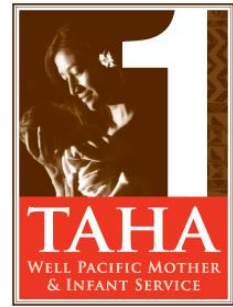


MEDIA RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Josephine Samuelu, Senior Advisor
Company Name: TAHA – Well Pacific Mother and Infant Service,
School of Population Health, The University of
Auckland
Telephone Number: 021 243-9642
Email Address: j.samuelu@auckland.ac.nz



Headline: PACIFIC PARENTS ARE GREAT PARENTS

Praise and Encouragement: Celebrating National Children's Day, 7 March 2010.

Every day is a great day to enjoy time with our children. However, Sunday 7th March is particularly special because it's National Children's Day. It's also significant because it's the 10th anniversary of National Children's Day, a day for all Pacific families to celebrate their children and give them extra praise and encouragement.

For our Pacific parents with children under 1 year old, it's a particularly special time for the new addition to the family to grow and thrive in a positive environment. The first year of life for a Pacific baby is important to parents because they want to do the best they can for their baby so that it thrives and survives. The first year of life for a Pacific baby is also important to the grandparents who give of their time, energy, cuddles and kisses to enhance the life of this new generation who will join their proud ancestry line. The first year of life for a Pacific baby is important to the aunties, uncles and cousins who will help to raise this child with love, praise and encouragement.

There is a Samoan proverb used in relation to parenting from the publication 'A Theology of Children' written by Reverend Nove Vailaau. The proverb also resonates with all Pacific families and is appropriate for this years National Children's Day.

"O au o matua fanau'
'Children are the parents' liver (precious)

This proverb likens children to an internal organ, the liver, a vital part of a human being's system. The word 'au' means liver of an animal or human being. Just as a person needs to protect and care for his/her liver, so the parents are to care for and protect their children.

Pacific parents do the best for their babies and they are to be praised and encouraged for the awesome job they are doing. To a baby, who is learning things

for the first time, praise and encouragement creates a positive environment for them to feel safe and secure and grow up strong, happy and healthy.

So, here are some tips to protecting your baby in its first year as you continue being a great parent. Share these tips with grandparents and the whole family and friends so that they continue to be great carers for your baby.

- When you put baby to sleep, sleep baby on their back facing up (not on their side, front or on pillows).
- When baby is sleeping, make sure there is plenty of space around their face.
- Ensure the environment for baby is as safe as possible, especially when baby is asleep. No alcohol, drugs or partying around baby.
- Ensure baby breathes clean air and not air filled with cigarette smoke, especially when sleeping. If you are a smoker, ask your doctor or nurse about quitting or call Quitline (0800 778 778).
- Breast milk for baby is best. But if that's not possible, use formula milk. (Ask your midwife for advice).
- Handle baby gently.
- Talk and sing to your baby. Give lots of love, praise and encouragement.
- For more information contact your midwife or Plunket nurse.

Enjoy every day with your baby and children and do something extra special this Sunday on National Children's Day.

ENDS

Contact: Josephine Samuelu, Senior Advisor
Company Name: TAHA – Well Pacific Mother and Infant Service, School of
Population Health, The University of Auckland
Telephone Number: 021 243-9642
Email Address: j.samuelu@auckland.ac.nz