



Our tikanga approach

Introduction

The purpose of the Independent Children's Monitor (the Monitor) is to provide a credible view of the Oranga Tamariki System, highlighting areas that will drive continuous improvement to advance outcomes for tamariki and their whānau, particularly tamariki and whānau Māori.

To understand if the Oranga Tamariki system is working for tamariki and whānau, we need to hear their experiences and views on what is going well and areas for improvement. To do this well, we must uphold their mana when we kōrero with them so that they feel valued and safe to share with us.

Our tikanga approach lays a sound foundation for us to work with tamariki and whānau and those who hold their best interests at heart - hapū, iwi and communities. Relationships built on respect and trust, reciprocity, a common focus, cohesiveness and proactive engagement along with effective processes for talking, learning and working together, will contribute to a successful outcome.

Our tikanga approach is about always striving to do the right thing in the right way when we hui, and consists of the following principles:

- Whakapapa (kinship) – making connections through finding out a little about each other and acknowledging connections
- Whakamana i te tāngata (respect) – showing respect by understanding and supporting Māori kawa and tikanga
- Whanaungatanga (relationship) – fostering a sense of connection when engaging with each other. Relationships are important
- Manaakitanga (caring for others) – having integrity and caring about how we relate to people
- Kotahitanga (unity) – while people may hold diverse views, it is important to identify a shared sense of purpose.
- Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face-to-face) – engaging in person particularly to resolve any issues and maintain connections.

Although our tikanga approach has a strong focus on Māori, the principles apply to all peoples and communities.

Our tikanga approach is read alongside the Monitor's Ethic's Code that provides more detailed information about how to engage with tamariki, and the When We Visit Communities (Interim) Policy.

Our tikanga journey

Since the Monitor was established in July 2019, we have focussed on building a strong tikanga foundation. We have engaged with iwi, Māori and community partners from across the motu and established the Kāhui group made up of Māori rangatira to provide us with expert advice, guidance, support and oversight of our work including cultural guidance. We have recruited Māori staff with strong kawa and tikanga knowledge, and we support all staff to build cultural knowledge and understanding to confidently engage with tamariki, whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities.

Some of the ways we have supported staff include providing weekly te reo Māori and waiata sessions and supporting staff to learn their pepeha and karakia for opening and closing hui. Staff have also learnt about the mihi whakatau process and all new staff are welcomed with mihi whakatau. Going forward we will be providing staff with professional whakawhiti kōrero (reflective conversations) and cultural supervision to enable them to reflect on and improve their practice, particularly when we hui with others.

Our Tikanga Approach for Engaging with Tamariki, Whānau, and Communities is a living and evolving approach that will be reviewed and strengthened as we learn from tamariki, whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities, about their experiences engaging with us.

Our tikanga approach

The following information provides guidance on how to embed the tikanga principles into practice when we hui with others. Our tikanga approach is a process that starts before we engage (so we are well prepared), during the engagement, and after the engagement (to maintain relationships).

It is important to be sensitive with how we apply our tikanga approach, acknowledging that Māori (and people from other cultures) will be at different places culturally. Our tikanga approach is a guide only – it is important to be guided by the needs and preferences of those we engage with.

Before the hui

Whakapapa: learn about the people we will hui with by finding out if we have an existing relationship with them and where applicable, talk with a kaitūhono (connector). Information that would be helpful to know before we make contact includes:

for tamariki and whānau:

- their iwi
- whether tamariki or whānau speak te reo Māori or another language
- whether tamariki or whānau would prefer to engage with Māori staff or staff of the same culture as them.

for iwi, Māori, and community partners:

- gather the following information either internally, via a kaitūhono, or on an iwi, Māori or community partner's website:
 - their organisational structure
 - the type of relationship they have with the Oranga Tamariki system (i.e. strategic partnership or shared care agreement, for example)
 - their mission, vision, and aspirations
 - progress of iwi Treaty settlements where relevant (i.e. some iwi, as part of the Treaty Settlement process have entered into a strategic agreement with the Crown to improve outcomes for whānau).

Whakamana i te tangata: ensure Monitor staff have the cultural and leadership expertise and knowledge to engage effectively. Determine:

- if Māori staff or a member of the Monitor's leadership team leads the hui

- if staff with expertise engaging with tamariki including disabled tamariki are required for any hui
- that all staff (Māori and non- Māori) know:
 - their pepeha and can confidently participate in pōwhiri and mihi whakatau
 - waiata and karakia for opening and closing hui and blessing kai
 - the kawa and tikanga of the tamariki, whānau, or partner organisation
 - whether a kaikōrero (speaker) and kaikaranga (caller responding to tangata whenua) is required for a pōwhiri.

Whanaungatanga: provide tamariki, whānau, and iwi, Māori, and community partners with the opportunity to determine how the engagement will be undertaken. Ask them:

- how they would like the hui to be run (one to one interview or wānanga with a group)
- where they would like the hui to be held
- who else they want to invite to the hui.

Manaakitanga: confirm what koha (including kai) will be provided to tamariki, whānau, or a community partner and whether we need to cover expenses associated with travel costs, venue hire or other expenses.

During the hui (kanohi ki te kanohi)

Manaakitanga: be respectful during hui by:

- observing and following appropriate kawa and tikanga
- showing humility (hūmārie) through listening and acknowledging limitations, both as an individual and organisation
- allowing time for tamariki, whānau, iwi, Māori, and community partners to share kōrero that matters to them
- being patient even if the hui goes longer than expected.

Kotahitanga: Create a safe and ethical environment for people to korero. When we open hui with others:

- ask participants if they would like to open the hui with karakia
- introduce yourself and apply whanaungatanga
- explain to participants:
 - the role of the Monitor
 - the purpose of the hui
 - how the information they share will be used and protected
 - the process for changing or withdrawing information they share with you.

- provide an opportunity for people to ask questions
- obtain informed consent from tamariki, whānau, and caregivers before proceeding with the interview.

During the hui:

- apply a semi-structured and trauma informed approach to the hui
- match and mirror the body language, tone, and words and phrases of the people you are talking with where appropriate
- in groups, provide opportunities for everyone to have a voice via direct questioning or breaking large groups into small more intimate groups.

When we close hui:

- thank participants for their time
- provide a summary of what was heard to the person/s being spoken with, either verbal, written, or using pictures
- provide information about where participants can get support if concerns are raised
- provide your details so participants can contact you if they have any queries or want to change or withdraw what they said
- inform participants:
 - when, what, and how they will receive the findings (refer to the When we Share Back with Communities kawa)
 - when the report will be published and how they can access it.
- close hui with karakia if you opened with one.

After the engagement:

Kanohi ki te kanohi: Maintain a respectful relationship by:

- contacting them after the engagement to thank them for their time and kōrero
- following the When we share back with communities kawa to share findings with communities.

Related kawa and tikanga

Kawa:

- When we Visit Communities kawa
- When we Share Back with Communities kawa
- Ethics Code
- Child Protection Policy

Tikanga:

- Semi-structured and Trauma Informed tikanga
- Match and Mirror tikanga
- Facilitating Group Hui tikanga

Date of approval	16 November 2020
Date of next review	16 May 2021
Approved by	The Monitor's Leadership team

Version	Version notes	Date version approved
V2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Added more detail to the 'during hui' section of the Tikanga Approach 	