



# He Huarahi Tamariki

SCHOOL FOR TEENAGE PARENTS - TERM 1 2022

## Whakawhanaungatanga Day

The year 2022 started quite differently with the return of everyone back to school wearing masks inside. What didn't change though was our tradition of dedicating the first day to re-establishing relationships and getting to know any new students and staff. Jackie ran a number of sessions based on Rock & Water theory and this proved to be a lot of fun! Students got familiar with each other again and explored the conceptual strength in both rock-like and water-like behaviour. This is proving a great metaphor for what 2022

has required of us so far!

We then went on excursion down to Willowbank Park for a lunch of fish and chips. While we were there we had a good look around the 'rocks' and 'water' and brought home a few rocks of our own to decorate. These were finished over the next week or so and have since found many different homes in and around the school. They are serving as beautiful reminders of our first day back and the different strengths we have available to us.



Right to Left: Jackie leading a Rock & Water session. Denia, Bree & Bailey at Willowbank Park. Che'-Zahn, Denia & Bree enjoying lunch. Catherine & Millie painting rocks back at school. The end product.

## Student Contribution — What A Morning!

I wake to a teeny little foot dragging across my face. Somehow, I managed to sleep through my 6.30am alarm. Again. Before opening my eyes, I already know it's my baby girl, my own little human alarm who never fails to wake me. The way she smiles at me is so lovely and I can't help but return one back. She's in a good mood, thank God, so kisses and cuddles are a must! But only for a few minutes.

I take a deep breath and finally force myself out of bed. I sit my one-year-old daughter outside the bathroom door while I quickly use the toilet, brush my teeth and wash my face. Cue her daily door knocking. "Memi? Memi! Mum. Mum. Mama!" The knocking dies down and stops. On my way to the kitchen, I hear little baby conversations. Then see a destruction of Nutri-grain leading all the way to my son with his bowl filled right to the top.

"Hi Mum!" with a proud smile on his face.  
"Hi Bubby, want some milk?" as I sweep up the sea of Nutri-grain on the floor and complete his cereal mission, with milk. I manage to make my daughter's Weet-Bix while holding her, like every other day. Otherwise she'll try to steal her brother's breakfast and it's such a hassle breaking them up from a fight. Once I sit her in her booster chair with her breakfast, I make a break for it back to the room, where I throw two sets of outfits each into their school bags, along with three nappies each, never forgetting to put one more outfit each, the best outfit, onto the bed for later. Testing my luck and seeing how far I

can go with getting myself ready, I rummage through my drawers for something decent to wear to school. I find a good enough outfit for today and before I find my shoes, times up!

And there she is at the door with an evil grin on her face. Should I be worried? She gets closer and closer, so close that I can confirm that it is indeed Weet-Bix around her mouth. Oh no! Got to get it off before it starts getting crusty and hard. With just one wipe of a warm water flannel, it comes right off.

Hand in hand we make our way back to the bedroom where I change nappies that have endured a long night full of "wees", as my two-year-old son would call it, and switch pyjamas into the very best outfits I left on the

bed from earlier. After two years of nappy and outfit changes, I'm super-fast at this part. I feel like no time has passed, that is until I'm multitasking by throwing breakfast bowls into the dishwasher, wiping down the table and trying not to lose my patience at my son because he wants to put his shoes on all by himself but won't listen to me. "No, the other foot. No son, your left foot! No son your *other* left foot. Wrong again Bubby. Come on we've got to go!" Yes!! He finally gets it right after I show him by putting Baby's shoes on her as an example.

I feel a vibration coming from the right side of my pocket. Like a nerve would do, it in-



Art Laumua is the 2021 recipient of the Clifton Buck Memorial Cup for Excellence in Writing.

(Continued on page 3)



## Tēnā koutou katoa

*He iti hau marangā, e tū te pāhokahoka  
There may be a little storm, but in the end there is a  
rainbow.*

We welcomed our school year with more Covid storms. Negotiating Omicron and being adaptable and fluid, like water, *ko au te awa, ko awa te au, I am the river and the river is me.* We have navigated through the ever changing Covid scenarios. He Huarahi Tamariki remains *he toka tū moana, the rock that standing firm in the sea.* These challenging times will pass, and we can move on and grow from these experiences - and our rainbows will shine.

*Ngā mihi nui, Paula Hay – Kaiārahi*

## Music Therapy



Above Left: Liz and Shruti composing a lullaby. Above Right: Reo on the steel tongue drum with Bridget.



“Music has been shown to have multiple benefits for all aspects of health so it offers a fun and safe way to help our students process some of the challenges in their lives and to enjoy learning new skills.”

Liz Langham is a Masters student at Victoria University studying Music Therapy, and she is on placement with us for 2022. She is helping us explore well-being through a musical lens and we are enjoying the range of activities this is exposing us to.

Having Music Therapy on site once a week means things like ‘instrument of the day’. Fancy having a go on a kalimba anyone? Or perhaps the violin or steel tongue drum is more your jam. There are also opportunities to explore musical activities you could do with your children, mindfulness music sessions and even reconnecting with an instrument you haven’t played in a while.

## Waka Ama & Physical Education

In Term 4 last year, students were excited to have a number of Waka Ama lessons on the beautiful Porirua harbour. Here is Dahlia’s take on the experience...

*This was so much fun! For some of us it was our first time doing this, for me it was my first time.*

*Waka Ama consists of hard work and team work. Nakita is a natural leader, she kept the pace for us at the front and Fiona was at the back, she was our navigator keeping us on track. We did so good and all came back to school feeling super proud of ourselves. Even though I kept getting confused and saying “Whaea am I holding my paddle the right way?” Thank you Fiona and Catherine (Shift) for making this possible for us, we appreciate you guys.*

We have also seen an increase in regular physical education opportunities for our students in 2022. This is thanks to having Jackie Agalawatta (PE teacher and counsellor) with us fulltime, and to continued support from community organisations like Shift, the Cannons Creek Boxing Academy and Yoga in Daily Life.

Activities range from table tennis to yoga to boxing and include regular walking and running opportunities. We even have a fitness circuit set up in the garage for lunchtime sessions. Thank you Shanaia!



Above Top: Dahlia, Millie & Shanaia all ready to go.

Above: On the water with Nakita in the lead.

Below: Hannah trying out kick-boxing in the garage gym.



## Welcome to our New Babies!



Te Aroha, a girl – Alethea  
Lexus, a boy – Hiwa-te-Rangi

## Staff News



Left: We are very pleased to welcome back Fiona Mokomoko-Park this year to cover ongoing Maternity Leave in our Maths Department.



We would like to welcome 2 Masters students from Victoria University who are on placement with us for the year.

Liz Langham (left) is studying Music Therapy and will join us on Tuesdays.

Nicola Comerford (right) is from the Educational Psychology department and will be here on Fridays.





# Student Contribution – What A Morning! (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

stantly sends a message to my brain telling me that the van driver is here. I read “2 mins away.” Oh no, I have no time left so I race through the course of toys my son has set up for me through the hallway, I spot my sandals which are not the fastest to run in but definitely the fastest to put on. I slip into them so easily. After dumping every toy into their bottomless toy box, I hear a horn beep twice, followed by a text “Here.” I never look forward to making my way to the van. Although it’s much easier now that the kids are older, I still dread this part. One arm with bags and holding my son’s hand, and the other carrying Baby, I get through the gate, down a million sets of stairs, and proudly make it onto the school van without my son running away from me. So far, so good. Seatbelt time and my son isn’t having any of it. Just when I thought it was going to be a good day, he brings me back to reality that not every day is perfect. He doesn’t sit in the car seat so I’m wrestling with him for a few minutes apologizing to the van driver and the other girls who have already been picked up. I know they don’t mind because they understand what it’s like having kids. After bribing my two-year-old son with the promise of an ice block after school he sits back pompously, allowing me to finally fasten his seatbelt.

And we’re off. On our way to school it’s time for my son’s van tour where I get to enjoy an accompanied van ride while holding hands with my babies. The tour guide himself introduces me to all the buildings and vehicles we pass. “Mum, bus! Mum, train choo choo! Mum, burgers! Mum? Mum, cars!” and if we’re lucky we get to see animals such as birds or dogs on our way. I absolutely love him making sure I know what these things are, it shows me how much he’s learned. This cute tour comes to an end when we arrive at our destination. One more obstacle of holding bags, son’s hand, and his sister up “The Great Wall of China”, we make it to the doors of their

Daycare or “heaven”, I can’t tell the difference. As soon as I open the doors my son merrily runs his backpack to the bag hooks, while I take my daughter to her side. I leave her with a kiss and put her bag away, then head back over to my son’s side for a kiss. I take one more look at my handsome little guy who’s already forgotten about me, “Bye Bubby!”

“Bye mum! La you”

“Love you too Bubba.”

I close the doors knowing they are in good hands and will have an awesome day today. I sigh in relief. Now I can finally have my time to myself and focus on me for the day. I take one step at a time into the dining room of my school and feel like something’s wrong. Did I forget something? I give myself a pat-down. Nope, my phones in my back pocket. What is it? I look myself up and down and when I get to the bottom, I realise where this feeling of forgetfulness is coming from. I laugh for a second, then switch my sandals to their right feet. What a morning!

Art Laumua



Art’s children: Kyree (left) and Akesa (right).

## Student Lunches



In the middle of the term, COVID left a few gaps in the ranks here at He Huarahi Tamariki. So we did what we do best and responded to what was required on any given day. What was really appreciated though, was the help and assistance our students provided when it came to covering for our Chef Jaz Picard.

As you can see from the photos, we were well catered for on the days we had a student rostered on for lunch, not to mention all the times they stepped up to help on other occasions. It is lovely to see this expression of our school values of Aroha, Whanaungatanga and Rangatiratanga during challenging times. A big shout out to Bridget for the yummy burgers & coleslaw, Pina for the delicious ambrosia and Bree for the tasty fettuccine and garlic bread.

Even better, is the potential that all this hard work might translate into NCEA credits thanks to ongoing changes.

## First Aid and GET Training

The learning at He Huarahi Tamariki got off to a great start this year with workshops for all our students. Our NCEA Level 1 students completed the GET Started and GET Going Workshops with GET Training and earned 19 credits! These workshops were a whole day each and focused on preparation for the workplace and customer service skills.

For our NCEA Level 2 and 3 students we had Vertical Horonz come in to deliver First Aid training over 2 days. Students (and a few staff) earned their First Aid certificate and up to 4 credits. Thanks to Peter for running an awesome course. We look forward to having you back for our Level 1 students.



Practicing CPR: Jackie and Catherine (above) and Dahlia (right)

# Graduate News

*This is an abridged version of Nakita Kopua's speech given at our 2021 Prize Giving. Nakita graduated last year and we were lucky to have her share her reflections of her time at He Huarahi Tamariki. Her son, Tai Te-Ariki, graduated from Kids Count alongside her.*



My journey at He Huarahi Tamariki started in April 2016. I was 16. I had recently moved from Auckland and had been in Wellington less than two weeks before I found out that I was 9 weeks pregnant. Although I was in no state of mind to take care of a new born baby, I knew that I was going to go through with the pregnancy. My life was rubbish and I had nothing to live for, and it felt like this baby would save my life. He gave me motivation and a purpose to carry on and seek a good life for both of us.

After discussing with my caregiver about what my high school plans might now look like, I did an online search for "courses while pregnant." I wasn't even certain that there would be any courses available. The first suggestion that came up was He Huarahi Tamariki, School for Teenage Parents. I rang and asked about enrolling. I needed my NCEA Levels 1, 2 and 3 mainly because of the stigma of having a baby at 16. I didn't want people saying, "You're just a drop out because you got pregnant young," when in fact it's okay. I was just going to get my NCEA the long way.

Tai Te-Ariki decided to come 3 weeks early. At 10.40am on 4 October, 2016, I had Tai Te-Ariki weighing in at 6lbs 1 ounce. I had the best labour and felt very lucky. I spent the next 4 days in the maternity ward, until my milk came through. I was so grateful to have this time to learn how to feed my newborn baby. I recall it being the worst pain that I had ever endured. It was worse than labour. I knew the only way for it to get better was to persevere through the pain.

During my first year at HHT, I had the honour of blessing our kai, when our beloved Aporo Joyce harvested the grapes in 2016. I want to acknowledge Aporo and whānau for giving another student and me the opportunity to go to Waiheke Island for the Tourism Maori Course. It was the longest time I had ever had away from my son, and on the 4th day I was away he turned 3. I sang "Happy Birthday" to him and sent it through to my whanau to see. I missed him so much.

In October of 2017, I had the pleasure of showing Jacinda Ardern our beautiful kura. Our English teacher at the time encouraged several of us first time voters, to write to her before the Election and ask a few questions about why we should vote for her. After the election had been held, and before the government had been finalised, she came to visit. We talked and ate cake which she had brought us. The cake had icing on it that said, "Let's Eat This"... So we did!

I was also lucky enough to be part of the group of girls who participated in the film Tūmanako in 2017. This film was about the adversities experienced by, and the perceptions of

others towards, teenagers who become parents. During one part of making the film we used the song Tangaroa Whakamautai by Maisey Rika. We all had a few lines each to add to the film. We also had the opportunity to shoot some of the film at the Avalon TV Studios. A few weeks later, we were interviewed by Maori Television during the Kids Count Party at the end of the year.

In 2020, we were invited to join the students of Wellington East Girls' College, for their Formal at Te Papa Tongarewa. An anonymous donor had gifted us the tickets. We felt very fortunate. We jumped at the opportunity because we missed out at our other schools, either because we were too young, or because we were pregnant and had left the school. It felt like a second chance, and I wasn't going to miss it!

I have participated in 4 netball tournaments plus a netball game that was substituted for the tournament this year, because of COVID restrictions. I was lucky enough to be a part of the team the year we won the Lower North Island Tournament. I'll never forget that final game. We played hard in the pouring rain against the Wairarapa TPU. At the end of the third quarter, they were 1 or 2 goals ahead of us, and we managed to bring it back in the fourth quarter. We pushed to the end. It was the best feeling accomplishing that together as a team. It was a very proud moment.

I can't count how many times the school has supported my son and me throughout the challenges I faced in the past 6 years. I feel as if I practically grew up here. I can't wait to go off and make my teachers here proud.

I am going to miss HHT. I have grown fond of this place, especially Jaz's beautifully cooked meals. I'll miss my routine, the other mums and our shared experiences, conversations, and mostly my teachers and their continued knowledgeable advice and perspectives. Their endless support is what keeps me going. Having them telling me that I have the potential to do anything is a big motivation for me.

I'm really nervous to start something new, but I'm excited. I can't wait to come back and visit.

Kia ora. Nō reira, kua mutu āku kōrero mō tēnei wā, e ngā mātua, e ngā whāea, e ngā rau rangatira mā, huri noa te whare. Tēnā koutou, Tēnā koutou, Tēnā koutou katoa.

**Donations towards the work of the school are always welcome and donations to the scholarship fund can be made to the HHT Trust. Either of these are tax deductible and a receipt will be sent to you.**

**A very big thank you to all the public and private donors who have supported us recently. Your donations are very much appreciated.**

Thank you to Jenifer Kerr, Gawith-Deans Family Trust, David Daily Charitable Trust, Zonta.

Kiwi Community Assistance, Beanies for Babies, Pregnancy Help, Loved for Life, Parish of Pauatahanui, Bright Communications and the many others who donate used equipment and clothing.

**If you have changed address or would like the newsletter emailed to you, please contact us via [info@hht.school.nz](mailto:info@hht.school.nz)**

**Our host school is Wellington East Girls' College - Principal: Gael Ashworth**



Follow us on Facebook:  
He Huarahi Tamariki - HHT  
School for Teenage Parents,  
Wellington, NZ

## "Of course you can do it"