

Kaitiaki pēpi

Gifting taonga

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

Pounamu taonga like kapeu, manaia or tiki were sometimes used when tamariki were teething. They were used because their large size meant there was no risk of pēpi choking. The hard and cool stone is just right for soothing sore gums and helping teeth push through.

It's becoming more common to give taonga to mark significant milestones for pēpi and whānau.

Think about who you can approach to make taonga and what significance it will hold for your whānau. You could store taonga in waka huia and pass them on as whānau heirlooms in the future.



Tama ariki

Tama ariki refers to tamariki with disabilities as children of the gods – tamariki with superpowers. Tama ariki reaffirms that every person has mana and gifts to value and share.

Here are some tips from whānau for kaitiaki of tama ariki:

- Me āta titiro, me āta whakarongo. Observe without judgement, and listen with an open heart.
- Me āta kōrero tō katoa kia mārama. Speak with all of your being, sometimes words aren't enough or they're way too much. Try hand gestures, body language and expressions.
- Waiho au ki ahau anō. Let our tama ariki be, wherever they may be. It's up to us to change, not them.
- He taonga te whakaaro nui ki te tama ariki, ki tōna kaitiaki hoki. Our tama ariki come first, always. So, a kind thought to their parents or guardians, or support for their wellbeing is precious.

