

If you ever leave your wahakura behind by mistake:

- ☺ **Never put baby to sleep by themselves on an adult bed.**
- ☺ The pillows and heavy blankets are a suffocation risk.
- ☺ **Never let baby sleep with any adult who is exhausted, drunk or drugged.**
- ☺ Babies can be laid on and suffocated by these adults. Never let other children sleep with your infant.
- ☺ **Children can also overlay and suffocate infants.**
- ☺ Never sleep with baby on a sofa or in a waterbed.
- ☺ **Surface needs to be firm and flat.**
- ☺ Never put baby between you and the wall.
- ☺ **Babies can get squashed in and suffocate.**
- ☺ Babies should never sleep in a car seat. The head will drop forward and block the airway.
- ☺ **There should be no loose strings around.**
- ☺ Strings, ties on clothing, cords for window blinds and mobiles that baby can reach are dangerous.

Your wahakura and how to look after it.

- ☺ **Your wahakura will be made by an expert weaver.** It should have a flat bottom, reasonable firm sides and a top edge strong enough to pick it up easily.
- ☺ **Your wahakura is not designed to be a carry-cot.** It does not have handles.
- ☺ **It has a thin mattress.** Both mattress and cover are easily washable.
- ☺ **You can wash the wahakura** with a wet cloth and mild washing liquid. Dry with towel and leave to air.
- ☺ **Watch out for any sharp or rough flax edges.**

For your Wahakura Contact:

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Tairawhiti Wahakura Project

Wahakura



A safe sleeping place for your Baby

Important Information

A Wahakura is a woven flax bassinet for infants up to 5-6 months.

- ☺ It promotes breastfeeding
- ☺ It helps bonding
- ☺ It is likely to protect baby from SIDS (cot death) and overlying.

And for babies older than 6 months (when the high risk of SIDS ends)

- ☺ Baby will now need to move to another sleeping space because the wahakura will be too small.
- ☺ Your own wahakura may serve all your children or even do the rounds inside the Whanau.
- ☺ 'Community owned' wahakura will be retrieved by your health worker and given to another family to use.
- ☺ Some families have had larger wahakura made because baby, mother, father, nan and koro did not want to change sleeping arrangements!



Safe Sleeping Rules For the Whakura

- ☺ **Always use your wahakura.**
- ☺ It goes anywhere and everywhere.
- ☺ **Always sleep baby on the back.**
- ☺ This assists in the protection from SIDS.
- ☺ **Sleep pepi on a firm mattress.**
- ☺ A thin mattress 20-25mm sponge rubber with a cotton cover is best.
- ☺ **There should be no gaps between mattress and edge of the wahakura.**
- ☺ Gaps may create a space for baby to move into and this could hinder baby's breathing.
- ☺ **Do not use a pillow.**
- ☺ Pillows may cause baby's head to come forward and block the airway.
- ☺ **Keep baby's face clear of blankets.**
- ☺ **Avoid head covering. Prevent suffocation.**
- ☺ Pepi in a wahakura promotes bed sharing safely.
- ☺ Baby's feet should be at bottom of wahakura

- ☺ Stops baby wriggling down under the blanket.
- ☺ There should be no loose articles in the wahakura.
- ☺ Blankets, pillows or soft toys can cause suffocation.
- ☺ Never let baby sleep with any adult who is exhausted, drunk or drugged.
- ☺ Always remind every caregiver of these rules.

Check. Nan or Koro may be still on the 'old rules.'

**Call (06) 867 4226
Tairawhiti Midwives**

