

Deepen relationships with ākonga and whānau

A suggestion for implementing the strategy
'Foster relationships and partnerships' from
the Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Includes:

- Strengthen relationships
- Connect with culturally sustaining frameworks
- Commit to understanding ākonga
- Involve family and whānau
- Innovate with getting to know your learner
- Successful home-school partnerships

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Foster relationships and partnerships](#)

Suggestion: [Deepen relationships with ākonga and whānau](#)

Date

19 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/deepen-relationships-with-students-and-whanau

Strengthen relationships

Respectful caring relationships are at the heart of the McAuley High School learning community. Maintaining these relationships involves every member of staff.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/221215196>

Closed Captions

Source:

[An inclusive learning community, ERO](https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/an-inclusive-learning-community)
<https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/an-inclusive-learning-community>

Connect with culturally sustaining frameworks

Learn from ākonga and whānau using culturally sustaining frameworks. Build a holistic learner profile to understand how to support ākonga wellbeing and learning.

For example, use dimensions from the Māori health model, Te Whare Tapa Whā

Taha Whānau – family, people and relationships

- whānau, friends, iwi and hapū
- cultural, religious, social and recreational connections
- professionals working with the family.

Taha Wairua – spiritual wellbeing or life force

- spiritually strengthening aspects, for example, faith, being in nature, creative activities and meditation
- special interests, hopes and priorities for ākonga and whānau.

Taha Tinana – physical wellbeing

- physical activity and recreation preferences
- physical abilities and challenges
- medications and allergies.

Taha Hinengaro – mental and emotional wellbeing

- strengths and talents
- dislikes, what can upset them
- signs that the learner is beginning to feel upset or anxious
- strategies used to calm ākonga.

Whenua – connection to the land and environment

- important places
- iwi and hapū, maunga and awa – mountains and rivers
- interests in the environment, plants and animals
- connections to people and ancestors.

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Foster relationships and partnerships](#)

Suggestion: [Deepen relationships with ākongā and whānau](#)

Date

19 June 2026

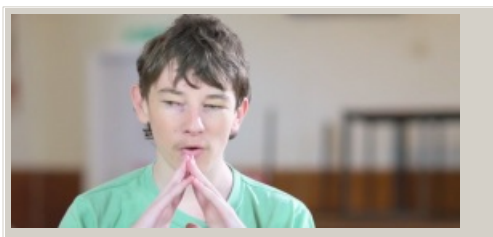
Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/deepen-relationships-with-students-and-whanau

Commit to understanding ākongā

Hamish describes the positive impact of being “known” by his teacher.

He also reflects on the impact of being invisible.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/McAgVbOsLnc>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Inclusive Education Action Group \(NZ\)](https://ieag.org.nz/voices/videos/)
<https://ieag.org.nz/voices/videos/>

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Foster relationships and partnerships](#)

Suggestion: [Deepen relationships with ākonga and whānau](#)

Date

19 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/deepen-relationships-with-students-and-whanau

Involve family and whānau

“We talk,
we meet,
we listen”.

Educators
talk about
engaging
with and
welcoming
Pacific
families
and
whānau
using a
Tapasā
approach.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/519265219>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga \(Vimeo\)](#)

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/8206263/video/519265219>

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Foster relationships and partnerships](#)

Suggestion: [Deepen relationships with ākonga and whānau](#)

Date

19 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/deepen-relationships-with-students-and-whanau

Innovate with getting to know your learner

Learner profiles can help school staff build relationships with ākongā and their whānau, understand their perspectives and design learning to meet learner needs. There are many creative and innovative ways to build knowledge about your learner.

Creative alternatives to learner profiles:

1. All About Me Interviews

- One-on-one chats with a teacher or peer using simple, structured questions.
- Use visuals or yes/no prompts.
- Record answers through voice, video, or drawing:
- "What do you like at school?"
- "What helps you learn?"

2. Video Introductions / Self-Presentations

- Learners record short videos introducing themselves.
- They can show their strengths, interests, and needs.
- Great for visual and verbal expression — use prompts or interview formats.

3. Photo Collages or Vision Boards

- Learners select photos of people, places, things, or activities they like.
- Use magazines, printed photos, or digital tools (like Canva or Book Creator).
- Add labels or short captions if appropriate.

4. Learning Choice Baskets

- Use a basket or box filled with objects that represent learning preferences (e.g., headphones, timer, picture of a friend, fidget, iPad).
- The learner selects what helps them learn best.
- You can record their choices as a profile.

5. Interactive Poster or Wall Display

Create a classroom wall or board where learners can add post-its or pictures under categories:

"I feel calm when..."

"I like learning with..."

"I want to get better at..."

[Inclusive Education](#)

From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Foster relationships and partnerships](#)

Suggestion: [Deepen relationships with ākongā and whānau](#)

Date

19 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/deepen-relationships-with-students-and-whanau

Successful home-school partnerships

Build a partnership that has a clear focus on learning, where everyone can make positive and active contributions that benefit learning.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/113879057>

[View transcript](#)

Source:

[Pasifika Education Community \(NZ\)](#)

<http://pasifika.tki.org.nz/Media-gallery/Engaging-with-Pasifika-parents-families-communities/Parents-matter>

This information was downloaded/printed from the Ministry of Education's website "Inclusive Education". Except where otherwise noted it is Crown Copyright 2018.

Information on the Inclusive Education website is regularly updated so we recommend you check the website version of this information to ensure it remains current.