



Upper Hutt council is supporting a rangatahi leadership project addressing family violence



National campaign booklets are regionalised by including local personalities and contact details for agencies dealing with family violence. Mayor Bob Simcock featured in the Hamilton booklet.

MAYORS SAY IT'S NOT OK

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN RAISING AWARENESS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND MAKING NEW ZEALAND A SAFER PLACE.

Many councils and mayors are already involved in work that is making a difference in their communities and there is a growing willingness from more councils across New Zealand to get involved.

In April this year Waitakere City Council, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development, hosted a one-day, national forum looking at ways local government can help prevent family violence. The forum was a chance for mayors, councillors, council chief executives and staff to highlight initiatives already underway, share ideas and develop new partnerships.

The forum was a valuable exercise that resulted in the President of Local Government New Zealand, Lawrence Yule, making family violence a subject for discussion at this year's LGNZ conference.

The following examples and findings illustrate the range of work already underway and provide a starting point for others who want to get involved.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Develop partnerships with sports and business leaders in your community
- Front local family violence campaigns
- Front community events
- Consider ways to support family violence prevention work by providing Council resources such as printing or photocopying
- Link Council websites to family violence prevention websites
- Display the It's not OK message in everyday spaces in your community such as pools and libraries

Some campaign examples: slogans on rubbish bags, family violence prevention messages on buses, street flags, violence free supermarkets, slogans on letterboxes.

CAMPAIGN SUPPORT FOR COUNCILS

The Campaign for Action on Family Violence – the It's not OK campaign – is supporting many councils in their work on family violence.

The It's not OK Campaign is a long term programme to change attitudes and behaviour. The campaign can help councils by providing resources, information and advice.

Campaign work is implemented by the Ministry of Social development in association with the Families Commission.

CONTACT US

Contact the campaign team at areyouok@msd.govt.nz and visit the website www.areyouok.org.nz for more information.

Or Contact:

Sue Bidrose, Director of Community Wellbeing, Waitakere City Council
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WAITAKERE LEADING THE WAY

In 2007 Waitakere Mayor Bob Harvey launched the Mayoral Taskforce on Family Violence which he co-chairs with Maori Party MP and local kaumatua Dr Pita Sharples.



WHITE RIBBON DAY

Waitakere City Council works with other agencies to lead the annual White Ribbon day march in Waitakere. In 2008, 800 people marched under the banner, Family Violence - It's Not OK in Waitakere. The march attracts people from all ages, cultures and backgrounds.

The taskforce consists of regional and national leaders committed to supporting the people and agencies working to reduce and prevent family violence in Waitakere. Their vision is that all families and whānau in Waitakere have healthy, respectful and stable relationships, free from violence.

The taskforce is not an operational group. The leaders act as advocates and champions to aid networking, cooperation and partnering. Taskforce members provide the expertise of their agencies in support of family violence services and workers in Waitakere.

The taskforce is supported by a Maori Roopu and a local advisory group. Both play a key role as the bridge between the taskforce and the people and agencies working in family violence prevention and intervention. They also inform the taskforce of key issues, gaps and opportunities that exist in Waitakere.

Family Violence has been a priority for Waitakere City Council and a feature of the council's community wellbeing strategy and crime prevention plan for some time. Under the First Call for Children Policy, Waitakere City Council has pledged Waitakere will be a city where children and youth are free from violence.



'IT'S NOT OK' BILLBOARD CAMPAIGN

Launched in 2007, the Waitakere It's Not OK billboards led the localisation of the national campaign.

Waitakere billboards have featured 'famous westies' such as Michael Jones, Vai'iga "Inga" Tuigamala, Robyn Malcolm, Pio Terei and Mayor Bob Harvey as well as 'ordinary' residents.

Currently several generations of the Wehi whānau, the family behind New Zealand's premier kapa haka group Te Waka Huia appear on the latest billboard in Henderson.

"This is a really important issue to us as a family and a message we have been talking about through our performances for some time," says Henderson resident Ngapo Wehi who along with wife Pimia are leaders of Te Waka Huia.

"We want to send a strong message to our people that it is OK to ask for help. Don't sit and suffer or watch someone else suffer. Do something, tell someone and ask for help."

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HAMILTON KICKS OFF WITH CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN

Hamilton City Council targeted the stressful time leading up to Christmas in 2008 to launch its version of the It's not OK campaign.

Working with the campaign team in Wellington, the council developed a range of billboards promoting violence free messages. These featured local personalities including Mayor Bob Simcock and former All Black lock, Keith Robinson. The billboards were displayed in highly visible locations across the city.

About 5000 mini booklets were also handed out at the city's Santa parade. The booklets provide information, advice and contact details for providers of family violence prevention services in the Hamilton area. Coasters and posters were also developed and distributed in cafes, pubs and clubs across the city.

The council campaign is designed to complement and support existing local networks and actions.

Stage Two of the Hamilton campaign is focusing on children and young people and older people. The desired outcome is always to create a city where child abuse – or the abuse of older people – is not tolerated. This is achieved by taking a strong stance on a critical issue by giving a cohesive, local dimension to the national campaign.



HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL STRESSES THE VALUE OF USING EXISTING RESOURCES:

- Some of our best spokespeople are our council staff
- Why re-invent the wheel
- Existing networks and relationships are quickly mobilised
- Expert knowledge is never far away
- Council facilities are great communication tools.



IT IS
OK TO ASK
FOR
HELP



A Rotorua Christmas Parade float actively promoted positive messages about family violence.



Street banners with positive messages around Family Violence were painted by families and community agencies, and hung in the Rotorua CBD.



Christchurch City Council supports initiatives like this city bus.

TODDLER'S DEATH PROMPTS CITY'S ACTION PLAN

“Child abuse is not just a Rotorua problem. It's a national one. It can happen anywhere.”

The death of a young child as a result of violent injuries inflicted in her home prompted the development of a plan to make a city safer for all its families.

The Rotorua Safe Families Action Plan is about preventing violence in families, ensuring effective and appropriate services are available and accessible to all and achieving a coordinated response to situations of violence in families.

The plan is a result of a community discussion process when concern about family violence was at a peak following the death of Rotorua toddler Nia Glassie.

After a great deal of work and commitment to the project by many community stakeholders, the Action Plan was launched by Mayor Kevin Winters. It provides a framework for the community to address all aspects of violence by involving stakeholders from across sectors, working together in a co-ordinated way.

The Plan uses a community action approach, creating opportunities for all community stakeholders to contribute to planning and implementing work.

It involves four work streams:

1. Community awareness raising
2. Supporting community led neighbourhood initiatives
3. Improving support services for people affected by violence
4. Improving intervention options by statutory agencies

LEARNINGS FROM ROTORUA:

- Be responsive when the opportunity arises
- It's about people, not just funding – people make it happen
- Manage the shared space – co-ordination is important
- Every community is different and will do things differently
- Don't wait until you've got it right to get started

“
IT'S NOT OK TO
LOOK THE OTHER
WAY AND SAY
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PROBLEM”



Waimakariri Mayor Ron Keating takes a lead in events addressing family violence.



Hauraki District Council has taken a leadership role in a community wide plan for reducing and preventing family violence



Many councils like Tauranga have Safe City accreditation and family violence is a key component.

