

# Ko te Whānau



He Taonga te Reo o te Whānau

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## He Mihi

**N**au mai, haere atu tāku pānui ki ngā whānau e ngakaunui ana ki te reo Māori nei. Tēnā koutou i ngā tini āhuatanga o te wā, i ngā piki me ngā heke o te whakatō i te reo ki roto i ngā whakatipuranga e heke mai nei.

Tēnā koutou e pīkau nei i tēnei mahi nui kia ora ai te reo i ngā ngutu o ā tātau tamariki hei reo kōrero, hei reo katakata, hei reo tākaro anō hoki. Tēnei te mahara atu nei ki ngā kaumātua nā rātau te huarahi nei i whakatakoto hei whāinga mā tātau. Kua ngaro atu rātau ki tua o te arai; heoi anō te wāhi ki a tātau, ko te whakatutuki i tā rātau i pie ai, i moemoeā ai. Apiti hono, tātai hono, ko rātau ki a rātau. Apiti hono, tātai hono, ko tātau ki a tātau. Tēnā tātau katoa.

*Ko Te Whānau* is a new pānui that is designed to provide information to whānau of children at Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori, Māori immersion schools and other people interested in te reo. The main focus is on the development of te reo in our children, issues that affect this and ways in which we can help our children. We intend to publish *Ko Te Whānau* every three months in this pānui format.



Author Steven Chrisp and his wife Mākere and the children, Wiremu (2), Julia (10), Hīria (6)

## The contents of *Ko Te Whānau* will include the following:

1. Articles about the development of the Māori language in New Zealand generally, and among our children in particular.
2. Updates on the Government sector, with information about activities and plans in the education sector, in broadcasting and in Māori development.
3. Extracts from articles and books from overseas about similar experiences and activities.
4. Frequently asked questions and answers about the bilingual development of our children.
5. Opportunities for whanau to discuss issues that concern them, and to share their success stories with the rest of us.
6. Guest columns from people associated with the promotion of te reo Māori in a number of sectors.
7. Some lists of common Māori vocabulary and phrases, for use with our children.
8. Anything else that you tell us to put in!!

***Ko Te Whānau* will be written in English and Māori, in clear, easy-to-read language.**

# AHAKOA ITI, HE TAONGA

Do you want to help your children develop their Māori language skills? But feel as if you don't know enough to be able to help them? Then you should read on!



Using Māori is **not** an all-or-nothing affair. It doesn't matter if you do not speak Māori perfectly; every time you use the language in some way, you are making an important contribution to the revitalisation of our language and sending a message to our kids that Māori is important and useful in everyday life.

Many experts agree that "every endeavour, no matter the size, makes a difference" to the survival and promotion of a language (Kathleen Douglas of UNICEF in Canada).

Many people have some knowledge of the Māori language that has been developed through high school, family environments or in other situations. **Use what you already know!** You may be pleasantly surprised at the number of people that start using their Māori language skills as well, following your lead.

Some overseas research has shown that people often remember more language than they think they do. With regular use, there is every chance that you will remember more and more of the language and be able to use this in your conversations.

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## USING TE REO MĀORI IN THE HOME

**Using te reo Māori in the Home** is a publication recently produced by the Māori Language Commission and will be closely followed by two other booklets - **What can I do, Where can I start** and **Having fun with Māori**.

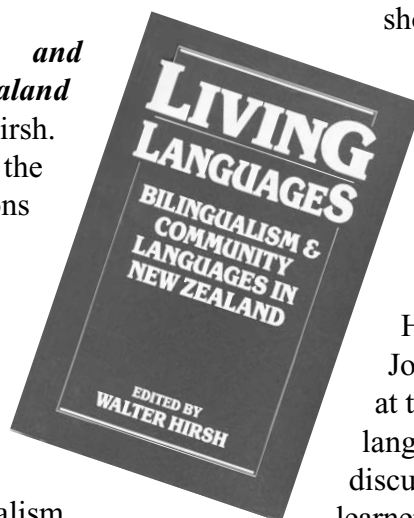
These booklets are intended as support resources for those with children learning the Māori language, and who would like to have more Māori in the home.

**Available free from the Māori Language Commission**

## He pukapuka hei tiroiro mā tātau

*Living languages; bilingualism and community languages in New Zealand* (1987). Edited by Walter Hirsh. Heinemann, in association with the Office of the Race Relations Conciliator.

The book for this issue is an oldie but contains lots of good information that is very relevant to the revitalisation of the Māori language today. Many of the books that are available about bilingualism and bilingual families have been written overseas, and reflect the situations and concerns of other countries. This book, however, consists of several short, chapters written by New Zealanders with a very good understanding of the language situation



here in New Zealand as it was in 1987. It is clearly written in plain English, and it is browsable.

Furthermore, because it is a local book, it should also be readily available in local libraries!!

The first section of the book is devoted to language acquisition and maintenance. It contains chapters by leading New Zealand sociolinguists including Janet Holmes, Elizabeth Gordon and John Moorfield. These authors look at the development of language within language learners of all ages, and discuss the stages that all language learners go through and the strategies that we can use to support anyone interested in learning a language.

The second section of the book is devoted to the Māori language, and it includes contributions from

# He kupu nō tāwāhi

He mea tango mai ēnei kōrero e whai ake nei i te pukapuka a Lenore Arnberg e kiia nei ko *Raising Children Bilingually* (whārangi 113-4). He wahine tēnei e tohunga ana ki ngā āhuatanga o ngā reo kāore i te nui te kōrerotia.



## Children need lots of repetition

Children need to hear words and expressions many times before they are able to use them automatically, ie without having to reflect on them. This is especially true for the child speaking a minority language [for example, Māori], for whom exposure to the language is often limited. Therefore, activities in which the child is introduced to new words and concepts need to be repeated frequently. The learning of new words and concepts will also be enhanced if this involves a ‘total learning experience’ in which several senses are involved simultaneously.

## Reading to the child

Parents who are successful in raising their children bilingually seem to read frequently to their children in the minority language, often once per day ... According to some experts, a mistake

which parents often make when reading to two- and three-year-old children is insisting on reading the text word for word. A better approach is to look at the picture and talk to the child about it, asking the child questions and making sure to give the child ample time to answer.

Richard Benton, John McCaffery, Rameka Cope, Turoa Royal, Beatrice Kerr and Haare Williams. These authors cover a wide range of topics that affect the Māori language, giving the history of the language from pre-European times to the 1980s and discussing issues in Māori education and broadcasting.

The third section consists of short articles about community languages in New Zealand, including Chinese, Tongan and Dutch. The articles offer an insight into the issues faced by other language communities in New Zealand, and the ways in which they are trying to cope with these issues.

This is a useful, easy-to-read book with some good advice about language development and some interesting perspectives on Māori. Take a look!

It is interesting to note the emphasis on repeating new words and concepts regularly.

The good thing for parents is that this gives us the opportunity to learn with the children at the same time!

## Te pai o te pānui pukapuka?

Anei ētahi pukapuka reo Māori hei pānui māu ki tō tamaiti, ki ōu tamariki rānei, ā, a tōna wā māna anō tana pukapuka e pānui.



Heoi anō ko te pai o te pānui pukapuka i te taha o tō tamaiti, kāore e roa ka mārāma hoki e koe te tikanga o ngā kupu me te ia o te kōrero.

# Ko ā koutou pātai

We would like to make this section a regular feature of *Ko Te Whānau*. In this issue, we have taken some of the questions from the pamphlet *Using Te Reo Māori in the Home*. In future, we will devote this section to your questions and concerns.

## *Will speaking Māori at home affect the ability of my children to speak English?*

No. Children (and adults) can learn and use two languages with ease. In fact, more than 60 percent of the people in the world - over 2 billion people - are bilingual.

Children have plenty of time for language learning as they are growing up. They are constantly exposed to the English language through television, friends and neighbours, shopping and entertainment, and through family members. This will ensure that children grow up with a good knowledge of the English language.

## *How long will it take for my children to be fluent in Māori?*

Learning a language does take time. We often underestimate how much time is needed to fully learn a language, and expect instant results.

Some researchers have suggested that it can take five to six years of constant exposure to a language for children to become fluent. This requires a large commitment by parents to use Māori on a daily basis, often in a very repetitive manner. It also means, however, that you have a good deal of time to increase your own Māori language skills.

It pays to start speaking Māori to your children as soon as possible - even while baby is in the womb.

## *I feel whakamā about speaking Māori - especially in public. What can I do?*

It is important to build up your confidence about speaking Māori. The best way to do this is practice, and the best people to practice with are your children. Start slowly, and gradually build up the momentum.

You may also want to make contact with other people in a similar situation, to swap ideas and experiences. Kōhanga Reo whānau are a good starting point here.

## *I try speaking Māori to the children, but they always respond in English. What should I do?*

**Don't despair.** Children grow up surrounded by English, and it is normal for them to imitate what they hear around them. However, if you speak Māori to your children, and you send them to a Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori, or Māori immersion programme, there is a very good chance that they will become fluent in both Māori and English. This means that, as they grow older, they will be able to make conscious decisions for themselves about what language they speak.

**Don't try and force your children to speak Māori.** That could cause your children to develop negative attitudes to Māori, and put them off.

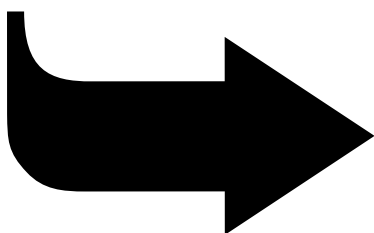
# Ko ngā reta

We invite you to write to us to discuss your problems, your success stories, and anything else that you have on your mind with regard to the Māori language. We welcome letters in Māori and English, and will publish them here if you are agreeable. Many of us are going through the same ups and downs as we try to instil the Māori language into our children, and this is an opportunity for us to share our experiences. Remember, you are not alone!

Please send your letters to

*Ko Te Whānau*  
*Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori*  
PO Box 4 11  
WELLINGTON

ph: (04) 4710-244  
fax: (04) 4712-768  
e-mail: [kotewhanau@tetaurawhiri.co.nz](mailto:kotewhanau@tetaurawhiri.co.nz)



*Nō reira, e te iwi, ka mutu i konei a tataua pitopito kōrero mo tēnei wā. Noho ora mai rā koutou i o koutou kainga maha i raro i ngā manaakitanga a te Wahi Ngāro.*

