

WHĀNAU MANAAKI

For Whānau, not for profit

Term 2, 2025



Nau Mai Haere Mai | Greetings and Welcome to our Whānau Manaaki Parent & Whānau Pānui | Newsletter.

We hope you and your whānau enjoyed the long weekend. This pānui is produced by Whānau Manaaki. Although we know you receive regular communication from your child's kindergarten or service, we decided to produce a regular newsletter that is published every 2 months or so, to provide you with information that impacts our network and Early Childhood Education in general. This is the third of our pānui, if you missed the first two they can be found on our website.

In this issue you will find:

Welcome back
.....
2025 Budget Announcement
.....
Government Reviews
.....
E Tū Kaha Campaign
.....
Gloop Recipe
.....
The Sensory World of Our Tamariki
.....
Health & Well-being Event with
.....
Piri'anga Alofa
.....
Around the Regions

Mō Matou | About Us

Whānau Manaaki Kindergarten Association operates the service that your tamariki attends. Whānau Manaaki pays staff, provides professional and pastoral support, and maintains properties of more than 100 kindergartens and home-based services across Aotearoa. We offer high-quality teaching and learning with our 100% qualified teachers and trained educators. We also provide transport, and support from social workers and community workers in some regions. As you know, Whānau Manaaki tamariki get a great start in a caring community-focused environment. Each kindergarten offers its own individual programme, based on Te Whāriki - our world leading early childhood curriculum.



“He taonga te mokopuna, he taonga te tamaiti.”

A grandchild is a treasure, a child is a treasure.

Budget cuts kindergarten funding, increased fees likely

The Government Budget sets out its financial plan for the coming year and years ahead. This year it announced a 0.5 percent adjustment to early childhood funding rates, which, because inflation is running at around 2.5 per cent, is effectively a funding cut.

This means kindergartens and other early childhood services around the country will face funding difficulties. As a result Whānau Manaaki is likely to have to put up fees for hours over 20 at our kindergartens. If we do, we will give you an advanced warning of 2 or 3 months.

We have not had any detail yet from the Ministry of Education about how the new funding rates will be applied but we definitely expect to face financial difficulties as a result.

As always, we will continue to provide our high quality services to your children, and we will continue to keep you informed.

Other budget changes include increases to Learning Support services, which will help some of our families, making transition to school easier, and supporting more children with high needs once they arrive at

school. Unfortunately the government has made changes to the Best Start payment for families with a new baby, meaning the average New Zealand family will no longer qualify for the full amount.

Best Start will be means tested for families earning more than \$79,000, starting from next April 2026. It takes a while to work through the detail of how budget changes work on the ground, so we will keep you informed as we find out more.



Government Reviews Overall Funding System for Early Childhood Education

The government is also carrying out a review of the early childhood education funding system. This review is expected to begin in the second half of this year. We don't know exactly what it will mean, but we are concerned that it may move away from funding for 100 per cent qualified teachers.

We believe your children deserve qualified teachers, and we will continue to offer this. In 2010 the government cut funding for qualified teachers, which meant each kindergarten losing around \$50,000 (which would be more in today's terms). We hope such significant cuts don't occur again. We continue to advocate for qualified teachers and quality early childhood education. We know many of you have contacted your MP to express support for our teachers and our quality services, and we really appreciate this support.

You can follow us on:

Facebook [whānaumanaakikindergartens](#)

Instagram [whānaumanaaki](#)

Tik tok [whānaumanaaki](#)



Visit our
website

E Tū Kaha - Stand Up Strong

Letter to The Prime Minister To Protect Early Childhood Education

Our E Tū Kaha (Stand Up Strong) campaign was created to inform whānau and the greater public of the importance of quality early childhood education and to empower communities to stand up strong for government policies that support the early childhood education sector.

In support of this campaign, many of our staff and parents and whānau have written to MPs, made submissions and held events to highlight the importance of high quality ECE.

The latest activity we are involved in is signing an open letter to the Prime Minister calling on him to safeguard the future of early childhood education in New Zealand.

The letter has been produced by the union for early childhood teachers, NZEI Te Riu Roa, in consultation with the sector.

We encourage all kaiako and families to sign it and share it and encourage their friends and whānau to sign as well.

You can find a link to the letter here:

[Back quality early childhood education for all tamariki! | NZEI Te Riu Roa](#)



Image credit: NZEI Te Riu Roa



RECIPES

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Cornflour Gloop Recipe

Here's a great 'gloop' recipe that is used in our services. It's wonderful for children's sensory development and a great thing to keep them occupied during these winter months.

Ingredients

2 cups Cornflour

1 cup Cold Water

Pour the cornflour into a bowl. Add the cold water slowly, stirring constantly and stop when the water is barely absorbed by the cornflower.

The resulting solution is fascinating to play with. It can be scooped up with the fingers as a mouldable material, but flows like liquid back into the bowl.



TEACHING & LEARNING

The Sensory World Of Our Tamariki

At a recent Learning Support Network Hui our teachers learnt in greater depth about sensory processing. Sensory processing is how our brains receive and respond to information from our senses. While this is often associated to the needs of children with autism, everyone has sensory thresholds, and understanding how our tamariki experience and respond to sensory information can help both families and teachers better support and understand individual's needs.

When thinking of our senses we often think about our five external senses; tactile, smell, auditory, vision, and taste. However, we also have our four internal senses, interoception, neuroception, proprioception, and our vestibular sense.

Each of these nine senses serve an important function in how we respond to the world and are designed to keep us safe.

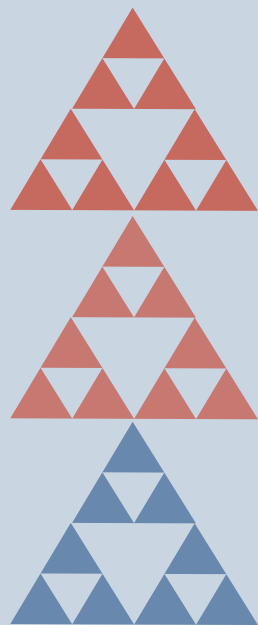
In understanding how a child processes their senses, it can be helpful to think of sensory thresholds as cups. When their cup is filled with water, one feels alert and grounded.

When a cup is over-filled, the cup spills over. If underfilled, there isn't enough water to satisfy, or in other words there is not enough sensory input to properly stimulate a child. Every person has a different sized cup, a small cup will fill quickly, and on the opposite end some with large cups will require extra water to be full.

How we manage our cups is through modulation, we can pour water out or pour water into a cup based on a child's needs. Some environments are very stimulating – this can, for example, mean it might be noisy, bright, strongly scented, or simply a completely new place to them. For a child with a large cup this can feel fantastic, and they will feel in their element wanting to take it all in. For other children it may be over-stimulating, and they may need to move to a quiet and dark or familiar place to lower the fill of water in their cup.

Take some time to observe your child's reactions to their environments you may notice a few patterns which could lead to being able to more easily establish when it is time for some quiet or rest, or on the other hand when your child needs to be active and stimulated. It can be so valuable to better understand the sensory world of your child.

You can find out more information at: CDHB Health NZ 'Let's talk about Sensory Processing'.



Health and Wellbeing with Piri'anga Alofa

An important part of Whānau Manaaki is Piri'anga Alofa Pacific and Community Services, our Pacific-run and focused community services organisation.

Piri'anga Alofa runs regular health and wellbeing events, from stalls at festivals to sporting health events, and most recently an event in Whanganui, at Tōtara Puku Kindergarten.

This was an evening where families could attend and be supported by the health teams that were on hand.

Some of the services provided at the event included; child immunisations, dental checks, health screenings, B4 School checks, cervical and breast screenings, as well as general health advice, all available free to the local community.

What is so impactful about these events is that they remove barriers for families in accessing health care and provide opportunities for the whole family to get a check up. This sentiment, being a family-centred event, backs the notion that to care for a child's wellbeing is to care for the whole family. Beyond this, health events such as these promote health services and spread awareness throughout the community.

It can be a great reminder as we come into the colder months to get a health checkup. Keep an eye out on the Piri'anga Alofa social media and website for upcoming events, and take care of each other's health as a family.

Thank you to the Piri'anga Alofa team, and their partners in the event: Whanganui Regional Health Network, Te Waka Tairanga Ora, Whānau Āwhina Plunket, Community Oral Health Services, Health NZ, and Health New Zealand - Te Whatu Ora. As well as a big thank you to the teachers, support staff, and wider Whānau Manaaki at Tōtara Puku Kindergarten.

You can keep up-to-date with news and events at www.piriangaalofa.org.nz



Top Image: All smiles in the dentist chair

Bottom: Left, Ina Ropu-Tengaru from Nuanua Kindergarten and Ngaretta Strong from Toru Fetū Kindergarten supporting the Health and Wellbeing Event.

Around the Regions



South Otago

Clutha Valley, the most recent addition to our kindergarten whānau, celebrate their new space with special tee shirts.



Wellington

Johnsonville West celebrated World Children's Week with a wheel day



Horowhenua

Ōtaki National MP Tim Costley met with Horowhenua kaiako at Arohanui Kindergarten to discuss concerns about possible changes to early childhood education



Porirua

Toru Fetū gets ready for their Papa and Vouvou day (grandparents day)



Kāpiti

Tamariki at Waikanae Kindergarten came across a scout den on their Ngā Kaihopara o te Ngahere / Explorers of the Forest adventure.



Central Plateau

Taihapa tamariki love playing in their sensory rich mud kitchen



Whanganui

Marie Mcfarland have formed their own T-ball team and have been competing against primary schools this year



Hutt Valley

Cottle Kindergarten celebrated Children's Day

Wairarapa

Una Williams kicks off rippa rugby season

