

Partner with parents and family to support their child's learning

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Establish reciprocal relationships with families' from the Guide: [Supporting Pacific learners](#)

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- Includes:**
- Successful home-school partnerships
 - What to ask parents and family
 - Pacific parents' preferences
 - Build positive relationships
 - Support learning conversations
 - Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Supporting Pacific learners](#)

Strategy: [Establish reciprocal relationships with families](#)

Suggestion: [Partner with parents and family to support their child's learning](#)

Date

11 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/supporting-pacific-learners/partner-with-parents-and-family-to-support-their-childs-learning

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>

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What to ask parents and family

Connect with parents/caregivers and family to understand the strengths and needs of their child.

The people in the learners' lives:

- parent and whānau hopes and priorities
- important people in the learner's life
- best methods and times to communicate with the family
- professionals working with the family
- questions they have and support they would like from the school.

Practical elements:

- the language(s) spoken at home
- medications and allergies
- equipment used at home
- what they do at home to support learning

Learners' likes and dislikes:

- likes, interests, strengths, what they're good at, can do independently
- dislikes, what can upset them, how they express this, calming skills
- favourites (TV programmes, hobbies, books, songs, sports)

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Pacific parents' preferences

To build a successful partnership, Pacific parents want:

- ✓ to be contacted more often about their child's positive achievements
- ✓ to be informed about celebrations of their child's achievement, especially when their child was receiving an award or certificate at assembly
- ✓ honest reporting about their child's progress and achievement
- ✓ to be contacted sooner rather than later when concerns or issues arose regarding their children's education or well-being
- ✓ to have a homework centre at their child's school, to build confidence in helping their child with learning
- ✓ Information meetings, for example meetings about NCEA
- ✓ an appropriate staff member as a key contact or liaison person for Pacific families
- ✓ a senior manager (particularly in secondary schools) responsible for improving educational outcomes for Pacific students
- ✓ school staff, particularly teachers, with some understanding about working with Pacific families
- ✓ meetings for groups of parents based on their ethnicity.

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Build positive relationships

When building relationships with Pasifika families, consider your approach and be mindful of the experiences they bring.

Identify barriers to engagement and help to break these down.

It is important to consider:

- personal preferences for engagement (for example, face-to-face, group based)
- suitable timing (for example, time of day, week), acknowledging personal pressures and commitments
- the background of the person or group and their personal experiences with schooling
- the benefit of the event for the people you are engaging with
- culturally appropriate actions for different situations
- letting them know about you, as well as learning about who they are.

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Support learning conversations

Communicate and share information in a meaningful way, demonstrating understanding and support for parents' concerns.

- ✓ Promote regular face-to-face contact to reinforce strong communication and engagement with parents and families right from the start.
- ✓ Communicate and share information in a meaningful way, demonstrating understanding and support for parents' concerns.
- ✓ Value what parents and caregivers have noticed or assessments they have had done outside school.
- ✓ Involve parents and family in determining strategies to support the student's learning and wellbeing.
- ✓ Work with any programmes or materials being used at home to maximise consistency and support for the student.
- ✓ Develop systems for passing on information about a student's needs, progress, and next steps in ways that are meaningful.
- ✓ Actively and regularly communicate positive information and achievements to the family.

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Useful resources



Talanoa tips with Pasifika learners

A Core blog post that discusses what Pasifika success, Pasifika aspirations, Pasifika presence, Pasifika engagement, and Pasifika achievement look like in your school or field of work.

[Visit website](#)



Learning from each other - A final report

Learning From Each Other is a Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (TLRI) that provides a relationship-derived description of helpful tools that are useful for communities, educational professionals, and professional development providers to support sustained positive change for Pacific students.

Publisher: Pasifika Education Community

[Visit website](#)

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