



Linking Theories to Te Whāriki

Bowlby

Bowlby's theory of attachment suggests that tamariki come into the world biologically pre-programmed to form attachments with others, because this will help them to survive.

- Tamariki who have strong positive attachments to familiar caregivers use them as a safe base from which to explore their environment.
- When familiar caregivers respond warmly and consistently, tamariki form a strong sense of self, which is vital for healthy emotional and social development.

Te Whāriki

- The environment is predictable and dependable, and infants are supported to build trusting attachment relationships.
- Kaiako facilitate tuakana–teina relationships and ensure that mokopuna have opportunities to manaaki and take responsibility for others. Kaiako trust mokopuna to manage these relationships and to indicate when they need support.
- Safe, stable and responsive environments support the development of self-worth, identity, confidence and enjoyment, together with emotional regulation and self-control.
- A foundation of remembered and anticipated people, places, things and experiences will give them the confidence to engage successfully in new settings.
- A familiar and unhurried kaiako has primary responsibility for each infant so that they can anticipate who will welcome and care for them.
- The timing and pace of caregiving practices is guided by the infant.

Bronfenbrenner

Bronfenbrenner believed that a person's development is affected by everything in their surrounding environment.

- Fostering positive relationships with Tamariki and their whānau is vital to the development of the tamaiti.
- We need to reflect the needs and expectations of the society, culture and community in which our Tamariki live. (Building a local curriculum)

Te Whāriki

- It is important that kaiako are sensitive to the different ways that the diverse families represented in their setting may understand and seek to promote wellbeing.
- Belonging is nurtured through social interaction with kaiako and other tamariki and by respecting the achievements and aspirations of each tamaiti's family and community.
- Appreciation of and respect for tamariki's social and cultural connections are expressed in the day-to-day life of the setting.
- Kaiako are consistent, reliable and realistic in their expectations and responses, and they foster harmonious working relationships with each other and with parents and whānau.
- Belonging is nurtured through social interaction with kaiako and other tamariki and by respecting the achievements and aspirations of each tamaiti's family and community.
- Tamariki's learning is located within the nested contexts and relationships of family, community, and wider local, national and global influences.
- Kaiako in ECE settings weave together the principles and strands, in collaboration with tamariki, parents, whānau and communities, to create a local curriculum for their setting.
- Kaiako talk with infants about what they, and other tamariki, are doing and encourage the infant's interest in, and interaction with, other tamariki. Infants are included in social events.

Dewey

Dewey believed that human beings learn through a 'hands-on' approach. Dewey was a pragmatist, and, from an educational point of view, he believed students must interact with their environment in order to adapt and learn.

- Educating young tamariki must be child-centred, active and interactive.
- Education should also reflect each tamaiti's interests and backgrounds and that their social and cultural worlds are important.

Te Whāriki

- Tamariki learn through play: by doing, asking questions, interacting with others, devising theories about how things work and then trying them out and by making purposeful use of resources.
- Tamariki need many opportunities to engage in rich and rewarding experiences with people, places and things.
- Attention is paid to providing a range of play experiences that stimulate the senses, mind and body.
- Tamariki are able to manipulate their environment by being provided with appropriate equipment.
- Infants are provided with resources, including natural resources, in a variety of colours, textures, shapes and sizes to experiment with and explore freely.
- Toddlers are able to experiment with real tools and materials and use natural materials in their outdoor and indoor play.
- Ability and inclination to cope with uncertainty, imagine alternatives, make decisions, choose materials and devise their own problems.
- An understanding that trying things out, exploring, playing with ideas and materials and collaborating with others are important and valued ways of learning.
- Kaiako talk with infants about what they, and other tamariki, are doing and encourage the infant's interest in, and interaction with, other tamariki.
- Tamariki's increasingly complex social problem-solving skills are encouraged, for example, through games and physically active, imaginative and cooperative play.
- Toddlers have opportunities to make choices, take risks, and engage in a wide range of play, both inside and outside, with the support of kaiako.

Gardner

Gardner's theory suggests that intelligence based on I.Q. testing is far too limited. He identified eight different intelligences to show potential in tamariki and adults:

- Linguistic intelligence ("word smart"); Logical-mathematical Intelligence ("number/reasoning smart"); Spatial intelligence ("picture smart"); Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence ("body smart"); Musical intelligence ("music smart"); Interpersonal intelligence ("people smart"); Intrapersonal intelligence ("self smart"); Naturalist intelligence ("nature smart").
- The arts and creativity play a major role in Tamariki's learning.
- Tamariki can explore many cognitive concepts through their play and creative explorations.

Te Whāriki

- Tamariki learn through play: by doing, asking questions, interacting with others, devising theories about how things work and then trying them out and by making purposeful use of resources.
- Recognition of different domains of knowledge and how they relate to understanding people, places and things.
- The setting offers a range of arts-related resources that support tamariki to discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive.
- Toddlers have opportunities for active exploration and creative expression with the support, but not the interference, of kaiako.
- Kaiako provide resources and provocations that encourage tamariki to use creative arts to express their thinking about people, places and things.
- Tamariki construct knowledge as they make meaning of their world. Knowledge is cultural, social and material. It draws on cultural, aesthetic, historical, social, scientific, technological, mathematical and geographical information.
- Te Whāriki emphasises the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions that support lifelong learning.
- Kaiako actively respond to the strengths, interests, abilities and needs of each tamaiti and, at times, provide them with additional support in relation to learning, behaviour, development or communication.
- Kaiako encourage tamariki to develop their own interests and curiosity by embarking on longer-term projects that require perseverance and commitment.
- The programme provides activities for tamariki to develop their strengths, interests and abilities, such as in music, movement, language, construction, art, sorting and organising, and in doing things with others.
- Toddlers are encouraged to develop skills at their own rate and understand their own abilities and limitations. Kaiako wait for toddlers to indicate that they need assistance rather than assuming that they do.
- Kaiako use assessment to find out about what tamariki know and can do, what interests them, how they are progressing, what new learning opportunities are suggested, and where additional support may be required.
- Kaiako observe and value tamariki as individuals. Their interests, enthusiasms, preferences, temperaments and abilities provide the starting point for day-to-day planning, ensuring that all tamariki can participate to the best of their abilities

Gesell

Dr. Arnold Gesell, an American educator, pediatrician and clinical psychologist believed that **tamariki developed** in a discontinuous manner and he was the only theorist of his time to conclude that tamariki develop in stages instead of by age. Some of the key points associated with his theory include:

- Although all tamariki cycle through the same stages or sequences of growth, they do not enter the stages at the same time. Each tamaiti has its own unique pace.
- When each stage occurs is influenced by internal factors, such as physical and mental development, genetics, personality and temperament.
- It is also influenced by external factors, like parenting style, environment, peers, culture and health.
- Brain development, gross motor and fine motor capabilities occur most automatically, without learning or instruction.

Te Whāriki

- Neuroscience and studies of gene–environment interaction are providing evidence for how tamariki’s biological foundations interact with specific aspects of the environment during development and how brain development can be nurtured by high-quality early learning environments.
- Kaiako understand the progression of and variations in tamariki’s development and provide time for the gradual growth of independent skills, such as feeding, toileting and dressing.
- Kaiako avoid making unnecessary developmental comparisons between tamariki, recognising that developmental progress varies.
- Activities, playthings and expectations take account of the fact that every toddler differs in their development, language capability and mastery of skills. The programme builds on the curiosity and passions of each toddler.
- Tamariki experience activities that develop their gross and fine motor skills and offer varying degrees of physical challenge and reasonable risk. Such activities include climbing, balancing, hammering, hopping, turning, pouring and undertaking obstacle courses and construction projects.
- Kaiako respect infants’ motor progression and allow their physical development to unfold naturally at their own pace. Safe and stimulating objects and furnishings are provided for infants to move, hold on to, balance against, or pull themselves up on.

Maslow

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs suggested that before individuals meet their full potential, they need to satisfy a series of needs.

- Tamariki need their basic needs met in order to grow and develop and to foster their sense of wellbeing.

Te Whāriki

- Their health is promoted; Their emotional wellbeing is nurtured; They are kept safe from harm.
- Kaiako facilitate tuakana–teina relationships and ensure that mokopuna have opportunities to manaaki and take responsibility for others. Kaiako trust mokopuna to manage these relationships and to indicate when they need support.
- Kaiako actively respond to the strengths, interests, abilities and needs of each tamaiti and, at times, provide them with additional support in relation to learning, behaviour, development or communication.
- Infants are learning rapidly and depend on sensitive adults to respond to their individual care needs. Through caregiving practices such as those for feeding and changing (sometimes referred to as 'caregiving rituals'), infants are learning to trust and that they are worthy of love.
- From birth, infants can communicate their needs and, increasingly over time, anticipate events. They rely on kaiako to sensitively observe their cues and gestures in order to meet their needs and provide opportunities for learning.
- Infants are developing trust that their physical, emotional, cultural and spiritual needs will be met in predictable ways. They need the security of knowing that a familiar adult is nearby.

Piaget

Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development suggests that tamariki move through four different stages of mental development - sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational. His theory focuses not only on understanding how tamariki acquire knowledge, but also on understanding the nature of intelligence.

- Tamariki need to be able to see, touch, taste, smell, move and hear the things they are learning about. This is called 'concrete learning'.
- The tamaiti is an active learner and that the tamaiti must be given opportunities to explore, discover and experiment. These principals underpin all cognitive development.

Te Whāriki

- Tamariki develop by participating actively in the opportunities that are available to them.
- Attention is paid to providing a range of play experiences that stimulate the senses, mind and body.
- Tamariki learn through play: by doing, asking questions, interacting with others, devising theories about how things work and then trying them out and by making purposeful use of resources.
- Everything in the immediate environment is chosen for its potential as a learning resource. Kaiako provide open-ended and sensory-rich resources for infants to explore.
- Infants have a variety of sensory experiences including fresh air and a range of smells, temperatures and sounds. They experience different indoor and outdoor play spaces, such as smooth floors, carpet, grass and sand.
- Consideration is given to the aesthetic and sensory environment, ensuring that it includes pleasing contrasts in light, colour, design, sound, taste and smell.
- Toddlers have access to a range of sensory-rich, open-ended and durable resources that support their holistic learning and development.

Rogoff

Rogoff attempts to explain the theory of cultural nature of human development by arguing that tamaiti's development and its learning process should be guided by participation between the tamaiti and an adult within a specific community.

- Adults have a role in guiding Tamariki's learning and that language is important for Tamariki's learning
- Communities should be encouraged to be more involved with their tamariki.
- There is an emphasis on collaborative work between parents, teachers and the tamariki in order to incorporate cultural processes in tamariki's learning.

Te Whāriki

- Belonging is nurtured through social interaction with kaiako and other tamariki and by respecting the achievements and aspirations of each tamaiti's family and community.
- Kaiako are consistent, reliable and realistic in their expectations and responses, and they foster harmonious working relationships with each other and with parents and whānau.
- Local curriculum design involves a complex weaving of principles and strands.
- Tamariki's learning is located within the nested contexts and relationships of family, community, and wider local, national and global influences.
- ECE service will use Te Whāriki as a basis for weaving with tamariki, parents and whānau its own local curriculum of valued learning, taking into consideration also the aspirations and learning priorities of hapū, iwi and community.
- Toddlers are encouraged to develop skills at their own rate and understand their own abilities and limitations. Kaiako wait for toddlers to indicate that they need assistance rather than assuming that they do.
- Kaiako empower infants to discover their own limits by allowing them the time and space to learn for themselves and not intervening unnecessarily.
- Tamariki have opportunities to develop and explore social concepts, rules and understandings in social contexts with familiar adults and peers.

Rousseau

Rousseau (1712-1778) believed that the role of the teacher was to guide, not to instruct. He believed tamariki should be taught by experience not by verbal lesson and advocated that play was the best method support learning.

- “Wise education proceeds by observing the tamaiti and adopting its measures to his individual capacities and needs”
- It is important to develop a tamaiti's character and moral sense, so that the tamaiti can learn to practice self-mastery and remain virtuous.

Te Whāriki

- Kaiako actively respond to the strengths, interests, abilities and needs of each tamaiti
- Consistent and manageable expectations and boundaries are set.
- Kaiako assist toddlers to manage their feelings when making choices and decisions and when dealing with conflict and frustrations.
- Kaiako have appropriate expectations about toddlers’ abilities to cooperate, share, take turns or wait for assistance.
- Strategies that promote positive behaviour for learning are used to prevent unacceptable behaviour and support the learning of new behaviours, social skills and competencies.
- Kaiako are consistent, reliable and realistic in their expectations and responses, and they foster harmonious working relationships with each other and with parents and whānau.
- Tamariki are helped to understand other people’s attitudes and feelings in a variety of contexts, for example, in play, conversations and stories. Opportunities are provided for tamariki to talk about moral and ethical issues.
- Tamariki’s growing capacities for empathy are fostered through reading or by telling them stories about other people.
- Tamariki’s developing capacities and understanding about rules and social strategies are fostered through such routines as sharing and taking turns.

Smilansky

Sara Smilansky's work with Piaget research focuses on how tamariki learn through play and the relationship of play to future academic success. She distinguishes four types of play:

- Functional Play involves tamariki experimenting with materials and learn how things go together. They explore and examine the functions and properties of objects by pushing and pulling, banging and dropping, and are learning how things feel, taste, smell, and sound, and what they do.
- Constructive Play emerges as tamariki gain more experience playing with materials and begin to construct things. They learn the different uses of material. Their actions are purposeful and directed towards a goal. They start putting things together with a plan in mind and are able to sustain their attention for longer.
- Pretend or Dramatic Play can develop alongside functional and constructive play and emerges in the toddler years and we see sociodramatic play developing as they become more people oriented.
- Games with Rules also involve planning and require a new depth of self-control. Games with rules help tamariki concentrate, understand limits, and control their behaviour to conform to the rules.
- Social interactions contribute to the development of creativity and intellectual growth.

Te Whāriki

- Kaiako talk with infants about what they, and other tamariki, are doing and encourage the infant's interest in, and interaction with, other tamariki. Infants are included in social events.
- Toddlers' preferences to play alone or alongside others are catered for in the programme. Many opportunities are provided for small-group activities and toddlers are encouraged, but not pressured, to contribute.
- Kaiako support toddlers' attempts to initiate social interactions and empower them to develop relationship skills by choosing carefully when to intervene in toddlers' conflicts and relationships with peers.
- Kaiako have appropriate expectations about toddlers' abilities to cooperate, share, take turns or wait for assistance.
- Tamariki's increasingly complex social problem-solving skills are encouraged, for example, through games and physically active, imaginative and cooperative play.
- Tamariki learn through play: by doing, asking questions, interacting with others, devising theories about how things work and then trying them out and by making purposeful use of resources.

Steiner

Steiner believed that a tamaiti's moral, spiritual and creative sides need as much attention as their intellect. He strongly believed in the idea of developing the whole person. The Steiner way of teaching hopes to support tamariki to develop into very able young people who have a strong sense of self and diverse capacities that enable them to become socially and economically responsible citizens.

- Providing real life tasks for Tamariki gives them a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Tamariki need free, creative play to develop their spirit, bodies and minds.

Te Whāriki

- Tamariki develop by participating actively in the opportunities that are available to them.
- Tamariki learn through play: by doing, asking questions, interacting with others, devising theories about how things work and then trying them out and by making purposeful use of resources.
- curriculum and pedagogy focus on the 'whole learner', reflecting the holistic way in which tamariki learn and grow, with the cognitive (hinengaro), physical (tinana), emotional (whatumanawa), spiritual (wairua), and social and cultural dimensions all tightly interwoven.
- The environment is challenging but not hazardous for toddlers. While alert to possible hazards, kaiako support healthy risk-taking play with heights, speed, tests of strength and the use of real tools.

Vygotsky

Vygotsky's Cognitive Development Theory is comprised of concepts such as culture-specific tools, language and thought interdependence, and the Zone of Proximal Development. He asserts that learning is an essentially social process in which the support of parents, caregivers, peers and the wider society and culture plays a crucial role in the development of higher psychological functions.

- Working with adults and more skilled peers is essential for tamariki to acquire the ways of thinking, knowing and being, that can make up a community's culture.
- Tamariki will learn essential skills through observation and intentional teaching from more capable others.
- Social interaction plays a major role in the development of Tamariki and that they involve communicating.
- Emphasising the role of language in the development of the tamaiti's thinking processes.

Te Whāriki

- Recent sociocultural theorising builds on Vygotsky's ideas that learning leads development and occurs in relationships with people, places and things, mediated by participation in valued social and cultural activities. In this framework, play is an important means by which tamariki try out new roles and identities as they interact with others. Peers and kaiako provide forms of guidance and support.
- Tamariki develop by participating actively in the opportunities that are available to them.
- Language, key words, signs and routines that infants are familiar with at home are used in the ECE setting. The environment is language-rich and includes familiar rhymes, songs, chants and experiences.
- Many opportunities are provided for small-group activities and toddlers are encouraged, but not pressured, to contribute.
- The programme provides activities for tamariki to develop their strengths, interests and abilities, such as in music, movement, language, construction, art, sorting and organising, and in doing things with others.
- Kaiako observe and value tamariki as individuals. Their interests, enthusiasms, preferences, temperaments and abilities provide the starting point for day-to-day planning, ensuring that all tamariki can participate to the best of their abilities and that additional support is accessed as required.
- Tamariki learn through play: by doing, asking questions, interacting with others, devising theories about how things work and then trying them out and by making purposeful use of resources.
- Tamariki have opportunities to develop and explore social concepts, rules and understandings in social contexts with familiar adults and peers.
- Kaiako talk with infants about what they, and other tamariki, are doing and encourage the infant's interest in, and interaction with, other tamariki. Infants are included in social events.
- Toddlers' preferences to play alone or alongside others are catered for in the programme. Many opportunities are provided for small-group activities and toddlers are encouraged, but not pressured, to contribute.
- Tamariki's increasingly complex social problem-solving skills are encouraged, for example, through games and physically active, imaginative and cooperative play.
- Tamariki's developing capacities and understanding about rules and social strategies are fostered through such routines as sharing and taking turns.