

What is tuakana-teina?

The concept of a tuakana-teina relationship.

The tuakana-teina relationship, an integral part of traditional Māori society, provides a model for buddy systems. An older or more expert tuakana (brother, sister or cousin) helps and guides a younger or less expert teina (originally a younger sibling or cousin of the same gender).

In a learning environment that recognises the value of ako, the tuakana-teina roles may be reversed at any time. For example, the student who yesterday was the expert on te wā and explained the lunar calendar may need to learn from her classmate today about how manaakitanga (hospitality) is practised by the local hapū.

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