

Maungaarangi Kindergarten and Whanau Centre



Educational Leadership Conference stories

November 2013 – Presented by Henare Gurney



Protecting our toanga for the garden.



Preparing the earth with love and weed pulling for our yummy watermelon.

Ngawairua this little story is not just about your love of Papatuanuku and all that this involves but also about the journey you have come thus far. Not long back you would come to kindergarten and be upset that dad or mum had left you here with us. It took some time, some aroha and some finding out who you were to help you settle with us. I now look at these photos and my heart fills with happiness as I see the confident, cheeky and lovable Ngawairua moving about our kindergarten owning everything that you do and owning this place. Ngawairua some journeys are hard in our life and some are easy, it is from the hard journey's that we learn more about ourselves such as resilience, perseverance, empathy, confidence and the knowledge that you have an inner strength that will support you in any situation that you may find yourself in.

As I said before this is more of a story so that you can also see how far you have come from your first settling stories. I have to say I hardly see you these days as you always seem so busy with your new friends, or working in the garden, sand area or in the family corner looking after our babies.

Just like in the story Te Pura, the Guardian Taniwha of Wairoa when her eggs were stolen from her nest and she went out looking for them, worried about them, I have become your Taniwha as I watch over you guarding your essence.

Budding Engineer / Nga Kete Marama

Matua Henare

Tane Mahuta the guardian of knowledge would be proud of you Brooklyn as you designed the railway track and your block whare. Like Tane when he collected the baskets of knowledge from the heavens, you Brooklyn set your mind to task and completed what you wanted to.



Learning Happening: In the process I saw a number of things that you were learning. From, weight distribution, balance, connecting items, through to shape recognition and testing and experimentation. All great engineers started with learning these concepts through learning as you have done today.

Links to whakapapa: In fact the great Nga Puhi chief Kawiti was renown for his engineering skills. His engineering talents were such that the British assumed his Pa were designed by Englishmen. Which they were not – it was simply that he had a mind for solving problems and designing structures or fortified Pa's in this instance. And it was because he was allowed to explore, work with materials and have access to people and their knowledge. Just as you do Brooklyn.

Where to from here: Keep experimenting and practicing Brooklyn, and keep taking the time to look around you and observe the mahi that others are doing, for that is also a key to successful learning. In the coming months no doubt you will be showing your sister Nga Puhi the ropes.

Whanau Whakaaro: After talking with your Mum Brooklyn about the story she thought it was all good. She made mention that her Dad said that your whanau ingoa was going to be Kawiti's but ended up being Brown. What a cool story to hear from you Mum. It is fantastic to get to know a bit more about your purakau whanau (family story). Thanks for letting me know Mum.



ore Princesses ...

We were researching the many different princesses in the world, using the Google Search Engine to provide images of princesses. We scrolled through the many pictures, choosing various ones to cut out and stick on to create our own Royal Collage.



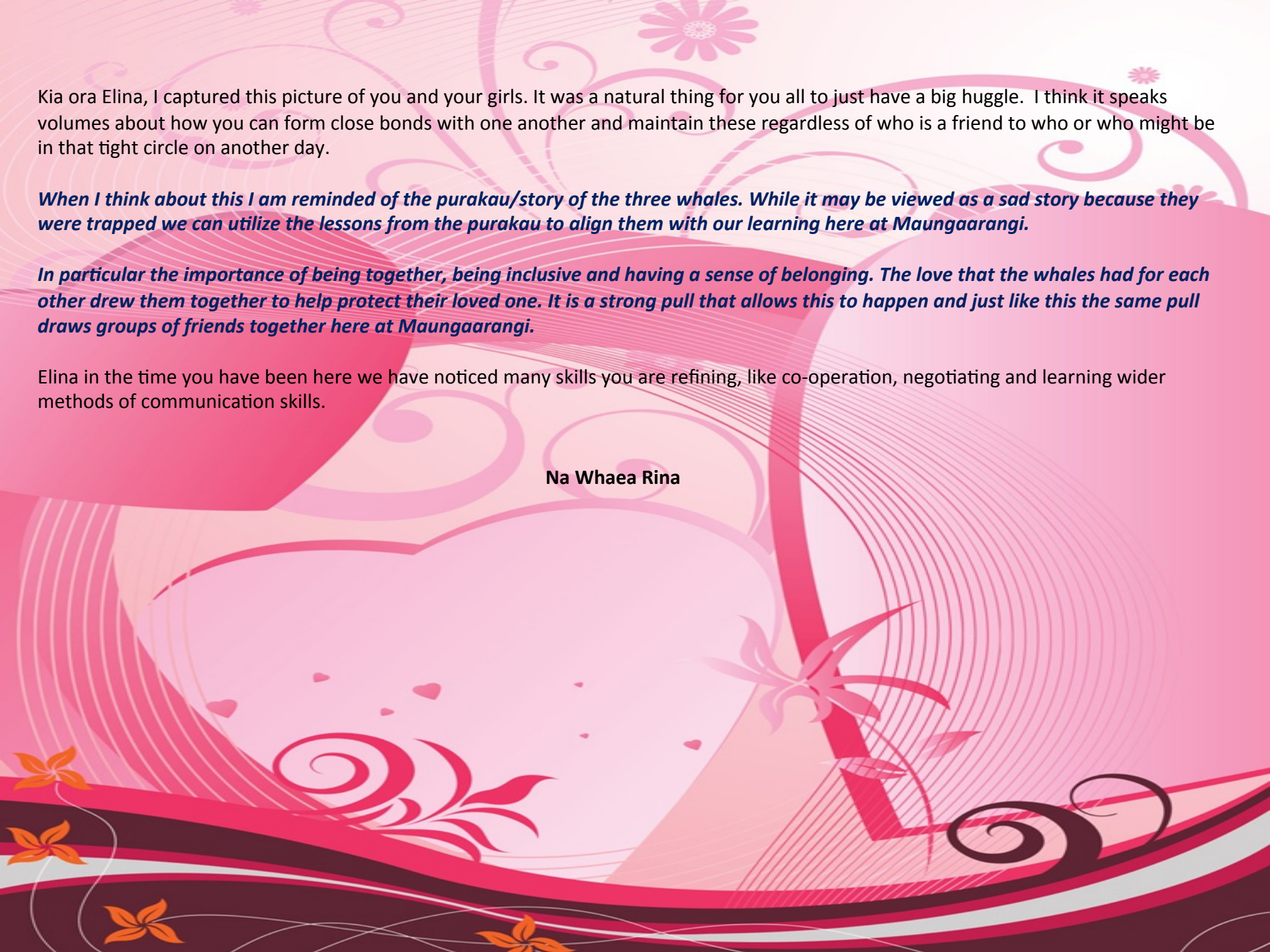
I loved the pictures you chose, Kishya, not just the typical Disney for you, no! You were interested to find out about the real princesses of our world. Did you know in Maori Tikanga you don't have to be the Kings daughter to be a puhi/princess, more it is about your leadership skills and your wairua. *An example of this is Wairaka who is honored at our local Te Whetu-o-te-Rangi Marae in the carvings of Toroa and his daughter Wairaka, representing the Mataatua waka connections of nga Iwi. When the Mataatua canoe landed near the site of present-day Whakatāne, the men went ashore. While they were gone, the canoe began to drift out to sea. Tradition says that Wairaka, daughter of the captain Toroa, seized a paddle and cried, 'Me whakatāne au i ahau nei!' (I must act like a man!).* She and the other women saved the canoe. Wairaka is also commemorated by a statue on a rock at Whakatāne. Hmm, Princess Kishya of Te Puna, has a nice ring to it! With your great communication and negotiation skills I can definitely see you as a modern day Puhi!

In our own purakau of Taurikura we see a very headstrong puhi using magic to turn herself into a Tuatara. Using our imagination we can grow our Wairua, which we believe is our responsibility to work with children in such a way that we embrace and encourage this. According to Froebel, the end of education should not be reason, per se, but rather the unfolding of the divine essence within the child.

He thus urged educators to respect the spontaneous and essentially creative nature of this unfolding (Miller, 1997). In his view, the role of education "is to build on the 'living core' of the child's intrinsic spiritual capacities" (Dillon, 2000, p. 11).

Na Whaea Jenelle





Kia ora Elina, I captured this picture of you and your girls. It was a natural thing for you all to just have a big huggle. I think it speaks volumes about how you can form close bonds with one another and maintain these regardless of who is a friend to who or who might be in that tight circle on another day.

When I think about this I am reminded of the purakau/story of the three whales. While it may be viewed as a sad story because they were trapped we can utilize the lessons from the purakau to align them with our learning here at Maungaarangi.

In particular the importance of being together, being inclusive and having a sense of belonging. The love that the whales had for each other drew them together to help protect their loved one. It is a strong pull that allows this to happen and just like this the same pull draws groups of friends together here at Maungaarangi.

Elina in the time you have been here we have noticed many skills you are refining, like co-operation, negotiating and learning wider methods of communication skills.

Na Whaea Rina

Whenua Whangaiahia-Living alongside the natural world

It was with much delight that I watched as I saw you fill the water can and wander around looking for some plants to give an inu to. On such a wera afternoon I try to explain to you that our plants probably need water in the morning rather than now, however you think otherwise. One of our biggest focuses here at Maungaarangi is that we nurture the child's ability to build knowledge about and a connection with our whenua. I wonder Punawai if this is a prior knowledge that you bring with you? Is there someone in your whanau who has a garden which you visit often?

One of our purakau Maori tells us about Rata and the waka and how he forgot to ask Tane Mahuta for permission to cut down the totara rakau/tree, for the waka/canoe and the consequences for this of having to return day after day to repeat his mahi/work. In this story the lesson of asking for permission and following a procedure is important for us to share with you Punawai. The respectful use of wai/water, knowing when is the best time for watering.

Kaitiakitanga-Guardianship of our whenua/land, this is a responsibility we endeavour to instil within our tamariki, it allows a deeper understanding of our natural world and indeed a sense of connection to the whenua and to our Whaea Papatuanuku. Our grounds are full of maara kai/food gardens, all sorts of trees and flowers. There is a lot of work to be done with them and knowing you are keen to help with this is so cool Punawai.

Just like Rata who learnt the hard way, we will need to follow procedures, listen with our hearts and be open to having some good korero about what happens in the natural environment. It is also about being safe and knowing where we can and can not go or what tools and equipment we might need.

So thank you so much for having a kind wairua/spirit towards our gardens and outdoor environment.

Na Whaea Rina





Ko te kai a te rangatira - he korero
The food of the chief is talk - when a chief says something, that is their bond, as their mana (or honour) rests on the truth of their words.

This whakatauki came to mind when you Ryder and Haimona were playing together in the dramatic area.

Learning happening: So much social skills, language development, turn taking and negotiation, and listening to others ideas are encouraged in this area. I saw not only verbal discussion but also non verbal understanding. Like the whakatauki above you two came to an agreement and respected each other mana and commitment to agreed tasks.

Link to whakapapa



Te Kahuhiapo, Rahera

Rahera was a wahine of great mana and influence, and was an important person in the iwi of Ngati Pukenga and Ngati Pikiao but also to Maoridom. She would have been proud of her moko (Ryder and Haimona) as you both display learning skills that are needed to communicate clearly and effectively amongst others. Rahera was asked for assistance to recall whakapapa and history about her people. Her oral and memory skills would have had to be sharp. I am sure your tupuna Rahera's wairua is still guiding and influencing you both as you grow and learn. I look forward to seeing you continue to develop your innate skills and abilities and being an assistance to support you.

Whanau whakaaro: It was cool catching up with you Jess about the story and hearing your thoughts about the Kuia. I am pleased you liked the story. Like you it was the first time to hear about Rahera and the mana she held. I also liked hearing that you reckon that one of your whanau could have been named after her. Pretty powerful stuff to be carrying a name of your tupuna, and in the case for Ryder, have such powerful wahine toa in his whanau apart from his Mama. Hope you have a good catch up with your whanaunga. I hope the information I printed off the internet is useful.

