



## 'It's not OK' Campaign Community Evaluation Project

# CASE STUDY 6: PAEROA

Paeroa has a longstanding commitment to violence prevention and intervention campaigns. Initially, this arose in 2001 with the development of the Family Violence Prevention Network, a loose collective of family violence-related agencies. The network was solidified with the advent of Family Violence Interagency Response System (FVIARS) in 2007 and the launch of the 'It's not OK' Campaign in 2008 which is when the network first began engaging in primary prevention activities.

A previous campaign in neighbouring Waihi informed the development of the Paeroa Campaign. Of note, Paeroa's Family Violence Coordinator and the Population Health Waikato District Health Board Health Promoter, co-leaders of the Paeroa Campaign, were also group members of the Waihi Campaign. Through this membership, the two staff members were exposed to a number of key lessons that were taken and adopted for the Paeroa Campaign. Namely, the importance of community champions and the need for training and support of those champions.

## INTERVENTIONS

'It's not OK' Campaign-related interventions occurred over two time periods. Between 2008 and 2010 the Campaign focused on raising awareness. This included media campaigns (local newspaper, radio and newsletters), posters, billboards and the development of an 'It's not OK' Campaign branded gazebo for use in community-based events. Coinciding with these efforts, the Hauraki District Council ratified a family violence policy. In hindsight, participants stressed that this stage was fundamental to the Campaign's second phase rollout.

Next, in 2011, the Paeroa Campaign was launched. The Campaign focused on the reduction of alcohol-fuelled family violence in Paeroa and was launched after approximately 12-months of intensive community consultation, training and planning. Key to the success of the Campaign was the identification and training of 26 community champions from the following identified sub-communities:

- schools;
- sports;
- church communities;
- farming communities;
- business communities;
- youth;
- Māori / marae;
- arts;
- Hauraki District Council; and,
- media.

The following specific Campaign related interventions were developed and implemented in the community.

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### KEY INTERVENTIONS

**Awareness raising** – branding, billboards (localised with community representatives), logos on sporting uniforms and sporting merchandise and resources, with a specific focus on teams that travel long-distances, Facebook, information through the local newspaper, and a gazebo was commissioned

with 'It's not OK' Campaign branding. The gazebo acted as a protective covering for events with a secondary purpose of raising awareness and reinforcing key messages. Importantly the resources were viewed as indispensable. In particular, localised resources were highly valued.

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**Local champions** – a central component of the Paeroa Campaign was the identification, training and promotion of 26 community champions. Champions were identified to reflect the diverse nature of Paeroa's communities as well as targeted neighbourhoods. Initially, champions were promoted through billboards but this extended to posters and having an extensive presence at community events.

## IDENTIFIED IMPACTS

Participants stressed that impacts arising out of the Campaign have been incremental and generally occurred on a small scale. These changes, however, have been appreciated as they qualitatively demonstrate a major shift in cultural attitudes and behaviours associated with non-violence.

### 1. Increased awareness and message infiltration

All participants stated that the national 'It's not OK' Campaign has resulted in a high degree of awareness and knowledge of family violence. Further, the local Campaign had raised awareness of how support can be accessed.

*People are now automatically thinking about family violence. It has become normalised. (Paeroa, Prevention Coordinator #1)*

*People in the community know there are people they can go to for support. (Paeroa, Champion #3)*

In addition, key Campaign messages were reported as having become entrenched within the various communities. This was evidenced by the adoption of Campaign messages, within common vernacular, across multiple levels of the various communities.

### 2. Attitude change and increased prosocial behaviours

The Campaign was reported to have positively impacted on people's knowledge of family violence as well as decreasing incidents of antisocial behaviour and contributing to a number of positive changes in communities and workplaces.

#### Increased knowledge of family violence

Multiple reports were provided of the national Campaign and local initiatives leading to an increased understanding of family violence and an increased incidence of children, families and social service providers engaging in family violence discussions. Importantly, these discussions had a cumulative influence and inspired further discussions.

*There is a notable wider understanding of family violence. This is community wide. (Paeroa, Champion #2)*

*There is less shame disclosing family violence. I've seen this across generations. Older people, who once would never disclose are talking about family violence now. (Paeroa, Working Group representative #1)*

### **Decreased antisocial behaviour**

Multiple reports of reduced antisocial behaviour were provided. School students reported that it is now uncommon for male students to intimidate female students sexually. In the wider youth community, extending outside of schools, a notable decrease in physical violence was reported.

*There has been a decrease in youth violence. It has really quietened now. Where there is violence it is most likely coming from kids who are new to the area. (Paeroa, Champion #6)*

Families, once regarded as intergenerationally dysfunctional, and at-risk of continued family violence, were reported to have an increased awareness of family violence and had taken actions to refrain from family violence and adopt positive family dynamics. This was often linked to self-referrals to alcohol and other drug treatment.

Multiple reports were provided of people who had a history of assault choosing to engage in non-violence in conflict situations. Across the community, groups that had once been perceived as conservative, and resistant to discussions involving family violence, had demonstrated positive attitude shifts and had requested involvement with the Campaign.

### **Changes in wider community culture**

The Campaign was discussed as having provided a vehicle for wide-reaching attitude and behaviour change. Youth who had participated in a variety of awareness raising activities were described as having experienced insights into family violence. Further, and perhaps more importantly, feedback provided by youth over the last year highlighted a determination to end negative cycles of intergenerational dysfunction.

In addition, participants unanimously reported a significant decrease in public violence.

*There has been a drop in people arguing on the streets. You don't see young people bullying on the street anymore. (Paeroa, Champion #4)*

*Much of violence has gone. Before you would walk down the street and you would see women fighting in the street. And they would be arguing about their children like, "How dare you tell my children not to do something". All of that has stopped. (Paeroa, Champion #4)*

While the Campaign and the various awareness and behaviour change strategies were believed to have led to decreased public violence and conflict, the role of champions was directly traced to reduced violence.

*What's interesting about the Campaign is that people recognise me. So if I'm walking up the street and there is a bit of a conflict, people see me and they scatter. (Paeroa, Champion #4)*

*I had a young mum come up and ask me for help. (Paeroa, Champion #5)*

*The champions have turned into walking billboards. (Paeroa, Champion #2)*

Further, the role of champions, as members of the community, was linked to sustained behaviour change.

*People recognise me, and as soon as they see me they walk away. (Paeroa, Champion #4)*

### **Changes to organisational culture**

Behaviour and attitude change also occurred in a variety of organisations. The local Campaign has supported a number of social service providers, and some employers, to develop and implement non-violence policies.

### **3. Inspired to intervene**

A small but growing movement of community-based family violence interventions was directly linked to the Campaign. Specifically, individuals discussed situations in which they or another party had intervened in family violence situations.

In addition, multiple reports were provided where community champions had been asked to intervene in family violence situations. Four champions reported that they had been approached on numerous occasions about family violence issues and had referred these cases onto the Family Violence Coordinator. In other situations, champions had acted as an information and referral source.

*One day I was in my tyre shop and this woman drove up really fast and ran out of her car. She had seen my face on a poster and ran in saying she needed to be protected from her husband. (Paeroa, Champion #2)*

### **4. Community responsiveness and ownership**

Community responsiveness and ownership was cited as a primary source of evidence that the Campaign has had a major community impact. The Paeroa Campaign was discussed as quintessentially community-owned. This was underscored by the role of champions who represented a diverse cross-section of the community. In addition, the Council adopted a strong family violence leadership role through the introduction of a family violence policy and by implementing policies to reduce the number of off-licence premises and restrict gambling. Other aspects of community ownership included the local high school's involvement with the Campaign through the nomination and support of senior students as champions, local businesses in-kind support of the Campaign and sports clubs' growing commitment to being violence free.

### **5. Statutory intervention**

Police and Child Youth and Family participants reported increases in family violence notifications, lower thresholds for the reporting family violence-related behaviours (an increase in minor offences being reported) and an increase in those coming forward with a first-time notification. Further, an increase in strangers reporting a family violence incident was noted.

*The 2013 statistics show the lowest family violence rate on record for the period between Christmas and New Year. There were four notifications over that period compared to average of 20 for preceding years. (Paeroa, Police representative #1)*

Further, participants linked an increase in self-referrals directly to the increased awareness arising from the Campaign. This was especially noted in relation to self-referrals to general parenting programmes.

## **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

Participants were asked to identify critical success factors integral to the local Campaign's success. Critical success factors included: local leadership, the importance of a dedicated coordinator, the role of a planning Working Group, community responsiveness, community champions, the national 'It's not OK' Campaign and the support provided by the national 'It's not OK' team.

### **1. Leadership**

The success of Paeroa's 'It's not OK' Campaign was attributed to four tiers of leadership. Participants strongly believed that this model was the most successful approach to creating sustainable change.

First, the Mayor was attributed with sanctioning an initial response to family violence and children witnessing the combination of alcohol use and violence in the home. Importantly, throughout the course of the Campaign, the Mayor has had a strong presence at events and has been a strong supporter of non-violence initiatives.

*The Mayor's leadership was essential. He positively embraced the need for the Campaign and led the Council accordingly. His commitment was real. He has turned up to all our events and has made significant financial contributions. (Paeroa, Family Violence Coordinator)*

Next, the Paeroa 'It's not OK' Campaign Working Group, comprising community leaders, met over a 12-month period to plan the Paeroa Campaign. This process involved determining the Campaign's focus and identifying and developing interventions.

The local Family Violence Coordinator and the Population Health Waikato District Health Board Health Promoter were highly regarded as leading local initiatives. Whereas the Mayor endorsed change from a political standpoint, the Family Violence Coordinator and the Health Promoter provided much needed organisation, community consultation and energy across the many initiatives. Finally, within aspects of the local community, family violence champions acted in a fourth level of leadership. In each of these designated communities of interest, champions provided leadership in the form of family violence prevention and intervention, a source of referral and, in many cases, crisis support. Importantly, the local champions, whilst engaging in leadership, additionally had a strong role influencing change in their various communities.

## 2. Dedicated coordinator

The Family Violence Coordinator role, with a single preventative Campaign focus, was identified as critical to the Campaign's success as the Coordinator was able to solely focus on community engagement, planning and local Campaign implementation. The single coordination focus contrasts with some other case study sites where the Coordinator's dual prevention and case management responsibilities resulted in a reduced amount of time the Coordinator could dedicate to Campaign related activities.

*Every time I hear of family violence coordinators who do both, network coordinators, when they say they do FVIARS too, the next thing they say is that I wish I had more time to do what you do. (Paeroa, Family Violence Coordinator)*

*I am a Family Violence Coordinator because I coordinate the network. I don't do case work or FVIARS. It is hugely important. When I started, FVIARS took up four days a week but that didn't leave any time for prevention activities. The Campaign is about networking. It is about constantly selling the Campaign. It is about being a salesperson for social change. I didn't have the energy or the time to go from case management perspectives to broader social change. If you want to change behaviours and social norms, pre-abuse, that is a completely different job. You need different skills and resources and a different focus. (Paeroa, Family Violence Coordinator)*

## 3. Planning and community collaboration

The Paeroa 'It's not OK' Campaign Working Group was identified as essential to the local Campaign's success. Integral to this success was a 12-month planning process that identified the focus of the local Campaign but, equally important, the Working Group's composition, of diverse community representatives led to a high degree of community representation and ownership.

## 4. Community responsiveness

In 2012, Jordan Voudrais, a local business owner was murdered. Participants identified Jordan's murder as a seminal event that rallied the community and provided an impetus to the local Campaign.

*We had a murder in our town. It pulled the community closer together and we decided we wanted this to be a safe place to live. (Paeroa, Working Group representative #1)*

## 5. Community champions

The role of champions, while providing the community with local endorsement, was also associated with crime prevention and intervention outcomes. Much of this success was associated with the careful decision-making that led to the selection of a wide cross-section of champions; people who resonated with those in the communities they represented. As a consequence, champions were seen to have an extensive reach based on an authenticity of relationships. It was this authenticity, derived from community connections, that was believed to result in early intervention and prevention.

*X is rough as guts. He was a big gang member and turned his life around. He's made a huge difference on his street. He connects with everyone in his community and he's made sure the Campaign messaging is out there and is right there to support and intervene when required. (Paeroa, Working Group representative #2)*

## **6. The national 'It's not OK' Campaign**

The national 'It's not OK' Campaign was described as providing a vital framework to guide the area's family violence prevention and intervention strategies.

*The Campaign's branding is powerful. People identify with the Campaign nationwide. This is the golden arches of family violence. (Paeroa, Champion #1)*

The national Campaign was also appreciated for providing an opportunity to build upon consistent national messages at a local level. In this sense, the 'It's not OK' Campaign was described as providing a vital framework to guide Paeroa's non-violence efforts.

*The national Campaign has provided a national framework to hang our local initiatives on. It provided a scaffolding for us to build upon. (Paeroa, Family Violence Coordinator)*

*The fact that the Campaign is nationally coordinated means that there is a consistent anchor point that we are tied to. (Paeroa, Champion #2)*

The Campaign was reported to have been embraced, nationally and locally, because of the clarity and tone of its' messaging. Further, the Campaign was seen as hugely successful because it consistently encouraged communities to develop their own non-violence, Campaign related, strategies.

## **7. Support provided by the national 'It's not OK' team**

The national Campaign team was lauded for their provision of advice and support.

*The team has always been there. They have always been a phone call away. (Paeroa, Family Violence Coordinator)*

Especially appreciated was the provision of strategic advice and the focus the Campaign team brought to local initiatives.

*The team were amazing. We would take our initial thoughts around messages to the team and they worked with us to build our capacity and shape our messages. Their expertise was amazing. (Paeroa, Family Violence Coordinator)*

The provision of 'It's not OK' Campaign resourcing was highly valued. While the funding was relatively small, it was greatly appreciated given the various agencies' low operational budgets and time it would take for local resources to be developed locally. The awareness related activities would not have been possible without this funding. Participants acknowledged that without this funding opportunities would have been lost to link local initiatives with the national 'It's not OK' Campaign branding which would have severely hindered audience resonance and uptake. As

such, the complementary national and local branding meant that a call to non-violence occurred at a local level.

Further, Campaign resources were highly appreciated as they removed burden from communities to develop their own resources whilst providing an opportunity to provide a local stamp on the national Campaign merchandise and resources.

## **BARRIERS TO ON-GOING SUCCESS**

Insufficient funding was raised as a primary barrier to the Campaign's on-going success. This barrier was understood within an environment of intergenerational violence and family dysfunction that will require long-term support to achieve the required changes. As such, funding was identified as requirement to the development and implementation of strategies to achieve significant shifts in culture.

Next, a lack of assurance surrounding the Family Violence Coordinator position was raised as a barrier. Intermittent funding was associated with an inability to plan long-term.

*The funding for Family Violence Coordinators runs out on June 30, 2015. So we are working hell for leather because we don't know if we are going to be around after then. (Paeroa, Working Group representative #3)*

Finally, a scarcity of adequate referral, support and intervention services was raised as a primary concern. Importantly, participants acknowledged that the Campaign has resulted in increased awareness and referrals for support and intervention. While the Campaign has resulted in increased awareness and referrals for support and intervention, the community has struggled to meet these increased demands.

This was especially frustrating given increased family violence notifications have not coincided with increased service related funding. Specifically, the need for a local safe house and timely access to alcohol and other drug (AOD) related services were raised.



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