

Kiwi Tahī

OVERVIEW

Kiwi Tahī is an early intervention and prevention programme specifically focussing on 8 – 12 year olds considered highly vulnerable due to risk factors and/or negative associations.

Kiwi Tahī currently works in collaboration with Police Youth Services to identify 8 -12 year olds demonstrating a series of indicators and risk factors associated to offending behaviour. Research shows that early intervention and positive engagement plays a significant role in preventing youth offending and anti-social behaviour during impressionable years.

Most youth offenders that move into the Youth Justice system drop out of a formal educational setting by intermediate age, but demonstrated these disengagement signals much earlier. This is a crucial stage in their overall development and need to re-engage the disengaged to keep them connected socially and academically.

Kiwi Tahī is community-based, involves the whole family to help support and strengthen relationships, provide positive role modelling and enhance life skill development.

HOW KIWI TAHI WORKS:

The programme provides positive role models for participants and their parent/caregivers, supports healthy relationships, teaches life skills that strengthens self, and provides access to community services and support.

The 26 week programme focusses on life skill development aimed at increasing protective factors. (Safeguards that promote resiliency and enhance a young person's ability to make better decisions.)

Life skill modules:

- Strengthen Self – Individual, Family, Culture
- Negative Peer Pressure and Gang influence
- Negative impact of Alcohol and Methamphetamine
- Nga Pou Whaioranga (Health and Well-being)
- Use STARS (cognitive behaviour therapy tool) to resolve situations

Engagement is usually no less than 2 afternoons per week (pick up from school) + every day during the school holidays. Staff also work in collaboration with the schools to address any truancy or behavioural issues and are able to provide support throughout the day when required.

“Kiwi Tahī was my sanctuary, it was a programme about me and not my brothers. I felt special and included, finally something for me. The programme was about encouraging me to believe in myself, encourage good social skills, develop positive relationships and be independent.”

Q'wy, Kiwi Tahī Participant



Kiwi Tahī is underpinned by this whakatauki (proverb):

Whāngai Ka Tupu Ka Puāwai
That Which is Nurtured, Blossoms then Grows

WHY KIWI TAHI?

Kiwi Tahi's aim is for participants to;

- Increase pro-social behaviour, emotional regulation, interpersonal skills, school engagement and community connectedness.

Whānau willing to engage will have an opportunity to strengthen family relationships, increase life skill knowledge, access community supports and support positive change.

KIWI TAHI RESEARCH:

A Pilot was funded in partnership with a Community Funder and Ministry Social Development in 2015 and 2016. A mixed model evaluation (quantitative and qualitative) was administered through the Graeme Dingle Foundation.

Participants demonstrated low confidence, internalised behaviours (withdrawing from family) and externalised anti-social behaviours (fighting and truancy). The study showed evidence of increased pro-social behaviour, emotional regulation, positive thinking, interpersonal skills and school attendance. They also developed positive life goals and envisioned a more positive future.

KIWI TAHI HISTORY:

In 2001 Stephen Boxer MNZM founded the MYND programme which services the Auckland region. MYND targets high risk youth offenders and aims to reduce re-offending rates and stop young people becoming stuck in the youth justice system.

In 2010 Stephen observed that the family names of the young people who were being referred to MYND kept recurring. He concluded that this was because siblings or associates from the same families were becoming involved in offending behaviour.

In part, this was due to siblings or young people following their brothers/sisters/cousins into the youth justice system because they were exposed to similar environmental and family-based risk factors. In addition, the young people were also exposed at an early age to the anti-social and offending behaviour of their older brothers/sisters/cousins, who were often the most significant role model/s in their life. It was also observed that the severity of the offending was increasing and at an earlier age.

Kiwi Tahi is a programme under the governance of the Graeme Dingle Foundation.

“I can confirm that the Police here in Counties Manukau West (Otahuhu, Mangere and Papatoetoe) have seen a significant decrease in youth activity in and around the Mangere Town centre. What is also evident is that those on the programme are not frequenting the town centre at all – something that is creating a “diffusion of benefits” effect in other areas within a close proximity to the Mangere Town centre. I can certainly see the benefits of the programme and would like to see the programme continue here in Counties Manukau West.”

Senior Sgt Steve Smith



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