ahua – they were the face of Io, of the supreme being. Children therefore were perfect underneath everything. This belief was what stopped any maltreatment of the child. To harm the child was to harm the atua. Fundamentally, the child was considered tapu, the more closely and directly he or she was linked to the atua. The child represented the atua, the tipuna who have gone before and the children who are to come. This meant that the kaumatua treated them with respect and consideration.”

Harte and Jenkins

Early observers remarked on the gentle and loving care given to the babies and children by mothers, fathers and all adults and the lack of physical or any type of punishment.

“The children are seldom or never punished; which, consequently, causes them to commit so many annoying tricks, that continually renders them deserving of a sound, wholesome castigation.”

Joel Polack (1807–1882) author, artist, trader

“ *I saw no quarrelling while I was there. They are kind to their women and children. I never observed either with a mark of violence upon them, nor did I ever see a see a child struck.* **”**

Reverend Samuel Marsden



LEAVE BIG FOOTPRINTS FOR YOUR CHILDREN TO FOLLOW

DO WHAT YOU SAY YOU ARE GOING TO DO

Promise only what you
can deliver.

BE THE GREATEST LEADER IN THEIR LIVES

Live your values 100%
each day.

BUILD A CLEAR PATHWAY TO THE FUTURE

Set goals for with your family
and live to achieve them.

LIVE WITH INTEGRITY

Make sure your public face
and your private face look the
same.

Tamariki were raised and educated collectively to be independent, knowledgeable and actively involved in their whānau

In traditional society, and until relatively recently, tamariki were raised and educated in a collective manner. The communal living arrangements meant that children had easy access to parents, aunties and uncles, grandparents and others who all contributed to their upbringing and education. This ensured that children accumulated a lot of knowledge about their whakapapa, values and belief systems and all of the things that sustained Māori society. This instilled confidence, identity and a sense of pride in tamariki.

“ There can be no finer children than the New Zealander in any part of the world. ”

Reverend Samuel Marsden



OUR ANCESTORS WERE GENTLE NURTURING PARENTS

Our ancestors recognised the special place of tamariki – their whakapapa connections and role in the future prosperity of the whānau, hapū and iwi:

- Māori children were raised and nurtured to feel loved, confident and safe
- Parents and grandparents composed and sang special waiata to tamariki from birth, to cement their bonds and whakapapa
- Tamariki were involved in whānau matters from an early age, which encouraged them to feel a sense of belonging and to develop their social and intellectual skills
- Many in the whānau had a part to play in the upbringing of tamariki – this ensured that children received a broad education and knowledge making them smart, confident and inquisitive, and helping to strengthen and sustain the whānau, hapū, iwi.

Although times have changed there is a great deal of wisdom within these traditional practices that can guide our parenting today.



**Our
wāhine
ancestors
were strong,
influential
and valued**

3



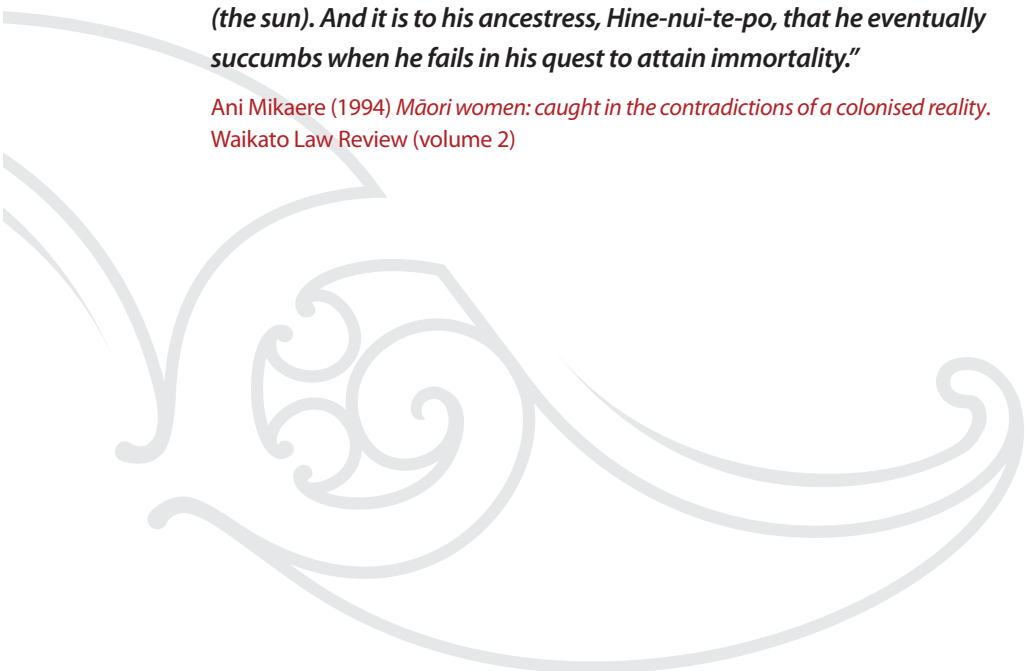
Our wāhine ancestors were strong, influential and valued


Mana wāhine — women had power and influence in traditional Māori society

If we look at Māori sources of information passed down through the generations – waiata, whakatauki, haka and iwi histories – we get an interesting sense of how wāhine participated in and influenced traditional Māori society. Powerful women feature strongly in our earliest stories, highlighting their importance in sustaining the well-being of the whānau, hapū and iwi.

“Māori cosmology abounds with stories of powerful women... The tales of Maui-tikitiki-a-Taranga are particularly instructive as to the influential roles that women held. Maui acquires fire from his kuia, Mahuika. It is with the jawbone of his kuia, Muriranga-whenua, that he fishes up Te Ika a Maui (the North Island) and makes the patu with which to subdue Ra (the sun). And it is to his ancestress, Hine-nui-te-po, that he eventually succumbs when he fails in his quest to attain immortality.”

Ani Mikaere (1994) *Māori women: caught in the contradictions of a colonised reality*.
Waikato Law Review (volume 2)





The mana and influence of our wāhine ancestors and their role in nurturing life and enriching whakapapa and whanaungatanga is also reflected in our language and cultural concepts:

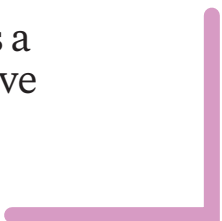
Māori refer to women as **te whare tangata** (the house of humanity)

Whenua means both placenta and land (the two are linked through the burial process)

Hapū means to be pregnant and it also means a large kinship group

The ancestress of all Māori, **Papatūānuku**, is the earth (land is intrinsically tied to the social, cultural, spiritual and economic well-being of Māori)

The presence of women was seen as a potent form of **whakanoa** (to remove tapu, or make normal).



Women performed a wide range of roles, including leadership roles

The experiences of early Māori women were not universal with social status and other factors having an impact. However, there is a range of evidence suggesting that wāhine Māori actively participated in and influenced many aspects of life. Some have described our early ancestors as being “extremely liberated”. The collective whānau model meant that childrearing and other domestic tasks were shared and Māori men had a key role in parenting. Unlike Western women at that time, our wāhine ancestors had a degree of flexibility, independence and a wide range of roles.

“She considers her Māori ancestresses, prior to the impact of Christianity, to have been ‘extremely liberated’ in comparison to her English ancestresses. She points out that Māori women were not regarded as chattels or possessions, that they retained their own names upon marriage, that their children were free to identify with the kinship group of either or both parents, that they dressed in similar garments to the men, and that conception was not associated with sin or child bearing with punishment and suffering but that these were seen to be uplifting and a normal part of life...”

Ani Mikaere (1994) talking about Rose Pere in: *Māori women: caught in the contradictions of a colonised reality*

WĀHINE OCCUPIED IMPORTANT POSITIONS

In pre-European days and throughout history there are countless stories of Māori women who occupied important positions as composers, military strategists, powerful landowners and mediators. Māori women had a say in the affairs of the tribe and could inherit land. They continued to fight for recognition of these rights following colonisation and the imposition of English laws and thinking which undermined their status.

A newspaper editorial in 1861 noted the participation of Māori women in the rūnanga: 'Ta te [M]aori, me hui katoa, te iti te rahi, te tāne te wāhine, te koroheke te ruruhi ... e uru katoa ana ki nga Runanga [M]aori, me o ratou whakaaro me o ratou korero; e whakatika ana tenei wāhine me ana korero ano ...' '(but with the Māori Runanga, all must assemble together, the small and the great, the husband, the wife, the old man, the old woman these all obtain admittance to the Runanga Māori, with all their thoughts and speeches ... this woman gets up and has her talk...)'

Traditionally land was bequeathed to women, as the mana of women to give birth to descendants meant that mana whenua (authority over land) was not lost through marriage. During the Kotahitanga movement women argued that the law should recognise Māori women as land owners and leaders in their own right. The 1897 petition from the Kotahitanga to Queen Victoria was signed by Māori women and men.

Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand

There are many examples of women as poets and composers of waiata throughout history – central to the exchange of tribal history and traditions and as expressions of social commentary. Women's dominant role as composers in traditional Māori society is testimony to their vital role as knowledge bearers and leaders at this time.

"...Rangi Topeora, of Ngāti Raukawa and Ngāti Toa descent. She was a signatory to the Treaty of Waitangi, a powerful landowner, and a prolific composer of waiata. Her mother, Waitohi, was Te Rauparaha's sister, a leader in her own right and a known military strategist."

Ani Mikaere (1994)

A SENSE OF EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN WĀHINE AND TĀNE

This sense of equilibrium between men and women was no doubt surprising to early English settlers who observed and commented through a Western lens:

“When speaking of the dexterity of the fishermen, I should have mentioned that of the fisherwomen also; for the women here are as expert at all the useful arts as the men, sharing equally the fatigue and the danger with them upon all occasions excepting war; in which though they undergo considerable fatigue, they do not participate in the danger.”

John Savage

**“In many instances...
I have seen the wife
treated as an equal
and companion.”**

Augustus Earle

“A number of women were in the heat of the action, amongst whom was Tippahee’s old wife, not much less than seventy years of age and Duaterra’s [Ruatarā’s] wife [Rahu] bearing in her hand a patoo about seven feet long, made out of the jawbone of a whale. This weapon she brandished about in the very centre of the battle, and went through all the various movements of the men, whether in retreating or advancing.”

Reverend Samuel Marsden

“At the battle of Ōrākau in the King Country in 1864, Ahumai Te Paerata famously responded to the suggestion that the women and children should be allowed to leave, ‘Ki te mate ngā tāne, me mate anō ngā wāhine me ngā tamariki’ (if the men die, the women and children die also).”

Rawinia Higgins rūau ko Paul Meredith, ‘Te mana o te wāhine – Māori women’, Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand

“Most missionaries and settlers struggled to recognise the leadership of Māori women, preferring instead to deal with their male counterparts. Only 13 Māori women signed the Treaty of Waitangi (out of some 512 signatures). The daughter of Te Pēhi, a Ngāti Toa rangatira, was not allowed to sign as it was believed that women were not important enough. Angered at the insult, her husband also refused to sign.”

Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand

Survival depended on harmony and collaboration – wāhine and tāne valued each other's roles within the collective

The roles and relationships between tāne and wāhine were highly valued in traditional Māori society. They were an important part of the collective and maintaining the balance was vital to whānau strength and survival.

“Pere describes her childhood as being full of very positive female models, and how her elders set the example of men and women respecting and supporting each other, and working alongside one another.

The roles of men and women in traditional Māori society can be understood only in the context of the Māori world view, which acknowledged the natural order of the universe, the interrelationship or whanaungatanga of all living things to one another and to the environment, and the over-arching principle of balance....

Both men and women were essential parts in the collective whole, both formed part of the whakapapa that linked Māori people back to the beginning of the world, and women in particular played a key role in linking the past with the present and the future. The very survival of the whole was absolutely dependent upon everyone who made it up, and therefore each and every person within the group had his or her own intrinsic value. They were all a part of the collective; it was therefore a collective responsibility to see that their respective roles were valued and protected.”

Ani Mikaere (1994)

OUR WĀHINE ANCESTORS WERE STRONG, INFLUENTIAL AND VALUED MEMBERS OF THE COLLECTIVE

Our language and the stories and histories that have been passed down through the generations reflect a traditional society where wāhine Māori actively participated in and influenced many aspects of life. We know that:

- Everyone had a part to play in maintaining order and balance within the universe, including our wāhine ancestors who had an influential role in the functioning, well-being and survival of the collective
- Transgressions against this harmony, in the form of violence against women and children, were prohibited and dealt with harshly according to tikanga
- Women had a vital role linking the present with the past and with the future; the mana associated with this is reflected in our language (hapū, te whare tangata, whenua, Papatūānuku)
- Domestic duties, including childrearing, were shared with tāne and other members of the whānau and hapū, freeing women to perform other roles
- Wāhine held leadership and military roles, inherited land, were revered as composers and had a say in important iwi matters
- The power and strength of our wāhine ancestors is reflected in numerous waiata and stories which are repeated and passed down with pride through the generations
- Māori women continue to be at the forefront of critical Māori issues such as Treaty rights, education, water and social justice.



Māori woman carrying a baby on her back – Photograph taken by William Henry Thomas Partington. Ref: 1/1-003118-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.



THE WORLD AND ALL THINGS IN IT ARE TREASURES

BUT THE MOST TREASURED OF ALL IS YOUR MOTHER

**VALUE YOUR TIME
TOGETHER**

Visit often and chat about life

SEEK HER COUNSEL

When you need her she will
give you good advice

**LEARN ALL HER
RECIPES**

You will never know when you
will need them

**BE THE BEST
MOTHER YOU CAN BE**

Give children love and quality
time and they will forgive your
mistakes



**Our tāne
ancestors
were
tender
fathers**

4



Our tāne ancestors were tender fathers

In pre-European times Māori men played an important nurturing role in the lives of their tamariki and whānau. There was recognition that a strong tāne could have dual roles as a warrior and as a protective father and whānau member – both were important to whānau well-being and survival.

Tāne were tender, loving fathers

There are numerous observations from early European settlers that together help to paint a picture of Māori men who were extremely gentle and affectionate towards their children and for whom childcare was a natural part of their role within the wider whānau. Māori fathers were openly loving and nurturing towards their tamariki and mokopuna.

“They are kind and hospitable to strangers, and are excessively fond of their children. On a journey, it is more usual to see the father carrying his infant than the mother; and all the little offices of a nurse are performed by him with the tenderest care and good humour.”

Augustus Earle (1793–1838) artist, traveller, writer

“One of the finest traits I have noticed in the New Zealanders is that of parental love; the men appear chiefly to nurse their children, and are generally to be seen with one on their back covered up under their mats, the little things appear likewise sensible of their fathers’ love for they seem principally to cling to them.”

Richard Taylor (1805–1873) missionary, naturalist, writer [cited by Ann Salmond, 2016]

“ The New Zealand father is devotedly fond of his children, they are his pride, his boast, and peculiar delight; he generally bears the burden of carrying them continually within his mat ... The children are seldom or never punished. ”

Joel Polack

Men had an important parenting role

The shared parenting of children was also commented on as this would have been surprising to Western men at that time. It is possible that these commentators mistook other whānau members (uncles, aunties) as fathers or mothers because collective child-rearing practices were unfamiliar to them. Nevertheless, whether they were fathers, uncles or other whānau members it is clear that men played a significant and loving role in the lives of tamariki. For example, historians suggest that it was common practice for fathers to assume care for baby boys after they were weaned while mothers cared for the baby girls. This is supported by early observers' accounts.

“The father performs the duty of a nurse; and any foul action the embryo warrior may be guilty of, causes rather a smile than a tear from the devoted parent.”

Joel Polack

“Children were suckled until they had teeth and could walk, and their parents carried them around with them or placed them on mats or dog skins on the floor of their houses. Fathers, like mothers, looked after the physical needs of their children.”

Julien Crozet (1728–1780) Lieutenant to Du Fresne on the French vessel ‘Le Mascarin’ (cited by Salmond in *Two Worlds*, p 422)

“In the manner of rearing children, and in the remarkable tenderness and solicitous care bestowed upon them by the parents, no partiality on account of sex was in any instance observed. The infant is no sooner weaned than a considerable part of its care devolves upon the father: it is taught to twine its arms round his neck, and in this posture it remains the whole day, asleep or awake.”

Richard Cruise – military man (from *Journal of a Ten Months’ Residence in New Zealand*, published 1824)

“The boys are brought up almost entirely by the men; and it is not uncommon to see young children of tender years sitting next to their parents in the war councils, apparently listening with the great attention...”

Joel Polack

The involvement of tāne (and all whānau members) in the lives of children from the time they were born helped to cement the bonds of whakapapa, and to create confidence in their children who felt safe, loved and a strong sense of belonging.



BECOMING A FATHER IS EASY BEING A DAD ISN'T

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

Your children may not listen to what you say but they will imitate what you do.

SHOW THEM THAT YOU LOVE THEIR MOTHER

Children feel safe and secure when their parents are happy and respect each other

TALK TO EACH OTHER POSITIVELY

Give heaps of praise to your family and to yourself too. Speak openly and honestly with compassion



Māori meeting house. Ref: 1/2-001930-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

OUR TĀNE ANCESTORS WERE GENTLE, CARING FATHERS

In early days Māori men had an important role in parenting; European observers noted that:

- Tāne were extremely gentle, loving and good humoured with their children
- Childcare was a natural and important part of a tāne's role within the wider whānau
- Tāne had a key role in the upbringing of the boys, carrying them around as infants and including them in many community activities from an early age
- This parenting style created happy, confident children who had a clear and respected place in family/iwi life.



**Balance,
harmony
and tikanga
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strength and
survival of the
collective**

5



Balance, harmony and tikanga ensured strength and survival of the collective

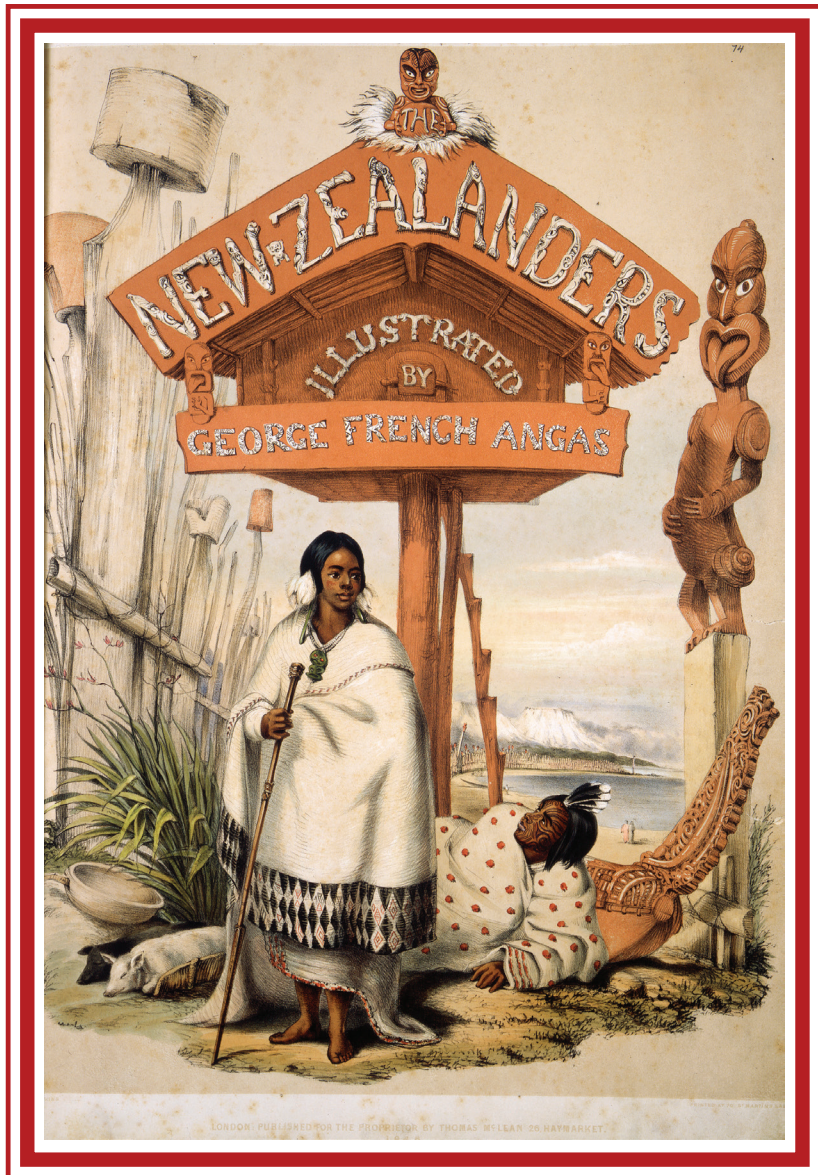
Before Europeans arrived in Aotearoa, traditional Māori society was characterised by a collective spirit – everyone working together for the good of the whānau, hapū and iwi. The whānau and wider collective was dependent on there being harmony and collaboration – their survival depended on it.

Tikanga kept order and protected whānau, hapū and iwi

In pre-European times, we know that whānau relationships were governed and maintained within a complex system of law based on tikanga. Tikanga guided all domestic and tribal (and inter-tribal) activities and behaviour. Any transgressions, physical or verbal, required discussion (and sometimes immediate action). Regardless of the response there was a clear process, informed by tikanga, in order to make amends or restitution.

“... they did not by any means convince him there was anything wrong in his own mode of thinking, and he replied, that no doubt the Missionary was right, judging by the law of white men, but that he was right, judging by the law of his country. The subject, he said, had been thoroughly discussed by themselves, and every knotty point argued according to principles recognized by Māori law, till they had arrived at conclusions which, as he quaintly expressed it, were as straight and even as a board planed by a carpenter.”

Edward Shortland, (relating an observation by a missionary about the tikanga used to settle a local feud)



Hawkins, Frances Louisa, – 1884. Angas, George French, 1822–1886: The New Zealanders illustrated by George French Angas. Lithographed by Louisa Hawkins. London, Thomas McLean, 1847. Ref: PUBL-0014-TP. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

Collective responsibility and tikanga prevented violence

Some academics have pointed out that this collective responsibility served to limit violence within whānau. Violence from men towards women and children was unusual, and if it did occur there were harsh punishments according to local tikanga.

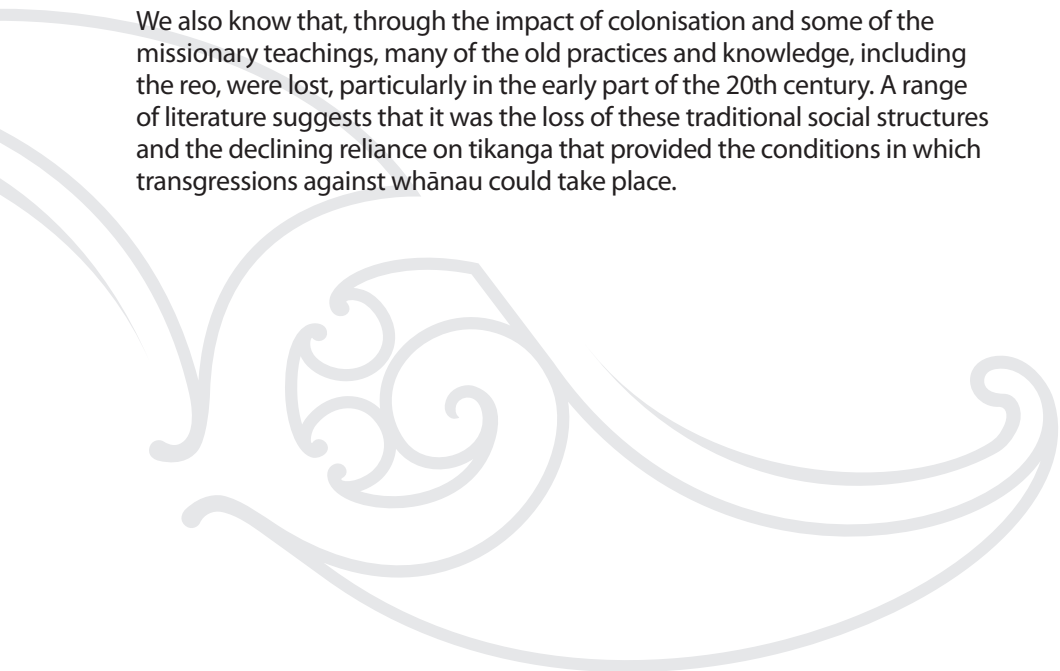
“Instances of abuse against women and children were regarded as whānau concerns and actions would inevitably be taken against the perpetrator.”

Ani Mikaere (1994)

“In pre-colonial Māori society a man’s house was not his castle. The community intervened to prevent and punish violence against one’s partner in a very straightforward way.”

Stephanie Milroy (cited by Ani Mikaere, 1994)

We also know that, through the impact of colonisation and some of the missionary teachings, many of the old practices and knowledge, including the reo, were lost, particularly in the early part of the 20th century. A range of literature suggests that it was the loss of these traditional social structures and the declining reliance on tikanga that provided the conditions in which transgressions against whānau could take place.



OUR ANCESTORS KNEW THE POWER OF A HARMONIOUS WHĀNAU AND COLLECTIVE

The strength, success and survival of the whānau, hapū and iwi relied on there being balance, respect and harmony. Our ancestors worked together, collectively, to achieve this, placing value on every family member's contribution (past, present and future). These principles remain true today. A whānau can achieve a great deal if:

- It works together harmoniously and each member contributes to the collective whole
- All are clear about their roles and responsibilities in keeping the whānau strong and successful
- There is a sense of belonging and togetherness fostered by sharing family history and stories, creating and repeating special rituals and traditions
- Parents/adults respect, support and show love for one another – role modelling positive relationships for their tamariki
- There is a tikanga in the home where all are clear about behaviour that is acceptable and that which is not, and the consequences (non-violent) for actions that hurt the whānau in any way – mentally, physically, spiritually
- Aroha, kōrero awhi and manaakitanga are paramount, keeping whānau strong and resilient through the good times and the bad.



YOUR ANCESTORS SIT ON YOUR SHOULDERS TO KEEP YOUR FEET ON THE GROUND

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

You have no rights until you fulfil your responsibilities

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE TO YOUR ANCESTORS

Ancestors leave responsibilities and tasks for each generation to complete. Have you checked to see what they left for you to do?

ALL THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW HAVE ALREADY BEEN DONE FOR YOU

Share stories about your elders and about your history with your children.

Further support and information

6

E Tū Whānau is a movement for positive change developed by Māori for Māori. It's about taking responsibility and action in your community and supporting whānau to thrive.

Everyone has a part to play in creating change – E Tū Whānau is a great place to start!

YOU CAN GET INVOLVED OR FIND OUT MORE @

www.etuwhanau.org.nz

www.facebook.com/etuwhanau

List of early European observers

7

Augustus Earle (1793–1838) artist, traveller, writer

Reverend Samuel Marsden (1765–1838) chaplain, magistrate, agriculturalist, missionary

John Savage (1770–1838) surgeon, traveller, writer

George French Angas (1822–1886) artist, naturalist, writer

Edward Shortland (1812–1893) doctor, administrator, scholar, linguist

Joel Polack (1807–1882) author, artist, trader

Julien Crozet (1728–1780) Lieutenant to Du Fresne on the French vessel 'Le Mascarin'

Richard Taylor (1805–1873) missionary, naturalist, writer

Richard Cruise – English army officer who wrote *Journal of a ten months residence in New Zealand* (published 1824)

Reproduced quotes included in this booklet may have irregular spelling and macron use.

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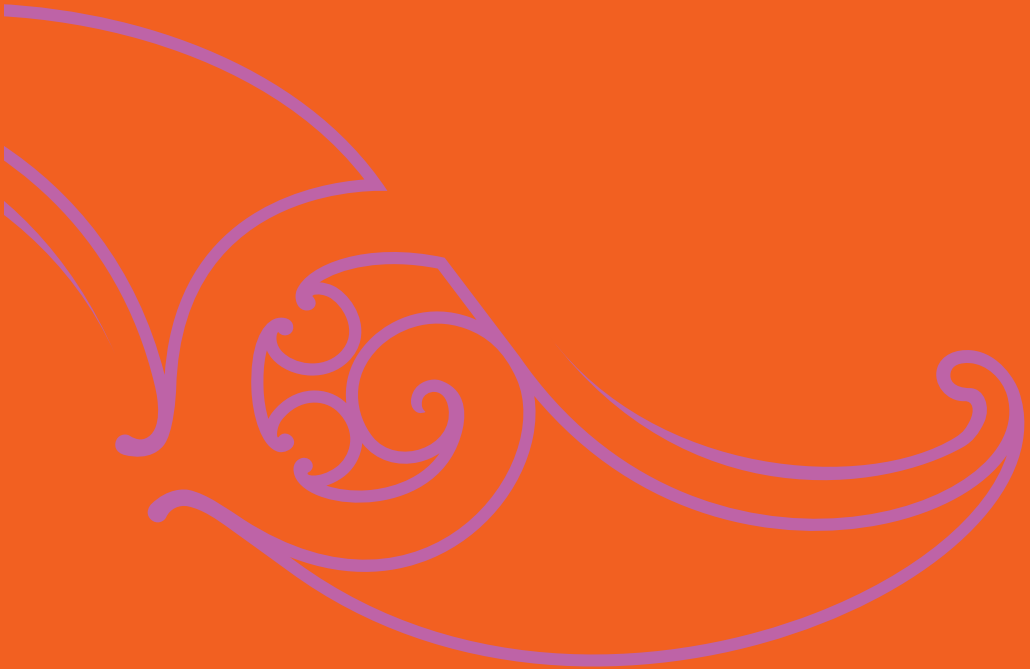
Oruamatua whānau outside meeting house
at Moawhango, ca 1880s. Reference Number:
PAColl-7081-20. Alexander Turnbull Library,
Wellington, New Zealand.

**“Your
ancestors
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ground”**



*E Tū
Whānau!*

Te Mana Kāhā o te Whānau



**Te mana
kaha o te
whānau!**

