

ORANGA TAMARIKI HUI PREMATURE UNTIL MĀORI LOOK TO THEMSELVES FIRST



While the hui for a Māori-led inquiry into Oranga Tamariki by prominent academics is to be welcomed, it is misguided to say that only the Crown stands in the way of tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) when in fact it is ourselves (Māori) who have failed our children.

Destiny Church Leader Bishop Brian Tamaki says that even though Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has acknowledged the state is a bad parent – and that she wants to 'work with Māori' – he cannot fault her seeming reluctance to grant tino rangatiratanga to Māori.

"How can we take back our children when the names of Nia Glassie, Moko Rangitoheriri, Cris and Cru Kahui and 5-month-old Lincoln Wakefield and many more bear testament to this generational curse? No state can stand by while babies die."

"As Māori, I think we have to ask some hard questions of ourselves first."

"After Twenty-three Māori MPs, all the social workers, and academic hui in the world, along with billions of dollars spent, we still haven't fixed what is broken. The Prime Minister talks about 'early intervention' because it is clear that we (Māori) have a problem with 'babies raising babies' on the back of generations of inadequate, dangerous parenting."

Bishop Tamaki said the dysfunction lies in Iwi, Hapu and whanau itself. "With all due respect if Māori were to have complete control, would we be ready for that? Addictions, drugs, family trauma and virtually no parental guidance are part of the reason 4,260 Māori children are in state care."

"The state currently has no choice but to step in. No government wants these sorry statistics on their watch when it comes to baby killing. Many current Māori organisations or structures give the Government no reason to trust us yet."

"Yes, the state has failed us and, while I salute this hui, it will come up short, as the Government will not give us our kids back, yet. Let's face it, we, Māori, have not done a good job up to this point. Stamping our feet, marching, and having hui will not do any good until we clean house first."

"Many of the baby uplifts, child murders, along with the increasing domestic violence, is generational. These young parents are third generations who are 'venting pent up unresolved dysfunction, like a burst hose under increasing pressure'" said Bishop Tamaki. Often drugs, alcohol, poverty, and violence has been the environment these perpetrators have come out of. The state has no choice.

Bishop Tamaki said, however, that this does not mean there aren't some Māori organisations doing a good job.

"For more than 40 years, my wife Hannah and I have worked to make things better for Māori families by breaking the inter-generational curse. Many have criticised us because the methods we use in ManUp and Legacy (for women and children) are not Tikanga Māori enough or government

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sanctioned initiatives. I know for a fact, with increasing negative statistics and billions of dollars poured into this problem, Tikanga Māori and government initiatives are failing to work either."

"The results of ManUp and Legacy speak for themselves. Whereas most iwi, hapu and whanau are not in a healthy position yet to deal with the magnitude and depth of this problem. We should never return our problematic whānau or individuals back into the same old environment they've come out of."

Bishop Tamaki said that the reason why ManUp and Legacy have achieved transformational success is due to:

- 1) The depth of spiritual (wairua) surgery needed to heal intergenerational trauma (this is a specialised area of function)
- 2) Te Iwi Tapu creates a transformational community – a wrap-around support structure that is not broken or dysfunctional.

It is a mistake to believe that ManUp and Legacy are only about prisoners when, in fact, they are about making families whole. "ManUp provides not only Intervention but also rehabilitation and reintegration. You can't let people return to a previous environment and expect a different result because it is that dysfunction that caused the problem in the first place."

"We take the dysfunctional families, and we wrap around them families that have survived what they are enduring, but which are no longer dysfunctional. This is a transformational community designed to re-socialise and re-culture their family lifestyle."

"We see the evidence in the hundreds of changed lives; it is a new dynamic that is restoring mothers and fathers and providing a real fix to these problems."

Bishop Tamaki called on Prime Minister Ardern to back her claim that she is willing to work with Iwi by including Te Iwi Tapu in the mix.

Children's Minister Hon. Tracey Martin recently outlined the five common denominators behind uplifts – synthetic cannabis, methamphetamine, family violence, alcoholism and mental health – but these factors sit outside the control of Oranga Tamariki (OT). "OT is powerless to change these from within. They must deal with the consequences of the dysfunction – they are not its cause. On the other hand, ManUp and Legacy have enjoyed significant successes in all five of these areas."

"People within Government have informed us that OT receives more than 90,000 calls of concern every year, yet they are only really equipped to deal with approximately 30,000 – leaving the remaining 60,000 to struggle on.

"The Government and Maori need trust-worthy partners. No more keeping us out in the dark! Let's mainstream ManUp and Legacy to change these nasty statistics. It's time to put aside our differences, and together we can make a difference." Bishop Tamaki said.

