

# Hikina

## Case study











# Contents

Introduction	3
National Leadership – The E Tū Rangatahi Story	5
Community Mobilisation – A Grassroots Approach	7
Summary	9

# An introduction to our Hīkina case study

With over 155,000 registered participants and 65% of New Zealanders connected to rugby, New Zealand Rugby (NZR) is uniquely positioned to influence positive cultural change. Rugby brings people together and builds lasting relationships across communities.

In Aotearoa, one in three women have been the victim of intimate partner violence in their lifetime, highlighting the severity of family and sexual violence as a national issue.

Every individual deserves respect, safety, and freedom from abuse. Rugby can influence social norms and behaviours and reduce harm. NZR aspires to unify communities to help eliminate family and sexual violence in Aotearoa.

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata – people are the most important part of rugby and keeping them safe in all aspects of their lives is a priority. Safe sporting environments increase the likelihood of lifelong participation in physical activity.

In 2024, we developed a programme called Hīkina.

Hīkina is about uplifting our game to serve the wellbeing of people, supporting our long-term strategy of *Mauri Tu, Mauri Ora – Thriving People, Thriving Game*. Hīkina harnesses the power of rugby to safeguard people and whānau by working at the community level and partnering with local groups to build healthy futures.

- **Hīkina Tangata:** We nurture the potential of our rising generation.
- **Hīkina Whānau:** We strengthen our whānau voices.
- **Hīkina Hapori:** We unify our communities on common values.
- **Hīkina Taiao:** We establish safe and supportive environments.
- **Hīkina Tikanga:** We create sustainable strength-based responses.

Our vision is for tamariki, rangatahi, and whānau to be safe, healthy, and active through rugby. Our goals are for them:

- **To be safe.** They are safe and there are avenues to seek help.
- **To thrive.** They have a great time and enjoy positive social connection and growth.
- **To participate.** They continue in rugby in whatever capacity.

## The Impact:

Hīkina's aspiration is long-term, sustainable change within rugby communities. Increased reporting is a positive outcome, indicating greater awareness and confidence that action will be taken.

## The Values That Guide Hīkina



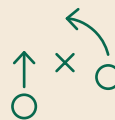
### HĪKINA TE AROHA

We uplift and care for people.



### HĪKINA TE MANA

We uplift and empower whānau.



### HĪKINA TE MĀRAMATANGA

We uplift our knowledge and skills.



### HĪKINA TE PONO

We uplift with integrity and honesty.

## Background:

Hīkina evolved from Te Hurihanga in response to shifts in rugby amplified by COVID-19, as well as the growing scale and complexity of the program, which hindered progress. In 2023, NZR and ACC agreed to refresh the program for 2024-2025, focusing on community mobilisation, a core element of *Te Aorerekura: National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence*.

**Hikina**, a program to harness the power of the rugby community to protect and safeguard our rangatahi and tamariki.



Using the following initiatives:

### Māori Rugby Development

Supporting E Tū Rangatahi Camps  
Activating a Community of Practice – Kaitiaki Group  
Establishing Community Referral Pathways  
Developing a Community Model of Care

### Provincial Unions

Safeguarding and Protection - Fast Fund  
Activating a Community of Practice  
Community Readiness – Understanding Violence and Harm  
Establishing Community Referral Pathways

This work will strengthen NZR's existing safeguarding and protection mahi including Safe Clubs, Safe Kids, harm free workplace for our staff, and police vetting for all under 18 coaches and referees.

# National Leadership

## The E Tū Rangatahi Story

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



#### EMPOWERING MĀORI YOUTH:

E Tū Rangatahi camps inspire rangatahi to embrace their Māori identity and develop life skills through rugby.



#### ADDRESSING VIOLENCE PREVENTION:

By integrating violence prevention strategies, the program improves off-field outcomes for Māori communities.



#### KEY DEVELOPMENTS:

A system framework, risk management group, and health response process have been developed to safeguard rangatahi.

### About

NZR delivers E Tū Rangatahi camps for Māori youth to experience rugby and develop life skills in a kaupapa Māori context. Held on local marae, these programs encourage Māori to be proud of who they are, lead awesome lives, and follow their dream and aspirations and become leaders in their communities. The vision is to inspire and unify whānau, hapu, and iwi, through Māori rugby, he waka eke no (a canoe we are all in together).

### The Opportunity

E Tū Rangatahi empowers rangatahi by integrating protective factors against violence. Expanding the kaupapa to influence whānau, hapu, and iwi will improve societal outcomes and safeguard tamariki, rangatahi, and whānau.

*"It's all about lifting the mana and the wairua of our rangatahi Māori. I believe Hīkina to be very important and beneficial to the Kaupapa. Hīkina's potential is huge as time flows by, as our knowledge creates grown perspectives and understandings of how we can uphold our rangatahi in all their beauty."*

- E TŪ RANGATAHI KAITIAKI

### FACTORS THAT PROTECT AGAINST VIOLENCE:

HEALTHY  
RELATIONSHIPS

HELPING  
AND HEALING

SOCIAL  
CONNECTION

ORANGA  
TAMARIKI

GENDER  
EQUITY

CELEBRATING  
DIVERSITY

CULTURAL  
IDENTITY

NON-VIOLENT  
SOCIAL NORMS



## The Impact

Hikina launched the Kaitiaki Group, a group of rangatira with backgrounds in health, social services, education, and community rugby. This group empowers rangatahi by fostering opportunities and connections that embody the values of E Tū Rangatahi, thereby improving off-field outcomes for Māori. The Kaitiaki Group have supported the following developments:

1. **E Tū Rangatahi Values and Activities** – Safeguarding principles have been embedded into E Tū Rangatahi through a kaupapa Māori lens. This equips rangatahi and rangatira with the skills to influence friends and whānau.
2. **System Framework** – A framework has been developed to address gaps, build succession, and mitigate risks. This will ensure the kaupapa is future proofed and aligned with best practice.
3. **Risk Management** – A Pae group has been established to oversee risk response processes, systems, and capability.
4. **Health Response** – A formal harm response process is being developed with NZR's mental health and wellbeing team. This will ensure rangatira are trained to manage escalations, deliver on camp support, and provide referrals.

These developments focus on preventing and responding to harm and building capability to safeguard participants.

## Plans for 2025 - What's ahead

- Implement the system framework, ensuring E Tū Rangatahi is future-proofed and aligned with best practice.
- Conduct readiness assessments with the Kaitiaki Group, laying the foundations to mobilise their communities to prevent family and sexual violence.
- Develop a national community model of care, connecting rangatira and rangatahi with local support services, facilitated by trusted connectors.



### KEY LEARNINGS

#### EXPLICIT INTEGRATION OF PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Protective factors are implicitly incorporated through the actioning values, activities, and leadership, creating a korowai that safeguards participants. There is an opportunity to integrate explicit violence prevention initiatives.

#### STRENGTH OF ACTIONING VALUES

The actioning values - Paki Tu (uplift each other), Paki Toa (help each other be successful), Paki Rongo (listen and support) foster connection and accountability. These values show the importance of simple, consistent messaging for communities.

#### COMMON BONDS AS UNIFYING FACTORS

Being Māori and loving rugby bring rangatahi and rangatira together and these shared identities foster connection, allowing the kaupapa to weave in protective factors implicitly, reinforcing a sense of community and support.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Building relationships through connection, presence, and respect is essential, captured in the principles of whanaungatanga, tea towel tanga, and kaitiakitanga. Emphasising these values fosters trust and paves the way for lasting progress. Often overlooked in Western-centric contexts, these principles present a valuable learning opportunity.



# Community Mobilisation

## A Grassroots Approach

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



#### EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH SAFEGUARDING:

NZR has partnered with Provincial Unions (PUs) to safeguard participants focusing on tailored strategies, support and resourcing.



#### COMMUNITY READINESS AND MOBILISATION:

NZR will conduct readiness assessments to generate insights, allowing us to co-design solutions.



#### SAFE CLUBS, SAFE KIDS:

The Safe Clubs, Safe Kids network fosters collaboration among PUs by sharing best practise, resource, and by providing education.

### About

NZR works with 26 affiliated PUs across Aotearoa. PUs deliver rugby to 155,000 registered participants via clubs, schools, and direct to participant programs. There are 475 clubs and 318 colleges delivering rugby. Each PU and community face unique geographic, demographic, and socio-economic challenges, with rugby serving as a unifying force.

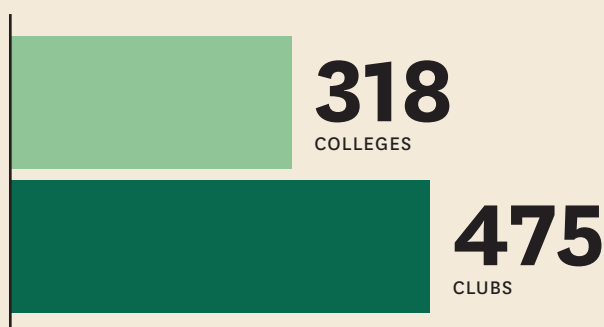
### The Opportunity

PUs have an opportunity to leverage rugby's influence to safeguard individuals and whānau, enhancing capacity, capability and understanding within communities. By completing readiness assessments, NZR can gauge how prepared rugby communities are to protect participants, allowing for tailored support. Through organisational development, direct participation, community mobilisation and advocacy, PUs can embed prevention strategies to protect participants and strengthen their communities.

#### NZR & PROVINCIAL UNION DELIVERY:



#### ORGANISATIONS DELIVERING RUGBY:



*"Hikina provides a Kaupapa Māori approach based on mātauranga to support and develop māreikura and whatukura through connecting and reconnecting to Te Ao Māori. The value is through harm prevention, health promotion, physical activity, wellbeing and utilising rugby as a vehicle to engage our communities across Aotearoa. Hikina also allows us to grow Kaitiaki and leadership in Māori communities across Aotearoa."*

- JOSEPH TYRO





## The Impact

Hikina has focused on fostering relationships and supporting communities across Aotearoa through the Safe Clubs, Safe Kids network. The following key initiatives have been delivered:

- Three Safe Clubs, Safe Kids webinars facilitated by Safeguarding Children Aotearoa
- An in-person safeguarding workshop for PU designated persons
- Quarterly safeguarding hui to maintain momentum and collaboration
- A review and refresh of the Safe Clubs, Safe Kids policy template
- Online content and assets developed for Child Safeguarding Week 2024

The Safeguarding and Protection Fast Fund provides funding, subject matter expertise, training, and education. Several PUs including Horowhenua-Kapiti, North Harbour, South Canterbury, and Taranaki have expressed interest.

Two readiness assessments were completed with NZR community rugby staff and the Kaitiaki Group. These insights will inform co-designed solutions in 2025.

## Plans for 2025 - What's ahead

- NZR will conduct three Community Readiness Assessments, helping understand each PUs specific safeguarding needs and readiness
- Readiness Assessment insights will guide the co-design of solutions, addressing gaps in activity, leadership, norms, knowledge and support
- The continuation of the Safe Clubs, Safe Kids network, supporting PUs by sharing best practices, resources and education opportunities



### KEY LEARNINGS

#### **THE VALUE OF ENGAGING DIRECT TO PARTICIPANTS**

Direct interactions, particularly through Māori Rugby Development and informal groups, yielded the most engagement. Focusing on accessible, motivated groups enables faster progress, especially when PUs have limited resource or understanding.

#### **PREVENTIVE INTENT EXISTS, BUT IMPLEMENTATION IS CHALLENGING**

Although communities and stakeholders agree on the value of prevention, engagement varies across PUs, influenced by leadership, buy-in, capacity, and resources. Effective safeguarding requires commitment from executive or board-level leadership to drive change.

#### **TAILORED APPROACHES ARE ESSENTIAL**

PUs vary in terms of needs, capacity, and structure, requiring tailored strategies for effective safeguarding. Community readiness assessments will help identify these differences and guide appropriate actions. A one-size-fits-all approach is often ineffective.

#### **CULTURAL SENSITIVITY IS CRITICAL TO EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARDING**

The diversity within rugby highlights the need for culturally sensitive approaches. Initiatives like E Tū Rangatahi with its cultural focus helps ensure that safeguarding practices resonate with the communities involved, increasing their relevance and effectiveness.

#### **CONSISTENT FUNDING AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP ARE KEY TO SUSTAINED CHANGE**

Sustainable long-term progress is reliant on continued funding, strategic guidance, and leadership continuity across all levels. Frequent changes in staff, resourcing, and policy lead to disrupted progress and partially adopted programs.

# Summary

## What's Next

Hikina presents a powerful opportunity to embed safeguarding into community rugby by partnering with local communities to build healthy futures. Key actions in 2025 include:

- **Nationwide Community Model of Care:** Establishing a national community model of care to connect rangatira and rangatahi with local support services.
- **Community Readiness:** Conducting community readiness assessments to evaluate PU safeguarding readiness. Insights will allow the network to address gaps in leadership, knowledge, and resources.
- **Cultural Empowerment:** Strengthening E Tū Rangatahi by embedding protective factors and violence prevention initiatives, empowering Māori communities nationwide.

A developmental evaluation of Hikina will provide insights into safeguarding and prevention, highlighting strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth.

## What's Possible

These opportunities reflect the immense potential of harnessing rugby communities as a vehicle for cultural change:

- **Social Transformation:** Rugby's community reach can influence attitudes and behaviours, contributing to the elimination of family and sexual violence.
- **Cultural Pride and Leadership:** E Tū Rangatahi (and similar programmes) empower Māori by fostering Māori identity and leadership capabilities.
- **Tailored Safeguarding Approaches:** Community readiness assessments will allow for nuanced solutions that resonate with unique local needs.
- **Sustainable Change:** A focus on embedding prevention strategies and fostering collaborative networks ensures long-term impact.

## The Foundations

Hikina has been established on a solid foundation of principles, values, and strategic efforts, underpinned by relationships grounded in whanaungatanga and kaitiakitanga.

- **Strategic Vision:** Guided by Mauri Tu, Mauri Ora – Thriving People, Thriving Game.
- **Hikina Values:** Hikina Te Aroha, Hikina Te Mana, Hikina Te Māramatanga, Hikina Te Pono.
- **Community Mobilisation:** Collaboration with local groups to build strong, connected communities through shared values.
- **Cultural Connection:** The integration of kaupapa Māori values, fostering connection and accountability.
- **Resources:** The development of a community readiness assessment tool, monitoring and evaluation plan, Māori Rugby Development framework, documenting of E Tū Rangatahi values and activities, and a health response process.







Mehemea ka moemoeā  
ahau, ko ahau anake.  
Mehemea ka moemoeā  
tātou, ka taea e tatou.

If I am to dream, I  
dream alone. If we all  
dream together then  
we shall achieve.”



