# Supporting school issues through a whole-school approach

# Successful relationships

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| Police district | School name | School demographics | Submitted by |
| Auckland | Name withheld | Secondary  Decile band 1–3 | Const. C. Warwick-Ching  School Community Officer |

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| Summary | Encouraging healthy relationships through education, with the goal of reducing family violence |
| Issue | A high percentage of family violence in the students’ home environments. |
| Identification and prioritisation | The issue was identified to the school through anecdotal information and the high number of students who approached staff about it. At the school’s request, Police and the school met and discussed the issue. |
| Short-term goal | That students know what family violence is, what can be done to stop it, and where to turn for help. |
| Long-term goal | To improve students’ family relationships by:   * whatever the family’s culture, changing the perception that family violence is acceptable * reinforcing that it's okay to seek help.   Measurement would be through an evaluation form for students at the end of the intervention, discussions with students involved to gauge if their attitudes have changed, and also seeking opinion of the teachers involved. |
| Prevention activities | Activities that occurred within a whole-school approach included:  School ethos and environment   * The school’s supportive and caring Catholic ethos combined well with Police and outside agencies. School staff diligently and devotedly implemented the planned strategies. * Throughout all student interactions, the staff and outside agencies ensured that there was a warm, non-judgemental atmosphere in which all participants could share experiences and partake in scenarios in an exceedingly safe environment. * LOGOS, a Marist youth development organisation against family violence, was the main partner, along with Police.   Community connections   * The school was supported by the Catholic community, in particular Catholic Social Services. * CYF and PRIDE (Tongan Mentoring) collaborated with and assisted the school in an ongoing advisory role. * LOGOS has been a main partner, along with Police and teaching staff. * Parents and caregivers were contacted and encouraged to take part in student homework activities so that they could improve their parenting skills and understand the reasoning behind the intervention.   Curriculum teaching and learning   * Classroom education involved activities such as team building and scenarios of realistic confrontational situations to help students develop strategies for coping with all areas of family violence, from being a victim to supporting friends and family who are victims. * Police, teaching staff and specially trained staff from LOGOS liaised together and interacted with students, not just in a teaching capacity but also as role models. * Outdoor team-building activities aimed to encourage students to trust their peers and realise that they could turn to friends for help and support in family violence situations |
| Impact | A survey conducted after the intervention aimed to establish whether students had a better understanding of how a relationship should be and how to deal with relationship issues. The survey showed a marked improvement in students’ confidence and understanding of what a healthy relationship should be like, that support from family and peers is invaluable, and how to deal with a confrontational situation without resorting to violence.  It is not possible to assess the long-term impact of this intervention in one year, but both the SCO and school will conduct student surveys in 2016 to reassess the effect. |
| Next steps | Police and outside agencies will continue working closely with the school next year to keep the momentum of the intervention, and to introduce new students to the concepts. |
| Obstacles | No obstacles were encountered this year. |
| Improvements | The intervention went very smoothly, with positive feedback from the students. |
| Conclusion | Time will tell, but so far the results seem very positive! |