

# te pihinga

BOOKLET

1

From birth  
to 6 months



whakatipu

tākai







As descendants of their tīpuna, mokopuna are born into this world with immense potential. They are a living link between the past, present and future.

Te Pihinga 1 is a guide for the journey of whānau and their growing pēpi from birth to 6 months old. This is a time for parents, caregivers and kaitiaki to nurture, care for and keep pēpi safe in their new world through individual attention. Te Pihinga offers simple whānau tikanga for this stage of rapid growth.

Each section of this pukapuka contains simple and practical ideas to support early brain development. Mātauranga Māori can guide our parenting and provide what pēpi needs for healthy development.

Nō reira kia kaha, kia māia!



**What's happening at**

# **1 to 3 months**

**Hokia ki ō maunga kia pūrea  
koe e ngā hau a Tāwhirimātea.**

Return to your mountains so you can be  
cleansed by the winds of Tāwhirimātea.



# Pēpi says

I like to eat, sleep and kōrero. It's my daily routine.

When I'm comfortable and people respond to me, I'm learning to trust my world – tōku ao ātaahua!

As I get stronger and start to get some control over my body, I'll lift and turn my head to see what you're doing, and I'll follow your voice. I love voices and I recognise them.

I gaze a lot and like to study the faces of people in my new world. I can tell the differences between familiar faces.

I'm learning how to smile – or maybe I've got wind?



My whānau are helping me learn through simple mahi like kōrero, waiata and keeping me calm. It's all helping my brain to develop.



I like it when my whānau sing to me when they change my kope, it keeps me feeling calm.

I've had my 6-week Tamariki Ora Well Child check to make sure my body and brain are growing well.

Breast milk is the best kai for me. It has all the nutrients I need to grow. It also has natural antibodies that help to protect me from infections and illness.

If I need a bottle, my whānau know how to prepare it correctly so I still get all the nutrients I need.



Did you know that the nutrients in milk help to coat my brain connections with myelin. Myelin is a fatty coating that acts as insulation to make sure messages flow smoothly and quickly in my brain. That is why my whānau learnt how to make my milk properly.



# Whānau say

We sleep when we can.

Having pēpi at home is new, exciting, fun and scary at times.

Sometimes it's hard to work out what our pēpi needs and wants. We take time to watch closely and listen carefully, and we're starting to recognise their signs.

The way we hold pēpi, talk to pēpi, look into their eyes, and take care of them is all helping their brain develop well.

We've learned how to properly prepare formula for pēpi in case we need to bottle feed.

We're learning about:

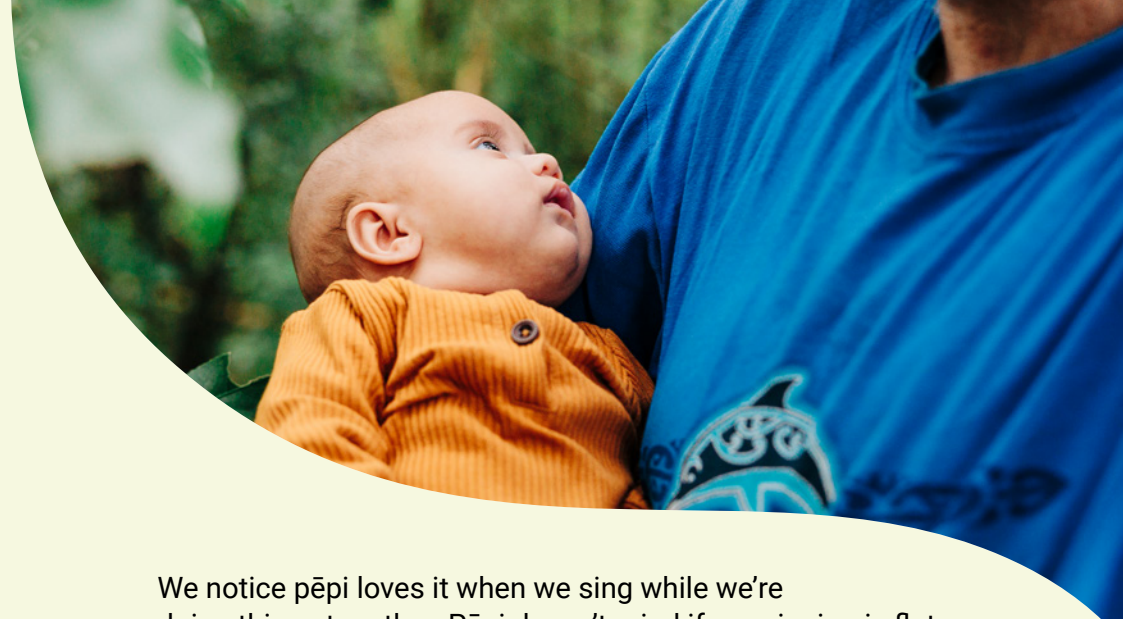
- things that relax or upset pēpi
- how pēpi likes to be held or fed
- how pēpi goes to sleep.

We try little routines that help pēpi get to know and trust us, like talking to pēpi when they wake up, before picking them up.



We know that too many sights, sounds or tastes all at once can overstimulate and unsettle pēpi.





We notice pēpi loves it when we sing while we're doing things together. Pēpi doesn't mind if our singing is flat.

If we feel we're getting stressed, we give pēpi to someone who's calmer. Pēpi can sense when we're stressed.

If we're stuck, we ask whānau and friends for ideas on sleeping, holding, wrapping or feeding pēpi. We listen to all their kōrero and then work out what's best for us and our pēpi.

Keeping calm when pēpi can't stop crying is hard. We try a technique and give it time to work before we try something else.

**We can try:**

- waha (carrying pēpi close to our heart)
- waiata
- going for a hīkoi
- gentle patting and rocking.

# 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.



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





## 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*.

# Kaitiaki pēpi

## Waha

Carrying pēpi close to the heart

Our tīpuna used hue or gourds to carry water to their whare. The term waha describes how they would cradle it close to their body to ensure its safety. The same word is used to describe securely carrying pēpi.



Our kaitiaki would waha pēpi to soothe them when they were upset or hard to settle. This gave the village an opportunity to support the raising of mokopuna.

When we wrap and securely sling pēpi close to the body of their kaitiaki, warm and close to the rhythm of the manawa (heart), like the familiar foetal environment, it can calm and soothe an unsettled pēpi.



Waha helps pēpi to learn how to regulate their breathing when they're upset.

# Ngā taonga tākaro

**Awhi pēpi when you talk to them so they can tune into your voice.** Look at them when you speak and use exaggerated facial expressions. Watch how pēpi responds when you make your voice higher, stretch the vowel sounds, and speak slowly using short sentences.

**Pēpi can't see colour yet.** Contrasting patterns of light and dark, especially black and white, are great for developing vision. A quick homemade cardboard book with simple black and white shapes or patterns is perfect for pēpi to look at.

**Pēpi is getting stronger and likes to kick their legs and move their arms.** Put pēpi on the floor, on a clean blanket, so they can move freely.



**A gentle mirimiri, especially after a bath, can be part of a relaxing routine for you both.** Only do it for as long as pēpi enjoys it – they will let you know when they've had enough.

**Sing with pēpi at bath time, changing time, or any time you have their full attention.** Singing can be playful and fun, or calming and soothing.

**Try calling out their name, or using things to make different sounds** – squeaking, rattling, jingling – from different places in the room. It's fun and can be a simple test of their hearing.

## Waiata kōhungahunga

Waiata is a great way to share and learn te reo Māori. Lots of repetition of Māori sounds and words help to create language patterns in baby's brain for the future.

Oriori can be soothing and calming. This waiata has repetition which is great for their developing brain and you can include the names of all the people in their whānau.

Moe moe pēpi, moe moe rā

Ka hoki mai a māmā ākuanei

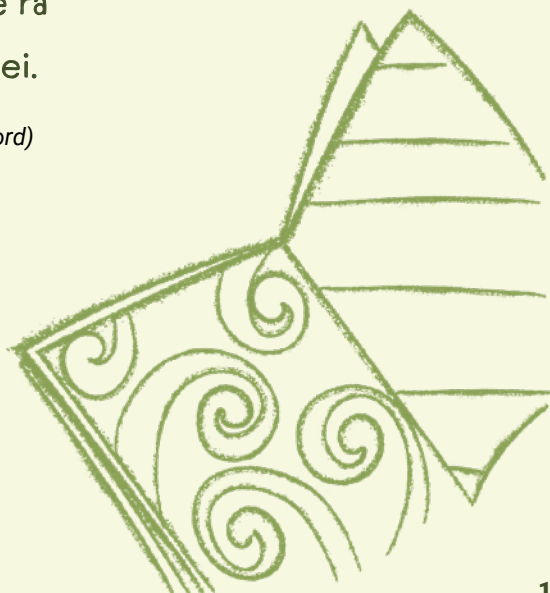
Moe moe pepi moe moe rā

Ka hoki mai a pāpā ākuanei.

*(Tune: Hush little baby, don't say a word)*



Visit [takai.nz/waiata](https://www.takai.nz/waiata)  
for more.





# Ngā tohu whānau

There are 6 things that promote a strong relationship between parents, kaitiaki, whānau and their tamariki. In the first 6 months of a baby's life they might look like this.

## Love and warmth

- Give pēpi our full attention during care routines.
- Hold pēpi close. Rock and sing to them.
- Use gentle mirimiri to soothe pēpi.

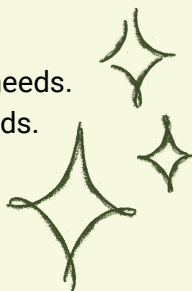


## Talking and listening

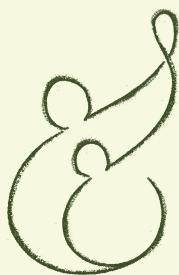
- Make eye contact with pēpi.
- Copy the sounds pēpi makes.
- Learn to read baby's cues.

## Guidance and understanding

- Understand that pēpi depends on us to meet their needs.
- Know we can't spoil pēpi by responding to their needs.
- Know pēpi is using their senses to learn
  - eyes, ears, mouth, nose, and hands.



This is an important time for you and your pēpi to get to know each other and to build a secure relationship with them. Pēpi depends on you to meet their needs and provide a safe and secure environment for them to thrive.

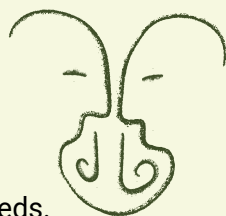


## Limits and boundaries

- Know when pēpi is tired and help them get to sleep.
- Notice how pēpi reacts to different people and places.
- Know our own limits and look after ourselves.

## Consistency and consequences

- Develop care routines, like changing kope the same way, to help pēpi know what to expect each time.
- Build routines for pēpi which are in tune with their needs.
- Help pēpi build trusting relationships with a few key people.



## A structured and secure world

- Know that the relationship pēpi has with their main carers is the foundation for future learning and relationships.
- Keep pēpi safe from harsh voices, angry feelings and harmful places.
- Set up safe spaces for pēpi to feed, sleep and play.







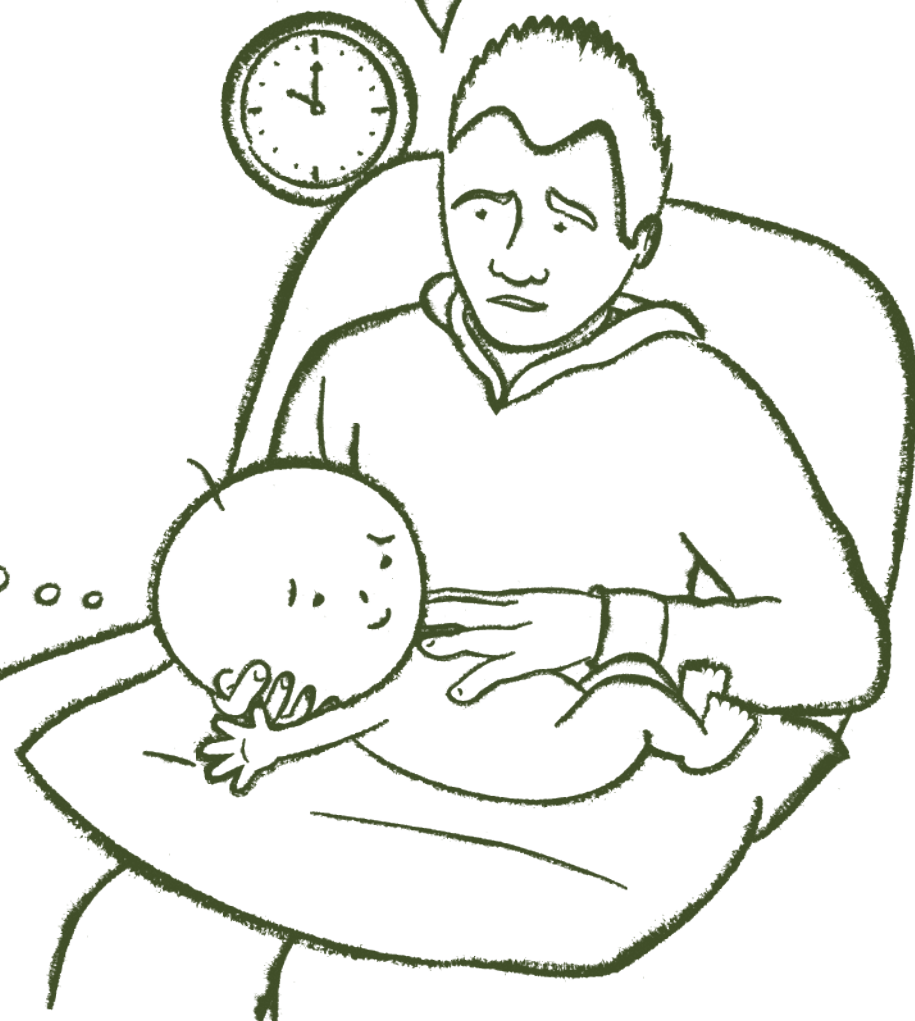
# What's the time, Mr Wolf?

Wow... this is soo  
good... I love this!

Carry on, don't  
stop... haere tonu!



Mirimiri  
your waewae...  
your puku...  
is that enough?





**What's happening at**

# **4 to 6 months**

**He taonga te tamaiti.**

Every child is a treasure.



# Pēpi says

I can copy facial expressions – I like people to pūkana to me.

I like bringing things to my mouth, especially my hands.

I'm getting louder. I can squeal and when I think something is really funny, I laugh out loud! That really gets attention.

I am beginning to move my body more. I can roll over and I like to reach for things that interest me. First I grab them, then I look at them before I put them in my 'testing machine' – that's my waha!

When we read books together, I like to grab hold of the page and pull it towards me.

Something is mamae in my waha. If I dribble a lot I might be getting teeth.



I know the familiar faces in my world really well now, and I notice a lot more details – Nannie’s moko kauae and koro with his pāhau.

I’m getting steadier when I sit by myself. There’s a whole new view when I’m sitting up. I like it when there’s a pillow behind me just in case I tip over and bang my ūpoko.

I will turn towards my whānau when they’re speaking so I need them to kōrero pai to each other and around me. It’s important for my brain development and my emotional wellbeing.

**As soon as I open my eyes in the morning I’m playing and when my whānau join in it’s even more fun.**



I like it when my whānau kōrero to me, especially in te reo Māori. But any language I hear regularly helps to build strong connections in my brain for speaking and listening in the future.





# Whānau say

We've started talking about our whakapapa and we like to show pēpi whānau photos and talk about who's who.

When pēpi makes a new sound we copy it, so they're keen to try again and again. We make learning to talk and listen into a fun game.

We make sure pēpi has lots of different things to explore that are safe – interesting textures but nothing that could hurt them.

We love playing with our pēpi and it helps pēpi learn about trust. We also repeat games often which strengthens brain connections for their learning.

We want to make sure our pēpi has good hearing so we play games to help them tune in to different sounds coming from different places.

We talk to pēpi about the things around us, what we're doing, and what's happening when we are doing things together.



Tamariki Ora Well Child checks are great for asking questions about how our pēpi is developing. I'd better make a list of things we're noticing about pēpi and any pātai we have so we are ready for our next check up.

We want to make sure those big beautiful eyes are working well so we'll ask about vision checks at the next Tamariki Ora catch up.

We visit whānau, friends and animals so pēpi can see, hear and feel different sights, sounds and textures.

We try to give pēpi a balance of noisy and quiet time. We have some simple routines that suit us and they give pēpi a sense of security.

Pēpi has a whole new interest in kai. We make sure to really penupenu (mash) so there's no risk of them choking. We keep it easy for us to prepare especially if we are out and about on the go.



We go for walks outside if we're feeling a bit stressed. We look at things and name them while we're out. It helps both our brains have a rest from stressful things.

# Kaitiaki pēpi

## Whakapapa

Whakapapa is what connects us to our ancestors. It links us to whānau, hapū, iwi and marae. It's never too early for pēpi to learn about their whakapapa.

Whakapapa is about intergenerational wisdom and helps pēpi to understand all of the gifts, skills and talents that they inherit from their ancestors.

Whakapapa can be introduced in different ways, through waiata, stories, carvings, art and photos. To help pēpi understand where they fit in their whānau, use words like:

- tuakana
- tuahine
- teina
- koro
- tungāne
- kuia



When pēpi hears whakapapa recited, it helps develop memory skills and builds their sense of identity and belonging.



## Wahakura

Wahakura are sleeping pods woven with harakeke for pēpi to safely co-sleep with parents and kaitiaki in shared spaces.

Like waha, wahakura support pēpi to feel close to whānau when they sleep, while keeping them safe.

When māmā is hapū, all whānau can join together to make a wahakura for pēpi. This can be a great bonding activity and a way for others to help parents prepare for the arrival of pēpi.

# Speaking my mind

Titiro – look at  
māmā, titiro mai.

Kia ora pēpi.  
Do you remember  
me?

Āe, I remember you.  
You have cold hands!







# Ngā taonga tākaro

When pēpi is playing on the floor, encourage them to reach for things. This builds strength and develops their hand-eye coordination. Place things just out of reach and encourage pēpi as they try to reach for them.

You could make a play gym for pēpi by hanging two or three things to reach for and grasp, for example, a square of bright fabric, or a set of measuring spoons. You can tape them to the edge of a table.

Do calm activities just before putting pēpi down for a moe, ideally when they are relaxed but not yet asleep. Help pēpi learn in a gradual way that moe time is comfortable and pleasant.

Pēpi will enjoy a small rourou (basket) filled with a variety of objects that make different noises, have different textures, colours and shapes. Watch out for any sharp edges. Anything smaller than a small egg is too little. Kia tūpato.



# Waiata kōhungahunga

Sit pēpi on your knee and hold their hands in yours as you show them how to pakipaki.

Mēnā harikoa koe, pakipaki

Mēnā harikoa koe, pakipaki

Mēnā harikoa koe, ki a puta atu ai

Mēnā harikoa koe, pakipaki.

*(Tune: If you're happy and you know it)*



Visit [takai.nz/waiata](https://www.takai.nz/waiata) for more.



## My whānau pepeha



Ko \_\_\_\_\_ te maunga



Ko \_\_\_\_\_ te awa



Ko \_\_\_\_\_ te waka



Ko \_\_\_\_\_ te iwi

Ko \_\_\_\_\_ te hapū



Ko \_\_\_\_\_ te marae

# He kāinga haumarū

## A safe home

There are lots of things we can do to lessen the chances of accidents happening. Think prevention!

- **Check out possible dangers** by getting down on the floor and seeing what pēpi could reach. Electric plugs or cords, heaters, hot drinks or even a hanging tablecloth.
- **Mahia kia pako – make it click.** Make sure the car seat pēpi uses is suitable for their age and it's fitted properly.
- **Always use the harness** in prams, highchairs and shopping trolleys.
- **Remove bibs** before pēpi goes to bed or falls asleep.
- **Always keep a hand on pēpi** in the bath or on high surfaces.
- **Avoid burns** by putting cold water in the bath before the hot water.

Learn more about safety

[www.safekids.org.nz](http://www.safekids.org.nz)

[www.plunket.org.nz](http://www.plunket.org.nz)



Pakiwaitara

# The legend of Māui-tikitiki-a-Taranga

Long ago there lived a man named Māui, half man, half god, who had supernatural powers. He was the youngest of five sons. When Māui was born his mother Taranga mistakenly thought he was stillborn. In her grief she cut her hair and wrapped her pēpi in it, then placed him in the sea.

Tangaroa, atua of the sea, saw Māui begin to move and sent karengo (seaweed) to care for him until he was rescued by his grandfather Tamanui-ki-te-rangi. He taught Māui waiata, haka and whakapapa and told him about his parents and whānau.

As he grew up, Māui longed to meet his mother and his brothers. He left his home in the sea and went to his mother's house. There he found his four brothers, Māui-taha, Māui-roto, Māui-pae, and Māui-waho.





The brothers wondered who this stranger was, so Māui had to prove himself before they would accept him as their brother. When he showed them how he could haka, and how he could change himself into a bird, his brothers were amazed.

That night Māui crept into the house and hid behind one of his brothers as his mother was counting them. She got confused when she counted one extra person. Māui tried to tell her who he was, but she didn't believe he was her child.




Māui then told her how she had wrapped him in her tikitiki, the topknot of hair, when he was born, and how karengo had cared for him while in the sea. He told her about being found on the shore by his grandfather Tamanui-ki-te-rangi.

Māui told her that when he was in her womb, he had heard her say the names of his older brothers. He proceeded to recite them to prove that he was her son.

When his mother heard this, she cried out, “Aue, you are my pōtiki. From now on, you will be named Māui-tikitiki-a-Taranga.”





What might this pakiwaitara remind us of?

- When we kōrero, waiata and mirimiri pēpi before birth we prepare them for a safe and secure world.
- Like Māui, pēpi can hear and feel everything māmā does.
- Learning whakapapa gives pēpi a sense of belonging to their whole whānau.



# **Tōku reo, tōku ohoo**

## **My voice, my awakening**

Pēpi says... Tell me a little bit about myself.

**Who welcomed me into the world?**

**What was happening in Aotearoa then?**

**What's one cool thing about me?**



Pēpi says... Now I want to know how you're doing.

How are you feeling now after having me around for six months?

What's one thing you have learned from being my kaitiaki?

What's one song you are listening to now?









## The Whakatipu series supports whānau with parenting.

It follows the journey of plant growth – from a seed, to a seedling, to a sapling and then a young tree. The booklets cover pregnancy, birth and child development up to the age of five years. They provide information, activities and tikanga-based learning for all parents and whānau involved in nurturing the growth and development of the next generation.

Order free resources at [takai.nz](http://takai.nz)

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From conception  
to birth

**te**   
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Booklet 1  
From birth  
to 6 months

Booklet 2  
From 7 to  
12 months

Booklet 3  
From 13 to  
18 months

**te**   
**kōhuri**

Booklet 1  
From 19 months  
to 2 years

Booklet 2  
From 2 years  
to 2 and a half

Booklet 3  
From 2 and a half  
to 3 years

**te**   
**māhuri**

From 3 to  
5 years

**tākai**

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