

Cori's Story

One Kiwi Can kid to 1,400!



**GRAEME DINGLE
FOUNDATION**

Empowering kids to overcome life's obstacles
Whakamanawatia ngā tamariki kia eke panuku



From an eager 7-year-old Kiwi Can participant to a dedicated Kiwi Can Programme Coordinator, Cori Maroroa knows firsthand the benefits of Graeme Dingle Foundation's values-based Kiwi Can programme for tamariki.

As a child who thrived playing sports, Cori is candid about her primary school experiences.

"Like many other kids I was at school for the sports and the food really. The education side...was just 'cause we had to".

While schoolwork didn't always motivate a young Cori, the energy-packed Kiwi Can programme is remembered fondly.

"It's just as I remember it as a child, it was always fun. You enjoyed your time going to Kiwi Can".

Nearly two decades on, Cori is helping over 1400 tamariki across Rotorua create fun memories of their own, build confidence and develop valuable life skills.

"We just help them break the values down. Resilience? What's that big word? Oh, it means to keep on trying. Then we build some tools around it."

But how do you win over 7 to 10-year-olds whilst teaching themes like resilience and integrity? It's all in the delivery.

"The Kiwi Can leaders are fun and engaging. They're the adults at the school that aren't like the teachers. More like a tuakana. You always get the sense from Kiwi Can leaders that they've got a big inner child...they're there to have fun as well."

We want every child to know: What they have inside is greater than any obstacle.

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Cori recalls the core Kiwi Can values that have helped her throughout life, especially as she plans her next career move.

“It’s that foundational, strong value base. Understanding resilience - to keep on trying, bouncing back. Integrity - doing the right thing. They’re simple words but quick reminders throughout life. When you get it at the age of 7 or 8, then it kind of sticks and becomes normal practice.”

As she wraps up four years at Graeme Dingle Foundation Rotorua, she reflects on the connections she’s made.

“I’m going to miss my time in the classroom. Just the spark with the kids. You build good rapport with them as a leader, even as a coordinator. At events like sport, basketball, touch or just out in the community when you’re doing your shopping. And connections...that’d be a big one. With the school staff and some lifelong friends and family I’ve made through this role.”

With an almost nostalgic grin she adds, “that is, if I don’t get pulled back in to cover or something like that.”

*Since sharing her story, Cori has signed a contract to help launch a new programme in Rotorua! And whilst Cori makes for a perfect example of the unpredictable places life can take you after school, we’re simply stoked to have her for a little bit longer!



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