

A large scale pandemic has hit New Zealand's shores causing panic and anxiety to ripple through the country. The COVID-19 Coronavirus originating from Wuhan, China had made it's way around the world and what begun as a few infected, quickly amassed to many deaths; particularly amongst our older generation. While we watched the news of what was happening all around the world, our Centre started preparing ourselves for the inevitable.

During the months of March and April, our nation went into lockdown with Bright Beginnings Early Learning Centre closing its doors and everyone in Aotearoa ordered to stay home to keep the virus at bay. The teachers have been quick to respond to this crisis; banding together to ensure that we stay connected to our families and offer our support to them. We have been keeping in touch digitally and doing what we can to reach out. It was heart warming receiving the many photos, stories and videos of how children were spending time at home with their families.

Despite the harrowing circumstances, many positives arose from the crisis. Families were finally able to spend that much needed time together and Papatūānuku, the earth mother, was able to breathe and replenish. Through the sadness, there was also a lot of hope. Seeing an entire world give up so much for the sake and safety of others is humbling. We learned from the 1918 pandemic and when history looks back on this time, it will reflect upon how so many of us came together, all alone, to help each other. The irony of it all, that we had to separate from each other in order to save one another.

**Kua takoto te manuka**

**-The leaves of the Manuka tree have been laid down.**

**It is now in our hands how we navigate around this.**