

**Year 6 Action Research Report on 'Poutiria te Aroha' – bringing a
Nonviolent Parenting Programme into a New Zealand context**

**Te Mauri Tau
December 2016**

Summary

Poutiria te Aroha is an approach to child-raising that draws on two rich traditions – the philosophy and practice of nonviolence, and the knowledge and tikanga of Te Ao Māori. The project is an initiative of Te Mauri Tau, a holistic kaupapa-Māori based education organisation, located in Whaingaroa (Raglan). Training programmes are being developed for parents, caregivers, whānau and service providers, both in Te Reo Māori and in English. At the same time, a whole-of-community model is being fostered in Whaingaroa, to embed this approach so that young people will be met with nonviolence and aroha everywhere they go. The work has begun in Whaingaroa, with a view to sharing the training and the whole-of-community model with others across the country who may be interested and inspired by these approaches.

A grant from the Todd Foundation has provided substantial support for the programme in 2016. This follows five years of JR McKenzie Trust funding for the foundational work on Poutiria te Aroha. In 2016, JR McKenzie Trust agreed to a new grant for the development of Poutama, a project centred on young people in their transition to adulthood. Additional funding has been gratefully received in 2016 from Trust Waikato, Lotteries Grants Board, and Toimata Foundation. Fraser High School also supported a joint initiative with their teen parenting unit.

A deliberate strategy in 2016 has been to build capacity and expand the group of trained Poupou hapori (community educators) by running a second ‘Train the Trainer’ course. Three of four modules were completed (two in August and one in November), with the fourth module scheduled for March 2017. This has seen a new group of trainees bringing their own perspectives to the training, and taking the learning back into a variety of contexts. A growing relationship has been fostered with Kōkiri Hauora, a Māori community service provider based in Wainuiomata, by training two of their staff. They have found immediate application for their learning across a range of their organisation’s activities.

Another cycle of development and trial has occurred this year in Te Reo o te Ngākau. This is an approach that combines teaching Te Reo Māori with sharing the key concepts and language of Poutiria te Aroha. New material in Te Reo Māori has been trialled every year since 2013, delivered at community workshops and on marae (working with partners such as Te Ataarangi and Te Rūnanganui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori). In 2016, a further seven 3-hour immersion sessions were delivered to students of Te Reo Māori at Poihākena Marae in Whaingaroa by one of the Poupou hapori trained in 2014.

Other Poupou hapori from the 2014 course have continued to deliver parenting classes and to weave nonviolent parenting (NVP) and Poutiria te Aroha into their professional activities and lives. Ten-week nonviolent parenting courses were delivered twice this year in Whaingaroa. Poupou hapori have also brought understandings from their training into other community-based work they are doing in suicide prevention and brain development education. Kaiako carry an awareness of the philosophy and practice into their teaching work at kura, kōhanga and kindergarten.

Poutiria te Aroha is an evolving programme. Following the passion and interest of staff members, emergent responses have arisen to needs identified for particular groups. The Poutama project began in 2015 with a focus on young men (Poutama Tāne), and this year a programme has also been developing for young women (Poutamāhine).

Poutama Tāne is an initiative informed by NVP and Poutiria te Aroha, taking young men on a 'rites of passage' journey. The design combines tikanga Māori, outdoor experiences and mentoring from positive male role models, with strong whānau and community participation. The programme has been led by one Poupou hapori and supported by other men trained in 2014, as well as a wider group of men from youth work backgrounds and from the Whaingaroa community. In 2015, the first journey took a group of teenagers and their fathers on a Polynesian voyaging waka. Further programme development occurred this year with a second trial journey in July, this time held in the environs of Whaingaroa harbour. Feedback indicates that like the 2015 journey, this experience was impactful and positive for the young men involved and for their whānau. The trajectory of this programme has thrown up some significant challenges, however, for the organisation and staff involved, leading to much reflection and difficult decisions about the fit of the approach within Te Mauri Tau. As a result, and notwithstanding the positive outcomes of the journey, the call has been made that this programme will not form part of Te Mauri Tau activity in 2017, other than completing any further organisational reflection deemed necessary to document the experience to date.

The parallel programme for young women, Poutamāhine, has undergone significant development in 2016. Groundwork laid down in previous years with He Puawai, the teen parenting unit at Fraser High School, provided the basis for new sessions this year delivered to the young mothers (some held at the school and some in Whaingaroa). These deliveries conveyed cultural wisdoms drawn from kōrero about Hine, emphasising the sacredness and power intrinsic to female identity, links to natural cycles, and the importance of celebrating and acknowledging all of this in whānau life. The young women were also offered practical experiences demonstrating respect and care for themselves, such as eating healthy kai and doing yoga.

The resonance of Poutiria te Aroha with whānau Māori has led to its inclusion as part of an iwi-run initiative to bring Tainui children in the state foster system back into the care of Tainui whānau. Poutiria te Aroha staff attended and delivered sessions at trainings for whānau preparing to welcome these mokopuna into their homes.

Poutiria te Aroha is based on a vision for a whole-of-community change model, founded in the belief that this will help create the necessary change towards a more socially just society. Ruth Beaglehole, pioneer of the nonviolent parenting philosophy and practice that informs Poutiria te Aroha, made three visits to Raglan this year to support the Train the Trainer modules (which included several local trainees). While here, Ruth mentored Poupou hapori, ran a support group, renewed contacts with those working to embed nonviolence within this community, and advised those that requested her guidance.

Poutiria te Aroha continues to inspire and attract support. Todd Foundation has confirmed a further grant which will secure the project's work for the next two years. Gratitude is extended to all who have contributed to the ongoing development of Poutiria te Aroha, with a view to realising its potential to create better outcomes for whānau and tamariki.

Combining action and research to inform the development of Poutiria te Aroha

Since the inception of the project, an 'action research' approach has been used to test ideas and understand the impact of Poutiria te Aroha. This involves a cyclic process of planning, action and reflection, whereby learning from each phase of work is applied to inform the next steps.

The first two years' action research reports documented early programme development and the foundations of a whole-of-community approach in Whaingaroa, including participants' responses to trial deliveries. The 2013 report featured in-depth change narratives from those who had been implementing the approach within their whānau and work contexts. The 2014 report recorded the process of training a cohort of trainers (Poupou hapori) so they could deliver a 10-week curriculum on nonviolent parenting, informed by the anchor-points of Poutiria te Aroha. The fifth action research report in 2015 drew together the threads of programme development to give an up-to-date description of Poutiria te Aroha and a progress report after five years of work.

This is the sixth Action Research report. In addition to an overview of Poutiria te Aroha and how activity in 2016 relates to outcomes and objectives, the report provides more detail on four areas of focus for the year:

1. Train the Trainer course
2. Delivery to communities and whānau
3. Te Reo o te Ngākau – Māori language classes teaching Poutiria te Aroha
4. Poutama – programmes for teenage girls and boys transitioning to adulthood

Snapshot of activity in 2016

Train the Trainer course

- Modules 1 & 2 held in August, Module 3 in November

Poupou hapori (community educators) delivery to community

- 2 X 10-week courses delivered in Whaingaroa to community in Term 2 and Term 4
- Nonviolent Parenting delivery to teen parents fortnightly throughout the year
- Incorporation into Poupou hapori practice of suicide prevention and brain development education

Delivery of Poutiria te Aroha into Māori settings

- Delivery on the kaupapa at marae and kura in Waikato, Auckland, and Wellington
- Part of training programme for Waikato-Tainui caregivers involved in Mokopuna ora
- Introduction run for Te Reo Maioha (training providers for Maori early childhood in NZ)

Te Reo o te Ngākau

- 7-week course at Poihakena Marae teaching the kaupapa of Poutiria te Aroha, informed by mātauranga Māori, and providing relevant language structures and vocabulary

Poutama – programmes for young men and women transitioning into adulthood

- Second trial journey for Poutama Tāne (rites of passage for teenage boys) in Whaingaroa
- Content development and trial deliveries of Poutamāhine (programme for teenage girls) – with He Puawai, Fraser High School teen parenting unit

Programme development and professional learning

- Further wānanga and tailoring of Poutiria te Aroha content for specific settings and contexts, including community deliveries, marae/ Māori settings, Te Reo o te Ngākau and Train the Trainer course modules/ Poupou hapori professional development
- Poutama Tāne leader attending 5-day Making Men - rites of passage journey in Australia
- Regular logistics and planning hui to guide and coordinate the programme

Funder and partner relationships and networking

- Roundtable reporting with Todd Foundation; grant recipient hui with JR McKenzie Trust
- Securing further programme funding from Todd Foundation, Lotteries and Trust Waikato
- New project funding from JR McKenzie for Poutama
- Strengthening relationships e.g. with Kōkiri Hauora, Waikato-Tainui, Te Mana Ririki
- Participation and running two workshops at Australasian Facilitators' Network conference

Whole-community model

- Poupou hapori in the community of Whaingaroa integrating this work into ongoing practice at kindergarten, school, kōhanga reo, and through community initiatives like Poutama Tāne
- Participation in community service delivery network
- Support group to foster reflection and integration of the practice into daily life

Outcomes

The aim is to create a whole-of-community model, starting in Whaingaroa, to promote nonviolence in all interactions, with the ultimate outcome of greater well-being for tamariki and whānau.

The specific differences that this work will make to whānau and community are:

- Healing and building of relationships within whānau and communities
- Parents having realistic expectations of children through greater knowledge of child and brain development
- Insights into parenting and whānau models drawn from Te Ao Māori reaffirming identity and providing motivation, inspiration and guidance
- Capacity for ongoing positive relationships through modelling and teaching an accessible process for nonviolent parenting informed by Māori concepts
- An environment of respect that is protecting and nurturing of children and their needs, so that they in turn grow up to be healthy members of communities – breaking the cycle of violence
- A more positive and healthy culture within whānau and community generally

Objectives

The following table provides an overview of the objectives of our work over the coming years, and the activities that have supported these objectives in 2016.

Table 1: How activity in 2016 contributed to meeting programme objectives

Objective	Description of work	Activity in 2016
<p>A culturally anchored parenting programme.</p>	<p>The core focus of Poutiria te Aroha is to create a culturally anchored parenting programme that resonates strongly with whānau Māori.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the journey of exploring core cultural elements from Te Ao Māori, and bringing them together with understandings from nonviolent parenting. • Distil what we have learned into ‘products’ or ‘offerings’ that resonate with Māori identity and heritage and that we can deliver in different contexts, in English and in Māori. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing and refining content around the four ‘pou’ of Poutiria te Aroha; drawing learnings from wānanga about Ngā Pou o te Whare - Developing cultural anchoring material and session plans for Train the Trainer course Modules 1-3 - Preparing material in English and in Māori for specific delivery contexts: Mokopuna Ora; Poutama; Te Tātai Ahorangi; marae deliveries - Developing a child protection policy anchored in Poutiria te Aroha - Kaupapa content linked to Te Ao Māori for Te Reo o te Ngākau classes
<p>A trained and supported cohort of parent educators who can deliver the programme adapted for specific community settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue training and mentoring parent educators (Poupou hapori), with Poupou hapori from the 2014 training building on their experience through further deliveries and wānanga. • Work with Poupou hapori to adapt the core teachings into curriculum design for different groups and environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering Train the Trainer course Modules 1-3 - Poupou hapori assist lead trainer in delivery of Train the Trainer modules - Developing further cultural anchoring training for existing Poupou hapori - Supporting Poupou hapori to deliver in specific settings: community night classes, He Puāwai teen parent unit, Poutama Tāne journey, Reo classes, marae settings
<p>Appropriate learning opportunities for parents and caregivers, with expanded reach regionally and nationally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening and expanding our networks to increase our delivery capacity and reach people who can most benefit from this work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building relationships with Mokopuna Ora, Kōkiri Hauora, Te Ataarangi, Te Mana Ririki, Kura Kaupapa Māori, marae, Te Reo Maioha Early Childhood NZ and other rōpū Māori - Strengthening our network of trained local resource people (Whaingaroa participants in Train the Trainer course), including service providers - Network with other indigenous facilitators (at the Australasian Facilitators’ Network conference 2016 held in Whaingaroa)

<p>Enriched whānau understanding of, and commitment to, healthy parenting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase parents’ and caregivers’ awareness of how current dominant belief systems reinforce the fundamental pattern of violence in homes and society, and how this can be reproduced in parenting. • Offer empowering information to families about brain and child development in order for families to have realistic expectations of their children, and be able to maintain an empathetic view of their behaviour. • Increase whānau understanding of the importance of maintaining connection even in challenging moments. • Enable participants to explore the cultural model of the tuakiri. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of 10-week night classes in Nonviolent Parenting (two series) - Tuakiri presentations on marae, to He Puāwai teen mothers and to hui whakapakari (youth facilitators) - Delivery about the kaupapa in marae/ to Māori groups at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Te Iti o Haua marae (Tauwhare) – Te Ataarangi ○ Kura Kaupapa Māori - Tōku Māpihi Maurea (Kirikiriroa), Te Rakipae Whenua (Tāmaki), and Ngā Mokopuna (Te Ūpoko o te Ika) ○ Tainui Endowed College - Kia Ata Mai Educational Trust ○ Waahi Paa – Mokopuna Ora training for Waikato-Tainui caregivers ○ Poihakena marae –Te Reo o te Ngākau classes ○ Te Reo Maioha Early Childhood NZ – in Te Ūpoko o te Ika
<p>Whānau putting the philosophy into practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing parents and caregivers with practical strategies and support for connected communication through the development and provision of the language structures and vocabulary (in English and Māori) that parents can use to support their communication practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of 10-week night classes in Nonviolent Parenting (two series) - Kura and Marae-based delivery – see above - Seven-week delivery of Te Reo o te Ngākau – Poutiria te Aroha language class series informed by mātauranga Māori, for adults interacting with tamariki in Te Reo Māori
<p>Whānau can access the support they require throughout this learning process through development of a whole-community approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of a whole-community model in Whaingaroa (Raglan) so that all those who come into contact with whānau have a heightened consciousness in their interactions, in the aspiration that children can be safe wherever they come into contact with adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responding to requests from community and organisations such as kindergarten, playgroups and home schooling groups - Support group sessions - Recruiting of local participants to ‘Train the Trainer’ course - Participating in service providers’ network (Raglan Connect) - Sharing a child protection policy in the community network