

## Article

# Ki Tua o Ngaku Mokopuna—Beyond My Grandchildren: The Waikato-Tainui Mokopuna Ora Cultural Practice Framework

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## Abstract

This article examines the current statutory care and protection landscape in Aotearoa New Zealand (Aotearoa), focusing on the operations of Waikato-Tainui, a post-treaty settlement entity operating on behalf of the Waikato tribe (iwi), within this complex colonial context to safeguard and nurture mokopuna (descendants) and whaanau (families). Waikato-Tainui supports indigenous mokopuna within a fundamentally flawed settler-colonial care and protection system while concurrently reimagining an indigenous-led model rooted in ancestral wisdom and knowledge systems. Mokopuna Ora (Thriving descendants) is an indigenous whaanau-led and mokopuna-centred care and protection initiative that has been piloted, tested, researched, evaluated, and expanded over the past eleven years within the current settler colonial system. Drawing from deep empirical ancestral wisdom, the authors reimagine a new approach, building a roadmap for mokopuna and whaanau success. Ki Tua o Ngaku Mokopuna is presented as a cultural practice framework encapsulating Waikato ancestral wisdom and knowledge. While still in its early implementation stages, its development has been generations in the making, belonging to Waikato paa (communal meeting places) and hapuu (sub-tribes). Beyond a tool for frontline staff, this framework offers a vision, measures of success, and standards of excellence to inform theory and practice. This work addresses continuous indigenous resistance against negative colonial impacts, reflecting a shared indigenous experience and system of care and protection. In contemporary Aotearoa, the neo-colonial challenge is exacerbated by the current right-wing coalition Government and its ideological stance. The swift and extensive legislative reforms driven by harmful racist ideology are unprecedented, facilitating the exploitation of people, Papatuaanuku (the earth mother), and te taiao (the natural world) for corporate gain and profit. Maaori tribes, organisations, sub-tribes, families, and individuals are actively countering these racist ideologies, legislations, strategies, policies, funding decisions, and operational practices. This ongoing colonial violence is met with the strength of ancestral knowledge and wisdom, envisioning a future where mokopuna thrive. The framework represents indigenous love, growth, prosperity, and abundance amidst enduring colonial harm and ideological warfare.

**Keywords:** indigenous-led; self-determination; family



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## 1. Waikato-Tainui Whakapapa (Genealogy) and History

Waikato is a Maaori<sup>1</sup> iwi located in the central North Island of Aotearoa, with genealogical links to the Tainui waka<sup>2</sup> (ancestral canoe). During the 19th century, the Crown invaded Waikato in the largest and most important campaign of the New Zealand wars,

resulting in significant loss of life and the confiscation of over 1.2 million acres of Waikato land. The impact of the war on Waikato people went well beyond the battlefield; starvation, displacement, intergenerational social and cultural trauma and socio-economic disadvantage followed the Crown's invasion.

In 1995, Waikato became the first iwi to reach a historical Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti)<sup>3</sup> grievance settlement with the Crown, which included a Crown apology, a relativity clause for future settlements, financial compensation, and the return of a small proportion of lands confiscated by the Crown. While the settlement did not change the past, it provided the tribe with a set of tools and resources to leverage and reclaim its environmental, economic, social and cultural future, and an opportunity to reshape itself politically, including its relationship with the Crown.

Waikato-Tainui is the name of the post-treaty settlement entity with a mandate for 68 paa and over 96,000 registered tribal members of the Tainui waka<sup>4</sup>. To register, members must verify a genealogical connection to Waikato iwi and Tainui waka.

Waikato-Tainui operates under the mantle of Kiingitanga (Takerei 2019) (the Maaori King Movement), which provides the foundations upon which all practice is based. Kiingitanga unifies the drive for mana motuhake (self-determination), founded in 1858 with the aim of uniting Maaori, of uniting all tribes. Its primary goal was to cease the sale of land to European settlers, stop inter-tribal warfare, and provide a springboard for the preservation of Maaori culture in the face of European colonisation (O'Malley 2016). As it has done for the past 160 years, the role of Kiingitanga is still unifying its people.

Te Kirihaehae Te Puea Heerangi (Te Puea), born in 1853, is the mokopuna (grandchild) of the second Maaori King, Kiingi Taawhiao. She is remembered by Waikato descendants with pride as a remarkable leader who played a critical role in helping revitalise the King movement. Te Puea devoted her life to her people and was influential in building both the mana (authority, prestige) and economic strength of her tribe (King 2013). She is renowned for many things, including her devotion to the welfare of others, where she led a response to the devastating 1918 influenza epidemic and cared for the sick and over 100 orphans. As such, she is often referred to as the first Maaori social worker.<sup>5</sup> Te Puea was driven by the vision of her tuupuna (ancestors), her unwavering love for the Kiingitanga and her people. Her legacy and wairua (spirit) reverberate among her people today.

Ngaa uara o te waka o Tainui (the values), ngaa maataapono o te Kiingitanga (the principles) (Waikato-Tainui 2024), ngaa taonga tuku iho (traditional knowledge passed down), and the lived experience of tupuna set the measures of quality and success for all Mokopuna Ora work.

These strands of deep ancestral knowledge and wisdom sit at the centre of the Mokopuna Ora cultural practice framework, named Ki Tua o Ngaku Mokopuna. This holistic approach is focused on the overall well-being of kaimahi (workers) and the whaanau Waikato-Tainui they serve.

## 2. Colonisation and the Statutory Settler-Colonial "Care and Protection" System

The devastating intergenerational impacts of colonisation, and in particular settler colonialism, on every aspect of indigenous being in Aotearoa, particularly the cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, health, safety and wellbeing of Maaori children and families is well documented (for example, Jackson 1987; Moewaka Barnes and McCreanor 2019; Mutu 2019; Ngata 2019; Walker 1990; Reid et al. 2019). The role of the state on child abuse, when viewed through an indigenous lens, reveals a dark, murky and painful history.

From the late 19th century, Courts had the power to commit "neglected or abused children" to state residential (industrial) schools. The Children's Protection Act, introduced

in 1890, allowed police to intervene when children were perceived to be at risk. The emphasis through the 1920s onwards was to keep children within families, but those “neglected and abused” could still be removed.

The proliferation of international research in the 1960s shone a light on the child abuse of non-indigenous children, and the state considered making it mandatory for medical professionals to report suspected cases of abuse. From the 1970s, multidisciplinary teams worked together to give advice to social workers. During this decade, an unprecedented number of young Maaori were taken from their families and placed into foster and state care.

Statistics relating to Maaori children in state care and Maaori families who have been subjected to welfare authorities’ intervention have either been invisible or poorly recorded in the past. [Love et al. \(2016\)](#) posit that this has resulted in a porous statistical picture of the extent and nature of interactions between Maaori families and state welfare authorities in Aotearoa/New Zealand, preventing meaningful academic analysis and dialogue and excluding the lived realities of Maaori from official (statistical) discourse.

Anecdotal evidence indicates large numbers of Maaori children were removed from their families by well-meaning social workers, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, when there was a massive migration of Maaori from rural to urban areas ([MacDonald 2023](#)). The exact number of children with genealogical descent to Waikato, taken during this period, is unknown, but estimated to be in the hundreds.

The intergenerational consequences of institutional harm were devastating; a disproportionate number of Maaori children and whaanau were impacted ([Fitzmaurice-Brown 2023](#)). The majority of young people taken into state care suffered abuse (mental, physical and sexual) and neglect, resulting in unimaginable trauma manifested in destructive behaviours. Disconnected from cultural identity, whakapapa and whaanau, many sought connections and relationships within the gangs and turned to alcohol, drugs, and other substances to help alleviate the pain ([Fleming et al. 2021](#)).

In the 1980s, the state returned its focus to keeping children in their families. This approach was enshrined in the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989. Child, Youth and Family (CYF) became New Zealand’s statutory child-welfare agency in 1999. CYF was replaced by the Ministry for Vulnerable Children (Oranga Tamariki) in April 2017 after an expert group produced a critical review of CYF services in December 2015. The agency was renamed Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children on 31 October 2017.

Decades of research and evidence illustrate how the imposition of a punitive settler-colonial statutory “care and protection” system continues to perpetuate harmful ideologies and practices, disproportionately harming indigenous children and families who are over-represented in the statutory settler-colonial system today (See for example: [Hollis-English 2012](#); [Keddell 2019](#); [McCaull 2023](#); [Montgomery 2024](#); [Owen 2025](#)). This broken system is highlighted by successive reports, reviews and inquiries released over decades by indigenous and non-indigenous scholars, academics, policymakers, practitioners; and more recently by the [Office of the Chief Ombudsman \(2022, 2024\)](#), [Independent Children’s Monitor \(2023, 2024\)](#), [Controller and Auditor General \(2024\)](#) and [Royal Commission of Inquiry \(2024\)](#).

These mechanisms, created by the constitutional monarchy and settler-colonial parliamentary system of government to provide oversight, transparency and accountability to ensure government agencies act fairly, lawfully and in the public interest ([Ferguson 2010](#)), continue to call out gross negligence and institutional racism embedded within the Crown’s own agencies. Decades have passed, new generations birthed, yet still, indigenous children are taken and harmed by the system ([Boulton et al. 2020](#)).

[Oranga Tamariki Act \(1989\)](#), also known as the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act (1989), was designed to . . . “promote the well-being of children, young persons, and their families, whānau, hapū, iwi, and family groups” . . . through a range of initiative and interventions. However, the Act and various iterations of crown agencies established to improve the welfare of the most vulnerable children and young people in Aotearoa, more particularly, Maaori children, have failed to address the systemic issues that are prevalent today, especially in relation to the overrepresentation of Maaori children in the “care” of the state ([Haydon and Ruwhiu 2024](#)).

### 3. Mokopuna Ora

In 2013, Waikato-Tainui entered a relationship with the Crown to support the care and protection of mokopuna, descendants of Tainui waka ([Waikato-Tainui 2021](#)). The focus was on preventative and intensive intervention work to provide improved outcomes for tribal mokopuna and whaanau that may be in, or most likely to come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki. The alignment of objectives and aspirations between Oranga Tamariki and Waikato-Tainui resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on 31 October 2013. The MoU provided the foundation for the operational partnership model, Mokopuna Ora, to go live in 2015. In its first three years, the partnership focused on the recruitment of whaanau caregivers for mokopuna in care with genealogical connections to Tainui waka. This was identified by Oranga Tamariki as a priority.

The relationship did not turn out as anticipated. Waikato-Tainui employed two kaimahi who worked across four Oranga Tamariki offices. The roles were stretched beyond the initial scope and became a “one stop shop for all things Maaori”, internally for cultural guidance and support, and externally in communities supporting whaanau cases. The roles became unsafe, unsustainable, and untenable.

In 2016, the tribe contracted Waikato-Tainui Endowed College Researchers to evaluate Mokopuna Ora ([Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated 2024](#)). In 2018, Oranga Tamariki also commissioned an independent evaluation. The overall findings of both evaluations were consistent, that is, that the Mokopuna Ora model was achieving the intended outcomes, but was unsustainable due to insufficient resourcing.

During this time, Oranga Tamariki sought the support of Waikato-Tainui to recruit whaanau caregivers, over and above the existing role and responsibilities. The focus was on advocating and supporting whaanau and mokopuna to navigate the statutory system. The tribe’s response was to co-design a unique recruitment process, utilising tribal events and inviting whaanau to be caregivers. Following initial engagement, the tribe helped process applications and held induction waananga (in-depth forums) to ensure whaanau were prepared and supported for the important caregiving role. This challenge was exacerbated by the complex needs of some of the children who required care.

The interest generated by the recruitment drive exceeded all expectations, so much so that the Oranga Tamariki systems could not cope with the number of caregiver applicants. This created a bottleneck of unprocessed applications. To put this into context, Waikato-Tainui successfully recruited and appointed more caregivers in three waananga, than what Oranga Tamariki were able to recruit nationally over one calendar year.

Although Waikato-Tainui made significant strides in recruiting caregivers to meet the needs identified by Oranga Tamariki, applicants had to wait months before being contacted by the agency. When caregivers were finally appointed, many were treated poorly. The credibility of the tribe, which had fronted the process at tribal events, was jeopardised by the agency’s inaction. This situation became untenable, and from that point onward, Waikato-Tainui decided to discontinue efforts to implement the approaches and priorities set by Oranga Tamariki.

Driven by frustration and leveraging the introduction of Section 7AA, an amendment to the [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989](#), Waikato-Tainui changed the nature of the relationship with Oranga Tamariki to a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-based partnership. Te Tiriti o Waitangi forms the constitutional basis for Maaori–Crown relations and Section 7AA made it explicit that the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki was obliged to give practical effect to the Treaty of Waitangi—this included duties around whakapapa, whanaungatanga (familial relationships), measurable outcomes and iwi partnerships ([Independent Iwi Working Group on Constitutional Transformation 2016](#)). This powerful shift demanded that Waikato-Tainui exercise its power, authority and control over the relationship with Oranga Tamariki and, more importantly, for the tribe to determine how it will support the care and protection of mokopuna and whaanau, and not to be dictated to by the agency.

In 2019, a Strategic Partnership Agreement was signed by Waikato-Tainui with Oranga Tamariki, and the relationship underwent a fundamental change. The Agreement objectives were specific to the goals and aspirations of the iwi, informed by the needs of whaanau and mokopuna. In 2020, a Mokopuna Ora Sustainability Project—Implementation Plan was co-developed, informed by whaanau involved in the Oranga Tamariki system and front-line tribal and agency staff who worked within the system. Over 80% of the problem statements that the Implementation Plan sought to address focused on Oranga Tamariki policies, processes, systems, behaviours, attitudes and practices. Some examples included addressing the inherent racism embedded in the statutory system by building understanding of what was working for whaanau and what was not; the lack of staff cultural awareness, responsiveness and capability to engage safely and effectively with whaanau and iwi; the lack of timely and accurate information provided to whaanau about their tamariki; and an outdated client management system that enabled western approaches to recording state data. This comprehensive plan was approved by both Chief Executives.

However, when it came to operationalising the plan, Oranga Tamariki struggled to commit. From an iwi perspective, the agency was hampered by its own limiting mindsets, policies, processes, systems and capabilities. The Crown simply was not ready to truly partner, and iwi needed a different response to Care and Protection, a response informed by whaanau and led by our own for the benefit of all.

In 2021, Waikato-Tainui submitted a business investment proposal to Oranga Tamariki. The following year, a five-year strategic partnership outcomes agreement was signed between the two organisations, which includes the Mokopuna Ora strategy, divided into three primary workstreams: Devolution to Community, Strategic Leadership and Front-line Operations.

The journey to reform the relationship with the Crown is ongoing and is not without tension, challenge and compromise. Key milestones were achieved along the way because the iwi has demonstrated leadership, clarity and vision based on a powerful legacy inherited through the generations, cloaked by the Kiingitanga and vision of those passed.

#### **4. Devolution to Community**

Shifting the focus of power and control back to communities is the aspiration. While Oranga Tamariki has indicated a desire to decentralise and devolve at least some child protection functions, there is little detail about how this will be achieved and what functions, if any, are out of scope. Rather than waiting on this determination, our focus is on the design and development of a tribal and community-enabled, child-focused, whaanau-informed, holistic model of care and protection. Other tribes are also developing bespoke models of care and protection grounded in traditional tribal knowledge, that work for them (See for example: [Cleaver 2024](#); [Eruera and Ruwhiu 2016, 2021](#); [Herrmann 2016](#); [Moyle 2014](#); [Roguski 2020](#)). Our team is identifying what is working well so we can build on

this, what is not working well and where the gaps are so we can fill these, and working alongside families and the community to create solutions. What is working well includes the relational way kaimahi practice and engage with whaanau; taking the time to build trust and confidence; working alongside whaanau as an advocate and support person; helping them navigate complex processes and policies and explaining what these mean in plain language; providing a bridge to connect with their tribal and cultural identity; and sharing power with whaanau so that they develop their plan, set goals that work for them and lead the implementation of the plan.

Supporting the ecosystem is critical; this work also includes building workforce capacity and capability, the development of accords, community feedback and accountability mechanisms. We contend that we can provide more effective protection services for all mokopuna and whaanau in our rohe, both in partnership with Crown agencies and where necessary, independently.

## 5. Strategic Leadership

This part of the strategy feeds into the devolution to the community. Waikato-Tainui are engaged at the highest level of government, with relationships that shape Aotearoa/New Zealand's political, economic, and social landscapes. Actively driving policy decisions and influencing the nation's development. We are privileged to have a seat at key decision-making tables that our families do not. This comes with the responsibility to lean into challenging conversations with decision makers, people of influence and leveraging our partnerships to create real systems change. Our team compiles robust and relevant reporting and insights to support informed decision making on strategy, policy, legislation, commissioning authorities and resourcing.

## 6. Front-Line Operations

The Mokopuna Ora team is domiciled in Oranga Tamariki offices but is employed by Waikato-Tainui and accountable to Waikato-Tainui leadership. They advocate for families alongside social workers, professionals, within the Family court, hospitals and the wider sector.

Mokopuna Ora frontline work is the heartbeat of this work. This is where we meet, support and serve our whānau. This work contributes to the transformational change of care in protection in Aotearoa in two ways. First, it informs future design work and planning, in real time, informed by those who are most affected by the system. Second, it supports our families who are suffering and caught in the system now, while we work together to design our own model of care and protection.

### 6.1. Impact on Partnered Practice

In its early inception, between 2019 to 2022, Mokopuna Ora averaged three frontline workers. Over the last 18 months, the frontline team has grown to 17. With the increased team capacity, we now triage based on criticality of risk for whaanau Maaori, whereas previously, when the team was smaller, we only had the capacity to work with the whaanau of Waikato iwi. This approach is consistent with the principles of Ngaa Mataapono o te Kiingitanga of manaakitanga (kindness, support, to take care of) and aroha (love).

The team have been domiciled in a rural Oranga Tamariki office based in the Waikato Rural North region for over five years and has developed strong professional and trusted working relationships. In the last 20 months, the team has expanded to a second urban Oranga Tamariki office based in Kirikiriroa City region. The contrasting sites were selected to help the team better understand and adapt how it works to meet the different needs in each community setting.

Our years of experiencing a relationship and partnership with Oranga Tamariki have shown us that when there is recognition of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi; mutual respect; shared decision making; resource and knowledge sharing; transparency; accountability; and a long-term commitment to an enduring partnership; our relationship with the Crown is optimised for the benefit of whaanau and children. Building mutual respect takes time. We fundamentally believe that those people employed in the statutory care and protection sector genuinely want to do the right thing for tamariki, and while there have been cases where practice was poor, the issue does not sit with individuals but with the settler-colonial system.

### 6.2. Outcomes for Whaanau and Mokopuna

The Mokopuna Ora approach is strengths-based and promotes individual and collective self-belief, capability, lived experiences, the gift of our cultural heritage and how we apply these strengths in the care and protection space. At the centre of how we work is capturing whaanau voice and experiences to inform pathways toward healing.

Mokopuna Ora works with cases that have the highest likelihood of mokopuna going into state care. It is common that the majority of these cases have high and complex needs.

Since the formal Strategic Partnership began in 2019, up to 30 June 2024, Mokopuna Ora has advocated for the families of 715 children. During this same period, the Waikato Rural North region saw the number of children in care decrease by 51%. This outcome supports not just the Mokopuna Ora methodology but the dedication and sheer hard work of families, communities, and the innovative, collaborative approach shared with professionals and government partners. We know this approach achieves significant outcomes for families and children and demonstrates the benefits of adopting an indigenous approach. For the year ended 30 June 2024:

- Mokopuna Ora received a total of 101 referrals to engage with the whaanau of 215 mokopuna.
- No children entered state care from the families that Mokopuna Ora engaged with from the Waikato Rural North region.
- Six children entered state care, from the families that Mokopuna Ora engaged with, from the Kirikiriroa City region.

### 6.3. Emergence of Ki Tua o Ngaku Mokopuna

E kore teenei whakaoranga e huri ki tua o ngaku mokopuna. Naa Kiingi Taawhiao (Waikato-Tainui 2019). We must provide our children and their children a better platform than the one we inherited. A proverb by Kiingi Taawhiao. The emergence of Ki Tua o Ngaku Mokopuna, the Mokopuna Ora Cultural Practice Framework, is a logical development in the evolution of Mokopuna Ora. It is about the fundamental right to protect, care, and nurture our own.

The framework provides a strengths-based, holistic approach focused on the overall well-being of mokopuna, whaanau, and kaimahi. It challenges the team to think and act beyond care and protection, supporting whaanau to achieve mana motuhake over their own lives and the ongoing care and protection of mokopuna/tamariki.

Ki Tua o Ngaku Mokopuna provides the pathway and mechanisms to operationalise Mokopuna Ora practice, is informed by taonga tuku iho and underpinned by ngaa mataapono o te Kiingitanga.

Ki Tua o Ngaku Mokopuna is built on Tainui puuraakau (our stories), waahi tapuu (sites of significance) situated at Kaawhia where the Tainui waka is buried, and along the tuupuna awa (ancestral river) Waikato.

To build the frameworks, the team have drawn from tongikura (revered quotes of monarchs) gifted by Kiingitanga, which have sustained generations and carried the tribe through horrific times in history (Tuaupiki 2022). By design, these deep intellectual tools are integrated into the team's practice and tikanga (customs). They inform systems and processes, and how the team engages and serves whaanau.

The cultural practice framework goes beyond stating principles and values. It is embedded in the developmental evaluation and research that runs alongside this work. The rationale is to inform how we create fit for purpose measures that are grounded in the tribe's unique genealogy (whakapapa), identity and maatauranga aa iwi (tribal knowledge). Measures that hold the team to account and show us whether we are being tika and pono (correct and honest); doing what we say we will do in terms of keeping mokopuna safe; centring whaanau voice and experience; and supporting whaanau to achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.

#### 6.4. Future Actions

The state's statutory authority in matters of care and protection has the potential to strengthen or devastate the autonomy and life force of whaanau. The Aotearoa state care system is in crisis. Waikato-Tainui believe in a better future for our children, for all children, than what we currently have. If we do not define what success looks like for ourselves, history has shown us who will, and what the result will be.

Navigating the settler-colonial care and protection system and overcoming systemic barriers to enable mana motuhake has included: forging a strategic partnership with Oranga Tamariki that enabled a greater assertion of control over how care and protection is provided to Māori children in the geographical area within which Mokopuna Ora operates; challenging system bias from the highest levels of government and leadership down to the frontline.

Waikato-Tainui's vision is drawn from a renowned proverb by the second Maaori Kiingi Taawhiao, who reigned during the 1800s, a volatile period in Aotearoa's history, when Maaori were being systematically decimated. He said, *"I will build my own house. The posts are made of maahoe and patatee. The ridgepole is made of hiinau."*

Kiingi Taawhiao describes the types of non-traditional wood his people used to build houses at that time. Due to significant deforestation and environmental degradation caused by European colonisation, the iwi adapted and used what was available.

The tribe draws strength from this proverb. It speaks to the ability to utilise existing resources in unconventional ways, demonstrating resourcefulness, resilience and innovation in the most challenging of circumstances.

This is a critical way that Waikato iwi preserve our heritage by sharing our stories and learning from the past to help guide the future. This is a cornerstone of the Mokopuna Ora cultural practice framework, Ki Tua o Ngaku Mokopuna.

As a tribe, we stand firm in our sense of self, identity and heritage, knowing we have the tools and strength to overcome any challenges that lie ahead. Whakapapa is of utmost importance to us; our mokopuna are our sacred taonga (treasure), essential to the prosperity of our environment, community and future.

We remain unwavering in our commitment to preserve the legacy entrusted to us by our ancestors, ensuring a culturally responsive and effective approach to child protection and the preservation of whaanau for the benefit of future generations to come.

*"The system is designed to divide us. We must not let it distract us from moving forward. Let's stay focused and progress together."*

*Kiing Tuuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII*

*Kia Tupu, Kia Hua, Kia Puaawai—to grow, to be fruitful, to blossom.*

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**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

**Data Availability Statement:** Data is unavailable due to privacy and ethical restrictions.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This article deliberately uses the double vowel convention to indicate elongated vowel. This is now typical of the Waikato-Tainui writing style and has become the standard for their official tribal documents.
- <sup>2</sup> Waka is an ancient voyaging canoe. Tainui waka is one of the great Polynesian voyaging canoes that brought Maaori ancestors to Aotearoa New Zealand.
- <sup>3</sup> Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the founding document of Aotearoa, signed on 6 February 1840 between representatives of the British Crown and many rangatira Māori (chiefs and chieftainess). It was intended to establish a partnership between Māori and the Crown. Since 1840, Māori have asserted, and the Crown has acknowledged, that it has breached Te Tiriti o Waitangi and failed to honour the intent and principles contained within. In 1975, the Waitangi Tribunal was established to investigate breaches and make recommendations to the Crown to recognise these breaches. A formal settlement process was established to acknowledge, address and redress historical breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This process continues to this day.
- <sup>4</sup> Mokopuna Ora’s vision is mokopuna thriving in a safe, nurturing, whaanau environments, empowered by their whakapapa. The mission is to establish a Waikato-led, mokopuna-focused care and protection model that is whaanau-informed, haponi supported, and grounded in mana Motuhake, enabling all mokopuna to thrive (autonomy).
- <sup>5</sup> See, for example, URL <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/3h17/herangi-te-kirihaehae-te-puea> (accessed on 1 March 2025).

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