



TE AKA MĀTUA

Basic Drug Information for Mātua
and Concerned Whānau



Whare Tukutuku



Whare Tukutuku

He mihi tēnei ki a rātou mā kua wehe atu ki te pō – haere, haere, haere atu rā.

Mā te runga rawa koutou e manaaki e tiaki e arotaki i tēnei wā.

Ki a tātou te hunga ora – kia kaha tātou ki te whai i te huarahi tika mōu.

Tēnā rā koutou katoa

Ki a koutou e ngā ākongā e whai nei i te mātauranga
kia muramura ake te ahi kia kāngia mō tēnei kaupapa hirahira mō tātou anō.

Nō reirā nau mai haere mai, piki mai kake mai

Ki runga ki tēnei kaupapa, kia kotahi ai i ō tātou whakaaro moemoeā

Mai i te timatanga ki tōnā whakaotinga.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā rā koutou, whakatau mai ka tau.

Salutations to the dearly departed multitudes who have gone before us.

Return home to the night, I bid you farewell.

May the grace of God strengthen you, protect you,
and guide you on your journey?

To the Descendants of those departed
and to those seeking their path in life I greet you.
I greet those who are here today in search of more
and different knowledge, welcome.

May our thoughts and dreams become as one
from the beginning to the end and beyond.

Tēnā rā tātou katoa

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Whare Tukutuku



About TE AKA MĀTUA

Te Aka Mātua refers to the parent vine that Tāwhaki and his brother used to climb up to the heavens. He and his brother, Karihi, locate their grandmother Whaitiri who is looking after the vines at the bottom of the stairway. Karihi in haste attempts to climb the vines immediately, but grabs the aka taepa, or weaker hanging vine. The gusts of the heaven whirl him about furiously, and he falls to his death. His brother Tāwhaki follows his grandmother Whaitiri's instruction to stay close to the aka mātua, or parent vine. He adheres to her recommendation and arrives safely in the heavens, where he obtains the three baskets of knowledge.

(Note: There are other variations to the story of Tāwhaki and this is one given by Takurua Tawera)

The name of this booklet **"Te Aka Mātua"** in our context is a whakatūpato! To learn from the old, be guided by your grandparents, to keep striving for knowledge. The booklet has therefore been designed with Mātua, Taua and Pōua in mind, to awhi, support, and educate whānau members concerned with a loved one's drug use.

(Note: Some content has been adapted and reproduced from Information and Support Pack for Aboriginal Parents and Families, copyright Government of Western Australia Mental Health Commission, 2016.)

For more information and who can help, please refer to the contact list at the back of this booklet.

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Information for Mātua

Mātua and whānau get worried when they find out their taitamaiti are using or trying drugs. They often think the worst, and this is understandable. Keep in mind that there is no evidence that a young person experimenting with or using drugs occasionally will go on to develop a substance use disorder with that drug. So, it is important as a whānau member that you raise the concern of drug use in a supportive and loving way. It is equally valuable that you provide the taitamaiti with correct and relevant alcohol and other drug information and encourage open kōrero about the subject. For further information and support, call the help numbers listed in the back of this booklet.

Impact on Whānau and Friends

As a mātua, whānau member, or friend you might feel very frustrated, upset, or hurt by a loved one's substance use. You might not totally understand why they are using drugs, and you might suggest that they just quit or stop it. However, this is not always an easy option, there can be several reasons at play.

Remember young people like to try new things, and push limits from time to time. Although not all taitamaiti experience harm from substance use, some do. Seeing someone you love being impacted can bring up emotions. It is important to remember that your feelings are normal and valid.



Hīkaka
Anger



Matapōuri
Sadness



Pari te ihu
Overwhelmed



Nahenahe
Alone

Common
feelings you
might have are:



Pōhēhē
Confused



Poapoataunu
Shame



Ihongaro
Lost



Mōteatea
Grief

What Can You Do?

As a mātua, whānau member, or friend, you are an important person in role modelling healthy substance use behaviours. Your relationship with your taitamaiti is central to the decisions they will make.

There are many things that you can do, here are some options:

Learn as much as you can about the different types of drugs and the impacts they have on the mind and body. Talk to a doctor, health care worker or call the Alcohol and Drug Helpline for more information:
Helpline 0800 787 797.

Be respectful of your taitamaiti's experiences and thoughts. If you show respect, then they in return will respect you more for being supportive and non-judgemental. Two-way mutual respect and understanding is important.

Choose the right time, right place (wā tika) to kōrero. Pick a time when you are both relaxed and can speak calmly with each other.

Whānau tikanga and responsibilities. Reinforce whānau tikanga and responsibilities with your taitamaiti. It is important that they know what is expected of them. They should also know the consequences of breaking these and responsibilities. Try to allow your taitamaiti to be part of the decision-making process around their responsibilities and the consequences for not following them.

Get support for yourself. There is lots of help available for you. Other support can include a close friend, whānau member, a doctor, a health

Openly discuss alcohol and other drugs. Sit down and have a kōrero with your taitamaiti about alcohol and other drugs. Talk about the good and not so good things about them, listen to them talk about the good and not so good things. The key is to be honest and open - not to scare them.

Be a good role model. If you drink, show that you drink within safe limits. Have kai before you start drinking and have water or non-alcoholic drinks as well. Having alcohol-free days can be beneficial for you and your whānau.

Whakarongo. Honest and open communication is key when talking about drug use. Listen to your taitamaiti, without putting them down or yelling or judging. Showing that you are interested in their thoughts and experiences is important. This builds trust so they feel comfortable to talk or ask you questions.

Look after yourself. This is THE most valuable advice for you to remember. When you are stressed and anxious you tend to forget about yourself and put everyone else first. But it is important to look after you – go for a walk, take a bath, go for a coffee/tea with friends, eat well, rest, spend time with your partner and other tamariki. Remember that you are not alone.

It is essential that you are supported and able to talk freely about your feelings and concerns. Help is always available when you reach out.



Facts for Mātua

What is a drug?

A drug is any substance (except food and water) which, when taken changes the way our bodies function. They can affect the way we think, feel, and behave. Drugs may be legal (e.g., alcohol, caffeine, tobacco and prescribed drugs) or illegal (e.g., cannabis, meth, speed and heroin.)

Why do people use drugs?

People use drugs for many different reasons. Some of these include:

- To have fun
- To relax
- To forget problems
- To socialise
- To relieve boredom or stress
- To experiment
- As a distraction or way to cope
- To celebrate or grieve
- To feel accepted or liked



Types of Drugs

There are four main groups of drugs that affect the brain and the rest of the body – depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens and other.

Depressants (downers)

These types of drugs slow you down. They can make you feel happy, calm, and relaxed. But sometimes they can make you feel fearful, paranoid, or aggressive. These drugs can be very unsafe as they can cause unconsciousness, vomiting, or even death, as a person in overdose can stop breathing. Depressants include:

- Alcohol
- Benzodiazepines (benzos)
- Heroin
- Some painkillers
- Inhalants
- Cannabis

Stimulants (uppers)

These types of drugs speed up the messages going to the brain. They can make you feel awake, happy, and alert. They can also make you feel paranoid, scared, jealous and suspicious. These drugs can be unsafe.

Stimulants can include:

- Mild stimulants like coffee, tea, cola drinks and nicotine in tobacco.
- Stronger stimulants include amphetamines (speed), ecstasy (MDMA, Molly) crystal methamphetamine (P, ice, crystal meth) and cocaine.

Hallucinogens (psychedelics)

These types of drugs can make you see, hear, or feel things that aren't really there. The effects can be different each time. Hallucinogens include:

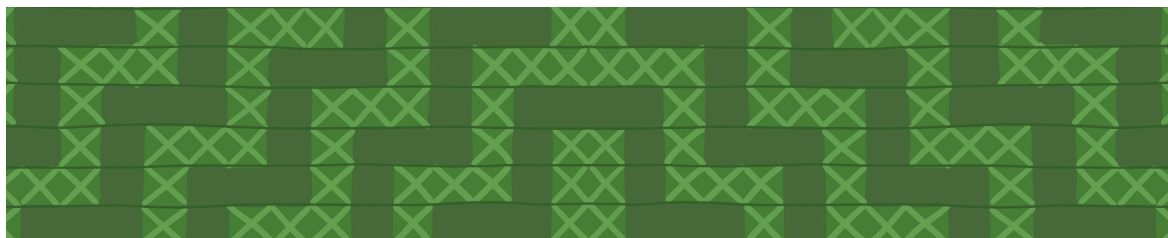
- Cannabis
- LSD or Acid
- Magic Mushrooms
- Mescaline (Cactus)
- PCP (phencyclidine)

Other

Some drugs belong to more than one drug group. Cannabis is a depressant, stimulant and a hallucinogen. Ecstasy is a stimulant and a hallucinogen.

Synthetic Drugs

Some drugs have been designed to imitate and mimic other illegal drugs. People may call them "legals" (also known as incense, Chronic or Spice) or "legal meth" (bath salts). These drugs are heavily laced with many different chemicals. These drugs are extremely dangerous as buyers do not know what chemicals they are taking. Even the packaging of these drugs states that these products are not intended for human consumption. Side effects from taking these drugs can be serious and life threatening.



Effects of Drugs

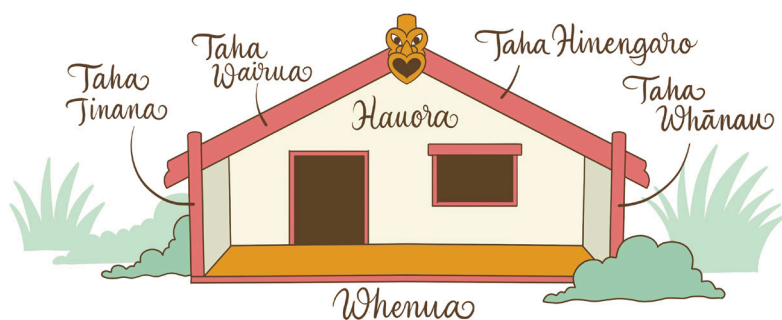
A person's experience of taking a drug will be affected by the following factors:

The individual person: Their mood, physical size, gender, age, personality, expectation of the drug experience, whether the person has eaten and whether other drugs have been taken.

The drug: The amount used, how it is used and the strength and purity/mix of the drug.

The environment: Whether the person is using it with friends, on their own, in a social setting or at home, at work, before or whilst driving.

Alcohol and other drugs can have an effect on wairua, hinengaro, tinana, and whānau. The following Te Whare Tapa Whā model shows this impact.



How Alcohol and Other Drugs Can Affect Our Wairua

Alcohol and other drugs can weaken the wairua and your connections with whānau, community and whenua.

Our way of being healthy is to look after ourselves by making the best choices we can, and to care for our whānau, community and culture. Alcohol and other drugs can tangle and weaken our spirit and mind or alter perceptions. This can affect our emotional, social, spiritual, and physical wellbeing. This can weaken our connection to whānau, community, culture and belonging. When we use alcohol and other drugs in harmful ways our wairua becomes weaker, and our thinking gets tangled. But if we stop or reduce use, our spirit can grow stronger, and our thinking becomes clear again.



People who do not use or use a little

- Strong Wairua
- Strong Whānau
- Strong Community

People who use a lot

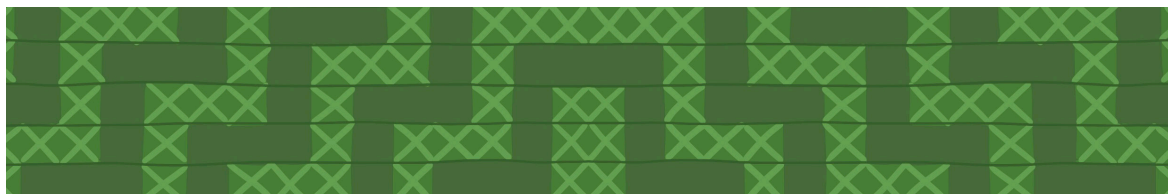
- Weak Wairua
- Concerned/Angry Whānau
- Concerned Community

People who use all the time

- Clouded Wairua
- Sad Whānau
- Sad Community

Mixing Drugs

Mixing or taking more than one type of drug can be extremely dangerous. It increases the chances of people experiencing bad side effects and other health complications. Some of these can include heart palpitations, heart attacks or even overdose. Mixing alcohol with heroin can slow both your heart and breathing rates so much that you can stop breathing. Mixing speed with ecstasy can make your heartbeat faster; you can overheat, get dehydrated and possibly die. Mixing drugs can make you lose control; you may vomit or pass out.



Types of Drug use

- **Trying it out (experimental use)**

When a person tries a drug a couple of times because they are curious. Remember it is normal for young people to experiment!

- **Hanging out with whānau or friends (recreational use)**

When a person uses a drug for enjoyment at a social occasion like a party or gathering.

- **Using a lot in a short time (intensive use)**

Also known as 'bingeing' and occurs when a person uses a lot over a short amount of time with the aim of getting drunk or intoxicated. For example, binge drinking or taking large amounts of drugs over a weekend.

- **Using every day (daily use)**

After regular use, a person may become physically and or psychologically dependent on a drug to feel normal.



What Does it Mean When Someone is Dependent on a Drug?

Being dependent on a drug means the person feels they need that drug to function normally or to feel okay. They believe they must use the drug to do certain things or feel a certain way. Dependence can vary from mild urges to out of control use.

When someone is dependent, their body has changed. If they suddenly stop taking the drug, they will most likely experience withdrawal symptoms. These unpleasant symptoms can include feeling sad or angry, or physical symptoms like vomiting, fits or cramps. Sudden withdrawal can sometimes be life threatening.

An example of withdrawal is if someone drank every day for a week and stopped, they might feel agitated, shaky, or get the sweats. They can feel sick. When someone is dependent to a drug they may begin to behave in unexpected ways – this can be difficult for whānau, friends, and community to deal with.

What Does it Mean When Someone is Tolerant to a Drug?

People who become dependent on a drug may become tolerant to that drug. This means they need to use more and more of the drug to get the same effect or avoid withdrawal symptoms.

For example - a person who used to get drunk after 3 beers now takes 12 beers to get drunk.

Being tolerant towards a certain type of drug sometimes leads to experimenting with other drugs or mixing more than one drug to get the desired result. This can be extremely dangerous and hazardous to their wellness and wellbeing.

Psychosis

Sometimes a person might become out of touch with reality. For example, they might start hearing voices that aren't there or thinking people are "out to get them". This is known as psychosis.

Symptoms of psychosis may include:

- Increased paranoia
- Aggression
- Delusional behaviour (believing things that are not reality)
- Hallucinations (seeing things that are not reality)
- Fear
- Lack of motivation
- Inability to perform their usual tasks at home, work or school.

Drug induced psychosis is usually short term (hours or days) and stops once the person stops using the drug. However, in some cases it can take much longer, up to 6 months or more.

When psychosis occurs, it is very distressing to the person using drugs, their whānau and the community. In this case professional help should be sought as soon as possible.



Drug Induced Psychosis and Treatment

In an extreme situation consider the following:

Give your taitamaiti quiet space - This may help them to calm down.

Keep yourself and your whānau safe - Leave the house or surroundings if in danger.

1. If this is an emergency phone **111**
2. If anyone is in immediate danger phone **111**
3. Or go to your nearest hospital emergency department (ED)
4. Phone your local Mental Health Crisis Team,
Ring Healthline **0800 611 116**

Overdose

In an emergency where you think someone has overdosed it is very important that you do not leave them alone.

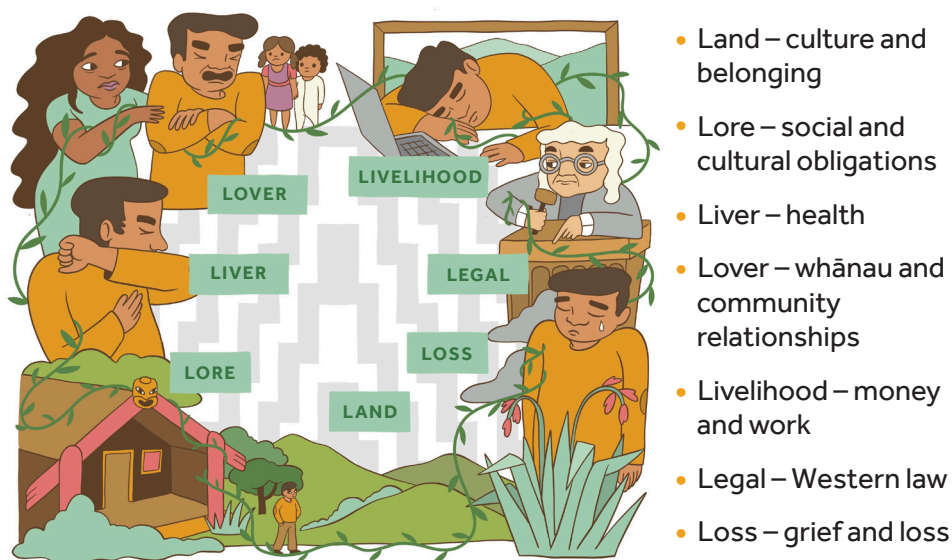
1. Call an ambulance straight away by dialling **111**.
2. Do not be scared about calling an ambulance.
The police will not come unless there is violence, serious injury or death.
3. Place the person in the recovery position (on their left side) and make sure they can breathe by tilting their head back to clear the airway.
4. Stay with the person until the ambulance arrives and provide any information that might help.

A Person's Alcohol and Drug Use Can Impact the Community

Everyone in the community is affected when alcohol and other drugs are used at hazardous and harmful levels. Even people who do not use at all are affected.

When someone is using alcohol and other drugs at hazardous or harmful levels it impacts on the person using the drugs, their whānau and their community.

When someone is using drugs and alcohol it impacts on every aspect of their lives. The 7 Ls Model demonstrates how each area can be impacted.

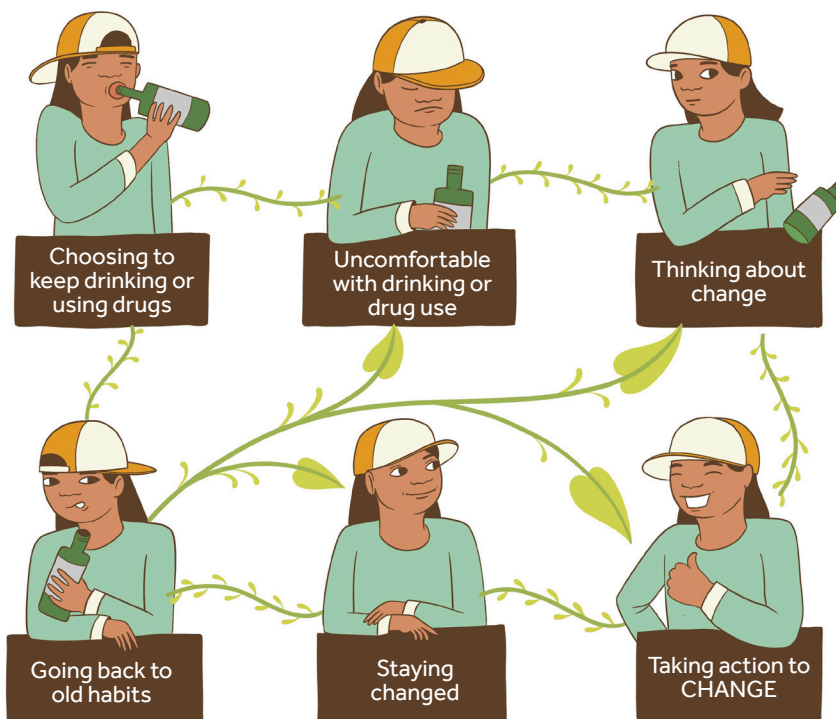


But it doesn't have to be like this. We can take better care of ourselves, our whānau, and our communities by having good information, making different choices about alcohol and other drugs, and by having an open kōrero with aroha.

Stages of Change

It is useful for Mātua and other whānau members to be aware of the various stages of change that a person trying to stop or reduce using drugs and alcohol can go through.

If you want to help your taitamaiti to make different choices or changes you can ask them what sort of help and support, they need. Each stage of change requires different things. Having prevention strategies in place for each stage is helpful. Some strategies can include having support from whānau and friends, being aware of triggers (events, different environments, and influential people), having coping strategies in place and using pharmacotherapy (replacement drug therapy).



The Stages of Change Model shows the steps involved in behavioural change. It shows:

- People can be in different stages for different lengths of time.
- People may move back and forward between the stages many times before they are ready to move onto the next stage or reach their goals regarding their drug and alcohol use.
- It is important to remember that movement is common and normal. People rarely change their behaviour on their first attempt. So, prevention strategies are very important.

What help is available for my Taitamaiti?

There are many forms of help available to your taitamaiti and at times it can seem hard to choose the best place for them to go. There is a variety of programmes and services to select from, such as drug and alcohol counselling, peer support groups, withdrawal services (medical, social, and home) and residential rehabilitation, kaupapa services, GP support and whānau counselling.

It is important to remember that help is available in lots of different ways.

Try to find the one that best fits your whānau! Some services will only awahi your taitamaiti after an assessment and if they want to get help for their drug use, don't give up, if the first door isn't sensitive to your whānau needs – you are not alone, pick up the phone.



Important Help Information

Emergencies

- If a friend or family member needs urgent medical attention, phone 111 for an ambulance.
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/where-go-help>

Healthline

- 0800 611 116
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/healthline>

Alcohol Drug Helpline

- 0800 787 797 or text 8681
- 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to speak with a trained counsellor. All calls are free and confidential.
- If you are concerned about your own drinking or drug taking, we can assist with information, insight, and support.
- If you are a family/whānau member, friend or professional concerned about someone else we can help you develop strategies for yourself and the other person.
- <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/>

Māori Helpline

- 0800 787 798 or text 8681
- <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/helpline/services/maori-helpline>
- Provide culturally affirming service, utilising resources available specifically for Māori, and refer callers to kaupapa Māori treatment services when requested.

Pasifika Helpline

- 0800 787 799 or text 8681
- <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/helpline/services/pasifika-helpline>
- Our Pasifika Helpline seeks to provide a holistic, culturally affirming service which meets your physical, spiritual, and mental needs and encourages support from family and community.

Youth Healthline

- 0800 787 984 or text 8681
- <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/helpline/services/youth-helpline>
- The Youth Helpline has dedicated people experienced in working through challenges with young people.
- They can talk to you about your own drinking or drug use or about another person's drinking or drug use.

Living Sober

- A friendly community where you can talk safely and honestly with others about your relationship with alcohol.
- <https://livingsober.org.nz>

Pot Help

- Everything you need to rethink your relationship with cannabis.
- <https://www.pothelp.org.nz>

Meth Help

- 0800 6384 4357
- <https://drughelp.org.nz/making-a-change/treatment-options/the-methhelp-team>
- Talk confidentially about a meth or P related issue or problem.

Are you OK?

- 0800 456 450 • <http://www.areyouok.org.nz>
- Provides information and can put you in touch with services in your own region.

Al-Anon

- 0508 425 4666 • <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.nz/>
- Offering help and recovery to all people affected by the alcoholism of a loved one or friend.
- Ring to find meetings and contacts in your area.

Alcohol.org.nz

- Information, advice, research, and resources to help prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm and inspire New Zealanders to make better decisions about drinking alcohol. • <https://www.alcohol.org.nz/help-advice>

Money talks

- 0800 345 123 • <https://www.moneytalks.co.nz/find-help-now/>
- Free financial helpline
- Connect people and whānau with their local foodbanks, help with the Work and Income process and entitlements, and support people to manage their money.

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TE RAU ORA

wharetukutuku.com

