

Kaitiaki Pēpi

Gifting of Taonga

Whānau are often given special taonga for their children. These can link them to their wider whānau, hapū, iwi and also to the person who gifted the taonga to pēpi.

Pounamu taonga like kapeū, manaia or tiki were sometimes used when tamariki were teething. These types of pounamu were used due to their large size; there was no risk of pēpi choking. The hard and cool stone was just right for helping to soothe sore gums and to help teeth push through.

The tiki, considered a good luck charm, was believed to give the wearer clarity of thought and great inner knowledge. The tiki depicts the first mortal born to the gods. It is also a strong fertility symbol that represents the human embryo, with the hands on the loins symbolising fertility and life.

