

Identity is my right
to be me

Me being me

How I see the world.

My many names,

I've been given,

Ones I choose,

To share, to keep safe,

To say hello.

My story—
Lived every day
Inside and out,
Connected.

My people—
Born to, gifted, and chosen.
Culture, my part of many.

My place—
A land of birth,
My home where I stand.

Woven with
How I feel and belong,
How I think and believe.

Words can hurt or uplift.

What others say matters.

What I say does too.

My experiences—

Liked and disliked,

What has happened to me.

They
push and pull,

And shape
me
new.

Everything to do with me
Transforms and builds me,

To what I am...

Anchored
To before, to now,
To who I'll be tomorrow.

I need to try new,
Need to make mistakes

To find my right.

To look to my horizon,
Toward who I wish to become.

Supported to
grow
and
change

Into the best me.

The many layers of me,
Part of the universe of we.

Identity is my right to be me.

Identity is my right to be me

Poem by Emma Hinton
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This poem was created through workshops with tamariki and whānau across Tāmaki Makaurau, inviting reflection on identity—what makes us who we are, how we belong, and how we grow. It was inspired by Article 8 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which protects every child’s right to identity—name, family, and nationality—as part of their human rights.

Curated by Emma Hinton (The Light Library) and Lizzy Lockhart (Save the Children NZ), the poem weaves the voices of children into one shared expression: *identity is our right to be ourselves.*

The Light Library
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