



He Huarahi Tamariki

SCHOOL FOR TEENAGE PARENTS - TERM 1 2024

End of Year Celebration with Zonta

We are very privileged to have a long-standing relationship with the Zonta Club of Mana. Not only do they support a graduate with a scholarship every year, but there are other ad hoc supports throughout the year for our current students and their babies. One of the biggest events they organise is a celebratory lunch at the end of the year.

The Zonta members fundraise and plan throughout the last half of the year in order to host the whole school with a wonderful lunch and generous gifts for the students and

Left to Right: Everyone enjoying an item; Litia (HHT Student) sharing her speech; Zonta and HHT sharing time together; Handing out the Christmas presents.

their children. In addition, there is also a well-chosen inspirational speaker. In 2023, it was footballer Anna Green who shared her personal story – both the successes and challenges.

It is always a wonderful way to conclude the year and our students enjoy being able to 'give back' with performances or shared stories. And we simply can not talk about the lunch without mentioning the amazing woman who organises it all every year – Thank you, Barbara Thompson.



Student Contribution – 17 and Hapū!

Statement of intention: In this piece of writing I want to show understanding of Māori teen pregnancy from an experienced point of view. I imagine that this piece may be published as an opinion piece in a newspaper or magazine.

Omapere Heke

Teen pregnancy. It's a tough situation. Being a teenager and finding out you are expecting a baby, especially if the pregnancy is unintended and not wanted, can put an enormous amount of stress on a young person. They can feel a number of different emotions, confused, scared, sad, happy or even excited. As a result of this teen birth rates in Aotearoa, New Zealand still remain high compared to other countries. The teen birth rate is particularly high amongst Māori, which is why I am going to focus more on over-viewing teen pregnancy, specifically within our Māori community and how it's portrayed in the media.

Māori youth have higher rates of teen pregnancy compared to any other ethnic group in New Zealand. Statistics show that Māori teenagers are three times more likely to fall pregnant and five times more likely to continue the pregnancy through to birth than pakeha teenagers. The difference in birth rates may be reflective of the fact that Pākehā teenagers are much more likely to have an abortion than Māori teenagers.

According to the latest statistics by the New Zealand Ministry of Health (2020), 62% of babies born to women aged 15 to 19 years old were born to Māori women that year. The outcome of

these high statistics has continued to be represented as a growing problem within the country.

However, there is very little research related specifically to Māori and teenage pregnancy, generally there is even less where Māori ourselves explore the views of our communities on this matter. So, when I went to research the cause of Māori teen pregnancy, most websites would state that the Māori teenager was most likely from a socially disadvantaged family background, has a lack of education,

has early exposure to young, single motherhood and family instability. But is this truly the case for all Māori teen parents? Or is this just how the media like to portray Māori?

As a Māori hapū teenager, I can tell you that I come from a financially stable family, my parents are still happily together and I have access to an education, which I am all so grateful for. It is important to remember that the media often presents a narrow or stereotypical view of teen pregnancy that may not reflect our diverse experiences and perspectives. As a teenager who found out I was pregnant, it came as a shock to me and my whānau, but as I am a Māori teenager it has not come to a shock to the media or the statistics. *(continued overleaf)*



Omapere Heke (with her daughter Analia) is the 2023 recipient of the Clifton Buck Memorial cup for Excellence in Writing

Tēnā koutou katoa

Mā whero, mā pango ka oti ai te mahi
With red and black the work will be complete

2024 has started off with a great buzz! We have spent time settling into the school year, and it has been exciting to have so many new students and new babies join us. So far this year we have been spending time building our community, reviewing how we all work together to create the "HHT Way", the He Huarahi Tamariki tikanga. It is always a valuable exercise to pause and think about what is going well, and what needs to be improved. Likewise, it is important to build plans for our future while acknowledging the work that has been already done. As the whakataukī states, when all of us work together, the work will be complete!

If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together - African Proverb

*Ngā mihi nui,
Paula Hay – Kaiārahi*

17 and Hapū! (cont.)

Most teenagers have our own unique journeys with our pregnancy that are not commonly discussed in the media. As I am a young Māori it has personally been difficult facing challenges and barriers, such as the feeling of being judged by older peers, letting my culture down by adding to statistics that are portrayed as problems, the constant fear of being looked down on and honestly making a not so smart decision knowing there would be consequences to my actions.

But going forward, I have learnt to be confident and embrace my decision in moving forward with my pregnancy with much whānau and community support. It has helped create a positive and supportive environment for myself to grow pēpi. Although I was lucky enough to push through the personal challenges and to be surrounded by phenomenal support and love, not every young hapū wahine has gone through the same experience.

Most Māori teenage parents miss out on much needed support which leads them to facing huge challenges and decisions on their own. The problem is if our teenage parents don't have the support they need, they may struggle to provide for their children's basic needs and face challenges that can be difficult to overcome.

Unfortunately, the media often portrays Māori in a negative light, perpetuating stereotypes and reinforcing biases. If Māori teen parents are unable to provide for their children, they may be more likely to be portrayed in an unflattering way by the media, which can further perpetuate these harmful stereotypes. This can have a negative impact on our self-esteem, our children's wellbeing, and the wider Māori community. By making sure all our teenage māmās are provided with support, it can help create a more positive and accurate representation of Māori in the media. Instead of knowing I am a part of a "growing problem", fighting the stereotypes of Māori teen pregnancy is an important step our country needs to take on. By challenging negative stereotypes and providing positive support instead of using teen pregnancy as an excuse to look down on Māori, we can help break the cycle of poverty and disadvantage that can be associated within teen pregnancy. By working on this, we can create a society where all young parents can be represented equally, regardless of their background and to have open opportunities to thrive and succeed.

Space Place

As part of our whakawhanaungatanga activities at the beginning of the year we had an excursion to Space Place and saw the Planetary Show 'We are aliens' and did a 'Roving Robots' workshop. Afterwards we ate lunch in the gardens and walked down to the Lady Norwood Rose garden. Overall, it was a great opportunity to learn about each other and the world around us. A big "thank you" goes to the Space Place crew for hosting us and the Nikau Foundation who covered the cost of entry and transport.



Welcome to our New Babies!



Aria, a girl – Te Ataakura
Haven, a boy – Te Rukuhia
Shakira, a girl – Natalia
Chorus, a boy – Ezekiel
Litia, a girl – Talila-lee
Jahkana, a girl – Sherena

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 Gawith-Deans Family Trust, Wellington Methodist Charitable and Educational Endowment Trust, Zonta, Kindness Collective, David Daily Charitable Trust, Janet Gottschalk, Pat Lummis, Kiwi Community Assistance, Beanies for Babies, Parish of Pauatahanui, Arise Church, Pregnancy Help, Loved for Life, The Salvation Army and the many others who donate used equipment and clothing. **Donations towards the work of the school (03 0547 0671844 000) are always welcome and donations to the scholarship fund can be made to the HHT Trust (02 0548 0369188 000). Either of these are tax deductible and a receipt will be sent to you.**

If you have changed address or would like the newsletter emailed to you, please contact us via 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"