

Te Kāhu Kōrako

He wānanga
whakarauora reo mō
te whānau

Kāhui: Tainui





INTRODUCTION

As part of Te Mātāwai’s support in revitalising te reo throughout Aotearoa, we are showcasing some of the kaupapa kaitono have been doing in Tainui. Herearoha Skipper sat down with us to kōrero about her whānau’s kaupapa reo, and tell us a little bit about what they’ve been up to.

HE AHA TE KAUPAPA WHAKARAUORA REO?

Herearoha and her whānau developed ‘Te Kāhu Kōrako’, a wānanga-based kaupapa whakarauora reo for whānau. She describes the kaupapa as an “intervention to keep te reo relevant and as a priority within the whānau, and to encourage te reo Māori in the home for our tamariki, mokopuna, and all whānau members.”



“[The] key focus of [Te Kāhu Kōrako is] revitalising the intergenerational sustainability of te reo Māori, [in] strengthen[ing] the health and wellbeing of te reo Māori for current and future generations.”

The wānanga reo focused on whakapakari reo, instead of learning about the technical and grammatical aspects of Māori. Each wānanga, based within the Hauraki rohe, was



designed to familiarise whānau with their marae, their whakapapa, and kōrero o neherā pertaining to each marae.

With the impetus of “bringing whānau home”, four wānanga a year were held at four different Hauraki marae. Local kaumātua were invited to share historical accounts and kōrero to the whānau present, and pūkenga reo with expertise in the Hauraki dialect were also brought in to support the kaupapa. The group was divided into four different rōpū depending on ability in te reo, and age from “babies up to pakeke.” Te Kōhungahunga consisted of 1-5 year olds; Te Pōkere 6-16 years old; Te Pīrere were those beginning on their reo journeys; and Te Kārearea were fluent speakers 17 years old and above. “We didn’t want for it to be a school-like environment – everyone would get the same material, but we would adapt the knowledge to the specific group, so Te Pōkere would use technology to disseminate what they had learnt.” Herearoha and her whānau had initially trialed the kaupapa amongst themselves, and then applied through the Tainui Kāhui in the first round of Te Mātāwai funding in 2017. This meant that they had a good grasp of what was needed, and drew from that experience to continue with the kaupapa.



For Herearoha, the driving force behind the kaupapa was for all generations within each whānau to speak te reo. For those growing up without the reo, this remains a critical goal within her extended whānau:



“By the time I had my kids in the 90s, we wanted te reo to be their only language. We had no reo, so we signed up to Te Ataarangi, and made the decision to do te reo full time. The whole whānau got into the kaupapa! We then schooled all our kids in kōhanga, kura kaupapa, and wharekura, so all our tamariki were confident reo speakers. Within that time period, we now have four generations of reo speakers. All our mokopuna, their first language is also te reo Māori.”

WHAT ARE THE LESSONS YOU’VE LEARNED?

When we asked, “He aha ngā hua e puta mai ana?”, Herearoha said, “There’s heaps!” Emphasising the importance of whanaungatanga in supporting whānau through their collective reo journeys, she stated:

“The main thing is whakapakari reo. It’s whanaungatanga and whānau love learning together. All our whānau come together, it’s like a reunion, it’s reconnecting them back to our marae, our culture and our language. That whanaungatanga, and learning as whānau, has been the highlight.”

Whānau “loved the opportunity to reconnect”, and following each wānanga, whānau were asked for feedback and what they’d like to focus on for future wānanga. On the back of this, the wānanga have focused on many



different aspects of Hauraki reo, tikanga, and kōrero, including whakataukī, tribal histories, and composing waiata to assist with learning pepeha for each marae. “It’s been really transformative for our whānau.”



The wānanga have also helped familiarise whānau with how to run large hui on marae, and they are able to apply this learning to real life situations. “So when tangi have been held, they can organise all aspects of the tangi – from on the pae tapu, to the karakia, the karanga, the waiata and the kai.”

When asked if her whānau wanted to continue with Te Kāhu Kōrako in the future, Herearoha said “Yep, all the feedback we’ve had is we need more wānanga.” This year has focused on succession planning, “as we want to build sustainability into our kaupapa, [by] getting the next generation teaching the programme.”



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE KAITONO?

For future kaitono looking to apply to their Kāhui for funding, Herearoha offered the following:

1. “You’ve got to identify the knowledge holders – they’re few and far between. This is particularly important in Hauraki, as we don’t have many fluent matatau reo speakers. So it’s really important that you engage with those knowledge holders.”
2. “Think about what resources you might need yourself, beyond the Te Mātāwai funding. I’d recommend kaitono build up their own teaching tools, but more importantly we need more learning resources.”



3. “People are really important. Build capacity within your own whānau and community to help run your kaupapa.”
4. “Te reo is still at critical point, especially in Hauraki, therefore be bold to create new innovation to ensure learning is fun.”
5. “Definitely stick at it! Don’t give up.”

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE ASPIRATIONS FOR TE REO MĀORI?

Looking to the future, Herearoa sees an Aotearoa where reo is a normal aspect of the fabric of life:

“Te reo would be thriving! Ultimately, we wouldn’t have to run these wānanga, because te reo is everywhere. Not so much the language itself, but there’d be wānanga on science, on development, on environmental kaupapa – all in te reo! That te reo is flowing on the marae; that when our tamariki go from home to home, they’re surrounded in te reo.”

