

Kapa haka festival finds favour



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Maori affairs reporter

MORE than 780 children took to the stage this weekend as part of the Rangitaiki Kapa Haka Festival.

The festival, held at the Whakatane War Memorial Centre, drew a crowd estimated at 1800 over the day.

Kura o Te Paroa and Te Kura o Te Teko jointly took out the top spot in the competitive section with Te Wharekura o Ruatoki placing second. Te Whata Tau o Putauaki and Te Kura o Te Paroa shared the top award in the whakangahau (entertainment) section.

Te Kura o Te Paroa also took out first place in the novice section with Te Kura o Taneatua claiming second and Motueka taking third.

This year's festival was co-hosted by Allandale Primary School and Ohope Beach School.

Tony Horsfall, the principal at Ohope Primary School, said the event was successful because of the positive community atmosphere.

"The venue was a real big factor in the success of the festival; the weather did not affect the performances and being in Whakatane made it accessible for lots of whanau to attend – a real community festival."

Rangitaiki Kapa Haka Festival committee member Thomas Mitai said he