

TECHNOLOGY: Years 7–8 Peer Mentoring and Leadership

Experienced ākonga mentor peers in complex problem-solving or research projects. They provide guidance, model strategies, and encourage independence. Ako or Tuakana–Teina is demonstrated as mentoring that supports learning, leadership, and responsibility.

Tikanga Practices:

- **Kaitiakitanga:** Tuakana mentor peers in projects about caring for the environment, modelling responsibility and guardianship. Together they uphold shared roles and responsibilities to people, place and resources.
- **Whakapapa:** Ākonga recognise their roles amongst all learners. Mentoring strengthens connections across ages, weaving relationships that sustain collective growth and identity.
- **Wairuatanga:** Guidance is balanced with mindfulness and respect for emotional well-being. Tuakana support peers holistically acknowledging intellect, spirit, and self as integral to learning.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. How do you prepare tuakana to be effective, empathetic mentors?
2. In what ways do you support teina to grow in confidence and independence?
3. How do you embed tuakana–teina as a sustained, authentic practice across subjects?



MIHIMIHI to follow Opening Karakia at Staff and Whānau Hui

Tēnā tātou e ngā kaiako,
Nau mai, haere mai ki tō tātou hui i tēnei rā.
He wā whakawhanaunga, he wā ako tahi,
Hei whakakaha i a tātou mahi mō ngā tamariki.
Noho ora mai, kia kotahi te whakaaro, kia kotahi
te ngākau.

Greetings to us all, teachers,
Welcome to our hui today.
A time to connect and learn together,
To strengthen the work we do for our tamariki.
Let us come together with one heart and one purpose.



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Tēnā koutou e ngā mātua, e ngā whānau,
Nau mai, haere mai ki tō tātou hui i tēnei rā.
He wā tēnei hei hono, hei kōrero, hei whakanui
i ā tātou tamariki.
Ngā mihi mahana ki a koutou mō tō koutou
tautoko me tō aroha.
Haere mai, whakatau mai ki tō tātou whare ako.

Greetings to you, parents and whānau,
Welcome, welcome to our hui today.
A time to connect, to share, and to celebrate our children.
Warm thanks to you for your support and care.
Come, settle in, and feel at home in our learning place.



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Ngā Taonga Whakaako Tikanga Māori – Theory and Practice

Primary School Contexts



WHANAUNGATANGA

RELATIONALLY CONNECTED: INCLUSIVE
OF TUAKANA/TEINA AND AKO



Te Kāhui Pā Harakeke
Child Well-being
Research Institute



Authors: Ngaroma M. Williams, Tracy Dayman, Lana R. Williams, 2025.

WHANAUNGATANGA

Relationally Connected: Inclusive of Tuakana/Teina and Ako

Whanaungatanga recognises that people themselves are taonga (treasures), and that the kinship systems of whānau, hapū, and iwi form the foundation of Māori social organisation.

These systems are built upon rights, responsibilities, and reciprocal obligations that ensure the well-being of the collective. Whanaungatanga is about belonging — knowing you are part of a larger whole that offers support, guidance, nurture, and protection. It reflects the deep connections Māori have not only with each other, but with all living things and the natural world. Defined roles such as *kaumātua*, *mātua*, *rangatahi*, *tāne*, *wāhine*, *tuakana*, *teina*, *kōhungahunga* (young child), *pēpi* *nohinohi* (toddlers) and *pēpi* (infants) are shaped by whakapapa and give structure to relationships. The focus is on interdependence and collective strength, rather than individual independence. This principle also brings to the fore the relationships we enjoy to all our environments we engage in and our resources.

Inclusive of Whanaungatanga Relationships are the Tuakana/Teina and Ako approaches:

Tuakana–Teina Approach (Same-Gender Mentoring)

The tuakana–teina approach is a culturally grounded peer mentoring model in which an older or more experienced child (tuakana) guides and supports a younger or less experienced child (teina) of the same gender. This approach fosters leadership, confidence, and relational learning while respecting cultural norms around gendered roles. Tamariki develop responsibility, empathy, and practical skills within a safe, culturally aligned framework.

Ako Approach (Cross-Gender Reciprocal Learning)

Ako is a reciprocal teaching and learning approach that values knowledge exchange between learners and teachers, regardless of gender. In ECE, children can both teach and learn from peers of any gender, sharing skills, knowledge, and experiences collaboratively. This approach encourages respect, critical thinking, and mutual growth, supporting inclusive and flexible learning environments.



Scan to find out more about these resources



READING: Years 1–3 Peer Mentoring

Older tamariki guide younger peers in simple classroom tasks, such as organising materials or sharing books. Younger students observe and imitate, Ako and/or Tuakana–Teina is applied as children develop leadership and mentoring skills.

Tikanga Practices:

- **Manaakitanga:** Older or more experienced tamariki help less experienced and/or teina to organise classroom resources, showing patience and encouragement. Through caring guidance, both learn that generosity and kindness strengthen their classroom whanaungatanga.
- **Kotahitanga:** Ako and/or Tuakana and teina collaborate on shared tasks, learning that working together brings unity. Cooperation builds belonging and shared achievement within their classroom context.
- **Māramatanga:** Teina, younger or less experienced tamaiti observe tuakana or older more experienced tamaiti reading or sorting, gaining insight through watching and asking questions. Understanding grows as observation and imitation lead to new learning connections.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. How do you create safe opportunities for older and younger tamariki to work together?
2. How do you encourage teina to contribute ideas and feel valued?
3. In what ways can you celebrate acts of guidance and learning between peers?

MUSIC: Years 4–6: Peer Mentoring and Leadership

Tuakana, older or more experienced tamaiti guides other peers in science experiments, music, art, or physical activities, demonstrating techniques while encouraging questions. Younger tamariki participate actively and contribute ideas. Ako and/or Tuakana–Teina is enacted as knowledge and support flow between tamariki, fostering confidence.

Tikanga Practices:

- **Rangatiratanga:** Tuakana or more experienced tamaiti lead group projects by demonstrating respectful leadership. They guide other tamariki while listening to their perspectives, showing that leadership involves humility and shared responsibility.
- **Ako:** Knowledge flows both ways as tuakana or more experienced tamaiti teach other tamariki to question. Learning is reciprocal, each tamaiti strengthens understanding through dialogue, experimentation, and reflection.
- **Aroha:** Encouragement and empathy underpin each interaction. Tuakana or more experienced tamaiti celebrate the efforts of other tamariki, creating an environment where every learner feels valued and confident to participate fully.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. How do you group/pair tamariki to ensure both tuakana and teina benefit from the interaction?
2. How do you model feedback and questioning that promote mutual respect?
3. What follow-up discussions help tamariki reflect on what they learned from each other?

