

How professionals and kaimahi can play their part

Professionals and kaimahi working with children, young people and whānau have a unique opportunity to support their wellbeing. By building trusting relationships, working in culturally grounded ways, and ensuring safe and inclusive practices, you help create environments where every child can be heard, protected, and supported to thrive.

Be approachable, youth-friendly and inclusive

Value te ao Māori and local community knowledge. Engage with iwi, hapū, and respected whānau leaders to inform best practice.

Grow your understanding

Deepen your understanding of different cultural values, beliefs and lived experiences. Learn approaches that support diverse groups, including mokopuna whaikaha and Rainbow children and young people.

Listen to children and young people

Involve them in planning activities or programmes that affect them. Elevate their voices and best interests in design, delivery, and decision-making.

Be a positive and trustworthy role model

Demonstrate positive and healthy behaviours and relationships and encourage children and young people to contribute to their communities.

Celebrate achievements

Acknowledge the strengths and positive efforts of parents, caregivers, families and whānau, tamariki and rangatahi.

Implement child safety policies

Make sure staff and volunteers working with children hold appropriate safety checks. Maintain relevant policies and processes, including foundational and ongoing training focussed on child protection and safeguarding.

Be informed and be alert

Be aware of signs of abuse or neglect and follow your child safety policies, including any reporting obligations if you believe a child is at risk.

Collaborate and share information

Work across agencies, know how and what information you can share when you have concerns about a child's safety, and share local service directories to help families access support more easily.

Support parents and caregivers

Check in, listen and connect them with local whānau services or parenting support programmes. Follow up, where appropriate, to check they received the help they needed.

Be an active bystander

If you see or hear something that seems unsafe involving a child or young person, respond in a way that is safe, respectful, and aligned with your organisation's policies and processes. Child safety policies should at all times give effect to New Zealand domestic law and children's rights.