

TK-Ria Whānau

He kaupapa
whakarauora reo mō te
whānau o Te Tairāwhiti

Kāhui: Te Tai Rāwhiti





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 Te Tai Rāwhiti. Kōkā Bub Te Kurapa sat down with us to kōrero about her whānau kaupapa reo, and tell us a little bit about what she's been up to.

HE AHA TE KAUPAPA WHAKARAUORA REO?

Kōkā Bub developed a kaupapa whakarauora reo for strengthening the language within her immediate and extended whānau. A former Te Ataarangi teacher, her kaupapa centres on “upskilling our whānau to kōrero Māori, so they can confidently speak to, and teach their kids to kōrero.” With an emphasis on intergenerational transmission, the whakarauora reo was three-pronged, and included:

1. an initial focus on weekly reo wānanga through Te Ataarangi;
2. supporting and nurturing the emergence of reo champions to become reo kaiako;
3. a focus on the reo domain of kai to be the common motivator to unite whānau.

The latter focused on food and food preparation, in encouraging whānau to use te reo during activities associated with this domain. Resources were provided to support whānau on their reo journeys, and included providing reo Māori labels for the kitchen ('kāpata', 'kapu', etc.), and short food preparation videos.

“So, food preparation, cooking, and eating, was all to be done in te reo – that was our major whānau task for the year, be it at the table, preparing food, or cooking.”

The kaupapa is household-based, rather than focused on individual people, as the home is a critical component of intergenerational reo transmission. Fifteen whānau are currently involved, and a dashboard of progress tracks the journey of each whānau over time. Using



a traffic-light system, (where red = little to no reo spoken, and green = a majority of reo spoken) usage of te reo could be seen increasing over time. Whānau reported their reo usage per month, and the spreadsheet was updated accordingly.

“There used to be a lot of reds, but now we’re recording quite a few greens. It’s a visual arotake for the whole whānau.”

The drive for this kaupapa came from Kōkā Bub’s experiences growing up, when “we had no reo.” This motivation is palpable when she recalls a world without te reo:

“I had nothing when I started. All my siblings, we had no reo. Only my oldest brother who was brought up by my grandparents. So, we were from that generation that didn’t have any reo. But because we had that encouragement from our parents [to pursue te reo], we committed our kids to kōhanga and kura Māori, [we pushed on]. It’s our responsibility as this generation to learn te reo.”

She and her whānau are continuing with this kaupapa and are applying to the Te Tairāwhiti Kāhui for further funding.

WHAT ARE THE LESSONS YOU’VE LEARNED?

When we asked, “He aha ngā hua e puta mai ana?”, Kōkā Bub emphasised how this “...was an awesome opportunity to bring the whānau back together.” She speaks of her whānau’s goal of being fluent in te reo in 15 years time, all bolstered by “coming together as a whānau and sharing our support of this kaupapa.” She is also seeing a significant increase of reo use amongst her whānau:



“It’s been wonderful, because when we first started, I could count on one hand whānau that could speak te reo. Now – out of 25 households, including households in Australia, 23 households are actually making an effort to learn to speak Māori, ahakoa he iti. That’s powerful!”

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU’VE FACED?

The application process through Te Mātāwai was somewhat challenging for Kōkā Bub, as it required access and familiarity with the internet and digital technology. “So, I needed a bit of support for that, because these are the types of problems that older people will encounter when they apply.” This is why she emphasised that kuia and kaumātua will likely need support if they intended developing and submitting their applications to help their whānau’s reo journey: “I’m really keen to support our elderly and our whānau to accomplish the application process. I’m thinking about planning for next year in how we’re going to support other whānau [in these situations].” Nevertheless, her passion for the reo helped push her through these challenges:

“The major thing would be my passion for te reo. Although I started off with no reo, and didn’t start learning till I was almost 30, I’ve always been passionate about it. You’ve got to be reo driven.”





WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE ASPIRATIONS FOR TE REO MĀORI?

Looking to the future, Kōkā Bub highlighted the importance of whakawhanaungatanga in strengthening te reo: “It’s about building those relationships in your whānau.” She sees this nurturing te reo within her whānau:

“I want my whole whānau to be conversant in te reo. Some of us may never be fluent, but to have the ability to communicate and converse comfortably in te reo within the greater whānau, that would be huge.”

