"Ko koe kei tēnā kīwai, ko au kei tēnei kīwai o te kete."

(You carry your handle and I'll carry my handle, of our kete)

Centre of Innovation Research Report of Te Kōpae Piripono

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and the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono

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Executive Summary

This report documents a three-year Centre of Innovation research project, carried out by the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono Māori immersion early childhood centre, into its exploration of leadership and the critical importance of whānau development in ensuring successful educational experiences and fulfilled lives for Māori children and their families. For Te Kōpae Piripono, whānau development involves the learning and development of every member of its whānau, whether that be children, parents, teachers, or management. Therefore, a key aspect of its kaupapa is the support and development of the whole whānau, not just the child enrolled. Te Kōpae Piripono's research project sought to explore, in depth, its whānau development structure and its own conceptualisation of leadership at Te Kōpae Piripono – that leadership (or what Te Kōpae Piripono refers to as Mana Tangata) be viewed in relation to four key responsibilities - Ngā Takohanga e Wha - Having Responsibility, Taking Responsibility, Sharing Responsibility and Being Responsible. Using Te Tātai Whakapapa - the structure and concepts of the original whānau of Ranginui and Papatūānuku – as its conceptual framework, the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono set about answering its research question, "How does whānau development foster leadership across all levels, enhance children's learning and development?" This led Te Kōpae Piripono on an unexpected journey. The whānau discovered that fear and anxiety afflict us, young and old, and are major impediments to our individual and collective development. Fear was found to be a significant barrier to whānau participation – particularly fathers' involvement - in their children's learning. The research data revealed that these emotional difficulties are generations old; the long-term consequences of families' lived experiences of education and of hardships due to colonisation and the muru raupatu - the massive land confiscations of the 19th century. Fostering leadership across all levels proved an intriguing challenge. The Te Kōpae Piripono whānau found that with perseverance, caring and empathy, and persistent positive action and support, individual and collective whānau were able to begin to be open and honest with each other, to learn to trust and to gain an inner peace. When whānau gain a sense of trust and equilibrium – through being, having, sharing and taking responsibility - the dynamic transformative ripples are wide and far-reaching, particularly for children. When this happens, the children of Te Kōpae Piripono are likely to grow up proudly Māori and fully participant citizens of the world.

TĀTAI WHAKAPAPA

Ko Rangi, ko Papa
ka puta ko Rongo
ko Tānemāhuta
tū ki te rangi e tū iho nei.

Whai muri iho
ko Tangaroa,
ko Tūmātauenga
Haumiatiketike
Tāwhirimātea
I rere ki te rangi, e hai

Tokona rā ko te rangi ki runga
ko Papa ki raro
ka wehewehea
ka puta te whai ao
te ao māramarama

Ka takatū ko te ira tangata
i ngā arearetanga o Papa
Horapa kau ana ki te matawhenua
ki te tuawhenua
ki ngā motumotuhanga, e hai

Koia rā tēnei e Rongo
Whakairia ake ki runga
Hohou ko te rongo
Ki runga, ki raro
Ki te hunga tāngata
Ki ngā tamariki mokopuna
Hui ē! Hui ē! Tāiki ē!

(Nā Huirangi Waikerepuru, 1991)

Supreme parents
Ranginui and Papatūānuku,
Bound in embrace.
From that union come
Rongomātāne and
Tānemāhuta,

Positioning himself heavenwards.
Tangaroa, Tūmātauenga and Haumiatiketike follow,
And then Tāwhirimātea
Who fled to the sky father, e hai.

Ranginui hoisted skywards,
Papatūānuku below,
Separated so the physical world,
the world of light can emerge.

Humankind is nurtured
In the crevices of the mother's body
Spreading out to cover the face of the earth
The landmass and the outer islands, e hai.

This is how it is, Rongo
Uphold and secure this order
Secure peace and tranquility
Above and below
To all people and all descendents.
Affirm it and secure it.
So be it!

This karakia (incantation) is the philosophical backdrop for Te Kōpae Piripono and its research. The Tātai Whakapapa articulates the genealogical structure of the Māori world and affirms our location on the continuum from cosmogonic beginning to preordained end. Within our tātai whakapapa, both the animate and the inanimate belong and are interdependent.

Recited at the beginning of an occasion or event, the Tātai Whakapapa is an affirmation of the central elements of Te Ao Māori and Māori beliefs about who we are and what is important to us. The recitation of the karakia recalls the beginning of our collective story, a narrative that serves as template for how we should approach life, maintaining the natural order in accord with our ancestors (atua), balancing opposing forces to achieve stability and well-being.

Chapter 1

Whakataki

Introduction

This chapter introduces our research. It provides a background on Te Kōpae Piripono, placing the centre in an historical context and presenting an overview of our operation. The rationale for our research is provided, including a discussion about our research journey in relation to our historical context.

1.1 Background

Te Kōpae Piripono is Taranaki's only Māori immersion early childhood centre. It was established in October 1994, by a diverse group of parents, educators and other prominent individuals in the community all committed to the retention and enrichment of te reo Māori me ōna tīkanga (the Māori language, its customs and traditions), in Taranaki. Te Kōpae Piripono was born out of a shared desire to rear our children on kaupapa Māori, that is, within a Māori paradigm, speaking the language of their forebears, and at home with indigenous concepts and practices. The opening karakia, Tātai Whakapapa (p.1) is, therefore, our founding karakia. It also informs the kaupapa or philosophy of Te Kōpae Piripono.

The character of Te Kōpae Piripono is embodied in its name. The word Kōpae is the Taranaki equivalent of 'kōhanga', or nest, wherein the young are nurtured, and the language and learning are fostered. Piripono speaks about devotion and commitment, and can be translated as an everlasting and genuine embrace.

Te Kōpae Piripono is located in Taranaki on the west coast of the North Island, in the city of New Plymouth, known to Māori as Ngāmotu. We are based in the old Barrett Street Hospital (which has been land-banked for treaty settlement with our local iwi Te Atiawa). We overlook the city of New Plymouth and we are blessed to have breathtaking views of the city and of a huge expanse of the ocean, the Tai Hauāuru. Our tūpuna, our ancestral mountain, Maunga Taranaki, stands behind us.

1.2 Our Historical Context

The landmass that comprises our rohe (region), Te Tai Hauāuru, off the west coast of the North Island of Aotearoa, is the right fin of Māui's fish, Te Ika ā Māui. At its centre stands Maunga Taranaki (Mt Taranaki), embraced by the tribal groups of Taranaki Tūturu, Ngāti Ruanui, and Te Atiawa. The people of Taranaki trace descent from ancestors who lived on and around the mountain prior to the arrival of those from the Pacific region during the Hekenga Nui (great migration). The vast expanse of land surrounding Maunga Taranaki was given the mountain's name by European settlers. Within the Taranaki region, covering 723,610 hectares, there are eight tribes (iwi), subdivided into tens of sub-tribes (hapū), affiliating to three main waka (canoes): Kurahaupo, Aotea and Tokomaru.

European settlement of the Taranaki region began sporadically with whalers and missionaries at the beginning of the 19th Century. By 1840, settlement had become a concerted effort with the purchase by the Plymouth Company, from West England, of tens of thousands of acres of land from the New Zealand Company, who had earlier acquired it from Māori by questionable means (Rice, 1992).

After the Treaty of Waitangi was signed by Māori leaders and the British Crown, in 1840, the trickle of settlers became a flood, swamping the indigenous population and unbalancing important relationships. The processes of colonisation, made legal by successive acts of Parliament that brought about actions such as the muru raupatu (land confiscations) and disease, took a significant toll on Taranaki Māori, giving rise to a steady decline in circumstance. Preoccupied with survival in this new antagonistic world, Taranaki Māori, like Māori elsewhere, pursued European knowledge with vigour, in the hope that it would make them competitive in the new economy. They were denied their land, and then their language, customs and traditions, as their acculturation took effect (Waitangi Tribunal, 1995). Key elements of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge and learning) were lost.

Despite that huge loss, despite the landlessness, dislocation, and marginalisation of iwi, the tribes survived with the remnants of their cultural property. By the latter part of the

20th Century, efforts had begun to right past injustices and to build for a positive future. It was acknowledged by many in Taranaki as elsewhere, that central to Māori development was the reclamation of identity, and of all those things that identify Māori.

By 1994, in the face of disproportionately negative statistics for Māori, immense time, energy and resource at hapū and iwi level, was going into the Muru me te Raupatu case before the Waitangi Tribunal, seeking restitution from the Crown. At the same time, some in the community felt there needed to be a simultaneous effort on the education front. This effort involved in the main part rebuilding the people, reinstituting culture and language, and developing strategies to improve achievement in education, which would equip the people to move forward positively into the future.

A number of developments in Māori education occurred at that time: the Taranaki Māori Education Authority was established, Te Wānanga Māori at Taranaki Polytechnic began in late 1989, the first Kura Kaupapa Māori opened, eight Kōhanga Reo operated. And in 1994 Te Kōpae Piripono Immersion Māori early childhood centre, opened its doors.

1.3 Overview of the Te Kōpae Piripono operation

At Te Kōpae Piripono, we endeavour to uphold the integrity of kaupapa Māori along with a commitment to excellence in education into the 21st Century, as we operate a multi-leveled governance and management structure and remain chartered to, and funded by, the Ministry of Education. Our governance structures recognise that people are at different stages of development. This allows all involved, to participate in a way that is most appropriate for them, according to skill, ability and background.

We conceptualise our whānau, of Te Kōpae Piripono, as the construct of a pouwhare, or wharenui, the ancestral meeting house:

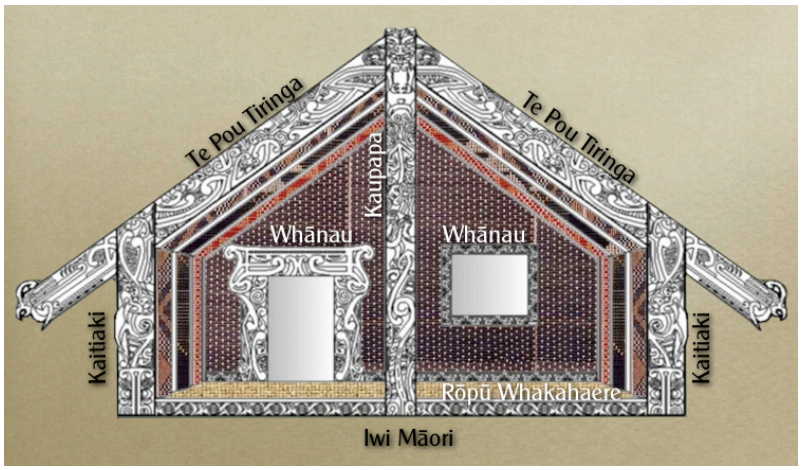

Figure 1.1: Structure of Te Kōpae Piripono

The tuanui or roof of the house is the governing body, Te Pou Tiringa. The tuanui is supported by the poupou (corner posts), which are the Kaitiaki. The whāriki, or flooring, is Te Rōpū Whakahaere or management committee. The poutokomanawa, or central pillar, is the kaupapa. The pouwhare of Te Kōpae Piripono is built on the iwi, the people, customs and traditions of Taranaki. Te Pou Tiringa is an incorporated society that was established by the founders of Te Kōpae Piripono to be the equivalent of a rūnanga kaumātua (council of elders) that would oversee and guide our kaupapa and our activities. Te Rōpū Whakahaere is the operational leadership of the community, comprising Kaitiaki, and parent representatives. Management of the Te Kōpae Piripono operation is coordinated by the Tumu (directors) of Te Kōpae Piripono. The Tumukāuru role has overall responsibility for governance and management, while the Tumukātake role has responsibility for curriculum, teaching and learning.

The whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono is a modern day construction of the socio-political organisation of pre-European Māori society. In this system, all members of Te Kōpae Piripono are encouraged to develop to their full potential, aspiring to and taking on, roles and positions of responsibility in Te Rōpū Whakahaere and Te Pou Tiringa, at the appropriate time.

Te Kōpae Piripono has a "full day" license. Children attend for the whole day, between 8.30 am-3.30 pm. Our centre operation coincides with the primary school calendar, meaning we operate in a four-term year, with corresponding holidays. We are licensed

for 30 children (20 over-2 and 10 under-2) but we choose to maintain our regular roll at around 20-25 children. This means we are able to maintain high adult:child ratios and foster strong and dynamic relationships with children and their families. We are also able to appropriately support children's Māori language learning.

We have a full-time and part-time teaching staff of seven. Almost all are registered early childhood teachers, including one who has a Master of Education degree (early years). Another embarks on early childhood diploma study in 2009.

The kaupapa of Te Kōpae Piripono is reflected in its mission statement.

> Te Kōpae Piripono is a kaupapa Māori educational initiative with an absolute commitment to tamariki and to whānau (children and their families). We are committed to the retention and enrichment of te reo Māori me ngā tīkanga Māori in Taranaki, provided through a total immersion learning environment – the most effective and efficient means of language acquisition. We strive for excellence in education, for Māori by Māori. We believe in a holistic approach to education, whereby children learn through play and through relationships. The child is valued as an individual and as a whānau member. (Pukapuka Whakamārama: Parent information booklet, Te Kōpae Piripono, 1994)

We rejoice in being Māori and believe that all the elements that proudly distinguish us as Māori and make Māori special and unique, should again find expression in every facet of our lives. For us kaupapa Māori means 100% te reo Māori, as the medium of teaching and learning. Te reo Māori is the outward expression of our taha Māori, our mana Māori and our values and beliefs about children.

We subscribe to a view of the child that is described in the Draft Charter of the Rights of the Māori child that, "The Māori child is a whole person and has the right to be treated in the wholeness of intellect, spirit and being," (Early Childhood Development, 2002).

An important aspect of our kaupapa is the support and development of the whole whānau, not just the child enrolled. Whānau support, especially for te reo Māori, is crucial to children's social and cognitive development. If whānau are speaking Māori at

home or even making attempts then the message to our children is that te reo Māori has an important place in their lives. For us, whanaungatanga means a partnership in education. We believe whānau are an integral part of teaching and learning.

An easy translation of whānau is family. Depending on the intent of the speaker, whānau may be the immediate family grouping, or family on a larger scale. Implicit in the term whānau are the rights, responsibilities and obligations that go with belonging to a group bound by common descent or by shared purpose. At Te Kōpae Piripono, the whānau, singular, is the collective; and whānau, plural, are the individual families, with their children, who comprise Te Kōpae Piripono.

We believe in a pedagogy of relationships where,

> "…relational concepts abound: dialogue, conversation, negotiation, encounter, confrontation, conflict. If knowledge is no longer viewed as an accumulation and reproduction of facts, but as perspectival and open-ended, then knowledge can be viewed as an open-ended conversation, privileging no party and seeking neither consensus nor a final truth." (Dahlberg, Moss and Pence, 1999, p.58)

1.4 Centres Of Innovation

Early childhood Centres of Innovation are part of New Zealand's early childhood strategic plan, Pathways to the Future, Ngā Huarahi Arataki (2002), whose goal is to, "foster research and development in the ECE sector and reflect New Zealand's heritage of ingenuity and innovation." The objective of Centres of Innovation is to help improve quality in early childhood education services by sharing innovative early childhood education practice, and by reflecting on quality practices using action research. The first of three cycles of Centre of Innovation research to date began with six centres in 2003.

In 2004, Te Kōpae Piripono, along with three other New Zealand early childhood centres, was announced as a Round Two Centre of Innovation. A central focus of our research is the role of whānau and leadership, in young children's learning and development.

1.5 Te Kōpae Piripono Centre Of Innovation Journey

This COI research has provided us with the opportunity to further consider and to reflect in depth on what we do, how we do it and why we do it. Our journey has had no maps or signposts. It has had its challenges and it has had its losses but it has also had huge gains. Some of the things we considered at the start of this COI research were questions such as, "What difference does fostering and developing whānau make?" And, "How does this really make a positive difference for whānau and for children?" These questions, and more, led to the formulation of our research question,

"Whakatupungia te pā harakeke, kia tupu whakaritorito"
(Nurture the essence of whānau. That it may flourish)

How does whānau development at Te Kōpae Piripono foster leadership, across all levels, to enhance children's learning and development?

Figure 1.2: Research Question

Te Kōpae Piripono's research question hits at the heart of two fundamental concepts outlined in this report – leadership and whānau. As earlier mentioned, 'whānau' is a totally inclusive term. It does not distinguish between management, Kaitiaki (teachers), mātua (parents), or tamariki (children). Hence, whānau development involves the learning and development of every member of our community of learners.

Our question raised a number of other questions for us. It caused us to consider,

- How do we view leadership?
- How does the learning and development of an individual, or a group, actually result in leadership within our whānau and the wider community?
- What ways can we foster our view of leadership within our whānau?
- So how might leadership look for an individual whānau member – whether that be a child, a parent or a teacher?
- And what might it specifically entail for the whānau as a collective whole?

1.6 Our Research Journey and Our Historical Context

Part of our research journey has meant us understanding our historical context. As already mentioned outlined earlier in this chapter, our historical context is the historical disenfranchisement of our people - economically, socially, politically and psychologically – through the muru raupatu, the massive land confiscations of the 19th century and successive government legislation. All of this was visited on our great, great, great ancestors. We are the products of the injustice, but it was our parents' generation that was most severely affected. Not only was that generation forced to move away from their papakainga - their traditional marae - they were also discriminated against (including being physically punished in school for speaking Māori). Since then, iwi Māori have existed in a continuum of injustice. These negative circumstances have continued for so long they have become ingrained in our psyche, so much so that we live in a vacuum – of grievance, of negativity and of survival. This survival mode leaves us like "crabs in a bucket". The only way we have known to get out (and survive) is to climb over each other. The voices we now hear are those of people in pain.

Whānau Development at Te Kōpae Piripono is our attempt at psychological, cultural, and educational redress for the injustices of the past. Ultimately, it is a pathway for te iwi Māori and a brighter future for our tamariki and our mokopuna. Whānau development is about re-learning, re-instating and celebrating concepts, ideas and practices that enable all of our whānau to grow and lead in thought and deed. Our challenge is to learn different ways of thinking and being, different paradigms, different views of self.

One of our important tasks is to acknowledge and understand the past and try to find a positive and optimistic pathway forward. Understanding this past means we can understand the significant numbers of our people who, whether they realise it or not, have been deeply affected and fractured by this history of our ancestors. We are finding new ways for us to talk together. We are finding new ways of doing and being. We are working at changing the impact of our fractured histories, regaining our balance, and moving on a pathway to wholeness – as individuals, as whānau, as hapū and as iwi. It is only when we can feel complete as individuals that we can truly know or realise Te Whāriki's aspirations for children (and their whānau), "to grow as competent and

confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society," (Te Whāriki, Ministry of Education, 1996, p.9).

The re-visiting of history and understanding Te Kōpae Piripono's location on an historical timeline and the context of why we exist - the big picture - can result in major paradigm shifts amongst whānau. One is the realisation of the critical role that they play in creating that brighter future for their children and their grandchildren. A significant part of this is the leadership responsibilities of every member of the whānau – everyone understanding their purpose in the big picture. The development of whānau is also key to supporting and fostering leadership, which, in turn, enhances children's learning and development. Paradigm shifts follow a process to understanding what is important, knowing the commitment, the resources and the support needed, the roles to be taken, and the responsibilities to be assumed.

We at Te Kōpae Piripono are reclaiming our culture, our historical knowledge, our sense of self, of worth and belonging. We are reclaiming ourselves as Māori. We make this effort so we are in a position to claim our future.

Chapter 2
Our Conceptual Framework

This chapter discusses the Tātai Whakapapa as the conceptual framework of kaupapa Māori, of Te Kōpae Piripono and of our research. Tātai Whakapapa encompasses the Whānau Atua (the first celestial family) and its fundamental significance to our research.

2.1 Te Tātai Whakapapa as the conceptual framework

The kaupapa (philosophy) of Te Kōpae Piripono is articulated by our opening karakia, Tātai Whakapapa. It affirms the kaupapa Māori paradigm that underpins and guides Te Kōpae Piripono and our research. This framework enables us to understand and to organise the indigenous concepts of Te Ao Māori, the Māori world, that are the essence of our operation and practice. The tātai whakapapa, as recited in our opening karakia, alludes to the creation of the universe, recounting the genesis of the atua (gods), and then of humankind. The story of the karakia tells of Māori descent from Io, from the primal parents, Ranginui and Papatūānuku, and from their celestial offspring, through to the present day. The story is a metaphor that explains the natural order and the place of human beings in that order. It provides assurance and hope for the future. An understanding of our cosmogonic genealogy must be the base or beginning point for those pursuing kaupapa Māori (the Māori paradigm) and mātauranga Māori (traditional Māori knowledge and learning). And so it is at Te Kōpae Piripono.

A closer look at our whakapapa for these purposes requires us to know the story of the original family. It is from the atua matua that all in the universe descend. The story begins with nothingness. Out of the void there evolved a blackness, and stages and stages of night, that eventually led to Te Po Tiwhatiwha, the night of a glimmering light. It is at this stage of night that we become aware of Ranginui and Papatüänuku embracing tightly as one, **one unified forebear** of human kind - the male and the female in unison (Io). The union was all at once loving, secure, and yet stifling for the many male offspring who could not move, develop or grow, within the embrace. The story is a template for our own family experiences. Some members of the family wanted to break free, and would destroy the parents by forcefully separating them if necessary. Some

wanted to remain in the security of their parents' embrace, and opposed their separation. Others wished to negotiate a separation with all parties for the benefit of all. Some clung to the mother, others to the father. This was the first instance of conflict within the family group...resolved by negotiation. Tānemāhuta successfully forced the parents apart, for the benefit of the offspring. From the separation emerged Te Ao Mārama. Some of the offspring burst out on their own finding and creating new opportunities, others clung to either parent protectively, or because they lacked confidence to leave. All the offspring developed and grew, they set about exploring their new environments and as they did so they created the natural world and all in it.

The divisions and alliances, differences and similarities, affections and dislikes, between members of the family continued, and continue to the present day. The ongoing conflict between the brothers is said to account for life's disasters and misfortune. Much of our ritualised behaviour and cultural practice, is concerned with reconciling the competing interests, balancing the opposing forces and maintaining stability between the atua and their domains, to maintain an ordered system that allows diverse elements to coexist in complementary and harmonious relationships, resulting in an integrated whole. Achieving perfect balance requires that accord is maintained between atua, each of whom has a particular disposition. The six main atua, we characterise in the following way:

Ranginui = Papatūānuku

Rongomātāne	calm
Tānemāhuta	knowledge
Tangaroa	capacity
Tūmatuenga	authority
Hamietiketike	resourcefulness
Tāwhirimātea	outer unrest
Rūaumoko	inner unrest

Figure 2.1: Atua Dispositions

Ranginui and Papatūānuku are characterised as integral components of each atua – Ranginui representing the non-physical, intangible and spiritual elements of each atua, and Papatūānuku representing the physical, concrete and tangible elements. Anxiety, aggression, confusion, jealousy, greed, selfishness, are some of the emotions that will gain paramouncy within the domain of an individual atua, if internal balance is not achieved, by resolving inner tensions. Where there is inner turmoil, there can be negative implications for the other atua and their domains, and for the whānau as a

whole. The balanced strengths/attributes of each atua allow for the efficient reconciliation of disagreements. Fear can be stimulating and challenging, but it must be balanced by the experience of accomplishment, and confidence in one's ability to respond to the fear-invoking circumstances. If one is not equipped with the tools to manage risk, one may be immobilised by the threat of the 'other'.

The divine offspring of Ranginui and Papatūānuku provide a template for our own behaviours, today. Our skills for collective living, and collective skill, must be practiced and current, to achieve natural balance in the modern day. The Kōpae research has been concerned with identifying and refining strategies that can achieve that balance at Te Kōpae Piripono and beyond. There must be reconciliation on an individual level if reconciliation and harmony is to be achieved for the whānau, for the group.

Our contention is that a dynamic whānau, where all members are balanced and in harmony, is the perfect environment for our children to thrive and to develop to optimum levels. Unless each member of the whānau is becoming whole and complete, the potential for the whānau to be whole and complete is limited. The Kōpae research, therefore, provided the opportunity to explore strategies that facilitated that development on both individual and collective levels.

Chapter 3
Core Elements of our Research

The two core elements of our research question are whānau development and leadership at Te Kōpae Piripono. This chapter mainly comprises two articles written by members of the research team. The first article, Whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono, traces the evolution of whānau from classical formations to the more modern constructions of the present day. The concept of whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono is examined, and the programme of whānau development is explored to show how it sustains the whānau. The second article, Leadership In Early Childhood Education discusses Te Kōpae Piripono's concept of leadership - Ngā Takohanga e Wha o te Mana Tangata: The Four Responsibilities of Leadership. This chapter also makes connections between our conceptual framework and the essential elements of our COI research. These connections are exemplified by a diagrammatic representation of our research framework.

3.1 Whānau At Te Kōpae Piripono

(An article adapted from a research paper, The Construction of Whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono, presented by Erana Hond-Flavell in 2004, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for her Master of Education degree, Massey University, 2005)

3.1.1 The Traditional Whānau

The whānau has traditionally been regarded the basic social unit of Māori society. The term whānau has been neatly defined as 'family', or, the extended family group that comprises Māori communities (Salmond, 1975), however, whānau is a much more complex term (Durie, 1994). When used as a verb, whānau has meant to be born, to be brought forth, to be produced (Gough & Taiuru, 1998; Williams, 1971). As a noun, the term has referred to offspring and to siblings, and to family clusters (Metge, 1995).

The whānau was the primary familial layer of Māori socio-political organisation, and the principal site of socialisation and learning (Makereti, 1986). The whānau was intricately and seamlessly woven into the whāriki (mat) of society so that the part was defined by the whole and the whole was contingent on the part. Whānau was a core component of the social, political, and economic fabric of Māori society, and a metaphor for the relationships between Māori, the natural environment, the forebears, and offspring. In 1995, Mākere Harawira cited Tukukino (1985) when she wrote "…the whānau is usually prescribed as being descended from a common ancestor and encompassing at least three or four generations. It is this aspect of whānau that provides a context for the cultural values of Māori, including nurturance as well as physical and emotional support" (p.ii).
It was whakapapa (genealogical descent) on which membership of the traditional whānau is said to have rested. Whakapapa, the ara whanaunga, were the lines connecting kin. Hirini Moko Mead wrote in 2003, "The whānau principle, which is described by anthropologists as the kinship principle and by Māori as the whakapapa principle, underpins the whole social system, that is, one must be born into the fundamental building block of the system in order to be a member as of right" (pp. 212-213).

Whakapapa interwove whānau with whānau, and built layers of generations and interconnections that are the *hapū* (socio-political unit comprised of genealogically-linked whānau*)*, *iwi* (socio-political tribal group comprised of hapū and whānau), and *waka* (confederations of iwi, hapū and whānau, all tracing descent from one of the ocean-going canoes that migrated to Aotearoa (New Zealand) from the ancestral Pacific homeland, Hawaiki (Ballara, 1998).

In a publication that sought to analyse the 'characteristics of whānau in Aotearoa', Cunningham, Stevenson and Tassell (2005) employed the following definition of whānau for their purposes, "A diffuse unit based on a common whakapapa, descent from a shared ancestor or ancestors, and within which certain responsibilities and obligations are maintained" (p.16). Durie (1994) used the term whanaungatanga (supportive relationships between people) as the process that reinforces whānau connections and strengthens members' responsibilities.

However, as a consequence of colonisation, many Māori have been denied the opportunity to develop a Māori identity based on the sense of belonging to one's kin group, defined by shared descent from a single ancestor. Many do not experience whānau in this traditional sense, and know little of the obligations, rights and responsibilities of whakapapa (family history) and kinship that whānau confers on the collective and on the individual (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). Significant numbers of Māori have become estranged from their own culture. Even those individuals who have the outward signs of being Māori, can inwardly feel alienated from their own culture. Sadly, some of those are equally uncomfortable in the dominant culture of *Pākehā* (European) New Zealand.

3.1.2 A Modern-day Whānau

The acculturation of Māori, described above, involved the degradation and corruption of Māori culture, behaviour, and thinking, with long-term negative consequences for the people (Awatere, 1984, Harawira, 1995, Smith, 1999). Yet, here at the turn of the 21st century, the protagonists of kaupapa Māori educational initiatives such as Te Kōhanga Reo (pre-school Māori language nests) and Kura Kaupapa Māori (kaupapa Māori schools), and, Te Kōpae Piripono, have ordained that whānau, as the cornerstone of kaupapa Māori, be the foundational context for the education of their children (Smith, 1997). In a society where Māori language, tradition, and thought, are unlikely to be inherent to the experience of many Māori children, this resolution has necessitated the creation of 'artificial' whānau, that is, whānau not of the traditional whakapapa-based variety but a new category created by often unconnected persons, in the present, around a vision for the future that is grounded in the past. This new variety of whānau is an artefact, a modern-day reconstruction of the traditional whānau.

This is whānau based on shared aspiration and the desire to shape the worldview of the young, even if there is no inbuilt whakapapa-derived connection between whānau members, identified by Mead (2003) as 'fundamental' to the notion of whānau. This new variety of whānau has been employed in the pursuit of the goals of kaupapa Māori education. The kaupapa is the 'glue' that binds whānau members who, without that familial connection, are free to opt out of their groups as readily as they chose to opt in.

Metge (1995) has asserted that the absence of the defining principle of the whānau model, common genealogical descent, and the replacement of it with commitment to 'kaupapa', places particular stresses on the whānau of Māori organisations (p.305). It would appear that kaupapa Māori enterprises such as Te Kōpae Piripono have been able to moderate those stresses. Te Kōpae Piripono employs specific strategies to ensure that new additions become one with the whānau so the kaupapa and the enterprise is reinforced by their entry.

3.1.3 Whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono

Most members of the Kōpae Piripono whānau have affiliations to Taranaki whānui and a collective identity is derived from the Taranakitanga (expression of being of Taranaki) of the centre. Perhaps Maunga Taranaki (the mountain Taranaki) could be regarded the figurative progenitor of the Kōpae Piripono whānau as this ancestral landform is claimed by all eight iwi of the Taranaki region as the seat of their identity as Taranaki Māori. This affiliation is a source of pride, of belonging, and purpose.

Non-Taranaki members of the whānau are regarded as manuhiri (visitors) of tangata whenua (indigenous hosts), as such they are embraced and have an important place and role in Te Kōpae Piripono. However, both tangata whenua and manuhiri combine in the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono, and are affiliated to the kaupapa that unites and binds them.

Every member of Te Kōpae Piripono has a contribution to make to the whānau that is valued in its own right. Everyone benefits in some way, in addition to the personal satisfaction and emotional reward that derives from participation in the Kōpae Piripono whānau. The Kaitiaki (teachers) contribute to the weave of the whāriki their time, professional expertise and knowledge of reo and tikanga (language and protocols), and in return they are respected and honoured as leaders, and are remunerated. The children's parents contribute to the weft of the whāriki their children, their own strengths, time, energy and revenue, and, in return they know their children are loved and cared for in a warm, caring, stimulating, Māori environment that will equip them for the future. The children can spend their first six years of life in Te Kōpae Piripono, and to the whāriki they contribute their energy, their heritage and their potential. The Pukapuka Whakamārama (Parent Information Booklet) states, "We see the child holistically as an individual with unique qualities and needs and also as a

whānau member" (p.4). Te Kōpae Piripono is the children's whānau, their families belong to the Kōpae Piripono whānau. The concept of whānau and all it represents is not taught, it is lived by these children and their families, and encompasses the entire Te Kōpae Piripono operation. This is whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono.

Members of the Te Kōpae Piripono whānau share responsibility for, and derive mutual benefit from, the Kōpae Piripono operation. The centre has clear structures of governance and management, which recognise that people are at different stages of development. This allows all involved in the operation to participate in an appropriate manner, at a suitable level, according to skill, ability, and disposition. Individual whānau members may become involved at management and governance levels when deemed by those parties to be ready and able. This strategy safeguards the Kōpae Piripono kaupapa, mediating against the potential threat posed by interlopers, and it assures the smooth running of the centre.

Whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono is a modern-day reconstruction of the socio-political organisation of pre-European Māori society. All members of Te Kōpae Piripono are encouraged to develop to achieve their potential. In metaphorical terms, each member (adult or child) of Te Kōpae Piripono is located at some level of the poutama, the learning and development staircase. Rates of progress are variable, depending on personal circumstances, however all movement is upwards. This is the poutama of whānau development and every member of Te Kōpae Piripono is in training for leadership.

3.1.4 Whānau Development

The development and learning of the individuals in Te Kōpae Piripono (at whatever level) is embraced and supported by the development and learning of the collective, of the whānau. 'Whānau development' is a keystone of Te Kōpae Piripono. The Pukapuka Whakamārama informs parents, "Parent and whānau involvement is vital at Te Kōpae Piripono. Our philosophy of empowerment through education and experience requires that all those involved take part in the whānau development plan." (p.7)

This whānau approach to personal and professional development means that learning and development opportunities are organised for the whole whānau in a planned and purposeful manner. A collective commitment to improvement is central to the innovation and success of Te Kōpae Piripono. The first objective of the Whānau Development Policy is "To encourage the development and growth of the parents and families of children attending the centre" (94.20, Policy Manual, p.27). All should feel comfortable in the collegiality of the collective movement forward and upward, and the knowledge that the Te Kōpae Piripono environment promotes individual and collective advancement.

The second and third objectives of the whānau development policy are "to ensure the retention and enrichment of Taranaki reo, and to assist in the development of the children" (94.20, Policy Manual, p.27). Part One of the policy prioritises reo Māori, detailing the steps parents/caregivers must take to develop fluency, and the degrees of fluency that should be achieved over time. Part Two of the policy stipulates that all whānau members must participate in whānau development wānanga, the subject matter of which is determined by the whānau, however, the purposes of the wānanga are to: "develop a strong whānau base at Te Kōpae Piripono; develop positive parenting methods; cover specific areas of development required within the whānau; keep up with current trends in education." Part Three of the policy deals with personal development, clearly stating the expectation that each parent/caregiver/Kaitiaki commits to ongoing personal development while involved in Te Kōpae Piripono. The centre's Charter states, "the annual parent support and development programme will be an integral part of Te Kōpae Piripono development" (p.2). Importantly, Te Kōpae Piripono has undertaken to provide financial assistance to support these developments.

3.1.5 Te Kōpae Piripono and whānau

The right to define and to control the use of ones cultural property is unquestionably being asserted by Te Kōpae Piripono. In a sea of definitions of, and assumptions about, whānau, Te Kōpae Piripono has reconstructed whānau in traditional terms, yet in its own way. The traditional genealogical basis of the whānau may well be absent, but the inherent cultural understandings gained from within a traditional kin-based whānau, are integral to Te Kōpae

Piripono and have become normalised for the children and their families. These acquired understandings will contribute to a whānau member's world-view, impact on every facet of life, and influence perceptions and expectations of their interactions within, and outside of, Te Kōpae Piripono.

To achieve whānau, Te Kōpae Piripono has created an oasis of āhuatanga Māori (things Māori), where communication is in te reo Māori, adherence to tikanga Māori (Māori protocol) is the norm, and whakaaro Māori (Māori ideology) is the ideal. The boundaries of this haven are the points past which spoken English is not permitted (except under certain conditions and in the absence of any children); where one crosses over a psychological divide between the outside New Plymouth/New Zealand setting into the Kōpae Piripono environment. This separation is achieved and maintained by verbal sign posting, by conditioning and modeling, by wānanga and hui, and by lots of discussion. However, the Kōpae Piripono foundation documents clearly position the centre within the Taranaki Māori milieu, signaling the hope that participation in the Kōpae Piripono whānau will become a lifestyle choice for constituent families, thus expanding the boundaries of the kaupapa out into the wider community.

New enrolments at Te Kōpae Piripono are limited to families who support the aims and objectives of the centre, and follow a lengthy enrolment process. The ethos of the kaupapa Māori at Te Kōpae Piripono is imparted to whānau members through a comprehensive process of whānau development that acknowledges the tuakana-teina relationships within the whānau while emphasising mutual learning and teaching within the collective. As whānau members become absorbed into the culture of Te Kōpae Piripono, they assume increasingly more responsibility for the maintenance and promotion of the kaupapa.

'Whānau' is an essential element of Māoritanga (Māori culture and philosophy). When persons decide that their children will develop Māori identity through education in a kaupapa Māori context, whānau is an essential element of that option, whatever the permutation. In a present-day Aotearoa/New Zealand community, Te Kōpae Piripono has successfully created and maintained a whānau environment in and around its centre that is

authentic, that is, based on Māori values and practices, even though not of traditional composition.

Te Kōpae Piripono is not alone in asserting the relevance of whānau. Others too have argued that a positive whānau environment is the most suitable education context for the learning and development of Māori children. Cormack (1997) outlined his formula for an effective learning environment for Māori students, albeit for older children and adolescents, that included 'building a hapū or whānau base in the class' as a central theme, giving students the 'security and confidence to perform…' (p.165). Smith (1996) supported the notion of the 'Māori family structure' as the appropriate context for the successful education of Māori children. Bishop (2003) argued that those key elements of kaupapa Māori education can be introduced to mainstream education sites to enhance educational outcomes for Māori students. The Te Kotahitanga project (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai & Richardson, 2003) is a kaupapa Māori response, based on kaupapa Māori educational theory (Smith, 1997), to the problem of underachievement among Māori students in mainstream schools. The rehabilitative potential of whānau within kaupapa Māori and therefore at Te Kōpae Piripono, is tremendous. Moeke-Pickering (1996) found that the formation of a secure whānau identity contributes to the development of a solid Māori identity in the individual. Smith (1995) argued that kaupapa Māori, of which whānau is elemental, is a means for social and cultural change as well as an educational intervention. The whānau environment can facilitate the learning and development of Māori students by fostering appropriate interpersonal relationships and instilling a firm sense of belonging to a Māori community. That this can contribute positively to the well-being and development of the individual and of the collective has been borne out at Te Kōpae Piripono.

3.1.6 Conclusion

Te Kōpae Piripono proponents contend that whānau in their situation is both achievable and sustainable, despite the diverse cultural backgrounds of contemporary Māori, and the location of Te Kōpae Piripono in the New Plymouth/New Zealand community. This end is clearly contingent on the construct of whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono being clearly understood by all. Although the principles of kaupapa Māori, and therefore the concept of

whānau and whanaungatanga, are implicit in the official Te Kōpae Piripono documentation and discernible to those who are already familiar with the Māori world view, the concepts are not specifically described or explained in these documents for new families who may have no experience of these notions, yet for whom clarity and definition is imperative, for the reasons outlined above. The Kōpae Piripono brand of whānau must therefore be clearly articulated in the centre's documentation and reinforced at every gathering, in order for the whānau to continue to maintain a collective understanding and commitment to the Kōpae Piripono paradigm, its principles and practices, over time. If this is not so, the Kōpae Piripono insistence on whānau may become problematic as original members leave and new members join. Therefore, a process of induction and education on, and before, entry would mediate the transition of new families into the whānau and into kaupapa Māori, while insulating Te Kōpae Piripono against the threat posed by the uninitiated.

The Kōpae Piripono brand of whānau has been achieved and maintained through a sustained commitment to Māori, to the principles of kaupapa Māori, and to the shared aspirations of the Kōpae Piripono community. From this commitment derives the centre's distinctive organisational structure, the well-considered policies and procedures, and the comprehensive programme of whānau development that promotes the learning and development of both the individual and the collective, for the benefit of all. With renewed vigour, Te Kōpae Piripono must continue to promote and reinforce its vision at every opportunity, throughout its literature, at organised learning opportunities, at whānau gatherings, and, in the wider community. This level of effort is required if Te Kōpae Piripono is to continue to embrace the new parents who choose quality Māori education in a whānau context for their children and for themselves. As more and more people experience first-hand the constructed kaupapa-based variety of whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono, one can anticipate, as a consequence of the strategies outlined above, a corresponding increase in the number of people in the wider Taranaki community who are experiencing first-hand, whānau of the traditional whakapapa-based variety.

3.2 Ngā Takohanga e Wha - The Four Responsibilities

Reconceptualising Leadership in Early Childhood Education

(Written by Aroaro Tamati, 2006)

3.2.1 Leadership in early childhood education

Many writings on leadership in early childhood education focus predominantly on the roles of formal leaders in early childhood centres, that is, centre directors, supervisors and teachers. This literature assumes that any debate about this topic relates to organisational and professional leadership. Even articles that critically analyse leadership in early childhood (Moriarty, 2002) tend to approach it from the dominant discourse of the early childhood professional whose role and responsibility it is, to "devolve" power to families, in decision-making processes. Often, little is discussed about the role and involvement of children and both their immediate and extended families. Rodd (1998) argues effective leadership in early childhood is about striving to create a community of practice and providing a high quality service. These factors, she argues, contribute to setting the "tone and psychological climate" that are the hallmark of a quality programme. However, Lambert (2002, p.38) argues, "Everyone has the right, responsibility and ability to be a leader". Yet leadership, she points out, is often construed as being the work of the leader. However, according to Lambert, leadership should be viewed as enabling "reciprocal processes" among people so they can create new meanings toward a shared goal. Therefore, leadership becomes, "manifest within the relationships in a community, manifest in the spaces, the fields among the participants, rather than in a set of behaviours performed by an individual leader" (Lambert, 1995, pp.32-33). Kagan and Bowman (1997) argue leadership in early childhood education is a social construct that involves a set of reciprocal relationships, rather than a static entity, or a set of attributes or competencies. Bryson (in McLeod, 2002) describes leadership as being a "collective enterprise, involving many people playing different roles at different times" (p.38). Pellicer (2003) adds that leadership is much more than a position, a title, or a mandate to be in charge, and more than a set of personal qualities or complex skills. Sergiovanni (1992, as cited in Pellicer, 2003),

maintains that the "heart" of leadership is what a person believes, values, dreams about and is committed to.

Lambert contends that leadership is made visible, not by the position people have but by what they do and how they behave. These "acts of leadership", she argues, are quite different to "role leadership", because they enable participants in a community (in our case Te Kōpae Piripono whānau) to be leaders in their own way. Leadership, Lambert argues, can therefore be viewed as an "inclusive field of processes" (p.47), where all members have the opportunity to be leaders. Lambert adds it is important that all members of a learning community gain similar skills, "in order for them to participate fully in the processes of creating communities together" (1995, p.102).

Bryson and Crosby (2004, p.298) argue that effective leadership in community organisations and communities is, "a collective enterprise involving many people playing different roles at different times". Indeed, the same people will be leaders at times and followers at times" in the pursuit of a common goal or vision. Raelin (2003) challenges us to take a "fresh" look at traditional notions of leadership and followership. He argues that the use of the word follower is inappropriate in any discussion about leadership, because it has connotations of, "doing what you are told because you are less valuable than the leader," (p.36). However, leadership and followership are one in the same process (Raelin, 2003; Kagan and Bowman, 1997).

"If we have reached a point in our organisational evolution that we no longer need leaders "out in front", then in the same vein, we no longer need our followers "back in line" (Raelin, 2003, p.36). Crosby and Bryson (2005) promote the idea of a "shared-power" world where leadership rests with those both with and without formal positions of authority. They argue that a shared power situation,

> "Enhances the power of the participants beyond the sum of their separate capabilities… …We see power as not just the ability to make and implement decisions (a traditional view) but also the ability to sanction conduct and, most important, to create and communicate shared meaning," (Crosby and Bryson, 2005, p.29).

Lambert (1998) talks about leadership as being, 'the reciprocal learning processes that enable participants in a community to construct meaning toward a shared purpose' (p.18). She asserts that leadership in this context means learning with and among members of a community that shares goals and visions.

Lambert focuses on teachers as leaders but transposing these ideas into a whānau context reveals striking similarities. Lambert argues that working in this model of leadership, members convene and facilitate dialogue (hui and narrative), mentor newer members (tuakana/teina – the concept of the older sibling looking after and guiding a younger sibling), pose inquiry questions (concept of AKO - the interchangeability of learning and teaching roles, Tamati, 2005);) and invite others to engage and participate in new ideas (Te Whakawhanake Whānau - whānau development opportunities). According to Stoll, Fink and Earl (2003), effective leaders honour the uniqueness of each group member and use their strengths to try to modify their weaknesses to optimise the ultimate focus – young children's learning and development. The result of such leadership, they argue, is a "moving wheel" populated with colleagues (in our case, whānau members) who are committed to learning, learning together, and who share a belief that learning should be valued for its own sake and for others' well being and development. Lambert (1995) argues that, within the context of reciprocal relationships anyone can choose to lead in such a leader/participant relationship.

A whānau-learning concept also links with Raelin's concept of leaderful practice,

- Concurrent: More than one leader can operate in any community at the same time.
- Collective: The community does not solely depend on one individual to mobilise action or make decisions on others' behalf
- Collaborative: All members of the community, not the position leader, are in control of and may speak for the entire community. Leaders realise that everyone counts, every opinion and contribution sincerely matter.
- Compassionate: Each member of the community is valued regardless of his of her background or social standing and all points of view are considered, regardless of whether they conform to current thought processes. By

> demonstrating compassion, one extends unadulterated commitment to preserving the dignity of others.
>
> (Raelin, 2003, pp.13-16)

3.2.2 Leadership at Te Kōpae Piripono

Ngā Takohanga e Whā: The Four Responsibilities

At Te Kōpae Piripono, we believe that if you take the traditional Western hierarchical structure out of the thinking about leadership, you are simply left with people and relationships. Therefore, if we follow with Lambert's argument, that every person has a right, responsibility and ability to lead, then every person at Te Kōpae Piripono – whether adult or child – is a leader. For us, leadership is about four key responsibilities – Te Whai Takohanga - Having Responsibility, Te Mouri Takohanga - Being Responsible, Te Kawe Takohanga - Taking Responsibility and Te Tuku Takohanga - Sharing Responsibility. The following demonstrates our evolving theory of leadership at Te Kōpae Piripono:

Ngā Takohanga e Wha: The Four Responsibilities

- ***Te Whai Takohanga - Having Responsibility*** relates to having designated roles and positions of responsibility.
- ***Te Mouri Takohanga - Being Responsible*** relates to an individual's attitude and actions. Being responsible is about being professional, acting ethically and appropriately, being honest, being positive and open to others and different perspectives.
- ***Te Kawe Takohanga - Taking Responsibility*** is about courage, risk-taking, having a go, taking up the challenge and trying new things.
- ***Te Tuku Takohanga - Sharing Responsibility*** is about sharing power, roles and positions. But more than this it is about relationships. Sharing responsibility denotes an interaction and engagement with others, being able to listen to others' points of view, acknowledging different perspectives and also asking for and providing assistance.

Figure 3.1: The Four Responsibilities

Why use of the term "responsibility"? It is an interesting question to consider. Answering it might perhaps be best done with another question. This paper has already discussed the more widely accepted construct of leadership in early childhood education, that of those in formal roles who act as enablers, facilitators, networkers and motivators of teams. But what of the description of people who consider themselves none of these, at least not yet? How do they come to regard themselves and be acknowledged by others, as leaders in their own right? It is through *having* responsibility and *sharing* responsibility then being encouraged and supported to *take* responsibility, that whānau members, individually and collectively, come to *be* responsible. With the support of the whānau, individuals come to understand the important role they play in leading, no, in driving their own and other's learning. As Lambert (2002, p.38) puts it, our definition of leadership determines how people participate in the notion of leadership.

Leadership is, therefore, both an individual and collective responsibility. Focusing on the notion of responsibility serves to remove the spotlight on people's status, rank and position. It offers no commentary on people's feelings, fears, or lack of confidence. Rather, it articulates the expectation of everyone's contribution and involvement. The 'Four Responsibilities' implies a person's right and ability to lead. In our view, every person is already a leader, whether they realise it or not. The concept of responsibility encourages and challenges us to consider the nature and level of our courage and commitment to ourselves and others, to step up to the plate, in our shared endeavours as a whānau learning community. What people do, for their own and other's ongoing learning, - sincerely, genuinely and passionately – is both the essence and the evidence of leadership.

As Crosby and Bryson (2005, p.49) put it, leadership begins with understanding "what truly matters to you". For those least accustomed to idea that they are leaders in their own right, summoning the courage to step up and take responsibility is probably their greatest challenge. Yet, for others, sharing responsibility might be their challenge. It is also important to note that being responsible is an essential component of each of the four responsibilities. Traditional definitions of leadership in early childhood education are most

closely aligned to that of having responsibility. While this is an important component of leadership it is not the only one. Just as important, and interrelated are the other responsibilities – being, taking and sharing. In fact, having responsibility could be seen as a natural evolution of the other three responsibilities.

3.2.3 Contemplating Ngā Takohanga e Wha

Ngā Takohanga e Wha: The Four Responsibilities are, fundamentally, about individuals and how they perceive themselves. But they are also, and perhaps more importantly, about their relationships, perceptions, feelings, attitudes and interactions with others. How people interact and perceive themselves and their relationships with others plays a central role in what people think and do as leaders. But leadership is about choice. We can choose to be or do – or otherwise – any of the four responsibilities. Contemplating leadership from this perspective encourages us to consider ourselves, in relation to "having, being, taking and sharing" responsibility. What do we need to exercise the four responsibilities? And how can we foster a learning community where everyone is a leader and where everyone's contribution matters? They are questions only we can answer.

3.2.4 Ngā Takohanga e Wha and Te Tātai Whakapapa

Our concept of leadership can be readily understood in the context of the Tātai Whakapapa, the respective dispositions and characteristics of the atua matua, and the interrelationships and connections, the balances and imbalances, within that original family.

Just as the concept of whānau is an interrelated mix of roles, responsibilities and relationships, so too is leadership. Leadership is a negotiation of these three concepts. We choose to understand leadership using the over-arching themes of the Tātai Whakapapa, to deconstruct the notion into Ngā Takohanga e Whā o te Mana Tangata (the four responsibilities of leadership), four complementary and interconnected dispositions of leadership comprising essential elements of each of the atua matua. These dispositions must be balanced within individuals if they are to be confident and competent leaders.

The relationship between the Tātai Whakapapa and Leadership is displayed graphically below. It is represented in a whakapapa (genealogy) format.

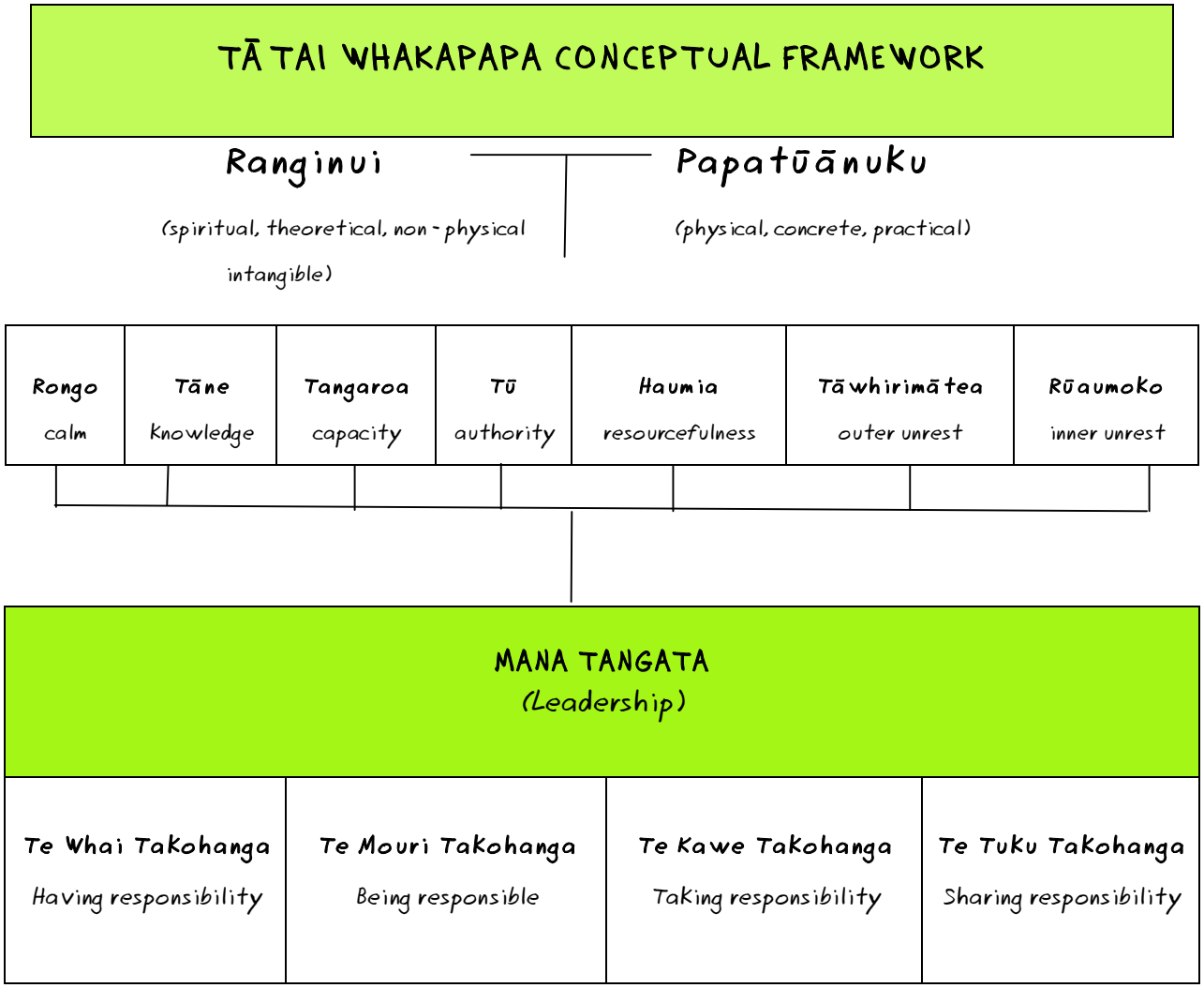

Figure 3.2: Leadership and Tātai Whakapapa Conceptual Framework

Chapter 4

Methodology

Research Approach, Conceptual Framework, and Design

4.1 Kaupapa Māori research

Kaupapa Māori research is a Māori-centred approach that emerged from the social and political context of the 1990s. Although akin to Western critical theory, it is not merely a critical response to quantitative positivist research, nor is it post-modernist, for these and previous research philosophies are located in Euro-centric epistemology. In contrast, kaupapa Māori research is "a 'home grown' theoretical and research approach that interrogates and investigates issues as they are contextualised within Aotearoa" (Pihama & Gardiner, 2005, p.10). In short, it is research into issues of concern to Māori, undertaken by Māori, for Māori, from a Māori perspective, and executed in a 'Māori way'. Graham Smith (1997) argued that kaupapa Māori theory validates and legitimises Māori language, knowledge and culture, while Durie (2002) maintained that kaupapa Māori research privileges the Māori world-view, and Māori aspirations. It is motivated by the desire for Māori to know more about themselves, to control the way Māori view the world and themselves, and how the world views and interacts with them.

Scott and Usher (1999) asserted that research methodology, the types of data and the means of data collection, are of less significance to the definition of research than are the epistemological and ontological assumptions that underpin the research approach. A kaupapa Maori approach to research is not constrained by choice of research methods and/or tools, however, the approach does require that proposed methods are scrutinised in relation to Ao Māori custom and practice, and, a decolonising agenda is a key element of analysis (Pihama & Gardiner, 2005).

Te Kōpae Piripono entered into the Centre of Innovation research project with the aim of contributing, from a Māori perspective, to educational knowledge, to benefit the Māori community. Foremost, was the desire to enhance whānau development at Te Kōpae Piripono, using the opportunity afforded by the Centre of Innovation initiative, to explore the ways the Māori worldview is framed and phrased in contemporary language to be understood by whānau members and then incorporated into the structure, practice, and processes of the whare kōhungahunga.

Smith (1999) identified *whānau* as "the intersection where research meets Māori, or Māori meets research, on equalising terms" (p.185). It is highly appropriate that kaupapa Māori, the Ao Māori paradigm, that has whānau at its core, is the theoretical framework of both the research and the researched. Both find reference, genealogically and/or conceptually, on the all-embracing Tātai Whakapapa. In fact, the pursuit of knowledge and the extension of understanding is very Māori. Tāne and his siblings, those who desired that their parents be separated so the offspring could expand and develop, set the precedent. Later, Tāne climbed into the heavenly realms in search of knowledge and enlightenment for humankind, which he then returned to earth. Later still, descendent Māui-Tikitiki-ā-Taranga, the youngest of his family, was inquisitive, innovative and risk-taking, ignoring the role and responsibilities prescribed for him, he achieved prominence through his quest to know and to change.

The themes of whānau and interdependence recur through the successive stories of the Tātai Whakapapa. Kaupapa Māori research seeks to uphold those themes of Te Ao Māori in the present and into the future, as does Te Kōpae Piripono.

4.2 Participatory action research

While ideologically the Te Kōpae Piripono research is inherently kaupapa Māori, the approach accords with the tenets of *participatory action research*, which is the research methodology of the Ministry of Education's Centres of Innovation project. The Ao Māori concept of *whanaungatanga* suggests relationship building, inclusivity and cooperation. Durie (2002) proposed that any undertaking of kaupapa Māori research would appropriately involve the development of dynamic relationships, solutions, negotiated directions and innovations. So it was that the Te Kōpae Piripono research effort was a comfortable blend of the kaupapa Māori approach and participatory action research.

Participatory action research is a process of enquiry that aims to create positive social change in communities and in society. The method embraces the principles of participation and reflection, and the empowerment and emancipation of individuals and groups seeking to improve their situation (Hughes & Seymour-Rolls, 2000). Participatory action research is also known as practitioner research for its application in institutions such as early childhood centres by practitioners/teachers who regard research

for social change as a collaborative process rather than simply an outcome. For this reason participatory action research was deemed a suitable methodology by Te Kōpae Piripono.

Kemmis & Wilkinson (in Atweh, Kemmis & Weeks, 1998, pp.21-36) listed six central features of participatory action research:

1) It is a social process aimed at improving organisations and groups by exploring the relationship between the individual and the group
2) It is participatory in that practitioners research themselves, examining how their own understandings, skills and values, frame and restrict their actions
3) It is practical and collaborative
4) It is emancipatory
5) It aims to free researchers from linguistic constraints and relationships of power within the educational setting
6) It is recursive, involving reflective evaluation of one's practice

According to Meade (2003) action research puts teachers in the "driving seat" and fosters positive attitudes to lifelong learning. The emphasis on self-reflection and evaluation can facilitate meaningful learning opportunities for adults and children. Over the years, the Te Kōpae Piripono professional development programme has incorporated the action research model.

4.3 Case study/Self study

As the primary aim of the Centres of Innovation project is to allow early childhood centres to research their own uniquely innovative practice, the Te Kōpae Piripono research is a case study, a stand-alone study of its own case, using a variety of investigative strategies. This in-depth study of Te Kōpae Piripono was designed to show how key Māori concepts are used and interpreted by the whānau to enable the centre to deliver quality outcomes. Reflection on practice and self-study have become essential elements of professional development through the better understanding of personal experience (Loughran & Northfield, 1998, in Hamilton, Pinnegar, Russell, Loughran & LaBosky, 1998, p.7), particularly for teachers in education. Te Kōpae Piripono's self-

study, has been a collaborative exercise, involving persons in the research process who are associated with the centre, but distant enough to bring 'other' perspectives to the interpretation of and response to any contradictions between beliefs and practice that Loughran and Northfield (1998) argue are likely to be found in self-study.

The collection and analysis of data from multiple sources, both qualitative (semi-structured interviews, wānanga, hui, narrative, observations) and quantitative (standardised questionnaires, attendance (etc) records), over the three year period, has enabled the interactive processes of Te Kōpae Piripono to be examined, providing some understanding of the complexities of a single sub-group of the kaupapa Māori early childhood education population. The qualitative information is most valuable when seeking to understand 'why' and 'how' things happen, and to know the qualities of happenings. When complemented with quantitative data, indicating frequency and intensity of activity, a more complete picture is drawn.

In keeping with case study methodology, the research team was not concerned about the study being 'representative' (Mitchell, 2000). There was no pretension that statistical inferences can be made from the study. Rather, logical inferences have been made based on the interactions and the relationships within the study, and through the triangulation of multiple sources of information (Scott & Usher, 1999). Te Kōpae Piripono hope that the findings of this case study will be of use to other kaupapa Māori education facilities and to all those who care for Māori students.

4.4 Research design

The innovative practice of Te Kōpae Piripono is centred on its "kaupapa Māori" (Māori conceptual framework) that is at the very core of the centre. Whānau Development is an imperative of kaupapa Māori at Te Kōpae Piripono. The Centres of Innovation project furnished Te Kōpae Piripono with the opportunity to research its brand of Whānau Development, the strategies employed to promote whānau development, and the dynamic role Whānau Development plays in fostering leadership to enhance children's learning and development.

The research question for this project was:

How does whānau development at Te Kōpae Piripono foster leadership, across all levels, to enhance children's learning and development?

The question emerged naturally from the deliberations of the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono, and the professional development activity of Kaitiaki, reflecting on how the abstract concepts of te Ao Māori and kaupapa Māori, and other relevant paradigms, are translated into concrete outcomes, such as the behaviours and environment conducive to good practice and optimal development amongst adults, then transferring into enhanced learning and development for the children. The research was planned in response to this question, with the objective of superior whole-whānau development at Te Kōpae Piripono and beyond.

A whānau approach to the research required that all whānau members have a clear understanding of the conceptual framework of te Ao Māori, and their connection to it. An initial realisation that some whānau members did not have this basic understanding, prompted the research team to focus in on the Ao Māori belief system, to clearly articulate, orally and in print, its significance and meaning, and relevance to us in the present. Until the research team did this, and talked it through with whānau, we could not assume that all (particularly new members) shared an awareness of the ideology that is the bedrock of kaupapa Māori education.[1]

4.4.1 Cycle One

The research proper commenced with a thorough review of Te Kōpae Piripono's operation through an analysis of Te Kōpae Piripono's documentation, a survey of the Te Kōpae Piripono whānau and extended community using a comprehensive questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, whānau hui and wānanga.

The research team determined it appropriate to begin the research by pulling the whānau together to take an historical journey through to the distant past, and to then retrace steps to Te Kōpae Piripono beginnings and to the 'kaupapa' of Te Kōpae Piripono. With an understanding of how the foundation whānau was thinking when they established Te

[1] Chapter 2 of this report articulates how the Tātai Whakapapa helps us make sense of the world.

Kōpae Piripono, it was felt the current whānau could better reflect on where Te Kōpae Piripono was positioned in the present. The whānau examined how individuals and families are currently located in TKP, and in the wider community. The wānanga process brought the whānau together in a whānau development exercise to build collective understanding, and to allow history to inform the present and future. The wānanga series also served as an introduction of the COI project to the entire whānau, and provided a baseline data collection exercise.

The combination of the introductory strategies provided the opportunity for all participants to self-reflect and -evaluate. The initial data (documents, surveys, transcripts) were methodically collated and analysed thematically, serving as the foundation for the research process, and shared with the whānau to allow the collective to both understand and determine the relevant concepts that would then thread through the research. A vision was arrived at, barriers and enablers for that vision were identified, and a plan to realise the vision was devised. For the purposes of the research, areas of focus emerged, and these were crystallized into three research areas:

- ***Whakawhanake whānau*** *(the Whānau Development programme)* – This focus was about optimising whānau development, at the heart of Te Kōpae Piripono, to better support members so they develop the capacity to participate equally and fully in Te Kōpae Piripono, and thereon in other areas of their lives.
- ***Whakauru whānau*** *(The enrolment and induction process)* – This focus emerged out of a shared view that the whānau should take greater care with the introduction of new children and their families into Te Kōpae Piripono. It was felt that full entry should follow a structured enrolment process that provides new persons with the necessary information and support to achieve a high level of understanding of the Te Kōpae Piripono paradigm on entry. This would assist their integration into the whānau, increasing the likelihood that they and Te Kōpae Piripono match.
- ***Tautoko whānau*** *(whānau support)* – This focus arose from concerns expressed about the difficulties individual families experience at Te Kōpae Piripono, and the shared desire to be appropriately responsive to those needs.

Three groups were formed from whānau volunteers to refine and develop the three research areas, informed by the data analysis. The groups worked independently and then reported to hui whānau. In April 2006, the Tautoko Whānau and the Whakauru Whānau strands were merged, as the similarities between the two became apparent.

Issues requiring action were prioritised and practical solutions devised. Plans of action were developed to augment whānau development to advance leadership across all levels of the whānau. The strategies included: revamped wānanga programme, process and opportunity; renewed enrolment and induction procedures; parenting support mechanisms; fresh approaches to and opportunities for social interaction and whānau relationship building; and, new personal and professional development opportunities.

Te Kōpae Piripono, the childcare centre, operated as normal over the three-year period. An extra full time teacher was employed to allow Kaitiaki to have time to participate actively in the research. Kaitiaki documented and reflected on their development and observations, in addition to the following:

- Writing children's learning stories
- Writing their own stories and maintaining reflective journals
- Observing and documenting children's play, conversations and learning
- Photographing children playing, talking and learning
- Taking videotape and/or audiotape of children while they were playing, talking and learning
- Presenting and recording children's work/art
- Engaging with parents/whānau/caregivers, on children's learning

Links were made between activity at adult level and children's learning. Whānau were surveyed to establish the effectiveness of the strategies, which were reviewed and then improved or replaced, as deemed appropriate. The overall efficacy of the research effort was assessed using methods similar to those utilised for the initial data collection.

4.4.2 Cycle Two

The first cycle of research highlighted concerns about the emotional difficulties experienced by members on entry to Te Kōpae Piripono and, beyond that, for some

became insurmountable barriers to their participation and growth, which then hindered whānau development. At the end of 2006, a second cycle of investigation, analysis, planning, action, and evaluation began on a deeper level, to explore the discomfort that underlies much of the behaviours of concern. A focus group, comprising a combination of 'comfortable' and 'uncomfortable' volunteers from the whānau, was formed to collaboratively explore the issues and to ascertain solutions. The group utilised semi-structured interviews and hui. The findings from Cycle Two were finally fed back to the focus group and to Kaitiaki on 26 October 2007.

4.5 Participants

The participants of this research project were the whānau (community) of Te Kōpae Piripono, past and present. All members of the current whānau were invited to participate in the project. In the main, current whānau (this includes extended whānau) have children attending Te Kōpae Piripono. When children leave Te Kōpae Piripono and move on to kura, they and their whānau continue to be part of the wider whānau network of Te Kōpae Piripono. Their involvement is as valued as that of current whānau members. 'Former' whānau were invited to participate in the research project, by email, post, or in person, as and when possible.

A representative group of current whānau members were identified to form the focus group/s (rōpū arotahi) who were consulted at the various stages of the research cycles to provide initial, formative and summative feedback/evidence in order to attest to strategy efficacy. By year three, the rōpū arotahi comprised Te Kōpae Piripono Kaitiaki and several whānau members.

The research team comprised the research leaders - the Tumu (directors of Te Kōpae Piripono) - the research associate, and the research assistant. Contributions were sought from other whānau members, and an independent research advisor, as necessary.

4.6 Ethical considerations

Te Kōpae Piripono practitioners and other whānau members, both new and old, collaborated in this kaupapa Māori participatory action research. The whānau of

researchers have a vested interest in Te Kōpae Piripono, and therefore in the research. In accord with Bishop and Glynn (1999), the researchers made no pretence of this kaupapa Māori research being impartial. These researchers were not passive observers, nor did they feel it imperative that their research be flawlessly scientific. Rather, the sense of accountability was to their children, and their children's children, by extending the pathway first trodden by their ancestors.

The well being of all parties in the research was paramount. This research had a "credit-based" focus (rather than a deficit-based orientation), meaning the emphasis has been on positive strategies and solutions for whānau development and leadership, framed by the kaupapa Māori conceptual framework. As some whānau members felt challenged by aspects of the research (deemed a valid response to change) they were supported to problem-solve those difficulties. The whānau met regularly to provide/receive support, clarification and guidance. Professional development was provided to assist Kaitiaki in their role, and individual whānau were supported through ongoing dialogue.

Given the up-close qualitative attention given to a sub-unit of the Māori population, by that same group (self study/case study), and given the involvement of children and other whānau members at various stages of personal and professional development, there is an even fiercer requirement here to safeguard participants and to protect their identity throughout the research and the dissemination of the findings. All efforts were made to prevent research activity infringing on participants' rights (indeed those of any stakeholder). Written informed consent was obtained prior to any action. Confidentiality was, and will continue to be, maintained unless specific informed consent is obtained. The research followed the University of Waikato: Human Research Ethics Regulations 2000, as determined by the University of Waikato School of Education Ethics Committee, which provided ethical approval for the project (sponsored by Professor Ted Glynn).

The Te Kōpae Piripono research contract with the Ministry of Education specifies that Te Kōpae Piripono retains the Copyright for its own intellectual property - understandings arrived at independently of the Centres of Innovation project. Te Ao Māori material belongs to Te Ao Māori.

4.7 Te Reo Māori

For the ease of the non-Māori reader, the Māori language used by whānau members and quoted in this report has been translated into English.

4.8 Tauiwi involvement

At Te Kōpae Piripono, the kaupapa allows *tauiwi* (non-Māori) to be involved as manuhiri (guests) in the whānau, guests of the tangata whenua, the local people. The reo Māori version of the Treaty of Waitangi serves as the model for that relationship. Tauiwi enter Te Kōpae Piripono on the kaupapa, supporting the vision and the ethos of kaupapa Māori, as well as desiring te reo Māori for their children and families. It is the kaupapa that unites people as whānau. Tauiwi are welcomed and included at Te Kōpae Piripono, they may participate in and contribute to the whānau, however, authority and control of the kaupapa remains with tangata whenua.

Chapter 5
Research Findings

Four key areas of findings have emerged from the Te Kōpae Piripono COI research. These are presented here in stand-alone sections: Whānau Development – The Structured Development of the Whānau; Fear - A Barrier to Participation, The Critical Involvement of Fathers; and The Central Role of Whānau Support.

The first section, Whānau Development – The Structured Development of the Whānau, discusses the programme of development opportunities at Te Kōpae Piripono, found to be the mechanism by which the whānau can be confident all members are learning and developing, and climbing the staircase to leadership and enlightenment.

The Fear – a Significant Barrier to Participation section argues that, as a major barrier to whānau participation, fear must be acknowledged and responded to appropriately if whānau members are to fully participate as leaders in Te Kōpae Piripono, in the other areas of their lives and importantly, to be constructively involved in their children's learning and development. The third section, The Critical Involvement of Fathers, addresses the issue of father absence from children's education, and the implications of this universal phenomenon, of particular concern to kaupapa Māori organisations. The research found the trend can be reversed. Finally, the section on whānau support comprises five sub-sections: 'Open and honest communication – much more than words', which looks at the need to have agreed processes for open communication and also the courage to follow these processes; 'Behaviour Guidance – an element of open and honest communication', which talks specifically about promoting positive behaviour and dealing positively with issues; 'Kaitiaki action is the 'glue' in effecting whānau development', which emphasises the essential role of Kaitiaki (teachers) as facilitators and networkers in the processes of whānau development; 'The Role of Critical Friends' which highlights the value of having people who can act as critical friends to support the developmental journeys of individuals and families; and 'Enrolment and Induction as whānau support', which describes processes that enable new families at Te Kōpae Piripono to gain shared understandings of our kaupapa, and of their individual and collective responsibilities. Effective induction processes facilitate and nurture membership and participation in the long term.

5.1 Whānau Development – the structured development of the whānau

Whānau Development is Te Kōpae Piripono's structured programme of learning and development opportunities for whānau members. Whānau Development has been a keystone of Te Kōpae Piripono since the centre's inception in 1994, when the first Pukapuka Whakamārama (parents information booklet) informed parents, "Parent and whānau involvement is vital at Te Kōpae Piripono. Our philosophy of empowerment through education and experience requires that all those involved take part in the whānau development plan" (p.7). Many of the families who have joined Te Kōpae Piripono since 1994 have been attracted by the vision articulated in the Te Pou Tiringa Incorporated constitution (1994): "Taranaki Māori children be prepared for life through high quality Māori education provided by competent educators in adequately resourced facilities and supported by a well-informed whānau."

Despite those objectives, many of the families enrolling in Te Kōpae Piripono have had little lived experience of Te Ao Māori, or of kaupapa Māori, only the vestiges of their cultural heritage having survived the highly effective processes of colonisation to be passed to them by their parents and grandparents.

In effect, Te Kōpae Piripono has provided the opportunity for Taranaki Māori to reclaim things Māori for themselves and for their offspring. The Whānau Development scheme was designed to bridge the difference between the Te Kōpae Piripono vision, and the understanding and experience of members, on entry, providing a process by which individuals and families are supported as they integrate into the whānau. Whānau Development promoted the learning and development of the whole whānau, as individuals and as a collective, in all manner of competences, which would then benefit the wider community. With whānau development as the goal, Whānau Development is the means by which the goal is achieved for the entire whānau.

Whānau Development is based on the premise that all members of the whānau, the children and their families, are climbing a metaphoric poutama, a learning and development staircase, and, that there is a shared commitment to, and responsibility for, the upward movement of the community on that poutama (Hond-Flavell, 2005). It was believed that the development of the entire whānau was unlikely to occur organically

from good intention and high expectations. A planned and purposeful approach to programming, responsive to members' needs and circumstances, would mediate the development of every whānau member, and of all the whānau.

The whānau approach (to caring and learning, to managing relationships, to personal growth and professional development) is fundamentally kaupapa Maori, and whānau has been identified as a feature of successful Māori education initiatives (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, & Richardson, 2003; Rokx, 1997). Substantial research too on pre-school education across the globe has attested to the importance of parent and local community involvement for children's learning in the early childhood environment (Biddulph, Biddulph, Biddulph, 2003; Siraj-Blatchford, 2006). In the United Kingdom, the Pen Green Centre in Corby is a multi-functional community service for children and their families where emphasis is placed on parent involvement – as partners - in every aspect of its programme (Whalley, 2001).

However, the centrally coordinated and structured Whānau Development programme, embedded with the Te Kōpae Piripono's wider support strategy, is an innovation of Te Kōpae Piripono and is considered by the centre to be a critical element of its formula for success. The protagonists of Te Kōpae Piripono recognised the correlation between parent/caregiver engagement and development and that of the children. Therefore, the personal and professional development of the parents, along with other members of each child's own family, has long been stressed and encouraged at Te Kōpae Piripono. Te Kōhanga Reo too has long promoted whānau development with learning opportunities for parents (Pohatu, Stokes & Austin, 2006). Draper and Duffy (2006) describe a similar approach taken at Thomas Coram Children's Centre in London, where parent training and development is valued, and programmes for parents are provided, with support to undertake personal and professional development as a way of supporting their children's learning.

At Te Kōpae Piripono, Whānau Development has meant everyone has been expected to be engaged in wānanga reo at the appropriate level, and progress has been monitored by the Tumu to ensure it was happening as agreed by families at enrolment. Relevant learning and development opportunities were provided to the whānau, throughout the year, coordinated by the Rōpū Whakahaere, and utilising the expertise within the whānau

or accessing opportunities in the wider community. All of the whānau were expected to participate. Kaitiaki and other staff members too have been supported to undertake training to acquire higher qualifications.

The flow-on effects from Whānau Development occurred in all directions as achievement was role-modelled and became normalised in the community of Te Kōpae Piripono. In effect, Whānau Development has been strategic to the centre's 'community building' (MacNaughton, with Hughes, 2003), that is, growing a community of learners on a base of kaupapa Māori and kaupapa Taranaki, and improving the learning taking place at all levels within it. By 2004, at Te Kōpae Piripono, six Kaitiaki had been supported by the whānau to gain their teacher registration; other whānau members too had been supported to progress up the stairway, demonstrating leadership in respective areas, importantly at Te Kōpae Piripono, in the area of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori (Māori language and culture). In 2005, The Education Review Office reported of Te Kōpae Piripono that the "children are developing as competent and confident learners with a strong sense of self worth."

5.1.1 Whānau Development from an Ao Māori perspective

The visual image of the *poutama,* described earlier, is commonly said to be the *stairway of knowledge*. This traditional design is used in many Māori art forms, and principally on the tukutuku panels that adorn the inner walls of ancestral houses throughout the country. The poutama is said to represent generations of descent (Moorfield, 2005), as well as the stages of learning and development. In particular, the poutama is said to symbolise the path taken by Tāne as he ascended through the celestial realms in search of knowledge and enlightenment, with which to inform the development of humankind (Te Rangihiroa, 1949). Tāne obtained the knowledge he was seeking from the uppermost heaven (Tihi-i-manono) and returned it to earth in three baskets of knowledge (ngā kete o te wānanga). This journey is recounted in a well-known chant that is recited by the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono,

Tēnei au, tēnei au
Te hōkai nei i taku tapuwae
Ko te hōkai - nuku
Ko te hōkai - rangi
Ko te hōkai a tō tupuna
A Tāne - nui - ā - rangi
I pikitia ai
Ki te Rangi - tūhāhā
Ki te Tihi - i - manono
I rokohina atu rā
Ko Io - matua - kore anakē
I riro iho ai
Ngā kete o te wānanga
Ko te Kete Tuauri
Ko te Kete Tuatea
Ko te Kete Aronui
Ka tiritiria, ka poupoua
Kia Papatūānuku
Ka puta te ira tangata
Ki te whai āo
Ki te Ao mārama
Tihei mauri ora!

Here I am
Striding swiftly with celestial power,
Swiftly moving over the earth
Swiftly moving through the heavens
Swiftly moving was your ancestor
Tane - nui - a - rangi,
Who climbed up
to the furthest of the heavens
to the peak of Manono.
There was found
Io - the - parentless.
From whom was obtained
the baskets of knowledge,
the basket called Tuauri
the basket called Tuatea
the basket called Aronui.
These were then brought back and established on
Papatuanuku,
the earth mother,
and humankind emerged
into the world of light and clarity.
I sneeze, there is life!

Figure 5.1: Chant – Tēnei au

Tāne is Tāne-nui-ā-rangi, also known as Tāne-te-wānanga, and as Tāne-toko-i-te rangi, the son of the primordial parents, Ranginui and Papatūānuku. Tāne successfully separated his parents allowing the siblings to expand their world, and to acquire new knowledge. While some of the offspring were content to be stifled in the confined space between their parents, the others were desperate for change. The various positions of the family members were heard and negotiated, and eventually Tāne was able to force the parents apart causing at once extreme sadness and great joy.

The Tātai Whakapapa and the ancient stories of that original whānau, help us at Te Kōpae Piripono to understand whānau development, whānau relationships, and the need for both individual and collective to progress. Importantly, the stories that have been handed down through the generations, signal the importance placed by our ancestors on the pursuit of knowledge and the striving for enlightenment.

From these stories, we learn that the tuakana-teina (elder sibling-younger sibling) relationship is a critical alliance and a mechanism to provide vital support for family members, some of whom may be less enterprising and/or confident (for example) than others, or, have interests that lie in other areas. Agreement around decision-making must

be negotiated between siblings, and this may not be straightforward… disagreements occur naturally within all families. Therefore, good conflict resolution and reconciliation practices are essential elements of the process.

We observe that through negotiation, equilibrium can be achieved within the whānau, for each member. Through negotiation, roles and responsibilities are assigned and the complementarity of positions is emphasised. Siblings negotiate to facilitate and mediate the development of siblings. Ultimately, the entire whānau benefits from the achievement of the individuals within it, and there is upward movement by all. Members move at their own speeds, and while progressing up the whānau poutama, may also be climbing their own. All movement is important and is valued.

Te Kōpae Piripono proposes that to achieve this level of whānau development, the process must be structured and formalised, and the decision-making well-managed. Development may or may not occur if the effort is left to chance. A corollary of whānau development is that both the tuakana and the teina can achieve mana by assuming the negotiated responsibilities of leadership and being effective in those roles. Leadership can emerge at the macro level of community as well as at the micro level of the individual.

This is the Te Kōpae Piripono conceptualisation of whānau development, based on our shared understandings of the Tātai Whakapapa. Whānau Development is the coordinated plan that ensures that whānau development takes place. The goal of Whānau Development remains the mediated holistic development of every whānau member to assume the responsibilities of leadership, in all respects. All members of Te Kōpae Piripono are ascending poutama, strengthening themselves, their offspring, and their community/ies.

5.1.2 COI research and Whānau Development

When whānau members were surveyed in 2005 for their understandings of Whānau Development at Te Kōpae Piripono, they gave a variety of reasons why they believed such development desirable. The following is a sampling of the contributions by members:

- *Whānau Development is the building of whānau capacity so that members can support their children's learning and development. Everyone has a role and a responsibility.*
- *There is an expectation that whānau commit to learning Te Reo Māori and tikanga and also to a personal development plan in an area of their choice.*
- *(Whānau Development allows) members to feel important and needed, therefore increasing their trust with Te Kōpae Piripono and resulting in higher levels of interest and more importantly their participation with the kaupapa.*

It became apparent that whānau members believed whānau development an appropriate way to support the children's learning:

- *Whānau development is the development of the parents/caregivers alongside their tamariki.*
- *We need to develop whānau for a better future for our children and grandchildren.*
- *Through strengthening and developing the whānau, including the parents, our children will thrive. They will reap all of the benefits.*

However, some members, particularly new members, were unaware of the Whānau Development programme, and were uncertain what whānau development looked like at Te Kōpae Piripono. The research team was surprised by this lack of understanding on the part of a few members. After some reflection, the team agreed that it reflected the somewhat haphazard implementation of the Whānau Development policy and procedures that had occurred in recent times. The team surmised that increasing demands on the centre's management systems, staff, and whānau, with a shift in the centre's construction of leadership, from hierarchical to distributed, in 2004, had unwittingly distracted attention from some of the centre's core practices, including Whānau Development. The Kaitiaki team had for some time noted reduced cohesion within the whānau and a decline in whānau participation. Held by Te Kōpae Piripono to be a central feature of its operation, the Centres of Innovation project provided the opportunity to review the Whānau Development programme.

The whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono came together for several weekend wānanga. The wānanga reiterated the belief that the Whānau Development process support members to develop the capacity to participate equally and fully in Te Kōpae Piripono, with and for their children, and thereon in the other areas of their lives. A focus group was formed to determine strategies, based on the ideas generated from the whānau, to revitalise and optimise the programme, enhancing the effectiveness, sustainability, and consistent implementation, so that all whānau members continued to benefit, as originally intended.

A significant exercise in the process was the identification by the whānau of the skills and abilities within the group. Whānau Development at Te Kōpae Piripono had always been about the building of the whānau skill base, and the use of this wealth to enhance individuals' learning and sense of belonging. However, the whānau was amazed at the collective expertise of members, especially when represented diagrammatically, in form of a rotating and evolving wheel (shown below):

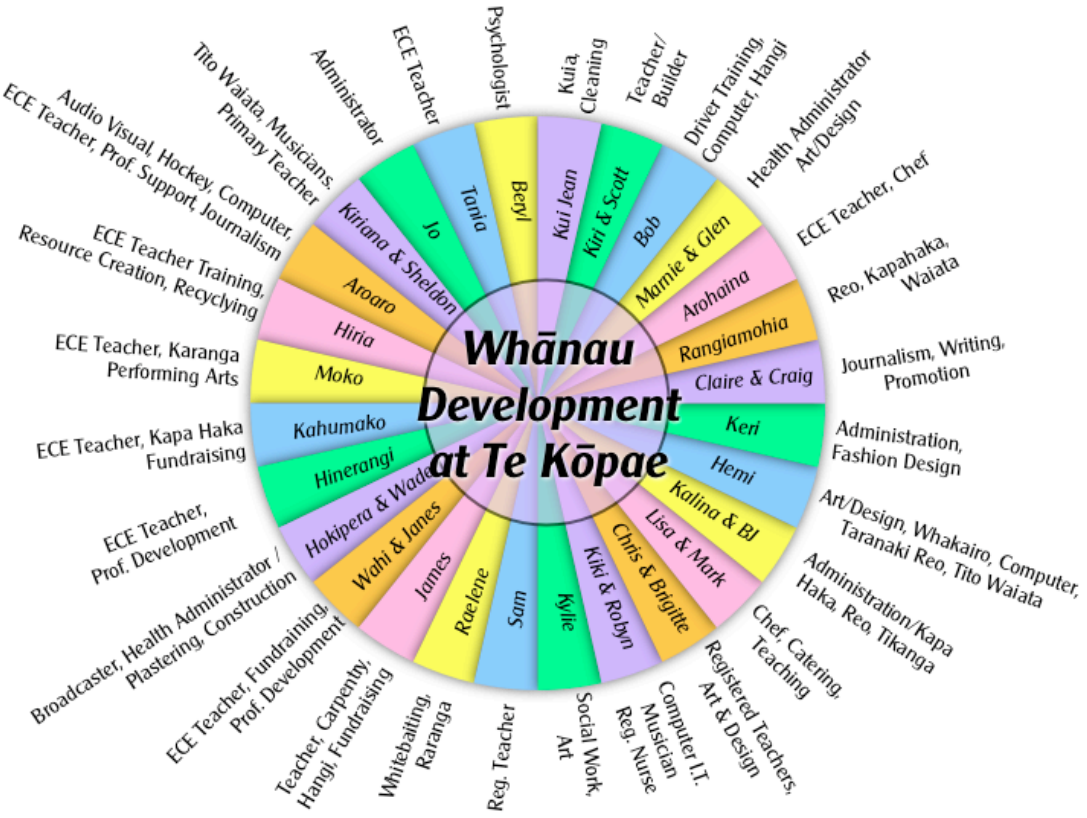

Figure 5.2: Whānau Development Wheel

The use of a wheel is deliberate. A wheel is not linear. The wheel provides a fascinating snapshot of the intricate and dynamic fabric of our whānau. It shows easily how expertise within the whānau can be utilised for the benefit of the individual and the collective at the same time. As the well-known proverb goes, "*Mā tōu rourou, mā taku rourou, ka ora ai te iwi,"* (with each person's contribution there will be ample provision for everyone). Whānau members could see the powerful resource that was the collective. Development of the whānau could be achieved through Whānau Development strategies developed by the whānau, for the whānau, and based on the needs of the whānau. Individually and collectively, members bring their expertise to support the development of the whānau.

But more than this, the mere process of creating a 'whānau wheel', not only served to acknowledge the amazing skills, roles and contributions of individual whānau members to Te Kōpae Piripono, it also revealed our relationship as a whānau. To create a whānau wheel requires you to truly know your whānau. Whether they realise it or not, every early childhood setting will have its own whānau wheel. Just how vibrant and 'moving' the wheel is will depend very much on the nature and level of relationships each setting has with its families.

The discussion that took place around the diagram assisted members to better understand the Four Responsibilities of leadership (Ngā Takohanga E Whā), in the context of the collective responsibility of whānau.

The focus group reviewed the policy and procedure documents, strengthening the coordination and management of the programme. Important alterations to the procedure were as follows:

- The annual convening of a committee that would assume responsibility for consulting the whānau to identify needs and interests, and, skills and expertise within the group; organise the learning areas according to ability to deliver; monitor the effectiveness of the wānanga programme, as well as participation rates within the whānau.

- Communication and other practical and social skills were prioritised for wānanga.
- Different types of opportunities for learning were added, including the production of Mātauranga Māori resources (DVDs: waiata, pepeha, and karakia; laminated wall posters; booklets for parents); Kāinga Kōrerorero began with support from the Mā te Reo Fund (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori), in the homes of some families; cooking sessions in te reo Māori were scheduled; child development, parenting & health seminars were scheduled.
- To allow essential relationships to form and be maintained, there was a greater emphasis on social gatherings and 'extra-curricular' activities such as regular shared meals and social evenings.
- Sports teams for the children, and their older siblings, were organised by adult whānau members. The teams participated in community competitions, and games and practices became 'whānau' affairs. 'Kōrero Māori' was the norm for these teams.
- The adoption of a Whānau Development and whānau participation checklist, which would be reviewed regularly by centre management as part of the support provisions.

Understood by all, and implemented in a consistent and constructive fashion, the Whānau Development programme would be effective and responsive to the needs of its members (including wānanga type, size, time, and location, etc). Members would know what was expected of them, and what they in turn could reasonably expect from others.

As the COI research team explored the relationship of Whānau Development to children's learning and development, and the promotion of leadership throughout the whānau, Kaitiaki began documenting and reflecting on their own development, and their observations of shifts and movement amongst the children and within the whānau. Programme attendance records were maintained, whānau learning stories were compiled, and whānau journals were kept to demonstrate growth and development towards the goal of enhanced leadership at Te Kōpae Piripono. Individuals were surveyed to gauge the effectiveness of the strategy. One Kaitiaki reflected on a particular wānanga:

> *I really wanted that wānanga to happen…I think once we had that wānanga, others were clear on what the expectations were, and the likes of (Kaitiaki), she just stood up. I was talking to her after that wānanga and she said, "If you hadn't brought this to the fore, I would have sat on it and sat on it." And I said to her that it was something that I needed to do for myself, otherwise, I was just going to get riri and not put myself outside there…it was knowing that I am safe to do it. So it was fear, eh. That's what motivated me to start asking, and I was really rapt about that, and I learned a lot.* (21.12.06)

A Kōpae mother described the impact involvement in wānanga reo had on her own mother:

> *Mum goes to night classes every Wednesday. I think she's reached level two. She's staunch at speaking only Māori to our son, even if the words get mixed up sometimes. She's sticking to the kaupapa, even if she doesn't talk Māori much here. She will not speak English and that's awesome. She gets hōhā if people speak English to her. She wants to speak Māori all the time, so the kaupapa will stay strong (Parent interview, 16.11.06).*

Another mother felt enabled by the wānanga reo:

> *When we first spoke…there was an expectation that whānau will be learning as well, particularly given our level of reo at that time, and I think doing that alongside it really, really, just changed my mind. When I went looking for a course, it was like, it's a pre-requisite, you have to do this for (your son). And that shifted it to, well, this is for the whānau, and that was reinforced at the wānanga too. Yes, I think that was a real enabler. Well, it enabled me to come here and develop relationships with people, and also want to stick to the kaupapa of the Kōpae. Wanting to do the immersion properly, I suddenly realised my own responsibility in that, (Parent interview, 14.12.06).*

As the new approach became embedded over the 2006/07 year, whānau members had opportunities to express their feelings about involvement in Te Kōpae Piripono and its programme of development. One of the fathers spoke about the impact of involvement on his family's life:

> *I just can't stress enough how it has changed our lives on quite a fundamental level. I think that was one of the things we were looking for even though we weren't able to articulate it in the first place. And it's made us much less conflicted about the beliefs that we've carried for a long time, politically if you like, the way that we view the country as a whole, and various things that go on. It made us able to stand more firmly in what we are and also perhaps to shrug some of the other stuff off… And we feel more and more that we are on the path of the future* (*Parent interview, 14.12.06).*

In keeping with the whānau approach of the Te Kōpae Piripono paradigm, individuals and families had to be developing for the centre to be deemed successful. The high level of organisation and promotion that surrounded Whānau Development, normalised individual and collective development for members and appeared to impel them to participate. Consequently whānau participation levels rose across the board for meetings, special occasions and social gatherings and had a snowball effect. A mother shared her enthusiasm for the whānau interactions:

> *The social occasions brought us together, to talk, to sing and eat together. All those positive things that come from being together – they are like a tonic for us all. This place is a caring place for my son. He sees us speaking Māori, amongst ourselves and modelling for him conversation in Māori. Being part of this place is a big support for me. (Parent interview, 13.11.06).*

The increased whānau involvement in centre activities transpired into greater cohesion within the whānau, as people came together and relationships were strengthened. The programme of activities provided the framework within which members could be included and supported. This was of utmost importance because some members had reported feeling isolated by their lack of reo, and at times feeling alone and/or overlooked amongst the bustling activity of the centre. The informal social gatherings provided for one mother vital support to deal with difficulties she was experiencing:

> *I think getting together on a social basis and being able to get beside someone and talk... That's really important to me because I realise that other people are often in the same situation, whether it be the lack of reo, or whatever the case may be, we quietly talk about it (16.11.06)*

A grandfather spoke of the powerful influence whānau role models had on his participation levels, *"And then (my son) stoked it up, he got all interested in it. He spent a year on wānanga with (tutor). I saw him there, and I thought, "Heck, I'd better do it as well." So you get involved..." (14.12.06).*

The Whānau Development programme provided members with learning and development opportunities to acquire the necessary skills to participate fully as competent and confident contributors. Furthermore, mutually beneficial alliances with other groups of a complementary nature extended the reach of Te Kōpae Piripono out into the Māori community and beyond, and provided for members an even greater sense of belonging to community. One mother shared how she had benefited from the wānanga reo/tikanga she attended:

> *"It is awesome if you have to go back to the marae, and… you don't feel so shy, it is more comfortable, you feel like you fit in better… That's probably the biggest high, being able to fit into that world, our world… And knowing if you have to go to a tangi or something, you can go on… We rally around as a whānau. There's no better feeling than knowing that you can do it" (16.11.06).*

Parents and caregivers had opportunity to develop parenting skill and build cultural knowledge, while the professional and personal skill development of Kaitiaki was allowed to benefit the collective, and transfer to the children by providing positive guidance and modelled behaviours. However, in keeping with the concept of AKO, where the roles of teacher and learner are interchangeable (Tamati, 2005), skill transfer is a multi-directional phenomenon at Te Kōpae Piripono. One whānau member spoke of the learning and development that had taken place within her family:

> *Looking at my own whānau and their development, (a high) for me has been (my moko)... (She) has become his (koro's) kaiako at home… …She makes it quite clear what he's expected to do… Sitting at the dinner table, (her koro) asks her to pass him the bread (in English). She says, "Paraoa koa" and holds it firmly. (Her koro) asks her to pass him the bread again. "Paraoa koa" (she) says again. (My husband) now understands that he must reply in te reo Maori. "Paraoa koa" (he says) and she passes over the paraoa. …It's been a big learning curve for him!" (Parent interview, 21.12.06).*

A whānau approach to personal and professional development has learning and development opportunities organised for the whole whānau by a Whānau Development committee in response to whānau requests and priorities. Whānau wānanga update new and existing members on the kaupapa of the centre, while a variety of learning opportunities are available to members. With renewed vigour, individual development plans for members are planned and monitored at management level. With regard to one learning opportunity, a couple spoke of their increased confidence in their roles as parents:

> *Mother: It has had a big influence on the way that I parent, which isn't something I was even thinking of when I came along here. It has been massive for me personally.*
>
> *Father: Yes, it has sort of given us permission... the way you guys deal with kids, it has really backed us in that, and allowed us to take that on even more, in the way that we wanted to. It's had a great influence at home. (Parent interview, 14.12.06)*

By the end of 2007, whānau participation in Te Kōpae Piripono wānanga had increased by 49% over the research period (2005-2007) with all of the whānau involved in some form of learning in the wider community. The increased whānau involvement had transpired into greater cohesion within the whānau reflecting the collective development that had taken place. Whānau members were much better informed about Whānau Development and the systems, processes, and expectations of Te Kōpae Piripono. Strong support was articulated for Whānau Development and the benefits to be derived from the programme for the children, along with the wider implications for Māori and community development. The following statement was written by a parent during the final data collection exercise,

> *Te Kōpae Piripono has exceeded all of our expectations, particularly around the holistic whānau development kaupapa. The lack of this experienced previously in a tikanga Pakeha early childhood environment was what motivated us to seek a tikanga Maori alternative, and Te Kōpae Piripono has more than met our needs. Our parenting, reo and tikanga, and whānau, are stronger. Ka rawe!*
>
> (January, 2007)

However, recommendations were also made as to how the programme might be further improved. Most related to the need for the adequate resourcing of the programme to ensure centre personnel had the facility to manage all their responsibilities, including Whānau Development. There were also suggestions made regarding greater flexibility of type, style, time, and venue, within the programme. The research team considered this response a positive outcome of the research process, indicating programme ownership, an awareness of the need for constant improvement, and an understanding of the non-static nature of learning and development. The attitude is captured in a comment added by a member to the post-questionnaire (2006/2007),

> *Te Kōpae Piripono is a very special place. The most special part is our shared acknowledgement that we are continually working on this kaupapa. It is a journey, a lifestyle, a way of being. We are all on a continual journey of learning about ourselves, individually and collectively. Our tamariki are our greatest hope, our most special taonga. This is not an easy road but working at it, together, has so much reward for us, and for future generations, (January, 2007).*

5.1.3 Summary

The structured programme of Whānau Development is firmly interconnected with the support strategies of Te Kōpae Piripono, and is pivotal to the learning and development of both adults and children at the centre, many of whom have limited knowledge of things Māori on entry.

Whānau Development is conceptualised at Te Kōpae Piripono, using the Tātai Whakapapa framework, as a whānau-based strategy designed to bring about balance between competing energies to achieve individual and collective confidence and competence. As such, Whānau Development is a collaborative exercise promoting shared understandings through personal and professional development for the benefit of all. The four responsibilities of leadership are being assumed to varying degrees by whānau members, both informally and formally, at all levels of the whānau. If adequately resourced and coordinated, Whānau Development can effect tremendous whānau development.

5.2 Fear – a significant barrier to participation

The central focus of the Te Kōpae Piripono research has been the relationship between the centre's whānau development programme and the children's learning and development. Through the research process whānau participation emerged as a recurring theme. It was argued by whānau members (at a series of wānanga whānau held in 2005 and 2006) that the levels of parent/caregiver participation could be predictive of the extent of development achieved for children, with some sharing anecdotes to support this assertion. An abundance of educational and psychological research was found to attest to the link between parental involvement and children's educational achievement (Gorinski and Fraser, 2006). High levels of whānau participation, to enrich members' experience of Te Kōpae Piripono, and to enhance young children's learning and development, became a goal of the research. During a wānanga whānau, in November 2005, a grandparent spoke of the different outcomes achieved for her second grandchild as a consequence of the learning and development that she herself had done since her elder grandchild was enrolled:

> *I brought my (elder) mokopuna here and I didn't know any reo…. at home there was more English… With (my second grandchild) …I knew a bit more reo than what I did before. I still need to learn more…I still feel whakamā doing it…I don't feel confident at all. But I'm getting there, I think. I'm seeing the difference between (the two children). I think (my second grandchild) has more reo than (my older grandchild had) at the same age…I can hold a conversation with her, and it amazes me when Kaitiaki talk to her and she knows it. So I think that's my growing too…I find that if you speak in te reo, she listens more.*

When surveyed (questionnaire and interview, 2005) during initial data collection, whānau members identified barriers to and enablers for whānau participation, in an effort to explain the variable levels of parent/caregiver involvement. Most barriers were external to the individuals, for example, demands of employment, lack of time, other commitments, no available support, and economic hardship. Lack of proficiency in te reo Māori was a common refrain. The enablers included factors such as, support of

family and friends, positive peer influences, proficiency in te reo Māori, and, welcoming and supportive environment.

In response to this feedback, a strategic plan was developed that incorporated an updated whānau development programme of learning opportunities and experiences, responsive to members' self-identified professional and personal needs; additional support mechanisms; improved communication strategies; and, increased variety and volume of social, sporting and cultural activities, aimed at building a greater sense of whānau amongst often unconnected whānau members.

The Whakawhanake Whānau and Whakauru/Tautoko Whānau strategies were implemented to great effect. Kaitiaki reported a greater coherence within the now better-informed whānau. Whānau members reported improved communication and higher levels of comfort as they came to know each other through interacting more frequently in a variety of settings, and sharing in whānau development opportunities organised during this period. Members agreed that as they came to know each other better, they began to feel more comfortable and confident in the Te Kōpae Piripono context. The overall level of whānau participation through the research period increased by 30%. A mother (who is also a Kaitiaki) recognised the importance of parent participation, *"If parents are comfortable then children are too, they are settled before they walk in the door, they are prepared to take risks, and will blossom like flowers. There is a correlation between parent participation and kids' development"* (1.8.07). A father shared with us that despite his feelings of extreme discomfort when he enrolled his child at Te Kōpae Piripono, due, he was sure, to his lack of reo, he persevered. *"(I was) feeling inadequate and humiliated. My confidence dropped. I became aware of my inadequacies… Forcing myself to come in, helped overcome that…"* (8.8.07)

However, despite overall improved participation, despite the number and extent of strategies employed, there was a small group within the whānau who did not respond as did their peers. It became clear that these members had difficulties that were unmitigated by the efforts of the whānau. The research team decided to take a closer look at the difficulties being experienced by this group that inhibited their participation in the education of their children at the centre.

5.2.1 Understanding the barriers

The reticence of some whānau members was not a new phenomenon. Over the years, the management team and Kaitiaki of Te Kōpae Piripono had noted higher than normal levels of anxiety amongst some whānau members. A common manifestation of this anxiety was the behaviour of the parent who would enter the centre as if under duress, rushing in and out without making eye or verbal contact with Kaitiaki. Often these individuals would tend only to participate in the non-challenging activity of the centre, if they had someone with them, blending into the background of the gathering. There were also those members who struggled to use the reo they had acquired, even with their own children at home.

The Whānau Development programme had been developed in recognition of the diverse backgrounds of members, the varying levels of cultural experience and cultural and socio-emotional competence. The goal of Whānau Development was the mediated development of every whānau member to assume the responsibilities of leadership. The research team agreed it was vital that ways be sought to assist these whānau members overcome their difficulties.

From the beginning of the research process, whānau members had identified fear as a significant barrier to whānau and child participation, although they may not have recognised it as such. Words such as *freaking out*, *embarrassed*, *uncomfortable*, *stressed*, for example, were used to describe how they felt. A number of whānau members disclosed that they indeed experienced anxiety in the various contexts of Te Kōpae Piripono. One spoke of an initial feeling of being paralysed with fear that someone would talk to her, *"Walking through that door here was so hard. It was like, "Don't talk to me in Māori!" And I still have those sorts of feelings even today. So I really feel for those parents who come in with no reo. The commitment is really important because it helps overcome the barriers."* (Whānau wānanga, 15.11.05). Another told of how inadequate he would feel, from the moment he passed through the Te Kōpae Piripono gate, *"I would take (my daughter) to Kōpae each day and pick her up. Initially, this was uncomfortable for me as the Kōpae was a total immersion Māori environment and I felt intimidated and uneasy due to the language barrier…" (Parent Reflection, 3.12.07).* This discomfort got in the way of active involvement and achievement.

As well as making boundaries and expectations clear, Kaitiaki determined that it was imperative to acknowledge the fear of whānau members, the uncomfortable feelings that they experience as they encounter change and learn new ways of doing and being. New members come to Te Kōpae Piripono with their lived experience of "education". For many this is a negative 'default' view, built on their own experience of powerlessness in their relationships with teachers and educational institutions. A grandfather shared one such experience:

> *The convent was (a culture shock), being away from home… Did I tell you about the piharau (lamp ray eels)? Well, when we got parcels from home we used to get cakes and stuff. One day Mum sent piharau down with the cake. The nuns opened it up. That was a joke to the Pakeha people. Me getting eels while they got cakes. I don't think I even ate the piharau, I was so embarrassed. It put me off piharau for a long time. It was really embarrassing. I could hear them talking. After that I told Mum not to send any more piharau… Then I went to Hato Paora. That wasn't too bad. You could catch your own eels there! (laughs) (11.06.07).*

Individuals voiced the fear of 'getting it wrong,' or, not being able to 'get it right'. Kaitiaki held the view that learning and growth can only occur if one has the courage to be open to change, and is prepared to take responsibility for one's own development. In the case of overly anxious parents, the mere act of enrolling their children at Te Kōpae Piripono, with its clearly articulated expectation of participation and commitment to kaupapa, was an extraordinarily brave thing to do. By doing so, they exposed themselves to significant amounts of discomfort and risk (Curtis, Kimball & Stroup, 2004).

The research team considered the assertion by educationalists that the principles of kaupapa Māori are key to the efficacy of any response to Māori under-performance in education. Much of the literature on Māori educational under-performance has related to Māori in mainstream education (Ngā Haeata Mātauranga, 2005; Tuuta, Bradnam, Hynds, Higgins & Broughton, 2004). Bishop (2003) argued that the key elements of kaupapa Māori education can be introduced to mainstream education sites to enhance educational outcomes for Māori students. Graham Smith (1992) posited six principles of kaupapa Māori education that will promote high levels of achievement: Tino Rangatiratanga (self

determination), Taonga tuku iho (indigenous knowledge), Ako Māori (Māori pedagogies), Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kāinga (the mediation of socio-economic and domestic difficulties), Whānau, hapū and iwi (familial relationships and connections), and, kaupapa (Māori paradigm) (p.2).

The question was asked: If kaupapa Māori is indeed a critical factor in intervention for Māori in education, how is it that for some whānau members of a kaupapa Māori education facility such as Te Kōpae Piripono, this approach is still not enough?

The team agreed that a greater understanding of this phenomenon was required so an appropriate response could be identified. With a research focus on whānau development, it was hoped that the insights gained might lead to specific strategies for incorporation into the Whānau Development programme, for the benefit of all.

While the core research strategy, which included reviewing and optimising the Whakawhanake Whānau and Whakauru/Tautoko whānau policies and procedures, was being progressed, a small focus group formed comprising a mix of individuals. Some of the group had self-identified as being anxious, some felt confident and comfortable, and, others claimed to have moved past the apprehension they had initially experienced to now feel quite at home. The group was interviewed individually and it then met as a group to discuss the issues and possible interventions.

5.2.2 Te Kōpae Piripono conceptualisation of fear and anxiety

The Tātai Whakapapa is the conceptual framework of Te Kōpae Piripono. It is a metaphor that explains the natural order, and the place of human beings in that order. Although this framework may not provide explanations (e.g. ecological) for current problems such as abnormal fear and anxiety, it can help us understand them in accordance with the indigenous concepts of Te Ao Māori (the Māori world). We of Te Kōpae Piripono hold that equilibrium is achieved when all elements of the Tātai Whakapapa are balanced complementarily. When there is perfect balance, individuals and groups can experience self-fulfilment.

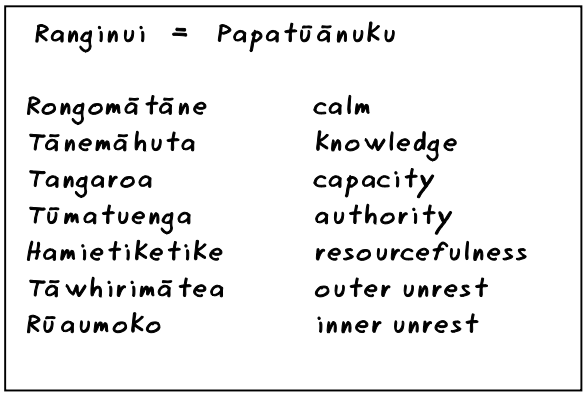

Figure 5.3 Generalised atua dispositions

The generalised dispositions of the seven main offspring of Ranginui and Papatūānuku are themes that permeate our activity and enable us to theorise about individual and collective circumstance. Within an individual, the dispositions should be in agreement. If not (and where there is no biological explanation), one or more temperament will gain paramouncy at the expense of others and the imbalance will cause the individual to experience cognitive, emotional, or spiritual difficulties that can impede functioning and even manifest physically. For example, if the temperament of Rongomātāne (calm - a highly desirable characteristic) is disproportionate to the others, the individual may become detached from reality, insensitive, and unresponsive. The abnormally anxious and apprehensive would have inherited the individual characteristics of each of the atua matua, but perhaps that of Rūaumoko, had become overly dominant.

Rūaumoko is the infant son who lacked the confidence and self-belief to venture out on his own, away from the security of his mother, Papatūānuku, on her separation from Ranginui. Rūaumoko remained huddled in the embrace of his mother. His inner conflict is said to give rise to seismic activity that can devastate. It is the positive influence of the family group, and negotiated cooperation, that reassures Rūaumoko enabling him to perform important subterranean functions. The pursuit of reconciliation, and agreement, between the competing personalities within the family, for the benefit of Rūaumoko, his supernatural family, and for all existence, is the quest for perfect peace. The story serves as a metaphor for the journey that Te Kōpae Piripono has undertaken to understand and then to support, those within its number who are troubled and handicapped by fear and anxiety.

5.2.3 Anxiety – explicable yet defeatable

Mason Durie (2001) discusses a Māori view of mental health that is consistent with that of Te Kōpae Piripono, although expressed differently. According to Durie, the Māori view of mental health does not conform to clinical symptom clusters or syndromes (p. 156). Depression and anxiety may not necessarily be medical conditions but indicative of an imbalance between the emotions, social relationships, spirituality, and the body. Still in accord with the approach of Te Kōpae Piripono, Durie argues that the healing process for Māori affected by anxiety concerns bringing the dimensions of the person's existence into balance.

The anxiety that some whānau members appeared to be experiencing at Te Kōpae Piripono was problematic because it was impacting negatively on their ability to be fully functional. The potential negative consequences of impaired functioning, aside from the possible disadvantage to children's education, were impeded development, due to diminished professional opportunity, social isolation, and reduced emotional health and wellbeing (Muzina & El-Sayegh, 2001). One whānau member was able to talk about the anxiety he had been experiencing:

> *Parent:* *The trouble with me is I am frightened to make mistakes because I should know better and I don't want to open my mouth unless I have got it right. …I've got the reo of my mother who I listened to and I don't want to get it wrong.*
>
> *Tumu:* *I'm just thinking about that 'not wanting to get it wrong' or 'needing to get it right' you were talking about before…*
>
> *Parent:* *Well that's a handicap really, eh. Trying to get it right before you open your mouth…" (Parent interview, 14.12.06)*

The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 2000 (DSM-IV-TR), identifies a variety of anxiety disorders where persistent feelings of anxiety cause discomfort and disruption to everyday living. The New Zealand Mental Health Foundation reported in 2002, that approximately ten percent of the population, at one time, suffers the effects of fears that are irrational, and result in impaired functioning. Ministry of Health (2006) found anxiety to be the most common 12-month disorder among Māori (19.4%), followed by mood disorders (11.4%). Anxiety was also the most

common lifetime disorder among Māori (31.3%), followed by substance-use disorders (26.5%), mood disorders (24.3%) and eating disorders (3.1%).

A review of the literature on anxiety disorders reveals *social anxiety* as a disorder relating to an individual's extreme emotional and physical reaction to feared social situations. The essential feature of social anxiety disorder is a 'marked and persistent fear of social or performance situations in which embarrassment may occur' (DSM-IV-TR, p.450) and which can lead to avoidant behaviour. People with social anxiety disorder demonstrate a marked or persistent fear of certain social situations and this will have one or some of the following characteristics:

- fear of showing anxiety symptoms or behaving in a way that is humiliating or embarrassing;
- fear that the evaluation of others will be negative;
- exposure to feared situations causes extreme anxiety and so is avoided or endured;
- avoidance of these situations significantly interferes with the person's education, social activities or relationships and/or causes marked stress; and,
- the fear is recognised by the individual as excessive or unreasonable

(Anxiety Disorders Unit, Christchurch, New Zealand, no date shown)

The fear may centre on a specific location, such as Te Kōpae Piripono, or an activity (while in every other situation the sufferer's anxiety levels are normal), or, there may be a generalised form of social anxiety where the sufferer fears and avoids personal interaction in most social situations (Mental Health Foundation, 2002).
Joan Metge (1995) has written extensively on the Māori concept of *whakamā* (equivalent to 'shyness', 'embarrassment', and 'shame'), and over the years teachers have been encouraged to make allowances for *whakamā* children. Durie (2001) described *whakamā* this way, "a mental and behavioural response that arises when there is a sense of disadvantage or a loss of standing, can be manifest as a marked slowness of movement and a lack of responsiveness… as well as avoidance of any engagement…" (p.25). During the 2005 survey of whānau opinion, when asked about the barriers to whānau participation and development, one member wrote "*whakamā* is a barrier…some of us are not

confident in building bridges to get to the whānau development stage." Two others identified the lack of self-confidence.

The legacy of colonisation for large numbers of Māori is socio-economic hardship, cultural deprivation, disengagement, and alienation. No wonder then that many have poor self-concept and suffer from feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt and insecurity (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). No surprise either that so many Māori struggle with *whakamā*. The life experience of many Māori is a veritable recipe for *whakamā* and anxiety. The Te Kōpae Piripono research team argues that *whakamā* may in fact be social anxiety disorder. Whakamā/social anxiety may explain the failure of many Māori to thrive in the formal New Zealand educational environment (Hemara, 2000), and may be a possible cause of the difficulties whānau members have experienced at Te Kōpae Piripono. A grandfather shares with Tumu his own experience:

Koro: *Sometimes I get shy…you get all uptight…You know, sometimes I can sit there and I can start a korero and if I get to a part where I am not sure, I think I'm still talking and I'm not, I'm talking inside my brain and I realise I'm not talking out loud.*

Tumu: *How do you get through that fear?*

Koro: *Probably getting a few more (people) throwing you in the deep end…me and other kaumātua, all about the same age. We put ourselves in that position where you know there's a chance that you have to talk… Then you're starting to sweat… (at one tangi) I took a deep breath…and then I saw (kaumātua) down the bottom...so he got up and did the mihi. Afterwards I wished I'd done it. I just have to make a breakthrough one of these days.*

Tumu: *Where does that fear come from?*

Koro: *I don't know. But I suppose if I had been through what (my mokopuna) has been through it would be easier.*

Tumu: *Is it that you will lose face because you don't know?*

Koro: *Yes, it sort of does. And yet when I listen to other people…I don't judge them. When I'm listening to them I don't care, so maybe nobody else will care when I'm doing it either. Maybe I'm being too hard on myself. Want to be perfect. We've got our kaumātua meeting tomorrow and they'll probably put the word on me to talk…actually, just having this talk has made it feel a bit easier… this korero might have chased a few bugs out of my head for tomorrow.*

(Whānau interview, 11.06.07)

Those who feel anxious in social situations are fearful that their performance will be evaluated negatively; that they will be humiliated or embarrassed. They worry that they will appear inept, inarticulate, or stupid, and, because of their deep-seated anxiety, their fears can become self-fulfilling prophecies. They tend to avoid the social situations that

they find too distressing. This avoidance results in a lost opportunity to develop social and communicative competencies through social interaction in those settings.

Horwood and Fergusson (1998) found that the rate of diagnosed 'social phobia' amongst Māori in their New Zealand study of psychiatric disorder and treatment-seeking in Christchurch-born young adults, was 13%. This percentage was almost twice that of the general population at 7.7%. The authors recommended that resources be applied to the area of Māori mental health research and treatment initiatives. Church (2003) too suggested that Māori researchers begin to examine the needs of specific groups of Māori, and evaluate interventions for use with Māori who have behaviour difficulties.

The COI research team focused on those behaviours (such as avoidance behaviours, performance anxiety behaviours, low sociability behaviours and behaviours indicative of poor self efficacy) that impacted on or were symptomatic of low participation at Te Kōpae Piripono, and so were problematic, impacting negatively on persons' ability to be fully functional in that environment. The exercise was informal and exploratory, aimed at achieving some understanding of the 'problem,' and possible solutions, on which the whānau might base a more substantial investigation at a later date[1].

If human behaviours are artefacts of the respective environments in which they occur (Porter, 2000), and judgements about behaviours are value-laden (Macfarlane, 2000), the team deemed it essential that the practitioner-researchers employ a reflective, collaborative-consultative approach to the search for answers. As a self-reflective investigation of human behaviour in a social situation, this was a valuable exercise. Kaitiaki gained valuable insights into their practice as a variable of whānau members' behaviour at Te Kōpae Piripono.

5.2.4 Specific strategies

The focus group described and interpreted their own behaviour, and that of others, and sought ways to support whānau members who appeared to be challenged. Overwhelmingly, the group concluded that Whānau Development, embedded in the wider support strategies and processes of Te Kōpae Piripono, is an appropriate kaupapa

[1] It is acknowledged therefore that no empirically proven claims can be made about these research findings.

Māori approach to intervention for whānau members, that is holistic and recognising of meaning through relationships as Durie (2001) argued it ought to be,

> "Scientifically based treatment and healing, on the other hand, is often perceived as an exercise in analysis rather than synthesis, and knowledge is seen to be built up from myriad small parts. In contrast, Māori gain understanding not so much from being able to recognise each single component part as from an appreciation of the whole, and the relationships that occur between phenomena and structures" (Durie, 2001, pp. 171-172).

Durie himself promoted *Paiheretia: Relational Therapy* as a Māori-centred approach to therapy and counselling that emphasises exploring a broad range of relationships that impinge on mental health (2001, p.171). Akin to the kaupapa Kōpae (Tātai Whakapapa) approach, Paiheretia seeks to achieve balance across the four fields of experience – spiritual, mental, physical, and social. Some of those relationships focus on the traditional world, and some on the contemporary.

The whānau approach at Te Kōpae Piripono is an holistic approach that recognises that members are not isolated cases, nor are their behaviours discrete phenomena. Just as a complex set of relationships can account for behaviours, so a complex set of relationships should comprise the appropriate response.

In addition to the support mechanisms and whānau activities already outlined, the group identified several strategies it felt could intervene in specific circumstances, and which can be easily incorporated into the overall whānau approach:

1. Where lack of proficiency in te reo Māori is central to feelings of inadequacy:

- Encouraging reo strategies such as the in-home kāinga kōrerorero scheme (Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Māori/Te Puni Kōkiri), where individuals' development can be mediated by a trusted support person, providing the building blocks at home, with their children, as grounding for moving on to organised wānanga reo.
- Introducing a variety of innovative, non-threatening learning opportunities, at different times, venues, and in various forms (visual aid, audio, video, literary, resources).

- Extra care taken in the manner of communications (while maintaining an immersion environment) to prevent members feeling too challenged/threatened by the use of te reo Māori. During a wānanga whānau in 2005, one whānau member said,

> *We are all parts of this wheel. Every cog has to work. It could be a different way that we work or a different contribution, but in order for the wheel to turn properly, we all have to contribute. I believe that we are pioneers and a little bit radical. When my children were born I decided, 'Nah! Te reo Māori is for my children and that's it! I can't control anything anyone else does…but what I can control is what I do. My decision was that it was going to be te reo Māori. If children have someone who is tūturu and committed to wanting te reo Māori for them, they will see that utter desire within us. They will know and hold it true, and want it for themselves (whānau wānanga, 15.11.05).*

2. Male-only meetings are opportunities for men to be with other men, in a comfortable environment, where they can restructure their thinking about themselves, their partners, children, about Te Kōpae Piripono, education, and their roles and responsibilities, and their conditioned behaviours. Such a forum would form a type of support group for men and provide access to male role models. As the men feel comfortable with new ways of being and doing, the nature of the forum can change. Women too, and other distinct groupings, may elect to have their own forums. Kaitiaki reflected on father involvement, "(The father) is awesome… he is chilled… Other males see other males relax and they think, 'Oh, he's relaxed, this must be a place that I can be relaxed too' and they feed off it." (Kaitiaki reflection, 27.9.07)

3. Where members struggle with their parenting role, and/or other related roles, and feel inadequate as a consequence: A whole-of-whānau approach is preferable to singling out individuals/families for attention. Whānau 'parenting' programmes can be run over a Term and be ongoing if necessary. These should be facilitated by persons who know how to work with Māori, and are experienced and highly skilled in the area. Such a wānanga series would be a non-threatening way to address the issues, while allowing whānau members to feel comfortable with each other. Beginning

with small steps, there are a variety of activities that include homework tasks, video-based exercises, and role-plays.

4. Healing wānanga, designed from a kaupapa Māori perspective can blend elements of mainstream treatment models, such as cognitive behaviour therapy with specialist support for individuals and families available as required. One father told how his difficulties originated in his childhood. He *"was shy as a kid, never participating in anything as a child. Parents split early…did not feel loved…no praise…or parental support…"* Because of that, he did not cope at school, *"If I was asked to speak or to do anything, I just walked out of the classroom…too hard…too negative."* He left school as soon as he was able to, and that had been the pattern of his life. At the time of this interview, the father had been involved at Te Kōpae for four years but only in the last year (2006/2007) had involvement increased as he got to know Kaitiaki on a personal level (as reo was barrier). When he knew them better it became easier and he became *"driven by my desire to learn"* (Parent interview, 12.9.07)

5. Where members feel isolated: Strengthen the *taurima* (buddy) system of ensuring every whānau has at least one close ally in the whānau who acts as a critical friend, as well as a taurima relationship with one Kaitiaki, who prioritises the connection with and support for them. This is particularly important for new families, but can be established with existing families to ensure no one is omitted. This will facilitate participation in whānau gatherings and occasions (which must also be prioritised). One Kaitiaki, and long-time whānau member, recalled how she had felt in the early days:

> *"I desperately wanted good Māori education for the children…I had made my mind up, but I was terrified because people spoke Māori to me. I didn't feel I fitted in at first…I would stay all day and it was lonely… Having a friend here at Te Kōpae (a special friend) helped…it was horrible for me then… I empathise with those who struggle here. I've been through it. I can help others who are like I was. I dealt with the obstacles and I can help others achieve the same…" (Kaitiaki interview, 1.8.07).*

6. Strengthened relationships with community persons and groups will prevent Te Kōpae Piripono from becoming isolated by its own kaupapa and programme. These relationships would serve as a specialist support network when required. A father spoke at the first wānanga:

> *Whether it's sports, culture, haka, jogging, education, whatever it is that turns people on. It's about learning and development in kaupapa Māori, about learning karakia, waiata, reo. That to me is what gets people excited. It's about seeing the learning taking place. That's something that is always going to be new, regardless of the fact that Te Kōpae has been around for 12 years or so…I wonder whether there needs to be more interaction with other rōpū…(15.11.05).*

Fear is a human condition whose presence in new whānau members is beyond the control of Te Kōpae Piripono. What the whānau can control is its response to those behaviours as they present. Programmed opportunities for Kaitiaki, and the whānau as a whole, to learn about the emotional difficulties that can underlie anti-social or uncooperative behaviours will ensure they are in a position to respond in appropriate and empathetic ways. The whānau provides the context, and the Whānau Development programme the structure, within which the response can be appropriate and effective. Healing (rebalancing) and growth (progress) are tenets of Whānau Development.

Te Kōpae Piripono is not content with short-lived gains, but is committed to finding long-lasting solutions that will endure. Māori development relies on a population of confident and competent individuals, leaders in their own right. In order to foster universal leadership development at Te Kōpae Piripono, a healing process has to occur that touches individuals deeply, and intervenes directly, to uplift and sustain them. Te Kōpae Piripono continues to explore the processes of healing, and to refine its own procedures and practices aimed at supporting members to bring balance to their lives and to those of the whānau, based on the foundation of kaupapa Māori and kaupapa Kōpae. As one Kaitiaki reflects,

> *What I've got out of this…is the need for a process, having an agreed process, and then the action of following the process that enables us to move on a journey together so we're all on a shared understanding of where we're at... If I trust the*

process and if I follow it, then the outcome may not be how I intended… but I'm gonna feel better… When I attempt to follow a process (even if I'm uncertain) I feel good about what I'm doing and I get stronger I feel more confident about myself and yes I get to know you better and I can relate, link or have that connection and that relationship gets stronger… (27.9.07)

5.2.5 Focus on children's' learning and development

It is imperative that Kaitiaki recognise socially anxious children in the centre, and do not dismiss them as innocuously 'whakamā', 'shy', 'quiet', 'self-contained', or mislabel them as 'developmentally delayed', 'noncompliant' or 'ADHD' (or other). With understanding, Kaitiaki will recognise both internalised and externalised behaviours as possible symptoms of the more fundamental disorder of social anxiety (Caspi, Henry, McGee, Moffitt & Silva, 1995), or whakamā. Recognition will prompt investigation, collaboration with the family, and intervention as appropriate in ways that nurture children's' spirit, and positively reframe their perceptions and self-belief. Consistently applied, this manner of response can have a positive impact on all behaviours at the centre. Wānanga at whānau level will bring about healing at all levels, and mediate adults' response to child behaviour.

If whakamā/social anxiety in children is due, to some extent, to a lack of social and/or emotional support and nurturance at home (Curtis, Kimball & Stroup, 2004), the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono can provide a culturally appropriate learning and social environment for children that is supportive and nurturing. Te Kōpae Piripono can fulfil the child's need for association and belonging (Maslow, 1998) in the early childhood context by creating an inclusive, non-judgemental, supportive family environment where individuals and their needs can be acknowledged and accommodated (Macfarlane, 2000).

Malouf (2002) lists commonsense ways the 'shy' child can be helped by the teacher in the education environment. The teacher can:

a) foster the development of the child's self esteem by readily giving deserved praise;

b) encourage and support the child and prevent avoidance of a feared situation;

c) ensure no one is humiliated or embarrassed;

d) openly discuss the issues around social anxiety, perhaps reading books about overcoming shyness and bullying (etc);

e) orchestrate the development of friendships in the classroom, guarding against anyone feeling excluded;

f) reward any advances the child makes towards participation in class activities;

g) promote an accepting climate and eliminate violence and bullying;

h) encourage participation; and,

i) work collaboratively with parents on the development of the child.

(Malouf, 2002)

All children can benefit from these strategies. At Te Kōpae Piripono, these are universally applicable 'bread and butter' teaching practices, embedded in the Māori context of the centre, and components of the still-developing whānau response that is aimed at rebalancing the emotional, physical, spiritual and cultural aspects of all whānau members, as Durie (2001) argued it must. The following is the comment that a parent added to one of her two-year-old's learning stories:

> *Ka pai rawa atu te mahi! We've noticed a new 'brave' (son) at home – climbing, clambering, writing, building… there's nothing (older sibling) can do that (son) won't have a go at. There's been a big boost in his language – he now either declares "Ka pai!" when he knows he's done well - given (baby) her blanket, written on paper not the wall… or looks at me with a tentative 'Ka pai?' if he's not quite sure of the correct thing to do. He is an awesome, busy, bright boy and his immersion at Te Kōpae Piripono is having a huge influence on his socialisation. Kia ora Whaea! (25.5.07)*

5.2.6 Summary – Fear a Barrier to Participation

Social anxiety disorder is an irrational fear of negative evaluation in social situations. The disorder can debilitate sufferers and if help is not forthcoming, render them emotional cripples. Significant numbers of Māori may be affected by this disorder (perhaps labelled as whakamā) but it goes unrecognised, so sufferers do not receive appropriate support. Whakamā/social anxiety could explain the difficulties experienced by some

whānau members at Te Kōpae Piripono that impede their ability to engage with, and participate in, the activity of the centre and/or the education of their children. The research tells us it does not have to be this way.

The whānau environment of kaupapa Māori organisations is conducive to healing and growth for Māori, but the research has found that for some, a deeper level of intervention is required if they are to achieve the self-assurance necessary to assume the responsibilities of leadership in their lives. Whānau Development provides the structure to ensure that all whānau members are blanketed by support and development strategies at whānau level, with added support available as necessary. A well-managed and multi-faceted approach is required to achieve durable outcomes for all members. If this occurs for Te Kōpae Piripono children at the beginning of their life journeys, it is hoped they will be sufficiently fortified to avoid the emotional struggles through life that some of their parents have had to endure.

5.3 The critical involvement of fathers

The research spotlight on whānau development and then whānau participation, served to focus attention on the increasing and concerning absence of the male element (the father element) from Te Kōpae Piripono. The absence of the male dimension has major implications for our whānau and for our children's experience of whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono, threatening the very foundation of the whānau. The research team began to explore the area of father involvement by reviewing literature, collecting quantitative participation data and then consulting whānau members for their thoughts on the perception that fathers, and the male element, were increasingly less visible at Te Kōpae Piripono. A variety of reasons were proffered by the whānau to explain this phenomenon, including, socio-economic factors, anxieties, patriarchal views about child care and child education, and the discomfort and uncertainty of some of the males in the women-dominated environment (whānau survey, 2005). Understanding the relationships between these factors, and finding ways to reverse the trend of missing fathers, became the goal of researchers, and a focus of the centre's Whānau Development programme.

5.3.1 Te Kōpae Piripono perception of the father role

The basis of our understandings at Te Kōpae Piripono are the creation stories, represented for our purposes by the Tātai Whakapapa. The stories are figurative explanations of evolutionary processes and historical events. They are important to Māori because much of our institutionalised behaviour, customs and attitudes found sanction in the stories.

The creation story tells of the numerous phases of Te Kore and then of Te Pō. At Te Pō Tiwhatiwha we become aware of Rangi and Papa embraced tightly as one, one unified forebear of human kind - the male and the female united. The union was all at once loving, secure, and yet stifling, and, within the embrace the male offspring were nurtured by both parents. This was the original whānau. Both mother and father feature equally in this template for family.

The complementarity of the male-female and mother-father roles was a characteristic of pre-European communal society (Makereti, 1986; Metge, 1995). Community responsibilities were assigned based on a person's birth, individual skills and abilities. Children belonged to the wider whānau and childrearing was highly valued, and shared by both sexes, as circumstances allowed, within the community. Therefore, a child had many father figures and male role models, in addition to its birth father, all making some contribution to the raising of that child.

The processes of colonisation by a foreign power dismantled Māori social structures and imposed a value system that scorned child rearing and housekeeping as lowly work for women (Harawira, 1995). In the present day, a kaupapa Māori approach to early childhood education implies a return to the way of our ancestors and a whānau orientation. It assumes that both the male and female elements of the whānau are present and active. Both mother and father (whaene and matua) are expected to participate in equivalent and complementary ways. At Te Kōpae Piripono, it is a basic premise that children will be cared for in a community that comprises all the elements of an extended family, of which fathers are an important part. However, few families enter Te Kōpae Piripono with their Māori worldview intact. Few have lived experience of a traditionally based Māori value system. The parents and caregivers of children entering Te Kōpae Piripono are products of a western, European-derived society. The modern day ideal 'family' is constructed in the style of the 'Victorian' family of the 1800s, which regained ascendancy in the post-war

period to the 1960s and continues to dominate into the 21st Century (McCann, 1999). Within that cultural and social framework, the father's role within the family is as provider and authoritarian figure, while the mother is the child-rearer, the nurturer of both the children and father (Sullivan, 2003). So it is unlikely that the immediate frame of reference of Te Kōpae Piripono parents includes males and fathers directly involved with their children in early childhood education. As one father reflects:

> *I didn't think (my being here) impacted on (my children) at the time - it was all too foreign to me. My upbringing was so different, my parents were authoritative, I never questioned the way things were. I started clicking on to that further down the track. I didn't think I needed to be hands on with the kids – man the provider and woman the nurturer, sort of thing (Parent interview, 8.8.07).*

Since it was established in 1994, Te Kōpae Piripono has noted an increasing disparity in female and male participation in the centre. As strong male characters of the foundation whānau have moved on, they have tended not to be replaced by men who are ready and able to be active with their children in this early childhood education environment. The absence of fathers is a deficiency that has serious implications for the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono and for the children, some of whom may not have the opportunity to have a complete experience of whānau elsewhere. It is important to have fathers stepping in as role models and father substitutes for those children who do not have a father figure in their personal lives. The very foundation of Te Kōpae Piripono is threatened if the equilibrium of gender role, inherent in the Tātai Whakapapa, is not restored to the whānau. Furthermore, if Te Kōpae Piripono is mirroring a national trend, there are broader implications for Māori society, of failing to find strategies that can reverse the trend of missing fathers.

5.3.2 Male role in modern society

In general, roles and responsibilities within the family unit are changing. Increasing numbers of fathers are more active in their children's lives today as attitudes to the role of men within the family and with children (and to women without the family and with no children) have changed. While there are still large pockets of resistance, society is

progressively more accepting of people's right to interpret for themselves roles within the family. Communities are now quite used to male caregivers of children, with shared or solo responsibility for all aspects of their children's development and wellbeing.

This social change has occurred in response to changing economic and social contexts, and has also been encouraged by a burgeoning body of research, which attests to the incredible importance of the role and involvement of fathers in the lives of their children. Pruett (2007) argues the significant impact that the positive and active involvement of fathers can have on their children's development, including:

- Young children are more likely to explore the world around them with vigour and interest. They tend to be more curious and less hesitant or fearful, especially in the face of novel or unusual stimuli. They also are less impulsive and have more self-control in unfamiliar social situations.
- The combination of a father's more active play initiation and his somewhat less immediate support in the face of frustration seems to promote adaptive and problem-solving competencies in a child.
- By the time they start school, children with hands-on dads are better able to wait their turn for the teacher's attention.
- Researchers in the 1950's studied a group of five-year-olds, focusing on their feelings of sympathy and compassion for other people. In a follow-up study 30 years later, they found that, as adults the strongest predictor of empathic concern for others was a high level of paternal care they received as children. (Pruett, 2007)

Discoveries in neuroscience have shown infant attachment to fathers is equally as important for the cognitive development of the child, as is that to mothers (Fletcher, 2003, p.126). Fathers, as well as mothers, are central to the development of a child's identity, sense of self, and perception of self, in relation to others and the world. McCann (1999) showed how a father's emotional and physical disconnection from his family can negatively impact on his children by placing "boys and girls at an elevated risk of emotional, educational, and developmental problems" (p. 67).

Although relevant early childhood literature is now likely to refer to 'parents' and 'caregivers' as the child-carers and nurturers, McMahon (1999, cited in Sullivan, 2003, p. 111) found that men are still out in the workforce 'providing' for their families and women

are the primary home-keepers. McMahon argues that fathers may help more at home but tend to act as helpers, not sharing equally in the workload and responsibilities of family life.

Outside of the home, Fletcher argues (2003, p.125), fathers are rarely involved in infant/child services. Mothers are the first point of contact and are usually the primary caregiver, so when services say 'family' or 'parent', the message appears to be aimed at mothers. Not only are mothers the main users of services, often it is other mothers who are the providers of those services. In essence, the early childhood sector is virtually monopolised by women, while child-rearing is still mainly a woman's preserve.

Turbiville, Umbarger and Guthrie (2000) list the following four key barriers to fathers' participation and involvement: a) work commitments, b) the different interactional styles of men and women, c) perceived power differences between men and women, and, d) traditional perceptions of male and female roles. While work commitments is an easily identifiable barrier, the differences in interactional styles and traditional perceptions of the male and female roles may not be immediately recognised as a barrier within the early childhood context.

Te Kōpae Piripono fathers were invited to recall the way they had felt when they first entered the 'women's domain' of Te Kōpae Piripono. Almost universally, the men said they had felt out of their depth in relation to early childhood education matters. Some became aware of how little they knew about their own children. One father had been attracted to Te Kōpae Piripono by another male, who was actively involved at Te Kōpae. The male role model and companion, in a female dominated organisation, was powerful. The member's partner stated, *"There needs to be more men involved. Males will attract males" (1.8.07).* Several members had felt aggrieved that their work hours prevented a greater involvement in their children's lives/education. However, the idea of greater involvement did not occur to all the fathers, some of whom had not considered it the man's role to be involved with their children in early childhood education. One father, now ensconced in the whānau, believes that response reflected how he was located at the time of enrolment, that is, he had been conditioned by his upbringing to see the man as the breadwinner, not the child-nurturer. He expressed some embarrassment about the attitude he held at the time of entry to what he perceived as a women's and children's zone. He was used to being in control, and to men being in control. This father has been involved in Te Kōpae Piripono for some years now. Staying rather than withdrawing required that he adopt new ways of being and doing. The kaupapa of Te Kōpae Piripono, his aspirations for

his children, and the insistence of his wife kept him from running away (Parent interview, 8.8.07).

The Tumu (directors of Te Kōpae Piripono) observed that some fathers did not know how to be at Te Kōpae Piripono because they had so little involvement in their children's education. Some were unsure how they should interact with their own children, much less with other children. Notwithstanding the reo Māori barrier - which for some fathers prompted feelings of anxiety - one father had felt uncomfortable in hui, because, at the time, they were mostly attended by females, *"I've found the hui pretty daunting. That's me. In recent times I didn't know if they were general meetings or one for wahine, me being the only guy there..." (Parent interview, 13.11.06)*

Because early childhood education is predominantly female-oriented, the different interactional style of men may be misconstrued as apathy or arrogance. Turbiville et. al (2000) argue there is a misconception that fathers' lack of involvement means they are less interested in their children's education, however: "we simply cannot dismiss fathers as uninterested until we examine our efforts to understand their priorities and interests," (p.79). Cunningham (1994) contends that the teachers of young children have a responsibility to take into account how they interact and work with fathers. The NZ Weekend Herald (Fathering Week Puts Focus Back on Dads, 25.8.07) reported Auckland University of Technology psychotherapist Warwick Pudney as saying, "Plunket and Playcentre have been serving women for a long time. There is a lack of consciousness about how it might be for a man going along there... They say any man is welcome but don't notice what sort of magazines (they) have in the waiting room or the posters on the wall." According to Pudney agencies expect men to join in and behave like women. His advice to centres, "If you want to get men involved, don't try to chat to them. Call them in and ask them to do a job – this is the way men engage in things" (p. A11).

The Engaging Fathers Project of the Family Action Centre, University of Newcastle (Sullivan, 2003) is a project designed to improve children's wellbeing by involving fathers in their lives. The protagonists of the project found that the way childcare centres relate to fathers is strongly defining of fathers' involvement. One of the mistakes made by centres has been to ask fathers to be involved in the same way, as are mothers, ignoring gender differences and a distinct father role. When these well-intentioned efforts fail, says Sullivan

(p.127), the father is then castigated for lack of interest or unwillingness to give up power. A far more effective approach would be for the centre to take responsibility for 'co-constructing' the father's role to fully encompass the care of children. The key is to develop specific ways that fathers can be involved, contributing in their children's interests, within the everyday activities of the centre. The Engaging Fathers Project found fathers are more inclined to become involved with their children in services such as Te Kōpae Piripono, when three conditions are met:

1. It is clear to the father that the activity will benefit their child;
2. The point of the father doing the activity, as opposed to anyone else, is evident; and
3. That which the fathers are expected to do is readily understood by them.

The Tumu felt these were commonsense conditions of engagement that ensure members have all the information to make informed decisions, are treated with respect, and know they are valued and needed. If the participation of fathers at Te Kōpae Piripono was to increase and be sustained over time, not only did the centre need to be father-friendly, it had to become a father magnet, with males attracting males to the whānau and to the 'kaupapa', normalising the role of fully-involved father. A 'hands-off' father role was all one father knew. It was like a bombshell when he observed several fathers actively participating with the children in Te Kōpae Piripono and sharing equally in the parenting of their own children. He was hugely influenced by his observations of these fathers and the conversations he had with them (often during working bees at the centre). In time, he made significant changes to his own attitudes and approach to parenting and family. The father reflected on his time at Te Kōpae Piripono and advocated for male-only, father-only, opportunities for men to come together (now that working bees were fewer) to talk things through and to share understandings, in appropriate ways. (Parent interview, 8.8.07)

The conceptual framework, Te Tātai Whakapapa, clearly emphasises the complementarity of gender roles within the family unit and signals that individual differences are to be valued and embraced. Perhaps, in the political and economic climate of recent years, Te Kōpae Piripono had been distracted from its mettle, to function authentically as a whānau Māori, embracing and respecting all elements, male and female. The Kaitiaki team discussed at length the issues surrounding fathers 'missing in action'. The data impelled Kaitiaki to reflect further on the very nature of their relationships with fathers within the whānau. The questions were asked: Do we really know our fathers? How can we say we know children if we do not really know both their parents? The Kaitiaki team elected to

maintain an open dialogue with fathers as has been done effectively with mothers, to determine how they could be involved, and what their participation could and should look like. The team determined to critically analyse the messages sent to fathers about fathers' roles, and male involvement, in the centre. The team also decided to find ways to appropriately acknowledge the importance of the father role at Te Kōpae Piripono and the contributions fathers make to their children's well being, and to the whānau. During a discussion at a wānanga whānau (15.11.05), two young fathers were able to share with the group:

> Father #1
>
> *(I was) thinking (my daughter) would learn her reo and (I would) not have to be involved with it. And I've realised we have to do it together. And being non-Māori it's very hard. Now, me and my partner are on the same level, but it's taken nearly a year to do that. I can see it's very important…it's important to know where you come from and you shouldn't have to learn your language again, starting from scratch. It's made me a better father for my daughter. I'm 100% supportive.*
>
> Father #2
>
> *I suppose I fall into the classic…There you go couz (to cousin at Te Kōpae Piripono). It was explained to me how it was here, and I go, "Yeah, cool, cool, that will be good for my daughter. I'm doing a good thing, you know." And I've just sort of realised (in this wānanga) you let life sort of take over, because (my daughter) has been here four years now. I've done te reo, I've had lots of opportunities, but I've just never followed through. And the same for my wife, I haven't been there for her as well. She'd give it a go too, but I've never held her up. I can honestly say (this wānanga) has changed my mindset. It's like you're seeing something else now, you know. I mean for me personally it's a different picture than what I saw, before our wānanga. I don't think it will be that hard. For me it's been a big click…I never realised, before yesterday, how big the picture (is)…Me and my wife talked last night and we both realise this is what it's all about…it's not about us, it's not about our tight-knit whānau, it's about being Māori and living Māori.*

5.3.3 Te Kōpae Piripono strategies to support father involvement

New channels of communication within the whānau were opened. Never before had fathers and men been consulted specifically for their male point of view. Several fathers responded readily and openly with their thoughts and opinions. Without prompting, the men identified some of the very issues raised by Sullivan (2003), and proffered their ideas about solutions:

- Establish a fathers-only (men-only) group that would provide the opportunity for men to support men, to socialise, and to address relevant issues. The men argued the value of male-only wānanga, to allow less than confident males to learn and develop away from what would otherwise be a female-dominated forum. It was felt this would enable men to 'catch up' so they could contribute in the whānau and with the children on an equal footing, having found their voice. This strategy was not intended to detract from women, rather, it was an opportunity for men to deal with issues affecting them, in appropriate ways, so they can then step up and contribute.
- Co-opt men into the management structures of Te Kōpae Piripono, to serve as role models for children and other men, and as male points of contact.
- Constantly reflect on how effectively Te Kōpae Piripono covers the male component of the male-female relationship within the whānau and amongst the children. This would involve an examination of the adequacy of equipment, activities, behaviour, language and imagery.
- Adopt specific strategies and formal supports for those who struggle with their role in Te Kōpae Piripono, including:
  - Tailored parenting programmes and communication wānanga to assist men and females alike learn new ways of doing and being
  - Explicit communication
  - A father-friendly environment where there is a space in which fathers feel comfortable
  - Flexible meeting hours
  - Specific jobs for men to do when they get to the centre.

The whānau has prioritised the areas of communication and relationship building, foregrounding open and honest interactions that are responsive to members. The male response has been significant. Kaitiaki report a reversal of the earlier trend towards absentee fathers. With this new approach, participation in the centre has become more balanced in terms of gender, and this has brought vibrancy to the day-to-day operation. Participation overall, by all members, has also been boosted. One father described his realisation about the importance of his participation at Te Kōpae Piripono, for his children's well being and development. *"When I am there the kids are proud. They are happy to have me there…everyone is. I am much more comfortable now" (Parent interview, 12.9.07). A* Kaitiaki reflected on another father fully involving himself at Te Kōpae Piripono:

> *And (the father) sat down and helped us do the face painting. Yeah he said, "I want to be a part of this!" And so he grabbed a pot of paint and he watched me and (another Kaitiaki) and asked how to do this and how to do that. And away he went. He just involved himself. He didn't need us to involve him…He's coming on board, you know, he's coming to most of our outings now." (Kaitiaki reflection, 21.9.07)*

Because fathers require clear messages of expectation that they be involved with their children in the whānau, we have determined that meetings with families take place with both parents in attendance. This policy sends a clear message to fathers that they are valued and important. Regular meetings with fathers provide the opportunities to build warm and trusting relationships with them and their families. Compulsory attendance at whānau wānanga reduces barriers, expanding member's comfort zones and building understanding. One such meeting provided the opportunity for one father to reflect on his role in improving relationships between family members at home:

> *What we might need to work on is our team work. Where we sort of fall short is…like you were saying, they always come to Dad. Dad's always the lenient one and the cool (parent) that will do things for them. They sort of look at their Mum as being the taniwha. So I think I was just basking in all that glory and I didn't want to change it. But seeing my mate fall down short on the other side…You've given us a lot to think about. (Parent interview, 12.4.07)*

5.3.4 Summary – Critical Involvement of Fathers

The absence of the male element in early childhood education is an international phenomenon, reflecting long-held attitudes to the role of fathers, and the economic realities of families' lives. For the whānau of kaupapa Māori education initiatives like Te Kōpae Piripono, the gender imbalance creates an unacceptable discrepancy within the whānau, a major threat to the kaupapa of those organisations, and to the Māori community as a whole. The drive to engage fathers at Te Kōpae Piripono is a work in progress. However, the mere act of focusing in on the area of father involvement, and prioritising open and honest dialogue in varieties of ways, has increased the presence of fathers at the centre. In an effort to make Te Kōpae Piripono 'father friendly', father involvement has been given purpose, emphasising physical action and concrete outcomes. Te Kōpae Piripono has striven to find ways fathers can be supported to overcome barriers and become enabled. As fathers derive personal reward from involvement in their children's learning, they can influence long-established patriarchal attitudes to gender roles in the community and foster change.

Through this process Kaitiaki have become much more aware of gender differences, and understanding of the challenges faced by fathers. Te Kōpae Piripono acknowledges the responsibility of the whānau to embrace father's strengths, interests and practical skills, and to promote the critical role that fathers have in their children's learning and development.

5.4 The critical role of whānau support

Much of Te Kōpae Piripono's research effort has centred on improving relationships within our whānau, through promoting open and honest communication and implementing effective communication systems that also model positive action across all levels of the whānau. But we have found that this cannot be done without providing support for whānau – both collectively and individually. We acknowledge that everyone in our whānau is at different levels of development. Some whānau need different kinds of support such as help with their Māori language learning so they can support their own children's language development or dealing with issues such as managing behaviour or fostering positive relationships. Dynamic learning and education is not going to be a priority if there are existing unresolved issues. Collective support can come in a variety of ways, including hui (meetings), haerenga (excursions), wānanga (gatherings of

learning), pōwhiri (welcomes), tangihanga (funerals) and hākari (celebrations). However, individual support is sometimes necessary.

The individual and collective whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono responded enthusiastically to clear and caring approaches and to the warm demands made of them. Improved communication was recognised as a positive outcome of the research and opportunities for further improvements were identified.

5.4.1 Open and Honest Communication – much more than words

Learning different ways of doing and being has meant learning new and improved ways of interacting with each other. The reality of Te Kōpae Piripono's historical context (as outlined in Chapter 1) has resulted in patterns of behaviour within our whānau that have cultivated closed and distrustful communication. Because we have continued to experience (often sub-consciously) the effects of the trauma of historical injustice, we have tended to exist in survival mode, preoccupied by self-preservation at all costs. We therefore have had difficulty listening to others' points of view and instead focused on expressing our own views and trying to force these on others.

Open and honest communication is important because without it we cannot build genuine, trusting relationships and truly have whānau development. Practicing being open and honest with others encourages us to think of 'other', particularly when dealing with issues. Learning to trust and be open to others is a scary process, made easier if open and honest communication is mediated by following agreed processes.

Over the years, we have observed and experienced situations where members of our whānau have struggled to be open, especially in times of conflict or difficulty. In hui Kaitiaki and hui whānau (teacher and whānau meetings), issues would be "discussed". However, discussion would involve minimal dynamic participation with some participants not contributing at all. Yet, as soon as hui were over, people would start talking about the issues amongst themselves, voicing their opinions or bemoaning the outcome. In effect, there was an official hui and then there was an unofficial "hui" of whispers. A natural consequence of this talking "around the houses" behaviour was that,

rather than being dealt with directly and then resolved, issues would often have layers and layers - often of unrelated "stuff" - added to them.

Buber (1958, in Chaitin, 2003) talks about open and honest communication as a "true" encounter between equals. "Every time people communicate, they offer definitions of themselves and respond to their perceived definitions of others. However, since these perceptions are always subjective and therefore inherently distorted, communication often leads to misunderstandings and bad feelings – causing people to shut down," (p.1). This creates a negative atmosphere that Gerling (1997) argues is characterised by distrust, apathy, a lack of hope, little mutual respect and a feeling of not belonging. It is also an atmosphere where "self-serving" individuals or groups can dominate and "fragment" an organisation and where others are often blamed for problems and issues.

At Te Kōpae Piripono, this closed behaviour threatened the fabric of our whānau. We realised during professional development meetings that we were not being honest with each other, because we did not trust that others would acknowledge and respect the worth of what we had to say. In fact, we did not believe ourselves in what we were saying. We lacked self-belief and because we couldn't be open and honest with others, (about our true thoughts and feelings) we ended up not being true to ourselves. We were not really *listening* to each other. Instead, we were trying to push our own agendas, to get what *we* wanted. It was an ultimate survival mechanism – that "crabs in a bucket" scenario, referred to in Chapter 1, where people are – metaphorically – climbing over each other (as opposed to helping each other) to get out of the bucket. Pratt and Dirks (in Dutton and Ragins, 2007) argue that trust serves as the "bones" to enable positive relationships to "stand tall, move forward and endure injury," (p.117). Trust, they explain, is a well-defined psychological state where people in relationships are able to accept vulnerability, based on the positive intentions or behaviours of others. They argue that acknowledging one's own vulnerability may help minimise two key barriers to generating relationships, aggression and ego, that is, looking after self rather than thinking of other. With trust, they argue, comes a sense of safety that enables personal risk taking and interpersonal openness. Gerling (1997) points out that every organisation is the product of how its members think and interact, and the community spirit they generate. He argues that a positive community spirit is a "group attitude" that is

characterised by deep trust, active participation, high hope, mutual respect, a feeling of belonging and lots of fun. These qualities, he argues, create intensely positive relationships.

> Chaitin (2003) argues that we should create "safe spaces" for open and honest communication where there is a supportive, non-judgemental and respectful atmosphere and where there is a problem solving approach to dealing with misunderstandings and issues. So, when people have difficulty expressing how they feel, we need to make it clear that there is an expectation that everyone contributes, no matter how scary that can be for them.

Gaffney (2007) argues that being honest is not just about telling the truth versus telling a lie. Rather, he says, honesty is about saying what needs to be said and not withholding information and ideas. Kahane goes further, proposing that attempting to be polite and not saying anything, maintains the status quo, that is, movement and change cannot occur. Gaffney says that, unfortunately, some people hold onto knowledge to determine the power dynamic in a relationship. However, withholding information can actually be toxic to the relationship. Gaffney adds many people don't realise that they are unconsciously encouraging others not to be honest with them, by getting defensive or upset when they are given bad news or unpleasant feedback. When people stop hinting around an issue, and are transparent and candid, problems can be addressed and resolved, and relationships can be transformed.

Safe spaces also involve empathic and respectful listening. According to Basaran (2002), listening is an important interpersonal communication skill for leadership. Kahane (2004) contends the way to listen is to stop talking.

> One reason we cannot hear what others are saying is that their voices are drowned out by our own internal voices. We keep reacting and projecting, judging and prejudging, anticipating and expecting, reloading and drifting off. The biggest challenge of listening is quieting down our internal chatter. When we succeed in doing so, we see the world anew (p.107).

At Te Kōpae Piripono, our theorising about open and honest communication during times of misunderstanding or conflict can be understood using concentric circles (Figure

5.1). When previously dealing with misunderstandings or conflict situations, the style of our communication served to jumble our feelings, words and actions. With everything so tangled we tended to react rather than respond or interact, and issues tended not to be resolved positively. The outcome of this was a type of 'blame game' where an issue was always someone else's fault.

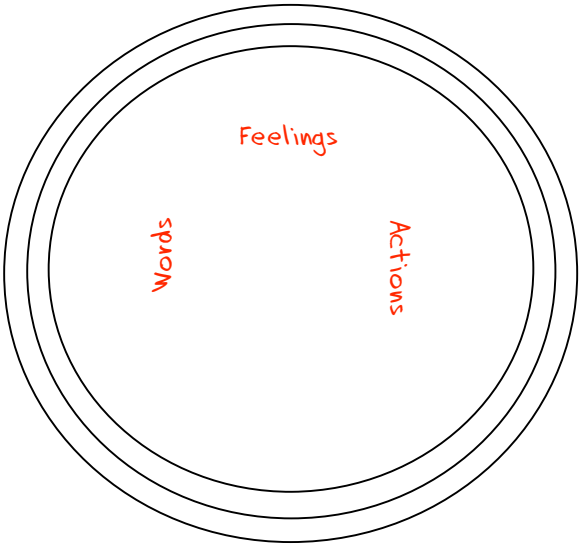

Figure 5.4 Former Style of communication at Te Kōpae Piripono

5.4.1.1 An agreed process for open and honest communication

Chaitin (2003) argues that safe spaces for communication are more likely to be created when there are agreed ground rules and processes that are sustained. Our commitment to ongoing improvement, through professional dialogue and development, led us to both formalise and revise our existing practice. We, therefore, all agreed that we would action our process for open and honest communication . This process is shown below:

Agreed Process for Open and Honest Communication at Te Kōpae Piripono

- Describe what you see.
- Listen, genuinely, to the other person's perspective.
- Clarify understandings and intentions.
- Acknowledge and process feelings.
- State the preferred action.
- Give choices.
- Provide thinking time and space for people to make their own decisions.

Figure 5.5: Agreed Process for Open and Honest Communication

During our professional development, we also discussed a helpful process for deciding where to put issues (Latham-Saunders, 2005). This is shown below:

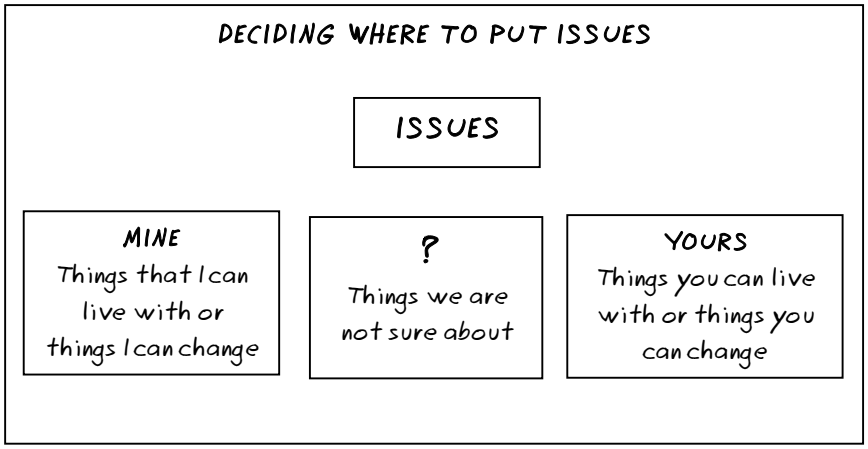

Figure 5.6: Dealing with Issues (Latham-Saunders, 2005)

By agreeing to follow our process for open communication, our whānau had a mechanism that provided thinking space and time to enable us to separate out the three chaotically entwined aspects of communication – feelings, words and actions. Creating spaces for thinking enables us to listen, to clarify, and then to respond, rather than react. This led to open and honest communication and, ultimately, to positive and reciprocal relationships. Using this process we were better able to express our intentions and our feelings and also to understand others' intentions and feelings, leading to a co-construction of meaning.

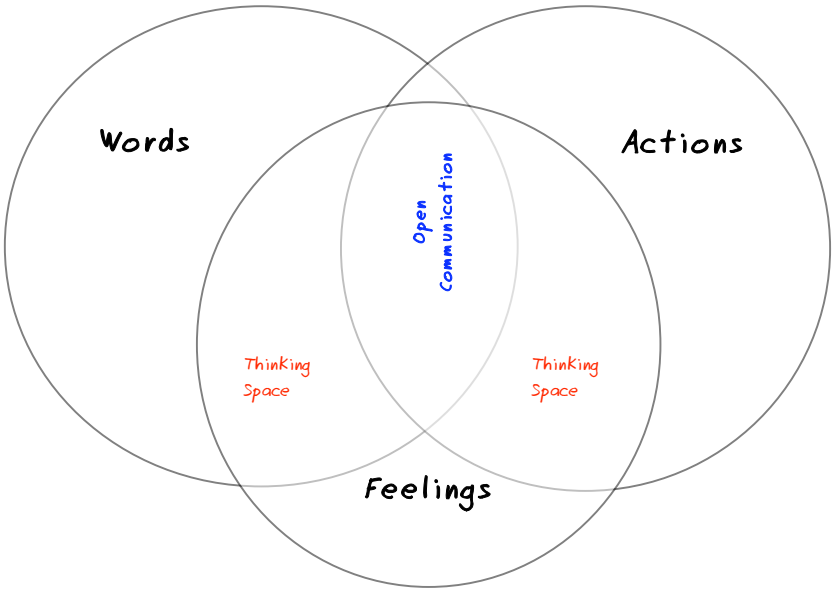

Figure 5.7: New style of communication at Te Kōpae Piripono (Open and Honest communication)

If people are trusting of this new style of open and honest communication, and adhere to the process, the concentric circles separate out, revealing "thinking spaces." At its core is open and honest communication - in action. The process of creating this safe space for communication provides us with the room to practice new, positive, and dynamic ways of interacting with each other. According to Kahane (2004) open and honest communication is all about choice.

> Every one of us gets to choose, in every encounter every day, which world we will contribute to bringing into reality. When we choose the closed way, we participate in creating a world filled with force and fear. When we choose an open way, we participate in creating another, better world (p.132).

5.4.1.2 Communication and Te Tātai Whakapapa

In order for open and honest communication to be successful, not only does everyone have to agree to the new communication processes, they also have to follow them. Open and honest communication happens when our words and our actions - what we say we will do and what we actually do – are in alignment. This need for balance corresponds to our understandings of our conceptual framework – Te Tātai Whakapapa. We have described our behaviour as being conceptualised by the opposing, yet interconnected domains of atua within all of us, striving for balance and equilibrium. When patterns of closed communication are established, those domains may abnormally be dominated by Rūaumoko – the atua who highlights the fear, anxiety and many other negative traits within us that prevent us from assuming leadership - taking, having, being and sharing responsibility. Rūaumoko, the concept of inner unrest, refers to a person's fear, a lack of confidence and anxiety in dealing with issues and unfamiliar and scary situations. When a person is in balance, the elements of Rūaumoko are very important and necessary, in keeping us alert, focussed and prepared to deal with situations. However, when we do not have equilibrium, Rūaumoko can get out of control resulting in inner unrest and, at worst, a vortex of debilitating fear, extreme anxiety, an acute lack of self belief and even cowardice. In its negative state, this disposition causes negative feelings to dominate, including pessimism, apathy, distrust, negativity, jealousy and deceit, and may manifest in the outer unrest represented by Tāwhirimātea.

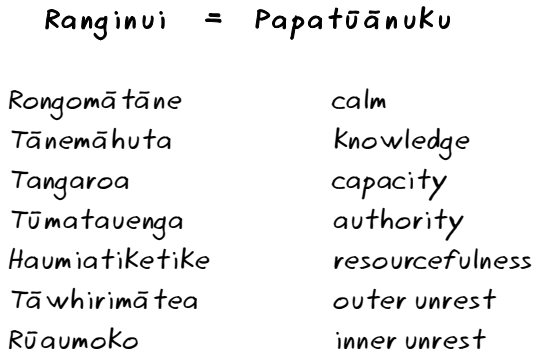

Figure 5.8: Atua Dispositions

When there is a discrepancy between a person's words and actions, this behaviour shows that their mōuri (their constitution or fundamental nature) is out of balance in some way. Conversely, when there is a degree of balance, people are better able to do what Jeffers (1987) refers to as, 'feel the fear and do it anyway'. They are better able to follow through with matching the actions to the words, and reflect positively on these actions, even if they feel vulnerable. We have found that if people are supported to follow our agreed process for communication, despite their sense in-equilibrium, the very action of following the process mediates their moving toward that state of balance. At Te Kōpae Piripono, our agreed process for open and honest communication involved the concepts of Rongomātāne (negotiation and engagement with others). Negotiation involves at least two parties and each party maintains their own mana and has a right to be heard. Kaitiaki give their thoughts about the process:

> Kaitiaki #1
> *When I attempt to follow a process I feel really good about what I'm doing and I get stronger. I feel more confident about myself and, yes, I get to know you better and I can relate, link or have that connection, and our relationship gets stronger (Kaitiaki reflection, 27.9.07).*
>
> Kaitiaki #2
> *It's in my brain all the time, its in my mind all the time. Probably (it's) always been in my heart but… now my hands, my head and my heart are working in unison… …walking the talk" (Kaitiaki reflection, 27.9.07).*
>
> Kaitiaki #3
> *My reflection is about following the process. What I really like is that trusting that we - everyone - follows a process or at least that I do cos I can't change what everyone else does but that if I trust that if I follow the process that we'll all move together on that journey cos we're all doing the same thing. We agree to*

> *do the same thing and at the end of the day we might still not agree but we have gone on a journey together of working through this issue. … the process enables trust (Kaitiaki reflection, 27.9.07).*

We have found that without trust, we struggle to achieve a state of balance. When we grow trust, we grow an environment of open and honest communication. This is the dynamic learning environment we seek to foster for children and their families – indeed, for our whole whānau. One Kaitiaki described what open and honest communication means for her:

> *…I had missed lots of korero so I had missed any shared understanding… I had put it on (others) and wasn't prepared to take responsibility for it. Now I enjoy coming to hui Kaitiaki. …It's about bringing a 'take' and we talk about how we can address it. It's no longer about avoiding things because you might possibly hurt someone. It's about working together. It is so enlightening – letting all that go (Kaitiaki interview, 5.12.06).*

During the course of our COI research, individual and collective whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono responded enthusiastically to clear and caring approaches and to the warm demands we made of each other. As mentioned earlier, improved communication has been a positive outcome of the research. We continue to look for opportunities to foster dynamic and positive open communication.

5.4.2 Behaviour guidance – an element of open and honest communication

Learning new ways of doing and being takes many forms. One of these is Te Kōpae Piripono's approach to promoting positive behaviour. At Te Kōpae Piripono, we have sought to provide alternatives to violence and aversive discipline practices. Te Kōpae Piripono has, for many years, had an organised and planned approach to promoting positive behaviour. We prefer to use the term 'behaviour guidance' as 'behaviour management' is a loaded term that conjures up an image of adults controlling children's behaviour, denying children the opportunity to address and problem solve their own conflict situations. We have found that, during the course of our COI research, our agreed processes for open and honest communication are in actual fact the same ones we have been using for promoting positive behaviour. The only difference has been the different terminologies used. The terms behaviour management and behaviour guidance

can often serve to focus attention on managing or guiding other people's behaviour - more specifically children's behaviour - without any reference to ourselves in the equation. But behaviour guidance is actually about us all learning how to deal with issues positively. Hence, our processes for positive behaviour guidance are actually the same as our processes for open and honest communication. Positive behaviour guidance, therefore, involves whānau-learning strategies for open and honest communication, dealing positively with issues, understanding child development and having and fulfilling realistic expectations of themselves and others. Realistic expectations include clear boundaries, making choices and learning from the consequences of our choices.

Positive behaviour guidance is a process that is practical and affirmative. It is also appropriate and effective for both children and adults – serving to foster positive relationships across all levels of the whānau. This includes relationships between adults; between adults and children; and between children. Fostering positive whānau relationships is an essential part of whānau development. We like to use the concept of Te Ara Poutama, for our way of promoting positive behaviour. We use the term Te Ara Poutama in reference to the journey Tānenuiārangi took up through the heavens in pursuit of enlightenment. We replicate that journey as we seek to develop and to understand ourselves, and our relationships with others. Maslow (1998) describes the end point of the development journey as self-actualisation. The term poutama refers to the steps that we need to take on this journey. As with the poutama concept, the pathway is not constantly vertical. The steps enable us to rest and reflect and then continue on. For some of us the movement is in big steps, for others of our whānau it is small. But as with poutama, movement is always upward. Given the negative past experiences of education for some parents and the resultant fear or loathing of educational institutions, teachers need to engage with parents positively and realistically (Porter, 2003). For such parents, any issues that arise concerning themselves or their children may be difficult for them to deal with. In terms of behaviour, learning new ways of doing and being is a journey for the whole whānau, not just for children. There, therefore, needs to be an ongoing programme of whānau wānanga or workshops to promote open and honest communication, positive approaches to parenting and positive behaviour guidance strategies. As can be seen below, the process for Te Ara Poutama is identical to that of our agreed process for open and honest communication.

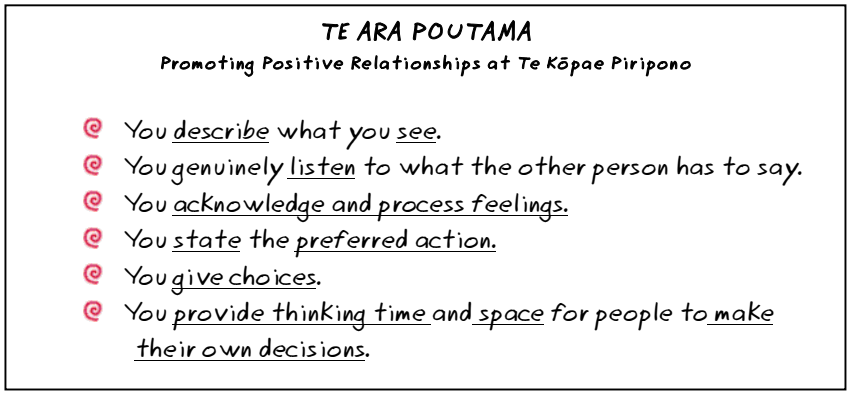

Figure 5.9: Te Ara Poutama – promoting positive relationships

Te Ara Poutama focuses predominantly on giving information, rather than opinions, assumptions or judgements. Simply describing what is happening (rather than assuming and making judgements), allows for positive and dynamic co-construction of resolving an issue, or incident. Giving information or describing without labelling is a fundamental practice promoted by Ginott (1972). Gartrell (2004) describes behaviour guidance as helping others learn from their mistakes. Guidance, he says empowers people to solve problems, to accept the consequences of their actions, to develop self-control, autonomy and an empathy for others and, ultimately, self-esteem. Gartrell talks about behaviour learning as a skill that we develop just as we would learn to ride a bike. He uses the term 'mistaken behaviour' and regards behaviour mistakes as an inevitable component of the learning process. At Te Kōpae Piripono, we believe that giving descriptive information enables both parties to clarify understandings and intentions. Giving information initiates non-judgemental dialogue and encourages individuals to "make decisions about their behaviour, based on their own internal needs" (Porter, 2003, p.12).

At Te Kōpae Piripono, children are quite capable of dealing with issues. It's just how much we as adults are prepared to trust that they can. As one Kaitiaki puts it:

> *…in terms of practice, the work we have done at Te Kōpae Piripono… …has kicked my butt to allow kids to resolve their own conflict without me jumping in …I thought…you know I don't want kids to wait to be as old as I am to start talking about it, you know, start now while they can, while they don't have those barriers (Kaitiaki reflection, 27.9.07).*

This approach provides us with constructive ways of dealing with different behaviours - of all age groups (our own included!!). It is about modelling and practicing new ways of doing and being. But we need to move away from use of the term behaviour. At Te Kōpae Piripono, instead of using the term 'behaviour management' we prefer to talk simply about dealing positively with issues. Behaviour is a hugely loaded term and, in many respects, is incorrectly used. The term behaviour actually relates to the symptoms of a person trying to deal with an issue. Behaviour is actually the end point, rather than the beginning point of the issue. Therefore, a person's behaviour should essentially be viewed as an indicator of the underlying issue. So, instead of dealing with the symptoms of issues, we need to get to the crux of the issues themselves. And the only way to do that is to follow agreed processes for communication.

5.4.2.1 Te Ara Poutama and Te Tātai Whakapapa

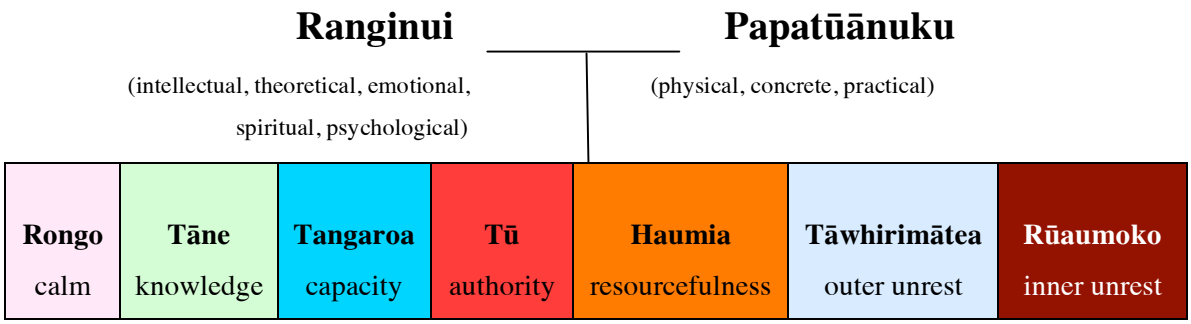

Table 5.10: Te Ara Poutama and Tātai Whakapapa

The process of giving information, views people as having the ability to solve their own issues. This concept has agency with Te Kōpae Piripono's Tātai Whakapapa framework. Within every individual, all the dispositions of atua exist. For some, these may be well-balanced, while for others, some atua dispositions may either not yet be developed, or be stifled for some reason. For us at Te Kōpae Piripono,

- Tū represents authority and confidence and relates to a person's ability to have (or to learn to have) control of their own actions;
- Tāne refers to knowledge and understanding, and this relates to the information that people access (within and without) to positively deal with issues;
- Haumietiketike refers to a person's resourcefulness and the strategies and skills they may access and utilise in working through issues;
- Rongo refers a person's innate ability to engage and dialogue with others, deal with issues positively. It denotes interpersonal skills, empathy and personal integrity.
- Tāwhirimātea (outer unrest) and Rūaumoko (inner unrest) both represent a person's self-esteem, feelings and emotions, and the ways people choose to express and resolve those sentiments. A person's behaviour is, to some extent, the manifestation of the level of balance they have been able to achieve between their inner and/or outer unrest.

This knowledge serves to facilitate the way forward for a person to access and emphasise the dimensions of Rongo, a state of calm and of engagement with another person in a positive way, even if a difficult issue exists. Words can flow and positive and authentic relationships can be fostered. This is a credit-based approach.

Hei Tauira

Example of Te Ara Poutama in action

Ngā Matawā

At Te Kōpae Piripono, we have several egg timers (what we call matawā) available and accessible to children to enable democratic turn taking. The children negotiate and determine the process and outcomes. When we first introduced the matawā, kaitiaki were fully involved - walking children through the process and giving them the words when they didn't know what or how, or were not able yet to state their needs. Now, adult intervention is not usually required.

This story is an example of open and honest communication in action. It is an example of leadership, in action, children as leaders, confident and competent individuals who are quite capable of "taking responsibility" for their own conflict resolution.

Tō Wā, Taku Wā *(your turn, my turn)*

Kahurangi has just picked up a pink bag, with which Aroha has been playing. Aroha sees this and wants it back! But instead of grabbing the bag off her, Aroha runs and gets a matawā and skillfully gives it to Kahurangi, swapping it with the bag. NEGOTIATION SKILLS!

Kahurangi realises her predicament and states her case in no uncertain terms! However, instead of walking away, Aroha negotiates again, "E hia ngā miniti?" (How many minutes do you want?). She then sets the matawā and hands it to Kahurangi. Redirected, Kahurangi turns her attention to the matawā. Pretty soon the matawā goes off, and Aroha shares the bag with Kahurangi and they both go off to play together in the kopa whānau, the family play area.

This process changed the focus of the girls' interaction - from self to other - from foe to friend - from conflict to resolution! LEADERSHIP!

Table 5.11: Example of Te Ara Poutama[2]

One parent describes how, despite her child moving on to kura kaupapa he still has a strong connection with the Kōpae, particularly in the area of dealing with issues positively:

> *…He gets upset with kids at the kura if they don't share and they don't respect each other's space and personal property. He still gets upset with that. He'll go, "All you have to do is ask and I'll give it to you (Pātai i te tuatahi!)!" He doesn't understand why the rest of the world doesn't see things through his eyes (laughs). (Parent interview, 19.11.06)*

[2] Pseudonyms used

5.4.3 Kaitiaki action is the 'glue' in effecting whānau development

At Te Kōpae Piripono it is not enough to just talk about Whānau Development and the behaviours that are expected of everyone to effect that development. At Te Kōpae Piripono, action is the key – positive action. It is important that we are all active members of our whānau, committed to our children's learning, and to the collective development of te reo Māori me ōnā tikanga. Everyone shares responsibility.

At Te Kōpae Piripono the concept of whānau is a key part of our kaupapa (philosophy). However, because Te Kōpae Piripono is also a licensed early childhood educational setting, what Kaitiaki *do* is imperative to ensuring Whānau Development. As the daily point of contact, Kaitiaki action can be seen as a type of 'whānau glue' that provides the links and the connection for the networks to develop between what might appear at first to be a disparate group of people (families), united only by the shared desire for a Māori education at Te Kōpae Piripono, and a brighter future for their children. Gonzalez-Mena (2007) puts it a bit more strongly than that. She argues it is teacher's responsibility to initiate partnerships with families. The whānau model at Te Kōpae Piripono posits the whānau at the heart of children's learning and development, not just to implement teachers' plans for children. The whānau relationship *is* the plan. Kaitiaki have an added responsibility for this learning, to truly know the child, and his/her whānau. If this does not happen then authentic learning will not happen for our children.

'Being that glue' manifested itself in a number of ways at Te Kōpae Piripono. Kaitiaki sought to actively and genuinely engage with whānau. They consciously made a point of connecting with whānau daily. At times, they had to persist in getting to know some whānau, particularly those who appeared least comfortable in engaging with teachers. Through this engagement, Kaitiaki got to know whānau more. Where possible, they shared whānau roles and decision-making processes. In doing so, Kaitiaki came to value the special knowledge, skills and contributions of individual whānau, to the collective as a whole. It was Kaitiaki persistence that appeared to be the key in pursuing positive reciprocal relationships with whānau (see Sheldon's Story, Chapter 6, p.112). It is important to note, however, that other early childhood settings may have different ways of fostering whānau development.

Research (Powell, 1996; Prior & Gerard, 2007) reveals that some teachers mistakenly view their role as being primarily involved with children. According to Powell (1996), early childhood settings tend to be organised to meet children's needs, yet parents needs must not be ignored if centres have a genuine interest in fostering partnerships. It is not possible to separate the child from the context of the family (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Powell, 1996; Gonzalez-Mena, 2007). "The child is a term that has no real meaning because no child stands alone; the influences of the family are always present" (Gonzalez-Mena, 2007, p.iii).

At Te Kōpae Piripono, we are mindful that whānau come to us for their children's education, and whether we like it or not we may initially be perceived as the 'institution'. The following conversation is testament of this perception:

Parent: *That feeling of, "I'm a teacher and I'm talking to you," that's the thing that gets me and its like, "Oh no, I don't want that!"*
Tumu: *Because you're thinking – these are the teachers and here's me. And the teachers are here and you're there?*
Parent: *Yes!* *(Parent interview, 17.8.06)*

Gonzalez-Mena (2007) argues the importance of building parent-teacher partnerships rather than simply encouraging parent involvement.

> "A partnership is different from parent involvement because it implies equity and shared power rather than one side dominating the other. In a partnership, roles and responsibilities may differ, but both sides have rights… …Partners collaborate rather than issue orders. In a partnership, communication is two-way rather than hierarchical" (p.iii).

The key, Gonzalez-Mena argues, is teacher action – namely gaining parents trust because she argues there can be no partnerships without trust.

Smith (1968, in Powell, 1989, p.313) contends that parent participation without the sharing of power is nothing more than "paternalism, which undercuts respect and accentuates dependence." Prior and Gerard (2007) argue that communication is the most important component of effective parent-teacher relationships. Relationships, they say, take time and effort to develop, requiring conscious preparation. Teachers must talk

with parents frequently and consistently. Kaiser and Rasminsky (2003) argue that each time teachers make contact with families, this helps build trust. Our research has found that the more Kaitiaki interact and engage with families in meaningful ways, the more likely those families are to become involved in Te Kōpae Piripono.

But research (Powell, 1996; Prior & Gerard, 2007) reveals that teacher fear, attitudes and perceptions of parents can also be barriers to successful parent support and family collaboration. Dunn and Kontas (1989; in Prior & Gerard, 2007) found teachers who believe that parents are doing a poor job of raising their children tend to talk with parents less often, while teachers who view parents more democratically have more equal expectations of parents, whatever the circumstances (Epstein, 1985; in Prior & Gerard, 2007, p.206). Added to this, teacher fear is a very real issue for effective parent-teacher relationships (Prior and Gerard, 2007). Prior and Gerard point out that many teachers have a fear of criticism, of making mistakes and sometimes not knowing what to say or do to develop positive relationships with parents. Some teachers are immobilised by fear of failing (see section 5.2), and often avoid opportunities to interact with parents.

> "But when a teacher faces his or her fears and makes efforts to connect with parents, he or she will most likely find much more acceptance than criticism, more successes than mistakes, and more ways to connect than ever imagined. Then the benefits of working with parents will become evident" (ibid, p.54).

Here is a Kaitiaki reflection about her level of engagement with a new whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono.

> *(Tama) has been at Te Kōpae Piripono for two terms and I have no idea who his whānau are – only their names. I reflected on my role as a Kaitiaki and whether I was I making them feel part of the Kōpae whānau if I didn't ask about them and tell them about me or find out what they do at home as a whānau. I was not doing justice to myself, to Te Kōpae Piripono or this new whānau. I hadn't made an effort to get to know his whānau. I didn't feel good about myself. I set about to build a relationship with his Mum. Through the kōrero with his Mum, (Tama) is now more aware that I am there to support him and his interests. Before, (Tama) would come to me ask me a question then go away again. Now he stays. I noticed that he didn't like wā huihui (mat time) and I realised he prefers small groups so I shared this with*

> *the other Kaitiaki and we did wā huihui in smaller groups. It has been great getting to know (Tama) and his whānau. It gave me a big fright to realise how little I knew about them. Now, our relationship is awesome. (Kaitiaki reflection, 20.11.06)*

There is evidence (Ames, 1995; in Prior & Gerard, 2007) that when teachers make efforts to improve communication and engage positively and purposefully with parents, the parents become more comfortable and become involved with their children's learning. Ames argues that these parents express a personal responsibility in helping their children. According to Porter (2003), children are more likely to settle and feel comfortable if they know their parents and teachers support and value each other, and each others' contributions. Kaiser and Rasminsky (2003) found that the more teachers and families engage with each other, the more interaction there is between teachers and children. Porter (2003) argues that 'collaboration' with parents does not happen by accident. Teachers need to actively plan for it. Our Whānau Development programme serves to provide a structure and process with which Kaitiaki can enable this to happen.

Hence, Kaitiaki 'action' is central to enabling families who join Te Kōpae Piripono feel fully part of the whānau, embracing a shared vision and shared understandings. Kaitiaki action can also support parents and caregivers to see how critical their role is in the lives and learning of their children. Mitchell (with Haggerty, Hampton & Pairman, 2006) argues there will be a discontinuity "when people who lack shared experience start working together" (p.89). We at Te Kōpae Piripono argue that Kaitiaki are the 'glue', the enablers who build critical continuity for the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono. Kaitiaki as the glue, ensures a "continuity of children's experiences," (Powell, 1989, p.23). Indeed, it provides positive continuity for the whole whānau.

But it is important to stress, that being the binding agent in the process of building and developing whānau is not just about saying nice things or giving out warm fuzzies. Development is about movement and change. So whānau development can also mean that, at times, we must question and challenge ourselves - and our thinking, our understandings, our commitment and our responsibilities. We have found that in the context of dialogue with individual whānau, we can notice and recognise whānau strengths and contributions while at the same time, offer "warm demands" (Meade and

Cubey, 1995) or supportive challenges for individual whānau members. Shifting people's thinking so they are comfortable to acknowledge their self worth and recognise that they have much to offer Te Kōpae Piripono and their children's learning, is essential in building partnerships with families and building a sense of whānau. One Kaitiaki talks about her own growth as a result of whānau development at Te Kōpae Piripono:

> *"…definitely working at Te Kōpae has been like, the icing on the cake really, to push me forward and face those challenges. Like I said before, I haven't ever worked before in a place that has been so challenging, but that's been a good thing, as a practitioner and personally" (Kaitiaki reflection, 27.9.07).*

We have found that talking alone and saying the right words just does not cut it. It is Kaitiaki ***action*** that is the glue that helps cement the relationship. The Kaitiaki role is, therefore, critical to maintaining shared understandings of our kaupapa and the ongoing commitment by all whānau. Kaitiaki must not only be, but be seen to be absolutely committed to our kaupapa. Doing something about your own and/or others' learning shows how much you care. This is what makes the difference. We realise that it's easy to say the words but it takes commitment and action to make it happen. It must be more than words. There also has to be action - positive action. It's about having a go. It's about taking responsibility. As the popular saying illustrates, *"No one care's how much you know, until they really know how much you care"*(Swartz, 1987, p.133). The following conversation provides a good example of the Kaitiaki action as the glue in effecting whānau development:

Kaitiaki: *So, going back to how things changed (for you)... was it the hui we had or the persistence.*
Parent: *Yeah, persistence really, not too much of the hui...the persistence and encouragement.*
Kaitiaki: *It is also about acknowledging the skills that you bring to Te Kōpae Piripono. We are really blessed with that skill. It makes our place dynamic.* *(Parent interview, 13.11.06)*

One Kaitiaki reflects that, on one occasion, she was trying to write a story about a child resolving conflict peacefully. However, she couldn't write the story because she had an unresolved family issue. Action was the only way forward.

> *I couldn't write it because I hadn't resolved my own conflict peacefully and until I had, I couldn't start the story. Every time I went to touch the keys it was just*

blank and I kept looking at the phone thinking I need to ring my sister and put things right. I was thinking how can I teach children to resolve conflict peacefully, if I can't even do it myself. So I put my fears aside and I rung her up and apologised. I knew exactly what was going to happen, but I did it……I told her how I thought and it didn't go well, so I just hung up. But I could start the story…" (Kaitiaki reflection, 27.9.07).

5.4.4 The role of critical friends

Working together, to find new ways of being and doing, means responding appropriately to the fears and anxieties that we have. During this research, we have found that we can implement any number of research strategies and plans but if we really want to help people to grow, we have to address that inner turmoil. Whānau support is both collective and individual. As mentioned earlier, there are a number of ways we have collective support at Te Kōpae Piripono, including hui (meetings), wānanga (gatherings of learning) and hākari (celebrations). However, an integral part of a whānau approach is the relationship between individuals. Each individual is as important as the group. Sometimes whānau members need one-on-one support to deal with issues or to problem-solve situations. We have found that there is a need, in these situations, for critical friends who can provide honest, open and non-judgemental feedback and support. To be a critical friend, people must perceive themselves as such and have the confidence and ability to carry that out. An important part of Whānau Development at Te Kōpae Piripono is to develop a pool of people (of both whānau and others) who can act as critical friends.

The concept of a critical friend is in keeping with Tātai Whakapapa. The role of a critical friend is much the same as the principle of tuakana/teina (older sibling/younger sibling). It is embodied within the concept of the whānau as our core foundation. Within the whānau atua (the first whānau) are tuakana and teina, all with special attributes and personalities and all intimately connected. The tuakana role can be seen as a supporter, an advisor, a mentor, a scribe, a coach and a challenger. A tuakana provides a listening ear when one is needed by the teina to work through an issue. A fascinating aspect of this relationship is that there is an interchangeability of the tuakana and teina

roles. As appropriate, and at any time the teina may take on the role of tuakana to his or her sibling, and the tuakana become the teina for that time. The key theme of the relationship between the two siblings is one of connection, belonging, care, concern and aroha. This type of relationship is borne out of the whānau context. A key role of a critical friend is to provide open, honest and non-judgemental feedback. This is not to say the feedback must always be favourable. Sometimes, the best support for a whānau member is to have their thinking challenged, to be assisted to clarify and to sort an issue. This learning can be a huge challenge for people. It is scary territory! In some cases, it may mean changing one's lifestyle, an entire lifetime of different ways of doing. Change can be scary and uncomfortable but it is only through having the courage to be open to change - taking responsibility - that we can grow and learn. Learning can only occur if we are open to change.

Larrivee (2005) argues that constructive comments offer specific assistance while supporting people's efforts and building self-confidence. Constructive comments, she argues communicate acceptance and allow the others to draw their own conclusions and judgments. Destructive comments, on the other hand, point out errors and can be interpreted as evidence of incompetence.

> Purposeful critique is constructive feedback that is not only descriptive but also offers a next step for (a person) to move toward self-correction and ultimately the sense of satisfaction of having gotten it right. Purposeful critique is feedback that specifically shows (people) the way, allowing them to construct what to do next, rather than feeling helpless (Larrivee, p.107).

According to Larrivee, the key to constructive feedback is to engage with, and to relate to others in a non-judgemental fashion. This enables self-evaluation and provides support, particularly if feedback relates to mistakes or learning that may be un-comfortable for the person. Larrivee talks about using a language of respect when giving feedback. This, she argues, can be found in I-language. I-language in action is:

- Non threatening;
- Doesn't require justification;
- Provides a reason for feedback;
- Doesn't imply a negative judgement;
- Maintains a positive relationship;

- Models appropriate expression of both negative and positive emotions;
- Supports other's consideration of the impact of their behaviour or actions; and
- Fosters responsibility for change. (Larrivee, p.119)

Atwater and Waldman (2008) argue that if a relationship is characterised by mutual trust and respect then negative feedback is likely to be received as constructive feedback rather than criticism. Larrivee (2005) proposes that when a person listens with 'quiet attention and silent affection' they act as a 'mirror of reflection, so the picture becomes clearer' for the other person, helping 'unmuddy the waters', and enabling the person to access their own resources to deal with issues (p.129). One whānau member shares his reflections on his own experience:

> *I struggled with parenting skill and ability, or lack of it, and the expectations of me regarding husband and wife roles… It was when my family experienced problems that I began to realise that my attitudes had been inappropriate, not constructive, and that it didn't have to be that way… If both parents are needy there needs to be help from a third party… If I'd had a third party back then to lead the process, to nurture both of us, it might have been different…. (Parent interview, 8.8.07)*

Mentoring is another term we might apply to the role of the critical friend. Rodd (2006) describes mentoring as a process that enables reflective dialogue. The mentor, she argues, acts as a critical friend in a supportive and non-threatening way. Successful critical friends, she argues, display empathy and understanding; an interest in life-long learning; sophisticated interpersonal skills; and an understanding of their role (p.172). At Te Kōpae Piripono we would add other important requirements for the mentor role including a commitment to kaupapa Māori, an understanding of our historical context and of the concept of whānau.

According to Williams (2005), a person who acts as a critical friend needs to be emotionally mature, prepared to give quality feedback (feedback that is specific, relevant, constructive, supportive and genuine), can celebrate achievements and be able to share decision-making. Te Kōpae Piripono's perspective on the role of a critical friend supports these crucial aspects. We believe that whānau taking on this vital

tuakana (concept of an older sibling) role need to be just that – a tuakana – to the whānau members they are supporting. The concept of a tuakana is of a person who is emotionally mature and confident, supportive, empathetic and genuine with the best interests of the teina (younger whānau member) at heart. Working together and engaging in problem solving processes is critical. The effectiveness of the role of the critical friend in ensuring genuine and dynamic support for whānau members is predicated on the strength and authenticity of the relationship.

> *Once you build up those friendships and relationships, trusting ones, like we have done, I feel very comfortable to make those mistakes in te reo Māori and wait for my friends to correct me and give me the kupu to carry on. So I think that's really important (Whānau wānanga, 15.11.05).*

A critical friend can also act as an advocate for other whānau members, such as, going with a whānau to meet with a school principal about their child. This could help the school view the whole child and better understand its responsibilities in relation to the child's well being.

There have been some wonderful instances where members of the Te Kōpae Piripono whānau have acted as critical friends for others. One is where a father took aside another father and talked to him about the responsibilities of the father role at Te Kōpae Piripono. "It's not about you… it's about your kids," the critical friend was heard to say to the other father. Another instance was a Kaitiaki who helped a grandfather (whose mokopuna attended Te Kōpae Piripono), address his irrational fears about his knowledge and fluency in te reo Māori. A key enabler for him was focussing on his mokopuna.

Kaitiaki:	*What are your thoughts on how important te reo Māori is for your mokopuna?*
Grandparent:	I want her to have the two languages. She spoke good Māori when she was here and then all of a sudden she left and then…it stopped. But I'd like her to keep going. I just have to try harder.
Kaitiaki:	*Why do you want her to have Māori?*
Grandparent:	I suppose because I'm Māori. I don't know. I just want her to be Maori. I want her to think Māori.
Kaitiaki:	*If you want her to be fluent there are other things you need to do to get that level of fluency. You can only change what you do. Speaking Māori only to her is an easy thing for you to do.*
Grandparent:	Yeah. I didn't think about it that way.

(Interview with grandparent, 11.6.07)

Another example of the role of critical friend is an interview between two members of the whānau with a parent, about the relationship difficulties the parent was having with her son.

Whānau Member: What makes it okay for you to speak up about it?
Parent: The big trust thing coming to Te Kōpae – tell others your 'take' (issue) – and someone can help you as to opposed to you being in it everyday for so long…
Whānau Member: What do you think has changed the most for (your son) – what are the most significant things for him do you think?
Parent: For him – would be his Mum. Having his Mum. Having time with me. I think another one – his behaviour will change the more me and him get to know each other again. So that's going to be a long term, you know – ongoing thing. The big change is having Mum listening to him… …me and him having a conversation, not just me saying what Mum wants to say and I don't care what he thinks. Having that trust again...
Whānau Member: What do you think that has done (for your son)?
Parent: It's just built his confidence up hugely with me.
(Conversation with parent, 31.5.07)

5.4.5 Whakauru Whānau – Enrolment and Induction as whānau support

Our enrolment/induction process at Te Kōpae Piripono is an essential support mechanism for new whānau. As mentioned previously, families come to Te Kōpae Piripono from different contexts and with their own lived experiences of education. As Te Kōpae Piripono is kaupapa-based, the enrolment/induction process helps new families to have shared understandings of kaupapa Māori and kaupapa Kōpae (the Kōpae way). Helping parents and their extended families come to see the big picture of why Te Kōpae Piripono exists and the critical role they have in their children's education, enables families to realise that what they *DO* really matters. During the research, our enrolment policy and procedure were reviewed and modified. The new process provides a comprehensive explanation, in DVD format, of the kaupapa (philosophy) of Te Kōpae Piripono, our historical context and the critical role of the parents and families. It also outlines expectations of people's ongoing development – both individually and collectively. This is accompanied by a series of scheduled follow up hui, over the period of a year. These hui enable an ongoing conversation with new families and enable an evaluation of where they are at, in terms of their own development and the level of their Māori language support for their children. By the first anniversary of their child/ren's

enrolment, families are expected to have a significant level of fluency in te reo Māori and of whānau involvement. If, after a year, nothing has fundamentally changed in families' involvement and support for their children's Māori language learning then our conversation encourages the family to review their reason for the enrolment – to seriously take responsibility for their child's learning. Throughout our research journey, we have found enrolment and induction must have a planned and structured approach such as this. But it must also be flexible, to meet the needs of individual whānau.

The enrolment/induction process seeks to ensure a mutual fit between Te Kōpae Piripono and prospective whānau. It introduces the context and sets the tone of our relationship. Whānau are able to see not only if Te Kōpae Piripono fits with their own aspirations for their child/ren but also whether they fit with Te Kōpae Piripono's kaupapa. Te Kōpae's enrolment process therefore helps families clarify what they truly value and want for their children. The process is the start of our shared learning journey – of our relationship. It also sets the expectation of our whānau as leaders – the expectation of taking responsibility, having responsibility, sharing responsibility and being responsible. It is not seen as a failing if people who go through the process subsequently decide to opt out. When families are ready to make that commitment, they will come back and be fully involved. Leadership is about choice.

The first family to go through this new process provided us with an immediate challenge. Despite the new enrolment and induction, the family did not become actively involved at Te Kōpae Piripono, leaving the dropping off and picking up of their daughter to other family members and attending few hui or whānau gatherings. When these issues were raised, over the scheduled series of hui, the young mother gave an array of reasons for the family's non-participation and for their lack of Māori language development. But she assured us that they would attend future whānau gatherings. However, this did not happen. In a further hui we had with the mother, we again discussed the issues of non-participation and reo. The following is an excerpt from that which she said at the meeting:

> "…we haven't had the time to do a lot of things. I mean I've been to one or two of the meetings and.. to tell you the truth when I came here, the first meeting,

> everything was in Te Reo Māori. Which is fine, because that is what Te Kōpae Piripono is all about. But for myself and my partner, we are both still learning Te Reo so we can't come here and speak fluently. To be quite honest, I like the way Kōpae are with our daughter. And I like the way she's learning through yous (sic). There's not much that I don't like I'm only just starting to understand your guys' kaupapa so… and the more I think about it the more it makes sense." (Parent interview, date withheld)

A week after this interview, the mother suddenly pulled her child out of Te Kōpae Piripono. This series of events graphically illustrates how, for this young mother, the words and the actions did not match. A conversation with the young mother on the day she left, provides an insight into the reasons for the discontinuity:

> Yeah and I only have really a relationship with a few people here. And a lot of it is because I knew them outside of here as well. Because I work during hours my daughter's at Te Kōpae Piripono and usually beyond those hours, I don't get to make it in here to pick her up and drop her off. Because I can't be here, I have to trust her grandparents to drop her off. I don't think they even know about Te Kōpae Piripono's kaupapa. (Conversation with parent, date withheld)

The mother reveals that, despite the extensive enrolment process, the atua dispositions appear to be out of balance and the destabilising influence of Rūaumoko dominates. Despite our considerable conversations, her actions show that she had not taken the scary step to be fully involved in Te Kōpae Piripono.

> Mother: "…my dilemma is getting … because it's not my family, it's (my partner's) family that are here. And it's trying to get them to get involved."
> *Tumu: "Maybe we need to hui with (your partner's) family too."*
> Mother: Excuse me I've got to get some…I need to get a breather."
>
> GOES OUTSIDE
> FIVE MINUTES LATER
>
> *Tumu: "I'm wondering whether you're feeling mokemoke (lonely) for your whānau. You feel on your own. There's your partner's whānau and then there's you. And you're trying to carry this kaupapa."*
> Mother: "Hugely!"

The anxiety, frustration and despair the young mother has experienced demonstrates how Ruaumoko can gain ascendancy, impacting negatively on one's ability to communicate openly and honestly, even on a matter as important as the education of one's child. Without the foundation of trust, open communication cannot happen. In the case of this mother it appeared that confronting the real issues was too difficult, her solution was to withdraw her child. This outcome was a sad loss for us but it was an example of the realities of our leadership-learning journey. We all make choices about our own learning and behaviour and the roads we go down. We all develop at our own pace. We have told the young mother that Te Kōpae's door is always open.

A different experience of the revamped enrolment process is that of another whānau, whose 3-year-old son spoke predominantly English when he began at Te Kōpae Piripono. Within a period of several months, the boy was conversing in Māori. The commitment and involvement of the boy's whānau, particularly his mother – as the vital lifeline for te reo Māori – has resulted in transformations for the whole family.

> *Now when I go to get the children, I end up staying, talking for a half an hour. Now, it's the children saying, "Let's go, Te Kōpae's finished for the day!" You can feel the whānau atmosphere. You are my son's real teachers. I have seen his reo strengthen… his love for this place. This is a safe place for him. When he sees us conversing in Māori, we are role-modelling that. Being together here is a big help (Parent interview, 13.11.06).*

5.4.6 Summary – Whānau Support

Whānau support is an integral component of whānau development. We acknowledge that everyone in our whānau are at different levels and stages of development. Some whānau need different kinds of support. Some key avenues of whānau support involves us learning new ways of communicating. For many, this means learning new ways of doing and being, and of trusting ourselves and others to follow our agreed processes for open and honest communication. Our approach to promoting positive behaviour – Te Ara Poutama – follows in much the same vein. Te Ara Poutama acknowledges people's ability to deal positively with issues. It also sets the expectation that people do so.

Because of the professional role that Kaitiaki have at Te Kōpae Piripono and because they are the daily point of contact, what Kaitiaki *do* is vital to successful whānau development. Kaitiaki action is therefore the 'glue' that binds the whānau. It must be acknowledged that teacher fear, attitudes and their perception of parents can be considerable barriers to positive whānau development. As our findings reveal, this has certainly been an issue for us. Professional development has proven to be a significant support in ensuring we create the right type of glue!

Whānau development is both a collective and individual endeavour. Sometimes individual whānau members need one-on-one support to deal with issues or to work through problems they may have. There is, hence, a need for there to be critical friends who can provide honest, open and non-judgemental feedback and support. Any member of the whānau can take on the role of a critical friend. To be a critical friend, people must perceive themselves as such and have the confidence and ability to carry that role out.

New families come to Te Kōpae Piripono from different contexts and with their own lived experience of education. Therefore, our enrolment/induction process provides essential support for new whānau. As Te Kōpae Piripono is kaupapa-based, the enrolment/induction process helps new families to have shared understandings of kaupapa Māori and of the kaupapa of Te Kōpae Piripono. The enrolment/induction process helps parents and their extended families to come to see the big picture of why Te Kōpae Piripono exists and the critical role they have in their children's education. It therefore enables families to realise that what they *do* in their children's lives really matters.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has identified five key findings of Te Kōpae Piripono's COI research. They have included Whānau Development – the structured development of the whānau; fear as a barrier to participation, the critical involvement of fathers and the central role of whānau support. The structured programme of Whānau Development is a collaborative exercise promoting shared understandings through personal and professional

development for the benefit of all – adults and children. If adequately resourced and coordinated, Whānau Development processes can effect tremendous whānau development. Fear is found to be a significant barrier to whānau participation. Acknowledging people's fear and their lived, often negative, experiences of education can help whānau to realise their own worth and to gain the courage to embark on their own leadership learning journeys. If this is Te Kōpae Piripono's children's experience of whānau and of education - at the beginning of their life journeys – they will grow and develop as Māori, competent and confident in themselves as true citizens of the world. The absence of the male element at Te Kōpae Piripono is a major threat to the kaupapa and the very fabric of the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono. Indeed, this gender imbalance is an issue that has ramifications for Māori society as a whole, and indeed the world. The drive to engage fathers at Te Kōpae Piripono is a work in progress. In an effort to make Te Kōpae Piripono 'father friendly', father involvement has been given purpose and meaning. Te Kōpae Piripono has striven to find ways fathers can be supported to overcome barriers. Te Kōpae Piripono acknowledges the responsibility of the whānau to embrace father's strengths, interests and practical skills, and to promote the critical role that fathers have in their children's learning and development. Whānau support is an integral component of whānau development. Support is needed at both an individual and a collective level. Sometimes individual whānau members need one-on-one support to learn and grow, and to understand the critical role that they play in their children's learning and development.

These findings highlight the need for participation of the whole family in their child's education, not just the child or mother alone. Leadership is about every member of the whānau acknowledging their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they actively participate in Te Kōpae Piripono, whatever their own level of fear or anxiety. Our children need to see us having the courage and motivation to step outside our comfort zone and really be part of their lives. This is true leadership in action.

Chapter 6

Whānau Learning Journeys

This chapter draws on the personal journeys of six whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono. These personal journeys each provide vibrant and dynamic examples of our research and particularly of our key findings. Each journey strongly links with most, if not all, of our findings and in many cases with each other. The personal stories provide an authentic and personal face to our research, which many people will be able to relate to. In almost all of the stories, whānau have used their real names. However, where pseudonyms are used this is indicated by a footnote.

6.1 The Critical Involvement of Fathers – Sheldon's Story

Sheldon's Story is an example of the role of fathers, fear and the power of positive action! Sheldon and his partner Kiriana have two daughters, Jade and Waimarino, who attend Te Kōpae Piripono. Kaitiaki observed that, when he brought his daughters every day, Sheldon seemed reluctant to engage in conversations with Kaitiaki and avoided eye contact, rushing in and out before any meaningful contact (and relationship) could be made. In our conversations with Sheldon, we learnt that he had been brought up by his grandfather who spoke mainly Māori to him. However, his grandfather died when Sheldon was eleven, and by his own admission Sheldon went "off the rails a bit" and "just forgot about everything", until enrolling his daughters at Te Kōpae Piripono.

This is a conversation one of our Tumu, Aroaro, had with Sheldon:

Sheldon: It's been scary bringing my girls here. I come here and I see the kids and they all kōrero Māori. When I bring the girls and they're all in a circle on the whāriki I go, "Oh no! I'm sitting in the circle and it's coming around and I'm going to get asked a question!" I start sweating. It's quite embarrassing and scary. It's the not knowing that's the issue, that I will not give the right answer.

Aroaro: But if you knew that even if you gave the wrong answer, that it was still ok, would that make it easier?"

Sheldon: Yes! But for myself I would prefer to be bang on."

Aroaro: But before we get to bang on, because there is always a learning time, how do we get on before we get to the bang on?

Sheldon: Yeah I know that I should be trying to attempt it, even if I do get it wrong, because I know that it reflects on my kids, if they see me. I know they don't

know it fully yet but if I'm talking it they won't be afraid to learn and attempt to learn themselves.

Aroaro: So, how about when you are at Kōpae, how would you feel about doing the actual opposite of what you want to do, which is, you want to get out of the door fast. But the opposite of that is to actually stay? And for the first few times, you won't be responding very much but just taking it in, so that you're immersed just like your children. How would you feel about that?"

Sheldon: Yes, I'll do that! …I'm just worried about it coming around the circle and not being able to respond!

Aroaro: But if you knew that you were not going to be put on the spot,…you'd be ok?

Sheldon: Not really! I'd feel stink because you'd be skipping me and going onto the next person!

Aroaro: But you're not stupid. You <u>would</u> understand! Let's just say we were on the whāriki and I started here and I went round the circle, you would have understood what you needed to say by the time I got to you?

Sheldon: Yep. I would. Because it's for my kids! So you make sure if I'm sitting down, you start from there *(points to where I am sitting)*, so by the time it comes around to me, I will be: Oh yeah I know that! *(laughter)* (Interview with Sheldon, 17.8.06)

This conversation is a dynamic example of acknowledging the fear, but also making the expectation clear of what is required <u>and</u> our belief that Sheldon <u>can</u> do it. Sheldon shows that he is up for the challenge.

Five days after this kōrero, Sheldon, who is a talented musician, brought in one of three songs he and his partner, Kiriana, had written for Te Kōpae Piripono. He showed the words to one song but asked for help with some of the Māori (taking responsibility). We agreed that we would collaborate to create this new Kōpae song (sharing responsibility). Within a day, Sheldon and Aroaro were performing the song for the children at Wā Huihui (mat time). Here is Sheldon's waiata:

He raukura te whānau e	Our whānau is precious
Tū tangata, Tū kaha	Helping us stand tall and strong
Te aroha i a tātou e	The aroha that we have among us
He Piripono e	Is steadfast and everlasting
Ngā tāonga a rātou mā	The treasures of our ancestors
Ko te reo me ōna tikanga	Language and traditions
Hei korowai rangatira	A chiefly cloak that we embrace
Me Piripono e	
	Listen to our children
Whakarongo ki ngā tamariki	The sounds they make
Te kitakita a Tātarakihi	Our future generations
Ngā whakatupuranga e	Our utter commitment to them
Kaupapa Piripono	

This fascinating set of events shows that Kaitiaki persistence, in fostering whānau relationships, especially with those who are visibly most uncomfortable, is critical in fostering leadership and a sense of whānau. It is about shifting people's thinking to be comfortable and open to the idea of acknowledging their self worth and that they have much to offer and contribute to Te Kōpae Piripono and their children's learning (taking up the challenge of leadership). Working together with Sheldon provides a strong message that he and his whānau matter to us. Talking and saying the right words just does not cut it. Persistent Positive Action was the "glue" that helped cement our relationship. The ripples of Sheldon's learning have been dynamic. In a subsequent conversation I had with Sheldon and Kiriana (21.11.06), this is what they said:

> Kiriana: To me, a high was Sheldon coming in yesterday and spending a lengthy amount of time with the tamariki. I thought that was awesome – him feeling comfortable to do so. Breaking through that barrier. What brought that on, Sheldon was asked. *"I felt more comfortable to come and do it. But I'm at home now. I'm just part of the furniture,"* was his reply. Sheldon said the turning point for him was our persistence, our dogged determination to build a relationship with him. Rather than feeling judged, he felt encouraged and acknowledged. Kiriana added, *" I reckon it's the time that you guys have spent, to actually sit down to kōrero with us and to share our fears. It's the sharing the fear that takes it away."*

And the wider ripples of Sheldon's learning continue to occur. One of their daughters, Jade, was shy and cautious in forming friendships. Sheldon's transformation has been Jade's transformation. What follows is a learning story written about Jade in 2007:

> *Today Jade arrived early with Dad and her sister. With eyes glistening, Jade told me excitedly about her sister's birthday – all the whānau and friends who were there, the birthday hats, the food, the cake, the singing and the presents. Her face showed her excitement and enjoyment. Wow what a magical moment! Jade has previously been a quiet girl who rarely conversed with adults or made eye contact. Yet, here she was initiating an animated kōrero, in te reo Māori, with smiles and direct eye contact! Since Jade parents have seen themselves as valued and respected members of the whānau at Te Kōpae Piripono, Jade now sees herself in a similar way (Learning Story, 28.11.06).*

6.2 Whānau Leadership - Hiria's Story

Hiria first came to Te Kōpae Piripono in 1997 when she enrolled her baby grandson, Mikaere. She later also took on the care of her granddaughter, Shaquille, who, in turn, attended Te Kōpae Piripono. It would be an understatement to say that their young lives have not always been easy. The family's experience as whānau members of Te Kōpae Piripono has changed all of their lives. While, both mokopuna have since moved on to Kura Kaupapa Māori (Māori immersion primary school), (Mikaere in 2001 and Shaquille in 2005), their strong whānau relationship with Te Kōpae Piripono continues.

In Hiria's case, her experiences motivated her to embark on study toward a Diploma of Teaching (ECE) with the field-based component at Te Kōpae Piripono. For her mokopuna, the ongoing relationship has been enabled by one of our whānau organising and coaching Kōpae hockey teams. This has meant that no less than 30 children continue to mainTain their whanaungatanga or kinship, outside of Te Kōpae Piripono's early childhood operation. Hiria's mokopuna have both stayed at different Kaitiaki homes and they also continue to participate in Te Kōpae Piripono activities. Fostering the relationship outside of Te Kōpae Piripono hours has sent the message to Hiria and her mokopuna that we (the whānau) continue to care. This connection through sport and other activities provides continuity for the children of Te Kōpae Piripono and our kaupapa.

Shaquille's experience dramatically demonstrates, a sense of personal worth, and knowledge that personal worth does not depend on today's behaviour or ability. It was Kaitiaki choice to love her unconditionally, no matter what her behaviour. Kaitiaki recognised that Shaquille was asking us: "Can I trust you, as I have varied experiences of trust?" and, "Will you help me, because I don't know how yet?" The commitment and persistence of Kaitiaki resulted in a transformation for Shaquille, helping her to rediscover her own mana (or self worth). Kaitiaki believed in her when she wasn't able to, yet. Through Kaitiaki actions, our answer to Shaquille's questions were, emphatically, "Yes!" We could see past the, at times, challenging behaviour to the "true" Shaquille. Hiria explains that, despite going to Kura Kaupapa Māori, Shaquille still strongly identifies with Te Kōpae Piripono:

Hiria: Last week, I played the Te Kōpae Piripono CD for the first time. I put it on and Shaquille just stood beside the stereo listening to it. She heard the Kōpae's pepeha and she just bawled her eyes out. Tears just came down. I just couldn't believe it. She was wailing. And it really got me. And I said to her, "He aha te raru? (what's wrong?)" And she goes, "Pīrangi au Kōpae (I want Kōpae)!" And I just couldn't believe it. I thought it was memory coming back and maybe she didn't want to go to school anymore. You know, she loved it here (at Te Kōpae Piripono).

Kaitiaki: *Why do you think she feels that way?*

Hiria: Well… she enjoyed it here. It was a safe place for her and she knew you.

Kaitiaki: *Does she feel she belongs here still?*

Hiria: Oh yeah, I think so, because I'm still here. That's why I'm here.

(Hiria interview, 14.8.06)

Hiria's consistent actions over a sustained period of time show her utter commitment to her mokopuna. They also provide a glimpse of the caring and reciprocal, dynamic and multi-dimensional relationships she has with Te Kōpae Piripono whānau. Hiria displays key aspects of leadership. She is taking responsibility for the well-being of her mokopuna. She understands that she plays the central role in providing vital continuity for them - in terms of education, of whānau, of kaupapa, of reo, of sport and of relationships. By actively taking on the role of <u>being</u> that continuity, she displays all of the four responsibilities – being, having, taking and sharing responsibility.

Hiria has actively chosen to maintain her connections with Te Kōpae Piripono whānau. Her self-initiated "tākoha" (contributions), such as the creation of significant arts, language and mathematical resources, and also considerable amounts of time, are ongoing evidence of leadership in action. Our reciprocal relationship is, therefore, the whāriki/context that embraces and supports learning for all the whānau.

6.3 A Father's Learning Journey - Scott's Story

Since the birth of my daughter, Te Ahupo, I have realised the importance of my role in her life. Both myself and my wife, Kiri, had decided that I would be an 'at-home papa' for our unborn baby and this was a role that I was extremely excited about. I was involved in the whole pregnancy of my baby - at every scan, check-up, blood test, you name it - after all, this pregnancy was just as much mine as it was Kiri's.

When our daughter was born I had an instant bond with her from the minute I welcomed her into the world with the common name I called her through the pregnancy ' Puku'. As soon as I said that name she turned her head and looked at me it was love at first sight, for both of us.

Kiri returned to work when Te Ahupo was three months old, a task that Kiri found difficult, as she was still breast feeding and didn't want to be separated from Te Ahupo. Despite this, I stayed at home with Te Ahupo for the first year of her life and we had a ball. Kiri would come home and the house would be in a state but it was more important to me that my girl and me had a good day and, more importantly, a lot of fun.

Both Kiri and me had decided our baby would go to Te Kōpae Piripono, prior to her birth. For us, it was the only centre we would ever entrust with our special taonga, due to the commitment and competency of the Kaitiaki and whānau. This was a movement that we wanted to be part of, for our tamariki. I started going with Te Ahupo to Kōpae at the end of 2004, to prepare her for attending full time in 2005. Unfortunately on the 14th of January 2005, Te Ahupo's 1st birthday, she was diagnosed with leukaemia. She immediately underwent six months of intensive chemotherapy at Starship Hospital. This was an extremely difficult time for us as a whānau. It is the most difficult thing to see your sick child wanting you to take all their pain away. Fortunately I got a part-time job, which allowed me to work in the evenings and weekends to help us through this challenging time - mentally, emotionally and financially.

Our daughter pulled through the six months of chemo and made a quick recovery and in Term 4, 2005, Te Ahupo started attending Te Kōpae Piripono full-time. I returned to full-time work and we moved on with life and set new goals for ourselves. The first of these

goals was regaining our financial security as we had lost this while our daughter was sick. With me working full-time for the first time in nearly two years it was a great change for us, or so we thought. With Kiri also working full-time, as a teacher, we found it difficult to negotiate Kōpae's hours of operation and our work hours, so we relied on others to take and pick up Te Ahupo each day. Initially we thought we were very fortunate to have great friends and whānau who would do this for us, however, it became increasingly difficult at home - constantly rushing every morning and evening. We were all close to burn out.

It is for this reason that I, once again, left work to spend more time with our daughter and give her the attention she needed and was missing out on. I began taking Te Ahupo to Kōpae each day and picking her up. Initially, this was uncomfortable for me as the Kōpae is a total immersion Maori environment. I felt intimidated and uneasy due to the language barrier. After a short time this burden lifted and I began to feel comfortable and looked forward to taking Te Ahupo to Kōpae. Soon, I was spending most of my days there with my daughter or with the other Kaitiaki whom I had developed great relationships with. I enjoyed getting involved with the other tamariki and watching my daughter thrive in such an environment. One of our concerns for our daughter was the fact that, at 3, she still wasn't walking independently but on the very first day I took her to Kōpae Te Ahupo took her first steps. This was an emotional time not only for Kiri and myself but also for all the Kōpae staff as it was obvious to us that all Te Ahupo wanted was some of our time and we were not paying the attention that we should have due to our work commitments and busy lives.

Te Ahupo continues to thrive. Our household is much less stressed and I have returned to work during the day. I continue to drop Te Ahupo off at Kōpae in the morning and Kiri now picks her up in the afternoon. We have found the right balance in our lives between work and whānau and we look forward to our lives in the future.

6.4 Kaitiaki Leadership Learning - Kahumako's Story

Ko Tuhua te Maunga
Ko Taringamotu te Awa
Ko Tainui te Waka
Ko Ngāti Maniapoto te Iwi
Ko Ngāti Hari te Hapū
Ko Hia-Kaitupeka te Marae
Ko Peter rāua ko Te Heitiki Turu ōku Matua
Ko Keith Wilson taku Hoa Rangatira
Ko Oti-Te-Rangi tā māua Tamatāne
Ko Sapphire tā mātou Mokopuna
Ko Kahumako Wilson taku ingoa
No reira, tēna koutou, tēna tātou katoa.

I am the eldest of seven children, and also a girl. From birth, I was brought up by my mother's parents (their first mokopuna). Had I been a boy, I would probably have been brought up by my father's parents (their fifth mokopuna). My grandparents were native speakers of te reo Māori but they wanted their mokopuna to grow up in the Pakeha world. They had a hard life. My parents were strapped for speaking Māori at school, therefore from a very young age my life was already pre-determined by my grandfather. After leaving school, I moved to Taranaki and got a job at Tegel Poultry, sending money home to the whānau to support my younger siblings coming through high school. By this time, my younger sister, her tamariki and my younger brother had begun their own journey of learning te reo Māori. Not me. I was the whānau breadwinner.

Another episode of my story began on Monday 13 September 1993 when my husband and I became first time parents to our adopted son Oti-Te-Rangi. This was the biggest and scariest challenge we had ever encountered, both as individuals and as a couple. A baby was not something we could trade-in for a later model, like we had upgraded new cars over the years. This required careful planning and commitment. I envied watching my younger sister, brother, nieces and nephew speaking te reo Māori, only speaking English when I was around. I wanted that for my son. Throughout Oti-Te-Rangi's early years, I was determined that he have nothing but the best care and education within a total immersion Māori environment.

I faced many barriers. I couldn't speak or understand te reo Māori and I didn't take kindly to people giggling and snickering, because of it. But I was determined that I would not sacrifice my son's right to learn te reo Māori and that I would learn alongside him. I enrolled Oti-Te-Rangi in a Māori language early childhood centre and it soon became apparent that the centre did not meet my expectations. This led to my decision to become an early childhood teacher. It was not easy. It meant working with children during the day, studying and attending whānau meetings and Māori language classes at night! Then there was the messy house!

I graduated with a Diploma of Teaching ECE in 2002 and joined Te Kōpae Piripono's teaching team in 2003. What a huge sigh of relief and a breath of fresh air. This was a centre I would be happy to work in - trained teachers, understanding, respectful, trustworthy and KAUPAPA MAORI too. Also in 2003, I took on another role within Te Kōpae – that of a kuia. My whānau was graced with another baby, our mokopuna Sapphire. We were a package-deal (hehehe!). However, despite the joy in my life – my mokopuna, my teaching status and being a valued member of Te Kōpae's teaching team - I struggled with self-confidence. I didn't realise it at the time but I was constricted by the fear of making mistakes and the scary prospect of trying new things. Something had to change!

In November 2006, my beloved Koroua (grandfather) died. One night, following his death, I was having a restless night, contemplating the COI research and what that truly meant for me and my family. At about two or three o'clock in the morning, I had the feeling of something sitting on my shoulder. Thinking about my Koroua, it suddenly became quite clear to me, "Ok, what legacy did you leave me? Apart from the happy memories of my childhood, you left me your turangawaewae, your whakapapa, and your reo, tikanga and kawa." I realised this was something I needed to pick up or otherwise it was going to be lost. I wouldn't be able to pass it down to my mokopuna when the time was right for her to learn about her whakapapa. All of sudden I felt a new sense of purpose and determination.

The outcomes of my change in thinking have been profound. On a family level, there has

been significant growth in Sapphire's language development and confidence. Her level of reo Maori is strong and she is not afraid to use it, wherever she goes. People look at her and she's quite adamant that she's not going to change to English, even if they don't understand what she's talking about. I'm proud of her for that. A big loud of applause must go to my husband whose development has come 'full circle'. Before, te reo Māori and tikanga wasn't something he would even think about - maybe for a minute and then the thought would be gone. But now he's got a cellphone, he's texting in Maori. He hates cellphones! But we bought him one for Christmas and it has turned him around, texting Oti and I every chance he gets. The changes for my family have a lot to do with Te Kopae's COI research, particularly the Four Responsibilities of Leadership. At home it has become a type of ritual or game - finding examples of Taking Responsibility, Being Responsible, Having Responsibility and Sharing Responsibility. Keith will do something and Oti will say, "Hey that's taking responsibility Dad!" So those have been some big highs for us as a whanau, and for him. He's starting to realise that, yes, you <u>are</u> appreciated and valued. You work long hours to support our whanau but there are also little things that you do that you probably don't think about which we all benefit from, and you're taking charge of that.

Te Kōpae Piripono's COI journey has proven to be an amazing leadership-learning journey for me. I have learnt to ask for clarification if I'm unsure and I now feel comfortable to ask for help. I am more confident to express my point of view, without feeling whakama. I feel safe that others are around me to support me, should I need it. Te Kopae Piripono is a safe haven where I can practice, try new things, make mistakes and learn from them. Parents and Kaitiaki have noticed the shift and it has had a positive impact to my self-esteem. One parent made the comment, "This time last year you would never have dreamt of taking on the role of kaikaranga." I think about this all the time. Yes, I can do it. I hope that parents and new Kaitiaki will see us as role models and feel safe to take up the challenges too. Before the COI research, I believed I had only once chance so I always to had 'get it right.' That was the perfectionist in me talking. Now, it's okay. I'm human. I am allowed to make mistakes. If I get it wrong, I am open to feedback and I will learn from that. I have started on a long journey but it is awesome.

I am buzzing at the moment. Writing learning stories and discussing children's learning with other Kaitiaki and parents, in a more in-depth way, has done a lot for my teaching practice. I'm having fun. We have lots of laughter. There are no barriers. There is too much good stuff to have time for barriers. For myself, an unexpected consequence of sharing and celebrating children's learning has been the considerable positive feedback I have received. The positive feedback I got took away the rest of the fear I had of getting it wrong. I feel really happy that there is that deeper involvement with whānau and it's not about them just being parents, it's about us being a whānau.

6.5 Stepping outside your comfort zone - Bob's Story

Matua Bob has been involved in Te Kōpae Piripono since the centre's foundation. Over the years, Bob's three youngest children (of six) have been enrolled. Although Bob didn't realise it at the time, he was a godsend to the whānau. He had much to contribute, as a carpenter and handyman, as a landscaper and machine operator of all types and sizes, as a father figure to the children, and a mate to the adults. We relied on Bob's expertise to problem-solve away property issues. We were a small whānau, and quite a close bunch. It hadn't occurred to us to tell Bob how important he was to the group, or how much we appreciated his contribution. We were just all there together making it happen, whānau. Bob worked long hours and there were many times that he could not make it to the Kōpae. He was reticent and distracted at times, but we barely noticed, we used to say he was a deep thinker, that though he might not say a lot, what he did say was spot on. So he was shy…there were a few of us!

We also found Bob frustrating over those years because, although he was skilled in areas highly valued in the community, when career pathways opened up to advance Bob in business, he didn't take them. In the positions he held, he would not assert himself. At home, decisions would be made to improve the family home, or to do other things, but the job would often not be followed through to completion. As a speaker of Māori, Bob was an asset to the whānau, but he spoke hesitantly. He was slow to put himself forward. We

would joke about wanting to put a bomb under him, or to give him a boot, to get him going. But that was Bob. We came to accept the way he was.

In 2006/7, we questioned Bob, along with other whānau members, on the barriers to participation and father involvement, and he began talking about his experience. Bob told us about how every step of his life journey had been a struggle with his feelings of inadequacy, and his fear of failing and disappointing others. His lack of self-belief had confined him to a comfort zone in which he excelled, but success in that restricted range of activities did not allow him to take risks and venture beyond that zone to test the upper limits of his abilities. Therefore, he lived a safe existence, doing things he felt comfortable doing, telling himself things were ok, yet feeling frustrated and embarrassed that he could not go further. This, despite being the top joinery apprentice in Taranaki, in his time; raising six wonderful children and having the support of a devoted (but frustrated) wife, and being sought after by many in the community. We learned that when Bob got married, he believed his role in the family was that of breadwinner and provider. Work therefore, always came first. Bob's view of parenthood had the wife as the homemaker who raised the children. The husband was out earning the money. Family life and relationships had revolved around that understanding. In Bob's own words, "I didn't think I needed to be there with the kids…my upbringing was so different, and I never questioned it. I came to realise all that, later on." (interview, 8.8.07)

We didn't know it at the time, but early involvement in Te Kōpae Piripono had also been difficult for Bob. He felt challenged on many fronts, from his stereotypical preconceptions about family and gender difference, to parenting style, to what he sensed were people's expectations of him as a Māori-speaking Māori male, and to the very use of te reo Māori. We didn't know it at the time but there were occasions when he had to force himself to come in to the Kōpae (interview, 8.8.07). Bob could recall incidents in his upbringing, which he suspected had something to do with his lack of self-confidence.

Bob is from a large whānau of 11 that settled in Auckland in the late 1950s. He is the middle child, with four older and four younger siblings. Both his parents were native speakers of te reo Maori. Here is what Bob had to say about that at a wānanga whānau:

> *My parents were native speakers of Māori and you would think it would have brushed off on to me, but it didn't. That's the way that my parents were. Māori was here (confined to cerTain times and places) and everything else was in English. When I entered Te Kōpae Piripono, I thought, "Yes, let's learn te reo Māori, it will be good for our kids to learn te reo Māori." But what I didn't realise was the bigger picture of what that really required, as far as involvement, commitment and all the rest. It's huge, and as it started to get bigger and bigger, I started to think, "Oh, this is not for me." Then I'd have some tamariki come around and they would start to kōrero Māori to me and I'd go, "Uh, oh!" I did used to do that. But then I realised that it was not good, because these young tamariki were going, "What's wrong with this? Why is he running away from me?" And I realised I was passing how I was feeling on to the kids. So I thought the next thing to do was to get into te reo Māori. It was really, really hard, but by the same token, it was a huge learning curve for me (15.11.05).*

How could Bob not have known that his reo Māori was already pretty good? His children, through him and his wife's efforts had te reo Māori as their native language. Bob told us how inadequate and unconfident he had felt around us at Te Kōpae Piripono. How did we miss that? If only we had known then all that we have learned about fear and anxiety since.

A few years down the track now, and many hours of talking and participation later, Bob was able to tell us what he has got out of involvement at Te Kōpae Piripono, "Personal growth and the growth of the family. Meeting new whānau and joining others to grow together as a whānau." He has moved a long way up the poutama of learning and development over the years, and the poutama continues to stretch up ahead of him. Bob is now a successful trainer in all levels of driver education. He is on the boards of

several organisations, and is highly regarded in the community. At home, he and his wife are able to talk easier about all manner of things they couldn't before, and the family is contented, busy going places. Bob continues to grow, and through sport and other activities he is taking others with him, providing support for males in the same position that he once was. Bob's contribution to the Kōpae's understandings around whānau support and development, and the engagement of fathers, has been substantial. In January 2007 Bob wrote, "Whānau is important and all need to be supportive for the wellness of our tamariki, mokopuna… To learn, we need to step out of our comfort zones."

6.6 "The Kōpae Thing" - Wahi's Story

We lived in Australia for 20 years, and while it was an awesome lifestyle over there, we felt like something was missing. What that was we didn't really know, it was nothing that we could put a finger on. Then, in 1996, Mum brought a group of kids over from Tamarongo. They had planned a school trip to Brisbane, but the airline went bust, and they lost all their airfares and accommodation. The community pulled together and put them on the plane, and then we put them up in our backyard.

While they were with us, the answer to our puzzle hit us like a flash. I remember thinking, "That's it, that's what has been missing, te taha Māori!" We were so impressed to hear the kids kōrero Māori, it was like, "Wow, that's it, that's what we've been missing all these years." We decided then that we would come back home to find it, but it was my husband who actually took that step. He came back for a tangi, and while here he came down to Taranaki to visit Mum and Dad. He rang me from there and said, "That's it, I've got a job." He didn't even go back to Australia to help us pack up or anything, he just left it all to me - because he was worried that if he went back, I might not move. Even though that was what I wanted, we had become set in our ways over there. The kids were settled in school and all their education had been in Australia, but that was that, we uprooted and moved home.

Very quickly we started looking for a place for the kids. We started off at one centre, but it wasn't a good model to follow, and although we didn't know then what was a good model, we knew what wasn't right for us. And then my mother said, "I know this awesome place in New Plymouth. If you are alright travelling every day, we'll make the phone call." And so that is what we did. My youngest son had just turned 9 months, it was 1999. That was one of the hardest things I've had to do in my life, to walk through the door of the Kōpae. Mum had said it was total immersion, and although that is exactly what we wanted for our children, I was terrified.

Mum is a native speaker of Māori, but out of a family of nine children, only Mum and an uncle, speak Māori. My grandfather's philosophy was, if you want to beat the Pakeha, you have to be better than them, so he pushed all his kids through the Pakeha system, and didn't emphasise the Māori, although it was always there. My Dad didn't speak Māori at all, his mother was from an area where she was taken away from her parents and put into a foster home to give her a better education. But at the end of the day she was the cleaner, the flunky, and the babysitter. She got taken away from her parents when she was seven. And she was put into a white pinny, no shoes, and she was not allowed to speak Māori, though that was all she knew, separated from her family…

I remember Mum's parents speaking Māori all the time. I must have understood. And when we were growing up Mum would speak to us in Māori...but we weren't particularly interested at that time. At school there was no Māori language, if you wanted to do Māori you could, but it had to be long distance through the Correspondence School. We also had a kapa haka but it was very sterile, with no room for movement and growth. We had a 1st XV rugby team which did the haka before a game, and that was all they did. When we had a pōwhiri at the school we were only allowed to the haka and 'Pā mai'. We had a repertoire of three waiata, we weren't allowed to do any more...I had no idea there was anything more, until I became an adult.

When we came to Te Kōpae Piripono, the biggest thing for me was the support here. If that hadn't been the case I would probably have been out the door in pursuit of my kaupapa - I

wouldn't have hung around to put my kids through something that was only lip service. So, as hard as it was to walk through that door, I made myself do it. Even though I really wanted to be there, I still needed a push, and support. We were travelling from Opunake every day, but I really really wanted things Māori for my family so I was determined to make it work. And I saw the beauty in everybody here and that made me determined to stay and learn more.

I loved the fact that the Kōpae encouraged people to get educated and to better themselves for the sake of their families...that was a big feather in the cap, and another reason I came here. I have been really grateful for the support I received to do my early childhood training. The training fitted well with the Kōpae, it helped me move in the direction I wanted to go. I completed my Diploma in Teaching - Early Childhood and also Te Tohu Mōhiotanga, and Te Ataarangi, Tau 1 (year 1) and Tau 2 (year 2). I started Tau 3 (year 3) but it was a bit too full on with all other things happening at the time. I still plan to do it when the time is right.

So we have been here in the whānau of the Kōpae for nine years, and it has been an amazing journey. My youngest son has been at the kura kaupapa Māori for some time now, but he and the other kids still feel very much a part of the furniture of the Kōpae. When they come here they are so happy to see all the whaene and the rest of the whānau. They often talk about the Kōpae. Because my youngest son began here at the Kōpae when he was very young, he has what I call the 'Kōpae Thing'. Whakaaro nui ki te tangata – always thinking of others and expecting to deal with issues the way the Kōpae does.

We speak Māori at home. My husband is working on building his reo, although he has been focusing on their English language development at home and preparing them for later on (we have just sent PJ to a Māori boys' boarding school). My husband has also been looking at his Tongan side as well. The kids have been asking questions, such as, "Why aren't we learning Tongan? We have to be fair, we've got Tongan tūpuna as well." So he's doing that as well. We believe that whatever language the kids choose to use, they have to be able to speak it properly.

It is important for me that my kids have a strong taha Māori, and that they can stand where ever they go. For example, before every football game, PJ does a karakia. Even when we've travelled away to Waikato and Wellington, before kai and stuff, there is always karakia. He would just stand up and do it, he expects everyone is going to stop for a karakia, and he'll always stand up and do a mihi to tangata whenua. No one asked him to, he just did it, to him, it's just what you do.

PJ's teachers say he is a strong, happy and confident young man, willing to give all things a go, and he makes friends easily. We, his parents, are very happy to hear this. The day before he left he wanted to dress up in his new school uniform and come to the Kōpae so he could show the Kaitiaki and whāene. He said, "The Kōpae was where it all started for me Mum." I was really touched by that. I have always known that the Kōpae was significant in the lives of my children, but I was a bit taken aback by the depth of this statement. When we talk on the phone he always says "*Me tuku taku aroha ki ngā whāene me ngā tamariki o Te Kōpae," (Please pass on my love to the whāene and children of the Kōpae).*

I have gained a lot from involvement in Te Kōpae Piripono. I have developed self-confidence, and have grown educationally. I know that Māori early childhood education is my career path. I believe I make a good support person for other whānau members, because I empathise with those who find it challenging… I've been there. I can help whānau who are like I was. I have overcome some significant obstacles in my time and I can help others do the same to achieve stability and belief in self, so their children have a really strong standing. Education is important and families need to know they can make choices.

To this end, I have found the co-construction of learning stories a fantastic tool, especially for new whānau who are still finding their feet and where they fit. Through that conversation process, they begin to feel much more comfortable, you can see that when they come in, there is not the 'rush in, and rush out, before someone sees me or notices me'. People are starting to hang around a bit longer, and when you're talking to them they are actually looking you in the eye, at your face. If you get that eye contact and really engage with them, they become a lot more relaxed and comfortable.

It is awesome to recognise learning in children's play and to then share that with families, because whānau are seeing that same thing at home and are thinking, "Oh my God, is that what that is, I thought it was just da, da, da." It changes their outlook on their children's learning. Children's activity is no longer "just play". They are less likely to say to their children, "Just go over there and play." I've had some good feedback from parents regarding that. Some parents say they take the learning home and share it with grandparents and aunties, and that's quite empowering… Then they'll come back and say, "Mum was surprised when I said this." There's a lot of positive development happening in families. There's also positive development amongst the Kaitiaki. It is always good to hear the various perspectives of the other Kaitiaki. We always see different things. To play a positive role in shaping and influencing peoples lives is really empowering stuff. Goodness knows what our lives would look like if there had not been Te Kōpae Piripono.

Chapter 7
Evidence of Children's Leadership

Children show leadership all the time. They are quite capable at setting their own goals and leading their learning. But how often and to what extent do adults see this and recognise it as such? This chapter provides a number of stories that show children's leadership learning and also leadership in action. In these stories, most of the children are referred to by their real names, however, where pseudonyms are used these are indicated by a foonote.

7.1 Te Tangihanga o Manu (Bird's Funeral)

Moses is a 4-year-old boy. He has been at Te Kōpae Piripono since he was a young child. Moses is the youngest in his large family.

One morning we arrived at Kōpae to discover that one of our budgies had died. Moses's whole demeanour changed. He would not leave the bird's side, as if he had taken on the responsibility for her care. Our whole whānau went into tangi (funeral rite) mode. The children created, decorated and furnished a small cardboard coffin with Moses organising its manufacture. Once complete, Moses insisted that he remove manu from her cage. Donning gloves, he gently eased her into his hands and ever so tenderly placed her in the box. Next he covered her with a piece of tissue paper, in case she got cold… Now with manu lying in state, we all proceeded to do our mihi poroporoaki (final farewells) to her. Children would come and go, laugh and cry, sing and karanga (call) to her and give wonderful orations. Throughout this whole process, Moses never left her side. At times, he would put his face so close to her that he was almost giving her a hongi. When the time came for us to bury her, Moses again insisted he carry her to our urupā (our pet cemetery. Yes, also buried there are a turtle, and three fish). Then when it came to the actual burial, Moses proceeded to show us how to do it, stamping the earth emphatically around the grave as he went. At the end of the day, when Mum came to pick Moses up, we recounted this fascinating series of events. But instead of the surprise that we expected, it was instant recognition for Mum. Oh yes, it was something she could very well believe, because Moses' father's whānau were the

designated grave diggers for his marae. It all fell into place for us. All that knowledge. All that understanding. And all those examples of leadership!

- …of Taking Responsibility – having the courage and confidence to take the lead and leading others in the tangi process;
- …of Having Responsibility – taking on various roles, including coffin maker, undertaker, caretaker and gravedigger;
- …of Sharing Responsibility with his friends to participate and to also take on various roles during the tangi; and
- …of Being Responsible – the total dedication and maturity Moses showed throughout the day, particularly his commitment to manu and to the roles he took on.

7.2 Tama[4] and the Dinosaur

Tama is almost three years old. He sometimes has difficulty articulating his needs, which can result in physical altercations with other children over play space and equipment. For the past few months now we have been using our matawā (egg timers) as one way of helping children resolve their own issues. With Kaitiaki assistance, Tama uses the matawā and is beginning to learn about turn-taking, considering other's feelings and having the confidence to advocate for himself.

This morning Tama arrived and immediately sought out some dinosaur figures he really liked to play with. Soon after, a younger two-year-old child joined him and started playing with one of his dinosaurs. Tama became anxious and started to pull the dinosaur off the other child. But all of a sudden he stopped in his tracks, as if deep in contemplation, and jumped up. "Whaea!" he called, "Matawā, Whaea," running to each of the three places he knew the matawā lived. Finding one at last, he raced back to the other child, announcing, "Taku wā!" (my turn) – "rima miniti?" (five minutes?) "Ae," (yes) was the younger child's automatic response and she immediately handed the dinosaur back to Tama. Tama smiled

[4] pseudonym used

and, in exchange, gave the other child the matawā. A short time later, the other child moved off to play in another area – leaving Tama with the dinosaurs and the matawā.

✪Tama shows his huge learning in dealing positively with issues. He has the courage, confidence (taking responsibility) and self-belief (being responsible) to problem-solve his issue over the dinosaur. In his interaction with the other child, Tama takes on the tuakana role (having responsibility) and he approaches the issue positively, enabling a positive solution to the problem at hand. By acting in this way, Tama reveals his leadership learning. Not only does he show the other child a different side of himself – his tuakana side (new ways of doing and being) - and modelling these tuakana traits (acceptable ways of dealing with issues), infinitely he learns something more about himself - as a competent and confident individual.

This story also shows the importance of following an agreed process. The very action of focussing on the process distracts Tama from the anxiety and other negative emotions about the potential loss of the dinosaur and helps him regain and maintain control of these emotions rather than forcing his will over the object and the other child. It is a negotiation of roles and of their relationship.

7.3 "Kaore au i te pīrangi!" (I don't want that!) - Tapeka's Leadership

Tapeka is 17 months old and one of the teina (younger children) of Te Kōpae Piripono. She is an only child and her first language is te reo Māori. This story talks about noticing, recognising and responding (Cowie, 2000) to leadership in someone this young.

Recently, we have noticed Tapeka throwing her food onto the floor during meal times. One of the Kaitiaki discussed this with her mother, who explained that, at home, if Tapeka did not like a particular food, she would 'hide' it from her parents. On Monday at lunchtime, Tapeka again threw her food. She shook her head vigorously, an obvious "no!" when offered a particular piece of food. But five minutes later, she wanted it. At lunchtime on Tuesday, the Kaitiaki tried a different strategy and asked Tapeka what she would like to eat:

Peaches? E Kao (no)! Rice crackers? Ae (yes)! Tapeka was then asked if she wanted water or milk to drink. She shook her head, 'no', to both. Instead, she pointed to the peaches she had, seconds earlier, rejected. Today at lunchtime, the Kaitiaki tested another hypothesis. Without a word, she opened all of Tapeka's food, leaving it for her to choose. Then the Kaitiaki sat and watched. What did Tapeka do? She sat at the table and promptly ate all her food! No issue! She then proceeded to drink, not only a cup of milk but also a cup of water.

✪Tapeka shows that, even at 17 months, she is a leader. She shows that she has a rapidly growing understanding of her ability to make her own decisions (taking responsibility) and to communicate this to others (sharing responsibility). Tapeka also shows that she has responsibility for herself and her own needs (having responsibility). She tests different strategies at meal times, at home and at Te Kōpae. It is highly likely that this behaviour is replicated in other aspects and interests in her life. Tapeka knows what she wants and, even though she has only a small amount of verbal language, she clearly articulates this. Taking control of her choices around meal times is just one indication of her desire to take responsibility for her own learning, including play, space, play equipment and friends. Leadership is about choice. Tapeka clearly shows she views herself as confident and competent (being responsible). This is leadership but it might easily be misconstrued as naughtiness, bolshy-ness, rebelliousness or put down to 'terrible-twos behaviour'. By her actions, Tapeka is telling us, 'Here I am. Can you see me? Will you acknowledge me and my right to be respected? This is what I want. Do you hear me? Do you really know me?'

7.4 Te Tito Waiata (Composing a Song)

This story shows shared and collaborative leadership in children. It highlights the importance of AKO - the interchangeability of teacher and learner roles (Tamati, 2005) - and fostering reciprocal Kaitiaki:child relationships. It also emphasises the importance of Kaitiaki understanding the level and nature of their engagement in children's play.

During the past several weeks, the children have been right into dancing and singing – dressing up and turning anything and everything into a microphone with which to perform.

One CD that they really like is, Whare Kōhungahunga 6 (Māori Music CD, Ministry of Education). They play it so much they know all the words! The great thing about this CD is it has different versions of each song: the words only, the music with the words and the music only. Today, a group of five children were singing along to the CD when it got to the music only version of the song they really liked. One of the Kaitiaki sang some different words. Oh what a commotion! "No! Stop! Those aren't the right words!" the children scolded. What a hoot, these children telling off the Kaitiaki! The Kaitiaki stopped the CD and explained that it was possible to make up your words because this version was just the tune. Well! Off they went! They wanted to write their own words to the song. They got some paper and pens and started to write. It was fascinating to see! They discussed their ideas and wrote down their words. Such focus! Such creativity! Then they tried to put their new words to the tune. But it wouldn't work. There were too many words! The problem solving began again, in earnest. How could they make it work? They discussed and tried different words then tested whether these would fit. Everyone was involved, Kaitiaki included. However, the children drove the discussion and wrote the words. The Kaitiaki was simply one of the group. Then they sang their words. Kātahi ko ngā manu tioriori ataahua ra! These are the words to their waiata (the English translation doesn't do it justice!):

Ko te kura o te ao o Taranaki e…	*The school of the world of Taranaki*
Titiro ki Maunga Taranaki e…	*Look at mountain Taranaki*
Ngā honu kei te maunga ra	*The turtles on the mountain*
Kei runga i te ao	*At the top of the world*
Ahua ataahua me te maunga Taranaki e	*Taranaki looks so beautiful*
Rere runga e…	*Flying up high*
E tere wana e…	*Going really fast*
E paruparu e…	*(and) there is dirt (up there too)*
Ka haere tātou ki te maunga	*We will all go to the mountain*
He pai to korowai ataahua	*I like your cloak (of snow)*
Ka mau au i te panekoti…	*It is like my skirt*
He rite to korowai	*Your cloak is like*
Ki taku panekoti kanikani ataahua e…	*my beautiful dancing skirt*

✪ Wow! This story is a fascinating look at how leadership is recognised and fostered, by the level and nature of the engagement of the Kaitiaki. Firstly, the Kaitiaki was engaged in the play, not as the 'teacher' but by being actively part of the play. By taking on a participant

role, the Kaitiaki provided the environment for the children to determine the nature, direction and outcomes of the play. Everyone in the group was an active participant – engaging, debating, discussing and deciding how their waiata should go. They were also able to discover cause and effect (because the words did not fit in relation to the music) and then to collectively problem solve. While they scribed their own words, the Kaitiaki also jotted these down, for rest of the whānau to access. The play had a life of its own. The children showed they were quite comfortable taking responsibility (having a go and trying new things), and having responsibility (taking on different roles at different times including scribe, singer, organiser, helper, timetabler, decision-maker and dancer). Working in such a dynamic and collaborative way showed their ability to share responsibility. This is being responsible. This is leadership!

7.5 Hamiora[5] and the Skeleton Puzzle

This story highlights the way children easily assume the responsibilities of leadership, such as taking on tuakana-teina roles (having responsibility), taking responsibility for another child's learning and collaborating with others in shared learning endeavours (sharing responsibility).

This morning four-year-old Hamiora asked for the skeleton puzzle. He was totally absorbed as he put together the child-sized skeleton, confidently referring to a wall chart to measure his progress and to decide what piece to select next. When three-year-old Tama came over to join him, Hamiora eagerly shared his skills and knowledge, and demonstrated how to use the chart for reference. He also affirmed, with a clap, when the Tama placed a puzzle piece in the correct place. This further encouraged Tama's participation. Hamiora's big smile and easy manner showed he was enjoying this tuakana-teina interchange. The pair had some tricky problems to work out. Not only did the thigh and arm bones look very similar, there were two of each of them – a left side and a right side! Hamiora persisted, mapping each bone against a part of his own body and then against the chart. I asked Hamiora some questions about his skeleton. His responses were that the skeleton was a boy who used to be a Pirate of the Caribbean. Then a vampire came and the skeleton's heart fell out because he

[5] pseudonym used

had no skin to keep it in! Robots, dogs and dinosaurs have skeletons, and skeletons don't get sick. When their legs get broken, they have to go to hospital and get a big plaster. Hamiora and Tama, spent most of the day in each other's company. Their next quest was to investigate whether or not the pūngāwerewere (spiders) that I had brought from home had skeletons or not!

✪Hamiora shows he is actively making sense of his natural, physical and social world – about human physiology and of social rules about friendship. He uses different strategies for active thinking and reasoning. Hamiora shows his creative imagination and his ability to make connections with previous experiences, stories and movies. He also makes strong connections with home and family. His Dad's leg was in plaster recently and his Mum is a nurse. But also evidenced during this play is Hamiora's leadership. He assumes a tuakana role (having responsibility) and takes responsibility for Tama's learning. But more than this, the pair's collaborative engagement is evidence of them sharing responsibility and their genuine desire to sustain their relationship in this shared endeavour.

7.6 "You're the nurses, not the doctors!"

This delightful story highlights children's leadership in action. The children[6] determine their own actions, make their own choices, take responsibility for themselves and others, drive their own learning and are self-reliant. They use strategies for initiating and maintaining their relationships with other children (sharing responsibility) including taking turns, problem solving, negotiating, seeking another's point of view, supporting others, and acknowledging other's feelings.

Just after morning tea, some of the girls begin to play as doctors, "not nurses, we're doctors!" one emphatically announces. Anahera (3yrs, 5months) becomes the patient and three other girls, Maria and Roimata (both 2-years-old) and Tui (3-years-old) are the doctors. Then Roimata takes a turn as the patient. She has a 'sore' stomach. Anahera and Tui become the doctors and diagnose her complaint. Shortly, 4-year-old Arahia joins the group, announcing she is the 'head doctor' and Tui and Anahera are her assistant doctors. Along comes 4-year-old Hohepa. He is curious about what the girls are doing. "Come and

[6] pseudonyms used for all children in this story

play with us," Arahia calls out, adding, "You're the nurses, not the doctors!" Hohepa is not amused at this statement and walks away. The girls' play continues for some 20 minutes with each of them interchanging roles – from doctor to nurse, to patient and back to doctor again. Tonsils are checked. Temperatures are taken. Operations are performed. All the girls are totally engrossed in their work! Then head doctor, Arahia, decides to be the patient. Doctors Anahera and another doctor (Te Wai, 3-years-old) duly remove her insides because they are 'too sick'. Next they amputate her leg. It is sick too! Then it is Tui's turn. She lies on the bed. All of a sudden Arahia holds a plastic microphone above Tui and begins to gently shake it. Then she starts to do a karanga over her. A Kaitiaki asks Arahia what she is doing. Arahia explains that Tui has died and she is sprinkling water on her. She continues with her karanga… "Kua mate ia… oooh, oooh, kua mate, kua mate, tangi, tangi!" (She's dead, dead, dead, crying, crying). Te Wai gets up and goes to 'ring' an ambulance.

✪This is dynamic, dramatic, spontaneous, social pretend play. There is sophisticated role play, with an awareness and commentary on complex gender and social roles (boys can only be nurses). All participants know their involvement and role in the play and this involvement is valued. The children are also comfortable to try out different roles and allow others to take on roles which may be seen as important, i.e. head doctor/patient (having responsibility). For some children, the aspect of giving up their role for someone else is huge growth. Anahera, 3years 5months, is a very good example of this. She has, until very recently, had difficulty finding ways to be positively involved with group situations. Giving up the prized role of doctor to another child is a new and exciting development. Could it be that she feels so strongly and meaningfully part of the group, so accepted and able to contribute to the group that any of the roles are quite acceptable to her? The most memorable part of the play is when Arahia does a karanga, announcing that the patient has died. Here, Arahia shows her awareness and understanding of the cultural norms and practices of tangihanga – doing karanga and sprinkling water over the body. This shows her confidence in using a variety of strategies for exploring and making sense of the world. This is also evidenced by her attempts to include the boys in the girls' play - but only on the girls' terms.

7.7 Te Atahaia's Story

Te Atahaia's story talks about the difference fathers make in the lives of their children, particularly their sons, to enable them to take responsibility, to have responsibility, to share responsibility and to be responsible.

Te Atahaia is the youngest of a family of eight. He has two brothers and three sisters. He likes to listen to music, collect rugby cards and play the drums. When he grows up Te Atahaia says he wants to be a forensic scientist. Te Atahaia's father believed his role was as the breadwinner of the family. His view of parenthood was that the wife was the homemaker who also raised the children.

Te Atahaia became part of Te Kōpae Piripono as a newborn. Generally, he was a happy and confident child. Sometimes he became anxious but, on the whole, he was happy and relaxed. The time came for Te Atahaia to leave Te Kōpae Piripono to go to school. We discovered really quickly that that was hard for him. Before too long, Te Atahaia was strategising many ways to return to Te Kōpae including undesirable behaviours such as yelling, hitting, pushing and throwing things…. While his mother worked with the school to find solutions for Te Atahaia there, she was also working on solutions at home. Tears and years went past. One issue was evident. This was the level of involvement of the father role in Te Atahaia's life.

In 2006, and with planned encouragement from his family and Kaitiaki, Te Atahaia and other Kōpae graduates joined another school's hockey team in the local junior hockey competition. Because of the huge whānau interest, in 2007, we decided to organise our own hockey teams. In all, we had four teams – Kōpae Mana, Kōpae Kaha, Kōpae Pīpī and Kōpae Paopao! Many of Te Kōpae families, past and present, became actively involved. Te Atahaia was invited to play for Kōpae Mana but unbeknown to us he had also been asked to play for his school as well. Te Atahaia was in a fix! If he chose Te Kōpae he would be letting his school team down and if he chose his school he could not face his Kōpae team-mates. His anxiety grew. His fear of divided loyalties and of possible rejection was overwhelming. So he decided not to play for anyone. Many whānau made repeated attempts

to get him to play, but to no avail. So we turned to Dad again. We asked him to be the assistant coach of Te Atahaia's team, Kōpae Mana. But Te Atahaia was not convinced and on the day of the game refused to get in the car and go to the turf. Oh No! Now what? Bob did some quick thinking and asked Te Atahaia if he would be team photographer (having responsibility!). Te Atahaia accepted but insisted there was no way he was going to play, even if someone asked him! When they got to the game, Bob went straight on the turf, to join the team. Te Atahaia went to go on the turf as well but Bob turned to him and said, "*Sorry son, you can't come on the turf. The only people allowed are umpires, coaches and players." "I used to be a player,"* Te Atahaia asked his mother. "*Yes and you can play again if you want*", she replied. That week, Te Atahaia started asking questions about who was in the team, what was the name of the team and was it too late to join.

The following Saturday, Te Atahaia went to hockey with his Dad, just to 'watch'. But when they got there, the team was short, and losing. Wahi (the coach of Kōpae Kaha) put out an 'SOS' call to Te Atahaia. He asked if he was <u>allowed</u> to play. Of course he was! His team won the game! After that, Te Atahaia played in almost every game. This is a conversation another Kaitiaki had with Te Atahaia: "*Kia ora Te Atahaia. It's good to see you playing hockey." "I'm only here because of him*!" Te Atahaia replied, gesturing to his father. The following night, Te Atahaia's mother asked him what it was about Dad that made the difference. He replied, "*Dad makes me feel confident*". Then he added re-assuringly, "*Oh, you make me feel confident too Mum, but Dad's makes me feel better*."

Bob's involvement changed Te Atahaia's thinking. We could tell by his body language that Te Atahaia desperately wanted to play hockey. But his anxiety, fear and lack of confidence had a paralysing effect on him. It was only when Bob took on the four responsibilities that Te Atahaia was able to break free from his anxieties and join the team. What the rest of the Kōpae whānau had unsuccessfully tried for 5 weeks, to convince Te Atahaia to play, Bob managed to achieve in just two conversations!

✪While this story shows Te Atahaia's father's leadership in supporting his son's involvement in hockey, it also reveals Te Atahaia's own emerging leadership. The most

obvious is his taking responsibility – as scary as it was, having the courage to have a go, to step up and join the team. But Te Atahaia also assumed roles of responsibility - team photographer and eventually team member (having responsibility). He also shared responsibility (giving and asking for assistance, and engaging and collaborating with others in the team). Te Atahaia shows that, with his father's support, he came to BE responsible. This experience has been a revelation for Te Atahaia. While there is still a long way to go to on his journey of confidence and self-fulfillment (and we all know journeys are not always smooth!), the most important thing is that Te Atahaia's journey has started. And for the record, Te Atahaia's team, Kōpae Mana won their end of season tournament. And Te Atahaia played in every game!

Chapter 8

REFLECTIONS OF OUR COI JOURNEY

This chapter provides the opportunity for research team members to step back from the research and reflect on our research journey, including our unique researcher/teacher relationship. This chapter also celebrates our amazing journey, and reflects what our time as a COI has meant for children and families, teachers, researchers and the early childhood sector.

8.1 Working as Whānau - Our Teacher-Researcher Relationship

"Ko koe ki tēna kīwai, ko au ki tēnei kīwai o te kete."
(You carry your handle and I'll carry my handle of our kete)

The above whakatauki (tribal saying) has come to symbolically represent our research journey - the fundamental concepts of our research, the research process itself, our findings and conclusions and, above all, our learning. As previously mentioned, Ngā Kīwai o te Kete (the handles of the kete) whakatauki denotes contribution, interdependence, responsibility, working together, supporting each other and having a shared purpose - symbolised by the metaphoric kete. "Ngā Kīwai o te Kete" therefore provides a perfect representation of our unique research associate and teacher-researcher relationship – working as whānau.

Throughout the COI research, we have adopted a whānau approach. Working as whānau brings with it all the benefits of shared understandings, shared ownership and shared responsibility - particularly the support from the whole whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono. In keeping with the ethos of 'Ngā Kīwai o te Kete', it was essential that our research associate share our collective worldview and was a speaker of te reo Māori. As one of our founding whānau, Erana Hond-Flavell, ably fit this criteria. Because of our long-standing relationship, right from day one, we were already up to speed, 'research-relationship' - wise.

Because of our existing shared understandings, we were able to progress our research quickly and easily. As a whānau member, Erana's support went beyond the actual research itself. Bishop (1996) argues this whānau approach is a familiar aspect of kaupapa Māori research where groups, that are constituted as a whānau, embark on research based on principles of whānau – traditional or contemporary.

> The whānau is a location for communication, for sharing outcomes and for constructing shared common understandings and meanings. Individuals have responsibilities to care for and nurture other members of the group, while still adhering to the kaupapa of the group… …Group products and achievement frequently take the form of group performances, not individual performances.
>
> (Bishop, 1996, pp.148-149)

One issue for us has been that, because we are a small, stand-alone kaupapa Māori and Immersion Māori early childhood centre, sustaining the research over a three-year period has been difficult. In our case, because we require registered teachers who are also speakers of te reo Māori, recruitment issues, and the provision of research release time for staff has been a challenge. In these circumstances, cooperation and open communication have been essential requirements of working effectively together. Our whānau research team made the COI research work by being well planned and task and outcome oriented. Each team member assumed responsibility (or leadership) for their areas of strength. Each took on complementary roles that involved both collective and individual effort.

8.2 A Greater Emphasis on Teaching and Learning

A dynamic trend that has emerged in the course of this research has been a greater emphasis on teaching and learning within the Kaitiaki team. There has been a much deeper understanding of the significant learning that can be recognised in children's play. Recognising and responding to that learning is refining teaching practice and teachers' reflection on practice. An example of this deeper level of reflection is shown in one teacher's comments, "I've realised that I need to step back more, that I've been intervening too quickly, that I need to step back and look for children's signals when they need me," (Kaitiaki reflection, 31.8.06). An enabler has been an

interview process that we established between each Kaitiaki and Lynsi Latham-Saunders (research assistant and professional development facilitator). Through the interview process, a number of questions were asked every week, which gave Kaitiaki the opportunity to clarify their thinking and their practice, individually and collectively. The interviews made very clear the expectation that Kaitiaki understandings would be applied in practice. Such questions included, "What have you documented about children's learning and what has that told you about (the child)?"

8.3 Documentation of Children's Learning

The research has helped spearhead and drive the dynamic documentation of children's learning. Kaitiaki are not only enthusiastically motivated to document children's learning on a constant basis, the learning they are documenting is authentic and real. The learning stories are the formal recognition of depth of children's learning. The stories and Kaitiaki professional discussion are focussed on the learning, not the activity. The series of interviews with Kaitiaki posed reflective questions about the documenting of learning. Through this process Kaitiaki critiqued and refined their learning stories, to help them get to the depth of the learning. Kaitiaki are now better able to focus on noticing, recognising, and responding (Cowie, 2000) to the recognised learning (the 'noticing' was often documented well through the photos, which often illustrated the activity adequately but not the deeper learning).

When Kaitiaki recognised the learning, they brought their professional perspective. They made the learning visible and they were confident to share this with whānau. This enabled children's whānau to understand the learning, in a context that made sense for them. It also enabled a partnership between Kaitiaki and whānau and a sharing of responsibility for the learning. The documenting and the sharing of the learning is absolutely about rich understandings of outcomes for children. A key part of this trend has actually been about greater Kaitiaki understanding of the learning and the importance of their teaching role. It has meant they have become more responsible for teaching and learning. The interview process we established enabled deep and ongoing reflection on practice. Initially, during these interviews, Kaitiaki identified barriers to their learning about recognising and responding to children's learning. But this gradually changed. The process of Kaitiaki regularly sharing learning stories and engaging in professional

dialogue about the learning, helped remove the barriers. One Kaitiaki commented that the discussion,

> *…took away a lot of the fear of, "Have I got it right?", or, "Am I on the same kaupapa as you, or am I right off the track?" That was a scary thing, but once we got into sharing our own learning stories and seeing that we are all different… …we could see some really intense learning going on…" (Kaitiaki interview, 21.12.06).*

Another Kaitiaki also found sharing the learning helpful.

> *It is good to see the different perspectives of the other Kaitiaki. I was having a chuckle at a learning story (another Kaitiaki did) of two girls dancing. I took the photos and she saw things that I didn't see. That was cool! (Kaitiaki interview, 19.11.06)*

8.4 Greater Partnership with Whānau about Children's Learning

The research has also brought about greater understandings with whānau about their children's learning. Whānau are now assuming more responsibility for their children's learning in, as well as out, of Te Kōpae Piripono. Kaitiaki are now excitedly and enthusiastically sharing the depth of learning with whānau that enables whānau to recognise this deeper level learning. An example is the sharing of the learning about a three-year-old girl. Previously her activity would have been discussed, but there would not have been a lot of discussion about the deeper learning. Now there is daily discussion between Kaitiaki and parents about the learning. Kaitiaki are now confident to initiate discussions spontaneously. As one Kaitiaki put it:

> *I think I've become more involved with the learning stories, and to feel really excited that I am sharing those with whānau as well as with the tamariki, and looking deeper than what I have been in the past. I've learned a lot" (Kaitiaki reflection, 21.12.06).*

As a consequence, relationships between the adults and between adults and children have been strengthened. In another example, a parent is now quick to recognise the deeper learning that is taking place for her son on a daily basis. It was a revelation to her. She now sees him differently, in a more positive light. The parent understands the significant role she has in her son's learning.

8.5 Building Research Capacity

As these trends reveal, the greatest enabler for our COI research has been the nature and level of professional development for Kaitiaki. The interview process, using the reflective questions and the expectation that Kaitiaki would bring something, or have something to offer each week, jump-started reflection on children's learning and Kaitiaki's own practice in a major way. However, we continually had to negotiate the cultural and whānau commitments of our unique setting, including coping with an ongoing shortage of relievers who are both registered teachers and qualfied in both written and spoken Te Reo Māori. One point we want to emphasise about our COI research journey is that, for the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono, research is no longer a separate exclusive activity for university academics. Research has been accepted as inherent to teaching and learning, and fundamental to educational excellence. Kaitiaki, in particular, are comfortable with the research process and some have expressed the intention to continue with further study.

8.6 Dissemination

Our whānau research team understood the need to disseminate our research findings to the wider Māori and early childhood community. However, this did not diminish the fact that, presenting to large audiences, was initially a daunting prospect for some of the whānau. But over the duration of the three-year research project, this anxiety has been mediated by the number and frequency of dissemination activities and requests. We have gained greater confidence to present, share and discuss our journey with others. Having the whānau involved in dissemination, in a variety of ways, has been an important part of the dissemination process. Contributions may have been different but they all added to the collective vision and provided a very real face to the research.

Chapter 9
CONCLUSION

> *We are where we are today in Taranaki is because of all the 'stuff' that was dumped on our great, great, great ancestors… the muru raupatu, the loss of land, the loss of livelihood, of whānau; the powerlessness and the despair. We are the results of all that. Our grandparents' generation were the ones most severely affected – beaten for speaking Māori, growing up experiencing discrimination, misery and grief. They didn't want their children to go through what they had gone through so they tried to bring them up as Pākehā. But their children, our parents, were still discriminated against and ridiculed. And I think a lot about what it must have been like for them to feel like manuhiri on their own marae. They couldn't understand what was being said, or what was going on! Actually, they didn't fit anywhere – in a Māori or Pakeha world! When I listen to the people of my parent's generation, all I hear is the voices of people who are in pain, who want to belong. I reckon our generation is about trying to understand the 'stuff' that they had to deal with and trying to find a pathway forward. Because that stuff happened and there is nothing we can do about it. But understanding why so and so's family alcoholised themselves to death, or smoked themselves to death, or killed each other to death, gives us purpose and strength to ensure that our children and grandchildren don't pay the price for that pain of the past. There's nothing we can do about what happened. It's about acknowledging that, and each other and finding new ways and processes to do and be.* *(Kaitiaki reflection, 6.3.07)*

When the whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono embarked on the Centres of Innovation research, the focus was on the 'innovation' of our centre with the aim to better understand *how whānau development at Te Kōpae Piripono fosters leadership, across all levels, to enhance children's learning and development* (research question). This was so we could improve practice and also share what we had learned with the Māori and early childhood education community. The process of answering this question led us on a different journey to the one we envisaged. We discovered that rather than simply confining our investigation to 'what' we were doing at Te Kōpae Piripono, we also had to look at the context in which we were operating and 'why' we were doing what we

were doing. The strength of the data compelled us to confront difficult issues and to look for solutions. The journey and the reach of the research was uncomfortable at times, but it proved hugely rewarding.

The Tātai Whakapapa framework allowed us to conceptualise whānau development and leadership in terms of the 'morals in the stories' of the archetype family, that of Ranginui and Papatūānuku and the balance/imbalance of the atua dispositions. From this perspective, the atua dispositions are enabled or disabled by circumstances and the events of the history of each person, and of the group. Many of us are unaware of the inner power we have to reverse those effects. On closer scrutiny, much of what had historically been recognised as the desired outcomes of good practice at Te Kōpae Piripono (high levels of development and the assumption of the four responsibilities of leadership) had, for some whānau members, been replaced by the inverse behaviours of denial, withdrawal and paralysis. We wanted to know what it was that tipped the balance for those members.

For this purpose of understanding, the fusion of kaupapa Māori with participatory action research and case study/self study was the ideal research approach, making possible an up-close and personal look at our organisation. The indigenous paradigm of kaupapa Māori is the bedrock of Te Kōpae Piripono. Kaupapa Māori embraces Te Tātai Whakapapa as the analytical framework for our COI research. This approach inspired in both the research team and the whānau, a confidence and a sense of freedom to undertake the project in ways we felt were appropriate. The search by the whānau for answers to the research question began with a review and reaffirmation of Māori and Kōpae ideology. Once a unity of thought was achieved on fundamental themes, the whānau then identified and explored the manifestations of key concepts in the structures of whānau and whānau development, leadership (mana tangata) and the relationship to learning.

Whānau is at the core of Māori organisation. At Te Kōpae Piripono it is no different. The traditional genealogical basis of whānau may be absent, but the cultural understandings inherent in a traditional kin-based whānau are integral to Te Kōpae Piripono and, over time, become normalised for the children and their families. The principles of interdependence, human connection and shared journeys were reinforced through the COI research process. The research has shown that whānau is indeed significant in the development and wellbeing of the children. The process of developing

'whole' children depends on the development of 'whole' families. The child is inseparable from the community and community from our people's history. Child and family development is simply a component of whānau, hapu, iwi, and people development. Therefore, all activity aimed at enhancing children's learning and development and mediating the better future that we wish for them, must involve whānau with a view of the wider context in which the children are located. It is in relation to the whānau that members rise or fall. We believe that whānau is the springboard and safety net and without whānau the individual is adrift. We strengthen the child by strengthening the whānau and this requires a deeper and broader level of care and attention than is traditionally provided by early childhood facilities. All Māori children are entitled to this level of care.

At Te Kōpae Piripono, leadership is about being fully functioning and secure in one's mana tangata, able to assume the four key responsibilities (having, taking, sharing and being) to be effective within the community. The responsibilities should be an integral part of every facet of our daily lives. The journey to achieve mana tangata is a process to reverse the negative effects of colonisation and acculturation by filling the head with knowledge and the heart with the comfort of knowing, understanding and belonging.

The fears and anxieties that afflict so many of us, young and old, and impede our development are not the problem, although they are problematic. These emotional difficulties are merely the indicators of the damaging effects on us of colonisation. Too-low participation rates in education amongst our people and especially among fathers in early childhood education, are the long-term consequences of the hardships experienced by our forebears. There are many others. It is also true that this is not a local phenomenon. Equivalent families around the globe will experience similar difficulties. The good news Te Kōpae Piripono has to share is that it does not need to be that way. As espoused by the Kaitiaki at the beginning of this chapter, the past cannot be changed, nor should it be ignored. If we ignore the relationship between past events and present outcomes, we permit those damaging events to continue to harm our people. By acknowledging the events of the past and understanding better ourselves in relation to those events, we gain a new perspective and can begin to heal and move forward. An important first step toward overcoming the emotional difficulties that underlie anti-social and oppositional behaviours is to understand these difficulties and being able to self-

reflect. With support we can find the strength to create a brighter future for ourselves and for our children and their children and so on, that we so keenly strive for...

At Te Kōpae Piripono there is a commitment to following processes of healing that help move people along a pathway of learning new ways of being and doing. These processes support people to reclaim their mana and develop a sense of self. They can also see that they are significant in the wider scheme of things and have a valid and valuable contribution to make. The process of learning to feel good begins with the individual and spreads to the whānau, radiating out through the community. This is the healing process of whānau development. Whānau development is the structure within Te Kōpae Piripono that ensures the process does happen. The COI research provided us with the opportunity to better understand and to improve the processes of whānau development at Te Kōpae Piripono.

Our findings reveal that for many of us who have had little experience of trusting relationships, we sometimes need support to help us to begin to trust - no matter how scary the prospect. Whānau support strategies are therefore central to the healing processes of whānau development. As outlined in Chapter 5.4, there are five essential elements of whānau support including following agreed processes for open and honest communication and for dealing with issues positively, the crucial role of the teacher, providing critical friends and effective enrolment and induction processes for new whānau. This journey is therefore about learning new ways of doing and being that can help us develop a sense of trust – in others and more particularly in ourselves. Positive whānau relationships rely on following agreed processes for communication. When we do not trust those around us, we need to be able to trust the process – to get us through. The process neutralises the power imbalances inherent in difficult relationships. Having agreed processes allows us to consider 'other'. Having ways to support whānau development aims to ameliorate the difficulties whānau members experience and to sustain them so all can strive for an equilibrium that will result in fulfilled lives.

As we conclude this part of our journey, we return to the whakataukī that we have held dear throughout this research, *"Ko koe ki tēna kīwai, ko au ki tēnei kīwai o te kete"* (you carry your handle and I'll carry my handle of our kete). This whakataukī connotes contribution, interdependence, responsibility, working together, supporting each other and having a shared purpose - symbolised by the kete. At Te Kōpae Piripono we emphasise personal responsibility and personal choice. People will step up and assume

responsibilities when they are ready and able to do so, not before. Irrespective of the time and energy that may be spent, we must be learn to be comfortable about the choices people make. Rather than constantly ruminating on our position and performance, it is our responsibility to allow others to embark on their own development journeys, while always leaving our door open. Our collective journey is convoluted and there may be dead end paths encountered on the way, however, this is the reality of our situation. At Te Kōpae Piripono, we have learned to be patient and persistent. Our responsibility is to find ways and opportunities for ourselves and others to have, take, share and be responsible.

The whānau of Te Kōpae Piripono hopes that our COI journey will contribute in some way to research in kaupapa Māori early childhood education. The outcomes of our research have opened up a whole range of avenues for further investigation. We believe that we have been able to provide some new or different thinking about whānau and leadership with examples providing explanation and evidence of this. We hope also that we can be a reference point for others wishing to explore our approach to early childhood education, that truly puts children and their whānau foremost in any thinking about teaching and learning. The child is paramount but he or she does not sit in isolation of his or her own context and also the shared context of Te Kōpae Piripono. Our COI research has been a self-study, centred on the 'Kōpae way'. This will not be the way for everyone. However, we hope others will be prompted to reflect on their own paradigms of practice, and consider different ways of doing and being – while recognising the universality of the core principles of our approach. We understand that our learning journey is lifelong and we continue to be inspired by others' contributions and leadership. We are open to others' questions, contributions and challenges. We believe that being open to change enables true learning to occur.

We have had an amazing, incredible time on our COI research journey. Not only have we researched our innovation, we have discovered so much more about ourselves. And we have developed even more as a whānau. We feel very privileged to have been part of the Centres of Innovation programme.

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Glossary of Māori words

āhuatanga ako	styles of learning
ara whanaunga	genealogical lines, connecting kin
aroha	love/compassion/consideration
aroha ki te tangata	consideration for others
atua	celestial child of Ranginui and Papatūānuku
atua matua	celestial offspring
hāhi	Christian ethos
hapū	sub-tribe
Haumietiketike	atua/realm of fern root (uncultivated foods)
hinengaro	cognition, thoughts, the thinking mind
hui	meeting/gathering
hui Kaitiaki	teacher meeting
iho matua	person's connection with ancestors
io	celestial god
iwi	tribe
kai	food
Kai Tahu	South Island iwi
karakia	prayer/indigenous incantation
kaumātua	Māori elder
kaupapa Māori	Māori paradigm
Kei Tua o te Pae	Early Childhood assessment exemplars (Ministry of Education (2004/05)
koha	gift/contribution
kōrero	dialogue
kui/kuia	elderly woman/grandmother
kura kaupapa Māori	Māori immersion primary schools
mana/wehi	the standing or esteem in which you are held
mana	status
mana ao tūroa	Te Whāriki strand: exploration
mana reo	Te Whāriki strand: communication
mana tangata	Te Whāriki strand: contribution
mana whenua	Te Whāriki strand: belonging
marae	meeting place (courtyard) and associated complex
māramatanga	enlightenment
matariki	star: Pleiades
mātauranga Māori	traditional Māori knowledge and learning
matua	parent
mātua	parents
mauri	life force/essence
mokopuna	grandchildren/great grandchildren
ngā iwi	tribal groups
ngā mahi ma te kaiako-whānau	teacher-whānau responsibility
ngā mahi whakamana mokopuna ki te ako	management and organisation of the environment
ngā taumata whakahirahira	aims of te whāriki)
ngā tumanako mo te mokopuna	goals for children
ngākau	feelings/how you display your emotions
ngā rangi tūhāhā	celestial heavens
ngāwari	relaxed
noa	free of tapu
papakainga	traditional marae

Papatūānuku	earth mother
pono	integrity
Ranginui	sky father
reo	language
rohe	region
Rongomātāne	atua/realm of cultivated foods
takuta	doctor
tamanui	the sun
tamariki	children
Tanemāhuta	atua/realm of forest realm
Tangaroa	atua/realm of sea
tapu	sacred
tapu/ihi	self esteem/sacredness
tauiwi	non-Maori
tautoko whānau	whānau support
Tāwhirimātea	atua/realm of wind
te ao	the world/wider environment
te ao Māori	Māori world
te hunga tangata	human component/community
te ira tangata	humanity
te po	darkness/night
te puna waiora	spiritual component
te reo	Māori language
te reo Māori me ōnā tikanga	Māori language, customs and traditions
te tino uaratanga	prime aims and objectives
tika	accuracy
tikanga	protocol
tikanga Māori	Māori protocol
tino rangatiratanga	self determination
Tūmatauenga	atua of realm of war
tumu	abbreviated term for director of Te Kōpae Piripono
tumukāuru	director of Te Kōpae Piripono – responsible for management
tumukātake	director of Te Kōpae Piripono – responsible for curriculum
waiata	song/music
wai	water
wairua	spirit/traits/essence of a person
waka	canoe/tribal connection
wana	energy
whae/whaene	mother/teacher
whakapapa	genealogical descent
whakatauki	proverbial sayings
whakawhanake whānau	whānau development
whānau	family/families
whānau atua	celestial family
whānui	breadth
whāriki	mat
whare	centre/house
whatumanawa	seat of emotions
whenu	strands