

Mā te Ngākau Aroha Koe e Ārahi

'Let a loving heart guide your decisions'

James has many wonderful attributes and characteristics and I believe this whakatauki is definitely one of them. James shares his joy of life everyday at Barnardos. His strong sense of manaakitanga (kindness and generosity) and kumanutia (care for, cherish) is so very evident in his play and interactions with others. We watch in awe and learn from James.

This reminds me of the quote '*Learn from the Maori world; teach wehi, ihi and wana - the wonder of life; the delight of life; and the love of life*'-Peter Alsop and Nathan Wallis.

James is loving and empathetic towards all living things, including our centre pets who he nurtures and is so very gentle with. With our guinea pig, Willow, you can see the pure joy and affection he has with our precious furry friend. We have also witnessed his wonder and pure enthusiasm with even the smallest of creatures, such as baby snails and wriggly worms.

James regularly demonstrates displays of affection and compassion. I remember on this day we talked about and practiced the art of hongi (the pressing of noses and sharing of breath, becoming one). This photograph shows his acknowledgment of a tekoteko (a carved figure). We also shared a hongi together before he invited others to share the experience. My heart sang as I watched his ihi (personal magnetism and charm) and confidence during these interactions with his friends.

Another of James wonderful qualities is his sociable nature, he seeks and enjoys the company of others. Often you will see James displaying consideration for others by allowing them space and time to explore and he offers resources to others when he





notices. It is such a pleasure to watch James interact with sincerity and patience.

We also see these wonderful qualities with things such as our beloved dolls and teddies. James is respectful to all our resources and we love watching him re-enact the roles of Dad, Uncle and even Grandad. All these wonderful caring qualities and attributes have been passed down to him from generations, and so too will he pass these on to future generations.



In everything James does I see wana (passion, energy, excitement and liveliness). Whether he is interacting in social play or in solitary play he is focused and driven by an innate desire to learn. His wairua shines with the vibrations of joy and wonderment of the world around him.

Whilst only a few of James' many characteristics have been mentioned here, I am certain these, and the aroha that guides his decisions will set him up to be a resilient and life-long learner. It will allow him to seek the goals he treasures most dearly throughout his life. It is an absolute pleasure and delight to watch James grow and unfold as the competent and confident learner he is. A huge congratulations to your Mum, Dad and whānau for nurturing such a helpful, caring and gentle natured soul. We would love to read your own aspirations for James.

Ngā mihi ki a koutou me arohatinonui.

Jan Drake on Nov 15, 2018

Bex, your kind words have moved me to tears. The aroha and support you and the team give James is enables him to feel safe and confident to be himself in your presence. Thank you for the amazing guidance and love that you all show to James. We hope James continues to delight in everything around him and that he continues to find amazement in his world so that he is a happy and contented person as he goes through his life.



Kelly Abraham on Nov 15, 2018

Aww!! This story captures our friend, James, so beautifully. He has such special qualities, and he brings so much joy into all our lives. Xx

Story date: 14 Nov 2018. Added by: Bex Thompson.

