

## Parenting programmes effective with whānau

MAY 2015

This *What Works* brief is designed for policy analysts, programme developers and/or funders to provide information on kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted parenting and whānau development programmes, to inform policy and programme development.

### What we found

- Kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted parenting programmes validate Māori values and practices inclusive of tikanga and te reo Māori. They help build transformative practices within the whānau and community by strengthening cultural identity and growing knowledge of traditional parenting practices.
- The programmes reviewed shared common characteristics by being strengths-based, whānau-centred, using Māori facilitators, helping bridge the gap between the whānau and social services and engaging the wider community as a means of social support.
- Kaupapa Māori evaluations identify Māori-specific outcomes, impacts and cultural responsiveness in programme development and implementation.
- Programme evaluations tended to focus on meeting contractual outcomes and did not always assess the impact of the programme on participants. Pilot programmes and/or programmes in the implementation phase require ongoing evaluation.
- The programmes were developed and implemented at the marae, iwi, regional and/or national level, with evaluations specific to a site, programme or provider. A kaupapa Māori meta-evaluation would determine critical success factors and levels of programme efficacy and strengthen the evidence base.
- Programmes using Māori facilitators known and respected in their communities meant whānau were not 'hard to reach'.

### About *What Works*

Superu's *What Works* series synthesises what we do and don't know about a specific social sector topic. We draw on international and New Zealand research to identify what does and doesn't work to address the topic at hand. Our aim is to inform decisions and investment in the social sector.

### Introduction

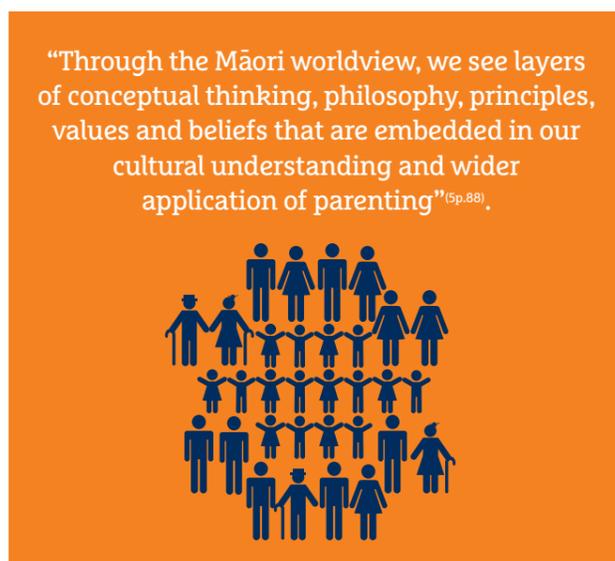
In 2012 the New Zealand government released the *White Paper for Vulnerable Children*<sup>(1)</sup>. The White Paper highlighted the importance of positive parenting practices and the value of supporting parents especially during their child's early years. As part of the government priorities to address New Zealand's vulnerable children, the Māori Affairs Select Committee (MASC) conducted the *Inquiry into the determinants of wellbeing for tamariki Māori*<sup>(2)</sup>.

The MASC report, published in 2013, stressed the need for the Crown and Māori to work in partnership to support whānau to strengthen the development of Māori children. The government response to the inquiry<sup>(3)</sup> stated that whānau-friendly parenting programmes were important, and the Superu publication *Effective Parenting Programmes: A review of the effectiveness of parenting programmes for parents of vulnerable children*<sup>(4)</sup> would include a review of effective parenting programmes within the context of whānau.

This paper presents and discusses key findings from the chapter of the main report titled *Māori parenting programmes within the context of whānau*. Superu's *What Works: Effective parenting programmes*, released in March 2015 looks at parenting programmes for the broader New Zealand population.

In undertaking the review of effective parenting programmes, Superu established a Māori experts advisory group to provide traditional and contemporary expertise on whānau development. That group identified key themes and specific kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted parenting programmes drawn from published and peer-reviewed literature.

## Māori worldview principles, values and beliefs are critical for whānau



Kaupapa Māori parenting programmes emerge from the Māori worldview. The concept and philosophy driving the programmes are from Te Āo Māori (the Māori world). Principles, outcomes and values for success are drawn from mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) resulting in Māori-specific design, delivery and practice by Māori **with** whānau<sup>(4)</sup>.

The following model outlines the Māori worldview beliefs and principles in the kaupapa Māori programmes we reviewed<sup>(4)</sup>. In these programmes the Māori worldview is central to design, development and delivery and is centred on the whānau. The culturally adapted programmes we reviewed have been aligned to the same principles and beliefs in order to become whānau-centred.

Figure 1: Kaupapa Māori parenting programmes in the context of whānau



### Māori worldview principles in Kaupapa Māori parenting programmes

- **Whakapapa** – genealogy, the principles associated with descent. The essence of whānau, hapū and iwi. Through whakapapa, *ngā taonga tuku iho* are imparted to the next generation. *Ngā taonga tuku iho* refers to traditional knowledge and knowledge pathways that are central to kaupapa Māori programmes and practices<sup>(7)(4)</sup>.
- **Rangatiratanga** – principles associated with autonomy and self-determination as the building blocks to whānau leadership, authority and whānau empowerment. This is reflected in supporting whānau to plan, strengthen their confidence, capability and autonomy<sup>(4)</sup>.
- **Whanaungatanga** – principles and values of kinship relationships<sup>(6)</sup>. The literature speaks to two ‘pre-eminent’ models of whānau. *Whakapapa whānau* (kinship) and *kaupapa whānau* (sharing a common purpose). These models are not exclusive. Whanaungatanga speaks to the relationships shared by both models of whānau<sup>(4)</sup>.
- **Manaakitanga** – principles associated with duties and expectations of care and reciprocal obligations. This includes acknowledging the mana of others, responsibility and accountability to other whānau and to those not connected by whakapapa<sup>(8)(4)</sup>.
- **Kotahitanga** – principles associated with collective unity as whānau and as Māori. Through kotahitanga, everyone contributes to the wellbeing of tamariki, whānau and the community<sup>(8)(4)</sup>.
- **Wairuatanga** – principles associated with a spiritual embodiment (including religion), and spiritual wellbeing. Respect for the spirit and the tapu, or sanctity of the child, is a key feature in whānau parenting programmes<sup>(4)(9)</sup>.

### Māori children are members of whānau, hapū and iwi

A major theme in kaupapa Māori literature is that Māori children are members of whānau, hapū and iwi. The responsibility for their upbringing extends beyond the immediate family, fostering the child’s sense of belonging and identity. The MASC inquiry into the wellbeing of tamariki Māori found that:

- the wellbeing of tamariki Māori is inextricable from that of their whānau
- acknowledging a Māori child’s collective identity recognises a whānau-centred approach to their wellbeing
- collaboration and partnership between whānau, hapū and iwi, government and other stakeholders is central to empowering relationships for delivering effective service with whānau<sup>(2 p.5)</sup>.

As the key social unit within Te Āo Māori, ‘whānau’ is a highly effective site of intervention for policy development and service delivery<sup>(10)</sup>. For example *Whānau Ora* is about working **with** whānau to transform lifestyles. It is focused on outcomes where whānau will be *‘resilient and nurturing, self-managing; live healthy lifestyles; participate fully in society and in Te Āo Māori; be economically secure and successful in wealth creation’*<sup>(11 p.1)</sup>.

Tamariki Māori have the right under the Treaty of Waitangi, the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to be raised within Māori language and culture, and to have the determinants of their wellbeing framed as Māori children located within whānau, hapū and iwi social structures of Te Ao Māori<sup>(12)(13)</sup>. While ‘whānau’ is ideally the site where cultural identity should emanate, this is not the case with many whānau. The 2013 Census reported around 16 percent of Māori did not know their iwi<sup>(14)</sup>. Consequently, whānau development programmes that are grounded in, or aligned to, Māori tikanga and kawa provide opportunities for whānau to reconnect with key elements of the Māori world<sup>(4)</sup>.

### Culturally adapted Māori parenting programmes

The practice of culturally adapting generic programmes to make them responsive to Māori emerged due to the criticism that generic programmes can be unsuitable and ‘inhibit positive outcomes for Māori parents when they are not based in Māori values and knowledge about childrearing’<sup>(6 p. 33)</sup>. For instance, Cargo’s experience in evaluating generic programmes is that these programmes are philosophically underpinned by values and beliefs that can be different from or contrary to indigenous values<sup>(15)</sup>.

The difference between kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted programmes is that kaupapa Māori programme theory originates within the Māori worldview. In comparison, culturally adapted programmes are largely derived from generic programme theory which is then adapted to match the cultural context in which it is delivered. It is important that Māori validate the responsiveness of the cultural adaptation. Careful consideration needs to be given to research, planning and implementation of culturally adapted programmes<sup>(15)</sup>.

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### Kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted parenting programmes reviewed

The kaupapa Māori programmes reviewed position parenting within the context of whānau. These are whānau and community development programmes as well as training programmes for facilitators of whānau programmes. These latter programmes are not always referred to as ‘parenting programmes’.

The culturally adapted programmes reviewed are generic parenting programmes that have been adapted to become whānau-focused.

The following table provides a short programme description, evaluation and/or peer review for the seven kaupapa Māori and four culturally adapted programmes that were part of this review.

Table 1. Evaluations and/or peer review of kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted programmes

Kaupapa Māori programme description	Evaluation and/or peer review
<p><b>Whānau Toko i te Ora (1999)</b> National Māori Women’s Welfare League parenting programme delivered through home visiting, whānau learning, group support and advocacy in six League regions<sup>(4)</sup>. It is funded per whānau<sup>(16)</sup>.</p>	<p>Evaluations (2002, 2013) identified improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• housing, child health and education outcomes</li> <li>• whānau relationships, cultural identity, tikanga and te reo Māori</li> <li>• confidence, self-advocacy, care for self and others<sup>(16)(17)</sup>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Te Atawhāingia te Pā Harakeke (2001)</b> Trains Māori and iwi family violence facilitators to support parents and children. It was trialled initially in the 1990s with male inmates in Rimutaka and New Plymouth prisons as a Tikanga Māori parenting programme<sup>(18)</sup>.</p>	<p>Evaluations of the trial and programme (1999, 2003) found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• skilled Māori facilitators helped inmates navigate prison structures and connect with whānau, hapū and iwi</li> <li>• training for Māori facilitators was well-structured<sup>(18)</sup></li> <li>• the programme could help reduce levels of family violence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tikanga Whakatipu Ririki (2011)</b> Developed by Te Kāhui Mana Ririki (a child advocacy organisation), this programme delivers unique traditional Māori parenting practices to eliminate child abuse<sup>(9)</sup>.</p>	<p>Feedback from participants indicated that the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• helped apply tikanga Māori parenting techniques</li> <li>• reduced stress through use of te reo Māori</li> <li>• changed gender roles within whānau.</li> </ul> <p>An independent programme evaluation is underway<sup>(8)</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Te Mana Kainga (1995)</b> This is a parenting programme that emerged from Ngāti Maniapoto’s tribal context of strengthening whānau empowerment. It was implemented in 1995 and evaluated<sup>(19)</sup>.</p>	<p>We have been unable to find the evaluation in publically available literature or determine whether the programme is still used. Therefore there is no evidence of effectiveness.</p>
<p><b>Poutiria te Aroha (2012)</b> Developed by Te Mauri Tau and trialled on a community basis, Poutiria te Aroha delivers an intensive ‘train the trainer’ non-violent parenting course<sup>(20)</sup>.</p>	<p>Action research completed during the trial confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poutiria te Aroha was ‘rigorous, well-informed and carefully developed’<sup>(20)(18)</sup></li> <li>• Poutiria te Aroha is yet to be fully evaluated therefore there is no evidence of effectiveness.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kaitoko Whānau (2010)</b> Developed by Te Puni Kōkiri for vulnerable whānau ‘experiencing multiple significant hardship’. The programme provides Māori-specific design, delivery and practice; facilitates whānau access to social services; aims to improve self-reliance, and reduce social dislocation and stress<sup>(21)</sup>.</p>	<p>The 2012 evaluation noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whānau quit smoking, drugs, and drinking</li> <li>• relationships with whānau, marae and social services improved</li> <li>• whānau set goals and planned for a better life</li> <li>• Kaitoko Whānau navigators did not find whānau ‘hard to reach’</li> <li>• mana and skills of the whānau navigator are a critical success factor<sup>(21)</sup>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Oranga Whānau (2009)</b> Developed by Te Puni Kōkiri for single parent families in environments of high deprivation and need, the programme is delivered in Whangārei, Auckland, Rotorua, Palmerston North and Wellington. It works within marae, home and community to re-connect whānau with wider whānau and community networks<sup>(22)</sup>.</p>	<p>An internal review is underway<sup>(4)</sup> but there is not yet evidence of effectiveness.</p>



**Table 1. Evaluations and/or peer review of kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted programmes (continued)**

Culturally adapted programmes	Evaluation and/or peer review
<p><b>Mātuatanga Whānau Programme (2001)</b> Developed as part of a PhD dissertation with the Apumoana marae and the Rotorua branch of the Māori Women's Welfare League, the programme is delivered over three sessions as part of a longer parenting programme<sup>(23)</sup>.</p>	<p>The Mātuatanga (Parenting) and Relationships Model and the Mātuatanga Values Model were compared with a Standard Parent Training (SPT) programme and found that the culturally adapted programme was more valued by Māori owing to inclusion of Māori values and practices<sup>(23)</sup>. As an independent evaluation is yet to be carried out there is limited evidence of effectiveness.</p>
<p><b>Hoki ki te Rito (2008)</b> A cultural adaptation of the Mellow Parenting Programme implemented by Ohomairangi Trust, the programme delivers an intensive parenting course for young mothers experiencing relationship problems with their babies and young children<sup>(4)</sup>.</p>	<p>Evaluation (2013) identified improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mental health</li> <li>• relationships between parents, children and wider whānau</li> <li>• child social skills, greater enjoyment and reduced conflict during play.</li> </ul> <p>The evaluation also called for ongoing programme assessment<sup>(4)</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Incredible Years Parenting Programme (IYP)</b> Widely implemented in New Zealand since 2010 with some small scale implementation prior to this. IYP consists of 14-18 sessions for parents of children aged 3-8 years. It aims to improve parenting behaviour and interaction with children. Earlier evaluations resulted in calls for IYP to be delivered in a manner culturally responsive to Māori<sup>(15)</sup>.</p>	<p>Evaluations (2008, 2009, 2013) noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• success occurred through engaging skilled Māori facilitators, and using tikanga, kawa and te reo Māori</li> <li>• basing the programme on the marae contributed to the retention of the majority of parents</li> <li>• IYP created a sense of group responsibility</li> <li>• IYP benefited Māori parents but not as much as non-Māori<sup>(4)</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>The impact of IYP is being monitored and evaluated.</p>
<p><b>Āhuru Mōwai (Parents As First Teachers, PAFT (1999))</b> Described as the 'Māori overlay' to PAFT, the programme was developed in response to criticism that PAFT wasn't culturally relevant with whānau. Based on home visits to whānau, it is targeted at parents with high-to-medium needs, with children aged 0-3 years<sup>(24)</sup>.</p>	<p>PAFT has been evaluated but the cultural adaptation is yet to be evaluated so there is no evidence of its effectiveness.</p>

### Kaupapa Māori programmes build knowledge of Māori culture, values and identity

All the kaupapa Māori programmes we reviewed help whānau build their knowledge of traditional Māori values in parenting and caregiving practices as well as increasing the use and knowledge of tikanga and te reo Māori. The programmes support forward planning, goal setting, building confidence and capability within the whānau, and they strengthen whānau engagement with government and other social services.

The few evaluations of kaupapa Māori programmes we reviewed found that these Māori-initiated parenting programmes can have a positive impact on participants' parenting skills and confidence. The incorporation of Māori concepts and values into family violence programmes and addictions services have also been found to benefit participants<sup>(6)</sup>. Importantly the incorporation and validation of Māori values and practices inclusive of tikanga and te reo Māori has been found to help bring about healing and growth in cultural identity<sup>(6)(7)(8)</sup>.

### Culturally adapted programmes are more enjoyable and effective for Māori parents

Cultural adaptations show that generic programmes can be made more effective and enjoyable for Māori parents. The culturally adapted programmes reviewed align to the principles, beliefs and values of the Māori worldview and provide social support for parents and extended whānau.

### Our review highlights a range of practices within effective kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted programmes

#### Whānau-centred programmes

Programmes and providers that centre on the whānau view the whānau as central to the design, delivery and success of policies and programmes. They enable and support the whānau by focusing on the whole whānau, not individual members. This can require flexibility around content and timeframes to meet their needs.

#### Skilled Māori facilitators, navigators, role models

Māori facilitators and whānau navigators play a significant role in advocating with and for whānau. They facilitate access to social services, help whānau develop a plan for reaching their goals, and create high trust relationships with whānau.

A number of the programmes supported Māori role models and mentors from within the whānau, for example, where *tuakana*, older or more experienced participants, work with *teina*, younger or less experienced participants. It was noted that using whānau and mothers in this role greatly enhanced the credibility for other whānau. These people are often key whānau contacts for the navigators.

#### A focus on strengths

Programmes that are based in Māori principles such as *aroha* and *manāki* (love and nurturing) encourage whānau to recognise and build on their strengths. The need for programmes and providers to adopt a strengths-based approach is a significant factor identified by many whānau.

#### Whānau planning and capability

While not all the programmes reviewed had formal whānau plans, they do encourage setting goals and aspirations. A formal whānau plan allows facilitators to help whānau plan the steps needed to meet their goals. For many whānau the opportunity to set and achieve their goals increases their confidence to succeed.

#### A focus on wellbeing

Some programmes encourage whānau to take greater control over their lives in key areas of cultural, mental and emotional wellbeing. Programmes helped whānau identify and develop changes to diet, smoking, alcohol use and anger management in culturally safe ways.

#### Advocacy on behalf of whānau

When whānau lack information about social services, they are unaware of their entitlements and are unable to access support. Whānau advocates assist whānau to engage with social services and access support, information and entitlements.

#### Home visits

When whānau are relaxed in their own environment, facilitators can gain greater insights in how to support them. Home visits are also easier for whānau who have children at home, do not have access to childcare, and/or lack transport. The Āhuru Mōwai curriculum is designed to be delivered as personal visits to whānau, where information can be individualised to suit their needs.

#### Social and community support for parents

Increased social support for parents occurred by helping whānau to strengthen their formal and informal networks and to encourage wider whānau and/or community involvement where appropriate. The use of advocates and role models were designed to increase social support and networks for parents.

## Policy implications



### The call for responsive public policy and services is not new

In 1988 the government released *Pūāo-te-ata-tū* (Daybreak) the report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori Perspective for the Department of Social Welfare (now known as the Ministry of Social Development).

Essentially, *Pūāo-te-ata-tū* aimed to address the lack of cultural understanding and responsiveness in policy impacting on Māori. The report identified that a partnership approach is needed to develop policy and programmes responsive to whānau, incorporate the values, cultures and beliefs of Māori in policy, and ensure social services are responsive to Māori<sup>(25)</sup>.

In 2014 the government’s response to the MASC report called for greater responsiveness by government agencies:

*‘All government agencies need to consider Māori models of health and wellbeing, principles and Māori viewpoints; understand the impacts of their policies and practices on wellbeing outcomes for Māori; consider Māori as a distinct group, with diversities within it; and report outcome information for Māori alongside other groups.’<sup>(3 p.3)</sup>.*

Progress can be seen today in approaches such as Whānau Ora. This review of kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted parenting programmes also suggests progress towards developing programmes and services in line with Māori values and beliefs.

### Existing mechanisms can support kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted programmes

Greater investment is needed in the evaluation of kaupapa Māori and culturally adapted programmes. As policy developers, researchers and funders build a stronger evidence base, we can simultaneously strengthen our use of practices known to be effective with whānau. For example, through procurement criteria, funders can identify outcomes and deliverables that support kaupapa Māori programmes and practices that are whānau-centred; strengths-based; build capability; encourage future plans and goals, and promote healthy life skills.

Policies can support greater use of navigators, quality advocates and organisations that have credibility with, and a proven track record of, adding value with whānau. The importance of strengthening cultural literacy and responsiveness to Māori can be seen in the government’s response to the MASC inquiry into the wellbeing of tamariki Māori:

**‘Effectiveness is in part linked to an agency’s ability to engage successfully with Māori in a way that is meaningful, viewed as an opportunity to better understand the needs of Māori and to ensure that outcomes for Māori are fully maximised.**

**It is also linked to the ability of an agency to put in place interventions that are more holistic in nature, whānau-focused and address multiple needs’<sup>(3 p.4)</sup>.**

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To increase the use of evidence by people across the social sector so that they can make better decisions – about funding, policies or services – to improve the lives of New Zealanders, New Zealand's communities, families and whānau.

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We work across the wider social sector to:

- **promote** informed debate on the key social issues for New Zealand, its families and whānau, and increase awareness about what works
- **grow** the quality, relevance and quantity of the evidence base in priority areas
- **facilitate** the use of evidence by sharing it and supporting its use in decision-making.





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