

Kaitiaki pēpi

Tohi

Dedication of pēpi

When pēpi is born, some whānau use traditional tohi which is a ceremony to lift the tapu of labour and birth. This is part of the tikanga to cleanse māmā and to dedicate pēpi to our atua Māori.

A tohi ceremony might take place by an awa, at the marae or any place of significance to the whānau.

Other tikanga might be a christening or baby naming ceremony which are also used to bless and welcome pēpi to the whānau.

As whānau, you might want to think about where a ceremony to welcome your pēpi could take place.



Ngā hau e whā

Pēpi might need help adjusting to life outside the safety of the whare tangata (womb). The tikanga in some whānau will see pēpi held up to the four winds.

This tikanga happens when pēpi goes home or goes somewhere new. The understanding is that when pēpi is held to the four winds their mauri settles and they get used to this new outside world.

Hold pēpi and let them breathe in the four winds. Take a few deep breaths yourself too – there's nothing like oxygen to clear your thinking, calm your tinana and settle your wairua.



Tikanga for introducing pēpi to the world, and whānau tikanga, all helps to develop the brain of your pēpi.