

CURRICULUM ACTIVITY: Water Conservation/Tap Monitoring

Tamariki monitor water use while washing hands or watering plants, learning about conservation and resource management. Kaiako model sustainable habits and explain why water must be protected. Kaitiakitanga is expressed as children understand their role as guardians of natural resources.

Tikanga Practices: Kaitiakitanga is portrayed within this scenario through tamariki:

- Using natural resources responsibly in repurposing rainwater.
- Learning to care for plants with wisdom and respect, using water thoughtfully and sparingly.
- Demonstrating care for living creatures by protecting and maintaining the health of their water habitats.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. Are you providing consistent opportunities for tamariki to practice kaitiakitanga through real-life actions like turning off taps or repurposing rainwater?
2. What resources can you create with tamariki to explain why water is so precious that incorporate mātauranga Māori?



NGĀ WHAKATAUKĪ Proverbs

Whakatō para, whāngai i te whenua.

When we feed the earth with what we share,
Papatūānuku blossoms everywhere.

Tiakina te wai, ko te wai te ora

Protect the water, for water is life.

Whāngai i ngā manu,
whāngai te taiao.

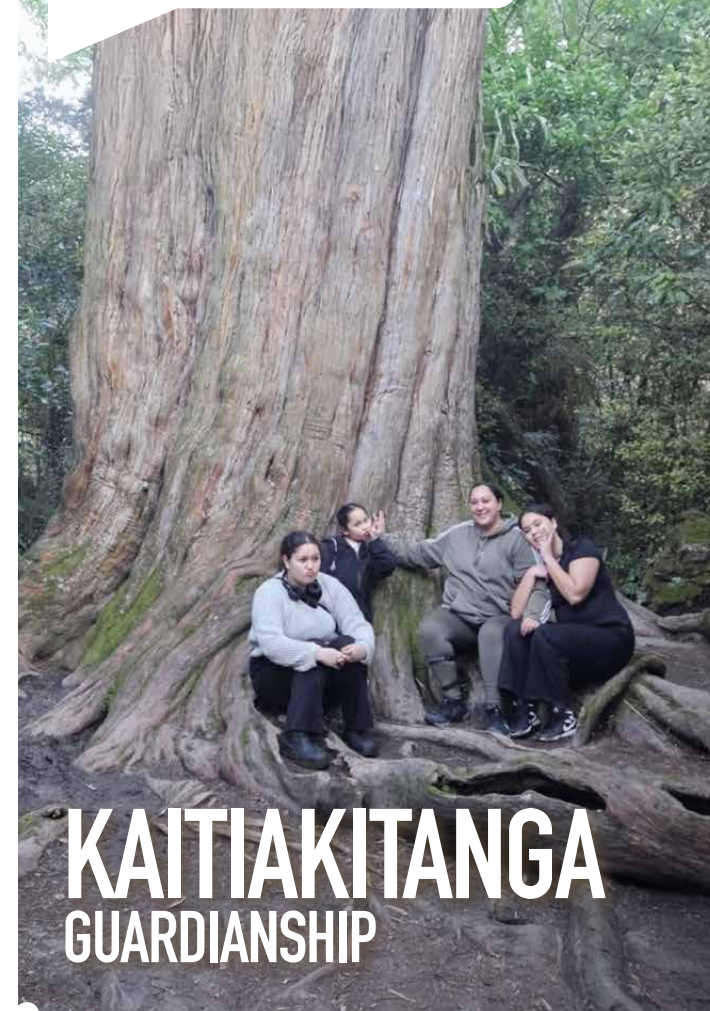
When we feed the birds, the whole
environment thrives



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Ngā Taonga Whakaako Tikanga Māori – Theory and Practice

Early Childhood Education Contexts



KAITIAKITANGA GUARDIANSHIP

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Te Kāhui Pā Harakeke
Child Well-being
Research Institute

Ako
AOTEAROA

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KAITIAKITANGA GUARDIANSHIP

Kaitiakitanga is a concept that refers to guardianship, especially over the natural world. It involves caring for the land, water, animals, and all living things with respect, responsibility, and long-term thinking.

In a preschool context, kaitiakitanga helps tamariki build a connection to nature, learn to care for their environment, and understand their role in protecting it. Through activities like gardening, recycling, and observing natural cycles, children develop values of respect, care, and sustainability. Teaching kaitiakitanga supports wellbeing, cultural identity, and a sense of belonging, while nurturing future guardians of the earth. It aligns closely with Te Whāriki's holistic principles.



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CURRICULUM ACTIVITY: Wildlife Care/Insect Hotels or Bird Feeders

Tamariki help build an insect hotels or fill bird feeders, learning about local species and habitats. Kaiako discuss how caring for animals and insects contributes to the health of the environment. Kaitiakitanga is enacted as children take responsibility for protecting and sustaining living creatures.

Tikanga Practices: Kaitiakitanga is:

- Expressed by the tamariki creating small shelters for ngā ngāngara and ngā manu to rest.
- Tamariki demonstrate kindness and a sense of responsibility by feeding manu – especially during the colder months.
- Evident in the way tamariki take ongoing responsibility for living things they have planted.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. How do you involve tamariki in the care and planting of native trees in ways that build a sense of responsibility and connection?
2. In what ways do your daily practices encourage tamariki to understand the importance of native plants in supporting local ecosystems and biodiversity?

CURRICULUM AREA: Environmental Sustainability and Centre Routines

Tamariki and kaiako sort rubbish, separate recyclables, and compost food scraps from kai time. Tamariki take responsibility for caring for the environment, learning that their actions directly impact Papatūānuku. Kaitiakitanga is practised as they develop understanding of the associated roles and responsibilities of sustainability and the importance of protecting resources for the future.

Tikanga Practices: Kaitiakitanga is evident here through:

- Awareness as tamariki learn to reduce waste and utilise food and natural waste scraps to create compost.
- Reflection: tamariki wash and reuse materials creatively, reducing waste going to landfill and giving new life to old things.
- Expression of leadership as tamariki take responsibility in helping their friends to make sustainable choices.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. How do you model sustainable practices for tamariki in ways they can understand?
2. How do you deepen the programme's sustainable practices to include mātauranga Māori ways of being, knowing, and doing?

