



# **Preventing Sexual Violence:**

## **A Stocktake of Tauwi & Bicultural Primary Prevention Activities 2013:**

### **Executive Summary**

**Tauwi Prevention Project,  
Tauwi Caucus of TOAH-NNEST**

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Te Ohaakii a Hine - National Network Ending Sexual Violence Together

This summary comes from the full report **Preventing Sexual Violence: A Stocktake of Tauwi & Bicultural Primary Prevention Activities 2013**. The full report is available from the Tauwi Prevention Project at [tauwiprevention@toah-nnest.org.nz](mailto:tauwiprevention@toah-nnest.org.nz)

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# Executive Summary

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In 2011 with funding from the Ministry of Justice, Te Ohaakii a Hine – National Network Ending Sexual Violence Together (TOAH-NNEST) established two parallel primary prevention projects, for Ngā Kaitiaki Mauri and Tauwi Caucus. One key outcome area for Tauwi Caucus was completing a national stocktake of community groups and state sector agencies delivering or participating in any kind of primary prevention of sexual violence in Tauwi and Bicultural communities.<sup>1</sup> The field of “primary prevention” is relatively young, with specific funding in New Zealand in place for just four years from the Ministry of Justice, though it builds on decades of prevention knowledge held predominantly by the specialist sexual violence sector.

This national stocktake was completed in 2012 by Tauwi Caucus. The stocktake survey defined primary prevention of sexual violence as:

*“Activities that seek to prevent sexual violence before it occurs by educating people about the issue of sexual violence and by promoting safe and respectful environments, behaviours and social norms.”*

This report from the Tauwi Caucus of TOAH-NNEST summarises data gained from the stocktake survey, begun by 52 respondents. Forty-four respondents answered a majority of questions. The analysis in the report reflects only these 44 “active” responses.

## **Led by the community sector**

Overall the stocktake shows the majority of sexual violence prevention activities are being carried out by the community sector (84% of active responses), and in particular, specialist sexual violence agencies. This pattern continues with primary prevention programmes, defined in the stocktake survey as *“a set of planned and coordinated activities undertaken by your organisation to prevent sexual violence.”* Of the 25 primary prevention programmes delivered within Tauwi and Bicultural communities, 23 are delivered by community agencies. New Zealand Police and the Ministry of Social Development deliver one primary prevention programme each.<sup>2</sup>

## **...with limited capacity**

There are 25 full-time members of staff from the community sector working in the primary prevention of sexual violence in New Zealand. Most agencies have one prevention staff member. Funding and resources were described as the most serious barriers to effective prevention for the vast majority of community respondents, as agencies struggled to sustain prevention activities in a funding environment in which pilot projects were funded but on-going programme delivery was not. Respondents wished to employ more staff focussed on primary prevention in order to meet community need; to develop appropriate resources and properly evaluate prevention work to ensure it is effective, and to grow capacity and skills. The majority of community agencies reported not having the resources to develop shared understandings of prevention within their communities, and not being able to respond to requests for prevention activities and programmes.

## **Strong understanding of social norms change**

The knowledge within the sector is reflected by the strong understanding of the need for social change, education, community safety, and promoting strengths based approaches to underpin primary prevention activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Kaupapa Māori activities were not included as these are covered by Ngā Kaitiaki Mauri within TOAH-NNEST.

<sup>2</sup> The New Zealand Police deliver *Keeping Ourselves Safe* and the Ministry of Social Development deliver the *It's Not OK* social norms campaign focussed on family violence. *It's Not OK* does not feature explicit messages about sexual violence. Both have national coverage and capacity.

Respondents discussed community based prevention efforts to shift social norms which support and enable sexual violence:

*"We believe that rape arises out of unequal power relations within our society, thus preventing rape is not only about giving individuals skills to negotiate ethical sex it is about addressing the wider social inequalities between men and women that allow rape to happen."*

Towards social norms which enable and support respectful, equitable relationships:

*"[We] aim to have a sex positive approach and we openly discuss aspects of healthy sexual relationships no matter what your gender or sexuality identity is. In our environment we have sexual violence prevention, domestic violence prevention, sexual health promotion, healthy relationship posters and fliers throughout our office. We actively engage in discussion with youth to promote healthy sexual relationships and support clients to seek relevant referral when any disclosure occurs."*

*"A couple of years ago, we were working with a local youth group - including young leaders - around "respectful sexuality". We had several sessions to explore positive sexuality, looking after friends and preventing sexual violence. The response from the young people was positive, and working from a prevention level was also positive and different from our usual work."*

### **Mixture of prevention activities**

Many agencies involved in sexual violence prevention provide a mixture of prevention activities – including primary prevention (influencing social norms at a population level); secondary prevention (working with at risk groups) and tertiary prevention (preventing re-victimisation). Most respondent agencies are interested in or undertaking a wide range of primary prevention activities, including sexual violence education, public policy advocacy, public sexual violence awareness raising activities and delivering programmes. Within current resource levels there is a risk of agencies being stretched too thinly, particularly when they are also involved in other kinds of prevention.

### **Focus on raising awareness rather than changing behaviour**

The most common sexual violence prevention activity is sexual violence education to provide information about local services; the characteristics, impacts and prevalence of sexual violence; and processes to deal with disclosures.

The need for providing information may reflect low knowledge about sexual violence in many communities in New Zealand, particularly for areas without specialist sexual violence services. Raising awareness of sexual violence is also seen as important for communities or groups for whom discussing sexual violence was relatively new (queer communities, male survivors, some ethnic minority communities). However, primary prevention offers the chance to develop skills, change behaviours, social norms and systems in ways that prevent sexual violence and change rape culture.

### **Need for national leadership**

Respondents reported a national sexual violence prevention strategy would help them address barriers to effective prevention, as would collaborative relationships on a national level which could support and replicate relationships at a local level. There was also significant interest in developing shared resources nationally – programmes, activities, public awareness campaigns, evaluation tools and programmes for specific community groups – to avoid every agency having to reinvent the wheel. The greatest interest in future prevention activities was in public awareness campaigns.

## **...and cultural diversity**

Respondents, particularly those from the community sector, are unlikely to be working with specific communities or cultural groups on sexual violence prevention strategies or programmes. This is concerning in terms of developing the most effective cultural responses to preventing sexual violence. In particular, over one third of respondents have no partnerships or relationships with faith communities, LGBT/queer groups, student organisations, disabilities groups, polytechnic/universities and culturally specific communities.

Respondents also reported a lack of sexual violence prevention materials for specific communities (bicultural groups, cultural communities, languages other than English, oral or non-literacy based, queer and trans\*, child friendly and youth friendly).

Prevention programmes are available to the general population and cater for diversity through a number of strategies including using inclusive images, examples and case studies; delivery by facilitators of diverse ages, ethnicities, sexualities and genders; and seeking cultural advice.

## **Twenty-five primary prevention programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand**

The survey showed 14 community organisations deliver 23 programmes, and two Government agencies deliver one programme each. Three programmes are social norms campaigns delivered community wide. The remaining 22 programmes are delivered by facilitators to specific audiences, mostly specific to a city, town or region. Eight programmes are available nationally, but uptake is patchy and dependent on local relationships.

Most programmes are delivered over three sessions or less. The most common programme length (8 programmes) is just one session. This does not reflect best practice, which suggests longer duration programmes are more effective in promoting behaviour change.

Most programmes have been delivered less than 20 times in the last year (16). Of the seven respondents who delivered programmes more than 50 times, two were Government agencies. Slightly fewer than 26,000 people attended a sexual violence prevention programme in the previous year. Nearly half of participants attended one programme. The median number of attendees per programme was 210.

The majority of programmes (18) target teenagers and just six programmes work with children under the age of 12. The most popular venues for sexual violence prevention programmes are educational settings, from early childhood centres and kohanga reo through to universities/polytechnics.

Respondents use a wide variety of programme materials, including visual, written, activities and discussions and workshops. Staff members delivering sexual violence prevention programmes receive a mixture of internal and external training, including training in dealing with disclosures.

## **Significant challenges in evaluating primary prevention effectively**

Publically available evaluation of existing prevention activities is limited. This is concerning for the growth of best practice in sexual violence prevention in New Zealand. Most respondents who deliver programmes self-evaluate (19 programmes), some combining with outside evaluation. Evaluations include a variety of methods, with observations and pre and post surveys the most popular.

Evaluations are usually based on participant satisfaction (all respondents) rather than behavioural intent (6 respondents) or actual behaviours (4 respondents). Respondents also less frequently measure sexual violence knowledge and attitudes. Research indicates that moving to measure behavioural intent and actual behaviours is important to prevent sexual violence.

## Recommendations and looking to the future

The specialist sexual violence sector has developed a range of primary prevention activities and programmes from within a very limited resource base. There is significant interest in further developing shared understandings of primary prevention and shared resources from a national perspective which can be rolled out around the country. Pockets of local good practice in a range of prevention activities exist, but there is no national consistency.

Prevention programmes mostly focus on educational settings, targeting teenagers. A small number of programmes are specific to preventing child sexual abuse. Developing national consistency in messages young people are receiving in schools or other places of learning about respectful relating including consent must be a priority in future prevention planning.

There are a wide range of community stakeholders with whom other partnerships exist but no current prevention activities or programmes are taking place, including health networks, education providers, New Zealand Police and child protection agencies. Training, capacity building and developing institutional prevention responses in these professional settings will result in effective sexual violence prevention.

Expanding organisational training in bystander interventions and dealing with disclosures will build on existing pockets of local good practice and ensure more workplaces, community based settings such as sports and faith-based groups, and social settings become skilled in preventing sexual violence.

The approach to preventing sexual violence in diverse cultural communities is currently one of adapting programme content to cater for diversity. This approach in the context of limited resources is inventive and very characteristic of New Zealand. However, in an ideally resourced situation, both approaches – culturally specific programming and inclusive programmes – would be utilised to promote cultural safety and develop the most effective prevention activities.

Prevention activities must move from solely raising awareness of sexual violence to shift social norms and systems and change behaviour. Well-resourced sexual violence primary prevention would:

1. Develop community understandings and reach agreement about desired prevention activities
2. Plan and take action to promote respectful social norms around gender, race, sexuality, disability and age – with particular attention to sexual relating and sexual safety
3. Implement activities which promote respectful social norms
4. Implement policies and institutional processes which promote respectful social norms
5. Monitor and evaluate impacts of actions in terms of behavioural intent and behaviour change
6. Change activities as required based on evaluation feedback.

Investing in primary prevention will have significant positive impacts in terms of reducing the incidence of sexual violence, the most costly crime per incident in New Zealand.<sup>3</sup> More generally, it will enhance the wellbeing and resilience of our communities.

This stocktake demonstrates pockets of knowledge and skills exist around the country, but every community should have access to sexual violence prevention activities and programmes, because every community is affected by sexual violence. It is also crucial that programmes, information and activities are available in our communities across the life span which promote healthy relating and undermine social norms that enable sexual violence.

At the moment in New Zealand, on the evidence of this stocktake, this is not the case.

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<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Justice (2009), *Te Toiora Mata Tauherenga – Report of the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence*.